

EMPLOYEE ETHICS IN EDUCATION

1. **Purpose.** South Tech is committed to promoting the highest standards of ethics and professional conduct by its employees. Any violation of this policy may subject the individual to disciplinary action including termination or revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate or other penalties as provided by law.

2. **Code of Ethics.**

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.

C. 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.

D. The educator will maintain full compliance with the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida Rule 6B-1.006.

3. **Principles of Professional Conduct.** The following obligations constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct of South Tech.

A. Obligation to the student requires that the individual shall:

1. Make a reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
2. Not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
3. Not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
4. Not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
5. Not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
6. Not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
7. Not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort

to assure that each students protected from harassment or discrimination.

8. Not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
9. Keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional services, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

B. Obligation to the public requires that the individual shall:

1. Take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
2. Not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expressions.
3. Not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
4. Not accept a gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
5. Offer no gratuity, gift or favor to obtain special advantages.

C. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual shall:

1. Maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
2. Not discriminate 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.
3. Not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
4. Not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly process of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and further, shall make reasonable effort to assure each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
5. Not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
6. Not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgment of colleagues.
7. Not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
8. Not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.

9. Not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
10. Not withhold information regarding a position from any applicant or misrepresent an assignment or condition of employment.
11. Not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with this policy and applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
12. Self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to the school president 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, individuals shall self-report any arrest, conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty of Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment or arrest.
13. Report to the school president any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules.
14. 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.
15. Comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission imposing probation, imposing a fine, or restricting the authorized scope of practice.
16. Cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate

4. **Training.** South Tech shall provide mandatory training for its employees on the requirements of this policy.

5. **Duty to Report.** All employees of South Tech have an affirmative duty to report all cases of a suspected violation of this policy. In particular, all employees must report misconduct by other school personnel (including instructional personnel and school administrators) which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Any person acting in good faith in the reporting of any instance of child abuse, abandonment or neglect shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

6. **Procedure for Reporting.** Employees who are aware of or who observe misconduct must report it immediately to the school president. All South Tech Academy employees who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is an abused, abandoned, or neglected child shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families' Florida 24 Hour Abuse Hotline (1-800-96 ABUSE), and notify the President immediately thereafter. If an employee becomes

aware of or suspects that the school president is engaging in misconduct, the Employee should immediately report the misconduct to the Chair of the Board of Directors. Employees are urged to document the activities or details of the event.

7. Reporting of Misconduct of Former Employees and Liability.

1. South Tech may not enter into a confidentiality agreement regarding terminated or dismissed instructional personnel or school administrators (or those who resign in lieu of termination), based in whole or in part on misconduct that affects the health, safety or welfare of a student.
2. South Tech may not provide instructional personnel or school administrators with employment references or discuss the personnel's or administrator's performance with prospective employers in another educational setting without disclosing the former employee's misconduct.
3. Under the provisions of §768.095, F.S., if the school president (or president's designee) discloses information about a former or current employee to the employee's prospective employer upon the request of the prospective employer, South Tech shall be immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by South Tech was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee.

Authority: 39.201-39.206, 1012.315,F.S.
Implementation: S. B. 1712, 39.201), F.S., 6B-1.001, 6B-1006
History: New: 12/11/08, Pending Board Adoption
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