

Category Required

See also JICDAA, RSA 186:11, IX-f

EMPLOYEE-STUDENT RELATIONS

Staff members are expected to maintain courteous and professional relationships with students, maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established professional boundaries. For purposes of this policy, "professional boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff while interacting with a student, in a manner consistent with the New Hampshire Department of Education Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, federal and state law, and District policies.

For purposes of this policy, "staff member" and "staff" includes every person identified as a "covered individual" under Board policy GBCD, i.e., employee, stipend position (e.g., coach, trainer, drama coach, etc.), designated volunteer (whether direct or through a volunteer organization), or any contractor or person working on behalf of a contractor when the contractor provide services directly to students of the District.

A. Prohibited Interactions

The Board understands that Staff may interact with and have activities, friendships or natural relationships with students or the families of students outside of school. This Policy is not intended to prohibit such interactions, provided that professional boundaries are maintained.

The below types of interactions with District students are prohibited unless necessary to serve an educational or health-related purpose. Note that many of the interactions listed are also prohibited under other policies or laws (harassment, abuse/neglect, Code of Conduct for NH Educators, etc.), and this policy in no way limits the application of those policies or laws, including any reporting requirements.

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or its staff.
2. The exchange of purchased gifts from staff members to individual students is discouraged and prohibited when the gift is of more than de minimis value (\$50). This does not include prize boxes, classroom supplies, etc.
3. Staff members shall not communicate with students in an unprofessional or developmentally inappropriate manner.
4. Staff members shall not associate with students in any school related situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
5. Dating between staff members and students is strictly prohibited.
6. Staff members shall not use insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
7. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
8. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
9. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.

10. All staff members are expected to have professional and supportive relationships with students, however, staff members shall not attempt to clinically counsel, assess, diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but, instead, should refer the student to the appropriate licensed/certified individual or agency for assistance.
11. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family information. Any request for this information shall come through the school office..
12. Unless necessary to serve an educational, health-related, or security purpose, staff members will not be alone in a windowless room with a student with the door closed, locked, or with the lights off.
13. Staff members are prohibited from socializing with students outside of school on social networking websites, consistent with the provisions of related Board policies..
14. Unless following a published District emergency health or medical emergency protocol or policy, staff shall not accompany or transport a minor to any medical appointment, mental health appointment or visit that includes any type of mental health evaluation, treatment, or counseling, or any other health-related appointment or visit, without the knowledge and written approval of the minor's parent or guardian.

B. Violations and Reporting Violations

Staff members who violate this policy may face disciplinary measures, up to and including termination, consistent with state law and applicable provisions of a collective bargaining agreement.

Any employee who witnesses or learns of any of the above behaviors shall report it to the building Principal or Superintendent immediately.

Additionally, if the alleged violation of the above would also constitute a violation of the Code of Conduct for New Hampshire Educators, and the reporting employee is also a Credential Holder, then the Credential Holder must also make such reports as are required by the Code of Conduct and related Board policies.

Additional reporting is required if the conduct constitutes abuse or neglect prohibited by RSA 169-C (see Board policy JLF), or is required under some other Board policy, statute or regulation.

C. Dissemination of Policy

The Superintendent shall ensure that all staff members are provided a copy of this policy each year by way of handbooks, or other appropriate means.

Adoption: March 9, 2006

1st Reading: August 10, 2016

2nd Reading: September 7, 2016

3rd Reading: Waived

Adopted: September 7, 2016

1st Reading: April 1, 2026 (as amended)

2nd Reading: May 6, 2026 (as amended)