

Cle Elum-Roslyn School District No. 404

Board Policy

Policy: 5253P
Section: 5000 - Personnel

Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries - Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to provide all staff, students, volunteers and community members with information to increase their awareness of their role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults.

In a professional staff/student relationship, school employees maintain boundaries that are consistent with the legal and ethical duty of care that school personnel have for students.

A boundary invasion is an act or omission by a school employee that violates professional staff/student boundaries and has the potential to abuse the staff/student relationship.

An inappropriate boundary invasion means an act, omission, or pattern of such behavior by a school employee that does not have an educational purpose; and results in abuse of the staff/student professional relationship.

Unacceptable Conduct

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

- A. Any type of inappropriate physical contact with a student or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the district's policy on Sexual Harassment of Students (Policy 3205); Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (Policy 3207); Nondiscrimination (Policy 3210); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX); the Washington State Law Against Discrimination (Chapter 49.60 RCW); or that constitutes misconduct under RCW 28A.640 and .642 or WAC 181-88-060; or any conduct that would constitute a violation of Chapter 9A.44 or 9A.88 RCW.
- B. Showing pornography to a student or sharing such with students in any manner or form;
- C. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the professional staff-student relationship;
- D. Socializing where students are illegally consuming alcohol, or using drugs or tobacco;
- E. For non-guidance/counseling staff, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff members are expected to refer the student to appropriate guidance/counseling staff. In either case, staff involvement should be limited to a direct connection to the student's school performance;
- F. Sending students on personal errands unrelated to any educational purpose;
- G. Banter, allusions, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature with students;
- H. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns or other private matters to one or more students;
- I. Addressing students or permitting students to address staff members with personalized terms of endearment, pet names or otherwise in an overly familiar manner;

- J. Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by phone, e-mail, instant messenger or Internet chat rooms, social networking websites, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business) without parent/guardian knowledge and/or including the parent/guardian in the communication;
- K. Exchanging personal gifts, cards or letters with an individual student;
- L. Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for beverages, meals or movies, shopping, traveling and recreational activities) outside of school-sponsored events, except as participants in organized community activities and except as participants of family events where the employee and his/her family is invited or connected with approved family outings and activities;
- M. Giving a student a ride alone in a vehicle in a non-emergency situation; and/or
- N. Unnecessarily invading a student's privacy, (e.g. walking in on the student in the bathroom).

Appearances of Impropriety

Depending on the context of the activity or situation, the following activities are examples of potential boundary invasions and can create an actual impropriety or the appearance of impropriety. Whenever possible, staff should avoid these situations. If unavoidable these activities should be pre-approved by the appropriate administrator. If not pre-approved, the staff person must report the occurrence to the appropriate administrator as soon as possible.

- A. Being alone with an individual student out of the view of others;
- B. Inviting or allowing individual students to visit the staff member's home without parental/guardian knowledge or permission;
- C. Visiting a student's home without parental/guardian knowledge or permission; and/or
- D. Social networking, in any form, with students for non-educational purposes unless readily available in a public domain (ie., facebook).

Reporting Violations

Students and their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to notify the principal (or other administrator) if they believe a teacher or other staff member may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy.

Staff members are required to promptly notify the principal or the supervisor of the employee suspected of engaging in inappropriate conduct that violates this policy.

The administrator to whom a boundary invasion concern is reported must document, in writing, the concern and provide a copy of the documentation to the assistant superintendent or director in charge of the district's human resources. The assistant superintendent or director of human resources will maintain a separate non-personnel file of all boundary invasion reports made to human resources.

Whenever boundary invasion concerns occur, the person in charge of human resources will review the full history of concerns relating to the person complained about and will provide a summary to the superintendent.

All professional school personnel who have reasonable cause to believe that a student has experienced sexual abuse by a staff member, volunteer, or agency personnel working in the school are required to make a report to Child Protective Services or law enforcement pursuant to [board policy](#) and [procedure 3421, Child Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Prevention](#), and [RCW 26.44](#). Reporting suspected abuse to the building principal or supervisor does not relieve professional school personnel from their reporting responsibilities and timelines.

Disciplinary Action

Staff violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The violation will also be reported to the state Office of Professional Practices. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement in accordance with the board's policy on Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect.

Training

All new employees and volunteers will receive training on appropriate staff/student boundaries within one month of employment. Continuing employees will receive training, at a minimum, every three years.

Dissemination of Policy and Reporting Protocols

This policy and procedure will be included on the district website and in all employee, student and volunteer handbooks. Annually, all administrators and staff will receive copies of the district's reporting protocol.

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Classification:

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