

# FACULTY-STUDENT INTERACTION GUIDELINES

*OUR STUDENTS ..... OUR  
RESPONSIBILITY*

Katonah-Lewisboro School District  
2012-2013

The following guidelines are presented to assist faculty and staff in demonstrating professional behavior and to minimize, if not avoid, compromising situations

# Appropriate Boundaries

- Faculty and staff must set appropriate boundaries with students and not engage in inappropriate behavior or demonstrate behavior that could lead to the appearance of an inappropriate relationship

The question, of course, is what is “inappropriate”?

## INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

- Casual touching of any kind (you should not touch any student unless it is for safety reasons and/or to keep them from harms' way, or if it is a requirement specific to an IEP or other curriculum directive)
- Giving personal gifts (\$75.00 District policy)
- Asking for or giving a ride home after school
- Sending intimate letters, cards, text messages, photos and/or videos
- Making personal phone calls
- Making contact via a social network (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Meeting off school grounds or in social settings
- Exchanging phone numbers/e-mail for non-educational or personal reasons
- Using terms of endearment such as "Sweetheart" "Beautiful" "Handsome"
- Communicating with a student using personal e-mail (any e-mail communication between a staff member and student must be for professional purposes only and sent via District e-mail)

SOME OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS WOULD BE CONSIDERED UNPROFESSIONAL AND /OR ILLEGAL AND **MUST** BE AVOIDED

- Engaging in sexual dialogue over the Internet, in text messages, e-mail, video or phone calls
- Meeting off school grounds or in social settings for non-educational purposes
- Dating students
- Any type of sexual contact or indecent exposure, in front of a student
- Flirting in a suggestive or sexual manner

# Continued...

- Telling off-color jokes about religion, sex, race, color, sexual orientation, or otherwise
- Using vulgar or abusive language that causes a student to feel harassed, bullied threatened or coerced
- Accepting favors or gifts in exchange for grades or other services
- Making suggestive comments
- Any type of sexual contact
- Using sexual terms of endearment
- Touching inappropriately

Staff should **NOT** touch a student unless it is to keep the student from harm or is specific to an IEP or curriculum initiative

# REMINDERS:

## **No socialization with students outside of school activities**

- To protect staff and students, the Katonah-Lewisboro School District discourages staff members from fraternizing or socializing with students on a **one-to-one basis** after school hours and off school grounds except during curricular or extracurricular activities. This applies to social networking (i.e. - Facebook, etc.) interactions. All electronic communication **must** be conducted through the District's email account

## **Get permission for school group outings**

- Staff members may take groups of students for school outings after school or on other designated times, but **MUST** obtain written permission from the school principal and the students' parents



# Disciplinary Measures

- Fraternizing or socializing with students outside of curricular or extracurricular activities, except with permission from the principal and parents, *may be considered unprofessional conduct unbecoming to a teacher and possible cause for disciplinary measures*
- *While this statement may be somewhat vague, it is in the best interest of both students and faculty members to exercise extreme caution and common sense in relationships*



# No Inappropriate Fraternization with Students During School Hours

- Staff members should avoid inappropriate or excessive fraternization with students during school hours and should always leave their doors open during meetings with students
- **Exceptions to this rule** would be members of the counseling department, social workers, and school psychologists

- ⦿ **No student visits to the faculty/staff member's home**
- ⦿ Faculty/Staff members should **not** invite students to their homes
- ⦿ **NO faculty/staff shall visit students in their homes unless a parent or guardian is present and it is official school authorized business**

# **NO Alcohol or Drug Use**

- Staff members should not condone student alcohol or drug use
- Staff members who serve students alcohol or drugs could be subject to criminal prosecution and disciplinary measures
- Faculty members who are present when students are drinking alcohol or consuming drugs place themselves in a compromising situation
- As per the District's Code of Conduct, faculty must report the incident to the proper authorities

# Student Initiated Behavior

If a student initiates inappropriate behavior toward you:

- Document the incident and report it to the school principal or Title IX Officer
- Report any incidents that follow
- Keep a log of events for your reference
- If appropriate, the principal and/or Title IX will intervene and speak to the student and parents about the inappropriate behavior

# NO GIFTS OR TOKENS

Faculty members should not give or exchange gifts or “tokens” with students

While the intent may be completely harmless, such acts can be misinterpreted by students and lead to unwelcome conclusions

## Katonah-Lewisboro School District Policy No. 2160 Code of Ethics states:

“No board member, officer or employee shall directly or indirectly solicit any gift or accept or receive any gift having a value of \$75.00 or more under circumstances in which it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence him/her, or could reasonably be expected to influence him/her in the performance of his/her official duties or was intended as a reward for any official action on his/her part. If a board member, officer or employee receives any gift having a value of \$75.00 or more, such gift shall be returned.”

## \*\*\*Reporting Inappropriate Staff Behavior\*\*\*

Staff members **MUST** report observed inappropriate behavior between students and other staff members, if they have reason to believe that a sexual relationship is occurring

State law requires staff to report all suspected child abuse to appropriate child protection authorities, and a sexual relationship between a teacher and a student constitutes child abuse



*These guidelines are developed for the protection of our students and faculty/staff. It is of critical importance that we maintain a professional relationship among our faculty/staff and our students, that our students are safe from inappropriate adult behavior, and that our faculty are safeguarded from compromising situations.*