

## **MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL STAFF/STUDENT BOUNDARIES**

The board of directors expects all employees to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in interactions with students. All staff members are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries.

The interactions and relationships between employees and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust, an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in and outside of the educational setting, an understanding of child development, and consistency with the educational mission of the schools.

Employees are expected to exercise common sense and good judgment in their interactions with students. Employees will not intrude on a student's physical or emotional boundaries unless necessary to serve an educational or physical, mental and/or emotional health purpose. An educational purpose is one that relates to the employee's duties in the district. Additionally, when interacting with students, employees are expected to be aware of and sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their own conduct and the conduct of other employees and volunteers. Employees will report issues to their building administrator or supervisor or human resources whenever they suspect or are unsure whether conduct is inappropriate or constitutes a violation of this policy.

A staff member who has knowledge or reasonable cause to believe that a student has been a victim of physical abuse or sexual misconduct by another staff member is required by law to report such abuse or misconduct to the appropriate school administrator. The school administrator shall cause a report to be made to the proper law enforcement agency if he or she has reasonable cause to believe that the misconduct or abuse has occurred. During the process of making a reasonable cause determination, the school administrator shall contact all parties involved in the complaint.

The board of directors supports the use of technology to communicate for educational purposes. However, employees are prohibited from online socializing with students or use of technology with students that violates the law, district policies or procedures, or other generally recognized professional standards. Employees whose conduct violates this policy may face discipline and/or termination.

The superintendent or designee is directed to develop (1) staff protocols for reporting allegations of failure to maintain boundaries; (2) training to increase staff awareness of their role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults; and (3) procedures to implement this policy.

**Cross References:**

Board Policy 3421

Child Abuse and Neglect

Board Policy 5270

Disciplinary Action and Discharge

**Legal References:**

RCW 28A.400.317

Physical abuse or sexual

misconduct by school employees—Duty to report—Training.

RCW 28A.400.320	Crimes against children— Mandatory termination of classified employees—Appeal— Recovery of salary or compensation by district
RCW 28A.405.470	Crimes against children—Mandatory termination of certificated employees— Appeal—Recovery of salary or compensation by district.
RCW 28A.405.475	Termination of certificated employee based on guilty plea or conviction of certain felonies – Notice to superintendent of public instruction – Record of notices
RCW 28A.410.090	Revocation or suspension of certificate or permit to teach—Criminal basis— Complaints—Investigation—Process
RCW 28A.410.095	Violation or noncompliance— Investigatory powers of superintendent of public instruction—Requirements for investigation of alleged sexual misconduct towards a child—Court orders—Contempt—Written findings required
RCW 28A.410.100	Revocation of authority to teach— Hearings
WAC 181-87	Professional certification—Acts of unprofessional conduct
WAC 181-88	Definitions of sexual misconduct, verbal abuse and physical abuse—Mandatory disclosure—Prohibited agreements