



GUIDE TO

STAFF / STUDENT INTERACTIONS

Salem-Keizer Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning environment for students when participating in any school or district activity. Whether learning takes place during the school day or during extra-curricular activities, safety is our top priority.

Salem-Keizer Public Schools has established the following expectations for employees, contractors, agents and volunteers to help promote the safety of both adults and students. Staff fully support these protocols, and feel it is important to share them with parents.

REGARDING

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION, staff members are expected to:

- Keep separate personal and professional social media accounts.
- Deny friend or follow requests from students on personal social media accounts, and not send friend or follow requests to students from personal accounts. This does not mean the staff member does not like the student. Rather, it is a way to set very clear boundaries.
- NOT communicate through text, social media, or other electronic methods with individual students using personal phone numbers or platforms. Staff may communicate with students and parents through systems called "Synergy ParentVUE," "Synergy StudentVUE," and "ParentSquare," the district's official text message notification platform. All communication with students should be transparent and for education or safety related purposes only.

DRIVING STUDENTS, STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD NOT:

- Drive a student or students in a personal vehicle without authorization from a school administrator. Staff may sometimes drive groups of students in a small school activity bus. There should always be at least two adults or two students in the vehicle at all times.
- Give students driving lessons, except as part of an approved driver education program.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS, STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD:

- Maintain a clear separation between their personal and professional lives, and maintain appropriate boundaries with students and their families.
For example, it is generally considered inappropriate for staff to go on outings or vacations with the student's family. However, this type of personal contact may not be considered inappropriate if a long-standing friendship exists between the staff/volunteer and the student's family or the relationship originated outside of the school setting. New relationships may form between staff, students and families through school-related activities, however, all adult-student contact is expected to be appropriate and transparent.
- NOT let existing friendships with students or families that originated outside of the school setting (i.e., church, neighborhood, non-profit group, etc.) supersede the district's expectations. For example, a coach or teacher should remove your child from their personal Facebook page, even if you're best friends. This helps ensure there's no implied favoritism for students.

MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS, STAFF SHOULD:

- Be aware of the physical environment when meeting with a student and do things such as: leave the door and blinds open, meet in a common area of the school, invite another staff member to join the conversation, and keep an appropriate physical distance.
- Only meet with a student away from school when there is a legitimate educational purpose and when the school administrator has given permission.

MAINTAINING APPROPRIATE STUDENT / STAFF BOUNDARIES

REGARDING

GIFTS AND SPECIAL PRIVILEGES, STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD:

- Develop transparent and fair reward systems where all students have the same opportunities to earn a certificate, gift card, plaque or other recognition.
- Staff members should not give or receive other types of gifts or special privileges.

TEAM OR CLASS CELEBRATIONS, STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD NOT:

- Hold events at their home. Group events are expected to be approved in advance by the school administration, and be chaperoned by multiple adults.

FINANCIAL BENEFIT, STAFF MEMBERS SHOULD NOT:

- Benefit financially from relationships with students and families.

REPORTING

Administrators want to keep students and staff safe and want to hear your concerns. They're trained to be sensitive to parent concerns, and to follow-up appropriately.

Anytime you have a concern about an interaction between staff or volunteers and students, you have the right to talk about it with a school administrator. Even if you are hesitant for some reason – you don't want to repeat a rumor, or you don't want to question someone's reputation, etc. – it's better to err on the side of safety and share your concerns.

You are welcome and encouraged to bring your concerns to the school principal, assistant principal, athletic director or to the district's Human Resources Department at 503-399-3061. You can contact them by phone, email or letter. If you prefer to share your concerns anonymously, please feel free to do so. However, we would ask that you provide as much specific information (who was involved, when, where, etcetera) as possible so that we can investigate and take appropriate action.

You're also encouraged to monitor your student's electronic communications and immediately notify a school administrator if you find anything concerning. Resources for keeping your student safe online can be found at <https://salkeiz.k12.or.us/students-families/safe-welcoming-schools/student-boundaries>.

If you suspect a child is being abused, you are encouraged to immediately contact the Oregon Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline at 1-855-503-SAFE (7233) or your local law enforcement agency.

Salem-Keizer Public Schools is committed to providing an educational environment that is free from harassment, misconduct and abuse. The involvement of caring adults in the school setting is important to the success of schools and the safety and wellbeing of students. Salem-Keizer Public Schools appreciates your partnership in protecting students. Together, we can keep the school environment safe for students and adults.

