



Wright City R-II School District Observation, Clinical Experience and Internship Handbook

The Wright City R-II School District values ongoing partnerships with several regional colleges and universities in their teacher education programs, school counselor programs, and school social worker programs. We have developed this brief handbook as a partner district to support positive placement experiences for preservice students/interns and district students and staff. An overview of the clinical experience/internship request process is provided below.

Requests

Preservice students, school counseling interns, and social work interns should not reach out to schools directly to secure placement for a clinical experience or internship. This includes contacting a classroom teacher or a building principal from a school in the Wright City R-II School District. Due to the volume of requests annually, we ask that clinical experience coordinators from each college or university contact our district office. Students reaching out directly will be directed to contact the clinical experience coordinator for their college or university to initiate a formal request. Official requests can be directed to Dr. Holly Broadway-Yates, Assistant Superintendent. Dr. Broadway-Yates can be reached by email at holly.broadway-yates@wrightcity.k12.mo.us or by phone at 636-745-7200.

Placements

Once a request is received at the district office, attempts will be made to find a desired placement at the appropriate grade level and content area, and the desired location, if noted in the request. The Wright City R-II School District regularly facilitates placements for early level field experiences or observations, mid-level field experiences or practicum assignments, and advanced experiences/internships. The clinical experience coordinator from each college or university will be contacted once a placement has been secured. Contact information for the cooperating teacher or counselor/social worker will be provided to the clinical experience coordinator. The preservice teacher/intern is expected to contact the cooperating teacher or counselor/social worker by email to schedule observations.

Background Check

All preservice teachers and counseling/social work interns are required to have affirmation of a clear fingerprint background check from their educational institution submitted to Elisabeth Thompson at the district office. Mrs. Thompson can be reached by email at elisabeth.thompson@wrightcity.k12.mo.us or by phone at 636-745-7200. If the institution is unable to provide proper affirmation, then the intern will need to register and provide fingerprints as specified by Mrs. Thompson

Cancellations

Please contact the district office should a placement need to be cancelled or reassigned.

EXPECTATIONS

Arrival/Departure

Preservice teachers and counseling/social work interns are expected to sign in at the front office of the school and wear a nametag identifying their status as a school visitor.

Preservice teachers and counseling/social work interns should sign out once their clinical experience or observation has been completed.

Board Policy

Preservice teachers and counseling/social work interns are expected to follow Wright City R-II School Board Policies for school volunteers ([Policy IICC](#)) and staff/student relations ([Policy GBH](#)). Please review the expectations outlined in this section prior to beginning an observation or placement at one of our schools.

Volunteering in the district is a privilege, not a right. The district may decline the services of any volunteer for any legal reason. All information collected on volunteers will be considered confidential to the extent allowed by law and will be used only to protect students or minimize disruption to the educational environment.

Although volunteers will provide support services, they are not substitutes for district staff. Volunteers will work under the direction and supervision of district staff.

Per [IICC-AP\(1\)](#), all volunteers will be given a copy of the rules outlined below:

1. Volunteers must follow the same dress code applicable to students.
2. Volunteers will not lend money or bring gifts other than stickers and greeting cards to individual students unless authorized by the building principal or designee.
3. Volunteers will not transport students.
4. Volunteers will not photograph or videotape students unless authorized by the building principal or designee.

5. Volunteers will not date students, have sexual relationships with students or arrange to meet students outside the regular school day or during school-sponsored events or activities. The district expects all adult volunteers to maintain the same professional boundaries with students that are expected of staff members, as detailed in policy GBH.
6. Volunteers will not dress students, change diapers, provide personal hygiene assistance or supply medication to students.
7. Volunteers will use universal precautions to avoid contact with body fluids.
8. Volunteers will receive district policies and procedures on computer use and will sign an authorized user form prior to having access to the district's computers.
9. In accordance with district policy, volunteers will not discriminate against or harass any person and will report all harassment or discrimination observed.
10. Volunteers will not search students or student property.
11. Volunteers will not direct a student to remove an emblem, insignia or garment, including a religious emblem, insignia or garment. If the volunteer believes a student's clothing is disruptive or promotes disruptive behavior, the volunteer will contact a staff member immediately.
12. Volunteers must sign in and out of the office when entering or leaving the school and must document the hours volunteered in the school.
13. Volunteers must report suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the building principal.
14. Volunteers will follow all the policies, procedures and other rules established in the district and all applicable laws.

STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONS ([Policy GBH](#))

Definitions

Educational Purpose – A reason associated with the staff member's duties in the district including, but not limited to: counseling, the treatment of a student's physical injury, or coordination of an extracurricular activity, depending on the staff member's job description.

Staff Member – For the purposes of this policy, a staff member is any individual employed by the district, including part-time and substitute employees and student teachers.

Student – Individuals currently enrolled in the Wright City R-II School District.

General

Staff members are expected to maintain courteous and professional relationships with students. All staff members have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and fairly applied discipline and the maintenance of physical and emotional boundaries with students. These boundaries must be maintained regardless of the student's age, the location of the activity, whether the student allegedly consents to the relationship, or whether the staff member directly supervises the student. Maintaining these boundaries is an essential requirement for employment in the district.

Although this policy applies to the relationships between staff members and district students, staff members who inappropriately interact with any child may be disciplined or terminated when the district determines such action is necessary to protect students.

Absolute Prohibitions

There are some interactions between staff members and students that are never acceptable and are absolutely prohibited including, but not limited to:

1. Touching, caressing, fondling or kissing students in a sexual or sexually intimate manner.
2. Dating a student or discussing or planning a future romantic or sexual relationship with a student.
3. Making sexual advances toward a student or engaging in a sexual relationship with a student.
4. Engaging in any conduct that constitutes illegal harassment or discrimination as defined in policy AC or that could constitute a violation of that policy if pervasive.
5. Engaging in any conduct that violates Board policies, regulations or procedures or constitutes criminal behavior.

Exceptions to This Policy

The goal of this policy is to protect students from harm and staff members from allegations of misconduct by requiring staff members to maintain professional boundaries with students. The district does not intend to interfere with or impede appropriate interactions between staff members and students.

An emergency situation or an educational purpose might justify deviation from some of the professional boundaries set out in this policy. Likewise, staff members might be related to students or have contact with students outside the school environment through friends, neighborhood or community activities, or participation in civic, religious or other organizations. These contacts might justify deviation from some of the standards set in this policy, but under no circumstance will an educational or other purpose justify deviating from the "Absolute Prohibitions" section of this policy.

The staff member must be prepared to articulate the reason for any deviation from the requirements of this policy and must demonstrate that he or she has maintained an appropriate relationship with the student. To avoid confusion, the district encourages staff members to consult with their supervisors prior to engaging in behaviors or activities that might violate professional boundaries as defined in this policy.

Failure to Maintain Boundaries

Unless an educational purpose exists or an exception as defined in this policy applies, examples of situations where professional physical and emotional boundaries are violated include, but are not limited to:

1. Being alone with a student in a room with a closed or locked door or with the lights off. Counselors or others who need to work with students confidentially must discuss with their supervisors the appropriate manner of meeting with students.
2. Meeting students in nonwork settings without the parent/guardian being present, even if the parent/guardian grants permission.
3. Associating with students in any setting where students are provided, are consuming or are encouraged to use or consume alcohol, tobacco, drugs or any other product or service prohibited to minors.
4. Communicating with students about sexual topics verbally or by any form of written, pictorial or electronic communication outside of Board approved curriculum or related to curriculum topics.
5. Discussing the staff member's personal problems with or in the presence of students.
6. Sponsoring parties, as an act related to employment, for students outside of school unless as part of an extracurricular activity that is appropriately supervised by additional staff members.
7. Inviting students to the staff member's home.
8. Being present when students are fully or partially nude.
9. Sending students on personal errands.
10. Allowing a student to drive the staff member's vehicle.
11. Providing a student (other than the staff member's children, stepchildren or other children living in the staff member's home) transportation in the staff member's personal vehicle without a supervisor's approval, unless another staff member or the student's parent/guardian is also present in the vehicle.
12. Allowing any student to engage in behavior that would not be tolerated if done by other similarly situated students.
13. Giving gifts to individual students.
14. Frequently pulling a student from another class or activity to be with the staff member.

