

Riverside County Office of Education
Board Policy 4119.21 Professional Standards, 4219.21, 4319.21

PERSONNEL

SUBJECT: Professional Standards

The County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools expect all employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, exhibit professional behavior, to follow the policies and regulations of the Riverside County Office of Education, abide by state and federal laws and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the school community. Employee conduct should enhance the integrity of the County Office of Education and advance the goals of the educational program and contribute to a positive school climate.

(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School County Office of Education)

(cf. 4119.1/4219.1/4319.1 - Civil and Legal Rights)

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

Each employee should make a commitment to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill his/her responsibilities and should focus on his/her contribution to the learning and achievement of County Office of Education students.

(cf. 4112.2 - Certification)

(cf. 4119.1/4219.1/4319.1 - Civil and Legal Rights)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

The County Board and County Superintendent encourage employees to accept as guiding principles the professional standards and codes of ethics adopted by professional associations to which they may belong. These standards are reproduced at E 4119.21 (certificated), 4219.21 (classified) and 4319.21 (management, supervisory and confidential).

(cf. 9005 - Governance Standards)

Staff Conduct with Students

The County Board of Education and County Superintendent of Schools expect all employees to exercise good judgment and maintain professional standards and ethical boundaries when interacting with students both on and off school property, and at either sanctioned or non-sanctioned events and activities. Inappropriate employee conduct shall include, but not be limited to,

1. Engaging in any conduct that endangers students, staff, or others, including, but not limited to, physical violence, threats of violence, or possession of a firearm or other weapon

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 4158/4258/4358 - Employee Security)

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2. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior towards students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members, or failing or refusing to intervene when an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a student is observed

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in County Office of Education Programs and Activities)

(cf. 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)

(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)

3. Physically abusing, sexually abusing, neglecting, or otherwise willfully harming or injuring a child

4. Engaging in inappropriate socialization or fraternization with a student or soliciting, encouraging, or maintaining an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student

5. Possessing or viewing any pornography on school grounds, or possessing or viewing child pornography or other imagery portraying children in a sexualized manner at any time

6. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language against students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members

7. Willfully disrupting County Office of Education or school operations by loud or unreasonable noise or other action

8. Using tobacco, alcohol, or an illegal or unauthorized substance, or possessing or distributing any controlled substance, while in the workplace or at a school-sponsored activity

(cf. 3513.3 - Tobacco-Free Schools)

(cf. 4020 - Drug and Alcohol Free Workplace)

(cf. 4112.41/4212.41/4312.41 - Employee Drug Testing)

(cf. 4112.42/4212.42/4312.42 - Drug and Alcohol Testing for School Bus Drivers)

9. Dishonesty with students, parents/guardians, staff, or members of the public, including, but not limited to, falsification of information in employment records or other school records

10. Divulging confidential information about students, County Office of Education employees, or County Office of Education operations to persons not authorized to receive the information

(cf. 3580 - County Office of Education Records)

(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

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11. Using County Office of Education equipment or other County Education resources for the employee's own commercial purposes or for political activities

(cf. 4119.25/4219.25/4319.25 - Political Activities of Employees)

12. Using County Office of Education equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty, except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity

Employees shall be notified that computer files and all electronic communications, including, but not limited to, email and voice mail, are not private. To ensure proper use, the Superintendent or designee may monitor employee usage of County Office of Education technological resources at any time without the employee's consent.

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

13. Causing damage to or engaging in theft of property belonging to students, staff, or the County Office of Education

14. Wearing inappropriate attire

(cf. 4119.22/4219.22/4319.22 - Dress and Grooming)

For purposes of this policy, the term “electronic relationship” includes engaging with students through any electronic means including but not limited to, telephone conversations, voice mail messages, text messages, e-mails, instant messages, and communication through internet social networking sites or other online means.

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in County Office of Education Programs and Activities)

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology)

An employee who observes or has evidence of inappropriate conduct between another employee and a student shall immediately report such conduct to the site administrator or County Superintendent or designee. An employee who has knowledge of or suspects child abuse or neglect shall file a report pursuant to the County Office of Education’s child abuse reporting procedures as detailed in AR 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting.

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

Any reports of employee misconduct shall be promptly investigated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of law or Board policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and, in the case of a certificated employee, may be subject to a report to the

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Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The Superintendent or designee shall notify local law enforcement as appropriate.

(cf. 4117.7/4317.7 - Employment Status Reports)
 (cf. 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
 (cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct with a student in violation of law or this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
 (cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

The County Office of Education prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint against an employee or reports an employee's inappropriate conduct. Any employee who retaliates against any such complainant, reporter, or other participant in the County Office of Education's complaint process shall be subject to discipline.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex

PENAL CODE

11164-11174.4 Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

80331-80338 Rules of conduct for professional educators

Management Resources:

CDE PUBLICATIONS

California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders

COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS PUBLICATIONS

Standards for School Leaders, 1996

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Code of Ethics of the Education Profession, 1975

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

Association of California School Administrators: <http://www.acsa.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

California Federation of Teachers: <http://www.cft.org>

California School Employees Association: <http://www.csea.com>

California School Leadership Academy: <http://www.csla.org>

California Teachers Association: <http://www.cta.org>

Commission on Teacher Credentialing: <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>

Council of Chief State School Officers: <http://www.ccsso.org>