



SUICIDE PREVENTION POLICY

The Board of Directors of The Academy of Alameda (“The Academy” or the “Charter School”) recognizes that suicide is a major cause of death among youth and should be taken seriously. To attempt to reduce suicidal behavior and its impact on students and families, the Board of Directors has developed prevention strategies and intervention procedures.

In compliance with Education Code section 215, this policy has been developed in consultation with The Academy and community stakeholders, Charter School-employed mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses), administrators, other school staff members, parents/guardians/caregivers, students, local health agencies and professionals, the county mental health plan, law enforcement, and community organizations in planning, implementing, and evaluating The Academy’s strategies for suicide prevention and intervention. The Academy must work in conjunction with local government agencies, community based organizations, and other community support to identify additional resources.

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, The Academy shall appoint an individual (or team) to serve as the suicide prevention point of contact for The Academy. The suicide prevention point of contact for The Academy and the Principal shall ensure proper coordination and consultation with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. This policy shall be reviewed and revised as indicated, at least annually in conjunction with the previously mentioned community stakeholders.

Suicide Prevention Crisis Team

To ensure the policies regarding suicide prevention are properly adopted, implemented, and updated, The Academy of Alameda created an in-house Suicide Prevention Crisis Team (“SPCT”) consisting of administrators, mental health professionals, relevant staff, parents, and middle and high school students.

The Academy of Alameda designates the following administrators to act as the primary and

secondary suicide prevention liaisons to lead the SPCT:

1. School Psychologist
2. Principal

The functions of the SPCT are to:

- Review mental health related school policies and procedures;
- Provide annual updates on school and district data and trends;
- Review and revise school prevention policies;
- Review and select general and specialized mental health and suicide prevention training;
- Review and oversee staff, parent/guardian, and student trainings;
- Ensuring the suicide prevention policy, protocols, and resources are posted on the district and school websites;
- Collaborate with community mental health organizations,
- Identify resources and agencies that provide evidence-based or evidence-informed treatment,
- Help inform and build skills among law enforcement and other relevant partners, and
- Collaborate to build community response.

A. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Academy of Alameda, along with its partners, has carefully reviewed available staff training to ensure it promotes the mental health model of suicide prevention and does not encourage the use of the stress model to explain suicide.

Training shall be provided for all school staff members. It may also be provided, when appropriate, for other adults on campus (such as substitutes and intermittent staff, volunteers, interns, tutors, coaches, and afterschool staff).

Training shall include the following:

- All suicide prevention trainings shall be offered under the direction of mental health professionals (e.g., school counselors, school psychologists, other public entity professionals, such as psychologists or social workers) who have received advanced training specific to suicide. Charter School has collaborated with Vector Solutions to review the training materials and content to ensure it is evidence-based, evidence-informed, and aligned with best practices.
- Staff training may be adjusted year-to-year based on previous professional development activities and emerging best practices.

Charter School shall ensure that training is available for new hires during the school year.

- At least annually, all staff shall receive training on the risk factors and warning signs of suicide, suicide prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention.

- At a minimum, all staff shall participate in training on the core components of suicide prevention (identification of suicide risk factors and warning signs, prevention, intervention, referral, and postvention) at the beginning of their employment or annually. Core components of the general suicide prevention training shall include:
 - Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;
 - How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;
 - How to respond appropriately to the youth who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and an immediate referral for a suicide risk assessment;
 - Emphasis on immediately referring (same day) any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide for assessment while staying under constant monitoring by staff member;
 - Emphasis on reducing stigma associated with mental illness and that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;
 - Reviewing the data annually to look for any patterns or trends of the prevalence or occurrence of suicide ideation, attempts, or death. Data from the California School Climate, Health, and Learning Survey (Cal-SCHLS) should also be analyzed to identify school climate deficits and drive program development. See the Cal-SCHLS Web site at <http://cal-schls.wested.org/>.
 - Information regarding groups of students judged by the school, and available research, to be at elevated risk for suicide. These groups include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Youth affected by suicide;
 - Youth with a history of suicide ideation or attempts;
 - Youth with disabilities, mental illness, or substance abuse disorders;
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth;
 - Youth experiencing homelessness or in out-of-home settings, such as foster care;
 - Youth who have suffered traumatic experiences

