

EMPLOYEE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

DH  
(LOCAL)

Each District employee shall perform his or her duties in accordance with state and federal law, District policy, and ethical standards. The District holds all employees accountable to the Educators' Code of Ethics. [See DH(EXHIBIT)] Further, each District employee is responsible for ensuring his or her conduct is aligned with and supportive of the Board's Core Beliefs and Commitments. [See AE]

Each District employee shall recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community and shall work cooperatively with others to fulfill the District's mission and uphold the Board's Core Beliefs and Commitments. Also, each District employee shall treat others with dignity and respect while serving the best interests of the District.

An employee wishing to express concern, complaints, or criticism shall do so through appropriate channels. [See DGBA]

**Violations of  
Standards of  
Conduct**

Each employee shall comply with the standards of conduct set out in this policy and with any other policies, regulations, and guidelines that impose duties, requirements, or standards attendant to his or her status as a District employee. Violation of any policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. [See DCD and DF series]

**Weapons Prohibited**

The District prohibits the use, possession, or display of any firearm, location-restricted knife, club, or prohibited weapon, as defined at FNCG, on District property at all times.

**Exceptions**

No violation of this policy occurs when:

1. Use or possession of a firearm by a specific employee is authorized by Board action. [See CKE]
2. A District employee who holds a Texas handgun license stores a handgun or other firearm in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area provided by the District, provided the handgun or other firearm is not loaded and not in plain view; or
3. The use, possession, or display of an otherwise prohibited weapon takes place as part of a District-approved activity supervised by proper authorities. [See FOD]

**Fraud Awareness**

Each employee shall be responsible for the detection, prevention, and reporting of fraud, misappropriations, and other irregularities. Each employee shall be familiar with the types of improprieties that might occur within his or her area of responsibility and shall be alert for any indication of irregularity. [See CAA]

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| Ethics Hotline                                       | <p>To facilitate reporting of suspected violations, especially in those situations where the reporting individual wishes to remain anonymous, the District has established a telephone/web reporting hotline. The District's Ethics hotline is operated by an independent third party who shall report all incidents directly to designated members of the Legal and Human Resources departments immediately after receiving notice of a concern. The reports shall be reviewed in collaboration with the Board's internal auditor.</p> <p>Individuals may submit an incident report of suspected violations by calling the number to the Ethics hotline or by accessing the link provided on the District's website.</p>                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Duties During a District Investigation</b>        | <p>In the event of a District investigation or inquiry, each District employee has an affirmative duty to provide to his or her supervisor(s), or any other District official assigned to investigate, all relevant and factual information about matters inquired. An employee who fails to volunteer such information shall receive a directive from an administrator to provide a statement. An employee's failure to comply with such a directive constitutes insubordination, a violation that shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Electronic Recording</b>                          | <p>No employee shall electronically record by audio, video, or other means any conversations or meetings unless each and every person present has been notified of being electronically recorded. Persons wishing to record a meeting must notify anyone arriving late to any such meeting that the meeting is being recorded. An employee shall not electronically record a telephone conversation unless all persons participating in the telephone conversation have been notified of being electronically recorded. These provisions are not intended to limit or restrict electronic recording of publicly posted Board meetings, grievance hearings, and any other Board-sanctioned meeting recorded in accordance with Board policy. These provisions are not intended to limit or restrict electronic recordings involving authorized investigations conducted by District personnel.</p> |
| <b>Electronic Communication</b><br>Use with Students | <p>A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the Superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communication, as this term is defined by law, to communicate with currently enrolled students only about matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities.</p> <p>Unless an exception has been made in accordance with the employee handbook or other administrative regulations, an employee shall not use a personal electronic communication platform, application, or account to communicate with currently enrolled students.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

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Unless authorized above, all other employees are prohibited from using electronic communication directly with students who are currently enrolled in the District. The employee handbook or other administrative regulations shall further detail:

1. Exceptions for family and social relationships;
2. The circumstances under which an employee may use text messaging to communicate with students or student groups;
3. Hours of the day during which electronic communication is discouraged or prohibited; and
4. Other matters deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee.

In accordance with ethical standards applicable to all District employees [see DH(EXHIBIT)], an employee shall be prohibited from using electronic communications in a manner that constitutes prohibited harassment or abuse of a District student; adversely affects the student's learning, mental health, or safety; includes threats of violence against the student; reveals confidential information about the student; or constitutes an inappropriate communication with a student, as described in the Educators' Code of Ethics.

An employee shall have no expectation of privacy in electronic communications with students. Each employee shall comply with the District's requirements for records retention and destruction to the extent those requirements apply to electronic communication. [See CPC]

Personal Use

All employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic communication as for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media violates state or federal law or District policy, or interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate for the content.

