



Catlin Gabel

**ADULT-STUDENT
STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR
GUIDE
2020-2021**

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Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to provide all Catlin Gabel community members with information to set guidelines for appropriate adult-student relationships to create a safe environment and protect children within the school community.

This handbook governs all conduct and relationships involving students that occur on or off school property or with any school-sponsored program or event. The policies apply to *all* adults interacting with Catlin students in conjunction with the school's programs, including employees (faculty, staff, coaches, etc.), contractors, volunteers, and any other third parties acting in any school-related capacity.

This resource is designed to raise awareness of issues and situations that may arise, prompt reflective behavior, and provide guidance. It is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of unacceptable or "at-risk" behaviors which may breach the boundaries associated with adult-student relationships. Likewise, this resource is not exhaustive of the policies that apply to our employees. Additional behavioral standards and policies may be found in the *Employee Handbook*.

Our Commitment to the Community

Catlin Gabel School is committed to providing a campus environment that is safe and healthy. We encourage supportive relationships between students and adults that promote student achievement and success. To that end, clear boundaries for interactions between students and adults in the community are paramount.

We require all adults affiliated in any way with Catlin Gabel School to maintain appropriate adult-student relationships at all times, both on and off campus. All interactions between members of the Catlin Gabel community should be based on mutual respect and trust, and should be consistent with the mission and values of the school. Every member of our community should expect an environment free of abuse, misconduct, and harassment, where appropriate adult-student boundaries are respected and maintained.

Catlin Gabel prohibits and will not tolerate child abuse, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment or boundary violations. Any reasonable belief of a violation of our policies, including a reasonable belief of inappropriate adult-student boundaries, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and/or child abuse, will be reported to the appropriate authorities. Those authorities may include law enforcement, Child Protective Services ("CPS," also known as "DHS"), Oregon Department of Education ("ODE"), and/or the Oregon Teachers Standards and Practices Commission ("TSPC"), as appropriate. To report, please refer to the "How to Report" section of this guide. All employees are required by law to report any suspected child abuse to

authorities. All community members are encouraged to report suspicious behavior as well. To make a report, please refer to the “How to Report” section of this guide.

No retaliation against individuals for working in good faith to report adult-student boundary violations, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or child abuse will be tolerated. Individuals who demonstrate retaliatory behavior towards a reporting adult or student shall be subject to discipline or, in the case of non-employees, other consequences as appropriate.

Safe and Healthy Boundaries

Strong and supportive relationships between adults and students are a core value of a Catlin Gabel education. Catlin Gabel adults provide invaluable mentorship and support to our students, and these relationships foster a strong foundation for our students as they grow into young adults and go out and contribute to our larger community.

At the same time, it is never acceptable for these relationships to cross a boundary into one of an overly familiar, personal, romantic, abusive, or sexual nature. Employees and other adults in our community are required to exercise sound professional judgment with regards to adult-student boundaries at all times. Faculty and staff are in a unique position of trust, care, authority, and influence with students. This means there is always an inherent power imbalance such that if that trust is ever abused, the student’s welfare is compromised.

Guiding Principles of Behavior

The school’s standards of behavior are based on four guiding principles.

Roles. Maintain clear and appropriate roles when interacting with children

- Serve as a role model
- Act consistently with your appropriate adult role, such as teacher, mentor, coach, tutor or other representative of the school
- Avoid acting as a peer or an alternative parent

Boundaries. Set and promote awareness of appropriate boundaries in all relationships with children and adolescents

- Establish and maintain healthy boundaries to ensure interactions with children are safe, healthy and positive
- Be alert to the comfort zones of different children and how culture and identity may affect perceptions of boundaries

Power. Use your influence and authority to promote the healthy development of children

- Be alert to the imbalance of power between adults and children
- Use your influence to promote the healthy development of children
- Put the wellbeing and emotional needs of children before your own

Accountability. Be accountable for your own and other adults' interactions with children

