

## MSSA Statement of Ethics for Educational Leaders

**MSSA and its members shall act with integrity, model professional behavior, and maintain high expectations for all students, staff and ourselves.** An educational leader's professional conduct must conform to an ethical code of behavior, and the code must set high standards for all educational leaders and commit to serving others above self and promote equity in the practices of the School Administrative Unit. This responsibility requires a leader who:

1. Provides professional leadership across the district and also across the community.
  - a. Knows and upholds the procedures, policies, laws, and regulations relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views; and pursues appropriate measures to correct those laws, policies, and regulations that are not consistent with sound educational goals or that are not in the best interest of children.
    - i. Enhances one's professional effectiveness by staying current with ethical principles and decisions from relevant sources including professional organizations
    - ii. Actively participates in educational and professional organizations and associations
  - b. Advises the school board and implements the board's policies and administrative rules and regulations.
    - i. Advocates for adequate resources and facilities to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.
    - ii. Influence and supports decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services.
    - iii. Ensures equity and non-discrimination in the school administrative unit's hiring practices.
  - c. Engages in professional or personal activity that supports one's effectiveness within the school community; and refrains from using their position for personal gain.
    - i. Avoids relationships with students which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to student learning or well-being or decrease educator effectiveness.
    - ii. Collaborates with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in order to advance students' best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration.
    - iii. Maintains the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public communications.
    - iv. Considers the implications of offering or accepting gifts and/or preferential treatment by vendors or an individual in a position of professional influence or power.
2. Promotes effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues.
  - i. Enhances the professional growth and development of new teachers and administrators by supporting effective field experiences, mentoring or induction activities across the career continuum.
  - ii. Ensures that educators who are assigned to participate as mentors for new educators, cooperating teachers, or other leadership positions are prepared and supervised to assume these roles.
  - iii. Ensures That educators are assigned to positions in accordance with their credentials, preparation, and experience in order to maximize students' opportunities and achievement; and
  - iv. Works To ensure a workplace environment that is free from harassment.
  - v. Honors all contracts until fulfillment, release or dissolution mutually agreed upon by all parties.
3. Maintains standards of exemplary professional conduct while recognizing their actions will be viewed and appraised by the community, professional associates and students.
  - a. Implements professional standards and local, state and national laws.
    - i. Confronts and takes reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the Code of Conduct and maintains fidelity to the Code by taking proactive steps when having reason to believe that another educator may be approaching or involved in an ethically compromising situation.
    - ii. Advocates for adequate resources and facilities to ensure equitable opportunities for all students.
    - iii. Accepts the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure, and training of one's position.
    - iv. Reflects upon and assessing one's professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis; and
    - v. Commits to ongoing professional learning.
  - b. Accepts academic degrees or professional certification only from accredited institutions.
  - c. Acknowledges the need to use technology responsibly and ethically in educational settings.

- d. Fulfills all professional duties with honesty and integrity and always acts in a trustworthy and responsible manner with staff and students.
  - e. Acknowledges the need to use technology responsibly and ethically in educational settings and understands and abide by the district's policy on the use of technology and communication.
    - i. Considers the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology on one's interactions with students, colleagues, and the general public; and exercises prudence in maintaining separate and professional virtual profiles, keeping personal and professional lives distinct.
    - ii. Promotes the benefits of and ~~clarifies~~ the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents, and community members.
    - iii. Knows how to access, document, and use proprietary materials and understands how to recognize and prevent plagiarism by students and educators.
    - iv. Recognizes that some electronic communications are records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and state public access laws and should consider the implications of sharing sensitive information electronically either via professional or personal devices/accounts.
    - v. Is vigilant in identifying, addressing and reporting (when appropriate and in accordance with local district, state, and federal policy) inappropriate and illegal materials/images in electronic or other forms.  
Monitors to the extent practical and appropriately reporting information concerning possible cyberbullying incidents and their potential impact on the student learning environment.
    - vi. Understands the intent of Federal Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) and how it applies to sharing electronic student records; including taking appropriate and reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of student information and educational records stored or transmitted through the use of electronic or computer technology.
4. Acknowledges that he or she serves the schools and community by providing equal educational opportunities to each and every child.
- a. Makes the education and well-being of students the fundamental value of all decision making.
    - i. Strives to attain diversity, equity, and inclusion of all voices and experiences.
    - ii. Conducts research in an ethical and responsible manner with appropriate permission and supervision.
  - b. Supports the principles of due process.
    - i. Respects the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of student communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice.
    - ii. Upholds parents'/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student.
    - iii. Protects the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.
  - c. Protects the civil and human rights of all individuals.
    - i. Seeks to understand students' educational, academic, personal, and social needs as well as students' values, beliefs, and cultural background(s).
    - ii. Respects the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, race, sex, gender, gender expression, language, physical and intellectual ability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, indigenous origin, religion, and all aspects of human identity that have been subjugated within our society.
    - iii. Establishes and maintains an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual safety of all students.
5. Emphasizes accountability and results, strives for increased student achievement, and holds high expectations for each and every student.
- a. Maintains the standards and seeks to improve the effectiveness of the profession through research and continuing professional development.
  - b. Creates learning communities that recognize and value diversity and advocates for equitable access for all students to the highest level of quality public education.
  - c. Facilitates continued self-examination of practices and policies recognizing bias and stereotyping; and adopts guidance and takes actions that ensure that students' success will not be predicted nor predetermined by either real or perceived identities.
  - d. Provides students, regardless of their race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, national origin or disability with equitable opportunities and support to learn in Maine's public schools.
  - e. Seeks to use evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice.

- f. Uses data, data sources, or findings accurately and reliably.
- g. Increases students access to the curriculum, activities, and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience.
- h. Works to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps.

DRAFT