

Bartlett City Board of Education		5024
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The primary function of the school system is the education of children and youth, and an effective educational program requires the services of men and women of integrity, high ideals, and human understanding. Each employee is expected to represent the school, the District, and the community in a positive manner. To maintain and promote these qualities, employees are expected to maintain high standards in all aspects of their school relationships.¹ These include, but are not limited to, interactions with students, colleagues, and others as a representative of the education profession.

All BCS personnel serve as representatives of the Bartlett City Board of Education and are subject to the BCS professional ethics standards described in this Policy. All teachers are subject to the Teacher Code of Ethics defined in state law and incorporated into this Policy. Failure to meet these standards of behavior will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

BCS Ethics

All BCS employees are responsible for adhering to the following standards of ethical behavior:

1. Maintaining just and courteous professional relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and others;
2. Growing their own efficiency and professional knowledge in their fields of work;
3. Transacting all official business with the properly designated authorities of the District;
4. Establishing friendly and intelligent cooperation between the community and the District;
5. Representing the District's goals and contributions to the community;
6. Placing the welfare of children as the primary concern when making all decisions, including the assignment of personnel. Placing pressure on school officials for appointments or transfers is unethical;
7. Refraining from using school contacts and/or privileges to promote personal enhancement of any kind, regardless of whether such enhancement is to the detriment of the District. Such enhancement includes promotion of partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or self-serving propaganda of any kind;
8. Abiding by established procedures to air complaints and grievances, starting with the school administrator who holds administrative responsibility for addressing the concern;
9. Making any criticism of other staff members or of the school system directly to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation and then to the Superintendent, if necessary;
10. Properly using and protecting all school property, equipment, and materials;
11. Abiding by all applicable federal and state laws;
12. Making reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
13. Making reasonable effort to protect the emotional well-being of the student;
14. Not intentionally exposing the student to embarrassment or disparagement;
15. Not using the employee's professional relationship with a student for private advantage;

¹ T.C.A. §49-5-501; T.C.A. §49-5-1003; T.C.A. §49-5-1004

16. Not disclosing information about a student obtained in the course of the employee's service, unless disclosure of the information is permitted, serves a compelling professional purpose, or is required by law;
17. Not knowingly making false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
18. Ensuring interactions with students take place in transparent and appropriate settings;
19. Not engaging in any sexually related behavior with a student, with or without the student's consent, and such prohibition applies to all sexually related behavior regardless of whether the sexually behavior was communicated to or with the student verbally or nonverbally, or in a written, visual, auditory, physical, virtual, digital, or electronic format. Sexually related behavior includes, but is not limited to, behaviors such as making sexual jokes or sexual remarks, engaging in sexual kidding, sexual teasing or innuendo, pressuring the student for dates or sexual favors, engaging in inappropriate physical touching, groping or grabbing, kissing, threatening physical harm and committing a sexual offense, or violent sexual offense, as those terms are defined in T.C.A. 40-39-202;
20. Not furnish alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs to a student;
21. Striving to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by a student when the student is under the employee's supervision on BCS premises, during school activities, or in any private setting;
22. Refraining from the use of alcohol while on BCS premises or during a school activity during which students are present;
23. Maintaining a professional approach with students at all times;
24. Not disclosing information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
25. Not accepting any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions; and
26. Following all Board policies and District procedures.

All BCS employees shall avoid any conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety between their personal interests, financial or otherwise, and the interests of the District. Concerns about conflict of interest arise when employees may have the opportunity to (a) use institutional privileges for personal gain or (b) influence business decisions of the District in ways that could lead to personal gain or give improper advantage to the employee's family or associate(s). In cases of uncertainty, an employee and/or supervisor should request a ruling from the Superintendent.

Teacher Code of Ethics

The Board expects BCS teachers to complete annual ethics training and to, at all times, adhere to the Teacher Code of Ethics defined in state law. This Code acknowledges an educator's obligations both to students and to the education profession at large.

