

Georgia Professional Standards Commission



The Code of Ethics for Georgia Educators 2016-17

Professional Standards Commission

Certification **Educator Preparation** **Ethics**

**Legal Authority
of the PSC Ethics
Division**

20-2-984.1. Adoption of a Code of Ethics.

- (a) It shall be the duty of the commission to adopt **standards of performance and a code of ethics for educators...** which are generally accepted by educators of this state.

20-2-984.1. Adoption of a Code of Ethics.

The standards of performance and code of ethics adopted by the commission shall be limited to professional performance and professional ethics.

The PSC does not care what you do in you personal lives as long as it does not carryover into your professional lives.

Definition of Educator

20-2-982.1.(2) "Educator" means education personnel who hold, have applied for, or been denied certificates, permits, or other certification documents issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

3 Main Duties of Educators

- Teach the Children
- Protect the Students
- Act Professionally and Ethically

TEST

- Name the 3 Richest People in the World
- Name the MVP of the 2015 World Series
- Name the 2016 USA winner
- Name the most recently appointed Supreme Court Justice
- Name 3 teachers who have had a positive impact in your life

What is Ethics?



Ethics

- Knowledge-codes, rules, knowing right from wrong
- Conduct-behavior that aligns with knowledge
- Ethics-courage to execute in the midst of pressure
- Doing what is right when no one is looking

Questions

- Complete the following sentences with an elbow partner....
- The most ethical person I know is.....
- This person is ethical because...

Standard 1

Legal Compliance

Standard 1

**An educator shall
abide by federal,
state, and local
laws and statutes.**

Legal Compliance

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the **commission or conviction** of:

- ⑩ a felony or any crime involving moral turpitude.
- ⑩ any criminal offense involving a controlled substance or marijuana.
- ⑩ any sexual offense specified in Code Section 16.
- ⑩ any laws applicable to the profession.

Standard #1 Legal Compliance

- The Educator found a co-worker's cell phone and debit card in a faculty bathroom. The Educator used the card to make several purchases using the school system's technology

Conduct with Students

Standard 2

An educator shall always
maintain a
professional
relationship with all
students, both in and
outside the classroom.

**A student is
anyone under
the age of
18.**

**OR, a student
enrolled in
grades Pre-K to
12 in a public or
private school.**

**For the purposes of the
Code of Ethics, the
enrollment period for a
graduating student
ends on August 31 of
the year of graduation.**

Sexual Abuse of Students

Revocation

Sexual Relationship with Students

- O. C.G. A.--16-6-5.1
- Person who has supervisory or disciplinary authority over a student who engages in sexual contact with students...
- New thing in Georgia

Sexual Relationship with Student



16-6-5.1

- Jail time
- Age 16-not less than one year nor more than 25 years in jail or a fine not to exceed \$100,000 or both
- Under the age of 16-not less than 25 years nor more than 50 years in jail

Statistics

- 1 in 84 chance of being killed in automobile during lifetime
- Risk of being sexually abused by age 18
 - For Girls-1 in 4
 - For Boys-1 in 6
- Median age-9 years old
- 90% of perpetrators known by family
- 40% inside the home

Standard #2 Conduct With Students

- The Educator engaged in sexual acts with his now ex-wife's teenage daughter for approximately six years. He recorded the acts and sold them for profit

Standard #2 Conduct With Students

- Three videos were posted on Facebook showing the Educator being present when marijuana was being rolled, smoking from a pipe, and allowing students under the age of 18 to consume alcohol

Student Relationship Guidelines

~~E-mail~~

~~Phone Calls~~

Be Friendly, Not a Friend.

~~Gossip~~

~~Parties~~

~~Inappropriate Jokes~~

~~Photographs~~

Student Relationship Guidelines

~~Home~~

Choose

~~Auto~~

**Appropriate
Settings**

~~Dark Room~~

~~Closet~~

Standard 3

Alcohol or Drugs

Standard 3

An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice.

Alcohol

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

- 2. being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages.**

20-2-984.1. The ... code of ethics ... **shall be limited to professional performance and professional ethics.**

Standard #3 Drugs and Alcohol

- The Educator admitted she consumed an alcoholic beverage before and during a school training event being held at a church facility. A witness stated there was an odor of alcohol emanating from the Educator and that she was seen drinking from a Gatorade bottle and putting it back in her bag. The Educator refused to submit to a breath test or allow contents of the bottle to be tested.

