



WELLS-OGUNQUIT COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

The Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee expects all staff members, including teachers, coaches, counselors, administrators and others, to maintain the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their conduct with students. Staff members also include school volunteers.

Interactions and relationships between staff members and students will be based upon mutual respect and trust; that staff members understand the appropriate professional boundaries between adults and students in an educational setting; and that staff members conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the educational mission of the District.

It is understood that staff members and their children may interact with and have friendships with the families of students outside of school. This policy is not intended to prohibit such interactions and friendships, provided that professional boundaries are maintained at all times.

Prohibited Conduct

Examples of unacceptable conduct by staff members that are expressly prohibited include but are not limited to the following:

- Any type of sexual or inappropriate physical contact with students, or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the School Committee's policy on Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students (Policy ACAA).
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher/student relationship.
- If a student initiates a discussion about his/her personal or family problems and/or relationships, staff members are expected to be supportive but to refer the student to appropriate guidance/counseling staff. Staff involvement should be limited to a direct connection to the student's school performance.
- Sexual banter, allusions, jokes, or innuendos with students.
- Asking a student to keep a secret or encouraging students to keep specific information or incidents from their parents; and
- Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students.

- Addressing students with terms of endearment, pet names or otherwise in an overly familiar manner.
- Permitting students to address you by your first name, nickname or otherwise in an overly familiar manner.
- “Friending” students or engaging in any other interactions on social networking sites or through any digital applications (outside of any school-approved activity).
- Communicating with students via their privately-owned computers, cell/smart phones or other electronic devices.

Before engaging in the following activities, staff members are expected to review the activity with their building principal or supervisor, as appropriate:

- Being alone with individual students out of public view
- Driving students home or to other locations
- Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff member’s home (unless the student’s parent/guardian approves of the activity, such as when a student babysits or performs chores for a staff member).
- Visiting a student at their home or in another location, unless on official school business known to the parent;
- Exchanging personal gifts (beyond the customary student/teacher gifts).
- Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for meals or movies, shopping, traveling, and recreational activities) outside of school-sponsored events or organized community activities.
- Taking photographs and/or videos of students for personal purposes or any purpose other than capturing images of a school event for school publication purposes.

Staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students (See Employee Handbook). Staff members are expected to discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute a violation of this policy.

Reporting Violations

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

Staff members are required to notify promptly the appropriate building administrator or superintendent if they become aware of a situation that may constitute a violation of this policy.

Disciplinary Action and Referrals to Outside Agencies

Staff violations of this policy shall result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Violations involving sexual or other abuse will also result in referral to the Department of Human Services, the District Attorney, and/or law enforcement, as well as notification of the Department of Education.

Policy Dissemination

This policy shall be disseminated to staff and volunteers by means determined by the Superintendent. This policy shall also be included in student handbooks.

Cross Reference: ACAA- Harassment and Sexual Harassment of Students
GCSA-GCSA-R – Employee Computer/Device and Internet Use
JLF – Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect
JLFA – Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response

Adopted by the Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee:

03/27/02

Revised by the Wells-Ogunquit C.S.D. School Committee: