



RESOLUTION NO.: 2019.047 – REVISED 5/22/2026

GREAT VALLEY STAFF/STUDENT INTERACTION POLICY

Great Valley Academy (GVA) recognizes its responsibility to establish and enforce rules, regulations, and professional standards governing student, employee, volunteer, contractor, vendor, and visitor conduct in order to maintain safe, supportive, respectful, and learning-conducive environments for all students.

GVA is committed to maintaining safe and appropriately supervised learning environments that protect students from abuse, neglect, exploitation, misconduct, and inappropriate relationships. This policy establishes professional boundaries and expectations for conduct between staff and students, students and students, and adults working within the school environment.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, vendors, consultants, interns, student teachers, coaches, and visitors interacting with students on behalf of Great Valley Academy.

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;
- Prevent excessive damage to property;
- Restrain or control a dangerous situation;
- Provide emergency intervention or safety assistance.

Safe Learning Environments (Facility Specifications)

GVA shall ensure school facilities and furniture are arranged to promote safe, easily supervised environments.

Visibility: Classroom and non-classroom environments (e.g., breakrooms, storage areas) must be configured to maximize adult line-of-sight and promote transparent engagement.

Supervision: High-risk areas shall be identified and monitored to prevent unsupervised interactions between adults and pupils.

Professional Boundaries and Conduct Expectations

This policy is intended to guide all GVA staff and covered adults in conducting themselves in a manner that reflects the high standards of behavior and professionalism required of school personnel and to specify the professional boundaries required between students and adults.

Although this policy provides direction, it is each staff member's obligation to avoid situations that could prompt suspicion by parents/guardians, students, colleagues, or school leaders.

For purposes of this policy, the term "boundaries" is defined as acceptable professional behavior by staff members and adults while interacting with students. Crossing the boundaries of a student/staff relationship is deemed an abuse of power and a betrayal of public trust.

Some activities may seem innocent from a staff member's perspective but may be perceived as flirtation, favoritism, grooming behavior, or sexual insinuation from a student or parent/guardian point of view. The purpose of the following examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviors is not to restrain positive and supportive relationships between staff and students, but to prevent relationships that could lead to, or be perceived as, sexual misconduct, exploitation, abuse, harassment, or inappropriate favoritism.

Staff members and all covered adults are responsible for understanding and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, removal from campus, revocation of volunteer privileges, and/or referral to law enforcement or child protective agencies.

Unacceptable Staff/Student Behaviors (Violations of This Policy)

The following examples are not exhaustive and are intended to illustrate prohibited conduct:

1. Giving gifts to an individual student that are personal, intimate, excessive, or inappropriate.
2. Any type of inappropriate physical contact with a student, including but not limited to massages, lingering touches, squeezing, stroking hair, lap sitting, or touching private body areas.
3. Intentionally being alone with a student in isolated or unsupervised settings when avoidable.
4. Making or participating in sexually inappropriate comments, jokes, stories, gestures, or discussions.
5. Seeking emotional involvement with a student for the adult's personal benefit.
6. Engaging in conduct that a reasonable person could interpret as grooming, favoritism, flirtation, or an inappropriate personal relationship.
7. Communicating with students through personal or secretive methods that are not related to legitimate educational purposes.
8. Using personal social media accounts, disappearing message applications, or private messaging platforms to communicate with students.
9. Encouraging students to keep secrets from parents/guardians, administrators, or school staff.
10. Sharing sexually explicit, suggestive, inappropriate, or offensive material with students.
11. Transporting students in personal vehicles without prior authorization and parent/guardian consent, except in emergencies.
12. Meeting students off campus without authorization and parent/guardian knowledge.
13. Maintaining relationships with students that extend beyond professional educational purposes.
14. Engaging in retaliation against any individual who reports suspected misconduct.

Acceptable and Recommended Staff/Student Behaviors

The following examples are intended to illustrate professional, safe, and appropriate interactions:

1. Obtaining parent/guardian written consent for off-campus or after-school activities.
2. Using school-approved communication methods and platforms for communication with students.
3. Ensuring electronic communications are professional, educational in nature, and, when appropriate, accessible to parents/guardians and administrators.
4. Keeping doors open or remaining in observable and interruptible settings when meeting individually with students.
5. Maintaining appropriate personal space and professional boundaries.
6. Stopping and correcting students if they cross personal or professional boundaries.
7. Keeping parents/guardians informed when significant issues develop regarding a student.
8. Seeking advice from an administrator or supervisor when boundary-related concerns arise.
9. Involving supervisors promptly when conflict or concerns involving a student develop.
10. Documenting incidents or interactions that could later become concerns.
11. Recognizing and addressing inappropriate behavior by students, coworkers, volunteers, contractors, or other adults.
12. Requesting another staff member be present whenever extended one-on-one interaction with a student is necessary.
13. Using appropriate gestures such as handshakes, high fives, or brief pats on the back.
14. Permitting brief, appropriate, non-sexual hugs that are student initiated when developmentally appropriate and consistent with GVA's philosophy of supporting students in a safe and caring environment.
15. Prioritizing professional conduct and maintaining a safe, respectful learning environment at all times.

