ANACORTES SCHOOL DISTRICT #103

Policy No. 4020
Community Relations

CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS

The board recognizes that school staff must exercise a delicate balance regarding the treatment of information that was revealed in confidence. A staff member may, in his/her professional judgment, treat information received from a student as confidential while at other times decide to disclose what was learned to the school administration, law enforcement officers (including child protective services), the county health department, other staff members or the student's parents. The staff member should advise the student regarding the limitations and restrictions regarding confidentiality. The student should be encouraged to reveal confidences to his/her parents. If the staff member feels obligated to disclose the confidence, the student should be informed prior to such action.

The following guidelines are established to assist staff members in making appropriate decisions regarding confidential information and/or communications:

1. Information contained in the student's cumulative record folder is confidential and is only accessible through the custodian of student records. Information secured through the authorization of the records custodian shall remain confidential and be used only for the purpose that its access was granted.

2. While certain professionals may have a legal confidential relationship as in attorney-client communications, school staff members including counselors (except licensed psychologists) do not possess a confidentiality privilege.

3. A staff member is expected to reveal information given by a student when there is a reasonable likelihood that a crime has or will be committed, (e.g., child abuse, sale of drugs, suicidal ideation).

4. A staff member shall exercise professional judgment regarding the sharing of student disclosed information when there is reasonable likelihood that the student's welfare may be endangered.

5. A staff member is encouraged to assist the student by offering suggestions regarding the availability of community services to assist a student in dealing with personal matters, (e.g. substance abuse, mental illness, sexually-transmitted diseases, pregnancy). The staff member should encourage the student to discuss such matters with his/her parents. Staff members are encouraged to discuss problems of this nature with the school principal prior to making contact with others.

Cross References:	Board Policy	2140	Guidance and Counseling
		2121	Drug and Alcohol Use/Abuse Program
		3231	Student Records
		4040	Public Access to District Records
		5260	Personnel Records
Legal References:	RCW 26.44.030	Reports—Duty and authority to make	
	WAC 246-100-071	Responsibility for reporting to and cooperating with the local health department	

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