Rationale

Employees of St. Mary's Charter School ("School") are expected to avoid apparent or actual conflicts of interest, favoritism, or bias in their workplace relationships. Consensual romantic relationships can give rise to such realities or perceptions and are thus potentially exploitative, especially when they involve supervisor/subordinate relationships. In addition, such relationships can and often do create an uncomfortable work or educational environment for students and staff.

Definition of Romantic Relationships

A "romantic relationship" is one that involves or is a prelude to sexual intimacy. A romantic relationship may be manifest through, but is not limited to, one or more of the following workplace behaviors: a pattern of exclusivity between two persons; consensual physical touching that implies a romantic intention or desire; the sharing of personal information appropriate for a romantic relationship but beyond the boundaries of a professional workplace relationship; actual physical intimacy; written communications or other actions that demonstrate or imply a romantic interest.

Relationships between Employees and Students

Employees shall never form romantic relationships with students. Any sexual relationship between a student and an employee is prohibited and unlawful, even if consensual. Effective 9/1/2017, per SB 7, a sexual relationship between an employee and any student in any public or private school is prohibited. PG 4.2.2 addresses reporting of such conduct.

Reportable Romantic Relationships between Employees

Romantic relationships are generally discouraged between a School's employees and that employee's immediate or distant supervisor. The power differential makes such relationships open to abuse and to charges of sexual harassment or unprofessional conduct.

This policy is not intended to prohibit romantic or outside relationships among peers or colleagues; however, employees involved in such relationships are cautioned to avoid situations that may contribute to an uncomfortable work or educational environment for other employees or students.

Reporting Requirements

In the event that consensual romantic relationships exist or begin to develop between an employee and supervisor, the supervisor is charged with the responsibility of notifying his or her immediate supervisor of the relationship. The reporting supervisor shall cooperate in making appropriate workplace arrangements and adjustments, which may include but are not limited to reassignments of duties, departments and/or locations.

Failure to Report or Cooperate

Employees in positions of authority who fail to report a romantic relationship with a subordinate or fail to cooperate in efforts to reduce the potential for workplace conflicts as directed will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.