

STUDENT/EMPLOYEE INTERACTION POLICY

Student Relations

The School encourages close, warm relationships between students and School faculty and staff. At the same time, it is important that each employee's conduct is at all times professional. Employees must maintain appropriate boundaries between themselves and students to ensure that they avoid even the perception of inappropriate conduct. Some activities may seem innocent from an employee's perspective but can be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from the perspective of a student or parent. The objective of this policy is not to restrain positive relationships between employees and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or may be perceived as, sexual misconduct. Employees must ensure that they do not cross the boundaries of a professional relationship.

Guidelines for Appropriate Boundaries with Students

Below is a list of examples of conduct that may involve inappropriate crossing of the boundaries of the professional relationship:

- Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal or intimate nature;
- Unnecessary physical contact with a student in either a public or private situation;
- Intentionally being alone with a student on campus or away from the school without parent or supervisor knowledge or permission;
- Making, or participating in sexually inappropriate comments;
- Sexual jokes, stories, or jokes/comments with sexual innuendo;
- Seeking emotional involvement with a student for an employee's benefit;
- Discussing an employee's own personal troubles or intimate issues with a student;
- Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior;
- Inappropriate use of social media with or about students including friending or following current students or former students who are under age 18;
- Excessive attention toward a particular student;
- Sending emails, text messages or letters to students of a personal nature if the content is not about school activities; or
- Failing to keep parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student.

Duty to Report

If an employee finds him or herself in a difficult situation related to boundaries, the employee should ask for advice from a division director, the School counselor or Head of School. When any employee becomes aware of another employee crossing appropriate boundaries with a student, the employee must report the matter to their Division Director or Head of School. If for any reason the employee feels uncomfortable reporting the issue to their Division Director or Head of School, they should contact the Board Chair directly. In some circumstances, employees will also have the duty to report such conduct in accordance with the mandated reporter requirements.

If a parent becomes aware of a situation between a student and an employee that crosses appropriate boundaries, the parent should report the situation to the Head of School.