- Always act in the best interest of children
- Take responsibility for the impact of your actions on children and others
- Seek and accept assistance for personal issues before they impact children
- Actively support others in the effort to meet these behavioral standards
- Communicate concerns about possible misconduct to the appropriate persons

GENERAL PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES

- Avoid any conversations of a sexual nature with students. This includes conversations that involve sexual banter or questions about a student's dating relationships, or other conversations that are flirtatious or have a romantic tone.
- Do not use swear words, share risqué jokes or photos, engage in gossip or overly-familiar conversations with students.
- Avoid addressing students or allowing students to address adults with personalized terms of endearment, pet names, or otherwise in an overly familiar manner.
- Do not discuss any personal problems, or other non-academic matters about your personal life, with students. If a student comes to you to discuss their own personal problems, encourage the student to talk to a counselor or to the student's advisor.
- Avoid adopting an "emotional welfare role" beyond the scope of your school role (for example, in the Upper and Middle School it is appropriate for a counselor or a dean to offer support to a student, and for the student's advisor to check in with a student in order to support and track the student's development in academics, athletics, their social interactions, and well-being, as well as their involvement in clubs and activities). If you have any questions about whether it is appropriate for you to adopt an "emotional welfare role", please check with your division or department head.
- Keep student and adult interactions readily interruptible or within hearing or sight range of another adult.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- Send communications only from school email accounts, not from personal email accounts.
- All communications with students should be related to your professional relationship with that student as a teacher, coach, etc.

- Do not text students unless it is an emergency or urgent matter. When in question copy a supervisor and/or parent on a text and email communications.
- Consider the subject matter, content, purpose, timing and frequency of electronic communication. Any communication that is sent to a student should be one that can also be viewed by the student's parent and your supervisor.
- Make class-related social media and internet sites available to supervisors and parents.
- Do not "friend" a student on social media platforms.
- Apply the same communication standards for electronic interactions that you would for in-person interactions.
- Do not post images of students on your personal social media sites without consent of the parent.

IN PERSON INTERACTIONS

- When meeting with students outside of class, whenever possible leave the door open or meet in a room with a window or glass panel in the door, where you are in view of others.
- Unless you are authorized, do not cover classroom windows in a way that restricts viewing from the outside or hallways.
- Do not invite student(s) to your home or a location off campus without prior approval from your supervisor and parent/guardian.
- Do not transport students in personal vehicles. The only exception is for emergency situations when an ambulance cannot be reached, and even then you must contact a parent/guardian and supervisor as soon as possible.
- Ask permission before touching any student. Examples of generally accepted physical personal contact in safe-touch areas (i.e. shoulder, upper back, arm) if the behavior is obviously appropriate, such as when giving a handshake, pat on the back, a high five or brief embrace from a coach after a score is generally acceptable. Do not have any student beyond kindergarten sit in your lap. Sitting in an adult's lap is only allowed in the preschool and kindergarten class, and should be initiated by the student (not the adult) unless a child is hurt. Parents may request that their child not sit on any adult's lap at school or any school-sponsored activity.
- For students participating in a non-school activity for a Catlin Gabel employee such as babysitting, tutoring or coaching, both the parent and school need to be notified in advance of this arrangement.

Prohibition on Dating Former Students and Graduates

Catlin Gabel prohibits all employees from engaging in sexual relations with current students at any time. Catlin Gabel also prohibits employees from engaging in sexual relations with any

former student under the age of 21. If at any time the school learns that a current employee is dating or having a sexual relationship with a Catlin alumna or alumnus under the age of 21 and/or is within 90 days of the student's departure from the school, that employee will be terminated. In the event the alumna or alumnus is under the age of 18 or has left school within 90 days, Catlin Gabel will notify the appropriate authorities.

