

Employee ~~Ethical Standards and Codes~~ of Conduct Procedures

Procedure: 5081-A

Section: 5000 Personnel

I. Definitions

A. Abuse

B. "Physical abuse" means abuse that results in physical injury or damage.

C. "Sexual abuse" has the same meaning as defined in Utah Code § 80-1-102(8081).

D. "Verbal abuse" means repeatedly communicating in an objectively demeaning or disparaging manner which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive learning environment.

E. "Mental abuse" means a pattern of sustained and repetitive acts or inappropriate statements that cause fear, lower self-esteem, or manipulate the person to control behavior. Examples of actions or statements that could be part of such a pattern include intimidation, threatening harm, destruction of property, insults or putdowns, arbitrary and unpredictable inconsistency, and denial that prior abusive incidents occurred. (Appropriate statements or actions taken in imposing discipline for misconduct do not constitute mental abuse.)

F. Utah Code § 80-1-102(64), (80) (2025)

G. Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-3(3) (January 10, 2024November 21, 2025)

H.

A.I. Boundary violation: A boundary violation means crossing verbal, physical, emotional, and social lines with a student or minor that an educator must maintain in order to ensure structure, security, and predictability in an educational environment. A boundary violation may include the following, depending on the circumstances:

1. Isolated, one-on-one interactions with students out of the line of sight of others;
2. Meeting with students in rooms with covered or blocked windows;
3. Telling risqué jokes to, or in the presence of, a student;
4. Employing favoritism to a student;
5. Inappropriate gift giving ~~Giving gifts~~ to individual students;

6. ~~Employee initiated frontal hugging or other~~ uninvited or inappropriate touching;
7. Photographing individual students for a non-educational purpose or use;
8. Engaging in inappropriate or unprofessional contact outside of educational program activities;
9. Exchanging personal email or phone numbers with a student for a non-educational purpose or use;
10. Interacting privately with a student through social media, computer, or handheld devices;

11. Discussing an educator's personal life or personal issues with a student;

B.J. A boundary violation does not include:

1. Offering praise, encouragement, or acknowledgment;
2. Offering rewards available to all who achieve;
3. Asking permission to touch for necessary purposes;
4. Giving a pat on the back or a shoulder;
5. Giving a side hug;
6. Giving a handshake or high five;
7. Utilizing public social media alerts to groups of students and parents;
8. Contact permitted by an IEP or 504 plan;
9. Emergency Situations

It is not a boundary violation when a student acts or speaks in inappropriately familiar ways with a staff member without having been prompted to do so by the staff member, but such incidents must be promptly documented and reported to the staff member's supervisor or the building principal and the student should be given guidance on proper student-staff relationships as directed by the supervisor or principal.

~~C. Grooming: Grooming means befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child or a child's family to lower the child's inhibitions for emotional, physical, or sexual abuse.~~

~~D. Sexual Conduct: For purposes of these procedures only, sexual conduct includes any sexual contact or communication between a staff member and a student, including but not limited to:~~

~~1. Sexual abuse, as defined by Utah Code, regardless of the gender of any participant, including:~~

~~a. Touching a student's anus, buttocks, pubic area, breast, or genitalia; or~~

~~i. Otherwise taking indecent liberties with a student; and~~

~~ii. Taking such action with the intent to:~~

~~1. Cause substantial emotional or bodily pain; or~~

~~2. Arouse or gratify the sexual desire of any individual.~~

~~2. Sexual battery, as defined by Utah Code, including intentionally touching, whether or not through clothing, the anus, buttocks, breast, or any part of the genitals of a student, and the actor's conduct is under circumstances the actor knows or should know will likely cause affront or alarm to the student touched; or~~

~~3. A staff member and student sharing any sexually explicit or lewd communication, image, or photograph.~~

~~10. "Bullying" means the same as that is defined by Policy 5082.~~

~~11. "Consensual sexual activity" means sexually explicit conduct involving an individual or consenting adults.~~

~~12. "Cyber-bullying" means the same as that is defined by Policy FHA and Policy 5082.~~

~~13. "Minor" means an individual under the age of 18 or an individual who an educator reasonably believes is under the age of 18 under the circumstances of the interaction.~~

~~14. "Neglect" has the same meaning as defined in Utah Code § 80-1-102(59).~~

~~15. The term "parent" means the natural or adoptive or step or foster parent of a child or legal guardian who acts in the place of a parent.~~

E.K. Staff: For purposes of these procedures only, staff or staff member means an employee, contractor, or volunteer with unsupervised access to students.

