

MAINTAINING PROFESSIONAL STAFF/STUDENT BOUNDARIES

The purpose of this policy is to provide all staff, students, volunteers, and community members with information to increase their awareness of their role in protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults. For purposes of this policy and its procedure, the terms “NWESD 189 staff,” “staff member(s),” and “staff” also include volunteers.

The NWESD 189 Board of Directors expects all staff members to maintain the highest professional, moral and ethical standards in their interaction with students. Staff members are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries.

The interactions and relationships between staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust, an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students in and outside of the educational setting, and consistency with the educational mission of the NWESD 189.

NWESD 189 staff will not intrude on a student’s physical and emotional boundaries unless the intrusion is necessary to serve a demonstrated educational purpose. An educational purpose is one that relates to the staff member's duties in the NWESD 189. Additionally, staff members are expected to be aware of the appearance of impropriety in their own conduct and the conduct of other staff when interacting with students. Staff members will notify and discuss issues with their program administrator or supervisor whenever they suspect or question whether their own or another staff member’s conduct is inappropriate or constitutes a violation of this policy.

The Board recognizes that staff may have familial and pre-existing social relationships with parents/guardians and students. Staff members should use appropriate professional judgement when they have a dual relationship to students to avoid violating this policy, the appearance of impropriety, and the appearance of favoritism. Staff members will pro-actively discuss these circumstances with their administrator or supervisor.

The NWESD 189 Board of Directors supports the use of technology to communicate for educational purposes. However, NWESD 189 employees are prohibited from inappropriate online socializing or from engaging in any conduct on social networking Web sites that violates the law, NWESD 189 policies or other generally recognized professional standards. Employees whose conduct violates this policy may face discipline and/or termination, consistent with the NWESD 189’s policies and acceptable use agreement, as applicable.

The Superintendent or designee will develop staff protocols for reporting and investigating allegations and develop procedures and training to accompany this policy.

First Reading: 08/24/11
Second Reading: 09/22/11
Revised: 11/16/15

Reference:
RCW 28A.400
RCW 28A.405.470
RCW 28A.405.475
RCW 28A.410.090
RCW 28A.410.095

RCW 28A.410.100

WAC 181-87

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