



## **Employee-Student Interactions Policy**

### ***(Employee Handbook: Maintaining Healthy Educator Boundaries)***

All School employees are responsible for creating, modeling and maintaining healthy, supportive and appropriate boundaries with students and alumni. Employees must be vigilantly aware of this responsibility in all aspects of their interactions with students and alumni, being mindful at all times of the importance of their visibility and presence as positive role models. Employees must also be aware of the inherent power differential between employees and students/alumni, and must strive at all times to model appropriate behavior to all members of the School community.

All sexual or romantic physical contact or communications with students (including text messages and communications by other electronic means) are strictly prohibited. Any suspicion of sexual/romantic relations by an employee with a student will be thoroughly investigated, and a finding of such conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and/or notification to the appropriate authorities.

While the School values employees' efforts to connect with students in a positive and healthy manner, even well-intentioned interactions with students can be problematic where they are inherently personal or overly emotional. Communications with students (including text messages and communications by other electronic means) should be restricted to appropriate School-related matters, including academic and athletic pursuits and interests and extracurricular activities. Employees should refrain from excessive communications with students, and from communications outside of normal School hours. Employees who receive communications from a student which are of an inherently personal or emotional nature should seek guidance and support from the School's Counselor and should alert the Division Head.

The obligation to maintain appropriate boundaries also extends to employees' interactions with recent graduates of the School. Employees should endeavor to be role models to these young adults in the same manner as with current students. Sexual or romantic relations (including contact or communications) with former students of the School who are under the age of twenty-three (23) are strictly prohibited.

Any violation or suspected violation of this policy must be immediately reported to the Division Head, or if it involves the Head of School, to the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Moreover, if an employee believes that a current student or former student under the age of twenty-three (23) has been placed at imminent risk of serious harm because of a violation of this policy, the employee is required to report such concern to one of the individuals listed above.

Employees with questions about this policy or their obligations to report suspected romantic or sexual relations or other inappropriate behavior, or with questions regarding any specific incident of suspected romantic and/or sexual relations or inappropriate behavior, should immediately contact the Division Head.

Assembly Bill 500 (AB500), effective January 1, 2018, adds section 44050 of the California Education Code, which requires schools to provide this section on employee interactions with pupils in its code of conduct and to parents and guardians of enrolled students on the School's website. The above policy is also included in the School's Employee Handbook.