

Student/Teacher Fraternization Policy

You are an agent of Young Scholars Charter School community. Therefore, you should conduct yourself accordingly at all times, especially during interactions with students and families. In order to protect yourself and to ensure the safety of our students, use your best judgment and your discretion in the choices that you make and how you govern interpersonal relationships with students and families. Below are some guidelines for you to follow.

Communication:

- Communication can be friendly but should always reflect the student/teacher relationship and should not use words that are attributable to an adult/adult relationship.

What does this mean? It means...

- You should continue to build strong, meaningful relationships with students that are centered on supporting that student to meet their long term academic and character development goals.
- You should inform the parent/guardian and Co-Principals about your intentions to be a member of the students' out-of-school support network.
- You should be thoughtful and purposeful about the language you use in conversations with a student and always remember that you are the adult.
- You should *not* have conversations/use terms or phrases with a student that you might use in a friendship with another adult.
- You may communicate with students outside of normal school hours by phone, text, and/or e-mail in a manner consistent with the guidelines set forth above, but you should be mindful of appropriate times for and frequency of such communications based on the circumstances and at all times respect any limitations on such communications imposed by the student's parent or guardian

You should limit your out of school time communication via cellular device and email to topics related to the student's education and school work (a student's personal situation and life may at times be considered to impact the student's educational development)

Social Media

We recognize that social media has become a way to communicate and connect to people both professionally and personally. Please be mindful that there are a number of legal implications to postings on social media sites connected to our school or its students. Similarly, below are some best practices which should guide the means by which you engage in social media relative to students and YSCS.

What does this mean? It means...

- Pictures of students are not allowed on staff social media sites without prior approval as families must sign a waiver to approve dissemination of student images;
- You should use all precautions when engaging in social media with students (it is a best practice to not engage with students using social media until legal clarity has been established);
- You should not arrange out of school activities or interactions with students via social media;
- You should make every attempt to refrain from social media use in the presence of students or in common spaces where students could readily enter.

Time:

- If you spend time with a student outside of regular school hours, you must have a written, signed permission slip from his/her parent or guardian and a copy should be filed in the main office. This slip should state the out-of-school activity or interaction, as well as the intended purpose.
- It is not acceptable for students to be the primary contact with families to obtain permission for time spent outside of school with a school employee.

What does this mean? It means...

Spending time with students outside of school time can have a profound and lasting impact on the life of a student; trips to a museum or aquarium can be both educational and fun:

- You should use good judgment in selecting a venue and also in ensuring a student's family is aware and understands the nature of a visit/excursion;
- You should recognize that school can be a safe haven for students; therefore, we should respect a student's desire to stay after school. Be sure to communicate openly with school administrators and family members about a student staying after school or beyond regular school hours.
- You should *not* assume that a student has received the necessary permission; you, as the adult, should take full responsibility for informing all appropriate parties and obtaining the required permission slip.

Transportation:

- Students should not be in your vehicle at any time without written, signed permission from a parent or guardian.
- If a student is left at school or a school event and a parent or guardian requests that you bring the student home, you must obtain verbal permission and document the date, time and the person who provided permission and send to your Co-Principals.

What does this mean? It means...

- You should ensure the safety of the student comes first; if a student is stranded or has no alternative way to get to a safe place, you should support the student in safe arrival home and inform the family of your decision.
- You should be certain to document verbal permission received so you can refer to it at a later date, if necessary.

Gifts/Resources:

- Gifts from a teacher or an administrator to a student must be educational in nature or involve a component of the student's school uniform.
- Gifts valued at more than \$25 must be approved by your school leader except when a part of a school-wide initiative that has been sanctioned by the administration
- Please refrain from giving money to students.

What does this mean? It means...

- You should let a student's family know if you choose to offer a gift to a student so they understand the nature of the gift (birthday, uniform supplement, etc.).
- You should *not* purchase items for students that are outside the realm of a student/teacher relationship or might be considered more appropriate in an adult/adult relationship.
- You should be thoughtful about the magnitude of a gift you choose to give to a student and its potential impact on other students who have not received a gift.