~~F. Student: For purposes of these procedures only, student means a child under the age of 18 or over the age of 18 if still enrolled in a public secondary school.~~

II. Procedures for Implementation

A. Professional Behavior Conduct

~~1. All district employees (including contractors and volunteers) must comply with various standards governing their ethical and professional behavior. Employees acknowledge that they serve the public, and that the public has placed its trust in them. This responsibility requires employees to maintain standards of exemplary professional conduct in a manner characterized by trust, morality, and ethical principles. Because a district employee's~~

~~actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates, and students, all employees must subscribe to the standards outlined below.~~

- ~~1. District staff are expected to comply with all District policies and to adhere to all requirements of the law. District staff are further expected to act professionally. This includes communicating in a civil manner and not promoting personal opinions, issues, or political positions as part of the instructional process in a manner inconsistent with law. It further includes integrity and honesty in relationships with others and conducting any financial business and accounting for funds honestly and with integrity. District staff are expected to comply with appropriate dress and grooming standards as established by District policy, supervisor directives, and generally accepted professional standards. District employees are required to report arrests and convictions as provided for in Policy 5062.~~

~~B. Professional and Ethical Code of Conduct~~

- ~~1. All employees, will comply with the Utah Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act, including provisions related to:~~

- ~~a. Potential conflicts caused by outside employment;~~
- ~~b. Accepting gifts or compensation;~~
- ~~c. Participating in transactions involving a business in which the employee has an interest;~~
- ~~d. Filing the required conflict of interest disclosure if the employee has a relationship with or interest in an outside business entity.~~
- ~~e. Making the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making and actions;~~
- ~~f. Fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity;~~
- ~~g. Being a role model of civic and social responsibility;~~
- ~~h. Maintaining a positive and safe learning and working environment;~~
- ~~i. Supporting the principle of due process and protect the civil and human rights of all individuals;~~
- ~~j. Obeying local, state and federal laws and not knowingly join or support organizations that advocate, directly or indirectly the overthrow of the government; and~~
- ~~k. Complying with the board's policies and district's administrative procedures.~~

~~2. Employee Standards~~

- ~~a. An employee may not:
 - ~~i. Be convicted of a felony;~~
 - ~~ii. Be convicted of a misdemeanor offense that:
 - ~~1. Adversely affects the educator's ability to carry out the educator's responsibilities; or~~~~~~

- ~~2. Adversely affects the well-being of students;~~
- ~~iii. Be convicted of, or engage in conduct of a sexual nature described in Utah Code~~
- ~~iv. Participate in sexual, physical, or emotional harassment towards any colleague or public school-age student;~~
- ~~v. Engage in:~~
 - ~~1. A single egregious instance or pattern of inappropriate contact in any communication, including written, verbal, or electronic, with a minor, student, colleague, or member of the community; or~~
 - ~~2. A single egregious instance or pattern of boundary violations with a student;~~
- ~~vi. Solicit, encourage, or consummate an inappropriate relationship, whether written, verbal, or physical, with a student or a minor;~~
- ~~vii. Accept an inappropriate gift from, or give an inappropriate gift to, a student;~~
- ~~viii. Be convicted of or commit a criminal offense involving a child, including physical abuse, cruelty, or exploitation of a child;~~
- ~~ix. Use corporal punishment, excessive (physical or emotional) force, or inappropriate physical restraint, except as provided in Utah Code;~~
- ~~x. Provide alcohol or unauthorized drugs to a student or allow a student under the educator's supervision or control to consume or obtain alcohol or unauthorized drugs;~~
- ~~xi. Attend school or a school-related activity in an assigned employment-related capacity while possessing, using, or being under the influence of~~

alcohol or an illegal drug;

