



Book	Policy Manual
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Title	STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE
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4213 - **STUDENT SUPERVISION AND WELFARE**

Support staff members may be confronted with situations which, if handled incorrectly, could result in liability to the District, personal liability to the staff member, and/or harm to the welfare of the student(s). It is the intent of the Board to direct the preparation of guidelines that would minimize that possibility.

A support staff member, or a person who works or volunteers with children, who is found to have had sexual contact with any student shall be referred to the proper authorities and be subject to discipline up to and including discharge.

~~This policy should not be construed as affecting any obligation on the part of staff to report suspected child abuse under 48.981 Wis. Stats. and Policy 8462 – Child Abuse and Neglect.~~

Standard of Care of Students

Each District support staff members shall maintain a standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities which include, but are not limited to the following standards:

- A. Support staff members shall report immediately any accident or safety hazard about which they are informed or detect to their supervisor as well as to other authorities or District staff members as may be required by established policies and procedures.
- B. Support staff members shall report unsafe, potentially harmful, dangerous, violent or criminal activities, or threat of these activities by students to the Superintendent and local public safety agencies and/or school officials in accordance with Policy 8420 - School Safety and Reporting of Crime Statistics. Additionally, each support staff member shall also promptly report to the Principal any knowledge of threats of violence by students.
- C. Support staff should not volunteer to take on responsibilities they are not reasonably qualified for or able to perform. Voluntarily assuming such duties carries the same level of accountability as formally assigned responsibilities.
- D. Support staff members shall not send students on any personal errands.
- E. Support staff members shall not associate with students at any time in a manner which gives the appearance of impropriety, including, but not limited to, the creation or participation in any situation or activity which could be considered abusive or sexually suggestive or involve illegal substances such as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. Any sexual or other inappropriate conduct with a student by any staff member will subject the offender to potential criminal liability and discipline up to and including termination of employment.

This provision should not be construed as precluding a support staff member from associating with students in private for legitimate or proper reasons or to interfere with familial relationships that may exist between staff and students.

- F. Support staff members shall not disclose personally identifiable information about a student to third parties unless specifically authorized by law or the student's parent(s) to do so.
- G. Support staff members shall not transport students for school-related activities in a private vehicle without the approval of their immediate supervisor and consistent with the provisions of Policy 8660 - Transportation by Private Vehicle for District-Sponsored Activities or Trips. This does not apply to any student who is a support staff member's family member.
- H. **A support staff member shall not require a student** ~~Students shall not be required~~ to perform work or services that may be detrimental to their health.
- I. Staff members are discouraged from engaging students in social media and online networking media (see also Policy 7544 - Use of Social Media), except for appropriate academic, extra-curricular, and/or professional uses consistent with Policy 7540 - Technology, Policy 7540.03 - Student Technology Acceptable Use and Safety, and/or Policy 7540.04 - Staff Technology Acceptable Use and Safety.
- J. Staff members are expressly prohibited from posting any picture, video, meme, or other visual depiction, or comment pertaining to any student on social networking media or similar forums without the permission of the administration. This provision of the policy does not apply to pictures and/or videos taken of public events that may involve, or incidentally include, depictions of students participating in or observing such event where the purpose of the photo or video is to depict the event, not a particular student. This section does not apply to depictions of a support staff member's own child or other relative.

Since most information concerning a child in school, other than directory information described in Policy 8330 - Student Records, is a confidential student record under Federal and State laws, a staff member who shares confidential information with another person not authorized to receive the information may be subject to discipline and/or civil liability. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, grades, behavior, family background, and alleged child abuse.

~~[DRAFTING NOTE: The required language from 2025 ACT 89 is listed below. The optional language below is not required by 2025 Act 57, but may be desired for additional direction to employees.]~~

Appropriate Staff and Student Relationships

The District is committed to maintaining safe, professional, and developmentally appropriate relationships between staff and students. All employees, volunteers, and adults working with students are expected to uphold clear and appropriate boundaries and report concerns to protect student welfare.

Prohibited Conduct/Behaviors

This section applies to communications and behaviors that occur during or outside of school hours between an employee acting in the employee's official capacity and a student enrolled or otherwise participating in any aspect of the District's programming. To protect the wellbeing of students, grooming behaviors by staff are strictly prohibited. Likewise, this policy includes reference to other types of behaviors that, while not meeting the definition of grooming, constitute boundary violations that can create the appearance of grooming behavior.

