

SECTION 5 – PROCEDURES

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Staff Conduct Standards

Staff members are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect in all dealings with students, faculty, administrators and support staff. This includes the following behaviors:

- Demonstrating a welcoming attitude
- Using a friendly tone of voice with a low volume, so as not to disturb others
- Leave your desk as appropriate to discuss confidential information or speak directly with a person
- Notice when another employee is busy and ask permission to interrupt them if needed
- Discuss concerns or upsetting situations with a supervisor in a private setting

Staff shall refrain from excessive personal business, conversations or communications (email or telephone) during working hours with your child, students, faculty or staff. Remember to wear your 'staff hat' only during working hours.

If an emergency arises with a staff member's child treat it in the same way MMS would handle an emergency incident with any student. If the staff member needs to be excused from work, they should tell their supervisor that they need to leave their area to deal with the emergency, as a parent.

If a staff member needs to meet with a teacher or his/her child, it should be done on his/her own time, before or after school (preferably not during the lunch hour since staffing is low at this time).

Staff members need to be attentive to the noise level when entering other offices, approaching quietly the person you would like to communicate with.

Please enter classrooms, if necessary, to deliver a non-urgent message, before or after or between classes rather than disrupt a class in session.

Please let your supervisor know if you need to miss work for any reason. When necessary and possible, please arrange for someone else to cover your area. You may trade with someone if you like; however if someone works for you, you may not be able to makeup those hours at a later time.

Respect confidentiality agreements. Any school business or program information that is not generally available to the public is considered confidential. This information should not be shared with others. This may include financial, relationships, health concerns or school strategy information, as well as personal interactions. Examples include:

- Student conduct or academic issues.
- You notice that a student in your child's class is sent to the Office for disciplinary action.

That information is confidential and should not be discussed with others.

- You have to call a parent about a health concern.
- Refer calls to the appropriate person as soon as possible without soliciting details of the call.
- If a student comes to the Office for disciplinary reasons, the receptionist should ask the student which teacher sent them to the Office and if they have a note for you. If there is no directive from the teacher, please ask a member of the Guidance Council (Dean of Students, Director, faculty member) to come to the Office and speak with the student.
- Direct your personal parent concerns to the appropriate director or teacher.

Students in the Office During School Hours

Visiting Staff Parents in Office

Students sometimes feel they want to see their parents in the Office during the school/work day. Our preference is to have students and parents arrange meetings at lunch or after school hours unless it is an emergency. Please meet children outside the Office, both to maintain personal boundaries and support the focus of the work environment.

Respecting Student Confidentiality

Please be respectful of students who are sitting in the office reception area by *not* asking them why they are there. It is often for health or behavior reasons, both of which are confidential.

Office Notification of Student Arrival

Teachers sending students to the office for any reason must call extension 250 or 408-847-2717 to notify Reception of the student's pending arrival or to ask for assistance.

Faculty Conduct Standards

We expect our faculty to support and exemplify the school values by demonstrating the following:

- Strive to be positive and respectful with students, parents and other staff members, in-person, by phone and through email communications.
- Respect the confidentiality of students, families and staff by avoiding gossip and refraining from any public ridicule.
- Clearly communicate homework and class policies and keep parents informed as issues arise.
- Follow the field trip procedures.
- Request or notify the Division Director and Reception of absences and submit the Absence Notification Form to the office.
- Be punctual for all school related activities.
- Discuss all school and student issues in a private setting.
- Refrain from non-professional associations with students in person or technology.
- Refrain from inappropriate physical contact with students.
- Keep door and window blinds open when meeting with students alone.
- Use the conference room in the office for private meetings with a student.
- Do not attempt to persuade students to believe in or embrace a particular religious or political view, or any personal lifestyle choice.
- Please refrain from casual conversations about students with office staff. Instead,

- schedule parent/teacher conferences with all staff after work hours or during breaks.
- Students are to be supervised by an authorized adult at all times during the school day. Do not leave students unsupervised in a classroom.
- Confer with the Division Director if a student exhibits any concerning behavior that you think may warrant an evaluation or referral.
- Report to your supervisor any uncomfortable issues.
- Help keep our campus and classrooms clean.
- Lock classroom doors and turn off heat and lights when leaving for the day.
- The computer lab should be locked at all times when not in use.

