

STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS**GBEB**

The Board expects all staff members, including teachers, counselors, administrators, and others to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their conduct with students. For the purpose of this policy, staff means employees, contract service providers, school volunteers, and student teachers/interns.

The relationship between staff members and students in the school should be one of cooperation, understanding, mutual respect, and trust. All staff have the responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning. All students and staff members will treat each other with respect.

When interacting with students in all curricular and extracurricular activities, both online and off-line, staff are expected to exercise good judgment and to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to an educational setting and consistent with the educational mission of the school.

Examples of unacceptable and prohibited conduct by staff include but are not limited to:

1. Any behavior of a sexual nature that may constitute professional misconduct and/or is a violation of criminal or civil statutes, professional codes of ethics or board policy; (Staff may not use their status to adversely influence a student of the district. Staff may not date, make sexual advances toward or engage in any sexual relationship with a district student, regardless of the student's age, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship, where the advances are made, or whether the staff member directly supervises the student. Further, staff may not discuss or plan a future romantic or sexual relationship with a student.)
2. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns or other private matters to one or more students;
3. Exchanging sexual banter, allusions, jokes or innuendoes with students;
4. Association with students in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs;
5. Using insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations;
6. Disclosing information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information; (This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.)
7. Non-counseling or social work staff encouraging students to confide their personal, family problems and/or personal relationship problems; (If students initiate such discussions, staff is expected to be supportive but to refer the student to appropriate counseling or social work staff. Non-counseling or social work staff involvement in such discussions should be limited to direct connections to the student's school performance.)
8. Asking students to keep a secret;
9. Singling out a student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship;

10. Maintaining personal contact for non-school-related business with a student by telephone, email, text, Twitter, letter or other form of communication; and/or
11. Addressing students or permitting students to address you in an overly familiar manner.
12. Following students through social networks such as Twitter or Facebook.
Note: Instructors may use social networks to broadcast and/or discuss their courses; however, it is strongly recommended that they set up accounts to be used only for school-related interactions.

Before engaging in the following activities without parents, staff members will review the activity with the Director of Full-Time Programs & Students or his/her designee as appropriate:

13. Being alone with individual students out of public view;
14. Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff member's home unless accompanied by the student's parent or with parental permission;
15. Visiting a student at home, unless on official school business; (This does not preclude a staff member or his/her child visiting a student's home at the parent's invitation for a social or other event.)
16. Exchanging personal gifts; (Beyond the customary student-teacher gifts); and/or
17. Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for meals or movies, shopping, traveling and recreational activities) outside of school-sponsored events; (This prohibition does not extend to community activities such as church or other events where there may be incidental social contact with students.)

In formulating this policy, the Board understands that there are circumstances when staff members and/or their children have personal relationships with the families of students outside of school. The intent of this policy is not to prohibit all social contact between staff members and families outside of school. However, because of the trust placed in school staff by the community and our schools' responsibility to protect the well-being of students, staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students at all times. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with the Director of Full-Time Programs & Students or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct or a planned activity may constitute a violation of this policy.

Reporting Violations

Students and/or their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to notify the Director of Full-Time Programs & Students, the Title IX coordinator or other appropriate administrator if they believe a teacher or other staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy.

Staff members are required to notify promptly the appropriate Director of Full-Time Programs & Students, CEO or the Title IX coordinator if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

Conduct that violates the Department of Education's educator code of conduct shall also be reported in compliance with VLACS Policy GBEAB- Educator Code of Conduct.

Disciplinary Action

Staff violation of this policy shall result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Human Services and referral to law enforcement, in accordance with the Board's policy on reporting child abuse and neglect and state law.

Law Reference:

N.H. Dept. of Education Administrative Rule – Ed 510.01- 510.05, Code of Conduct for NH Educators

Appendix Reference:

Date Adopted: March 25, 2010

Revision Dates: September 11, 2014, September 16, 2021, March 23, 2023