

Descriptor Term:  
CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

Descriptor Code:  
7.1200

Legal References: G.S. 115C-36, 47; Developed by the North Carolina Professional Practices Commission- June 5, 1997

Cross References: 7.1210 Professional Standards of Conduct and Performance for Teachers;  
7.1600 Employee-Student Relations; 7.1700 Employee Conflict of Interest;  
7.1710 Employee Conduct/Dress

The purpose of this Code of Ethics is to define standards of professional conduct for educators.

The responsibility to teach and the freedom to learn, and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all are essential to the achievement of these principles.

The professional educator shall acknowledge the worth and dignity of every person and demonstrate the pursuit of truth and devotion to excellence, acquire knowledge, and nurture democratic citizenship.

The educator shall exemplify a commitment to the teaching and learning processes with accountability to the students, maintain professional growth, exercise professional judgment, and personify integrity.

The educator shall strive to maintain the respect and confidence of colleagues, students, parents and legal guardians, and the community, and to serve as an appropriate role model.

- A. In order to uphold these commitments, the educator must make commitments to the student to:
1. protect students from conditions within the educator's control that circumvent learning or are detrimental to the health and safety of students;
  2. maintain an appropriate relationship with students in all settings;
  3. not encourage, solicit, or engage in a sexual or romantic relationship with students;
  4. not touch a student in an inappropriate way for personal gratification, with intent to harm, or out of anger;
  5. evaluate students and assign grades based upon the students' demonstrated competencies and performance;
  6. discipline them justly and fairly and not deliberately embarrass or humiliate them;
  7. hold in confidence information learned in professional practice except for professional reasons or in compliance with pertinent regulations or statutes; and
  8. refuses to accept significant gifts, favors, or additional compensation that might influence or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.
- B. In order to uphold these commitments, the educator must make commitments to the school and school system to:

1. utilize available resources to provide a classroom climate conducive to learning to the maximum possible extent;
2. acknowledge the diverse views of students, parents and legal guardians, and colleagues as they work collaboratively to shape educational goals, policies, and decisions;
3. not proselytize for personal viewpoints that are outside the scope of professional practice;
4. Signs a contract in good faith and not abandon contracted professional duties;
5. participate actively in professional decision-making process and support the expression of professional opinions and judgments by colleagues in decision-making processes or due process proceedings; and
6. when acting in an administrative capacity:
  - a. act fairly, consistently, and prudently in the exercise of authority with colleagues, subordinates, students, and parents and legal guardians;
  - b. evaluate the work of other educators using appropriate procedures and established statutes and regulations.;
  - c. protect the rights of others in the educational setting;
  - d. not retaliate, coerce, or intentionally intimidate others in the exercise of rights protected by law; and
  - e. recommend persons for employment, promotion, or transfer according to their professional qualifications, the needs and policies of the system, and according to the law.

C. In order to uphold these commitments, the educator must make to the profession to:

1. provide accurate credentials and information regarding licensure or employment and not knowingly assist others in providing untruthful information.
2. take action to remedy an observed violation of the Code of Ethics and promote understanding of the principles of professional ethics;
3. pursue growth and development in the practice of the profession and use that knowledge in improving the educational opportunities, experiences, and performance of students and colleagues.