



# INDIAN SPRINGS SCHOOL

*Learning through Living*

## **Indian Springs School Code of Personal Conduct** (excerpted from the *Indian Springs School Employee Handbook*)

**General Policy.** The School expects its employees to conduct themselves with the pride and respect associated with their positions. Employees should always use good judgment and discretion and maintain the highest ethical standards in carrying out the School's business. Improper conduct by and between employees, by and between employees and business associates, or by employees toward students, either on school grounds or at any school-sponsored off-campus activity, will not be tolerated. Any employee demonstrating improper conduct will be subject to disciplinary action including termination of employment.

**Ethical Standards for Working With Students.** Indian Springs School is dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and healthy environment that cultivates a love of learning, personal growth, and a sense of integrity and moral courage. The School has promulgated standards to guide the judgments employees make regularly in interactions with students. While the School recognizes that no one makes these judgments perfectly every time, these standards aim to help faculty and staff avoid behavior that may be legal but can still do harm and can signal a larger or growing problem for a teacher or staff member. The School aims to maintain the warm and collegial relations employees enjoy with students but also maintain an atmosphere of trust and security.

Both in person and in other interactions with students and all members of the school community, employees will:

- Always seek to foster students' growth, learning, and autonomy.
- Act as positive role models, in a manner consistent with the mission of the school, including in dealings with other adults.
- Take responsibility for maintaining healthy boundaries with students, consistently conveying to them that while employees care about them, employees' roles are limited to teaching and mentoring.
- Act in full awareness of the imbalance of power in relationships between adults and students, including recent graduates.
- Take responsibility for meeting employees' own emotional needs, and not putting students in a position where they are doing so.
- Agree to help one another, seek help, or both, when uneasy about whether boundaries are being maintained, or when some action seems like an abuse of power.
- Knowing that information has power and value, maintain appropriate confidentiality and discretion about student and school matters, always striving to promote the dignity of others.
- Act promptly, using the School's resources, if the well-being or safety of any member of the community seems threatened.

**Adult-Student Relationships.** Sexual relations and sexually oriented, romantic or suggestive communications between employees and students are strictly prohibited under all circumstances. Suspicion of such conduct must be reported immediately to the administration and to the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

**Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect.** Under Alabama law, every faculty, administrator, or staff employee is a designated reporter and must report any instance in which he or she has reason to believe that a student under the age of 18 is a victim of child abuse or neglect, or that there are circumstances which might reasonably result in abuse or neglect. Such abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual. An employee can meet her or his responsibility under Alabama law and school policy by immediately making a report directly to both (i) the Alabama Department of Human Resources or local law enforcement, and (ii) the Student Support Team at Indian Springs or the Head of School. Filing a report with the school's Student Support Team or Head of School does not replace the State's requirement for a school employee to report suspected incidences of child abuse or neglect directly to DHR or local law enforcement.