

**MAINE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE DISTRICT #53  
Burnham – Detroit – Pittsfield**

**Staff Conduct with Students**

The MSAD #53 Board of School Directors expects all staff and volunteers 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 and/or volunteers and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust; and an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in an educational setting; and should be consistent with the educational mission of the school district.

Prohibited Conduct

Examples of unacceptable conduct 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 board's policy;
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship;
- Encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff are expected to be supportive and if appropriate refer the student to guidance/counseling staff.
- Sexual banter, allusions, jokes or innuendos with students;
- Asking a student to keep a secret;
- Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students; and
- Permitting students to address you by your first name, nickname or otherwise in an overly familiar manner.

Staff members are expected to be sensitive to the appearance of impropriety in their conduct with students. Staff members are encouraged to discuss issues with their building administrator or supervisor whenever they are unsure whether particular conduct may constitute a violation of this policy. Except in cases where relationships exist, i.e. friend of children of staff/volunteer, or parental relationships, the following activities should be avoided.

- Being alone with individual students out of public view;
- Inviting or allowing students to visit the staff/volunteer at home;
- Visiting a student's home, unless on official school business;
- Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by telephone, e-mail, Instant Messenger or Internet chat rooms, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business);
- Exchanging personal gifts (beyond the customary student/teacher gifts); and/or

- 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 except as participants in organized community activities.

### Reporting Violations

Conduct, or suspected conduct in violation of this policy, must be reported to the building principal or superintendent for investigation.

### Disciplinary Action

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 and/or law enforcement in accordance with the board's Policies.

### Policy to be Included in Handbooks (or disseminated by other means)

This policy shall be included in all existing or future employee, student and volunteer handbooks.

Legal reference: 22 M.R.S.A. §4011-A

Policy Reference: 9.18 Harassment  
9.30 Disability Harassment  
10.02 Use of Private Vehicles for Transporting Students

Adopted: January 9, 2006

Amended: February 5, 2007