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Administrative Regulation

1. Purpose

The relationship of employees/volunteers with the students with whom they interact must be consistent with the responsibilities of their job and with the expectations of Carroll County Public Schools and the community we serve. Because school system employee/volunteers have responsibility for the supervision of students in their care, teachers, staff, and volunteers must assure that they maintain appropriate boundaries when interacting with students. Teachers and other staff serve as adult role models and, therefore, should be examples of appropriate behavior. Carroll County Public Schools will not tolerate any activity at any time on the part of staff/volunteers that crosses the line between employee/volunteer and student or that raises serious concern about an employee/volunteer's ability to do so. Any person who observes inappropriate behavior or events, or otherwise has reason to question a relationship between an employee/volunteer and a student, is required to bring the matter to the attention of the Principal, Director of Student Services, or the Cost Center Administrator.


This regulation also applies to CCPS staff, teachers of adult education, student teachers, and volunteers during the time the course is meeting, unless the teacher and student are married to one another. Adult education administrators shall investigate concerns in accordance with this regulation.

2. Scope

Misconduct

No employee/volunteer shall engage in any romantic or sexual relationship with a student. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to behavior that would constitute child sexual abuse, including sexual molestation or exploitation, regardless of whether the student is a minor and regardless of whether the student consents to, welcomes, or even encourages such conduct. Sexually suggestive behavior and communications that are sexual in nature also are prohibited. For example: making sexually suggestive comments or engaging in communications with a student that reveal intimate, personal information are prohibited.

No employee/volunteer shall engage in behavior or communications that is indicative of a personal, rather than job-related, relationship. For example, establishing a separate line of communication with a student for non-school-related purposes; giving personal gifts to particular students for non-school-related purposes; arranging to meet a student, on or off campus, for personal, rather than school-

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related reasons; inviting a student to join the employee for a social outing; eliciting sexual information about the student or his/her relationships with others; meeting a student alone without a reasonable, job-related explanation; or persisting in a course of conduct or communication with a student after being directed by the principal or other supervisor to cease the behavior.

3. Responsibilities


It is the responsibility of any person who believes or has reason to suspect that an employee/volunteer is engaged or has been engaged in conduct or communications with a student that is prohibited by this regulation or otherwise evidences a personal, rather than job-related, relationship with a student to bring this to the attention of the principal or appropriate supervisor. The principal or supervisor shall immediately notify the Director of Student Services who, in turn, will notify the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Elementary, Middle or High School.

The principal/supervisor or his/her designee will investigate and react to the concern in consultation with the appropriate Director of Elementary, Middle or High Schools and the Director of Human Resources during the investigation and in determining consequences, if any, for the employee/volunteer. The principal/supervisor will contact the student's parent(s) as soon as practicable (normally prior to the end of the next school day following the principal learning of the incident) to inform them of the allegation of inappropriate behavior and to seek input. In the case of adult education and students over age 21, parent contact need not occur. If the behavior could constitute child sexual abuse, then the Department of Social Services (410-386-3434) or, in cases involving physical or sexual abuse, the Maryland State Police (410-386-3000), or C.A.S.A. (410-386-3640) are the agencies that receive these reports in Carroll County as described on pages 218a through 218k of the Pupil Services Handbook, and parent contact will occur as described therein.

4. Documentation, Investigation, & Discipline

The principal, or appropriate supervisor, shall document all concerns brought that individual's attention, regardless of whether the concern is deemed to warrant a formal investigation. All investigations shall result in a report that includes the nature of the concern(s), significant dates, individuals contacted and/or interviewed, what the investigator concluded and what actions, if any, were taken as the result of the conclusions reached by the investigator.

Misconduct by an employee may result in discipline including, based on the severity, any of the following:

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- verbal reprimand
- written reprimand
- suspension with or without pay
- dismissal

Information given to the public related to disciplinary action against an employee for misconduct involving a student is to be made only by the Director of Human Resources, or his/her designee, who will maintain employee/employer and student confidentiality.

All communications regarding such concerns and any investigation shall be handled in as confidential manner as possible in order to protect the rights and privacy of all parties involved. The form on Page 216g of the Pupil Services Handbook shall be completed with copies distributed and filed as indicated on the form.

5. Notification/Training

The principal/supervisor, on no less than an annual basis, shall make the faculty and staff aware of the requirements of this regulations regarding staff and student relationships. Parents are to be informed through the Carroll County Public Schools Informational Calendar, school newsletters and/or student handbooks.