

STAFF-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 the 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 provides services directly to student of the District.

A. Prohibited Interactions.

The Board understand that Staff may interact with and have activities, friendships or natural relationships with student or the families of students outside of school. This Policy is not intended to prohibit such interactions, provided that appropriate limits 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 between staff members and students is discouraged and prohibited when the gift is of more than de minimis value or is directed to an individual student.
3. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
4. Staff members shall not associate with students in any 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 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. Staff members shall not attempt to 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 individual or agency for assistance. For purposes of the preceding sentence, “appropriate individual” includes any staff member, or contracted professional for which such counseling/assessment/diagnoses/treatment is explicitly within the individual’s duties (e.g., school nurse, school psychologist, etc.).
11. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, 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 background.

12. Staff members shall not be alone in a room with a student with the door closed, a locked door, or with the lights off.

13. Staff members are strongly discouraged from socializing with students outside of school on social networking websites, consistent with the provisions of Policy GBEED.

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 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, the Credential Holder must also make such reports as are required by the Code of Conduct and Board policy GBEAB.

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.

Legal References Disclaimer: *These references are not intended to be considered part of this policy, nor should they be taken as a comprehensive statement of the legal basis for the Board to enact this policy, nor as a complete recitation of related legal authority. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.*

NH Dept of Ed Regulation, Code of Conduct for NH Educators

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