

STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONS

Definitions

Staff Member B For the purposes of this policy, a staff member is a district employee or volunteer.

Student B For the purposes of this policy, the term "student" only applies to a student currently attending school in the Boonville R-I School District.

Educational Purpose B An activity reasonably considered to be part of the staff member's duties in the district including, but not limited to, counseling and the treatment of a student's physical injury, depending on the employee's job description.

General

Staff members are expected to maintain courteous and professional relationships with students. All staff members have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and the maintenance of physical and emotional boundaries with students. These boundaries will be maintained regardless of the student's age, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship, the location of the activity or whether the staff member directly supervises the student.

Staff members will maintain these physical and emotional boundaries unless there is an educational purpose justifying deviation from these standards. When such justification exists, the staff member must be prepared to articulate the appropriate educational purpose of the deviation and must demonstrate that appropriate precautions were taken. When possible, the staff member should consult his or her supervisor prior to engaging in behaviors or activities that might violate professional boundaries. Such notification is not required when a behavior is part of the employee's duties. For example, a nurse does not need to notify a supervisor each time he or she must be alone with a student to provide nursing care.

Violations

Unless an educational purpose exists, examples of situations where professional physical and emotional boundaries are violated include, but are not limited to:

1. Being alone with a student in a room with a closed or locked door or with the lights off on district property, in district transportation or any time the employee is serving in his or her capacity as an employee.
2. Caressing, fondling or kissing students.

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3. Dating a student or discussing or planning a future romantic or sexual relationship with a student.
4. Making advances toward a student or engaging in a sexual relationship with a student.
5. Meeting students in non-work settings without the parent/guardian being present, even if the parent/guardian grants permission.
6. Associating with students in any setting that involves the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs.
7. Discussing sexual topics with students verbally or by any form of written, pictorial or electronic communication.
8. Discussing the staff member's personal problems with students.
9. Sponsoring parties for students outside of school unless as part of an extracurricular activity that is appropriately supervised by additional staff members.
10. Telling sexual jokes or engaging in conversation that includes sexual innuendos verbally or by any form of written, pictorial or electronic communication.
11. Being present when students are fully or partially nude.
12. Sending students on personal errands.
13. Allowing the student to drive the staff member's vehicle.
14. Providing students with private cell phone numbers or e-mail addresses without the prior approval of a supervisor.
15. Allowing any student to engage in behavior that would not be tolerated if done by other students.
16. Giving gifts to individual students.
17. Frequently pulling a student from another class or activity to be with the staff member.

Additionally, staff members may not:

1. Knowingly allow students access to the staff member's personal social networking website or webpage that discusses or portrays sex, nudity, alcohol or drug use or other behaviors

associated with the staff member's private life that would be inappropriate to discuss with a student at school.

2. Knowingly grant students access to any portion of the member's personal social networking website or webpage that is not accessible to the general public.
3. Post information about identifiable students on a personal website or webpage on a social networking site without the permission of a supervisor.

Staff members who engage in any of the above behaviors or in any other conduct that intrudes on a student's physical or emotional boundaries without a valid educational or health purpose, will be disciplined, up to and including termination of employment. Depending on the circumstances, the district may report staff members to law enforcement and the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services for further investigation, and the district may seek revocation of a staff member's license(s) with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Reporting

Any staff member who possesses knowledge or evidence of possible violations of this policy must immediately make a report to the district's administration. All staff members who know or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately report the suspected abuse in accordance with Board policy. Staff members must also immediately report a violation or perceived violation of the district's discrimination and harassment policy (AC) to the district's nondiscrimination compliance officer. Staff members may be disciplined for failing to make such reports.

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Note: The reader is encouraged to check the index located at the beginning of this section for other pertinent policies and to review administrative procedures and/or forms for related information.

Adopted: March 19, 2008

Revised: October 20, 2010

Cross Refs: AC, Prohibition Against Illegal Discrimination and Harassment
JG, Student Discipline
JHG, Reporting and Investigating Child Abuse/Neglect

Legal Refs: ' ' 168.114, 210.115, RSMo.
Ross v. Robb, 662 S.W.2d 257 (1983)

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Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. ' 1681
Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999)
Gebser v. Lago Vista Ind. Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998)

Boonville R-I School District, Boonville, Missouri