Pre-Existing or Familial Relationships

Catlin Gabel recognizes that employees may have a familial and pre-existing relationships with parents or their own children's friends. Employees should use appropriate professional judgment when they have a dual relationship with students to avoid violating this policy and handbook guidelines, the appearance of impropriety, and the appearance of favoritism. The following recommendations may assist employees in these circumstances.

- Social contact should be generated via the relationship the employee has with the parents or by the event.
- Employees should avoid being alone with students in these situations. Where it is unavoidable, do so with informed consent of the parent.
- Faculty should politely avoid discussing matters relating to their workplace and should not discuss students' learning or progress at social or sporting events.
- Consuming alcohol in these situations may affect or impair your judgment, so alcohol should be limited when students are present at a social event.
- An employee with concerns about whether a situation may be compromising or may breach professional boundaries should discuss the concerns immediately with their supervisor or human resources.

How to Report Child Abuse, Misconduct, Boundary Violations or Rumors of Sexual Misconduct

Reporting Information and Expectations for All Non-Employees

Any student, parent, volunteer, contractor, or other member of the community with a concern about adult-student boundary violations, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct or child abuse should immediately report the concern to the Catlin Gabel Tip Line, head of school, assistant head of school, or director of human resources. Catlin Gabel takes all such reports seriously and will investigate the concerns. When appropriate, Catlin Gabel will notify law enforcement and/or contract the services of a third-party investigator to conduct an investigation.

TIP LINE

Catlin Gabel is now using **SafeSchools Alert**, a tip reporting service that allows students, staff, and parents to submit safety concerns to our administration five different ways:

1. **APP:** Search for “SafeSchools Alert” in the App Store to download for free
2. **PHONE:** (971) 351-1754
3. **TEXT:** Text your tip to (971) 351-1754
4. **EMAIL:** 1832@alert1.us
5. **WEB:** <http://1832.alert1.us>

You and your child can easily report adult-student boundary violations, sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, child abuse, threats of violence, or any safety issue you're concerned about through **SafeSchools Alert**. When you submit a tip, be sure to use our school's identification code: **1832** in your communication.

OTHER CONTACTS

Head of School: Tim Bazemore (bazemoret@catlin.edu)

Assistant Head of School: Barbara Ostos (ostosb@catlin.edu)

Director of Human Resources: Gloria Martin (marting@catlin.edu)

Oregon child abuse hotline (DHS): (503) 681-6917 or 1-855-503-7233

Emergency dispatch for immediate threat of harm or danger: 911

Reporting Information and Expectations for All Employees

Catlin Gabel employees must immediately report concerns about sexual misconduct, child abuse, or boundary violations to head of school, assistant head of school or director of human resources. **If the conduct rises to the level of child abuse, the employee is also required to report to Child Protective Services, also known as “DHS”.**

If you observe any adult engaging in the behaviors described in this handbook as inappropriate, harmful, or prohibited:

- Call law enforcement immediately, if a student is in imminent harm (call 911),
- Promptly inform the head of school, assistant head of school, or human resources of your observations.
- When in doubt, don't delay, report your observations right away. A report will initiate a fact-finding investigation.
- Do not confront or discuss with the adult exhibiting the behavior unless it is necessary to immediately intervene to protect a student.
- If approached by anyone other than a designated administrator, CPS, law enforcement (e.g., a detective or police officer), or parent of the student, do not discuss the matter.

- Document where, when, to whom and what you reported.
- If you observe student-to-student sexual harassment or misconduct, take appropriate action to intervene and to report the issue to the appropriate administrator.

Any employee who fails to report first-hand concerns of adult-student boundary violations, sexual misconduct, or child abuse, or who fails to report concerns of these inappropriate behaviors that are reported to them by a student or parent or other community member, shall be subject to discipline.

Information and Resources

1. What You Should Know About the Grooming of Students

THE SIGNS: WHAT IS GROOMING?