- In addition to initial orientations to the core components of suicide prevention, ongoing annual staff professional development for all staff may include the following components:
 - The impact of traumatic stress on emotional and mental health;
 - Common misconceptions about suicide;
 - Charter School and community suicide prevention resources;
 - Appropriate messaging about suicide (correct terminology, safe messaging)

- guidelines;)
- o The factors associated with suicide (risk factors, warning signs, protective factors;)
 - o How to identify youth who may be at risk of suicide;
 - o Appropriate ways to interact with a youth who is demonstrating emotional distress or is suicidal. Specifically, how to talk with a student about their thoughts of suicide and (based on The Academy of Alameda guidelines) how to respond to such thinking; how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately respond and provide support based on The Academy of Alameda guidelines;
 - o The Academy of Alameda -approved procedures for responding to suicide risk (including multi-tiered systems of support and referrals). Such procedures should emphasize that the suicidal student should be constantly supervised until a suicide risk assessment is completed;
 - o The Academy of Alameda -approved procedures for responding to the aftermath of suicidal behavior (suicidal behavior postvention;)
 - o Responding after a suicide occurs (suicide postvention;)
 - o Resources regarding youth suicide prevention;
 - o Emphasis on stigma reduction and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide;
 - o Emphasis that any student who is identified to be at risk of suicide is to be immediately referred (same day) for assessment while being constantly monitored by a staff member.

Specialized Professional Development for School-based Mental Health Staff (Screening and/or Assessment)

Additional professional development in suicide risk assessment (SRA) and crisis intervention is provided to designated student mental health professionals, including but not limited to school counselors, psychologists, social workers, administrators, and nurses employed by Charter School. Training for these staff is specific to conducting SRAs, intervening during a crisis, de-escalating situations, interventions specific to preventing suicide, making referrals, safety planning, and re-entry.

Specialized Professional Training for targeted School-based mental health staff includes the following components:

- Best practices and skill building on how to conduct an effective suicide risk screening/SRA using an evidence-based, Charter-School approved tool; Patient Health Questionnaire 9 (PHQ-9) Depression Scale; BSS Beck Scale for Suicide Ideation; National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)'s Ask Suicide-Screening Questions (ASQ) Toolkit; and the Adolescent Suicide Assessment Protocol – 20.
- Best practices on approaching and talking with a student about their thoughts of suicide and how to respond to such thinking, based on school guidelines and protocols.
- Best practices on how to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide and appropriately

- respond and provide support based on school guidelines and protocols.
- Best practices on follow up with parents/caregivers.
- Best practices on re-entry.

Virtual Screenings for Suicide Risk

Virtual suicide prevention efforts include checking in with all students, promoting access to school and community-based resources that support mental wellbeing and those that address mental illness and give specific guidance on suicide prevention.

Charter School has established a protocol for assigning school staff to connect with students during distance learning and school closures. In the event of a school closure, Charter School has determined a process and protocols to establish daily or regular contact with all students. Staff understand that any concern about a student's emotional wellbeing and/or safety must be communicated to the appropriate school staff, according to Charter School protocols.

Charter School has determined a process and protocols for school-based mental health professionals to establish regular contact with high-risk students, students who are on their caseloads, and those who are identified by staff as demonstrating need. When connecting with students, staff are directed to begin each conversation by identifying the location of the student and the availability of parents or caregivers. This practice allows for the staff member to ensure the safety of the student, particularly if they have expressed suicidal thoughts.

B. EMPLOYEE QUALIFICATIONS AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

Employees of The Academy of Alameda must act only within the authorization and scope of their credential or license. While it is expected that school professionals are able to identify suicide risk factors and warning signs, and to prevent the immediate risk of a suicidal behavior, treatment of suicidal ideation is typically beyond the scope of services offered in the school setting. In addition, treatment of the mental health challenges often associated with suicidal thinking typically requires mental health resources beyond what schools are able to provide.