- A. **Grooming** - Grooming behavior is defined as a course of conduct, pattern of behavior, or series of acts with the intention to condition, seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child for the purpose of engaging in sexual intercourse or sexual contact, or for the purpose of producing, distributing, or possessing depictions of the child engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

These prohibited grooming behaviors, as well as the behaviors included below, cover both in-person and digital communications, during non-school and school hours, and include sexualized conversations, inappropriate physical contact, and efforts to isolate a child from their family or peers. Staff must not engage in any romantic or sexual conduct with students, including dating, advances, sexual contact, or sexually suggestive communication.

When accompanied by the intent described above, grooming behaviors include the following and other similar forms of interaction between school staff or volunteers and students:

1. hugging, kissing, or other physical contact with a student;
2. telling sexual jokes to students;

3. engaging in talk containing sexual innuendo or banter with students;
4. talking about sexual topics that are not related to curriculum;
5. showing to or discussing pornography with a student;
6. any other form of interaction with a student that involves the requisite intent described above.

- B. **Boundary Violations** - Staff-student relationships may become inappropriate based on the frequency, timing, location, or nature of interactions. An employee need not have any intent to engage in grooming of a student but may still violate the obligation to maintain appropriate boundaries between students and staff, and therefore be subject to disciplinary action. Consent from the student or parent does not justify boundary violations.

Maintaining professional boundaries is essential to student safety and assists staff and volunteers in avoiding circumstances that can be perceived as grooming behavior. However, the District recognizes that certain physical contact or personal involvement may be clinically or educationally necessary. Behaviors that are required for a student's well-being or instructional success are permitted. This includes, but is not limited to: providing hygiene assistance to a student (e.g., following a toileting accident); physical spotting or corrective positioning in athletics (e.g., wrestling, gymnastics, or football); and administering first aid or emergency medical care.

(X) Any behavior that lacks a clear educational or medical justification, or that serves the emotional or physical needs of the adult rather than the student, is strictly prohibited. Such behaviors may be indicators of grooming and will be subject to immediate investigation. **{END-OF-OPTION}**

(X) Inappropriate boundary violations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. inappropriate comments about a student's body or appearance;
2. taking an undue interest in a student (i.e. having a special friend or a special relationship);
3. initiating or extending contact with students beyond the school day for personal purposes;
4. using e-mail, text messaging, or websites to discuss personal topics or interests with students;
5. giving students rides in the staff member's personal vehicle or taking students on personal outings without administrative approval;
6. invading a student's privacy (e.g. walking in on the student in the bathroom, locker-room, asking about bra sizes or previous sexual experiences);
7. going to a student's home for non-educational purposes;
8. inviting students to the staff member's home without proper chaperones (i.e. another staff member or parent of student);
9. giving gifts or money to a student for no legitimate educational purpose;
10. accepting gifts or money from a student for no legitimate educational purpose;
11. being overly touchy with students;
12. favoring certain students by inviting them to come to the classroom at non-class times;
13. getting a student out of class to visit with the staff member;
14. providing advice to or counseling a student regarding a personal problem (i.e. problems related to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationships, etc.), unless properly licensed and authorized to do so;
15. being alone with a student behind closed doors without a legitimate educational purpose;
16. telling a student secrets and having secrets with a student; and
17. other similar activities or behavior.

Inappropriate boundary violations are prohibited and must be reported promptly. **{END-OF-OPTION}**

- C. **(X) Preferential Treatment or Favoritism** - Staff behaviors that demonstrate, or give the perception of, preferential treatment toward a student or group of students. **{END-OF-OPTION}**

Appropriate Discussion Content When Using PCDs (Personal Communication Devices)

[DRAFTING NOTE: The statute (118.07(7), Wis. Stat.) does not define "appropriate content" but requires Districts to specify in policy what "appropriate content" means locally. While items A-E are recommended for a comprehensive definition, Districts may choose a narrower definition or include additional parameters for its required definition of appropriate content.]

When using PCDs to communicate with students and parents, staff members must use district-approved communication platforms.

When staff and school officials communicate with students using PCDs, discussions must be appropriate and not prohibited grooming or boundary violations, professional, and related to legitimate school purposes. Communications described here should be as brief as possible and only contain what is necessary. Appropriate content includes:

- A. ☒ Instructional communication (assignments, coursework, academic support);
- B. ☒ School-related activities (clubs, athletics, events, field trips, rehearsals);
- C. ☒ Scheduling or logistical information related to classes or school programs;
- D. ☒ Pedagogical assistance related to school participation (clarifying expectations, reminders, or academic assistance); and,
- E. ☒ Safety or emergency communication when necessary.;
- F. ☐ Other _____.

Communications must remain professional in tone, limited to educational or school-related matters, and consistent with District policies regarding staff-student boundaries. Failure to follow these policy expectations may result in discipline up to and including termination, and potential referral to law enforcement. The level of discipline will depend on the severity of the violation. This policy applies to communication that occurs during or outside of school hours.

