

General Rules of Staff Responsibility and Conduct

The District is committed to having a positive and professional workplace for all employees and educational environment for students. The District will take all necessary steps to ensure that the work and educational environments remain productive for everyone. It is the responsibility of all employees to treat students, parents/guardians, school patrons, contractors, vendors, sales persons, and colleagues with courtesy and respect.

Because employees interact with children daily, a high standard of staff conduct is expected. All rules of the District shall be observed by all employees whenever engaged in District business or acting on behalf of the District.

The following rules apply to all employees:

1. Employees are expected to maintain courteous and respectful relationships with students, parents/guardians, school patrons, contractors, vendors, sales persons and colleagues. The use of profanity is prohibited.
2. Employees will not intimidate, threaten, coerce or abuse, either physically or mentally, another employee, school patron, contractor, vendor, sales person, student or parent/guardian. Retaliation against students, parents/guardians, school patrons, contractors, vendors, sales persons and colleagues is strictly prohibited.
3. Employees must be truthful and will not provide false statements or make false accusations against students, parents, contractor, vendor, sales person, school patrons or colleagues. Employees are prohibited from falsifying district records or any report required of the employee or submitted by the employee or any other type of documentation. Employees must be truthful when giving statements related to any investigation.
4. Employees acting on behalf of or as a representative of the District must maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards and are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety. Employees are prohibited from engaging in sexual conduct on school grounds, in a District vehicle, during assigned supervisory time, or while attending school sponsored activities.
5. The District strictly prohibits the manufacture, use, consumption, possession, sale, transfer, distribution or being under the influence of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, marijuana, unlawful, illicit, illegal drug as defined by state and/or federal law, or unauthorized prescription medications by employees on any district property; in any district vehicle; off district property at any district-sponsored or district-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the supervision of the district; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the district or is otherwise engaged in district business.

Employees must notify their supervisor, prior to the start of their work day, if they are taking medications that may impact their ability to perform their job in a safe

- manner or if the medications have warnings that preclude them from performing functions of their job.
6. Employees must be present at their assigned school or place of work during specified work hours unless excused by their supervisor.
 7. Employees are prohibited from smoking or using any other form of tobacco or nicotine products (including electronic delivery devices) on any district property; in any district vehicle; off district property at any district-sponsored or district-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the supervision of the district; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the district or is otherwise engaged in district business.
 8. Employees must carry out directions of supervisory personnel.
 9. Employees must not use their professional relationships with students for private advantage.
 10. Employees are prohibited from using threats or personal/political influence in an effort to secure promotion, leave, transfer, change of evaluation, pay or other occupational advantage.
 11. Employees are prohibited from violating safety rules or safety practices, or failing to use safety equipment or failing to perform any responsibilities lawfully imposed upon the employee. Employees must perform in accordance with the employee's current job description, performance goals and authorized directives from their supervisor(s).
 12. Employees are prohibited from inducing or attempting to induce any employee, student parent/guardian, contractors, vendors, sales persons, or school patron to commit an unlawful act or to act in violation of any rule, regulation or policy applicable to the employee or student.
 13. Employees must notify their supervisor, principal, the Superintendent, Director of Human Resources or a school board member when an employee has knowledge of unprofessional or prohibited conduct involving an employee and a student.
 14. Employees must follow all district policies and procedures. Employees are prohibited from violating any rule, regulation or statute or other legal enactment applicable to employees. Employees must not fail to perform any responsibility lawfully imposed upon the employee. More specifically, as a professional school employee, employees are mandatory reporters of abuse and neglect of students. If a staff member fails to report or have a report made when they reasonably believe a student has been subjected to abuse or neglect, that employee is in violation of state law and this policy.

Professional Boundaries

All educational professionals and administrators will perform their duties and behave in a manner that does not cause a violation of the State Professional Code of Conduct for

certificated employees. Violation of this Code of Conduct can cause the District to report such performance or behavior to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with state law and regulation.

All staff members are expected to maintain professional and ethical relationships with students, even when interacting with students outside of the school day or via social media. Employees are prohibited from engaging in sexual, intimate, or romantic conduct or contact with a student, regardless of age, who is enrolled in the District.

Employees have the right to communicate with students outside of the school day. Yet, the Star School District considers any electronic communication between an employee and a student to be an extension of the classroom or school. This extension immediately creates a nexus between the employee's job in the District and the portion of their private life involved in the communication. Employees should be aware that the various types of electronic communication between a staff member and an individual student can easily be misinterpreted by a parent or community member. Therefore employees using e-mail, texting, or other means of electronic communication with students must keep all communication professional, transparent, and appropriate. This includes word choices, tone, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a professional in the District. Employees are specifically prohibited from making sexual comments, sexual innuendos, compliments that focus on a student's physical attributes, and from making sexist comments to students.

Employees will not intrude on a student's physical and emotional boundaries unless the intrusion is necessary to serve an educational, physical, mental and/or emotional health purpose. An educational purpose is one that related to the staff member's duties in the District.

A. Unacceptable Conduct Between Staff and Students

Examples of inappropriate boundary invasions by staff members include but are not limited to the following:

1. Any type of inappropriate physical contact with a student or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under board policy;
2. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the professional staff-student relationship;
3. Being in the area or vicinity where students are consuming alcohol and/or drugs;
4. Sending students on personal errands unrelated to any educational purpose;
5. Banter, allusions, double entendres, jokes, or innuendos of a sexual nature with students;
6. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students;
7. Addressing students, or permitting students to address employees with personalized terms of endearment, pet names, or otherwise in an overly familiar manner;
8. Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school without a legitimate purpose;

B. Workplace Dating Between Supervisor and Subordinate

Consenting "romantic" or sexual relationships between a supervisor/manager and a subordinate are complicated and have the potential for many serious issues including the appearance of favoritism, sexual harassment, nepotism, and disruption in the workplace. Accordingly, the District strongly discourages such relationships and any conduct that may reasonably lead to the formation of a "romantic" or sexual relationship.

By its discouragement of these romantic and sexual relationships, the District does not intend to inhibit the social interaction as an extension of the working environment and the guideline articulated above is not to be relied upon as justification or excuse for a supervisor's/manager's refusal to engage in such social interaction with employees.

If a romantic or sexual relationship between a supervisor/manager and an employee should develop, it is the responsibility and mandatory obligation of the supervisor/manager to disclose the existence of the relationship to the Executive Director of Human Resources within one week. Failure of a supervisor/manager to report their relationship with a subordinate could result in discipline up to and including discharge.

The District recognizes the ambiguity of and the variety of meanings that can be given to the term "romantic". It is assumed that either or both of the parties to such a relationship will appreciate the meaning of the term as it applies to either or both of them and will act in a manner consistent with this policy.

This regulation shall apply without regard to gender, gender identity, and without regard to the sexual orientation of the participants in a relationship of the kind described.

C. Employees Representing the District

Employees are expected to complete their work and conduct themselves competently and professionally at all times when on school grounds, in any district vehicle; off district property at any district-sponsored or district-approved activity, event or function, such as a field trip or athletic event, where students are under the supervision of the District; or during any period of time such employee is supervising students on behalf of the District or is otherwise engaged in district business including a training or conference.

Employees must demonstrate personal and professional integrity at all times when at work or representing the District.

Employees are also expected to conduct themselves off work in a manner that does not bring reproach to the District, violate district policies, or impair their ability to perform as district employees.

Date: 08.18.2011
03.19.2015