

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE FOR TEACHERS

Policy Code:

7305

The professional standards of this policy apply for all teachers and other certified personnel in the Watauga County Schools. Teachers and other certified personnel are also responsible for compliance with the standards applicable for all school personnel as specified in policy 7300, Staff Responsibilities.

A. TEACHER CONDUCT

The Watauga County Board of Education is dedicated and committed to providing all teachers with opportunities and resources to further their growth as professional educators. To that end, the performance of every teacher is assessed and the teacher is provided with constructive feedback through a formal evaluation and review process targeted to enhance professional growth. In addition, it is the Board's expectation that all teachers, regardless of their years of experience, are capable of and must adhere to certain minimum professional standards of conduct and performance as set forth in this policy. Therefore, all teachers and certified personnel employed by the Board shall:

1. comply with the Code of Ethics, as well as the Code of Professional Practice and Conduct, both for North Carolina Educators;
2. manage students' classroom behavior to minimize disruption to the educational environment and refer students, when necessary, to the administration for disciplinary action;
3. respond to all parent inquiries, complaints and/or concerns in a timely and professional manner;
4. participate in and complete any required professional development activities;
5. participate in a professional manner in all required staff meetings and student academic meetings, including required meetings for students with special needs;
6. complete and transmit all required reports and other documentation in a timely and professional manner;
7. arrive at school each day at an appropriate time designated by the principal ready and prepared to complete all assigned duties.
8. perform all assigned and/or accepted extracurricular and non-instructional duties in a timely and professional manner;
9. faithfully account for all funds collected from students, colleagues, or other parties and not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursements, expenses, or pay;

10. not create or post any inappropriate online content that has an impact on their (or any employee's) ability to do their job, especially if accessible to any student(s), and bear in mind that content created or posted online apart from the WCS network may be viewed by anyone, including students, parents, and other members of the community;
11. use the Watauga County Schools network only in a professional manner as described in policy 7335, Employee Use of Social Media, and 3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use;
12. be respectful in all conduct and communications with students as set forth in policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations, and shall not abuse or exploit any student in person or in electronic communication, including but not limited to the actions listed below. Electronic communications include, but are not limited to, e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, blogging, websites, and social media.
 - a. any use of language that is considered profane, vulgar, or demeaning;
 - b. any sexual act;
 - c. any solicitation of a sexual act, whether written, verbal, or physical;
 - d. any act of child abuse, as defined by law;
 - e. any act of sexual harassment, as defined by law; and
 - f. any intentional solicitation, encouragement, or consummation of a romantic or physical relationship with a student, or any sexual contact with a student. The term "romantic relationship" shall include dating any student.

The failure or unwillingness of a teacher to comply with the professional standards of conduct and performance listed herein may result in contract non-renewal or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. In all matters concerning a teacher's compliance with this policy, consideration shall be given to the impact on the education of a student or group of students and on the overall educational environment of the school.

B. NOTICE OF CRIMINAL OFFENSE

Teachers and all school system employees shall notify the human resources director if they are arrested for, charged with or convicted of a criminal offense (including entering a plea of guilty or *nolo contendere*) other than a minor traffic violation (i.e., speeding, parking or a lesser violation). Notice must be in writing, must include all pertinent facts and must be delivered to the human resources director no later than the next scheduled business day following the arrest, charge or conviction, unless the employee is

hospitalized or incarcerated, in which case the employee must report the alleged violation within 24 hours after his or her release. Upon judicial action in the matter, the employee must report the disposition and pertinent facts in writing to the human resources director no later than the next business day following adjudication.

Failure by an employee to provide timely notice as described above may lead to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

Legal References: G.S. 115C-47, -307, -308; 16 NCAC 6C .0601 and .0602; N.C. General Statute 90-95; Article 14 of G.S. Chapter 126

Cross References: Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (policy 4022/7231), Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace (policy 7240), Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (policy 4021/7230), Staff-Student Relations (policy 4040/7310), Confidential Information (policy 1325/7315), North Carolina Address Confidentiality Program (policy 4250/5075/7316), Technology Responsible Use (policy 3225/4312/7320), Copyright Compliance (policy 3230/7330), Staff Responsibilities (policy 7300), Duty to Report a Criminal Offense (policy 7307), Employee Use of Social Media (policy 7335), Employee Dress and Appearance (policy 7340), Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (policy 5070/7350), Electronically Stored Information Retention (policy 5071/7351), Extracurricular and Non-Instructional Duties (policy 7405), Employee Conflict of Interest (policy 7730)

Adopted: December 14, 2015

Replaces: 3.01.41, Professional Standards of Conduct and Performance for Teachers