

Minooka CCSD 201 Code of Conduct, Professionalism, and Ethics

Section 1. Commitment to Students

Section 2. Commitment to Families

Section 3. Commitment to Fellow Educators

Section 4. Commitment to the Profession

Section 5. Commitment to High Ethical Standards

Glossary

References

Code of Conduct, Professionalism, and Ethics

The School Board, in an effort to operate the District under the highest ethical standards, adopts the following code of ethics for the educators.

Preamble

The Minooka CCSD #201 believes that the education profession consists of one education workforce serving the needs of all students and that the term 'educator' includes all education support professionals.

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 nature 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.

Section 1. Commitment to Students

- 1.1 Treat students in an ethical manner with respect and dignity.
- 1.2 Make the well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making and actions.
- 1.3 Refrain from bias, preferential treatment, giving special advantages, punishment, denying benefits, or excluding from programs based on actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, or culture.

- 1.4 Recognize and demonstrate respect for the unique potential of each student even when there are perceived deficiencies.
- 1.5 Protect students from conditions that are harmful to learning. Students are kept safe and free from danger through a safe environment, proper supervision, adequate planning (foresight) regarding safety issues (preparation for emergencies such as fire, weapons, seizures, fights, and bomb threats).
- 1.6 Commit to the welfare and interests of all students, and refrain from harming students physically or psychologically. Students are not deliberately humiliated, shamed, frightened, degraded, exploited, intimidated, hurt, or placed in danger. No cruel, unusual, demeaning, or excessive punishments are used.
- 1.7 Establish only those relationships that promote the social, emotional, and academic growth of students, and refrain from engaging in any form of sexual relationship or other sexual misconduct with students. The educator refrains from excessive informal and social involvement with individual students.
- 1.8 Report symptoms of abuse and neglect to the proper authorities.
- 1.9 Refrain from advocating, using in front of students at school functions, providing to students controlled and illegal substances. Reporting to work while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics, or any mind-altering substance is unacceptable.
- 1.10 Refrain from disclosing information about students obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
- 1.11 Provide students with access to a variety of responsible points of view, neither distorting nor suppressing subject matter, and creating an environment that allows students to exercise critical judgment.
- 1.12 Assess and grade students' performance carefully, accurately, objectively and impartially. The power of grading shall not be abused.
- 1.13 Use school resources and proprietary materials (funds, machines, supplies, time, property) in the way for which they were intended.
- 1.14 Comply with state regulations, written local school board policies and other applicable state and federal laws.

Section 2. Commitment to Families

- 2.1 Treats families/parents in an ethical manner.
- 2.2 Informs parents about the curriculum, policies, their child's academic progress, difficulties their child has, planned activities such as field trips or controversial topics, their child's absences from

classes and/or tardiness, and potentially harmful experiences while acting within the scope of an educator (Examples include but are not limited to exposure to contagious diseases, accidents or injuries, etc.)

- 2.3 Provides access to all records kept regarding their child (per FERPA) and are invited to interact with educators.
- 2.4 Encourages parents to collaborate in supporting their child's learning and learning environment through regular and meaningful communication.
- 2.5 Maintains confidentiality of students and families. The educator refrains from disclosing confidential/sensitive information about the family, unless it is a case of neglect or abuse. Parents are not talked about to other parents or members of the community and only with staff on a "need to know" basis.
- 2.6 Treats families with respect and does not discriminate against actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, national origin, socio-economic status, religious belief, physical appearance, or parenting style. The dignity of the family, its culture, customs, beliefs, values, and religion are respected.
- 2.7 Promotes adherence to the process of following the chain of command when a parent questions the educator's judgment. If the issue is not resolved, parents are informed as to how to contact the educator's immediate supervisor
- 2.8—Promotes effective and appropriate relationships with families and other stakeholders by maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public relations.
- 2.9 Maintains the highest ethical standard by not exploiting the educator's position of power when supporting students and families in such activities as tutoring, private lessons, private practice, etc.

Section 3. Commitment to Fellow Educators

- 3.1 Treats fellow educators in an ethical manner.
- 3.2 Establishes a relationship of trust and respect by: refraining from deceptively criticizing others; openly communicating concerns directly to the person involved; sharing resources and pertinent information, but refraining from taking the resources of others without permission; being willing to accept suggestions and constructive criticism, showing respect for colleagues with different philosophies; and refraining from embarrassing colleagues in front of students, parents and other educators.
- 3.3 Maintains a positive approach to school life and communicates with other educators in a way that is supportive and does not degrade or demean fellow educators.

- 3.4 Refrains from discussing private information about one educator with another. The educator does not disclose negative information about colleagues unless there is a compelling professional purpose or it is required by law.
- 3.5—Treats fellow educators with courtesy and with respect while engaging in respectful discourse in professional situations. When there is a disagreement, a private meeting is held wherein the problem is explained clearly and in a constructive manner. The educator recognizes that this may not resolve the problem but continues to engage in noncritical, positive dialogue.
- 3.6—Advocates by clearly articulating a problem and researching possible solutions when there is a conflict, when appropriate.
- 3.7 Treats fellow educators with respect and does not discriminate against actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, national origin, socio-economic status, religious belief, physical appearance, or parenting style. The dignity of the educator's culture, customs, beliefs, values, and religion are respected.

