

Code of Ethics
Principles of Professional Conduct of the
Education Profession in Florida

Florida Statute 6B-1.006

6B-1.001 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida.

1. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2)(b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2)(b) FS. History - New 3-24-65, Amended 8-9-69, Repromulgated 12-5-74, Amended 8-12-81, 7-6-82, Formerly 6B-1.01.

6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

1. The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.
2. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.
3. Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

- i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Obligation to the public requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
 - b. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
 - c. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
 - d. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
 - e. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.
5. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.
 - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
 - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
 - f. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
 - g. Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
 - h. Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
 - i. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
 - j. Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
 - k. Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
 - l. Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
 - m. Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) any arrests/charges involving the abuse of a child or the

sale and/or possession of a controlled substance. Such notice shall not be considered an admission of guilt nor shall such notice be admissible for any purpose in any proceeding, civil or criminal, administrative or judicial, investigatory or adjudicatory. In addition, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

- n. Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- o. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- p. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.
- q. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2)(b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2), 231.28 FS. History - New 7-6-82, Amended 12-20-83, Formerly 6B-1.06, Amended 8-10-92, 12-29-98.

Policy and Procedure for Reporting Professional Misconduct

All employees of The STAR Center are required by the 2008 Ethics In Education Act to report all instances of alleged employee or administrator misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.

Examples of misconduct include, but are not limited to: obscene language, drug or alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating, testing violations, physical aggression, and acceptance or offer of favors.

If you have personal, first hand information regarding any misconduct, you are required to report it by following the procedures outlined below. If someone tells you about misconduct you should: listen, evaluate, act immediately, document what you've been told, encourage the individual reporting the incident and then REPORT it by following the procedures outlined below.

Procedure for reporting alleged misconduct:

Report IMMEDIATELY in person, or in writing via email, any alleged misconduct to the school's CEO at: drfrankdecaro@starcenterforautism.com.

Allegations with regard to Florida Certified Educators that are found legally sufficient will be reported to the FLOE by the school on the required Educator Misconduct Reporting Form.

All allegations will be investigated by the school within 5 business days. At the administration's discretion and with the advice of counsel, summary results of findings may be disclosed to the reporting individual.

Failure to report alleged misconduct may result in penalties up to termination of employment and revocation of an educator's certificate.

Florida Statutes Regarding Employee Liability Protection

39.203 Immunity from liability in cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.--

(1)(a) Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

(b) Except as provided in this chapter, nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to grant immunity, civil or criminal, to any person suspected of having abused, abandoned, or neglected a child, or committed any illegal act upon or against a child.

(2)(a) No resident or employee of a facility serving children may be subjected to reprisal or discharge because of his or her actions in reporting abuse, abandonment, or neglect pursuant to the requirements of this section.

(b) Any person making a report under this section shall have a civil cause of action for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against any person who causes detrimental changes in the employment status of such reporting party by reason of his or her making such report. Any detrimental change made in the residency or employment status of such person, including, but not limited to, discharge, termination, demotion, transfer, or reduction in pay or benefits or work privileges, or negative evaluations within a prescribed period of time shall establish a rebuttable presumption that such action was retaliatory.

768.095 Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former or current employees.--

An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under chapter 760.

Training Requirements for Standards of Ethical Conduct

All instructional personnel and administrators of The STAR Center must complete training on The STAR Center's adopted standards of ethical conduct. Training will be a part of the annual in-service training prior to the first day of school. Employees who are hired after that training date will be required to complete the training within the first 30 days of employment.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ETHICS IN EDUCATION

In accordance with the Ethics in Education requirements for the Florida Department of Education, I understand and will comply with the following provisions as they pertain to my employment at The STAR Center:

1. I recognize my duty to report and understand the procedures for reporting any alleged employee or administrator misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.
2. As part of my staff training my director has provided an explanation of the employee liability protections provided under ss. 39.203 and 768.095, F.S.
3. I have received training on Code of Ethics and Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida
4. I acknowledge that posted in the school office is a notice that all employees have a duty to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. This notice includes the statewide toll-free abuse hotline number (1-800-96ABUSE). I have also been informed that I have immunity from liability if I report to child protective investigations and I will have a duty to comply with child protective investigations.
5. I also understand that any allegations of misconduct must be reported to the office of Professional Practice Services.

Signature of Employee

Date Signed

Employee's Name (Printed)