~~xii. Attend school or a school-related activity in an assigned employment-related capacity after intentionally exceeding the prescribed dosage of a prescription medication that may impair the educator;~~

~~xiii. Possess or distribute an illegal drug or be convicted of any crime related to an illegal drug, including a prescription drug not specifically prescribed to the educator;~~

~~xiv. Be convicted of an alcohol-related offense;~~

~~xv. Subject a student to:~~

~~1. Physical Abuse~~

~~2. Verbal Abuse~~

~~3. Sexual Abuse; and/or;~~

~~4. Mental Abuse~~

~~xvi. Use or attempt to use a district computer or information system to access information that may be detrimental to young people or inconsistent with the educator's role model responsibility;~~

~~xvii. Knowingly possess, while at school or any school-related activity, any pornographic or indecent material in any form;~~

~~xviii. Use school or district equipment to intentionally view, create, distribute, or store pornographic or indecent material in any form;~~

~~xix. Knowingly use, view, create, distribute, or store pornographic or indecent material involving children;~~

~~xx. Expose students to material the educator knows or should have known to be inappropriate given the age~~

and maturity of the students;

~~xxi. Violate state laws regarding the possession of a firearm while on school property or at a school-sponsored activity;~~

~~xxii. Knowingly allow a student to violate a board policy or law concerning possession or access to a weapon;~~

~~xxiii. Interfere with or discourage a student's or colleague's legitimate exercise of constitutional, legal, or civil rights, whose actions are consistent with the law or a board policy;~~

~~xxiv. Knowingly or intentionally permit unauthorized collection, sharing, or use of student data;~~

~~xxv. Knowingly violate student confidentiality unless revealing confidential information to an authorized person serves the best interest of a student and serves a lawful purpose;~~

~~xxvi. Violate:~~

~~1. The Utah Public Officers' and Employees' Ethics Act;~~

~~2. Utah's Student Privacy and Data Protection Act;~~

~~3. Utah Admin. Code R277-107, Educational Services Outside of an Educator's Regular Employment; or~~

~~4. Utah Admin. Code R277-120-5, Classroom Materials Developed by Utah Educators;~~

~~xxvii. Cheat or engage in academic dishonesty, whether on behalf of a student or in the educator's own educational pursuits.~~

b.a. Required Conduct for an Educator

~~i. In addition to Employee Standards an educator shall:~~

~~1. Comply with all federal, state, and local laws;~~

~~2. Maintain a professional educator/student relationship, including by:~~

~~a. Treating a student with dignity and respect by promoting the health, safety and well-being of students; and~~

~~b. Maintaining appropriate verbal, emotional, and social boundaries;~~

~~3. Take prompt and appropriate action to prevent harassment or discriminatory conduct toward a student or school employee that the educator knew or should have known may result in a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment;~~

~~4. Take prompt and appropriate action to protect a student from any known condition detrimental to the student's physical health, mental health, safety, or learning;~~

~~5. Report suspected child abuse or neglect to law enforcement or the Division of Child and Family Services in accordance with Utah Code;~~

~~6. Report any suspicion of bullying to the appropriate school administrator;~~

~~7. Cooperate in providing all relevant information and evidence to the proper authority in the course of an investigation by a law enforcement agency or by the Division of Child and Family Services regarding potential criminal activity, except that an educator may decline to give evidence against himself or herself in an investigation if the evidence may tend to incriminate the educator as that term is defined by the Fifth Amendment of the U.S.~~

Constitution;

~~8. Take appropriate steps to notify a student's parents and refer a student to appropriate prevention services if a student threatens suicide or self-harm as required by Utah Code;~~