Section 4. Commitment to the Profession

- 4.1 Demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional.
- 4.2 Engages in lifelong learning regarding best practices, laws, standards, and current research.
- 4.3 Serves as an advocate for what is in the best interests of students. Advocates for good educational practice. The primary focus of all decisions is "What is best for students?"
- 4.4 Avoids using the position of educator for special personal, religious, political, or economic influence.
- 4.5 Commits to maintaining high standards of professionalism, appearance, and behavior. This expectation includes high standards of using social media and technology responsibly and transparently as outlined by the District's Acceptable Use of Technology Policy.
- 4.6 Ensures licensure is current and applies for only those positions which he/she has qualifications.
- 4.7 Implements federal and state laws regarding education, as well as the policies, rules and regulations of the school district. When a crime is committed that places students in potential physical or emotional jeopardy, or when the crime detracts from the educator's professional standing so as to render him/her unqualified or unfit to perform assigned professional duties and responsibilities, it may be deemed necessary and appropriate to negotiate a separation agreement with the District.
- 4.8 Uses respectful, courteous language, as well as appropriate vocabulary and voice tones. The educator does not use or distribute profane, obscene, vulgar, or indecent matter.

- 4.9 Demonstrates self-control in coping with stressful situations and anger. The educator does not fight, agitate a fight, or attempt bodily harm or injury to another person. The educator avoids conduct offensive to the dignity, decency, and morality of the profession.
- 4.10 Refrains from accepting any gratuity, gift, or favor that could impair or appear to influence professional decisions or action.
- 4.11 Upholds the civil rights of all. The educator does not impede due process.
- 4.12 Refrains from intentionally misrepresenting official policies of the school or educational organizations, and clearly distinguishes those views from his or her own personal opinions.

Section 5. Commitment to High Ethical Standards

- 5.1 Promotes academic honesty as a clearly defined expectation for students. Dishonesty is treated decisively with age-appropriate consequences as outlined within the Student Handbook and any other applicable source documents.
- 5.2 Promotes a learning environment and remains vigilant in fostering that environment wherein all are treated with respect and dignity. This environment promotes inclusivity and does not discriminate against actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, family status, sexual orientation, age, disability, race, national origin, socio-economic status, religious belief, physical appearance, or parenting style. Harassment or discrimination is treated decisively with age-appropriate consequences as outlined within the Student Handbook and any other applicable source documents.
- 5.3 Opposes any form of discrimination including the use of racial slurs or derogatory nicknames and promotes the use of appropriate language and gestures.
- 5.4 Treats everyone with respect, compassion, and honesty while refraining from engaging in behaviors that are physically and/or emotionally cruel.

Glossary

Boundaries

The verbal, physical, emotional and social distances that an educator must maintain in order to ensure structure, security, and predictability in an educational environment. Most often, the boundaries that are transgressed relate to role, time and place. By respecting contracted roles, appropriate working hours, and the location of the learning environment, secure boundaries are in place for all members of the schooling community.

Chain of Command

The chain of command refers to communication levels of authority in the school district. The Chain of Command is instituted to provide stakeholders at all levels with a person they may ask questions or report complaints. The value of having an established Chain of Command is an efficient tool that provides a roadmap when reporting concerns or communicating with school staff members. It is important to begin the process at the lowest level; the Board of Education (BOE) is purposefully the last link in the chain or roadmap.

Culture

The customary beliefs, social forms, and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group, including the characteristic features of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time.

District/school district

This is often referred to as a “local education agency.” A “district” in this document is defined as a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools. This can include charter schools, magnet schools, virtual magnet schools, regional educational school districts, or other entities falling under the definition above.

Educator

Defined within this document to be any individual employed by Minooka CCSD #201. (These employees can include, but are not limited to: Administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, student support personnel, school secretaries, custodians/maintenance, food service personnel, coaches, and any other school staff).

Ethic of care

Responding with compassion to the needs of students.

Harm

The impairment of learning or any potential action which may lead to physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or intellectual damage to a student or a member of the school community.

Professionalism

An individual’s adherence to a set of standards, code of conduct/ethics or collection of qualities that characterize accepted practice within a school setting.

Proprietary Materials

Materials that are protected from unauthorized use by copyright or other forms of intellectual property rights.

Safe environments/Safety and well-being

A school setting which promotes the well-being of all members of the school community and is characterized by the absence of physical, psychological, sexual or emotional harm.

School Community

This term usually refers to those stakeholders invested in the welfare of a school and its community. A school community includes school administrators, teachers, school staff members, students, their parents and families, school board members and other community members.

Sensitive Information

This includes but is not limited to student information and educational records, including medical or counseling records.

Student

A learner enrolled with Minooka CCSD #201.

Technology

Tools, systems, applications and processes that can include, but are not limited to, electronic communications networks such as the internet and electronic devices such as computers, laptops, phones and other hardware/software that deliver text, audio, images, animation, and streaming video.

References

[Illinois Educator Code of Ethics](#) (ISBE Website)

[NEA Code of Ethics](#) (National Education Association Website)

[AAE Code of Ethics](#) (American Association of Education Website)

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