“Grooming” is a pattern of behavior in which a perpetrator lures a child into an abusive relationship and conceals that relationship so the abuse can continue. Offenders groom victims for abuse, but they also manipulate the people around the child, such as parents or teachers. This is often referred to as “grooming the environment.” Grooming helps “overcome resistance, maintain access, and minimize disclosure,” notes Stephen C. Brake, a psychologist whose practice centers on the evaluation of sex offenders.

People who abuse children are often extraordinarily charismatic. Offenders may use personal charm to gain access to children and to lure them closer. Personal charm provides an alibi because no one can believe that someone so likeable could harm children. Grooming typically involves the following stages:

- **TARGETING THE VICTIM:** Abusers look for children with vulnerabilities they can exploit, such as low self-confidence, unmet emotional needs, strained bonds with caregivers, and low supervision.
- **BUILDING TRUST:** The offender learns about the interests and needs of the targeted child and gets closer without raising suspicions.
- **ESTABLISHING A BOND:** The offender works to fill a need in the child’s life and may offer gifts or extra attention, often lavishing praise on the child. The offender may treat the child like an adult, making the child feel special or chosen.
- **ENCOURAGING RELIANCE:** The offender may make the child feel like the offender is the only person who cares for or truly understands him or her. This makes it harder for the child to stop the abuse when it happens because the loss would be so great.
- **ISOLATING THE VICTIM:** The offender creates situations to be alone with the child, such as taking the child for a ride in a car or meeting the child in a place away from peers or known adults. The offender also isolates the child psychologically, making the offender

the only person the child can turn to for support. This reduces the likelihood of disclosure and it also makes people less likely to believe the child when they disclose the abuse because the child may be viewed as distant or weird.

- **SEXUALIZING THE RELATIONSHIP:** Offenders typically try to desensitize children by touching them in nonsexual ways first and then gradually advancing to sexual touch. The offender may also violate boundaries by talking about inappropriate or overly personal matters or exposing the child to pornography.
- **MAINTAINING CONTROL:** Offenders manipulate victims emotionally to continue the abuse. An offender might treat the child as a co-conspirator, making the child believe that he or she is to blame and might get in trouble if the “relationship” is discovered. The child may conceal the abuse because the potential loss of the emotional connection and gifts or special privileges would be too great. The child may also worry that he or she will not be believed because the abuser is well-liked and trusted within the community.

It is important to train teachers to recognize grooming behavior as well as signs of potential abuse in children. It is also critical to empower every member of the community to report suspicions of abuse in order to protect children.

Source: Excerpted from “Protecting Students from Sexual Abuse,” NAIS Magazine Summer 2019, by Myra McGovern, Steve Mandell, and Kathleen Buckstaff. Language was changed to remove masculine references made regarding offenders.

2. What You Should Know About Reportable Child Abuse

WHAT IS REPORTABLE CHILD ABUSE?

Child abuse is a crime under Oregon Law. It is also strictly prohibited under our policy, and concerns about potential abuse should be reported immediately. The law establishes several categories of child abuse.

CHILD ABUSE CATEGORIES

- Any assault, as defined in ORS chapter 163, of a child and any physical injury to a child which has been caused by other than accidental means, including any injury which appears to be at variance with the explanation given of the injury.
- Any mental injury to a child, which shall include only observable and substantial impairment of the child’s mental or psychological ability to function caused by cruelty to the child, with due regard to the culture of the child.
- Rape of a child, which includes but is not limited to rape, sodomy, unlawful sexual penetration and incest, as those acts are described in ORS chapter 163.
- Sexual abuse, as described in ORS chapter 163.

