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Expectation of Ethical Conduct for St. Johns County Educational Staff	6.106
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1. **Scope.** This rule sets expectations of ethical and professional conduct on the part of District instructional personnel, adjunct athletic coaches and instructional contractors ("District Educators").
2. **Expectation.** All St. Johns County School Board employees are expected to be ethical, professional and civil in all their dealings with students, parents, fellow employees and the public. The School Board finds that unethical, inappropriate or unbecoming conduct by District employees has the potential to disrupt the educational process and damage the reputation and stature of the District, its teachers and staff. The expectation of ethical conduct is particularly high for District Educators.
3. **Standards of Professional Conduct.** District Educators shall abide by The Principles of Professional Conduct of the Education Profession in Florida as set forth in State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081, F.A.C. and paragraphs 4-9 below. Furthermore, District administrative and instructional personnel shall not engage in any act of misconduct that might result in disqualification for employment pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.315 or loss of education certification pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.795.
4. **Ethical Principles.** District Educators shall be guided by the following ethical principles:
 - a. 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.
 - b. 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.
5. **Disciplinary Principles.** District Educators shall comply with the disciplinary principles set forth in paragraphs 6-9 below. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of their educator's certificate or other penalties as provided by law.
6. **Obligation to Students.** Obligation to students requires that the District Educator:

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- 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 provide classroom instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by Florida Statutes 1003.42(2)(n) 3. and 1003.46, F.S.
- g. Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is required by state academic standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have his or her student not attend.
- h. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
- i. Shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in Florida Statute 39.01.
- j. 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. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in Florida Statute 1000.05(4)(a).

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- k. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
- l. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- m. Shall not violate Florida Statute 553.865(9)(b), which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for the opposite sex on the premises of an educational institution.
- n. Shall not violate Florida Statute 1000.071, which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.

7. Obligation to the Public. Obligation to the public requires that the District Educator:

- 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.

8. Obligation to the Profession. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the District Educator:

- 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.

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- 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

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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 Florida Statutes 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c).

- 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 Florida Statute 1012.795(1).
- 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 Florida Statute 1012.795(1).
- p. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission imposing probation, imposing a fine, or restricting the authorized scope of practice.
- q. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

9. Access to Instructional Material. A certificate holder serving as a school principal shall not prevent, direct school personnel to prevent, or allow school personnel to prevent students from accessing any material used in a classroom, made available in a school or classroom library, or included on a reading list unless the certificate holder or his or her designee has reviewed the material and determines it violates the prohibitions in Florida Statute 1006.28(2)(a)2., the material is unavailable to students based upon school board policies adopted to implement Florida Statute 1006.28(2)(d), or it was determined under the District's objection process adopted to implement Florida Statute 1006.28(2)(a)2, that the material violated one of the prohibitions in that section.

10. Training. The Superintendent shall be responsible for training District instructional and administrative personnel in the requirements of this rule.

11. Procedures and Guidelines. The Superintendent is authorized to adopt procedures and guidelines to implement and administer this rule.

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STATUTORY AUTHORITY: **1001.41, 1001.42, 1012.22,
1012.23, F.S.**

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: **1001.42; 1012.315; 1012.796, F.S.**

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULES: **6A-10.081, F.A.C.**

HISTORY: **Adopted: 8/14/18
Revised: 01/13/26**