C. PARENTS, GUARDIANS, AND CAREGIVERS PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION

- Parents/guardians/caregivers may be included in suicide prevention efforts. At a minimum, the Charter School shall share this Policy with parents/guardians/caregivers by notifying them where a complete copy of the policy is available.
- This Suicide Prevention Policy shall be easily accessible and prominently displayed on The Academy of Alameda website and included in the Family Handbook.
- Parents/guardians/caregivers should be invited to provide input on the development and implementation of this policy.
- Charter School shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all

parents/guardians/caregivers/families, so they are aware of how to respond to a crisis and are knowledgeable about protocols and school, community-based, and crisis resources.

- Community-based organizations that provide evidence-based suicide-specific treatments shall be highlighted on the Charter School’s website with treatment referral options marked accordingly.
- Staff autoreplies during vacations or absences shall include links to resources and phone/text numbers so parents and students have information readily available. All parents/guardians/caregivers may have access to suicide prevention training that addresses the following:
 - Suicide risk factors, warning signs, and protective factors;
 - How to talk with a student about thoughts of suicide;
 - How to respond appropriately to the student who has suicidal thoughts. Such responses shall include constant supervision of any student judged to be at risk for suicide and referral for an immediate suicide risk assessment.
 - Charter School’s referral processes and how they or their children can reach out for help, etc.

Parents/guardians/caregivers are reminded that the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) generally protects the confidentiality of student records, which may sometimes include counseling or crisis intervention records. However, FERPA’s health or safety emergency provision permits the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student’s education records, to appropriate parties, in order to address a health or safety emergency when the disclosure is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals.

D. STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND EDUCATION

Messaging about suicide has an effect on suicidal thinking and behaviors. Consequently, The Academy of Alameda along with its partners has carefully reviewed and will continue to review all materials and resources used in awareness efforts to ensure they align with best practices for safe messaging about suicide. Suicide prevention strategies may include, but not be limited to, efforts to promote a positive school climate that enhances students’ feelings of connectedness with The Academy and is characterized by caring staff and harmonious interrelationships among students.

The Academy of Alameda’s instructional and student support program shall promote the healthy mental, emotional, and social development of students including, but not limited to, the development of problem-solving skills, coping skills, and resilience. The instruction shall not use the stress model to explain suicide.

The Academy of Alameda’s instructional and/or social emotional curriculum may include information about suicide prevention, as appropriate or needed. If suicide prevention is included in the Charter School’s instructional curriculum, it shall consider the grade level and age of the students and be delivered and discussed in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of

young students. Under the supervision of an appropriately trained individual acting within the scope of their credential or license, students shall:

- Receive developmentally appropriate, student-centered education about the warning signs of mental health challenges and emotional distress;
- Receive developmentally appropriate guidance regarding The Academy's suicide prevention, intervention, and referral procedures.

The content of the education may include:

- Coping strategies for dealing with stress and trauma;
- How to recognize behaviors (warning signs) and life issues (risk factors) associated with suicide and mental health issues in oneself and others;
- Help-seeking strategies for oneself and others, including how to engage school-based and community resources and refer peers for help;
- Emphasis on reducing the stigma associated with mental illness and the fact that early prevention and intervention can drastically reduce the risk of suicide.

Student-focused suicide prevention education can be incorporated into classroom curricula (e.g., health classes, orientation classes, science, and physical education).

The Academy of Alameda will support the creation and implementation of programs and/or activities on campus that raise awareness about mental wellness and suicide prevention (e.g., Mental Health Awareness Week, Peer Counseling, Freshman Success, and National Alliance on Mental Illness on Campus High School Clubs).

Charter School maintains a list of current student trainings, which is available upon request. Charter School has shared school-based supports and self-reporting procedures, so students are able to seek help if they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or if they recognize signs with peers. Although confidentiality and privacy are important, students should understand safety is a priority and if there is a risk of suicide, school staff are required to report. Charter-based mental health professionals are legally and ethically required to report suicide risk. **When reporting suicidal ideation or an attempt, school staff must maintain confidentiality and only share information limited to the risk or attempt.**

Charter School shall establish and widely disseminate a referral process to all students, so they know how to access support through school, community-based, and crisis services. Students shall be encouraged to notify a staff member when they are experiencing emotional distress or suicidal ideation, or when they have knowledge or concerns of another student's emotional distress, suicidal ideation, or attempt.