Reporting Improper Communication

In accordance with administrative regulations, an employee shall notify his or her supervisor when a student engages in improper electronic communication with the employee.

Disclosing Personal Information

An employee shall not be required to disclose his or her personal email address or personal phone number to a student.

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| Employee Use of Electronic Communication Devices         | <p>An employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, picture messages, or video messages to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor and does not interfere with or impact the employee's job performance. An emergency shall be defined as a circumstance that is threatening to one's life or safety that warrants immediate action.</p>                                                                     |
| <b>Harassment or Abuse</b>                               | <p>An employee shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Other employees. [See DIA]</li><li>2. Students. [See FFH; see FFG regarding child abuse and neglect.]</li></ol> <p>While acting in the course of employment, an employee shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other persons, including Board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents.</p> <p>An employee shall report child abuse or neglect as required by law. [See FFG]</p> |
| <b>Relationships with Students</b>                       | <p>An employee shall not form romantic or other inappropriate social relationships with students as detailed in DH(EXHIBIT). Further, an employee shall not solicit or engage in romantic or sexual contact with a student or minor. Any sexual relationship between a student and a District employee is always prohibited, even if consensual. [See DH(EXHIBIT), FFH]</p> <p>As required by law, the District shall notify the parent of a student with whom an educator is alleged to have engaged in certain misconduct. [See FFF]</p>                                 |
| <b>Tobacco and E-Cigarettes</b>                          | <p>An employee shall not smoke or use tobacco products or e-cigarettes on District property, in District vehicles, or at school-related activities. [See also GKA]</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Alcohol and Drugs / Notice of Drug-Free Workplace</b> | <p>As a condition of employment, an employee shall abide by the terms of the following drug-free workplace provisions. An employee shall notify the Superintendent in writing if the employee is convicted for a violation of a criminal drug statute occurring in the workplace in accordance with Arrests, Indictments, Convictions, and Other Adjudications, below.</p> <p>An employee shall not manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, use, or be under the influence of any of the following substances</p>                                                      |

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during working hours while on District property or at school-related activities during or outside of usual working hours:

1. Any controlled substance or dangerous drug as defined by law, including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, hallucinogen, stimulant, depressant, amphetamine, or barbiturate.
2. Alcohol or any alcoholic beverage.
3. Any abusable glue, aerosol paint, or any other chemical substance for inhalation.
4. Any other intoxicant or mood-changing, mind-altering, or behavior-altering drug.

An employee need not be legally intoxicated to be considered "under the influence" of a controlled substance.

Exceptions

It shall not be considered a violation of this policy if the employee:

1. Manufactures, possesses, or dispenses a substance listed above as part of the employee's job responsibilities;
2. Uses or possesses a controlled substance or drug authorized by a licensed physician prescribed for the employee's personal use; or
3. Possesses a controlled substance or drug that a licensed physician has prescribed for the employee's child or other individual for whom the employee is a legal guardian.

Sanctions

An employee who violates these drug-free schools provisions shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Sanctions may include:

1. Referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs;
2. Referral to employee assistance programs;
3. Termination from employment with the District; and
4. Referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution.

Notice

Employees shall receive a copy of this policy.

**Arrests, Indictments,  
Convictions, and  
Other Adjudications**

An employee shall report to the Legal Services department in writing within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of the employee for any felony, any offense involving moral turpitude, and any of the other offenses as indicated below:

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1. Crimes involving school property or funds;
2. Crimes involving attempt by fraudulent or unauthorized means to obtain or alter any certificate or permit that would entitle any person to hold or obtain a position as an educator;
3. Crimes that occur wholly or in part on school property or at a school-sponsored activity;
4. Acts constituting abuse or neglect under the Texas Family Code;
5. Acts constituting public intoxication, operating a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol, or disorderly conduct; or
6. Crimes involving moral turpitude, which include:
  - Dishonesty; fraud; deceit; theft; misrepresentation;
  - Deliberate violence;
  - Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor;
  - Felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance defined in Chapter 481 of the Health and Safety Code; or
  - Felony driving while intoxicated (DWI).

Exception                      The requirement to report a conviction or deferred adjudication shall not apply to minor traffic offenses.

Consideration                Being convicted of or receiving adjudication for a crime shall not be an automatic basis for termination. The District shall consider the following factors in determining what action, if any, should be taken against an employee who receives deferred adjudication or is convicted of a crime during employment with the District:

1. The nature of the offense.
2. The date of the offense.
3. The relationship between the offense and the position to which the employee is assigned.

**Safety Requirements**      Each employee shall adhere to District safety rules and regulations and shall report unsafe conditions or practices to the appropriate supervisor.

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**Dress and Grooming**

An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in accordance with any additional standards established by his or her supervisor.

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**Note:** Adopted following an expedited process to maintain compliance with the law and regulations, and without the policy committee's full review.

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