

STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

The Board of Education accepts the principle that the relationship between staff and students should be one of cooperation, understanding and respect. The Board believes that the Superintendent of Schools and each building level administrator as instructional leaders must exhibit a visible, involved relationship with student activities to create an appropriate environment for learning.

Staff members shall be expected to regard each student as an individual and to afford each the rights and respect due to any individual. Students shall be treated with courtesy and consideration.

Students shall be expected to regard staff members as individuals, employed to provide direct or indirect contributions to learning. No student shall have the right to interfere with the efforts of the instructional staff to coordinate or otherwise implement a learning program. Nor shall a student have the right to interfere with the motivation to learn or the learning activities and efforts of other students.

In-Person Communication

Personal contact between staff and students must be appropriate to the circumstances and unambiguous in meaning. Staff should avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students. Behaviors that may create an appearance of impropriety include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting ongoing, private conversations with individual students that are unrelated to academics, school activities or the well-being of students and that take place in locations inaccessible to others;
- Inviting a student or students for home visits;
- Visiting the homes of students without the knowledge and express consent of parents;
- Inviting students for social contact off school grounds without the permission or knowledge of parents; and
- Transporting students in personal vehicles without the knowledge and express consent of parents and the appropriate School District administrator

Electronic Communication

Digital technology may provide opportunities for educators and other School District employees to communicate appropriately with students and personalize learning. Such communication between staff and students must be transparent, accessible to supervisors and parents, appropriate to the circumstances, unambiguous in meaning and not violative of District Policy 2452 – Sexual Harassment. **Staff should restrict one-on-one electronic communications regarding school related matters with individual students to accounts, systems and platforms that are provided by and accessible to Patchogue-Medford Union Free School District. Sending text messages, including direct messaging of a student on a private and/or personal social media account regarding school related matters such as Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, Facebook or the “like”, may be deemed inappropriate.**

Staff-Student Relations (Continued)**Reporting of Violations**

District employees are encouraged to report suspected violations of this policy regarding in-person and electronic communications with students to the building principal, who shall report such information to Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources.

In the event that a student initiates inappropriate behavior toward a District employee, that employee shall document the incident and report it to his/her building principal or supervisor. The District shall promptly investigate all complaints of inappropriate staff-student relations and take prompt corrective action to stop such conduct if it occurs.

Training

Building principals shall be responsible for informing students, staff and parents of the requirements of this policy, including the duty to report violations, and the procedures established for investigation and resolution of complaints. Further, staff training shall be provided to facilitate staff identification of possible behavior that may constitute inappropriate staff/student relationships. Students shall be provided such training in an age-appropriate manner.

Cross Ref.:

- Policy No. 4410 – Technology Acceptable Use Policy for Employees and Volunteers
- Policy No. 2452 & 2452-R – Sexual Harassment
- Code of Conduct
- Policy No. 5147.1 – Child Abuse in an Educational Setting

Adopted:

January 22, 2024