

CONDUCT AND DRESS

The board of education expects staff conduct to be that of appropriate role models for pupils.

The board expects all staff members to be neatly groomed and dressed in clothing suitable for the subject of instruction, the work being performed, or the occasion.

The board retains the authority to specify the following dress and grooming guidelines for staff, within law, that will prevent such matters from having an adverse impact on the educational process. All staff members shall, when assigned to district duty:

- A. Be physically clean, neat and well groomed;
- B. Dress in a manner reflecting their assignments;
- C. Dress in a manner that does not cause damage to district property;
- D. Dress and be groomed in such a way so as not to cause a health or safety hazard.

If a staff member feels that an exception to this policy would enable him/her to carry out assigned duties more effectively, a request shall be made to the chief school administrator.

Unbecoming Conduct

When an employee, either within the school or outside normal duties, creates conditions under which the proper operation of the school is affected, the board upon recommendation of the chief school administrator and in accordance with statute shall determine whether such acts or lack of actions constitute conduct unbecoming a school employee, and if so, will proceed against the employee in accordance with law.

Unbecoming conduct sufficient to warrant board review may result from a single flagrant incident or from a series of incidents.

The Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of all pupils within this school district. Furthermore, the Board recognizes there exists a professional responsibility for all school staff to protect a pupil's health, safety and welfare. The Board strongly believes that school staff members have the public's trust and confidence to protect the well-being of all pupils attending the school district.

In support of this Board's strong commitment to the public's trust and confidence of school staff, the Board of Education holds all school staff to the highest level of professional responsibility in their conduct with all pupils. Inappropriate conduct and conduct unbecoming a school staff member will not be tolerated in this school district.

The Board recognizes and appreciates the staff-pupil professional relationship that exists in a school district's educational environment. This Policy has been developed and adopted by this Board to provide guidance and direction to avoid actual and/or the appearance of inappropriate staff conduct and conduct unbecoming a school staff member toward pupils.

School staff's conduct in completing their professional responsibilities shall be appropriate at all times. School staff shall not make inappropriate comments to pupils or about pupils and shall not engage in inappropriate language or expression in the presence of pupils. School staff shall not engage in inappropriate conduct toward or with pupils.

School staff shall not engage or seek to be in the presence of a pupil beyond the staff member's professional responsibilities. School staff shall not provide transportation to a pupil in their private vehicle or permit a pupil into their private vehicle unless there is an emergency or a special circumstance that has been approved in advance by the Building Principal/immediate supervisor and the parent/legal guardian.

A school staff member is always expected to maintain a professional relationship with pupils and protect the health, safety and welfare of school pupils. A staff member's conduct will be held to the professional standards established by the New Jersey State Board of Education and the New Jersey Commissioner of Education. Inappropriate conduct or conduct unbecoming a staff member may also include conduct not specifically listed in this Policy, but conduct determined by the New Jersey State Board of Education, the New Jersey Commissioner of Education and/or appropriate courts to be inappropriate or conduct unbecoming a school staff member.

School personnel, compensated and uncompensated (volunteers), are required to report to their immediate supervisor or Building Principal any possible violations of this Policy. In the event the report alleges conduct by the Building Principal or the immediate supervisor, the school staff member may report directly to the Building Principal. In addition, school personnel having reasonable cause to believe a pupil has been subjected to child abuse or neglect or acts of child abuse or neglect as defined under N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.10 are required to immediately report to the Division of Youth and Family Services in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 et seq. and inform the Building Principal or immediate supervisor after making such report. However, notice to the Building Principal or designee need not be given when the school staff member believes such notice would likely endanger the referrer or child(ren) involved or when the staff member believes that such disclosure would likely result in retaliation against the child or in discrimination against the referrer with respect to his/her employment.

Reports may be made in writing or with verbal notification. The immediate supervisor will notify the Building Principal of all reports, including anonymous reports. The Building Principal will investigate all reports with a final report to the Superintendent of Schools. The Building Principal upon reviewing an initial report or the Superintendent, upon reviewing the Building Principal's investigation report, may take such appropriate action as necessary and as provided for in the law. This may include, but is not limited to, notifying law enforcement, notifying the Division of Youth and Family Services in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2 et seq., and/or any other measure provided for in the law.

Arrest Reporting Requirements for Certificated Staff. N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.1(c), a new subsection, requires that certificate holders report to their superintendent within 14 days if they are arrested or indicted for any crime or offense by any jurisdiction, and to report within seven days the final disposition of such charges. In addition, this proposed new section would require school districts to make the reporting requirements known to certificate holders. The new subsection reads as follows:

(c) All certificate holders shall report their arrest or indictment for any crime or offense to their superintendent within 14 calendar days. The report shall include the date of arrest or indictment and charge(s) lodged against the certificate holder. Such certificate holders shall also report to their superintendents the disposition of any charges within seven calendar days of disposition. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may be deemed "just cause" pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5. School districts shall make these requirements known to all new employees and to all employees on an annual basis.

This Policy will be distributed to all school staff and provided to staff members at anytime, upon request.

Review/ Update and Adoption: August 16, 2007

Revised and Readopted: January 8, 2009

Review Date: December 29, 2010 – No Changes

Legal References: N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.1(c), Arrest reporting requirements of certificated staff
N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.2 Notification of outside agencies, police, DYFS

N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5 Grounds for revocation and suspension of certification
N.J.S.A. 18A:6-10 Dismissal and reduction in compensation of persons under
tenure in public school system

N.J.S.A. 18A:11-1 General mandatory powers and duties
N.J.S.A. 18A:28-5 et seq. Tenure of teaching staff members
N.J.S.A. 18A:27-4 Power of boards of education to make rules governing
employment of teacher, etc., employment thereunder

N.J.S.A. 18A:54-20 Powers of board (county vocational schools)

Hicks v. Pemberton Bd. of Ed., 1975 S.L.D. 332

Quiroli v. Linwood Bd. of Ed., 1974 S.L.D. 1035

Carlstadt Teachers Ass'n v. Carlstadt Bd. of Ed., App. Div., unreported decision
(docket no. A-1469-80-T4, decided March 26, 1982), 1982 S.L.D. 1448

Possible

Cross References:

4117.52 Dismissal/ Suspension
4119.2 Responsibilities
4119.21 Conflict of interest
4119.23 Employee substance abuse
4119.24 Staff/pupil relations
4138 Non-school employment
4138.2 Private tutoring
6144 Controversial issues
Social Networking Websites regulation

Key Words

Employee Conduct, Employee Dress