

### **Employee Code of Professional Conduct - SASED**

All Cooperative employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others. In addition, the [\*Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators\*](#), adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated into this Code of Professional Conduct. Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act* (325 ILCS 5/1 et seq.), engages in grooming as defined by 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

#### **Standards and Expectations Related to School Employee-Student Conduct**

1. All employee conduct must comply with the [\*Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators\*](#), adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, to the extent applicable.
2. Prohibited grooming behaviors and “sexual misconduct” include, but are not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic or physical activity, by an employee or agent of the school with direct student contact with a student that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Such an act includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. A sexual or romantic invitation;
  - b. Dating or soliciting a date;
  - c. Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialogue;
  - d. Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student;
  - e. Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature;
  - f. A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with a student.
3. Employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and appropriate boundaries with students.

##### **a. Communications with Students**

Employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students, including but not limited to, emails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, social media, and conversations that include any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and inappropriate between an employee and student. Employees must use a school provided or supported method to communicate with students whenever possible and are prohibited from using personal email, text messaging, direct messaging or other forms of communication that are similar in nature.

##### **b. Transportation of Students**

Employees are not permitted to transport students in their privately owned vehicles,

unless they have obtained the prior permission of Cooperative administration. Transportation of students in cooperative vehicles requires approval of administration and ideally should include at least three people.

c. Photographs of Students

Employees are prohibited from taking or possessing photos of a student on their personal devices. Student pictures, assuming parents have not opted out of photos, for school-sponsored activities used in furtherance of the school's educational mission are permitted. Employees should delete student photos from their personal device once photos have been posted and/or sent in furtherance of the school's educational mission.

d. Contact with Students

Employees are prohibited from meeting or contacting a student outside of their professional role. Some exceptions would be for situations where there is another established appropriate relationship (i.e. religious ed teacher, cub scout master, family relationship, etc). Employees are expected to avoid situations which could result in an actual or perceived inappropriate relationship between the employee and the student.

4. Employees are mandated reporters and required to comply with all reporting requirements of the *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act* (325 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.*) and *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972* (20 U.S.C. § 1681 *et seq.*) and related Board policies, including Board Policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*, and Board Policy 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*.

5. Employees, students, parents, and any third party can report prohibited behaviors, including prohibited grooming and sexual misconduct, and/or boundary violations pursuant to Board Policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure* and Board Policy 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*, or to any Cooperative or school administrator or staff member to whom the person feels comfortable reporting.

6. Employees are required to complete training related to educator ethics, mandated reporting, child abuse, grooming behaviors, and boundary violations as required by law.

7. Employees who violate this Code of Professional Conduct or who fail to report a violation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

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