

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

DATING AND SEXUAL RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES, INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS, AND VOLUNTEERS

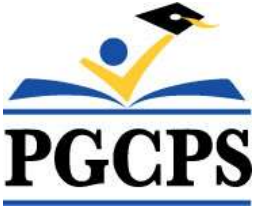
4218

Procedure No.

October 9, 2023

Date

- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this administrative procedure is to state a clear prohibition against dating and sexual relations between **employees, independent contractors, vendors, contractors'/vendors employees, volunteers and students**. As provided below, this administrative procedure provides a framework of the types of conduct that are deemed inappropriate with students; an opportunity for employees, volunteers and contractors to recognize and correct problematic behavior; and consequences for failing to do so.
- II. **POLICY:** Employees, independent contractors and volunteers in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) are expected to maintain courteous and professional relationships with students. They have a responsibility to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through the maintenance of physical and emotional boundaries with students. These boundaries must be maintained regardless of the student's age, the student's enrollment in PGCPS, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship, the location of the activity or whether the employee directly supervises the student. (Board Policy 4400)
- III. **DEFINITIONS:**
- A. *Date or dating* – Includes, but is not limited to, a social appointment, engagement, or occasion (pre-planned or not) between an employee, contractor or volunteer and a student where the purpose is to initiate or continue an intimate relationship for personal pleasure or sexual relations.
- B. *Employee* – For the purposes of this administrative procedure, an employee shall be permanent and temporary workers employed by PGCPS, substitute teachers, independent contractors and vendors, contractors' and vendors' employees and volunteers.
- C. *Sexual relations* – Include, but are not limited to, sexual contact or conduct, in person or through communication, including electronic, occurring between or involving two or more persons. Examples include:
1. touching or fondling;
 2. kissing;



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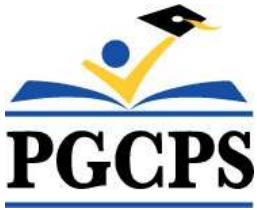
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3. phone calls, written communications, including electronic and social media (including, but not limited to, letters, notes, e-mails, text messages, social media posts), or visual media of an intimate or sexual nature;
 4. allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging in obscene or pornographic discussion (oral or written), display, films, poses, similar activity, or photography;
 5. accepting or giving gifts of a sexual or intimate nature;
 6. any filming or depiction of a child as prohibited by law;
 7. communications that include intentional sexual innuendoes;
 8. any kind of sexual penetration, sexual molestation, or sexual exploitation;
 9. sexual intercourse;
 10. rape or sexual offense in any degree;
 11. allowing or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution; and
 12. any other conduct that is specifically prohibited by law.
- D. *Student* – Includes a *student* who currently attends PGCPS and a *student* who attends any other elementary or secondary school system.

IV. PROCEDURES:

- A. PGCPS employees shall not date or have sexual relations with any student, regardless of whether the student is enrolled in PGCPS or another school system.
- B. These boundaries must be maintained regardless of the student's age, the student's enrollment in PGCPS or another school system, the perceived consensual nature of the relationship, the location of the activity or whether the employee directly supervises the student.
- C. Training



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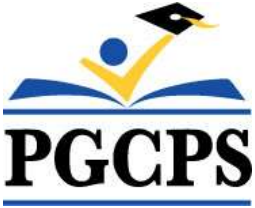
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1. Prior to the beginning of each school year, all PGCPS employees will complete the SafeSchools training module that addresses this administrative procedure.
2. Additionally, school principals shall review this administrative procedure with employees mid-year of each school year.
3. The Division of Human Resources will review this administrative procedure as part of the on-boarding process for newly hired employees.

D. Enforcement

1. A violation of this administrative procedure will result in disciplinary action, which may include written reprimand, suspension, or dismissal. Additionally, a violation of this administrative procedure will result in notification to Child Protective Services (CPS), and the local police as appropriate and a request may be made to the Maryland State Department of Education to suspend or revoke the employee's professional certificate, if applicable.
2. Any employee who possesses knowledge or evidence of possible violations of this administrative procedure must immediately inform their supervisor, school principal or appropriate school administrator. The employee is not required to inform their supervisor, school principal or appropriate school administrator about reporting suspected abuse to CPS.
3. All employees who have reason to suspect child sexual abuse shall immediately report the suspected abuse to CPS in accordance with Administrative Procedure 5145. Employees shall be disciplined for failing to make such reports.
4. Employees are prohibited from providing a recommendation of employment for an individual or contractor that the employee, school or school system knows or has probable cause to believe, has engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or minor in violation of the law.

V. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:



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- A. The Office of Government Relations, Compliance, and Procedures (OGRCP) will track and monitor employees’ completion of SafeSchools modules.
- B. OGRCP will monitor principals’ mid-year review of this administrative procedure.
- C. The Division of Human Resources will ensure that this administrative procedure is reviewed as part of the onboarding process for new employees.

VI. RELATED POLICY AND PROCEDURES:

Board Policy 4400 - Inappropriate Relationships between Students and Employees, Volunteers and Contractors
 Administrative Procedure 4219 - Inappropriate Interactions Among Students and Employees, Independent Contractors and Volunteers
 Administrative Procedure 5145 - Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

VII. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THIS ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

This administrative procedure originates with the Employee and Labor Relations Office (ELRO) and will be updated as needed.

VIII. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES: This administrative procedure supersedes the version dated August 27, 2018.

IX. EFFECTIVE DATE: October 9, 2023