~~9. Provide truthful, accurate, and complete information in:~~

~~a. Licensing, transfer, and employment applications or other documentation;~~

~~i. Evaluations of the educator, other educators, or students;~~

~~ii. Proceedings related to educator licensure, employment, or related benefits;~~

~~iii. Student IEP plans and related special education documentation;~~

~~10. Be forthcoming with truthful, accurate, and complete information to an appropriate authority regarding known educator misconduct that could adversely impact performance of a professional responsibility by another educator;~~

~~11. Use appropriate and professional language when communicating with students, including verbal, written, and electronic communications. Examples of inappropriate and unprofessional language include but are not limited to:~~

~~a. profanity~~

~~b. risqué, crude, or off-color jokes~~

~~c. intimidating, harassing, threatening, disparaging, or demeaning comments and/or;~~

~~d. racially or ethnically charged comments or slurs~~

~~12. Notify USBE at the time of application for licensure of:~~

~~a. Current investigations involving professional misconduct in another jurisdiction;~~

~~b. Prior licensing disciplinary action in another jurisdiction; and~~

~~c. Past criminal convictions;~~

~~d. Report an arrest, citation, charge or conviction to the district in accordance with Utah Admin. Code;~~

~~13. Conduct financial business with integrity by honestly accounting for all funds committed to the educator's charge, as school responsibilities require, consistent with board policy 2010;~~

~~14. Follow the board's accounting/fiscal policy and accompanying administrative procedures for collecting money in connection with a school activity, accounting for all money collected, and not co-mingling district or school funds with personal funds as described in Utah Admin. Code and Board Policy 2010;~~

~~15. Demonstrate honesty and integrity by strictly adhering to all state and district instructions and protocols in managing and administering a standardized test to a student consistent with Utah Code and Utah Admin. Code;~~

~~16. Accept academic degrees or professional certification only from duly accredited institutions; and~~

~~17. Honor all contracts until fulfillment or release.~~

~~3. Administrator standards~~

~~a. In addition to the above, school and district administrators shall demonstrate the traits, skills, and work functions designated in Utah's Educational Leadership Standards.~~

~~III. Violations~~

~~A. Any district employee who violates this established code of conduct will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.~~

~~B. For licensed educators, a boundary violation will result in disciplinary action at the district level and may result in action being taken against your professional license.~~

~~C. Staff must report all suspected violations of any of the above codes of conduct to the appropriate school administrator, the appropriate district administrator, or the human resource department.~~

~~D. Failing to report suspected misconduct as required in these procedures is a violation of not only these administrative procedures and the Utah Educator Standards, it may also be a violation of state law, and may result in disciplinary action.~~

~~IV. Investigations and Appeals~~

~~A. Principals, or their designees, will investigate reported violations of ethical standards and codes of conduct. Investigations into reported violations should be done in a timely manner (typically 1-10 business days), and a written finding will be provided to the person(s) who reported the violation as well as to the employee who was accused.~~

~~B. If either the person(s) who reported the violation, or the employee who was accused, are not satisfied with the investigation findings, they may make a written appeal to the Superintendent within 10 business days.~~

~~C. After receiving the appeal request, the Superintendent or their designee will review the investigation and make a final decision in a timely manner (typically 1-10 business days) regarding administrative action.~~

~~V. Training~~

- ~~A. The district will annually train all licensed educators on the Utah Educator Standards described in Utah Administrative Code,~~
- ~~B. Within ten days of beginning employment with the district, a staff member shall receive training regarding these procedures and accompanying board policy and shall acknowledge in writing having received and understood such training.~~
- ~~C. Staff must annually read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting and reporting child abuse.~~
- ~~D. Employees and contractors must annually attend abuse prevention training required by Utah Code Ann.~~

District staff are prohibited from being under the influence of, using, possessing, or distributing any alcoholic beverage, tobacco product (including electronic cigarettes), or controlled substance at school or at a school-related activity where the staff member is functioning as such, as outlined in Policy 5040. District staff are prohibited from providing alcohol or unauthorized drugs to students or from allowing students under the supervision or control of the staff member to use alcohol or unauthorized drugs. District staff are further expected to support District efforts to reduce inappropriate drug use and alcohol or tobacco use among students, including by reporting student actions as provided by Policy 6029.

