



## PROTECTING YOUR PROFESSIONAL REPUTATION

Educators in the normal performance of their duties may be at risk for allegations of abuse and/or harassment from students. Adhering to some basic guidelines can help create a safe environment for students and minimize the chances of being accused of inappropriate behavior.

1. Complete annual training for mandated reporters required by law.
2. Maintain professional attitude/behavior/boundaries with all students at all times.
  - a. Keep professional perspective and manner with students; do not try to communicate with students as a parent or a friend.
  - b. Never say or write anything to a student you would not be comfortable sharing with the student's parents or District administration.
  - c. Refrain from making any remarks, even in jest, which might be considered suggestive or demeaning in nature. Never remark about a student's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation or other identifying factors stated in the district's non-discrimination policy.
  - d. Avoid good natured "joking" or sarcasm that could be misconstrued by any of your students or their parents.
  - e. Avoid giving a student repeated compliments focused on physical attributes.
  - f. Do not have a relationship with a student outside of school or school activities.
  - g. Do not give students your personal phone number(s) or email address.
  - h. Maintain privacy on personal social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat, etc.); do not "friend" students or parents.
  - i. Be mindful, content on social media sites creates a perception and impacts your reputation and credibility. In some cases, a posting may be connected to your responsibilities as a NMUSD employee.
3. Avoid touching students in any manner.
  - a. Refrain from using physical force unless the student is in danger of harming him/herself or others.(Education Code § 49001)
  - b. NEVER touch a student when frustrated or angry.
  - c. NEVER touch a student in a punitive manner.
  - d. Recognize differing cultural and familial attitudes about any form of physical contact or touching; some families permit no touching at any time.
  - e. If a student initiates physical contact such as a hug, step back and offer a "high five" instead.
4. Never be alone in a private area with a student. Keep the door open when meeting with small groups of students outside of class. If a student comes into the classroom and you happen to be alone, immediately step out into a public area such as the corridor.
5. Never arrange to meet a student away from school.
6. Never ask a student not to tell their parent about an incident or conversation that has occurred.
7. Never transport a student in your automobile without written permission from the parent **and the administration**.
8. Interact with adults in a professional manner, with respect and kindness.
9. Follow Board Policy/Administrative Regulation 6144 – Controversial Issues
10. Follow Board Policy 4136/4236/4336 – Non-School Employment and Board Policy 4135/4235/4335 – Soliciting and Selling, regarding tutoring of students.