

495 NEPOTISM IN EMPLOYMENT

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent employment guidelines and to prevent situations where an individual may have or be perceived to have unfair influence over the career development, work assignments, work direction, performance reviews, or compensation of a family member who is also employed by the School District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The School District may employ family members of current employees. However, to be hired, transferred or promoted, close family members may *not* be assigned to the following:

1. Positions where one can influence the employment conditions or career of the other. This includes decisions involving hiring, termination, compensation, performance evaluation, discipline, promotional opportunities, and work assignments; or
2. Positions where one reports to, directs the work of, or otherwise has direct supervision of another close family member.

III. DEFINITIONS

1. **Close Family Member:** A close family member means the employee's parent, spouse, child (including adopted child), sibling, grandparent, grandchildren, niece, nephew, aunt, uncle, step relatives including stepchild, stepmother, stepfather, stepsister and stepbrother, in-law relationships including father- and mother-in-law, daughter- and son-in-law, brother- and sister-in-law, ward of the employee or employee's spouse, domestic partner, or person cohabitating in the employee's household regardless of the degree of relationship.
2. **Direct or Indirect Supervision:** Direct or indirect supervision means the authority to make, participate in, or recommend employment, and/or compensation-related decisions involving a close family member, including, but not limited to, decisions concerning hiring, promotion, transfer, discipline,

termination, salary, evaluation, grievance resolution, or other similar personnel actions.

IV. APPLICATION TO BOARD MEMBERS

Board members are not considered to have direct or indirect supervision except in situations when they are called upon to act specifically on matters of employment status or compensation for an applicant or employee. In such cases, board members shall notify the board chair and recuse themselves from all discussion and action when a close family member is involved.

V. EXCEPTIONS; SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

In special circumstances, a direct or indirect supervision relationship may exist between employees who are close family members. Such circumstances may be necessitated by factors such as the unique qualifications or responsibilities of the individuals involved, the lack of other available appropriate supervisory personnel, or whether the position for which the close family member is being considered is temporary in nature.

In such cases the district will promote transparency and review in the decision-making process to avoid the appearance of unfair influence as follows:

- A. Any exception must be reviewed and approved in writing by the Superintendent and reasonable measures shall be taken to minimize any appearance of unfair influence or preferential treatment;
- B. Any direct or indirect supervision relationship approved by the Superintendent shall be reported to the Board Personnel Committee;
- C. All employment decisions affecting the subordinate employee, including, but not limited to, selection, hiring, discipline, performance review, compensation, or leave, must be assigned to other supervisory personnel or, if no other supervisory personnel exist, such decisions shall be made by the Superintendent;
- D. Exceptions involving the Superintendent or cabinet members and close family members shall be reviewed and approved in writing by the Board Personnel Committee, and the written approval shared with the Board Chair.

VI. ADDRESSING EXISTING CONFLICTS AND CHANGES IN RELATONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEES

Any school employee involved in a direct or indirect supervision relationship with a close family member that existed *prior to* the original approval date of this policy or that arises *after* the adoption of this policy shall promptly notify the Executive Director of Human Resources of such relationship. The Executive Director of Human Resources shall make suitable arrangements for the transfer of one of the employees, assignment of a different supervisor, or a determination that an exception is necessary under Section V. of this policy.

Any direct or indirect supervision relationship approved by the Superintendent under Section V. shall be reported to the Board Personnel Committee. The Superintendent shall promptly notify the Board Personnel Committee of any direct or indirect supervision relationship which arises concerning a close family member of the Superintendent. All such direct or indirect supervision relationships involving the Superintendent shall be resolved in consultation with the Board Personnel Committee in accordance with this policy.

VII. COMPLIANCE WITH EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DISCRIMINATION LAWS

Nothing in this policy shall be construed as discouraging the employment of close family members for positions that do not involve direct or indirect supervision. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to otherwise limit the employment opportunities of any person employed by the School District.

Legal References: Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e *et seq.* (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act)

Cross References: Board Policy 401 (Equal Employment Opportunity)

BOARD POLICY 495
St. Cloud Area School District 742
St. Cloud, Minnesota

Adopted: July 17, 2019
Revised: December 16, 2020