

The Board of Trustees of Minidoka County Joint School District No. 331 believes that all employees should act in an ethical manner in all of their interactions with students, with each other and with members of the community. All District employees, where applicable, shall abide by the Principles of the Code of Ethics for Professional Educators Principals as developed by the Professional Standards Commission, approved by the Idaho State Board of Education, and approved by the Idaho Legislature.

[The following sections are new to the district from the ISBA.]

Believing in the worth and dignity of each human being, the professional educator recognizes the supreme importance of pursuing truth, striving toward excellence, nurturing democratic citizenship and safeguarding the freedom to learn and to teach while guaranteeing equal educational opportunity for all. The professional educator accepts the responsibility to practice the profession according to the highest ethical principles. The Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators symbolizes the commitment of all Idaho educators and provides principles by which to judge conduct.

01. Aspirations and Commitments-

- a. The professional educator aspires to stimulate the spirit of inquiry in students and to provide opportunities in the school setting that will help them acquire viable knowledge, skills, and understanding that will meet their needs now and in the future.
- b. The professional educator provides an environment that is safe to the cognitive, physical, and psychological well-being of students and provides opportunities for each student to move toward the realization of his/~~her~~ goals and potential as an effective citizen.
- c. The professional educator, recognizing that students need role models, will act, speak, and teach in such a manner as to exemplify nondiscriminatory behavior and encourage respect for others' cultures and beliefs.
- d. The professional educator is committed to the public good and will help preserve and promote the principles of democracy. He will provide input to the local school board to assist in the board's mission of developing and implementing sound educational policy, while promoting a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged.
- e. The professional educator believes the quality of services rendered by the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens. He strives, therefore, to establish and maintain the highest set of professional principles of behavior, to improve educational practice, and to achieve conditions that attract highly qualified persons to the profession.
- f. The professional educator regards the employment agreement as a pledge to be executed in a manner consistent with the highest ideals of professional service. He believes that sound professional personal relationships with colleagues, governing boards, and community members are built upon integrity, dignity, and mutual respect. The professional educator encourages the practice of the profession only by qualified persons.

02. Principle I – Professional Conduct. A professional educator abides by all federal, state, and local education laws and statutes. Unethical conduct ~~may~~ **shall** include the conviction of any felony or misdemeanor offense ~~as defined by~~ **set forth in** Section 18-110 and Section 18-111 33-1208, Idaho Code. ~~All infractions (traffic) as defined by Section 18-113A, Idaho Code, are excluded.~~

03. Principle II – Educator/Student Relationship. A professional educator maintains a professional relationship with all students, both inside and outside the **physical and virtual** classroom. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or emotional abuse;
- b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
- c. Committing or soliciting any sexual act from any minor or any student regardless of age;
- d. Committing any act of harassment as defined by District policy;
- e. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating a romantic or inappropriate relationship (whether written, verbal, **virtual**, or physical) with a student, regardless of age;
- f. Using inappropriate language including, but not limited to, swearing and improper sexual comments (e.g. sexual innuendoes or sexual idiomatic phrases);
- g. Taking **or possessing** inappropriate ~~pictures~~ **images** (digital, photographic, or video) of students;
- h. Inappropriate contact with any minor or any student regardless of age using electronic media;
- i. Furnishing alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing or encouraging a student to consume alcohol or unauthorized drugs except in a medical emergency; ~~and~~
- j. Conduct that is detrimental to the health or welfare of students; **and,**
- k. **Deliberately falsifying information presented to students.**

04. Principle III – Alcohol and Drugs Use or Possession. A professional educator refrains from the abuse of alcohol or drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Being on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity, home or away, involving students while possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs;
- b. Being on school premises or at any school-sponsored activity, home or away, involving students while possessing, using, or consuming alcohol;
- c. Inappropriate or illegal use of prescription medications on school premises or at any school-sponsored events, home or away;

- d. Inappropriate or illegal use of drugs or alcohol that impairs the individual's ability to function; and
- e. Possession of an illegal drug as defined in Chapter 27, Idaho Code, Uniform Controlled Substances.

05. Principle IV – Professional Integrity. A professional educator exemplifies honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Fraudulently altering or preparing materials for licensure or employment;
- b. Falsifying or deliberately misrepresenting professional qualifications, degrees, academic awards, and related employment history when applying for employment or licensure;
- c. Failure to notify the state at the time of application for licensure of past revocations or suspensions of a certificate or license from another state;
- d. Failure to notify the state at the time of application for licensure of past criminal convictions at the time of application for licensure of any crime violating statutes or rules governing teacher certification;
- e. Falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or deliberately omitting information regarding the evaluation of students or personnel, including improper administration of any standardized tests (changing test answers; copying or teaching identified test items; unauthorized reading of the test to students, etc.);
- f. Falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or deliberately omitting reasons for absences or leaves;
- g. Falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or deliberately omitting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation; ~~and~~,
- h. Falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or deliberately omitting material information on an official evaluation of colleagues, ~~and~~,
- i. Failure to notify the state of any criminal conviction of a crime violating the statutes and/or rules governing teacher certification.

06. Principle V – Funds and Property. A professional educator entrusted with public funds and property honors that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Misuse, or unauthorized use, of public or school-related funds or property;
- b. Failure to account for school funds collected from students, ~~or~~ parents, or patrons;
- c. Submission of fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay;
- d. Co-mingling of public or school-related funds in personal bank account(s);
- e. Use of school ~~computers~~ property for a private ~~business~~ financial gain;

- f. Use of school computers to deliberately view or print pornography; and,
- g. Deliberate use of poor budgeting or accounting practices.

