

1 The Transylvania County Board of Education (the “board”) expects all employees to maintain  
2 the highest professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with students.  
3 Employees are required to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning through consistently and  
4 fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries. Employees are  
5 expected to motivate each student to perform to his or her capacity while modeling the behavior  
6 expected of students in staff-student relationships.  
7

8 The interactions and relationships between staff and students must be based upon cooperation,  
9 mutual respect, and an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students  
10 inside and outside of the educational setting. Employees are expected to demonstrate good  
11 judgment and to avoid the appearance of impropriety in their interactions with students.  
12 Employees must consult their supervisor any time they suspect or are unsure whether conduct is  
13 inappropriate or otherwise constitutes a violation of this or other board policy.  
14

15 For the purposes of this policy, the terms “staff” and “employees” includes independent  
16 contractors and school safety officers, but do not include student employees.  
17

18 **A. ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL CONTACT PROHIBITED**  
19

20 All employees are prohibited from dating, courting, or entering into a romantic  
21 relationship or having sexual contact with any student enrolled in the school system  
22 regardless of the student's age. Employees engaging in such inappropriate conduct will  
23 be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may be subject to  
24 criminal action as provided in G.S. 14-202.4 and 14-27.32. **Further, school system  
25 personnel shall provide no assistance to an employee in finding another job, beyond the  
26 routine transmittal of personnel or administrative files, if the employee engaged in sexual  
27 misconduct with a minor or a student in violation of the law.**  
28

29 **B. RESTRICTIONS ON ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**  
30

- 31 1. In accordance with policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media, employees are  
32 prohibited from communicating with current students through non-school-  
33 controlled social media without parental permission except to the extent that the  
34 employee and student have an appropriate relationship which originated outside  
35 of the school setting. Any communication through social media authorized under  
36 policy 7335 must meet the professional standards established in this policy and  
37 must otherwise be consistent with law and all other board policy.  
38
- 39 2. Instant messages will be treated as a form of communication through social media  
40 subject to the terms of policy 7335 and subsection B.1 above, regardless of  
41 whether the messaging service is actually provided through a social media service  
42 or otherwise.  
43

- 44           3.     Employees are prohibited from engaging in other forms of one-to-one electronic  
45           communications (e.g., voice, voice mail, email, texting, and photo or video  
46           transmission) with students without written prior approval of the employee's  
47           supervisor and the student's parent. This rule shall not apply, however, if one or  
48           more of the following circumstances exist:  
49  
50           a.     the communication (1) is for an educational purpose, (2) is conducted  
51           through a school system-provided platform which archives all such  
52           communications for a period of at least three years (this requirement does  
53           not apply to telephone or voice mail communications), and (3) occurs after  
54           the employee has given prior notice to his or her supervisor or designee  
55           that such communications will occur;  
56  
57           b.     the communication serves an educational purpose and is simultaneously  
58           copied or transmitted to the employee's supervisor or designee, and, upon  
59           request, to the parent or guardian;  
60  
61           c.     the communication is necessary in a bona fide emergency, provide the  
62           communication is disclosed to the supervisor and parent or guardian as  
63           soon as reasonably possible;  
64  
65           d.     the communication derives from a relationship or association outside of  
66           the school setting and occurs with the consent of the parent or guardian,  
67           provided such communication does not otherwise violate this or other  
68           board policy.  
69  
70           Any one-to-one electronic communication permitted by this subsection must meet  
71           the professional standards established in this policy and must otherwise be  
72           consistent with law and all other board policies.  
73  
74           4.     It is the duty of every employee to notify his or her supervisor of any unsolicited  
75           one-to-one communication, in any form, electronic or otherwise, received from a  
76           student when the communication lacks a clear educational purpose. School  
77           counselors are excluded from this requirement only to the extent that it conflicts  
78           with their professional duties.  
79  
80           5.     Violations of this section will be considered unprofessional behavior subject to  
81           discipline, up to and including dismissal. Factors that may be relevant to the  
82           determination of an appropriate disciplinary response to unauthorized  
83           communications with students include, but are not limited to:  
84  
85           a.     the content, frequency, subject, and timing of the communications(s);  
86



130           **3.     Report of Criminal Misconduct**

131  
132           Any principal who has reason to believe that a student has been the victim of  
133           criminal conduct shall immediately report the incident in accordance with policy  
134           4335, Criminal Behavior.

135  
136           Legal References: **Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 7926**; Title IX of the  
137           Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq.*, 34 C.F.R. pt. 106; G.S. 14-27.32, -  
138           202.4; 115C-47(18); 16 N.C.A.C. 6C.0601, .0602; State Board of Education Policy TCP-C-014.

139  
140           Cross References: Governing Principle – Removal of Barriers (policy 1700), Prohibition  
141           Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (policy 1710/4021/7230), Discrimination,  
142           Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure (policy 1720/4015/7225), Student and Parent  
143           Grievance Procedure (policy 1740/4010), Criminal Behavior (policy 4335), Staff  
144           Responsibilities (policy 7300), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335)

145  
146           Adopted: June 15, 2015

147  
148           Revised: November 19, 2015; **[DATE]**

REVISED