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CODE OF ETHICS - SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Preamble

Public education in America rests on firm commitments to the dignity and worth of each individual; to the pre-eminence of enlightenment and reason over force and coercion; and to government by the consent of the governed. Public schools prosper to the extent that they merit the confidence of the people. In judging its schools, society is influenced to a considerable degree by the character and quality of their administration. To meet these challenges school administrators have an obligation to exercise professional leadership.

Society demands that any group that claims the rights, privileges, and status of a profession prove itself worthy through the establishment and maintenance of ethical policies governing the activities of its members. A professional society must demonstrate the capacity and willingness to regulate itself and to set appropriate guides for the ethical conduct of its members. Such obligations are met largely by practitioners through action in a professional society such as the American Association of School Administrators.

Every member of a profession carries a responsibility to act in a manner becoming a professional person. This implies that each school administrator has an inescapable obligation to abide by the ethical standards of his/her profession. The behavior of each is the concern of all. The conduct of any administrator influences the attitude of the public toward the profession and education in general.

These policies of ethical behavior are designed to inspire a quality of behavior that reflects honor and dignity on the profession of school administration. They are not intended as inflexible rules nor unchangeable laws. They serve to measure the propriety of an administrator's behavior in his/her working relationships. They encourage and emphasize those positive attributes of professional conduct which characterize strong and effective administrative leadership.

Policy 1. The professional school administrator constantly upholds the honor and dignity of his/her profession in all his/her actions and relations with pupils, colleagues, school board members, and the public.

Policy 2. The professional school administrator obeys local, state, and national laws; holds himself to high ethical and moral standards, and gives loyalty to his/her country and to the cause of democracy and liberty.

Policy 3. The professional school administrator accepts the responsibility throughout his/her career to master and to contribute to the growing body of specialized knowledge, concepts, and skills which characterize school administration as a profession.

Policy 4. The professional school administrator strives to provide the finest possible educational experiences and opportunities to all persons in the district.

Policy 5. The professional school administrator applying for a position or entering into contractual agreements seeks to preserve and enhance the prestige and status of his/her profession.

Policy 6. The professional school administrator carries out in good faith all policies duly adopted by the local board and the regulations of state authorities and renders professional service to the best of his/her ability.

Policy 7. The professional school administrator honors the public trust of his/her position above any economic or social rewards.

Policy 8. The professional school administrator does not permit considerations of private gain nor personal economic interest to affect the discharge of his/her professional responsibilities.

Policy 9. The professional school administrator recognizes that the public schools are the public's business and seeks to keep the public fully and honestly informed about their schools.

Overview

High standards of ethical behavior for the professional school administrator are essential and are compatible with his/her faith in the power of public education and his/her commitment to leadership in the preservation and strengthening of the public schools. The true sense of high calling comes to the Superintendent of Schools as he/she faces squarely such widely held beliefs as the following:

A. The effectiveness of the schools and their programs is inescapably the responsibility of the Superintendent.

B. Every act, or every failure to act, of the Superintendent has consequences in the schools and in the lives of people.

C. In many situations and to many people in a community the Superintendent is the living symbol of their schools.

D. The public entrusts both the day-by-day well-being and the long range welfare of its children and of its school system to the Superintendent and Board of Education.

E. The ultimate test for a superintendent is the effort which he/she makes to improve the quality of learning opportunity for every child in the schools.

F. In the long run, what happens in and to the public schools of America happens to America.

LEGAL REF.: The AASA Code of Ethics, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, D. C., 1966.