E. INTERVENTION AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The Academy of Alameda designates the following administrators to act as the primary and secondary suicide prevention liaisons:

- School Psychologists
- School Principal
- Middle School Counselor
- ERMHS Provider

Whenever a staff member suspects or has knowledge of a student's suicidal intentions, they shall promptly notify the primary designated suicide prevention liaison. If this primary suicide prevention liaison is unavailable, the staff shall promptly notify the secondary suicide prevention liaison.

The suicide prevention liaison shall immediately notify the School Principal or designee, who shall then notify the student's parent/guardian as soon as possible if appropriate and in the best interest of the student. Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.

The suicide prevention liaison shall also refer the student to mental health resources at The Academy of Alameda or in the community.

When a student is in imminent danger (has access to a gun, is on a rooftop, or in other unsafe conditions), a call shall be made to 911. The call shall NOT be made in the presence of the student and the student shall not be left unsupervised. Staff shall NOT physically restrain or block an exit. When a suicide attempt or threat is reported on campus or at a school-related activity, the suicide prevention liaison shall, at a minimum:

1. Ensure the student's physical safety by one or more of the following, as appropriate:
 - Securing immediate medical treatment if a suicide attempt has occurred;
 - Securing law enforcement and/or other emergency assistance if a suicidal act is being actively threatened;
 - Keeping the student under continuous adult supervision until the parent/guardian and/or appropriate support agent or agency can be contacted and has the opportunity to intervene.
 - Remaining calm, keeping in mind the student is overwhelmed, confused, and emotionally distressed;
 - Moving all other students out of the immediate area;
 - Not sending the student away or leaving him/her alone, even to go to the restroom;
 - Providing comfort to the student, listening and allowing the student to talk and being comfortable with moments of silence;
 - Promising privacy and help, but not promising confidentiality.

2. Document the incident in writing as soon as feasible.
3. Follow up with the parent/guardian and student in a timely manner to provide referrals to appropriate services as needed and coordinate and consult with the county mental health plan if a referral is made for mental health or related services on behalf of a student who is a Medi-Cal beneficiary. **Determination of notification to parents/guardians/caregivers should follow a formal initial assessment to ensure that the student is not endangered by parental notification.**
4. After a referral is made, The Academy of Alameda shall verify with the parent/guardian that the follow up treatment has been accessed. Parents/guardians will be required to provide documentation of care for the student. If parents/guardians refuse or neglect to access treatment for a student who has been identified to be at risk for suicide or in emotional distress, the suicide prevention liaisons shall meet with the parent to identify barriers to treatment (e.g., cultural stigma, financial issues) and work to rectify the situation and build understanding of care. If follow up care is still not provided, The Academy of Alameda may contact Child Protective Services.
5. Provide access to counselors or other appropriate personnel to listen to and support students and staff who are directly or indirectly involved with the incident at The Academy of Alameda.
6. Provide an opportunity for all who respond to the incident to debrief, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategies used, and make recommendations for future actions.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted on The Academy of Alameda campus, the suicide prevention liaison shall follow the crisis intervention procedures contained in The Academy of Alameda's safety plan. After consultation with the Charter School Principal or designee and the student's parent/guardian about facts that may be divulged in accordance with the laws governing confidentiality of student record information, the Charter School Principal or designee may provide students, parents/guardians, and staff with information, counseling, and/or referrals to community agencies as needed. The Academy of Alameda staff may receive assistance from The Academy counselors or other mental health professionals in determining how best to discuss the suicide or attempted suicide with students.

In the event a suicide occurs or is attempted off The Academy of Alameda campus and unrelated to school activities, the School Principal or designee shall take the following steps to support the student:

1. Contact the parent/guardian and offer support to the family.
2. Discuss with the family how they would like The Academy of Alameda to respond to the attempt while minimizing widespread rumors among teachers, staff, and students.
3. Obtain permission from the parent/guardian to share information to ensure the facts regarding the crisis are correct.
4. The suicide prevention liaisons shall handle any media requests.
5. Provide care and determine appropriate support to affected students.
6. Offer to the student and parent/guardian steps for re-integration to school. Re-integration may include obtaining a written release from the parent/guardian to

Speak with any health care providers; conferring with the student and parent/guardian about any specific requests on how to handle the situation; informing the student's teachers about possible days of absences; allowing accommodations for make-up work (being understanding that missed assignments may add stress to the student;) appropriate staff maintaining ongoing contact with the student to monitor the student's actions and mood; and working with the parent/guardian to involve the student in an aftercare plan; providing parental/guardians/caregivers/families local emergency numbers for after school and weekend emergency contacts.

