

## **Scholar Academy Staff Code of Conduct**

### **Purpose**

Scholar Academy (the “School”) is committed to providing an environment where its students and staff feel safe, respected, and comfortable. The School is also dedicated to upholding the trust that has been vested in the School by the parents of its students and the community at large. The School understands that these objectives cannot be met unless its staff engages in appropriate, responsible behavior and is held to high standards of conduct. This code of conduct establishes and sets forth the standards of conduct required of the School’s staff.

### **Definitions**

1. "Boundary violation" means crossing verbal, physical, emotional, and social lines that an educator must maintain in order to ensure structure, security, and predictability in an educational environment.

- (a) A "boundary violation" may include the following, depending on the circumstances:
  - (i) isolated, one-on-one interactions with students out of the line of sight of others;
  - (ii) meeting with students in rooms with covered or blocked windows;
  - (iii) telling risqué jokes to, or in the presence of a student;
  - (iv) employing favoritism to a student;
  - (v) giving gifts to individual students;
  - (vi) educator initiated frontal hugging or other uninvited touching;
  - (vii) photographing individual students for a non-educational purpose or use;
  - (viii) engaging in inappropriate or unprofessional contact outside of educational program activities;
  - (ix) exchanging personal email or phone numbers with a student for a non-educational purpose or use;
  - (x) interacting privately with a student through social media, computer, or handheld devices; and
  - (xi) discussing an educator's personal life or personal issues with a student.
  
- (b) A “boundary violation" does not include:
  - (i) offering praise, encouragement, or acknowledgment;
  - (ii) offering rewards available to all who achieve;
  - (iii) asking permission to touch for necessary purposes;
  - (iv) giving pats on the back or a shoulder;
  - (v) giving side hugs;
  - (vi) giving handshakes or high fives;
  - (vii) offering warmth and kindness;
  - (viii) utilizing public social media alerts to groups of students and parents; or
  - (ix) contact permitted by an IEP or 504 plan.

2. “Staff” or “staff member” means an employee, contractor, or volunteer of the School with unsupervised access to students.

### **Code of Conduct**

1. A staff member shall avoid boundary violations with students.
2. A staff member shall not subject a student to:
  - (a) physical abuse;
  - (b) verbal abuse;
  - (c) sexual abuse; or
  - (d) mental abuse.
3. A staff member shall report any suspected incidents of:
  - (a) physical abuse;
  - (b) verbal abuse;
  - (c) sexual abuse;
  - (d) mental abuse; or
  - (e) neglect.
4. A staff member shall not touch a student in a way that makes a reasonably objective student feel uncomfortable.
5. A staff member shall not make inappropriate contact in any communication with a student, including written, verbal, or electronic communications, regardless of the age or location of the staff member or student.
6. A staff member shall not give a gift to a student that would reasonably suggest or further an inappropriate relationship. A staff member may give small gifts or rewards to all students who achieve a certain objective or goal so long as such gifts or rewards are provided uniformly. A staff member may accept, but not solicit, a nominal appropriate personal gift from a student for the staff member’s birthday, a holiday, or a teacher appreciate occasion, consistent with School policy and Utah ethics law.
7. A staff member shall not employ favoritism, provide special favors, or give preferential treatment to a student or group of students in violation of law.
8. A staff member shall not discriminate against a student on the basis of sex, race, religion, or any other prohibited class.
9. A staff member shall comply with all School policies regarding appropriate use of electronic resources, electronic devices, and social media. A staff member shall avoid interacting privately with a student through social media, computer, or handheld devices and shall never interact with a student – publicly or privately – through such means for non-academic purposes.

10. A staff member shall not possess or drink an alcoholic beverage in the School or on School grounds. In addition, a staff member shall not drink alcohol during work hours, whether on or off School grounds.

11. A staff member shall not use tobacco in any form nor use an e-cigarette (or any other similar electronic oral device) in the School or on School grounds. Staff members shall comply with the Utah Indoor Clean Air Act in the School, on School grounds, and during work hours.

12. A staff member shall not use, control, possess, distribute, sell, or arrange for the sale of an illegal drug or controlled substance, an imitation controlled substance, or drug paraphernalia in the School, on School grounds, or during work hours.

13. A staff member is required to:

- (a) report any suspicion of child abuse or bullying to the proper authorities;
- (b) annually read and sign all policies related to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse; and
- (c) with respect to a staff member who is an employee or contractor, annually attend abuse prevention training required in Utah Code Ann. § 53A-13-112.

14. A staff member shall report the following to the School's Principal:

- (a) known violations of this code of conduct; and
- (b) known violations of the Utah Educator Standards contained in R277-515.

15. This code of conduct shall be posted on the School's website.

16. The School intends for this code of conduct to be consistent with the provisions of Utah Administrative Code R277-517.