

BERMUDA EDUCATORS COUNCIL



CODE OF PRACTICE

*Issued under the Authority of the
Bermuda Educators Council Act 2002 Section 17*

1 September 2010

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the Bermuda Educators Council Act 2002 (“the Act”), the principal aims of the Council as set out in section 3(3) of the Act are as follows:

- (a) *to improve standards of teaching so as to enhance the quality of learning; and*
- (b) *to maintain and improve standards of professional conduct of educators in Bermuda (p. 3).*

The purpose of the Code of Practice as set out in section 17 of the Act is to ‘*lay down standards for the professional conduct and practice expected of registered educators*’ in Bermuda. The Council anticipates that this can be accomplished through moral and ethical behaviour by all parties in order to adequately meet the needs of Bermuda’s students.

Therefore, all registered educators in Bermuda are required to comply with all standards of professional and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents and others to ensure the ongoing development of the Bermuda Educational System, both public and private, as included herein this Code of Practice.

The professional educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall obey the laws of Bermuda, the Act, and this Code of Practice as well as respect the various cultures in Bermuda, and demonstrate personal integrity.

Non-compliance could result in the educator becoming the subject of a Disciplinary Order and his/her registration being suspended.

ETHICAL CONDUCT TOWARDS STUDENTS

1. The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students qualities of character that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices. While we as educators strongly affirm that parents are the primary moral teachers of their children, we also believe that all educators, by personal example and direct instructions, are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, loyalty, fidelity and respect for the law, for human life, for others and for self.
2. The professional educator, in accepting his or her position of public trust, measures success by not only the progress of each student toward the realisation of his or her personal potential, but also his or her development as a citizen of the wider community.
3. Therefore, the professional educator:
 - a. deals considerately and justly with each student and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy;
 - b. does not intentionally expose the student to disparagement;

- c. does not reveal confidential information concerning students, unless doing so serves lawful professional or legal purposes;
- d. makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health or safety;
- e. endeavours to present information without distortion, bias or personal prejudice, using methods commensurate with a student's learning style; f. recognises that each student is an individual and that children can differ in their educational requirements;
- g. shall not discriminate against a student on the basis of race, colour, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status or sexual orientation;
- h. accepts an obligation to assist all students under his or her charge to develop their abilities and talents to the fullest extent possible;
- i. recognises that he or she should work with parents or guardians to promote the welfare of their student, particularly by consulting and involving them whenever desirable; and
- j. shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage or to pursue personal relationships.

ETHICAL CONDUCT TOWARD THE TEACHING PROFESSION

- 4. The professional educator assumes responsibility for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence. He or she endeavours to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law and by demonstrating personal integrity.
- 5. Therefore, the professional educator:
 - a. shall comply with the laws of Bermuda, the Act, this Code of Practice and the policies of the Ministry of Education, the school or other educational institution;
 - b. shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the Ministry of Education, the school or other educational institutions;
 - c. shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses or pay;
 - d. shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage;
 - e. shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts or favours that may impair professional judgment or curry special advantage. (This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents or other persons or organisations in recognition of or appreciation for service given);

- f. shall not falsify, deliberately misrepresent or omit professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credits and/or degrees, academic awards, other certification and employment history when applying for employment or when recommending an individual for employment, promotion or certification;
 - g. shall only apply for, accept, offer or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications;
 - h. shall not assist a non-educator in the unauthorised practice of teaching;
 - i. shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (“the CBA”) with the Ministry of Education and/or other educational governing bodies for the duration of the CBA; j. shall not attempt to influence the Minister of Education, the Ministry or Department of Education or any educational board on matters affecting educators unless officially requested by the Minister of Education, the Ministry or Department of Education and/or educational boards;
- k. shall not make public statements that may bring into disrepute the profession, his or her school or the department in which he or she works; l. shall give a fellow educator all the support and help possible to make the educator’s work effective. Senior professional colleagues shall consult and inform a junior educator on matters affecting his or her work and treat him or her with justice and dignity, especially when endeavouring to attain greater efficiency and more ethical professional behaviour in the interest of students and other colleagues;
- m. shall not delegate to an unqualified person, student-focused duties or functions requiring the knowledge and skills of a qualified educator; and n. shall act and dress within both the school and the community in a manner that enhances the prestige of the profession.

ETHICAL CONDUCT TOWARDS COLLEAGUES

- 6. The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.
- 7. Therefore, the professional educator:
 - a. deals considerately and justly with each colleague and seeks to resolve problems according to the laws of Bermuda, the Act, this Code of Practice and school policy;
 - b. shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless doing so serves lawful professional or legal purposes; c. shall not harm others by knowingly and willingly making false statements about a colleague or the Bermuda Educational System;

- d. shall adhere to the laws of Bermuda, the Act, this Code of Practice and written local school policies regarding the hiring, evaluation and dismissal of personnel;
- e. shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, religious or citizenship rights and responsibilities;
- f. shall not be under the influence of, possess, use, supply or consume alcohol, drugs or any other controlled substances on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students;
- g. shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, colour, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status or sexual orientation;
- h. consults in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the professional expertise and with a recognition and understanding of all those educators involved;
- i. should expect to be consulted by his or her supervisors in accordance with the Act whenever a complaint against him or her has been made and before any action is taken;
- j. shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence colleagues or professional decisions;
- k. shall not censure other educators or criticise their work in the hearing of students and/or the general public;
- l. shall report to a senior member of staff if the behaviour of a colleague is seriously in breach of the Act or this Code of Practice;
- m. shall not retaliate or take any adverse action, directly or indirectly, against any individual who has filed a complaint with the Bermuda Educators Council; and
- n. discusses informally and confidentially with a colleague any concern or dissatisfaction he or she may have in relation to that colleague's conduct or quality of work.

ETHICAL CONDUCT TOWARD PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND THE COMMUNITY

- 8. The professional educator recognises that quality education is the common goal of the Bermuda Government, the Ministry and Department of Education and both public and private schools, and that a cooperative effort is essential among these groups to attain that goal.
- 9. Therefore, the professional educator:
 - a. adheres to the laws of Bermuda, the Act and this Code of Practice in all interaction with parents, guardians and the community;

- b. recognises that he or she should work with parents or guardians to promote the welfare of their student, particularly by consulting and involving them whenever desirable;
- c. accepts the right of a parent or guardian to consult him or her, through the proper channels, on the welfare or progress of that parent or guardian's student;
- d. recognises a parent or guardian's right to be consulted about any matter that concerns the future development of his or her child, and shall, therefore, make concerted efforts to communicate to parents or guardians all information that should be revealed in the interest of the student;
- e. shall do nothing to undermine lawful parental authority, but shall be prepared to give advice which, in his or her professional judgment, is in the best interest of the student;
- f. shall make every effort to encourage parents or guardians to interest themselves actively in the education and welfare of their children;
- g. endeavours to understand and respect the values and traditions of diverse cultures represented in the community and in his or her classroom;
- h. demonstrates a positive and active role in school/community relationships and acts within the community in a manner which enhances the prestige of the profession; and
- i. shall not discriminate against or coerce a parent, guardian or other members of the community on the basis of race, colour, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status or sexual orientation.

CONCLUSION

This Code of Conduct comes into force and is effective as of September 1, 2010.

The Bermuda Educators Council pledges its support to all Educators as you undertake one of the most important roles for our island... educating our youth... the future of Bermuda. If you have any questions or need clarification regarding the Code of Practice, do not hesitate to contact the Council at 292.0964.