F. SUPPORTING STUDENTS DURING OR AFTER A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Students shall be encouraged through the education program and in the Charter School activities to notify a teacher, the Charter School Principal, another Charter School administrator, psychologist, counselor, suicide prevention liaisons, or other adult when they are experiencing thoughts of suicide or when they suspect or have knowledge of another student's suicidal intentions. The Academy staff should treat each report seriously, calmly, and with active listening and support. Staff should be non-judgmental to students and discuss with the student, and the student's parent/guardian, about additional resources to support the student.

G. RESPONDING AFTER A SUICIDE DEATH (POSTVENTION)

A death by suicide in the school community (whether by a student or staff member) can have devastating consequences on the school community, including students and staff. The Academy of Alameda shall follow the below action plan for responding to a suicide death, which incorporates both immediate and long-term steps and objectives:

The suicide prevention liaison shall:

- Coordinate with the School Principal to conduct an initial meeting of the Suicide Prevention Crisis Team to:
 - Confirm death and cause;
 - Identify a staff member to contact the deceased's family (within 24 hours;)
 - Enact the Suicide Postvention Response;
 - Notify all staff members (ideally in-person or via phone, not via e-mail or mass notification).
- Coordinate an all-staff meeting, to include:
 - Notification (if not already conducted) to staff about suicide death;
 - Emotional support and resources available to staff;
 - Notification to students about suicide death and the availability of support services (if this is the protocol that is decided by administration;)
 - Share information that is relevant and that which you have permission to disclose.

- Prepare staff to respond to needs of students regarding the following:
 - Review of protocols for referring students for support/assessment;
 - Talking points for staff to notify students;
 - Resources available to students (on and off campus).
- Identify students significantly affected by suicide death and other students at risk of imitative behavior; and refer them to a school-based mental health professional.
- Identify students affected by suicide death but not at risk of imitative behavior;
- Communicate with the larger school community about the suicide death; Staff shall not share explicit, graphic, or dramatic content, including the manner of death.
- Consider funeral arrangements for family and school community;
- Respond to memorial requests in respectful and non-harmful manner; responses should be handled in a thoughtful way and their impact on other students should be considered.
- Identify media spokesperson if needed.

- Ensure that all communications, documents, materials related to messaging about suicide avoid discussing details about method of suicide, avoid oversimplifying (i.e., identifying singular cause of suicide), avoid sensational language, and only includes clear, respectful, people-first language that encourages an environment free of stigma. As part of safe messaging for suicide, we use specific terminology when referring to actions related to suicide or suicidal behavior:

Use	Do Not Use
<p>“Died by suicide” or “Took their own life”</p>	<p>“Committed suicide” Note: Use of the word “commit” can imply crime/sin</p>
<p>“Attempted suicide”</p>	<p>“Successful” or “unsuccessful” Note: There is no success, or lack of success, when dealing with suicide</p>

- Include long-term suicide postvention responses:
 - a. Consider important dates (i.e., anniversary of death, deceased birthday, graduation, or other significant event) and how these will be addressed.
 - b. Support siblings, close friends, teachers, and/or students of the deceased.
 - c. Consider long-term memorials and how they may impact students who are emotionally vulnerable and at risk of suicide.

Student Identification Cards

Charter School will include the telephone numbers on all student identification cards:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/Suicide Crisis Lifeline:
 - Call or Text “988”
 - Call 1-800-273-8255
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: Call 1-800-799-7233
- Crisis Text Line: Text “HOME” to 741741
- Teen Line: Text “TEEN” to 839863
- Trevor Project: Text “START” to 678678
- Trans Lifeline: 1-877-565-8860
- Local suicide prevention hotline:
 - Crisis support services of alameda county: 1-800-309-2131

Professional Boundaries: Staff/Student Interaction Policy

AoA recognizes its responsibility to make and enforce all rules and regulations governing student and employee behavior to bring about the safest and most learning-conducive environment possible.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of, or willfully causing the infliction of, physical pain on a student,

For purposes of this policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee’s use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to property.

