

Greenfield Union School District

Board Policy

Professional Standards

BP 4119.21, 4219.21, 4319.21

Personnel

The Governing Board expects district employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, behave professionally, follow district policies and regulations, abide by state and federal laws, and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the school community. Employees shall engage in conduct that enhances the integrity of the district, advances the goals of the district's educational programs, and contributes to a positive school climate.

The Board encourages district employees to accept as guiding principles the professional standards and codes of ethics adopted by educational or professional associations to which they may belong.

Each employee is expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill his/her responsibilities and to contribute to the learning and achievement of district students.

Inappropriate Conduct

Inappropriate employee conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Engaging in any conduct that endangers students, staff, or others, including, but not limited to, physical violence, threats of violence, or possession of a firearm or other weapon
2. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior towards students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members, or failing or refusing to intervene when an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a student is observed
3. Physically abusing, sexually abusing, neglecting, or otherwise willfully harming or injuring a child
4. Engaging in inappropriate socialization or fraternization with a student or soliciting, encouraging, or maintaining an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student
5. Possessing or viewing any pornography on school grounds, or possessing or viewing child pornography or other imagery portraying children in a sexualized manner at any time

6. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language against students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members
 7. Willfully disrupting district or school operations by loud or unreasonable noise or other action
 8. Using tobacco, alcohol, or an illegal or unauthorized substance, or possessing or distributing any controlled substance, while in the workplace, on district property, or at a school-sponsored activity
 9. Being dishonest with students, parents/guardians, staff, or members of the public, including, but not limited to, falsifying information in employment records or other school records
 10. Divulging confidential information about students, district employees, or district operations to persons or entities not authorized to receive the information
 11. Using district equipment or other district resources for the employee's own commercial purposes or for political activities
 12. Using district equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty, except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity
- Employees shall be notified that computer files and all electronic communications, including, but not limited to, email and voice mail, are not private. To ensure proper use, the Superintendent or designee may monitor employee usage of district technological resources at any time without the employee's consent.
13. Causing damage to or engaging in theft of property belonging to students, staff, or the district
 14. Wearing inappropriate attire

Reports of Misconduct

An employee who observes or has evidence of another employee's inappropriate conduct shall immediately report such conduct to the principal or Superintendent or designee. An employee who has knowledge of or suspects child abuse or neglect shall file a report pursuant to the district's child abuse reporting procedures as detailed in AR 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting.

Any reports of employee misconduct shall be promptly investigated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of law or Board policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and, in the case of a certificated employee, may be subject to a report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Superintendent or designee shall notify local law enforcement as appropriate.

An employee who has knowledge of but fails to report inappropriate employee conduct may also be subject to discipline.

The district prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint against an employee or reports an employee's inappropriate conduct. Any employee who retaliates against any such complainant, reporter, or other participant in the district's complaint process shall be subject to discipline.

STAFF AND STUDENT NON-FRATERNIZATION

Definitions

- (a) Staff: For purposes of this policy, *Staff* is defined as the following:
1. Any individual employed by the District, including any certificated or classified employee, student, teacher, practicum student, fieldwork student, temporary employee, and substitute employee;
 2. Employees of contractors or agencies and independent contractors; and
 3. Volunteers, including Board Members.
- (b) Student: *Student* is defined as any individual enrolled in the District's educational programs.

The District expects all staff members, as defined above, to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their conduct with students. The relationships between staff and students must be conducive to an effective and safe learning environment. Staff are role models for students, whether on or off school property and both during and outside of school hours.

All District staff members are expected to accept responsibility for their conduct, and to understand that their conduct may have legal consequences to the District and that even off-duty conduct may adversely affect the abilities of a staff member to effectively perform his/her job duties. Staff is expected to abide by a professional standard of conduct and model good citizenship for students, parents and the community.

The interactions and relationships between staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust, an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in an educational setting, and consistent with the educational mission of the schools. Even if a student participates willingly in an activity, prohibited interactions between staff and students (regardless of the student's age) are a violation of this policy.

Specifically, the District expects that its staff maintain appropriate professional relationships with students and be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their site administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute a violation of this policy.

Employees must understand that even an appearance of inappropriate relationships will adversely impact their effectiveness in the school environment. Therefore, employees must be diligent in maintaining the highest ethical standards when interacting with students both inside and outside the school environment and are strictly prohibited from forming social and/or personal relationships with students outside the classroom.

Prohibited Conduct

Staff members are prohibited from engaging in any of the following conduct, regardless of whether the conduct occurs on or off school property or whether the conduct occurs during or outside of school hours. The following list of prohibited conduct does not, and is not intended to, constitute the entire list of conduct for which discipline may be imposed:

- (a) Engaging in any romantic or sexual relationships with students, including dating, flirting, sexual contact, inappropriate physical displays of affection, or sexually suggestive comments between staff and students;
- (b) Fostering, encouraging, or participating in emotionally or socially intimate relationships with students through communication or gift-giving;
- (c) Initiating or continuing communications with students for reasons unrelated to any direct educational purpose, including oral or written communication; telephone calls; electronic communication such as texting, instant messaging, email, chat rooms, Facebook, or other social networking sites; webcams; or photographs;
- (d) Socializing with students outside of instructional time;
- (e) Providing alcohol or drugs (regardless of age) to students – either prescription or illegal (except for those provided in accordance with district policy on medication administration); and
- (f) Transporting students unless part of the staff member’s job description.

Reporting Procedures

- (a) **Duty to Report.** Any person with knowledge or suspicion of an improper relationship between staff and a student must immediately report the conduct to school administration. Nothing in this paragraph is intended to relieve mandated reporters of their obligations under state and local statutes. All reports shall be forwarded to Assistant Superintendent of Personnel for further investigation.
- (b) **Anonymous Complaints.** Anonymous complaints of inappropriate fraternization by staff with students will also be investigated.

- (c) Investigations. Allegations of inappropriate staff-student relations shall be investigated immediately with the procedure utilized for complaints of harassment within the District. Allegations of inappropriate staff-student behavior shall be promptly investigated and will be treated as confidential and private to the extent possible within legal constraints.
- (d) Protection from Retaliation. Staff, students, and witnesses who make a good-faith report of a suspected fraternization violation, or who cooperate in inquiries or investigations related to the investigation of such a report, shall be protected from retaliation in accordance with District Policy.

Training

The principal of each school site and/or department or program supervisor shall be responsible for informing students, staff, and volunteers of the requirements of this policy, including the duty to report and the procedures established for investigation and resolution of complaints. Students shall be provided such information in an age appropriate manner. This policy will be disseminated as appropriate to staff, students, and parents.

Disciplinary Sanctions

The District will take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, against any staff found to have violated this non-fraternization policy in accordance with District policy, regulation and any applicable collective bargaining agreement. A violation of this policy may also subject staff to criminal and/or civil sanctions as well as disciplinary action by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

Notifications

The section(s) of the district's employee code of conduct addressing interactions with students shall be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and shall be posted on school and/or district web sites. (Education Code 44050)