

Personnel - All Employees

4025 PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES BETWEEN STAFF AND STUDENTS

The Crete Public Schools staff are responsible for conducting themselves professionally and for teaching and modeling high standards of behavior and civic values, both at and away from school. Staff are required to establish and maintain professional boundaries with students. They may be friendly with students, but they are the students' teachers, not their friends, and they must take care to see that this line does not become blurred.

CPS supports the use of technology to communicate with students for legitimate educational purposes. School district staff are responsible for conducting themselves professionally, exercising appropriate judgment, and teaching and modeling high standards of behavior and civic values, regardless of location. This applies to staff conduct and interactions with students and to the material they post on personal web sites, blogs, and other social networking sites including, but not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and other electronic or social media platforms. District staff are prohibited from inappropriate technological communication with students, including but not limited to texting, online socializing or social networking (including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other electronic or social media platforms), internet use, e-mail, blogging, or any other electronic communication that violates the law, district policies or expectations, or the Regulations and Standards for Professional Practices Criteria, commonly known as Rule 27 of the Nebraska Department of Education ("Rule 27").

Unless an employee has a legitimate educational purpose, as determined by the employee's building administrator, the following behaviors and use of social media are a violation of this policy. The following list is intended to be illustrative and does not describe every kind of prohibited behavior.

- Communicating with students about sex unless the student is reporting abuse or assault which is appropriately and immediately reported by the employee.
- Joking with students about matters involving sex, using double entendre or making suggestive remarks of a sexual nature.
- Sharing, showing, displaying or otherwise exposing a student or students to sexually inappropriate material or objects with students.
- Displaying or otherwise exposing a student to pornography.
- Making any sexual advances or engaging in any activity of a sexual or romantic nature with a student.
- Kissing of any kind with a student.
- Engaging in any type of dating, romantic or sexual contact with a current student of the district, regardless of the age of the student or a former student within one year of the student graduating or otherwise leaving the district.
- "Friending" or otherwise authorizing or requesting student access to personal social media accounts. This prohibition shall not apply to social media accounts created solely for class or educationally related matters to which all of the employees' students are allowed or offered access, and a building administrator has approved of such an account in advance.
- Intruding on a student's personal space such as, by touching unnecessarily, positioning too closely, or staring at a portion of the student's body such as, breasts, buttocks, or similar body parts.
- Initiating unwanted physical contact with a student.
- Playing favorites or permitting a specific student to engage in conduct that is not tolerated from other students.
- Discussing the employee's personal issues or problems with a student.
- Providing counseling for, attempting to solve, or solving a student's personal problems (including the student's dating or romantic life) or other issues without engaging trained personnel.

- Giving a student a gift of a personal nature.
- Engaging in activities with a student one-on-one not sponsored by the school without express permission of a school administrator.

- Any other behavior that exploits or attempts to exploit the special position of trust and authority between an employee and student.
- Transporting a student in the employee's vehicle without first obtaining the express written permission of the student's parents or a school administrator.
- Disclosing confidential student records or information.
- Disclosing confidential personnel records or information of other school district employees, agents, or volunteers.
- Behaving in any manner that results in a disruption to the school environment or that impairs the employee's ability to perform his or her employment duties or to be an effective employee.
- Using an employment title or including any reference to the employee's affiliation with the school district unless the communication is school related and in compliance with the law, district policies or expectations, or Rule 27.
- Including school mascots, symbols, logos, or other district trademarks in non-school related communications.

These prohibitions apply to all district employees, regardless of whether the employee engages in such conduct during the school day or while off duty.

Nothing in this policy should be construed to (1) limit an employee's right to speak as a citizen about matters of public concern, (2) prohibit an employee from communicating with students about non-school organizations or activities for which the employee is a coach or supervisor as long as the employee's communication is in compliance with the non-school organization's standards of conduct and Rule 27 or

(3) regulate any communication that is unrelated to the employee's position of employment with the school district and otherwise protected by the United States Constitution and the Nebraska Constitution.

Students, parents, and any other person should promptly notify an administrator if they believe that a school district employee or any other person affiliated with the school district may be engaging in conduct that violates this policy. School district employees are required to promptly notify an administrator if they become aware of any situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

A violation of this policy will form the basis for employee discipline up to and including termination or cancellation of employment, filing a report with law enforcement officials, and filing a report with the Commissioner of Education.

- References: Children's Internet Protection Act, 47 USC § 254
FCC Order adopted August 10, 2011
47 USC § 254(h)(1)(b); 47 CFR 54.500(b) and 68 FR 36932 (2003) (E-rate restrictions)
Neb. Rev. Stat. § 49-14,101.01 (Political Accountability and Disclosure Act) The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)
5 U.S.C. § 552, As Amended by Public Law No. 104-231, 110 Stat. 3048
Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-866 (Rule 27 Regulations and Standards for Professional Practices Criteria)

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