

Maintaining Appropriate Adult-Student Interactions Policy

BP 4119.24 Adopted: 09/08/22 Revised: 6/11/26, v4

Clarksville Charter School (“School”) is committed to maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment. All School Staff “Staff” are responsible for establishing and maintaining appropriate, professional boundaries with students. Employees must consistently model respectful behavior and demonstrate awareness of their role as positive influences within the school community. This responsibility applies to all interactions with students in any school-related setting.

Assembly Bill 500 (AB 500), effective January 1, 2018, adds Section 44050 of the California Education Code, which requires schools to provide this section on employee interactions with students in their code of conduct and to parents and guardians of enrolled students on the School’s website. This policy is also referenced in the School’s Employee and Parent/Student Handbook.

In accordance with Senate Bill 848 (SB 848), *effective July 1, 2026*, the School adopts and implements the staff–student interaction requirements described herein to promote safe, supervised, and trauma-informed learning environments, and to establish clear professional boundaries between employees, volunteers, contractors, and students in all School-sponsored programs, including the School’s resource center and virtual instructional settings.

The School recognizes that SB 848 applies to all school-sponsored programs regardless of location, including home visits, community meetings, and virtual instructional environments.

Safe Learning Environments – Nonclassroom-Based Settings

For independent study, virtual meetings, online platforms, or any remote instructional setting, staff must ensure that all student interactions remain:

- Observable and interruptible
- Conducted through School-authorized platforms
- Focused on instruction, academic support, or school-related needs
- Visible through tools that allow monitoring, record retention, or administrative access
- Staff must avoid communication that could reasonably be perceived as private or personal. Staff are expected to exercise professional judgment consistent with student safety, instructional necessity, privacy obligations, disability accommodations, and the developmental needs of students.

When one-to-one interactions are necessary for legitimate educational, safety, counseling, assessment, or instructional purposes, Staff shall ensure the interaction remains professional, observable when feasible, appropriately documented, and consistent with School supervision expectations.

For virtual and independent study settings, “observable and interruptible” includes communication conducted through School-authorized platforms that allow administrative access, record retention, parent/guardian visibility when appropriate, or participation within scheduled instructional sessions.

Boundaries Defined

“Boundaries” are the professional behaviors expected of staff when interacting with students. Crossing these boundaries is an abuse of power and a violation of public trust.

Boundaries apply to interactions:

- Between students, staff, volunteers, and contractors
- Among students
- Among adults employed by, volunteering for, or contracting with the School

All adults must maintain professional conduct that supports a safe, respectful, and supervised environment. These expectations supplement, but do not replace, other conduct policies.

Corporal Punishment Defined

Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any 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 or to prevent property damage.

The following examples are offered for the direction and guidance of School personnel:

A. Examples of **PERMITTED** actions (NOT corporal punishment)

1. Stopping a student from fighting with another student;
2. Preventing a student from committing an act of vandalism;
3. Defending yourself from physical injury or assault by a student;
4. Forcing a student to give up a weapon or dangerous object;

B. Examples of **PROHIBITED** actions (corporal punishment)

1. Hitting, shoving, pushing, or physically restraining a student as a means of control;
2. Making unruly students do push-ups, run laps, or perform other physical acts that cause pain or discomfort as a form of punishment;

3. Paddling, swatting, slapping, grabbing, pinching, kicking, or otherwise causing physical pain or punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student.

Acceptable and Unacceptable Behavior

The following examples outline behaviors that demonstrate appropriate professional boundaries, as well as actions that may violate them. These examples are not exhaustive, and staff are expected to use sound judgment and uphold the spirit and intent of this policy in all interactions. All employees are expected to understand and maintain these boundaries as a core part of their professional responsibilities.

Unacceptable Behaviors

The following behaviors are prohibited at all school-sponsored or related activities, including virtual activities:

- Giving gifts to an individual student that are of a personal and intimate nature
- Kissing of any kind
- Any type of unnecessary physical contact with a student in a private or secluded situation
- Meeting with a student in isolated, secretive, or non-school-related circumstances that are inconsistent with professional boundaries, legitimate educational purposes, or School supervision expectations.
- Making, or participating in, sexually inappropriate comments
- Sexual jokes, or jokes/comments with sexual overtones or double-entendres
- Seeking emotional involvement (which can include intimate attachment) with a student beyond the normative care and concern required of an educator
- Listening to or telling stories that are sexually oriented
- Discussing inappropriate personal troubles or intimate issues with a student
- Becoming involved with a student so that a reasonable person may suspect inappropriate behavior
- Transporting students in personal vehicles is prohibited except as authorized by School policy or administration.
 - Refer to the Field Trip Policy for specific, pre-established student groups.
- Allowing students in your home without signed parental permission for a pre-planned and pre-communicated educational activity, which must include another educator, parent, or other responsible adult
- Remarks about the physical attributes or physiological development of anyone
- Excessive or preferential attention toward a particular student that is not related to legitimate educational needs
- Sending emails, text messages, social media responses, or letters to students

Acceptable and Recommended Behaviors

The following behaviors support safe, professional, and transparent interactions with students:

- Ensuring all communication with students is professional, school-related, and conducted through approved school-authorized platforms when required
- Ensuring reasonable visibility or accountability measures when meeting one-on-one with a student
- Staff may use quieter or closed-door settings when necessary for testing integrity, counseling, confidentiality, disability accommodations, de-escalation, or instructional focus, provided the interaction remains professional, accountable, and reasonably observable or documented.
- Maintaining reasonable and appropriate physical space between yourself and students
- Redirecting students if they cross your personal or professional boundaries
- Keeping parents informed when significant concerns arise about a student
- Keeping before and after class discussions brief and professional, and closing virtual meeting rooms within 15 minutes of the scheduled end time
- Seeking guidance from the administration when you encounter a situation involving boundaries
- Notifying your supervisor when you observe behaviors that may indicate grooming, red flags, or concerning patterns
- Addressing unacceptable behavior by students or co-workers when observed
- Prioritizing professional conduct during all moments of student contact
- Because the School operates a nonclassroom-based instructional model, staff may meet with students and families in homes, community locations, resource centers, virtual settings, or other approved educational environments for legitimate educational purposes. All such interactions must remain professional and consistent with the School supervision expectations within this policy and other related practices.

