

# PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES FOR STAFF CONDUCT WITH STUDENTS

ETHICS TRAINING  
SPRING SEMESTER 2014

# ***TUSD***

***“Delivering Excellence in Education Everyday”***  
***Grow....Reach....Succeed!***

# Why is this training being presented?

We have the solemn responsibility to care for and protect each child in our school district at all times.

As adults that work with children, it is important that we know the professional boundary expectations.

There are two groups of people in our school district, the adults and the children. Both groups need to be safe.

# Objectives

By the end of the presentation, the participants will have a thorough understanding of Staff Conduct with Students (GBEBB-R).


By the end of this presentation, participants will know the components of GBEBB-R and apply the regulation to varying scenarios and discussions using the PowerPoint and group dialogue so that there is consistency and clarity about the responsibilities each employee has when working with students.

# **The bottom line for today's presentation is that we all know**

- **Conduct prohibited under any circumstances**
- **Inappropriate actions and behaviors**
- **Reporting of violations**

While relationships are important and necessary when working with students, our professional responsibilities require clear protocols and standards.

# GBEBB-R: Staff Conduct with Students

 <p><b>POLICY REGULATION</b></p>	REGULATION TITLE: Staff Conduct with Students
	CODE: GBEBB-R

All employees are expected to observe and maintain professional boundaries between themselves and students. A violation of professional boundaries will be regarded as a form of misconduct in violation of Governing Board Policy GBEBB, and may result in disciplinary action.

**Conduct Prohibited Under Any Circumstance:**

- Engaging in sexual activity, a romantic relationship, or dating of a student.
- Making any sexual advance – verbal, written, or physical – towards a student.
- Showing lewd, profane or pornographic materials (pictures or words) to a student.
- Engaging in talk containing sexual innuendo or sexual banter with students or telling sexual jokes.

**Inappropriate actions and behaviors when there is no legitimate health or educational purpose:**

- Engaging in peer-like behavior with students.
- Talking to the student about the student's personal problems and becoming the student's confidante instead of referring the student to the appropriate resource that may provide the appropriate support.
- Initiating or extending contact with students beyond the school day for personal purposes.
- Using email, text-messaging, My Space, Facebook, blogs, Twitter, or chat rooms or other websites to discuss personal topics or interests with students or posting provocative or inappropriate pictures or words on any website or other medium to which students may have access.
- Being overly affectionate or "touchy" with students.
- Favoring certain students by giving them gifts, money, special privileges, or not holding them to the same standards of behavior as other students.
- Discussing with a student the employee's personal problems that would normally be discussed with adults (e.g., marital problems).

- Allowing time alone with students at inappropriate places, such as at a teacher's or student's home, a personal vehicle, a bathroom, or behind closed doors.
- When alone in a room with a student, closing the door and not maintaining open and clear visibility through windows.
- Transporting a student in the employee's personal vehicle without prior express permission of the student's parent or school administrator in cases other than a health, safety, or emergency situation.
- Taking a student on a private outing, or meeting a student at a prearranged location.
- Inviting a student to the employee's home.
- Going to the student's home when the student's parent or a proper chaperone is not present.

The foregoing is a non-exclusive list of actions that, in the absence of a legitimate health or educational purpose, will be regarded as a violation of the professional boundaries.

**Reporting of Violations of Professional Boundaries**

In accordance with Regulation GBEB, an employee shall notify a supervisor or a District representative when an employee has knowledge of unprofessional, prohibited, or criminal conduct involving an employee and/or a student. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action against the person for failure to report.

Adopted: November 9, 2012 [Friday Report]  
 Revised: November 28, 2012 [scrivener error correction only]  
 Reviewed:  
 Reviewed:

**Legal Ref:** A.R.S. 13-3620

**Cross Ref:** GBEB-R *Staff Conduct*  
 JLF *Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection*

## GBEBB-R Staff Conduct with Students

Conduct Prohibited Under Any  
Circumstance

**Any questions???**

## GBEBB-R Staff Conduct with Students

Inappropriate actions and behaviors when there is no legitimate health or educational purpose.

**Lots of questions!!**



# Professional Boundaries Training

Recognize there are gray areas when we address professional boundaries. Various factors can influence our judgment. Active communication, context and a consistent approach to the application of the regulation is important.

# Professional Boundaries Training

Let's practice.

Where is *YOUR* **Red** Flag?