District staff may not engage in consensual sexual activity on school grounds, during contract hours, or while responsible for actively supervising students. District staff are prohibited from knowingly viewing, accessing, or possessing pornographic or indecent material in any form (print, electronic, or otherwise) while on school premises or at a school-related activity or by using District devices, internet access, or other resources, including equipment provided to the District through an education service provider. District staff may not knowingly use, view, create, distribute, or store pornographic or indecent material involving children at any time. District staff may not expose students to sensitive material as defined by Utah Code § 53G-10-103 and as determined by the District. (This restriction does not apply when District staff access pornographic or indecent material for the limited purpose of investigating a violation of this restriction or to enforce this restriction.) District staff may not expose a student to materials that are inappropriate given the age and maturity of the student.

Professional and Ethical Relationships with Students—

District staff are to comport themselves in a way that contributes to maintaining and fostering a positive, effective, non-disruptive and safe learning environment for students. This includes maintaining professional and appropriate demeanor and relationships with students, both during and outside of school hours and on and off campus and through in-person and electronic interactions (through devices or social media). This also includes respecting appropriate intrapersonal boundaries in interacting with students and avoiding behavior that could reasonably lead to the appearance of impropriety. An educator may not invite, suggest, or encourage a student to reconsider or change the student's sexual orientation or gender identity. An educators may not use his or her position, through

language, instruction, materials, or symbols, to actively endorse, promote, or disparage another individual's race; color; religious belief; sex; national origin; marital status; political belief or creed; physical or mental condition; family, social, or cultural background; sexual orientation; or gender identification particular partisan, religious, denominational, sectarian, agnostic, or atheistic belief or viewpoint in a manner inconsistent with District policy.

Staff are prohibited from engaging in the following conduct towards students:

1. Abuse (physical, sexual, verbal, or mental, as defined above);
2. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), or hazing;
3. Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion (or lack of religious affiliation or belief), political viewpoint, or disability;
4. Boundary violations;
5. Sharing any sexually explicit or lewd communication, image, or photograph;
6. Allowing students in their homes for a school-related social activity without prior written permission of the principal;
7. Dating or any type of romantic or sexual relationship or conduct;
8. Requests for sexual activity or sexually suggestive comments; or
9. Touching a student in a way that makes a reasonably objective student feel uncomfortable.

The foregoing prohibitions apply to staff interaction with any student presently enrolled in the District and to staff interaction with any student who was enrolled in the District within the time period two (2) years before the conduct in question. In addition, District staff may not knowingly engage in sexually explicit conduct with a former student within six months of the student graduating or officially exiting from high school where the staff member works.

Flaskamp v. Dearborn Public Schools, 385 F.3d 935, 944 (6th Cir. 2004).

The District recognizes that in circumstances where a staff member and a student have a relationship which is independent of and does not arise out of the school context, interactions which would be a boundary violation in the absence of that independent relationship may not constitute a boundary violation. (Examples of such independent relationships include where the staff member and student are family members or otherwise closely related or where the staff member and student are both affiliated with a non-school organization and the interaction relates to or arises out of that relationship.) The other prohibitions listed above apply regardless of the existence of an independent, non-school relationship.

Violation of any of the prohibitions of this policy is grounds for employee disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and for action up to and including termination of the District's relationship with a contractor or volunteer.

Reporting Requirements—

Staff members are required to promptly report any suspected incidents of abuse (physical, verbal, sexual, or mental) or neglect, including suspected incidents of child abuse as provided in Policy 6038. Staff members are also required to report incidents of student prohibited acts under Policy 6065, which includes hazing and demeaning or assaultive behavior). Staff members shall also report incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment.

