

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

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- I. An effective educational program requires the services of personnel of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. All employees shall be expected to maintain and promote these qualities. The Board shall also expect all administrative, instructional and support staff members to adhere to the *Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida*, the Code of Ethics for Public Officers and Employees, and the standards set forth in F.S. 112.313.
- II. Administrative and instructional personnel, as defined by Florida Statute, shall be required to complete training on these ethical standards as designated by the Superintendent. All other employees shall be encouraged to participate in training related to professional ethics.
- III. The Superintendent and School Board members shall complete annual ethics training as required by law.
- IV. All employees shall be responsible for reporting misconduct by School Board employees that affects the health, safety or welfare of a student.
- V. Pursuant to F.S. 1001.42(7), the Superintendent may not knowingly sign and transmit to any State official a report of alleged misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student which the Superintendent knows to be false or incorrect, or knowingly fail to adopt policies that require instructional personnel and school administrators to report alleged misconduct by other instructional personnel and school administrators, or that require the investigation of all reports of alleged misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators, if the misconduct affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Violation of these provisions will result in the forfeit of the Superintendent's salary for one (1) year.
- VI. Standards of Ethical Conduct
 - A. Administrators (means those individuals identified in F. S. 1012.01(3), F.S.) shall be guided by and adhere to the following ethical principles:
 1. The administrator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
 2. The administrator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. Therefore,

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the administrator will strive for professional growth and seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.

3. The administrator recognizes the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, students, parents, and other members of the community and therefore strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.
- B. District administrators shall comply with the disciplinary principles listed below. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual administrator's certificate, or other penalties as provide by law.
1. Obligation to the student means the District administrator shall:
 - a) make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b) not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c) not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d) not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e) not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f) not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by F.S. 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46.
 - g) not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is required by State academic standards as adopted in F.A.C. 6A-1.09401, as is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have their student not attend.
 - h) not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.

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- i) not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in F.S. 39.01.
 - j) not harass or discriminate against any student based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. Discrimination based on race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in F.S. 1000.05(4)(a).
 - k) not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - l) keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
 - m) not violate F.S. 553.865(9)(b), which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for the opposite sex on the premises of an educational institution.
 - n) not violate F.S. 1000.071, which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.
2. Obligation to the public means that the District administrator shall:
- a) take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
 - b) not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
 - c) not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
 - d) accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
 - e) offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

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3. Obligation to the profession of education means that the District administrator shall:
- a) maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b) not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
 - c) not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
 - d) not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable efforts to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e) not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
 - f) not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
 - g) not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
 - h) not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
 - i) not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
 - j) not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
 - k) provide upon the request of a certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.

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- l) not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these *Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida* and other applicable Florida statutes and State Board of Education rules.
- m) self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by the District) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt, nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal; judicial or administrative; or investigatory or adjudicatory.

In addition, District administrators shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of F.S. 943.0585(4) (c) and 943.059(4)(c).

- n) report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education rules as defined in F.S. 1012.795(1).
 - o) seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education rules as defined in F.S. 1012.795(1).
 - p) comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission imposing probation, imposing a fine, or restricting the authorized scope of practice.
 - q) as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.
4. No administrative staff member shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect; engage in any business transaction or professional activity; or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of their duties in the public interest.

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5. No administrative staff member shall solicit or accept anything of value including a gift (See F.S. 112.312), loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon an understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the administrator would be influenced thereby.
6. All District administrative staff members shall adhere to the ethical and disciplinary principles enumerated above.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY:

1001.41, 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED:

112.312, 112.313, 112.3142, 1001.42, 1012.01,
1012.22, 1012.23, 1012.27, 1012.796, F.S.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE(S):

6A-10.081

HISTORY:

ADOPTED: _____

REVISION DATE(S): 10/21/2025

FORMERLY: