

SCHOOL COUNCIL CODE OF ETHICS

Council members shall follow Georgia's Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics for Educators, as modified. A copy of the code of ethics, as modified, is provided below.

THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS And HENRY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Introduction

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Professional Standards Commission has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, ensures the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession, and defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction.

Definitions

“Educator” is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the Professional Standards Commission and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, “educator” also refers to local school council members, paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.

“Student” is any individual enrolled in the state's public or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual age 18 or under.

Standards

Standard 1: Criminal Acts - An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes the commission or conviction of a felony or misdemeanor offense, including DUI/BUI, but excluding minor traffic violations such as speeding, following too closely, improper lane change, etc. As used herein, “conviction” includes a finding or verdict of guilt, a plea of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*.

Standard 2: Abuse of Students - An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: committing any act of child abuse, including physical and emotional abuse; committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment; committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act; committing any act of sexual harassment; soliciting, encouraging, or consummating a romantic or inappropriate

relationship with a student (including dating a student) whether written, verbal, or physical; and furnishing alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs - An educator should refrain from the abuse of alcohol or drugs during the course of service on the council. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: being on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and being on school premises or at a school-sponsored activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming alcohol.

Standard 4: Misrepresentation or Falsification - An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional service on the council. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or omitting professional qualifications, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history; falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or omitting information regarding compliance reports submitted to federal, state, and other governmental agencies; falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or omitting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel; falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or omitting reasons for absences or leaves; and falsifying, deliberately misrepresenting, or omitting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation.

Standard 5: Public Funds and Property - An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to: misusing public or school-related funds or property; failing to account for funds collected from students or parents; and submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.

Standard 6: Improper Remunerative Conduct - An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest.

Standard 7: Confidential Information - An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student records, unless disclosure is required or permitted by law. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to unauthorized sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, personal confidences, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results.

Standard 8: Abandonment of Council Responsibilities - An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations of service as a member of the local school council. Unethical conduct includes failure of a council member to meet the requirements of accountability. *See Article XIII, Accountability, of the Henry County By Laws for School Councils.*

Standard 9: Professional Conduct - An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards. Unethical conduct is any conduct that seriously impairs the council member's ability to function in his or her council position or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students (inappropriate language, physical altercations, etc.).

Reporting

Council members are required to report to the local school council a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics by members of the council.

Disciplinary Action

The local school council is empowered to remove council members. Specifically, see: Article IV, School Council Membership.