



705. EMPLOYEE ETHICS—FRATERNIZATION & NEPOTISM PPSD POLICY

General Belief	The Providence School Board has a responsibility to establish policies that protect the safety and well-being of students and employees, and that create and maintain a safe, supportive, and positive learning environment and workplace. The Board affirms the responsibility of employees to abide by the standards of professional conduct, to act as role models for students at all times, and to promote the dignity, health, and safety of students. The Board further recognizes the importance of maintaining professional conduct and relationships in the workplace, avoiding conflicts of interest, prohibiting nepotism, and ensuring employees abide by local and state ethics laws.
Purpose and Scope	The purpose of this policy is to establish standards of conduct to ensure that relationships among Providence Public School District (“PPSD” or “the District”) employees are professional and respectful, to promote appropriate workplace behavior, and to facilitate compliance with city and state law.
Definitions	The following definitions are provided to assist in understanding this policy. Business Associate: A person joined together with another person to achieve a common financial objective. Dating: Dating includes, but is not limited to, a social appointment, or engagement, preplanned or not, in which the purpose is to initiate or continue an intimate personal relationship for personal pleasure or sexual gratification. District Employee or Employee: All District appointed personnel, pursuant to Providence Public School Board appointments. District Partner: District contractors, consultants, vendors, representatives from outside organizations, and volunteers. Family Member: An individual who is related to an employee as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, half-sister, grandparent, great grandparent, grandchild, great grandchild, step-grandparent, step-great grandparent, step-grandchild, step-great grandchild, person who is engaged to be married to the employee or who otherwise holds himself or herself out as or is generally known as the person whom the employee intends to marry or with whom the employee intends to form a household.

	Household Member: A person having legal residence or living in an employee's place of residence. Romantic and/or sexual relationship: A relationship in which individuals become involved to the point that there is dating, exchange of personal affection, intimate or sexually suggestive communication, emotional attachment, or any form of sexual or physical intimacy.
Guidelines and Implementation Strategies	The Superintendent will develop administrative regulations to implement the Employee Ethics, Fraternalization and Nepotism policy, as necessary. 1) <u>Ethics</u> District employees or District partners who are family members, household members, business associates, or who are engaged in a romantic/sexual relationships shall have no conflict of interest in supervising, auditing, oversight, and evaluation. No District employee in a supervisory position will directly or indirectly be responsible for the supervision, evaluation or hiring of any District employee or District partner who is a family member, household member, business associate, or with whom there is a romantic/sexual relationship. As public employees, District employees shall act in accordance with the provisions in the Providence Code of Ethics, and the State of Rhode Island Code of Ethics. 2) <u>Fraternalization</u> Consensual romantic/sexual relationships between a supervisor and a subordinate may interfere with sound management practices, and could lead to allegations of conflict of interest, sexual harassment, or sexual favoritism. The District therefore does not allow dating or romantic relationships between supervisors and subordinates, whether or not those individuals are assigned to the same building or division. This prohibition applies to District employees and District partners. Consensual romantic relationships between employees who are not in direct or indirect supervisory roles are not of concern to the District, unless such relationships impede operational functions, influence or undermine organizational decision-making, or constitute sexual harassment or discrimination. 3) <u>Nepotism</u> As provided for under the Rhode Island Code of Ethics, employees shall not participate in any matter as part of their District

	responsibilities if they have reason to believe or expect that a family member, or any household member: a) Is a party to or a participant in such matter; b) Will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss related to such matter; or c) Obtain an employment advantage.
Training, Oversight, and Communication	Violation of any part of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees seeking guidance on this policy, the Providence Code of Ethics, or the State Code of Ethics should contact the City of Providence Municipal Integrity Officer.
Compliance with Laws, Confidentiality Requirements	The Superintendent will ensure that all PPSD personnel and all PPSD contractors comply fully with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations, and with all Board Policies. In the event any part of any Policy is unlawful, the Superintendent will report such event to the Board as soon as practicable and request of the Board a modification of this Policy.
Policy Revision and Adoption	This policy shall supersede the “Staff Ethics/Nepotism” policy approved June 28, 2004 and Resolution # 6-26-04, and all other previously adopted or amended policies, resolutions, or other documents addressing the same. All prior Board adopted or amended policies shall have no force or effect to the extent that they conflict with this newly adopted or amended policy.
Legal Reference	Providence Code of Ordinances, Chapter 17, Section 17-33, “Code of Ethics.” Rhode Island General Laws, § 36-14-1 et seq., “Code of Ethics.”
Cross Reference	PPSD Policy, “Students and Staff Bullying and Harassment”
History	Policy Committee Review: June 19, 2017 Approved by Board: August 2, 2017