

MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL STAFF/STUDENT BOUNDARIES

The purpose of this policy 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. This policy applies to all district staff and volunteers. For purposes of this policy and its procedure, the terms “district staff,” “staff member(s),” and “staff” also include volunteers.

General Standards

The Woodland Public Schools board of directors expects all district staff members to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their interaction with students. District staff members are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, by consistently and fairly applying discipline and establishing and maintaining professional boundaries.

Professional staff/student boundaries are consistent with the legal and ethical duty of care that district employees have for students.

The interactions and relationships between district staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust, an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in and outside of the educational setting, and consistency with the educational mission of the district.

District staff members will not intrude on a student’s physical and emotional boundaries unless the intrusion is necessary to serve a demonstrated educational or physical, mental and/or emotional health purpose. An educational purpose is one that relates to the staff member’s duties in the district. Additionally, staff members are expected to be aware of and sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their own conduct and the conduct of other staff when interacting with students. Staff members will notify and discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they suspect or are question whether their own or another staff member’s conduct is inappropriate or constitutes a violation of this policy.

The board recognizes that staff may have familial and pre-existing social relationships with parents or guardians and students. Staff members should use appropriate professional judgment when they have a dual relationship to students to avoid violating this policy, the appearance of impropriety, and the appearance of favoritism. Staff members shall pro-actively discuss these circumstances with their building administrator or supervisor.

Use of Technology

The Woodland Public Schools board of directors supports the use of technology to communicate for educational purposes. However, district staff are prohibited from inappropriately communicating with students on-line or from engaging in any conduct on social networking Websites that violates the law, district policies, procedure or other generally recognized professional standards. Employees whose conduct violates this policy may face discipline and/or termination, consistent with the district’s policies and procedures, acceptable use agreement and collective bargaining agreements, as applicable.

The superintendent or designee will develop staff protocols for reporting and investigating allegations and develop procedures and training to accompany this policy.

Legal References: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

RCW 9A.44	Sex offences
RCW 9A.88	Incecent exposure — Prostitution
RCW 28A.400.320	Crimes against childre — Mandatory Termination of classified employees — Appeal — Recovery of salary or compensation by district
RCW 28A.405.470	Crimes against children - Mandatory termination of certificated employees - Appeal - Recovery of salary or compensation by district.
RCW 28A.405.475	Termination of certificated employee based on guilty plea or conviction of certain felonies - Notice to superintendent of public instruction - Record of notices.
RCW 28A.410.090	Revocation or suspension of certificate or permit to teach - Criminal basis - Complaints - Investigation - Process.
RCW 28A.410.095	Violation or noncompliance - Investigatory powers of superintenenent of public instruction - Requirements for investigation of alleged sexual misconduct towards a child - Court orders - Contempt - Written findings required.
RCW 28A.410.100	Revocation of authority to teach - Hearings.
RCW 28A.640	Sexual Equality
RCW 28A.642	Discrimination Prohibition
RCW 49.60	Washington State Law Against Discrimination
WAC 181-87	Professional Certification - Acts of Unprofessional Conduct
WAC 181-88	Sexual Misconduct, Verbal and Physical Abuse - Mandatory Disclosure - Prohibited Agreements

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