

**Policy 4119.21: Professional Standards**

**Status:** ADOPTED

**Original Adopted Date:** 03/08/2018 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/09/2021 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/09/2021

The Governing Board expects district employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, behave professionally, follow district policies and regulations, respect and abide by state and federal laws, and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the school community. Employees shall engage in conduct that enhances the integrity of the district, advances the goals of the district's educational and extracurricular programs, and contributes to a positive school climate.

The Board encourages district employees to accept as guiding principles the professional standards and codes of ethics adopted by educational or professional associations to which they may belong.

Whenever education includes topics that may be controversial due to political beliefs or other influences, instruction shall be presented in a balanced manner that does not promote any particular viewpoint. Teachers must, without bias, or favoring their own personal beliefs, share facts and information around differing perspectives.

Each employee is expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill his/her responsibilities and to contribute to the learning and achievement of district students.

**Inappropriate Conduct**

Inappropriate employee conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Engaging in any conduct that endangers students, staff, or others, including, but not limited to, physical violence, threats of violence. Possession of a firearm or other weapon not allowed on campus or at a school sponsored event
2. Engaging in harassing, discriminatory, harsh, physically threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating behavior towards students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members, or failing or refusing to intervene when an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a student is observed
3. Physically abusing, sexually abusing, neglecting, or otherwise willfully harming or injuring a child
4. Engaging in inappropriate socialization or fraternization with a student or soliciting, encouraging, or maintaining an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student
5. Maintaining personal contact with a student that has no legitimate educational purpose, by phone, letter, electronic communication, or other means, without including the student's parent/guardian or the principal
6. Possessing or viewing any pornography on school grounds, or possessing or viewing child pornography or other imagery portraying children in a sexualized manner at any time
7. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language in the presence of students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members
8. Willfully disrupting district or school operations by loud or unreasonable noise or other action
9. Using tobacco, alcohol, or an illegal or unauthorized substance, or possessing or distributing any controlled substance, while in the workplace, on district property, or at a school-sponsored activity
10. Providing or allowing minors to use alcohol or illegal drugs
11. Being dishonest with students, parents/guardians, staff, or members of the public, including, but not limited to, falsifying information in employment records or other school records
12. Disclosing personal, family, or other private matters to students or sharing personal secrets with students
13. Divulging confidential information about students, district employees, or district operations to persons or entities not authorized to receive the information, including, but not limited to, discipline referrals, grades, medical information, special program status
14. Criticizing a student's parent to the student
15. Using district equipment or other district resources for the employee's own commercial purposes or for political activities
16. Using district equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty, except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity

Employees shall be notified that computer files and all electronic communications, including, but not limited to, email and voice mail, are not private. To ensure proper use, the Superintendent or designee may monitor employee usage of district technological resources at any time without the employee's consent.

17. Causing damage to or engaging in theft of property belonging to students, staff, or the district
18. Wearing inappropriate attire, including, but not limited to, clothing that is free of writing, pictures or any other

insignia which are crude, vulgar, profane or sexually suggestive, which bear drug, alcohol or Tobacco Company advertising, promotions and likenesses, or which advocate racial, ethnic or religious prejudice. Clothing shall be sufficient to conceal undergarments at all times.

### **Reports of Misconduct**

An employee who observes or has evidence of another employee's inappropriate conduct shall immediately report such conduct to the principal or Superintendent or designee. An employee who has knowledge of or suspects child abuse or neglect shall file a report pursuant to the district's child abuse reporting procedures as detailed in AR 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting.

Any reports of employee misconduct shall be promptly investigated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of law or Board policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and, in the case of a certificated employee, may be subject to a report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Superintendent or designee shall notify local law enforcement as appropriate.

An employee who has knowledge of but fails to report inappropriate employee conduct may also be subject to discipline.

The district prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint against an employee or reports an employee's inappropriate conduct. Any employee who retaliates against any such complainant, reporter, or other participant in the district's complaint process shall be subject to discipline.

### **Notifications**

The section(s) of the district's employee code of conduct addressing interactions with students shall be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and shall be posted on school and/or district web sites. (Education Code 44050)

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