School-Authorized Platforms

All electronic communication with students should occur through School-authorized platforms, systems, or applications that preserve records, allow administrative access, or provide monitoring or archival capabilities (e.g., Canvas, Google Classroom, school email, Zoom).

A School-authorized platform is any digital tool or communication system approved by the School or its designee for instructional or school-related use that supports student safety, privacy, record retention, and appropriate staff-student interaction. The School may update or modify approved platforms and implement additional communication

limitations based on student age or grade level, consistent with Education Code §32100(b)(1)(B).

Communication conducted on School-authorized platforms is considered observable and not private, even when occurring one-to-one. Permitted communication on these platforms must remain professional, school-related, and limited to:

- School activities
- Instructional support or academic information
- Scheduling related to school assignments
- Student safety or well-being concerns

One-to-One Communication Within School Authorized Platforms

Staff may engage in limited one-to-one communication with students through School-authorized platforms for instructional or student-support purposes. This includes responding to student work, providing feedback, answering questions, and communicating through LMS (Learning Management System) messaging tools.

Limited one-to-one communication is permitted only when all of the following conditions are met:

- Occurs within a School-authorized platform, such as Canvas inbox, Google Classroom comments, school email, or school Zoom account.
- Directly supports instruction or student needs, including providing feedback on assignments, clarifying academic directions, or addressing a school-related concern.
- Remains professional, purpose-driven, and related to legitimate educational or student support needs, avoiding personal or social conversation.
- Takes place in an observable or otherwise supervised environment, including communication visible to administrators within the LMS, retained through School email systems, or occurring during a live instructional session.

Staff should avoid extended or ongoing one-to-one exchanges in private chat and should move substantive conversations to platforms that preserve records (e.g., email or LMS) or include additional participants when appropriate.

Personal Devices and Personal Accounts

Staff may use personal devices for school-related communication with students.

However, communication with students on non-approved platforms (e.g., personal texting, personal email, personal phone calls) is permitted only when a parent/guardian is included in the communication.

Using a personal device to access a School-authorized platform is permitted; however, staff should avoid personal platforms *unless* a parent/guardian is included and the communication is brief, professional, and school-related.

All such communication must:

- Be brief, professional, and school-related
- Occur during school hours unless addressing an urgent safety matter
- Be used only when School-authorized platforms are not reasonably available

Prohibited Communication Methods

The following communication methods are strictly prohibited between staff members and students:

- One-on-one private texting or calling without parent inclusion
- Using personal social media accounts to message or “friend” students
- Sharing personal photos, memes, or non-school-related content
- Messaging apps with disappearing or encrypted private messages (e.g., WhatsApp, Snapchat)
- Use of non-approved platforms without parent/guardian inclusion

Reporting

When any staff member becomes aware of another staff member, volunteer, guest, or vendor who may have crossed the boundaries specified in this policy or has a reasonable suspicion of misconduct, they must report the suspicion to their immediate supervisor, Human Resources, or the Executive Director promptly.

“Reasonable suspicion” means it is based on facts that would lead a reasonable person to believe the conduct occurred. Prompt reporting is essential to protecting students, the suspected staff member, any witnesses, and the School as a whole. Employees must also report to the administration any awareness of, or concern about, student behavior that crosses boundaries or any situation in which a student appears to be at risk for sexual abuse.

SB 848 requires all employees, volunteers, contractors, and school board members to complete annual training on identifying, responding to, and reporting suspected grooming behavior, boundary violations, and misconduct. Compliance with training is mandatory.

Investigating

The School will promptly investigate and document the investigation of any allegation of sexual misconduct or inappropriate behavior, using such support staff or outside assistance as it deems necessary and appropriate under the circumstances. Throughout this fact-finding process, the investigating administrator and all others privy

to the investigation shall protect the privacy interests of any affected student(s) and/or staff member(s), including any potential witnesses, as much as possible.

Investigations shall include reviewing any relevant electronic communications, visibility/access logs, or facility supervision records (including those at the resource center).

Consequences

Staff members who have violated this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and, where appropriate, will be reported to authorities for potential legal action.

Collaboration with Risk Management Entities

The School will collaborate with its insurance provider or joint powers authority to identify and adopt best practices known to prevent violent crimes, sex offenses, and egregious misconduct.

Definitions

- “Sex offense” has the same meaning as defined in Education Code §44010.
- “Violent crime” has the same meaning as defined in Education Code §32281.
- “Small school district” means a district with fewer than 2,501 units of average daily attendance at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Record Retention

All electronic communications related to School activities or student learning must be retained in accordance with the School’s records retention policies.

- Communications on personal platforms do not meet standard record-retention requirements and should be avoided. When such communication occurs in accordance with this policy (i.e., with parent/guardian inclusion), staff should transition the communication to a School-authorized platform when feasible.