

OYSTER RIVER COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD	Policy Code: GBEB
Date of Adoption: May 2, 2007 Policy Committee Review: October 12, 2016 School Board First Read: October 19, 2016 Back to Policy Committee: October 26, 2016 School Board First Read: November 2, 2016 School Board Second Read/Adoption: November 16, 2016	Page 1 of 2 Category: Recommended

## STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

The Oyster River School Board 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. For the purposes of this policy, staff members also include school volunteers.

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.

### *Prohibited Conduct*

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

1. Any type of sexual or inappropriate physical contact with students or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the school board's discrimination and harassment policies;
2. Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the normal teacher-student relationship;
3. Using their position to manipulate students for reasons that are prohibited by law for inappropriate reasons.
4. Sexual banter, allusions, jokes or innuendoes with students;
5. Asking a student to keep a secret;
6. Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns or other private matters to one or more students;
7. Limit social networking sites to school-approved activities only

Before engaging in the following activities without parents, staff members will review the activity with their building principal or supervisor, as appropriate:

1. Being alone with individual students out of public view;
2. Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff member's home unless accompanied by the student's parent or with parental permission;
3. Visiting a student at home, unless on official school business (this does not preclude a staff member or his/her child visiting a student's home at the parent's invitation for a social or other event);
4. Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by telephone, e-mail, Instant Messenger, Internet chat rooms or other technologies, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business);
5. Exchanging personal gifts (beyond the customary student-teacher gifts); and/or
6. 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. (This prohibition does not extend to community activities Such as church or other events where there may be incidental social contact with students.)

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STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS (continued)

In formulating this policy, the Board understands that there are circumstances when staff members and/or their children have personal relationships with the families of students outside of school. The intent of this policy is not to prohibit all social contact between staff members and families outside of school. However, because of the trust placed in school staff by the community and our schools' responsibility to protect the well-being of students, staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students at all times. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct or a planned activity may constitute a violation of this policy.

Reporting Violations

Students and/or their parents/guardians 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

Staff violation 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 and may result in referral to law enforcement, in accordance with the school board's policy on reporting child abuse and neglect and state law.

Dissemination

This policy shall be included in all employee, student and volunteer handbooks and located in the Policies link on the school district web site.

Cross Reference: IJOC – School Volunteers