

All Personnel

BP 4119.21

4219.21

CODES OF ETHICS

4319.21

The Governing Board expects district employees to maintain the highest ethical standards, to follow district policies and regulations, and to abide by state and national laws. Employee conduct should enhance the integrity of the district and the goals of the educational program.

The Board encourages district employees to accept as guiding principles the codes of ethics published by professional associations to which they may belong.

(cf. 9271 - Code of Ethics)

Legal Reference:

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

80331-80338 Rules of Conduct for Professional Educators

RULES OF CONDUCT FOR PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS

Note: To replace its former "Code of Ethics," the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing drafted the following Rules of Conduct, which are found in the Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 80331-80338. These Rules of Conduct became effective in February 1989 and are sent out with every teacher credential.

Title 5, Article 3. Rules of Conduct for Professional Educators.

General Provisions.

80331

- (a) These rules are binding upon every person holding a credential or any license to perform educational services under the jurisdiction of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the consequences of any willful breach may be revocation or suspension of the credential, or license, or private admonition of the holder.
- (b) Nothing in these rules is intended to limit or supersede any provision of law relating to the duties and obligations of certificated persons or to the consequences of the violation of such duties and obligations. The prohibition of certain conduct in these rules is not to be interpreted as approval of conduct not specifically cited.
- (c) These rules may be cited and referred to as "Rules of Conduct for Professional Educators".
- (d) The Commission shall complete a study of the effect of these rules and present its findings to the Governor, the Legislature, and the State Board of Education no later than September 1, 1989.
- (e) As used in these rules:
 - (1) "Certificated person" means any person who holds a certificate, permit, credential, or other license authoring the performance of teaching or education-related service in grades K through 12 in California public schools.
 - (2) "Professional employment" means the performance for compensation of teaching or other education-related employment in a position for which certification requirements are set by law.
 - (3) "Confidential information" means information made confidential by Section 35301 of the Education Code; or, information which was provided to the certificated person solely for the purpose of facilitating his/her performance of professional services for or on behalf of the person or employer providing such information.

Professional Candor and Honesty in Letters or Memoranda of Employment Recommendation.

80332

- (a) A certificated person shall not write or sign any letter or memorandum which intentionally omits significant facts, or which states as facts matters which the writer does not know of his/her own knowledge to be true relating to the professional qualifications or personal fitness to perform certificated services of any person whom the writer knows will use the letter or memorandum to obtain professional employment nor shall he/she agree to provide a positive letter of recommendation which misrepresents facts as a condition of resignation or for withdrawing action against the employing agency.

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- (b) This rule has no application to statements identified in the letter or memorandum as personal opinions of the writer but does apply to unqualified statements as fact that which the writer does not know to be true or to statements as fact that which the writer knows to be untrue.

Withdrawal from Professional Employment.

80333

- (a) A certificated person shall not abandon professional employment without good cause.
- (b) "Good cause" includes, but is not necessarily limited to, circumstances not caused by or under the voluntary control of the certificated person.

Unauthorized Private Gain or Advantage.

80334 A certificated person shall not:

- (a) Use for his/her own private gain or advantage or to prejudice the rights or benefits of another person any confidential information relating to students or fellow professionals;
- (b) Use for his/her own private gain or advantage the time, facilities, equipment, or supplies which are the property of his/her employer without the express or clearly implied permission of his/her employer;
- (c) Accept any compensation or benefit or thing of value other than his/her regular compensation for the performance of any service which he/she is required to render in the course and scope of his/her certificated employment. This rule shall not restrict performance of any overtime or supplemental services at the request of the school employer; nor shall it apply to or restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens of minimal value offered and accepted openly from students, parents or other persons in recognition or appreciation of service.

Performance of Unauthorized Professional Services.

80335 A certificated person shall not, after July 1,1989:

- (a) Knowingly, accept an assignment to perform professional services if he or she does not possess a credential authorizing the service to be performed; unless he or she has first exhausted any existing local remedies to correct the situation, has then notified the county superintendent of schools in writing of the incorrect assignment, and the county superintendent of schools has made a determination, within 45 days of receipt of the notification, that the assignment was caused by extraordinary circumstances which make correction impossible, pursuant to the procedures referred to in Education Code Section 44258.9 (g) (2) and (3) .
- (b) Knowingly and willfully assign or require a subordinate certificated person to perform any professional service which the subordinate is not authorized to perform by his or her credential or which is not approved by appropriate governing board authorization, unless he or she has made reasonable attempts to correct the situation but has been unsuccessful, and has notified the county superintendent of schools of those attempts, and the county superintendent of schools has determined, within 45 days of being notified of the assignment, that the assignment was caused by extraordinary circumstances which make correction impossible.

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- (c) Neither (a) nor (b) shall be applicable in a situation where extraordinary circumstances make the correction of the misassignment impossible.
- (d) There shall be no adverse action taken against a certificated person under this rule for actions attributable to circumstances beyond his or her control.

Performance with Impaired Faculties.

80336

- (a) A certificated person shall not:
 - (1) Perform or attempt to perform any duties or services authorized by his or her credential during any period in which he or she knows or is in possession of facts showing that his or her mental or intellectual faculties are substantially impaired for any reason, including but not limited to use of alcohol or any controlled substance.
 - (2) Assign or require or permit a subordinate certificated person to perform any duties authorized by his or her credential during any period in which the superior certificated person knows of his or her own knowledge or is in possession of facts showing that the subordinate certificated person's mental or intellectual faculties are substantially impaired for any reason, including but not limited to use of alcohol or any controlled substance.
- (b) For the purpose of this rule, substantial impairment means a visible inability to perform the usual and customary duties of the position in a manner that does not represent a danger to pupils, employees, or school property. It does not include or mean inability attributable to lack of, or inadequate, professional preparation or education.

Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

80337

No certificated person shall directly or indirectly use or threaten to use any official authority or influence in any manner whatsoever which tends to discourage, restrain, interfere with, coerce, or discriminate against any subordinate or any certificated person who in good faith reports, discloses, divulges, or otherwise brings to the attention of the governing board of a school district, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing or any other public agency authorized to take remedial action, any facts or information relative to actual or suspected violation of any law regulating the duties of persons serving in the public school system, including but not limited to these rules of professional conduct.

Discrimination Prohibited.

80338 A certificated person shall not, without good cause, in the course and scope of his or her certificated employment and solely because of race, color, creed, gender, national origin, handicapping condition or sexual orientation, refuse or fail to perform certificated services for any person.