Title: **Professional Standards**
Code: SP 4019.21
Book: Superintendent Policies
Section: Section 4000 - Personnel

Professional Standards

The County Superintendent of Schools expects employees of the Marin County Office of Education (MCOE) to maintain the highest ethical standards, behave professionally, follow MCOE policies and regulations, abide by state and federal laws, and exercise good judgment when interacting with students and other members of the school community. Employees shall engage in conduct that enhances the integrity of the MCOE, advances the goals of the MCOE's educational programs, and contributes to a positive school and work climate.

The County Superintendent of Schools encourages MCOE employees to accept as guiding principles the professional standards and codes of ethics adopted by educational or professional associations to which they may belong.

Each employee is expected to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill their responsibilities and to contribute to the learning and achievement of students.

Inappropriate Conduct

Inappropriate employee conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Engaging in any conduct that endangers students, staff, or others, including, but not limited to, physical violence, threats of violence, or possession of a firearm or other weapon.

2. Engaging in harassing or discriminatory behavior towards students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members, or failing or refusing to intervene when an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying against a student is observed.

3. Physically abusing, sexually abusing, neglecting, or otherwise willfully harming or injuring a child.

4. Engaging in inappropriate socialization or fraternization with a student or soliciting, encouraging, or maintaining an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.

5. Possessing or viewing any pornography on school grounds or while present at a MCOE facility, or possessing or viewing child pornography or other imagery portraying children in a sexualized manner at any time.

6. Using profane, obscene, or abusive language against students, parents/guardians, staff, or community members.

7. Willfully disrupting MCOE or school operations by loud or unreasonable noise or other action.

8. Using tobacco, alcohol, or an illegal or unauthorized substance, or possessing or distributing any controlled substance, while in the workplace, on MCOE property, or at a school-sponsored activity.

9. Being dishonest with students, parents/guardians, staff, or members of the public, including, but not limited to, falsifying information in employment records or other school records.

10. Using the employee's position, privilege or access to obtain confidential information about students, MCOE employees, or MCOE operations for non-MCOE business reasons or to disclose such information to persons or entities not authorized to receive the information. This includes accessing an employee's own or a relative's confidential employee information for personal purposes or private gain.

11. Using MCOE equipment or other MCOE resources for the employee's own commercial purposes or for political activities.

12. Using MCOE equipment or communications devices for personal purposes while on duty, except in an emergency, during scheduled work breaks, or for personal necessity.

    Employees shall be notified that computer files and all electronic communications, including, but not limited to, email and voicemail, are not

private. To ensure proper use, the County Superintendent of Schools or designee may monitor employee usage of MCOE technological resources at any time without the employee's consent.

13. Causing damage to or engaging in theft of property belonging to students, staff, or the MCOE.

14. Wearing inappropriate attire, as more specifically described in Superintendent's Policy 4019.22, Professional Appearance and Personal Care Standards.

Reports of Misconduct

An employee who observes or has evidence of another employee's inappropriate conduct shall immediately report such conduct to their supervisor or the County Superintendent of Schools or designee. An employee who has knowledge of or suspects child abuse or neglect shall file a report pursuant to the MCOE's child abuse reporting procedures as detailed in AR 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting.

Any reports of employee misconduct shall be promptly investigated. Any employee who is found to have engaged in inappropriate conduct in violation of law or Superintendent policy shall be subject to disciplinary action and, in the case of a certificated employee, may be subject to a report to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The County Superintendent of Schools or designee shall notify local law enforcement as appropriate.

An employee who has knowledge of but fails to report inappropriate employee conduct may also be subject to discipline.

The MCOE prohibits retaliation against anyone who files a complaint against an employee or reports an employee's inappropriate conduct. Any employee who retaliates against any such complainant, reporter, or other participant in the MCOE's complaint process shall be subject to discipline.

Notifications

The section(s) of the MCOE's employee code of conduct addressing interactions with students shall be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and shall be posted on school and/or MCOE websites. (Education Code 44050)

Adopted: **August 14, 2025**
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