

Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies

Section 10-145d-400a

(a) PREAMBLE

The Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators is a set of principles which the education profession expects its members to honor and follow. These principles set forth, on behalf of the education profession and the public it serves, standards to guide conduct and the judicious appraisal of conduct in situations that have professional and ethical implications. The Code adheres to the fundamental belief that the student is the foremost reason for the existence of the profession.

The education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professionalism. Therefore, the educator accepts both the public trust and the responsibilities to practice the profession according to the highest possible degree of ethical conduct and standards. Such responsibilities include the commitment to the students, the profession, the community and the family.

Consistent with applicable law, the Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators shall serve as a basis for decisions on issues pertaining to certification and employment. The Code shall apply to all educators holding, applying or completing preparation for a certificate, authorization or permit or other credential from the State Board of Education. For the purposes of this section, "educator" includes superintendents, administrators, teachers, special services professionals, coaches, substitute teachers and paraprofessionals.

(b) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE STUDENT:

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall:

- (A) Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of students as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with students;
- (B) Engage students in the pursuit of truth, knowledge and wisdom and provide access to all points of view without deliberate distortion of content area matter;
- (C) Nurture in students lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, or sexual orientation;
- (D) Foster in students the full understanding, application and preservation of democratic principles and processes; and
- (E) Guide students to acquire the requisite skills and understanding for participatory citizenship and to realize their obligation to be worthy and contributing members of society.

- (F) Assist students in the formulation of worthy, positive goals;
- (G) Promote the right and freedom of students to learn, explore ideas, develop critical thinking, problem solving, and necessary learning skills to acquire the knowledge needed to achieve their full potential;
- (H) Remain steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all students;
- (I) Maintain the confidentiality of information concerning students obtained in the proper course of the educational process, and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice;
- (J) Create an emotionally and physically safe and healthy learning environment for all students; and
- (K) Apply discipline promptly, impartially, appropriately and with compassion.

(c) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession, shall:

- (A) Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession;
- (B) Uphold the professional educator's right to serve effectively;
- (C) Uphold the principle of academic freedom;
- (D) Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment;
- (E) Engage in professional learning to promote and implement research-based best educational practices;
- (F) Assume responsibility for his or her professional development;
- (G) Encourage the participation of educators in the process of educational decision-making;
- (H) Promote the employment of only qualified and fully certificated, authorized or permitted educators;
- (I) Encourage promising, qualified and competent individuals to enter the profession;
- (J) Maintain the confidentiality of information concerning colleagues and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice;
- (K) Honor professional contracts until fulfillment, release, or dissolution mutually agreed upon by all parties to contract;
- (L) Create a culture that encourages purposeful collaboration and dialogue among all stakeholders;
- (M) Promote and maintain ongoing communication among all stakeholders; and
- (N) Provide effective leadership to ensure continuous focus on student achievement.

(d) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

(1) The professional educator, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall:

- (A) Be cognizant of the influence of educators upon the community-at-large; obey local, state and national laws;
- (B) Encourage the community to exercise its responsibility to be involved in the formulation of educational policy;
- (C) Promote the principles and ideals of democratic citizenship; and
- (D) Endeavor to secure equal educational opportunities for all students.

(e) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE STUDENT'S FAMILY

(1) The professional educator in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall:

- (A) Respect the dignity of each family, its culture, customs, and beliefs;
- (B) Promote, respond, and maintain appropriate communications with the family, staff and administration;
- (C) Consider the family's concerns and perspectives on issues involving its children; and
- (D) Encourage participation of the family in the educational process.

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

- (f) **The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the student, shall not:**
- (A) Abuse his or her position as a professional with students for private advantage;
 - (B) Discriminate against students;
 - (C) Sexually or physically harass or abuse students;
 - (D) Emotionally abuse students; or
 - (E) Engage in any misconduct which would put students at risk; and
- (g) **The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession, shall not:**
- (A) Obtain a certificate, authorization, permit or other credential issued by the state board of education or obtain employment by misrepresentation, forgery or fraud;
 - (B) Accept any gratuity, gift or favor that would impair or influence professional decisions or actions;
 - (C) Misrepresent his, her or another's professional qualifications or competencies;
 - (D) Sexually, physically or emotionally harass or abuse district employees;
 - (E) Misuse district funds and/or district property; or
 - (F) Engage in any misconduct which would impair his or her ability to serve effectively in the profession; and
- (h) **The professional educator, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall not:**
- (A) Exploit the educational institution for personal gain;
 - (B) Be convicted in a court of law of a crime involving moral turpitude or of any crime of such nature that violates such public trust; or
 - (C) Knowingly misrepresent facts or make false statements.

Unprofessional conduct is not limited to the descriptors listed above. When in doubt regarding whether a specific course of action constitutes professional or unprofessional conduct, please seek advice from your school district or preparation institution.

(i) Code revision

This Code shall be reviewed for potential revision concurrently with the revision of the Regulations Concerning State Educator Certificates, Permits and Authorizations, by the Connecticut Advisory Council for Teacher Professional Standards. As a part of such reviews, a process shall be established to receive input and comment from all interested parties.

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