An educator shall engage students in the following manner:

1. Abide by all applicable federal and state laws;
2. Not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
3. Provide the student with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
4. Respect the constitutional rights of the student;
5. Not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view;
6. Not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the students' progress;
7. Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;

- 1 8. Make reasonable effort to protect the emotional well-being of the student;
- 2 9. Not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement;
- 3 10. Not on the basis of race; color; creed; disability; sex; national origin; marital status; political
- 4 or religious beliefs; family, social, or cultural background; or sexual orientation, unfairly
- 5 exclude the student from participation in any program, deny benefits to the student, or
- 6 grant any advantage to the student;
- 7 11. Not use the educator's professional relationship with the student for private advantage;
- 8 12. Not disclose information about the student obtained in the course of the educator's
- 9 professional service, unless disclosure is permitted, serves a compelling professional
- 10 purpose, or is required by law;
- 11 13. Not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
- 12 14. Ensure interactions with the student take place in transparent and appropriate settings;
- 13 15. Not engage in any sexually related behavior with a student enrolled in the school or LEA
- 14 in which²:
- 15 a. The educator provides instruction to students, serves as an administrator, or
- 16 performs any other official duties as an educator, regardless of whether the
- 17 educator is employed or serves as a volunteer in a teaching or non-teaching role;
- 18 or
- 19 b. The educator has, within the immediately preceding twelve (12) months, provided
- 20 instruction to students, served as an administrator, or performed any other official
- 21 duties as an educator, regardless of whether the educator was employed or served
- 22 as a volunteer in a teaching or non-teaching role; or
- 23 c. A student who, within the immediately preceding twelve (12) months, graduated or
- 24 withdrew from, ceased enrollment in, or completed the highest grade level offered
- 25 by the LEA or school in which the student was formerly enrolled, if, during the
- 26 period for which the student was enrolled in the LEA or school, the educator
- 27 provided instruction to students, served as an administrator, or performed any
- 28 other official duties as an educator, regardless of whether the educator was
- 29 employed or served as a volunteer in a teaching or non-teaching role.
- 30 i. Educators are prohibited from engaging in sexually related behavior
- 31 with a student, with or without the student's consent, and applies to
- 32 all sexually related behavior regardless of whether the sexually
- 33 related behavior was communicated to or with the student verbally or
- 34 nonverbally, or in a written, visual, auditory, physical, virtual, digital,
- 35 or electronic format.
- 36 ii. Sexually related behavior includes, but is not limited to, behaviors
- 37 such as making sexual jokes or sexual remarks; engaging in sexual
- 38 kidding, sexual teasing, or sexual innuendo; pressuring the student
- 39 for dates or sexual favors; engaging in inappropriate physical
- 40 touching, groping, or grabbing; kissing; rape; threatening physical
- 41 harm; and committing sexual assault;
- 42 16. Not furnish alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs to the student;

² T.C.A. 49-5-1008

17. Strive to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by the student when the student is under the educator's supervision on District property, during school activities, or in any private setting;
18. Refrain from the use of alcohol while on District premises or during a school activity at which students are present; and
19. Maintain a professional approach with the student at all times.

In fulfillment of an educator's obligation to his or her profession, the educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically and shall conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the dignity and integrity of the profession. The educator shall not:

1. Deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications in an application for a professional position;
2. Misrepresent the educator's professional qualifications;
3. Assist entry into the teaching profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute;
4. Knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position;
5. Assist a non-educator in the unauthorized practice of teaching;
6. Disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless the disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
7. Knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague;
8. Accept any gratuity, gift, or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions; and
9. Use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Breaching the Teacher Code of Ethics

An educator who has personal knowledge of a breach by another educator of the Teacher Code of Ethics shall report the breach to the educator's immediate supervisor, Superintendent, or the Board within thirty (30) days of discovering the breach.

Failure to report a breach of the Teacher Code of Ethics, or to file a report of any criminal activity or other misconduct that is required by federal or state law, is a breach of the Teacher Code of Ethics.

The BCS Human Resources Department shall ensure that the District conducts annual professional development training concerning the Teacher Code of Ethics and its requirements. The training shall address what constitutes unethical conduct.