Question

- How many Educators are guilty of going to a restaurant on a Friday evening and consuming a bottle of beer or a glass of wine with their meal, and then going to a high school football game?
- What level of intoxication is acceptable when an educator is interacting with students or community members at school events?

Standard 4

Honesty

Standard 4

An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

- 1. professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;**

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, 1
falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

- 2. information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;**

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, 1
falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

**3.information regarding the
evaluation of students and/or
personnel;**

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

4. reasons for absences or leaves;

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

5.information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and

Honesty

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:

6.information submitted in the course of professional practice.

Standard #4 Honesty

- The Educator holds a pre-service certificate and was doing her student teaching. She completed the EdTPA assessment and submitted to Pearson for scoring. The two submissions were 99% and 77% exact wording as another student's submission a year earlier

Standard #4 Honesty

- The Educator requested at least three teachers to sign an IEP meeting attendance sign-in sheet. The Educator admitted these teachers were not in attendance but that the school psychologist was in attendance. The school psychologist said he was testing another student during this time.

Standard 5

Public Funds & Property

Standard 5

An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Public Funds & Property

Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. **misusing public or school-related funds;**
2. **failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;**
3. **submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay;**
4. **co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and**
5. **using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or **authorized designee.****

Standard #5 Public Funds and Property

- The Educator wrote and negotiated unauthorized checks payable to cash or to herself for a total of \$1575 within a six month period from the Pre-K PTA bank account. She was unable to produce receipts to reconcile expenses. She paid restitution to the school system.

Standard 6

Remunerative Conduct

Standard 6

An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Standard #6 Remunerative Conduct

- A parent reported the Educator was charging to tutor students after school during the last half hour of the work day. The Educator initially denied she was charging the students. The parent then provided text messages sent by the teacher telling parents not to tell the administrators. The Educator was suspended and given a letter of direction. She continued to tutor for money

Standard # 6 Remunerative Conduct

- The Educator admitted to giving out of season batting lessons. The Educator did not keep an account of how much money he received for batting lessons. He admitted he knew he could not accept compensation during the season but thought it was okay to charge during the off-season

Standard 7

Confidential Information

Standard 7

An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information.

Confidential Information

- ⑩ Annual performance evaluation records of school personnel
- Health services provided to an insured
- Individual student performance data, information and reports
- School records of students with disabilities
- A student's education record

Standard # 7 Confidential Information

- The Educator works at a GNETS facility. A church friend asked the Educator about a high school student who was dating her daughter. The Educator looked up records in Infinite Campus and provided the friend with academic and discipline records

Standard 8

Abandonment of Contract

An educator shall fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or education agency for the duration of the contract.

Abandonment of Contract

- The PSC expects educators to honor their contracts.
- The PSC has identified circumstances that warrant educators leaving their contracted positions without a release.
- Educators and systems are expected to act professionally and make every effort to minimize the effect on the students experiencing the loss.

Standard #8 Abandonment of Contract

- Current Practice
- The PSC will not sanction a certificate if resignation submitted before June 1
- After June 1, the PSC will not sanction a certificate for spousal transfer requiring unreasonable commute, serious illness in the immediate family which requires Educator to provide care, or a promotion in the field of Education (not higher pay)

Standard #8 Abandonment of Contract

- The Educator signed an employment contract FY 2015 and then requested to be released from the contract to take a position in a neighboring county which was closer to her residence. The request was denied. Subsequently she filed a second request citing medical issues. In all, she filed 4 requests, which were denied. She was charged \$2014 in liquidated damages and reported to the PSC
- Reprimand

Standard 9

Required Reports

An educator shall file reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse, or any other required report.

Requirement

- The law states an educator shall make a report on suspected child abuse immediately and no later than 24 hours

Standard # 9 Required Reports

- The Educator was employed as a high school principal. A counselor reported to him in the fall that she had heard rumors of an inappropriate relationship between a teacher and a student. Previously, a school secretary had reported a similar rumor to him. Two years later, the teacher was arrested and charged with 3 counts of sexual assault.

Standard # 9

- An elementary SWD began making graphic statements that led paraprofessionals in the classroom to believe the student was being sexually abused. They discussed their concerns with the teacher but she did not report it to anyone.

Standard 10

Professional Conduct

Standard 10

An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the teaching profession.

Standard #10 Professional Conduct

- During a dispute between the Educator and the student, the educator engaged in a verbal altercation which involved threatening language. The Educator had been recently removed from coaching due to a verbal altercation with a parent. The Educator was arrested for Terroristic Threats/Acts and simple assault

Standard #10 Professional Conduct

- Multiple students in the Educator's classroom recalled him making derogatory comments towards students. The comments included "pea-brain, stupid, crazy, and ignorant. Several students also said the Educator used profanity

Standard 11

Testing

Standard 11

**An educator shall
administer state
mandated assessments
fairly and ethically.**

Major Testing Violations

- Breach of Test Security
- Fail to provide or attend training
- Fail to follow directions specified in the manual
- Coach, prompt, alter or provide answers to students during the test
- Interpret, explain, or paraphrase test items
- Copy or take notes on test items

Standard # 11 Testing

- The Educator admitted that after administering, collecting, turning in the Spring Georgia Milestone math test, she handed out scraps of paper to her students and asked them to write down questions they thought were difficult. Several students cooperated with the request.

Teacher's Role

- Attend training
- Ensures security of test booklets before, during, and after testing
- Follow directions
- Arrange seats to promote individual work
- Circulate about the classroom to prevent cheating and other violations
- Be familiar with allowable student accommodations
- Account for all testing materials

Lessons Learned

- Establish an environment conducive to student learning and test score improvement
- Require training for all participants with similar information and format at all training sessions
- Require available staff to monitor during testing
- Test security is paramount

Lessons Learned

- Investigate all allegations and complaints thoroughly - consider involvement of outside investigators
- Large increases in student test scores are a red flag
- Having knowledge of testing violations and failing to report jeopardizes teaching certificate
- Superintendents, Principals, and Test Coordinators are ultimately responsible

Enforcing Sanctions

The superintendent and the superintendent's designee for certification shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the superintendent and the superintendent's designee must hold GAPSC certification.

Year Surrender	Denied	Revoked	Voluntary	Total
FY 2005	2593	221	140	
FY 2006	4272	171	131	
FY 2007	2376	261	125	
FY 2008	3354	161	103	
FY 2009	2571	271	123	
FY 2010	1367	281	108	
FY 2011	1858	209	6	
FY 2012	1892	251	135	
FY 2013	1486	281	128	
FY 2014	1899	261	143	
FY 2015	2681	291	136	
FY 2016	568	624		166

Sanctions-July, 2015-July 2016

- Legal compliance-45
- Conduct with Students-83
- Alcohol and Drugs-23
- Honesty-78
- Public Funds and Property-10
- Remunerative Conduct-5
- Confidential Information-1

Sanctions

- Abandonment of Contract-23
- Required Reports-18
- Professional Conduct-58
- Testing-22
- Total-368

RESA Totals

FY 2015

CSRA-31

Chattahoochee-30

Coastal Plains-34

First District-70

Griffin-59

Heart of Georgia-6

Metro-289

Middle Georgia-45

North Georgia-34

FY 2016

CSRA-49

Chattahoochee-37

Coastal Plains-40

First District-68

Griffin-56

Heart of Georgia-15

Metro-375

Middle Georgia-40

North Georgia-23

RESA Totals

FY 2015

NE Georgia-29
NW Georgia-36
Oconee-12
Okefenokee-14
Pioneer-16
SW Georgia-30
West Georgia-26
RESA Avg-48
RESA Total-761

FY 2016

NE Georgia-37
NW Georgia-48
Oconee-17
Okefenokee-14
Pioneer-21
SW Georgia-34
West Georgia-25
RESA Avg-56
RESA Total-899

Open Cases by RESA - Teachers Listed on CPI Report

2015

CSRA-.0063

Chattahoochee-.0094

Coastal Plains-.0097

First District-.0083

Griffin-.0088

Heart of Ga.-.0042

Metro-.0068

Middle Ga.-.0100

2015

North Ga.-.0070

NE Ga.-.0058

NW Ga.-.0050

Oconee-.0123

Okefenokee-.0077

Pioneer-.0032

SW Ga.-.0085

W. Ga.-.0065

Avg.-.0070

ADVICE

- Take testing seriously
- Be friendly but not a friend to the students —you are not their friend but their supervisor and role model
- Honesty and Integrity are important
- Educators are held to higher standards
- Educators are mandated reporters if they are aware of violations of Code of Ethics
- Do not interact with students via social media

Quote From an Educator

- My goal for the school system is NOT to be used as an example in Paul Shaw's power point presentations

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