Understanding Professional Boundaries

Guiding Principles

1. Remember school policies in all interactions
 - Anti-Harassment
 - Anti-bullying
 - Employee conduct – staff and faculty
 - Respectful Communication
 - Confidentiality
1. Remember school's core values (rules cannot cover every situation, values can)
 - Respect for all
 - Honesty
 - Kindness
 - Integrity
 - Compassion
 - Empathy
 - Service
 - Appreciating diversity
2. Remember appropriate boundaries- (limit that indicates where two things might be different)
 - Boundaries can define what is and what is not appropriate
 - Do not blur professional and personal boundaries
 - Be consistent even when wearing different hats
3. Remember the power differential
Adults, especially faculty, are in a position of authority over students.
 - Grades
 - Discipline
 - Advice and Guidance
 Students are inherently in a vulnerable position.
 - They yearn for positive feedback
 - Want to avoid negative feedback
4. Maintain Transparency and Accountability
Act transparently (no secret conduct) and be accountable.
 - Report concerns about students, employees or administrators
 - Seek help from Directors or/and Head of School if warranted
 - Avoid gossip and talk to people directly or seek help from those in charge.

Acceptable and Recommended Behaviors To Protect Employees And Students

1. Obtain prior permission
 - Field trips
 - After school activities
 - Use of non-school technology- both school and parents should approve and only for school related activities and must use professional conduct
2. Maintain and reinforce boundaries with students
 - Avoid late evening, weekends and holiday emails, texting and chatting
 - Stop and correct students if they cross a professional boundary
 - Keep after class discussions brief and class related
 - Give praise without touching students or employees
 - Keep a reasonable space between you and employees
 - High Fives and handshakes acceptable versus hugs
 - Don't assume younger students want to be hugged
3. Act transparently
 - Keep parents informed as issues arise
 - Let supervisors know when there are issues
 - Keep your door open and/or window blinds open when meeting with student alone
4. Be accountable
 - Ask another staff member to be present if meeting with a special needs student, or if you are meeting after school hours it is better to use the conference room where others are nearby
 - Seek advice if a student or coworker's behavior seems uncomfortable
 - Recognize the responsibility to report and stop any behavior that crosses professional boundaries of students or employees.
 - Make notes of any incident that could evolve into something more serious

Sample list of Unacceptable Behaviors

- Kissing of any kind
- Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a public or private place
- Intentionally being alone with a student on or off campus
- Making or participating in any sexually inappropriate comments
- Sexual jokes, stories or innuendos
- Seeking emotional involvement with a student
- Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student
- Becoming involved with a student such that a reasonable person might suspect inappropriate behavior
- Giving rides to and from school or places without expressed permission of parents
- Being alone with a student in a closed room with blinds drawn
- Asking students to visit you at home
- Sending communication that is not related to school especially at night, or weekends, holidays and over summer vacations
- Remarks about a student's physical attributes
- Excessive attention towards one student

Gray Areas

- Hugging
 - Depends on age of students, or when a tragedy occurs like a death in the family- but only in public with student permission
 - Hugging employees- only if agreed to and in public
 - Handshakes and High fives are safer behaviors
- Dancing with students
 - Only in public
 - No touching
 - Or be safe and politely decline
- Dress code issues
 - Report to the director of the division or Dean of Students
 - Always determine who is the best person to communicate about the inappropriate dress
 - Employees should have a witness with them when speaking privately with the student about their attire
- Off campus school activities
 - Follow school guidelines and expectations for behavior
 - No alcohol if students are present at the school sponsored event
 - No alcohol use if driving school vehicles
- Social Media Guidelines
 - Do not use private accounts to email or "friend" current students and recent alumni who may have contact with current students
 - Use the school sites to post info about the school
 - Best to avoid use of private accounts for school matters- for example use school email account for all school work versus a private email account