07. Principle VI – Compensation. A professional educator maintains integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or business personnel when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Unauthorized solicitation of students or parents of students to purchase equipment, ~~or~~ supplies, or services from the educator who will directly benefit;
- b. Acceptance of gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
- c. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education; and,
- d. Soliciting, accepting, or receiving a ~~pecuniary~~ financial benefit greater than fifty dollars (\$50) as defined in Section 18-1359(b), Idaho Code.

08. Principle VII – Confidentiality. A professional educator complies with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and employee records, unless disclosure is required or permitted by law. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, personal confidences, health and medical information, family status or income, and assessment or testing results with inappropriate individuals or entities; and
- b. Sharing of confidential information about colleagues obtained through employment practices with inappropriate individuals or entities.

09. Principle VIII – Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment. A professional educator fulfills all terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Abandoning any contract for professional services without the prior written release from the contract by the District;
- b. Willfully refusing to perform the services required by a contract; and,
- c. Abandonment of classroom or failure to provide appropriate supervision of students at school or school-sponsored activities to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

10. Principle IX – Duty to Report. A professional educator reports breaches of the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators and submits reports as required by Idaho Code. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Failure to comply with Section 33-1208A, Idaho Code, (reporting requirements and immunity);
- b. Failure to comply with Section 16-1605, Idaho Code, (reporting of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect);
- c. Failure to comply with Section 33-512B, Idaho Code, (Suicidal tendencies and duty to warn); and
- d. Having knowledge of a violation of the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators and failing to report the violation to an appropriate education official.

11. Principle X - Professionalism. A professional educator ensures just and equitable treatment for all members of the profession in the exercise of academic freedom, professional rights and responsibilities while following generally recognized professional principles. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Any conduct that seriously impairs the Certificate holder's ability to teach or perform his professional duties;
- b. Committing any act of harassment toward a colleague;
- c. Failure to cooperate with the Professional Standards Commission in inquiries, investigations, or hearings;
- d. Using institutional privileges for the promotion of political candidates or for political activities, except for local, state, or national education association elections;
- e. Willfully interfering with the free participation of colleagues in professional associations; and
- f. Taking or possessing inappropriate pictures images (digital, photographic, or video) of colleagues.

Preamble

~~We, the personnel of Minidoka County School District, recognize the responsibility to provide high quality education for all students and commit ourselves to the most ethical conduct in providing this service. In accordance with these responsibilities, any employee:~~

- ~~1. Shall not engage in conduct that is offensive to the ordinary dignity, decency, and morality of others.~~
- ~~2. Shall avoid injury to students and other personnel, their property, reputation, or employment by false or malicious action.~~
- ~~3. Shall not use, distribute or in any way make available any illegal or legal substance recognized as harmful to learning, well being of the students, or advocate the use of any such substances.~~
- ~~4. Shall respect the constitutional right of students and colleagues.~~

- ~~5. Shall treat fairly all persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, disability, age, family status, or national origin.~~
- ~~6. Shall maintain a socially acceptable relationship with colleagues and students. Inappropriate behaviors include but are not limited to touching, sexual misconduct, using foul or vulgar language, inappropriate conversations, or inappropriate writing of notes.~~
- ~~7. Shall keep in confidence information acquired about colleagues and /or students in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purpose or is required by law.~~
- ~~8. Shall not use institutional privileges for private or political gain.~~
- ~~9. Will not commit theft or fraud. Account for all money, equipment or any supplies committed to his or her charge and/or owned by Minidoka County School District or its entities.~~
- ~~10. Shall honestly perform services. Shall use time granted for the purpose for which it is intended.~~
- ~~11. Shall present one's employment qualifications accurately and completely.~~
- ~~12. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent official policies of the school district or educational institution and shall clearly distinguish those views from personal attitudes and opinions.~~
- ~~13. Shall adhere to written school board policies and state and federal laws regarding dismissal, evaluation, and employment practices.~~

~~The principles of this code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision-making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations. This document does not replace specific policies approved by the Board of Trustees. Employees may also be subject to other codes of conduct provided by their individual professional associations or groups.~~

~~Violations of this Code of Ethics shall be dealt with as outlined in this policy's procedure.~~

Violations of this Code of Ethics

- ~~● The procedure is to be handled at the lowest possible administrative level. The site administrator shall discuss the matter informally with the employee involved. A verbal warning may be given for minor violations.~~
- ~~● A repetition of the same minor violation or a more serious violation may result in a written reprimand or further disciplinary action.~~

- ~~• If a solution is not reached to the satisfaction of the site administrator, the matter will be referred to the superintendent/designee.~~
- ~~• The superintendent/designee shall investigate and/or review the allegations and a meeting may be scheduled with all parties involved. The superintendent/designee may suspend the employee with or without pay during the review or until the matter is fully resolved.~~
- ~~• If the investigation finds the employee to have been unethical, and the problem cannot be resolved, the superintendent/designee may submit a request to the Board of Trustees of Minidoka County School District for review.~~
- ~~• If the review by the Board of Trustees determines there has been a violation of this Code of Ethics, a written report may be filed with the appropriate state governing agency, and a recommendation may be made for a plan of improvement, probation, or termination.~~
- ~~• Employees shall be treated with fairness and respect based upon relevant laws and/or district policies.~~



LEGAL REFERENCE:

ADOPTED: July 17, 2000

AMENDED/REVISED: February 22, 2005, June 16, 2008