For clarification purposes, the following examples are offered for direction and guidance of School personnel:

- A. Examples of PERMITTED actions (NOT corporal punishment)
 - a. Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
 - b. Preventing a pupil from committing an act of vandalism;
 - c. Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
 - d. Forcing a pupil to give up a weapon or dangerous object;
 - e. Requiring an athletic team to participate in strenuous physical training activities designed to strengthen or condition team members or improve their coordination, agility, or physical skills;
 - f. Engaging in group calisthenics, team drills, or other physical education or voluntary recreational activities.

- B. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)
 - a. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;

- b. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;
 - c. Paddling, swatting slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain;
 - d. Taping or use of any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior.
- C. Examples of PROHIBITED actions (corporal punishment)
- a. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;
 - b. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;
 - c. Paddling, swatting slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain;
 - d. Taping or use of any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behavior.

Staff-Student Interactions

While the use of appropriate touching is part of daily life and is important for student development, teachers and other staff members must ensure that they do not exceed appropriate behavior. If a child or other staff member specifically requests that they not be touched, then that request must be honored without question.

Boundaries Defined

For the purposes of this policy, the term “boundaries” is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members while interacting with a student. Trespassing beyond the boundaries of a student-teacher relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviors

This policy is intended to guide all School faculty and staff in conducting themselves in a way that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of school employees and to specify the boundaries between students and staff.

Although this policy gives specific, clear direction, it is each staff member’s obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents, students, colleagues, or school leaders. One viable standard that can be quickly applied, when you are unsure if certain conduct is acceptable, is to ask yourself, “Would I be engaged in this conduct if my family or colleagues were standing next to me?”

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member’s point-of-view but could be perceived as flirtation or sexual insinuation from the perspective of students or parents. There is no single reasonable person standard. The purpose of the following lists of unacceptable and acceptable behaviors is not to restrain innocent, positive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to or may be perceived as inappropriate, or sexual misconduct, or “grooming.” Grooming is defined as an act or series of acts by a sexual predator

to gain physical and/or emotional control by gaining trust (of staff and/or family and a minor) and desensitizing the minor to various forms of touching and other intimate interaction.

Staff members must understand their own responsibilities for ensuring that they do not cross the boundaries as written in this policy. Violations could subject the teacher or staff member to discipline up to and including termination. *Disagreeing with the wording or intent of these established boundaries will be considered irrelevant for any required disciplinary purposes.* Thus, it is critical that all employees study this policy thoroughly and apply its spirit and intent in their daily activities.

Unacceptable Behaviors

These lists (and any subsequent lists) are not meant to be all-inclusive, but rather, illustrative of the types of behavior intended to be addressed by this policy.

1. Giving gifts of a personal and intimate nature (including photographs) to a student; or items such as money, food, outings, electronics, etc. without the written pre-approval of the Principal. It is recommended that any such gifts be pre-approved by the Principal
2. Kissing of ANY kind
3. Massage [Note: Permitted in athletics only if provided by massage therapist or other certified professional in an open public location. Coaches may not perform massage or rub-down. Permitted in special education only as instructed under an IEP or 504 Plan.
4. Full frontal or rear hugs and lengthy embraces
5. Sitting students on one's lap (grades 3 and above)
6. Touching buttocks, thighs, chest or genital area
7. Wrestling with students or other staff member except in the context of a formal wrestling program
8. Tickling or piggyback rides
9. Any form of sexual contact
10. Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private situation
11. Intentionally being alone with a student away from school
12. Furnishing alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs - or failing to report knowledge of such
13. "Dating" or "going out with" a student
14. Remarks about physical attributes or physiological development of anyone. This includes comments such as "Looking fine!" or "Check out that [body part]."
15. Taking or requesting photographs or videos of students for personal use or posting online
16. Either partially or fully undressing in front of a student or asking a student to undress, with the intent to view/expose private body parts
17. Leaving campus alone with a student for lunch
18. Sharing a bed, mat, or sleeping bag with a student
19. Making, or participating in, sexually inappropriate comments
20. Sexual jokes, or jokes/comments with sexual overtones or double-entendres
21. Seeking emotional involvement (which can include intimate attachment) with a

