

Policy GABB: Staff/Student Non-fraternization

Status: DRAFT

Original Adopted Date: 09/09/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 09/09/2024

Adults who have contact with children and adolescents through school activities have the responsibility not to betray or misuse their privileged position and shall never take advantage of students' vulnerability or of their confidence.

It is the policy of the Board of Education to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact or sexually nuanced behavior or communication between a staff member and a student, while the student is enrolled in the school system. The prohibition extends to students of the opposite sex or the same sex as the staff member, and applies regardless of whether the student or the staff member is the initiator of the behavior and whether or not the student welcomes or reciprocates the attention.

STAFF GUIDELINES FOR NON-FRATERNIZATION

Staff members are expected to use good judgment in their relationships with students both inside and outside of the school context including, but not limited to, the following guidelines:

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school and/or staff.
2. Staff members shall not exchange gifts with students.
3. Staff-sponsored parties, at which students are in attendance, unless they are a part of the school's extracurricular program and are properly supervised, are prohibited.
4. Staff members shall not fraternize, written or verbally, with students except on matters that pertain to school-related issues.
5. Staff members shall not text students nor participate in any student blogs.
6. Staff members shall not friend students on any social media platforms.
7. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol or drugs.
8. Staff members shall not date students. Sexual relations with students, regardless of age and/or consent, are prohibited and will result in dismissal and criminal prosecution.
9. Staff members shall not use insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
10. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
11. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
12. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse or neglect.
13. Staff members shall not attempt to counsel, assess, diagnose or treat a student's personal problem relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health and/or family relationships but instead, should refer the student to appropriate school personnel or agency for assistance, pursuant to law and Board policy.
14. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning

assessments, ability scores, grades, behavior, mental or physical health and/or family background.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees, faculty and staff are solely responsible for the content and the security of their social media websites and applications and shall not give their social media website passwords to students.

Employees, faculty, and staff shall NEVER use their personal social media accounts in any way purporting to be or speaking for the Jackson County School District.

Fraternization via the internet between employees, faculty or staff and students is prohibited and in violation of standards of the Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics. Communications with both students and parents shall be done in person, over the telephone, through standard mail, and/or through email. Social media shall never be used and is not an appropriate form of communication.

Access of social media websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited.

Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff or students from the use of educational websites.

ANNUAL REMINDER TO STAFF

The Superintendent and the school principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating the use of drugs and alcohol.
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid.
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology.
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in online conduct.