Employees who are parents or legal guardians of students enrolled in the District may communicate with their own children using PCDs outside of District-approved platforms, provided such communications are personal in nature and not conducted in the employee's official capacity. This exception does not permit the employee to engage in District-related communications with other students outside of approved platforms, nor does it exempt them from applicable laws, policies, or expectations regarding professional conduct.

[DRAFTING NOTE: Policy 7544—Use of Social Media requires the District Administrator to designate and communicate the District-approved social media/communication platforms/sites, which all Board members, staff, coaches/advisors, and approved volunteers are required to use exclusively when communicating with each other and/or with students, including providing general communications to the public. These may be platforms approved across the District, specific to a building, or upon request of a particular program/teaching.]

District-Approved PCD Communication Platforms - The District Administrator is required to designate and communicate the District-approved social media/communication platforms/sites, which all Board members, staff, coaches/advisors, and approved volunteers are required to use exclusively when communicating with each other and/or with students.

The approved communication platform(s) is/are:

- A. ☒ District email/messaging;
- B. ☒ District-approved social media platform(s), for group public messaging, not individual or direct private messaging;
- C. ☒ Designated athletic and co-curricular communication app.

] The District approved communication platform(s) shall be listed on the District's website. **[END OF OPTION]**

Outside-District and Staff-Parent Relationships - This policy permits appropriate interactions from legitimate, pre-existing, non-District relationships (e.g., relatives, family friends). Staff who are parents or guardians of enrolled students must maintain professional conduct in accordance with this policy, in all school-related activities and communications, avoiding favoritism or conflicts of interest. Where such relationships compromise professional responsibilities, the District may intervene.

Professional Conduct During Off-Site School Activities - Staff must maintain professional boundaries as identified in this policy, during non-school hours and school hours, during all school-sponsored off-site activities such as field trips, competitions, travel, and overnight events. Increased vigilance is required in these less-supervised settings.

Reporting of Allegations of Inappropriate Staff and Student Relationships

- A. **Student Reporting Process** - Students who feel uncomfortable or witness inappropriate behavior are encouraged to report concerns to a trusted staff member or school counselor(**X**), or via the District's anonymous reporting tool ~~[END OPTION]~~. All reports will be treated confidentially to the extent legally possible.
- B. **Staff Required Reporting of Misconduct** - Any concerns about inappropriate staff-student conduct must be reported immediately to a supervisor, principal, or the District's Compliance Officer(s). Anonymous reports will be investigated per District harassment procedures outlined in Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment.

Mandated Reporting - Per 48.981, Wis. Stats., all staff are mandatory reporters. Suspected child abuse, including by another staff member, must be reported immediately to:

- A. a designated administrator/Title IX Coordinator; and
- B. Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement.

Immediate action is required; do not delay. More info: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/cps/process>

Violations and Consequences - Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may be reported to external agencies as required by law. The level of discipline will depend on the severity of the violation.

Policy Access - This policy will be:

- A. posted on the District's website;
- B. reviewed annually with staff; and
- C. included in new employee onboarding.

Pursuant to the laws of the State and Policy 8462 - Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, and Sexual Misconduct, each support staff member shall report to the proper legal authorities immediately any sign of suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. In addition, if there is any cause to suspect misconduct as specified in 118.07(6), Wis. Stats., as described in "Required Notification to Parents for Alleged Sexual Misconduct" in Policy 8462 - Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect, and Sexual Misconduct, each support staff member shall immediately report it to the District Administrator or their supervisor or a Title IX Coordinator.

Annual Training - Annual training is required for all employees. This training shall include identifying, preventing, and reporting grooming and professional boundary violations, appropriate content and methods of communication with students for both during and outside school hours, as well as the range of consequences for staff who violate this policy. **[DRAFTING NOTE: DISTRICTS MAY USE DPI'S ANNUAL TRAINING OR MAY DEVELOP THEIR OWN STATUTORY COMPLIANT TRAINING.]**

~~Pursuant to the laws of the State and Board Policy 8462—Child Abuse and Neglect, each support staff member shall report to the proper legal authorities immediately, any sign of suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.~~

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Legal	48.981, Wis. Stats.
	118.07(6), Wis. Stats.
	118.07(7), Wis. Stats.
	948, Wis. Stats.
	948.072, Wis. Stats.
	948.095, Wis. Stats.

Cross References

ag4213 - LIABILITY OF STAFF FOR STUDENT WELFARE

Last Modified by Ellen Suckow on June 25, 2026