

Code of Ethics

Policy Number

6.149

Issue Date

07/01/1996

Effective Date

10/13/2014

Revised Date

N/A

An effective educational program requires the services of individuals of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, all employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships. These standards include the following:

1. The maintenance of just and courteous professional relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others;
2. The maintenance of their own efficiency and knowledge of the developments in their fields of work;
3. The transaction of all official business with the properly designated authorities of the school system;
4. The establishment of friendly and intelligent cooperation between the community and the school system;
5. The representation of the school system on all occasions that the contributions of the school system to the community are positively recognized;
6. The welfare of children as the first concern of the school system when placing professional personnel. The use of pressure on school officials for appointments or transfers is unethical;
7. Restraint from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or selfish propaganda of any kind;
8. The proper use and protection of all school properties, equipment, and materials;
9. The responsibility to make any criticism of other staff members or of the school system directly to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation and then to the director of schools, if necessary; and
10. The regarding of each student as an individual that is due certain rights and respect.

All employees shall observe the code of ethics exhibited with this policy. Any employee found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of their employment. A teacher's violation and/or disregard of the standards set forth in this policy or in the Teacher Code of Ethics set forth in Section 49-5-1001, et seq. of the Tennessee Code Annotated may constitute conduct unbecoming to a member of the teaching profession.¹

Legal Ref.

1. TCA 49-5-501(3)(D); TCA 49-5-1001, et.seq.

Other Ref.

N/A

Related

N/A

Attachments

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Preamble

The educator, believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence and the nurture of democratic principles. Essential to these goals is the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to adhere to the highest ethical standards.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents and of the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct.

The Code of Ethics of the education profession indicates the aspiration of all educators and provides standards by which to judge conduct.

Principle I

Commitment to the Student

The educator strives to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the educator -

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning.
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view.
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress.
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social or cultural background or sexual orientation unfairly;
 - a. Exclude any student from participation in any program.
 - b. Deny benefits to any student.
 - c. Grant any advantage to any student.
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
9. Shall insist on reasonable standards for all students.
10. Shall create a positive atmosphere in and out of the classroom.
11. Shall extend courtesy and respect to all students.
12. Shall treat all students with consistent fairness.¹

Staff members shall use good judgment in their relationships with students beyond their work responsibilities and/or outside the school setting and shall avoid excessive informal and social involvement with individual students. Any appearance of impropriety shall be avoided. Sexual relationships between employees and students shall be prohibited.²

Legal Reference

1. TEA Code of Ethics
2. TCA 39-13-506; TCA 39-13-527

Principle II

Commitment to the Profession

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator -

1. Shall not in an application for a professional position deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications.
2. Shall not misrepresent his or her professional qualifications.
3. Shall not assist entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education or other relevant attribute.
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.
5. Shall not assist a non-educator in the unauthorized practice of teaching.
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague.
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

Ethics

Policy Number

2.133

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04/21/2008

Revised Date

N/A

The Board adopts this Code of Ethics as recommended by the Tennessee School Boards Association as a guide to its members as they provide educational leadership for the youth of our state. The Board further agrees that ethical issues regarding the Board or its members may be referred to the TSBA Advisory Ethics Commission.

ARTICLE I - MY RELATIONS TO THE CHILDREN

Section 1

I will at all times think in terms of “children first,” always determining other important things according to how they affect education and training of children.

Section 2

I will seek to provide equal educational opportunities for all children regardless of ability, race, color, sex, creed or location of residence.

ARTICLE II - MY RELATIONS TO MY COMMUNITY

Section 1

I will endeavor to appraise fairly both the present and future educational needs of the community and to support improvements as finances permit.

Section 2

I will represent at all times the entire school community and refuse to represent special interests or partisan politics.

Section 3

I will endeavor to keep the community informed about the progress and needs of the schools.

ARTICLE III - MY RELATIONS TO TEACHERS AND PERSONNEL

Section 1

I will support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as employees and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff.

Section 2

I will support and protect personnel in performance of their duties.

Section 3

I will not criticize employees publicly but will make such criticism to the director of schools for investigation and action if necessary.

ARTICLE IV - MY RELATIONS WITH OTHER BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1

I will recognize that authority rests only with the Board in official meetings and that the individual member has no legal status outside of such meetings.

Section 2

I will refuse to make promises as to how I will vote on a matter which should properly come before the Board as a whole.

Section 3

I will make decisions only after full discussion of matters at a Board meeting.

Section 4

I will respect the opinion of other members and will accept the principle of "majority rule."

ARTICLE V - MY RELATIONS WITH THE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Section 1

I will support full administrative authority as well as responsibility for the director of schools to properly discharge all professional duties.

Section 2

I will support director of schools accountability for working and requiring staff to work within the framework of policies set up by the Board.

Section 3

I will refer all complaints and concerns to the director of schools.

ARTICLE VI - MY RELATIONS TO MYSELF

Section 1

I will inform myself about my duties and responsibilities and current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by my state and national school boards associations.

Section 2

I will avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest and will refrain from using my Board position for personal or partisan gain.

Legal Ref.

N/A

Other Ref.

N/A

Related

N/A

Attachments

N/A