Staff members are also required to report any instance of violation of this Code of Conduct policy, including but not limited to instances of sexual harassment as provided by Policy 5031. If a staff member becomes aware that a student has initiated any interaction

with a staff member which would be improper or inappropriately familiar, the staff member must promptly document and report that incident.

Staff members should report any instances where the staff member knows or has reason to believe that a staff member holding a Utah educator or administrative license has violated the Utah Educator Standards.

Reporting Procedures—

Reports required under this Code of Conduct shall be made as follows: Reports regarding child abuse or neglect shall be made according to Policy 6038. Reports regarding sexual harassment shall be made according to Policy 5031. Reports of student prohibited conduct shall be made according to Policy 6065. Other reports required by this Code of Conduct shall be made to the staff member's immediate supervisor or the building principal.

However, if the person who would receive the report is the person whose conduct is in question, the report will be made instead to that person's supervisor.

Training—

Each staff member must, at least every year, read Policy 6038 (regarding reporting of suspected child abuse) and any other policies relating to identifying or documenting child abuse.

Each staff member must, at the time of initial employment and at least every year thereafter, be trained on the requirements of this code of conduct Policy 5081A and must at the time of each training sign a statement acknowledging that the staff member has read and understands this code of conduct.

Each staff member who is either an employee or a contractor must, once every three years, attend sexual abuse and human trafficking prevention training.

Each staff member who holds a Utah educator or administrative license shall become and remain familiar with the professional standards set forth in Utah Administrative Rule R277-217.

Each staff member who holds a Utah educator or administrative license must, each year, read and acknowledge reading Policy 5081.

Public Notice of Code of Conduct—

This policy shall be posted on the District's web site.

Legal References

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-3(3) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-210-2(6) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-210-2(11) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-210-2(36) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-2, -3, -4, and -5 (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-2(1012) to (1214) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-2(3) (August 7, 2024)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-495-4(1)(c) (October 8, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-2(5), (18) to (22) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Code § 76-5c-208 (2026)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-2(4), (7) to (9), (25) to (28) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-3(2), (3) (November 21, 2025)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-2(2), (4) (August 7, 2024)

Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(3)(a) to (j) (August 7, 2024)

Utah Code § 63G-7-301(3)(a)(i), (b) (2025)
Utah Code § 76-5-422 (2025)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-210-2(44), (50) (November 21, 2025)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-217-2(6) (November 21, 2025)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(3)(c), (k)(i) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(5)(a) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(5)(b) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(3)(k)(i), (5) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(3)(k)(ii) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Code § 63G-7-301(3)(b) (2025)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(6) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(3)(k)(iii) (August 7, 2024)
Utah Code § 53G-9-207(3) (2026)
Utah Code § 53G-6-806(4) (2026)
Utah Admin. Rules R277-322-3(4) (August 7, 2024)

Utah Code Ann. §76-5-404.1(2), Forcible Sexual Abuse (2019)
Utah Code Ann. §76-9-702.1, Sexual battery (2015)
Utah Code §53E-6-603(2), Ineligibility for educator license (2020)
Utah Code §53G-8-302, Prohibition of corporal punishment (2019)
Utah Admin. Code R277-107, Educational Services Outside of an Educator's Regular Employment
Utah Admin. Code R277-120-5, Classroom Materials Developed by Utah Educators
Utah Code Ann. §§53E-9-203(7), Student Privacy (2018)
Utah Code Ann. 53G-9-604(2), Parental Notification of Certain Incidents and Threats required (2019)
Utah Code Ann. §§53E-6-701, Mandatory reporting of physical or sexual abuse of students (2019)
Utah Code Ann. 62A-4a-409, Investigation by division (2021)
Utah Admin. Code R277-217-4
Utah Admin. Code R277-113
Utah Code §53E-4-312, Preparation for tests (2019)
Utah Admin. Code R277-404
Utah Administrative Code, Rule R277-217
Utah Code Ann. §53G-9-207, Child Sexual Abuse Prevention (2019)

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