

Love Letters from a Student

The Scenario:

Mr. Chen, a new teacher, confides in you that one of his male students is writing him love letters. He doesn't know what to do and asks you for advice. What do you do or advise?

Discussion Begins

What do you do?

What do you advise the new teacher to do?

Do you report? If so, to whom? If so, when? If you don't, what might happen to the student? To Mr. Chen? To you? To your school? To LAUSD?

If you report and the Local Law Enforcement Agency or the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) tells you...

...to **handle it administratively**, what do you do next?

...**they will investigate**, what do you do next?



Legal Response

This situation might be a mere case of student infatuation or it might be a case of Sexual Harassment. In either case, you should connect Mr. Chen with an administrator who can then advise him.

If this is a case of infatuation, someone (Mr. Chen, an administrator, dean, counselor) should discuss appropriate boundaries with the student while not damaging his self-esteem.

If this is a case of Sexual Harassment, you should connect Mr. Chen with the Title IX Complaint Manager as well as an administrator. Follow the steps in the Title IX Policy/ Complaint Procedure Bulletin (BUL-2521.1) and Sexual Harassment Policy Bulletin (BUL-3349.0). Educational Equity can provide training in this area for both students and staff.

If you are an administrator, you should then notify the Local District Operations Coordinator. As appropriate, the Local District Operations Coordinators and/or Division of Human Resources Representatives shall consult with Employee Relations to determine whether they may begin an administrative investigation. Once clearance has been obtained, the administrative investigation shall proceed. If warranted, upon conclusion of the investigation, take appropriate disciplinary action (which might result in a mandatory recommendation for expulsion).

Listen

You may have a strong emotional reaction. However, convey your interest and concern.

Protect

Encourage Mr. Chen to write-up the incident, and speak with his new teacher liaison or supervisor.

Connect

Check-in with Mr. Chen to assure that he has followed through with the recommendations. Every school site has protocols, systems, and resources to support and address student and employee safety and well-being. This is an opportunity for you to get familiar and connect with the procedures, policies, and resources at your school site.

Model

Maintain a professional and calm level of emotions and reactions. Do not express shock or anger at the possible perpetrator or event. By encouraging Mr. Chen to respond in this way, you are modeling professional conduct and promoting a safe learning environment.

Teach

Take this as an opportunity to reflect on how you would handle such a situation.

Emotional Support