POLICY 423 – EMPLOYEE-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

I. PURPOSE

The School Board recognizes that in order for the District to achieve its mission, a safe and healthy learning environment and appropriate employee-student relationships are essential. The District is committed to providing an educational environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. Every District employee is to provide students with appropriate guidance, understanding, and direction while maintaining a standard of professionalism and acting within accepted standards of conduct.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. School district employees should maintain professional relationships with their students in all their interactions with them whether on or off duty and on or off school district locations, including in the use of social media or any technology.

B. At all times, District employees will adhere to applicable standards of ethics and professional conduct as established by Minnesota law and will treat students with respect, courtesy, and consideration. Each school district employee is expected to exercise good judgment and professionalism in all interpersonal relationships with students. Such relationships must be and remain on a teacher-student basis or an employee-student basis.

C. District employees should act in a way that acknowledges and reflects their inherent positions of authority and influence over students. District employees should not intimidate, berate or shame students for ~~sincerely held~~their beliefs.

D. School district employees shall, whenever possible, employ safeguards against improper relationships with students and/or claims of such improper relationships. Excessive informal and social involvement with individual students is unprofessional, is not compatible with employee-student relationships, and is inappropriate

~~D.~~E. District employees will cooperate with any investigation concerning allegations of actions, conduct, or communications that if proven, would violate this policy.

~~E.~~F. The District recognizes that there are certain familial and other similar relationships that may provide exceptions.

III. ACTIONS THAT VIOLATE POLICY

Actions that violate this Policy include but are not limited to the follwoing.

A. District employees must not engage in sexual relationships with students, regardless of the age of the student.

B. District employees may not date students or have interaction or activity of a sexual nature with a student, regardless of the age of the student.

C. District employees whose interactions with students through ~~electronic~~ any type of communication that violates this Policy ~~423~~ are also in violation of Policy 441, Technology and Internet Acceptable Use By Staff when it involves the use of technology.

D. District employees must not commit or attempt to induce students or others to commit an illegal act or act of immoral conduct that may be harmful to others or bring discredit to the District.

E. District employees must not supply alcohol or any illegal substance to a student,

allow a student access to such substances or fail to take reasonable steps to prevent such access by a student.

F. District employees must not engage in any grooming behavior. Grooming occurs when a person 18 years of age or older that "expresses the desire or intent to engage in sexual conduct with a child; and engages in a deliberate pattern of conduct to methodically develop a false trusting relationship with the child that is intended to strategically manipulate the child to engage in sexual conduct with anythe person at a future time, regardless of whether any sexual conduct occurs.

IV. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. The District will promptly investigate allegations of violations of this policy and make mandated reports as appropriate.

B. The District will take appropriate disciplinary action when it becomes aware of conduct or communication including communication through a public online social media site that adversely affects the workplace or violates applicable professional codes of ethics.

C. The District will not indemnify District employees determined to be acting outside the scope of their duties including actions that violate this policy, or who are otherwise guilty of malfeasance, willful neglect of duty, or bad faith.

Revised:
Revised: 2/20/24
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Adopted: 6/18/2013

Cross References:
Policy 414-Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse
Policy 441-Technology and Internet Acceptable Use By Staff
Policy 707-Transportation of Students
Procedure 102-Equal Educational and Employment Opportunity

Legal References:
Minn. Stat. § 13.43, subd. 16
Minn. Stat. § 122A.20, subd. 2
Minn. Stat. § 122A.40, subds. 5(b), 13(b)
Minn. Stat. § 626.556; Minn. Rules 3512.5200 (Code of Ethics for School Administrators)
Minn. Rules 8700.7500 (Code of Ethics for Minnesota Teachers)