DPI-OLS COMPLAINT/REFERRAL MISCONDUCT ALLEGATION CATEGORIES

General information about these categories

- The following list of classification categories is used for consistency to assist the Office of Legal Services in identifying similar conduct for historical reference and general analysis purposes.
- The list is not intended to fully capture or depict the extent or severity of any conduct.
- These designations did not impact or influence decision-making in any way.
- This particular list of categories was applied to misconduct investigations beginning in March 2026. Earlier investigations utilized a more abbreviated, less comprehensive list.

List of misconduct allegation categories and their descriptions

1. **Substance Use**. Use or possession of alcohol or other controlled substance on school property, or being under the influence of a substance while on duty at school.
2. **Criminal, Not Involving Students**. Criminal charges that do not involve students or occur in a school setting. For example, OWI, theft, assault, or disorderly conduct.
3. **Criminal, Not Involving Students – Sexual**. Criminal charges that did not arise out of school employment but are sexual in nature. For example, child pornography, child enticement, sexual assault of anyone – adult or child.
4. **Failure to Report**. Failure to investigate or report allegations of child abuse or neglect (to school or district administration, law enforcement, or CPS, as appropriate).
5. **Financial Impropriety**. Misuse of school funds.
6. **Inappropriate Behavior**. Catch-all for conduct not described in other categories. For example, social media posts or unique, one-off incidents.
7. **Inappropriate Boundaries**. Behavior that crosses appropriate boundaries of a staff-student relationship and reflects more of a peer-to-peer relationship. This includes allegations of suspected grooming. For example, frequent or excessive non-school related communications and discussions that involve inappropriate or non-school related subjects, or sending personal, non-school related photographs such as gym photos and bathroom selfies.
8. **Inappropriate Comments or Language**. Offensive comments made to or about students. For example, slurs or other discriminatory comments, verbal abuse, angry or emotional outbursts, vulgar language, cursing, or comments about a student's body or appearance.
9. **Inappropriate Sexual Behavior**. Romantic or sexual contact with students that is "consensual," with the acknowledgment that that term is not correctly used in instances of staff-student relationships. This includes sending or requesting sexually explicit or intimate photographs and relationships with students who have recently graduated.
10. **Inappropriate Teaching Techniques**. Allegations concerning teacher's choices in the classroom, including inappropriate lesson topics.
11. **Inappropriate Use of District Technology.** Under Wis. Stat. s. 115.31(1)(c)1.a., immoral conduct includes the intentional use of an educational agency's equipment to download, view, solicit, seek, display, or distribute pornographic material.
12. **Neglectful Supervision**. Failure to appropriately supervise students. This includes leaving students unattended, failing to intervene in situations requiring adult intervention, and failing to appropriately secure potentially harmful items.

13. **Physical Assault**. Physical contact with a student that is well outside norms and cannot be interpreted as reasonable. For example, hitting a student on the arm with a ruler, or grabbing a student and pushing them into a wall.
14. **Physical Maltreatment**. Physical contact with a student, which has a disciplinary purpose and may be interpreted as reasonable in some situations. For example, restraint and seclusion that goes too far, or excessive force when engaging in redirection techniques.
15. **Sexual Assault**. This includes A) Sexual contact with students of any intimate area, or non-intimate area (where the intent is sexual), whether or not the contact leads to criminal charges and B) All cases with criminal assault charges where the allegations involve students, even those that do not involve contact.
16. **Unwanted Physical Contact**. Behavior involving unwanted physical contact with a student, which makes the student uncomfortable. For example, non-violent, non-sexual touching of any non-intimate area such as shoulders, back, leg, or neck, or the accidental touching of an intimate area.