This policy does not prevent:

- Touching a student for the purpose of guiding them along a physical path;
- Assisting a student after a fall or injury;
- Engaging in rescue efforts or the application of CPR or emergency first aid;
- The use of reasonable force in self-defense or defense of another person.

Excessive force is prohibited.

Electronic Communication and Social Media Expectations

All electronic communications between staff and students shall:

- Serve a legitimate educational, extracurricular, or school-related purpose;
- Be professional in tone and content;
- Occur through school-approved platforms whenever possible;
- Avoid secrecy or exclusivity;
- Be consistent with all district technology policies.

Employees are covered adults are prohibited from the following with students:

- Using personal social media accounts for inappropriate student interactions;
- Sending messages intended to be hidden from parents/guardians or administrators;

- Using disappearing message applications or private communication channels for non-school purposes.
- Engaging in communication that could reasonably be interpreted as personal, romantic, flirtatious, or exploitative.
- Whenever practical, parents/guardians should be included in communications regarding students.

Student-to-Student and Adult-to-Adult Conduct

GVA expects students and adults alike to maintain respectful and appropriate boundaries within the educational environment.

Harassment, bullying, grooming behavior, discrimination, retaliation, exploitation, intimidation, or abuse between students or between adults working within the school environment is prohibited and subject to investigation and disciplinary action.

Reporting Responsibilities

When any staff member, volunteer, contractor, parent/guardian, or student becomes aware of conduct that may violate this policy, or has a reasonable suspicion of misconduct, the individual shall promptly report the concern to a site administrator or appropriate supervisor.

Reasonable suspicion means that the facts available would cause a reasonable person to suspect misconduct or abuse may have occurred.

Prompt reporting is essential to protect:

- Students;
- Employees and volunteers;
- Witnesses;
- The integrity of the school environment.

Employees must also report concerns regarding:

- Student conduct that crosses boundaries;
- Potential grooming behavior;
- Situations in which a student appears to be at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harassment.

Administrators shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee upon learning of allegations requiring investigation.

Retaliation against any person making a good-faith report is strictly prohibited.

Child Abuse/Sexual Abuse Reporting (Mandatory Reporting)

If, within a professional capacity or within the scope of employment, a mandated reporter observes or reasonably suspects that a child has been the victim of child abuse or neglect, California Penal Code Section 11166 requires an immediate report to a child protective agency or law enforcement agency.

The report shall be made:

- Immediately or as soon as practically possible by telephone; and
- Followed by a written report within 36 hours.

Failure to comply with mandated reporting laws may result in criminal penalties, professional discipline, and employment consequences.

Please refer to GVA Policy Resolution 2019.046 for additional reporting requirements.

Investigation Procedures

The Administrator shall promptly investigate, document, and report allegations of misconduct, inappropriate behavior, boundary violations, abuse, or harassment using appropriate support staff, outside investigators, or legal counsel when necessary.

Throughout the investigative process, all individuals involved shall protect the privacy interests of affected students, staff members, and witnesses to the extent reasonably possible.

The Superintendent or designee shall promptly notify the Governing Board in closed session regarding the existence and status of investigations as appropriate.

Upon completion of investigations, findings and recommendations shall be reported to the Governing Board consistent with applicable confidentiality laws.

Annual Training Requirements

All employees, volunteers, and applicable contractors shall receive annual training regarding:

- Child abuse prevention;
- Mandated reporting responsibilities;
- Professional boundaries;
- Grooming behaviors and warning signs;
- Appropriate electronic communication practices;
- School reporting procedures;
- Maintaining safe and appropriately supervised learning environments.

Documentation of completed training shall be maintained by the school.

Consequences

Individuals who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including:

- Corrective action;
- Removal from duties or campus activities;
- Revocation of volunteer or contractor privileges;
- Termination of employment;
- Referral to law enforcement or child protective agencies when appropriate.

Date Approved:



Signature, President or Secretary

Board Action: *Motion - Bradley Second - Wahid*

AYES: *Hoffman, Pedraya, Foradley, Wahid*

NAYS: *None*

ABSENT: *Villanueva*

ABSTAIN: *None*

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