# Calibrating your “Red Flag” to GBEBB-R

Look at each slide and choose the response that you think

- Crosses a professional boundary
- Violate or **MIGHT BE** a violation of GBEBB-R
- Should be brought to the attention of your supervisor or TUSD representatives

# PEER LIKE BEHAVIOR

- A. A male middle school teacher plays basket ball with students during lunch recess.
- B. A female elementary school teacher has lunch in her room with a group of 4<sup>th</sup> grade girls at least 3 times per week. They call this their “Gossip Group.”
- C. A high school monitor goes to a rock concert with a group of students.

# Adults as “electronic” friends

- A. A coach emails a reminder to team members about practice times.
  
- B. A teacher creates a class Facebook page that is linked to his and other students’ personal Facebook pages.
  
- C. An office manager ‘tweets’ about her weekend activities to colleagues and students.



# Let's talk about hugs.....

- A. A monitor hugs a first grade student who is crying after falling on the playground.
- B. A female nurse is hugging a male sixth grader in the health office with the door closed.
- C. A female high school teacher is seen in a close embrace with a male student in the parking lot after the football game.

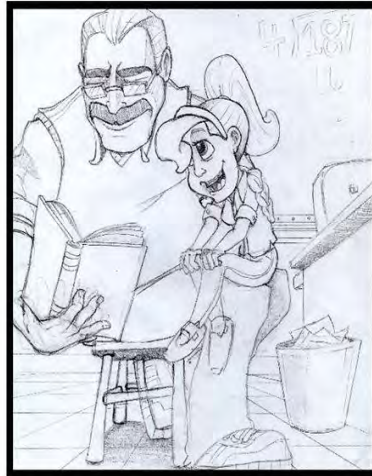


# Let's talk about touching...

- A. The yoga teacher is seen touching students while demonstrating yoga positions during class.
- B. The male art teacher is seen guiding the hand of a female student as she paints while at the same time it appears that he is pressing his body against her back.
- C. The counselor is observed with her arm around a student's shoulders while in her office with the door closed and locked. It is after school hours.



# Let's talk about lap sitting...



- A. Kindergarten students take turns sitting in the teacher's lap during reading time.
- B. Third graders can earn "lap" time with the bus monitor for good behavior on the bus.
- C. A high school student is seen sitting on a teacher's lap at the school dance.



# Want a lift?



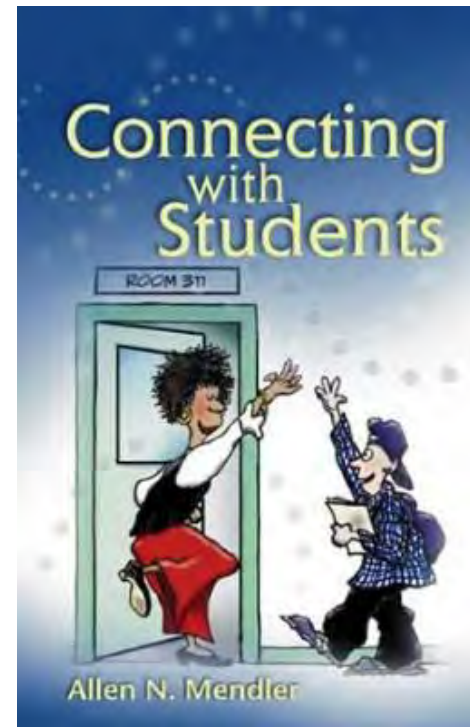
- A. An assistant principal gets parental permission to take a student who is sick home in his car because the parents do not have transportation that day. The health assistant accompanies them.
- B. A middle school teacher takes a group of students to get pizza after school.
- C. A teacher sees a student at the mall and offers him a ride.

# Where is *YOUR* red flag?

- What did you notice?
- What did you think about?
- What did you learn that you didn't know before?
- What did you learn about your boundaries?
- How did your boundaries “calibrate” with your co-workers?

# Appropriate Physical Expressions

What are examples of what this might look like?



# Professional Boundaries Training

## Reporting of Violations of Professional Boundaries

**Why???**



# Professional Boundaries Training

**WHEN UNSURE, SEEK DIRECTION**

**When in doubt, ASK!!!**

**Supervisor must be informed about  
professional boundary concerns.**

**If you wonder if you need to tell your principal  
about an incident,**

**YOU DO!**

# *Checking for understanding*

- Conduct prohibited under any circumstances
- Inappropriate actions and behaviors
- Reporting of violations
- The training on professional boundaries should be internalized by each of us, and it is a best practice to be self-introspective about how we work with students. Second, all of us have a responsibility to keep students safe and to report violations

# TUSD Professional Boundaries Committee:

- Martha Durkin
- Stacie Emert
- Frances Banales
- Marcia McCaskill
- Abel Morado
- Holly Colonna
- Maggie Leonard
- Pam Palmo

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- ❖ Maggie Leonard for her work organizing and researching this presentation.
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