- student beyond the normative care and concern required of an educator.
22. Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented
 23. Discussing your personal troubles or intimate issues with a student
 24. Becoming too involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior
 25. Giving students a ride to/from school or school activities without the express, advance written permission of the Principal and the student's parent or legal guardian
 26. Being alone in a room with a student at school with the door closed and/or windows blocked from view
 27. Allowing students at your home and/or in rooms within your home without signed parental permission for a pre-planned and pre-communicated educational activity which must include another educator, parent, or designated school volunteer
 28. Staff mirroring the immature behavior of minors

Sending emails, text messages, social media responses, making phone calls, or sending notes or letters to students if the content is not about school activities. Communication via private social media accounts is not acceptable.

This policy does not prevent: 1) touching a student for the purpose of guiding them along a physical path; 2) helping them up after a fall; or 3) engaging in a rescue or the application of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) or other emergency first-aid. Nor does it prohibit the use of reasonable force and touching in self-defense or in the defense of another. Restraining a child who is trying to engage in violent or inappropriate behavior is also allowed in compliance with the School's Limitations on Restraint and Seclusion Policy. Only such force as necessary to defend oneself, another person, or the child or to protect property is legally permitted. Excessive force is prohibited.

Acceptable Behaviors

1. Pats on the shoulder or back
2. Handshakes
3. "High-fives" and hand slapping
4. Touching face to check temperature, wipe away a tear, remove hair from face, or other similar types of contact
5. Holding hands while walking with small children or children with significant disabilities
6. Assisting with toileting of small or disabled children in view of another staff member
7. Touch required under an IEP or a 504 Plan
8. Reasonable restraint of a violent person to protect self, others, or property
9. Obtaining formal written pre-approval from the Principal to take students off school property for activities such as field trips or competitions, including parent's written permission and waiver form for any sponsored after-school activity whether on or off-campus
10. Emails, text-messages, phone conversations, and other communications to and with students, if permitted, must be professional and pertain to School activities or classes (communication should be initiated via transparent [non-private] School-based

- technology and equipment)
11. Keeping the door wide open when alone with a student
 12. Keeping reasonable and appropriate space between you and the student
 13. Stopping and correcting students if they cross your own personal boundaries, including touching legs, or buttocks, frontal hugs, kissing, or caressing
 14. Keeping parents informed when a significant issue develops about a student, such as a change in demeanor or uncharacteristic behavior
 15. Keeping after-class discussions with a student professional and brief
 16. Immediately asking for advice from senior staff or administration if you find yourself in a difficult situation related to boundaries
 17. Involving your direct supervisor in discussion about boundaries situations that have the potential to become more severe (including but not limited to grooming or other red flag behaviors observed in colleagues, written material that is disturbing, or a student's fixation on an adult)
 18. Making detailed notes about an incident that in your best judgement could evolve into a more serious situation later
 19. Recognizing the responsibility to stop "Unacceptable Behaviors" of students and/or co-workers
 20. Asking another staff member to be present, or within close supervisory distance, when you must be alone with a student after regular school hours
 21. Prioritizing professional behavior during all moments of student contact
 22. *Asking yourself if any of your actions, which could be contrary to these provisions, are worth sacrificing your job and career*

Duty to Report Suspected Misconduct

When any staff member, parent, or student becomes aware of a staff member (or volunteer, guest, vendor) having crossed the boundaries specified in this policy, or has a strong suspicion of "grooming behavior," they must immediately report the matter to human resources. "Grooming behavior" is an attempt to build an emotional and/or physical connection with a minor to gain their trust for the purpose of sexual abuse. "Suspicion" means something perceived in spite of inconclusive or slight evidence. It is based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a violation of the boundaries policy occurred. Prompt reporting of "unacceptable behaviors" observed in adult interactions with minors is essential to protect students, staff, any witnesses, and the school as a whole. All reports shall be as confidential as possible under the circumstances. It is the duty of the administrator to investigate and thoroughly report the situation. When observant staff members call attention to a boundary violation(s), the likelihood of harm is greatly reduced. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness or concern of student behavior that crosses boundaries or where a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

Consequences

Staff members who have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, and where appropriate, will be reported to law enforcement and other authorities for potential legal action.