Electronic Communication

Staff members are encouraged to communicate with students and parents/guardians for educational purposes using a variety of effective methods, including electronic communication. As with other forms of communication, staff members must maintain professional boundaries with students while using electronic communication regardless of whether the communication methods are provided by the district or the staff member uses his or her own personal electronic communication devices, accounts, webpages or other forms of electronic communication.

The district's policies, regulations, procedures and expectations regarding in-person communications at school and during the school day also apply to electronic communications for educational purposes, regardless of when those communications occur. Staff communications must be professional, and student communications must be appropriate. Staff members are discouraged from communicating with students electronically for educational purposes between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6 a.m. Staff members may use electronic communication with students only as frequently as necessary to accomplish the educational purpose.

1. When communicating electronically with students for educational purposes, staff members must use district-provided devices, accounts and forms of communication (such as computers, phones, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses and district-sponsored webpages or social networking sites), when available. If district-provided devices, accounts and forms of communication are unavailable, staff members communicating electronically with students must do so in accordance with number two below. Staff members may communicate with students using district-provided forms of communication without first obtaining supervisor approval. These communications may be monitored. With district permission, staff members may establish websites or other accounts on behalf of the district that enable communications between staff members and students or parents/guardians. Any such website or account is considered district sponsored and must be professional and conform to all district policies, regulations and procedures.
2. A staff member's supervisor may authorize a staff member to communicate with students using the staff member's personal telephone numbers, addresses, district sponsored webpages or accounts (including, but not limited to, accounts used for texting) to organize or facilitate a district-sponsored class or activity if the communication is determined necessary or beneficial, if a district-sponsored form of communication is not available, and if the communication is related to the class or activity. The district will provide notification to the parents/guardians of students participating in classes or activities for which personal electronic communications have been approved. Staff members will be required to send the communications simultaneously to the supervisor.

3. Staff use of any electronic communication is subject to the district's policies, regulations and procedures including, but not limited to, policies, regulations, procedures and legal requirements governing the confidentiality and release of information about identifiable students. Employees who obtain pictures or other information about identifiable students through their connections with the district are prohibited from posting such pictures or information on personal websites or personal social networking websites without permission from a supervisor and parent/guardian.
4. The district discourages staff members from communicating with students electronically for reasons other than educational purposes. When an electronic communication is not for educational purposes, the section of this policy titled "Exceptions to This Policy" applies, and if concerns are raised, the staff member must be prepared to demonstrate that the communications are appropriate. This policy does not limit staff members from communicating with their children, stepchildren or other persons living within the staff member's home who happen to be students of the district.

Consequences

Staff members who violate this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination of employment. Depending on the circumstances, the district may report staff members to law enforcement and the Children's Division (CD) of the Department of Social Services for further investigation, and the district may seek revocation of a staff member's license(s) with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Reporting

Any person, including a student, who has concerns about or is uncomfortable with a relationship or activities between a staff member and a student should bring this concern immediately to the attention of the principal, counselor or staff member's supervisor. If illegal discrimination or harassment is suspected, the process in policy AC will be followed.

Any staff member who possesses knowledge or evidence of possible violations of this policy must immediately make a report to the district's administration. All staff members who know or have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse shall immediately report the suspected abuse in accordance with Board policy. Staff members must also immediately report a violation or perceived violation of the district's discrimination and harassment policy (AC) to the district's nondiscrimination compliance officer. Staff members may be disciplined for failing to make such reports.

The district will not discipline, terminate or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against a staff member for reporting in good faith any action that may be a violation of this policy.