

*Maintaining Appropriate Boundaries with Students*Definition

“District Adults” means all District employees, coaches of recognized club sports, volunteers, student teachers, and independent contractors, including the employees of independent contractors who interact with District students or are present on District grounds. The term District Adults, as used in this Policy, does not include District students who serve as a volunteer or on a compensated basis.

Authority

All District Adults shall be expected to maintain professional, moral and ethical relationships with District students that are conducive to an effective, safe learning environment. This policy addresses a range of behaviors that include unlawful or improper interactions with students, precursor misconduct and other boundary-blurring behaviors that can lead to more egregious behavior. In this context, precursor misconduct includes the targeting of a student by an adult through various modes of communication with the intention of promoting or engaging in sexual activity with the student.

District Adults shall be informed of conduct that is prohibited and the disciplinary actions that may be applied for violation of Board policies, administrative regulations, rules and procedures.

This policy applies to conduct committed on or off school property and extends beyond the workday. However, this policy is not intended to interfere with appropriate personal relationships between District Adults and students and their families that exist independently of the District or to interfere with participation in civic, religious or other outside organizations that include District students.

Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent shall establish administrative regulations to implement this Policy defining what constitutes prohibited conduct relating to, among other things:

1. Romantic or sexual relationships,
2. Prohibited social interactions, and
3. Prohibited electronic communications.

The Superintendent or designee shall inform students, parents/guardians, and all District Adults regarding the contents of this Board policy through employee and student handbooks, posting on the District website, and by other appropriate methods.

The building principal or designee shall be available to answer questions about behaviors or activities that may violate professional boundaries as defined in this policy.

Electronic Communications between District Adults and Students

All electronic communications with a student conducted by District Adults who are not volunteers must relate to educational or extra-curricular programs or activities. Authorized methods of electronic communication are the following:

1. District-provided email;
2. District-sponsored web site (including school and teacher web pages);
3. Telephones (not including texting, unless otherwise permitted under number 4 below); and
4. Other electronic communication methods that are authorized by the administration in support of educational or extra-curricular programs or activities.

District employees are prohibited from using any electronic communication methods with a student for purposes not related to educational or extra-curricular programs or activities, except as specifically authorized in Administrative Regulation.

The accompanying administrative regulation shall establish guidelines for District Adults who are volunteers.

References:

Board Policy and Administrative Regulation No. 5436 “Reporting Suspected Child Abuse”

School Code — 24 P.S. Sec. 510, 1302.1-A, 1303-A

State Board of Education Regulations — 22 PA Code Sec. 10.2, 10.21, 10.22 Educator Discipline Act — 24 P.S. Sec. 2070.1a et seq.

Pennsylvania's Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators — 22 PA Code Sec. 235.1 et seq.

Child Protective Services Law — 23 Pa. C.S.A. Sec. 6301 et seq.