- Sexual exploitation, including but not limited to: (i) Contributing to the sexual delinquency of a minor, as defined in ORS chapter 163, and any other conduct which allows, employs, authorizes, permits, induces or encourages a child to engage in the performing for people to observe or the photographing, filming, tape recording or other exhibition which, in whole or in part, depicts sexual conduct or contact, as defined in ORS 167.002 or described in ORS 163.665 and 163.670, sexual abuse involving a child or rape of a child, but not including any conduct which is part of any investigation conducted pursuant to ORS 419B.020 or which is designed to serve educational or other legitimate purposes; and (ii) Allowing, permitting, encouraging or hiring a child to engage in prostitution as described in ORS 167.007 or a commercial sex act as defined in ORS 163.266, to purchase sex with a minor as described in ORS 163.413 or to engage in commercial sexual solicitation as described in ORS 167.008.
- Negligent treatment or maltreatment of a child, including but not limited to the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or medical care that is likely to endanger the health or welfare of the child.
- Threatened harm to a child, which means subjecting a child to a substantial risk of harm to the child’s health or welfare.
- Buying or selling a person under 18 years of age as described in ORS 163.537.
- Permitting a person under 18 years of age to enter or remain in or upon premises where methamphetamines are being manufactured.
- Unlawful exposure to a controlled substance, as defined in ORS 475.005, or to the unlawful manufacturing of a cannabinoid extract, as defined in ORS 475B.015, that subjects a child to a substantial risk of harm to the child’s health or safety.

Catlin Gabel School is subject to Oregon’s mandatory child abuse reporting laws. This means that every school employee is a mandatory reporter and is required by law to report child abuse. An employee having reasonable cause to believe that any child under 18 with whom the employee comes in contact has suffered abuse or neglect, or that any person with whom the employee comes in contact has abused a child, must report or cause a report to be made to the Oregon Department of Human Services or a local law enforcement agency.

WHAT IS “REASONABLE CAUSE TO BELIEVE” THAT CHILD ABUSE HAS OCCURRED?

Mandatory reporters do not have to—and must not—wait to “make certain” or confirm that child abuse occurred before making a report. “Reasonable cause” is not defined in the law but is generally considered to be equivalent to “reasonable suspicion.” If a mandatory reporter (such as a Catlin Gabel employee) has a suspicion or reason to believe that child abuse may have occurred, it must be reported.

An employee who, based on reasonable grounds, participates in good faith making a child abuse report has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as provided by law.

Source: CPS Guide on Child Abuse Reporting <https://apps.state.or.us/Forms/Served/de9061.pdf>

3. What You Should Know About Catlin Gabel’s Background Checks

All employees (including all regular faculty and staff, as well as subs, temps, and coaches) are required to submit to a background check, as are all chaperones, volunteers and contractors who have individual access to students. The screening process varies according to the adult’s role in the school community:

FOR ALL NEWLY HIRED EMPLOYEES

- Oregon State Police Background Check
- Fingerprinting via the Oregon Department of Education
- Sexual Abuse/Misconduct Verification Check (Sent to at least 3 of the employee’s most recent former employers)

FOR NEWLY HIRED BEGINNING SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

- All the above including enrollment in the Criminal Background Registry (CBR), which includes a second process of being fingerprinted

FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS

- Oregon State Police Background Check
- If a volunteer will have contact with students without the presence or supervision of a Catlin Gabel School employee, they must also be fingerprinted
- This includes parent chaperones who must also be fingerprinted in order attend an overnight school trip

Any individual required to submit to a criminal records check and/or fingerprinting in accordance with law and school policy will be terminated from employment, or not permitted to volunteer or chaperone, immediately upon (a) failure to pass the criminal records check; (b) the refusal to consent to criminal records check and/or fingerprinting; or (c) notification that the individual has made a false statement as to conviction of crimes prohibiting employment with the school as specified by law.

We voluntarily follow the Oregon Department of Education’s provisions pertaining to criminal records, including those pertaining to Forever Crimes. Subject individuals who have been convicted of any of the crimes listed under ORS 342.143 (i.e. “Forever Crimes”), or the substantial equivalent of any of those crimes if the conviction occurred in another jurisdiction or in Oregon under a different statutory name or number, shall be refused employment.