

## CODE OF ETHICS

The following paragraphs have been included in order to accept Corporate Tax Credit scholarship funds from qualifying parents. We accept this code of ethics with these two caveats:

1. Nothing in these paragraphs shall be construed as limiting our freedom to teach or proclaim the truths of the Bible from the perspective of Windsor Baptist Church's Statement of Faith.
2. Nothing in these paragraphs is to be construed as limiting our duty to protect our students from information that is deemed by us to be harmful to our students.

### **Code of Ethics – Education Profession**

*(Italic text has been added by Windsor Christian Academy. All other text is copied in its entirety from the Department of Education's Office of Professional Practices website: [http://www.fldoe.org/edstandards/code\\_of\\_ethics.asp](http://www.fldoe.org/edstandards/code_of_ethics.asp)*

#### **6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida**

##### **6B-1.001 Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida.**

1. 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~~ *responsible citizenship in our representative republic, the United States of America*. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. 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.
3. 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.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2)(b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2)(b) FS. History - New 3-24-65, Amended 8-9-69, Repromulgated 12-5-74, Amended 8-12-81, 7-6-82, Formerly 6B-1.01.

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**6B-1.006 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.**

1. The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.
2. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.
3. Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
  - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
  - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning *except in the area of learning to do evil as defined by the Bible.*
  - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view. *Windsor Christian Academy's educators are encouraged to develop critical thinking skills in students by teaching them to test all points of view against the unchanging truth of the Bible.*
  - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
  - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
  - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
  - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. *This requirement shall not in any way prohibit or limit the teaching of the whole or any part of the Bible. Windsor Christian Academy makes no apology for the doctrines taught in the Bible.*
  - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
  - i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Obligation to the public requires that the individual:
  - a. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
  - b. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
  - c. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.

- d. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
- e. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.
- 5. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:
  - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
  - b. Shall not 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. *This shall in no way deny Windsor Christian Academy the legal right to hire only those who adhere to Windsor Baptist Church's Statement of Faith.*
  - c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
  - d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
  - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.
  - f. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
  - g. Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
  - h. Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
  - i. Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
  - j. Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
  - k. Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
  - l. Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
  - m. Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) 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, shall self-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

- n. Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- o. Shall 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 as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.
- p. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.
- q. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Specific Authority 229.053(1), 231.546(2)(b) FS. Law Implemented 231.546(2), 231.28 FS. History - New 7-6-82, Amended 12-20-83, Formerly 6B-1.06, Amended 8-10-92, 12-29-98.

### **Employment Screening**

1. **Participating private schools must disqualify from employment any instructional personnel or school administrator who is convicted of an act listed under Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes.**

To comply with this requirement, private schools should review the level 2 criminal history report received for each employee (obtained through the VECHS program) and disqualify any employee convicted of an offense listed in Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes. Please note that private schools must also continue to screen employees for the offenses listed in Section 435.04, Florida Statutes.

2. **Participating private schools must conduct an employment history check before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students.**

This is completed by contacting the individual's previous employer and documenting the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, the private

school must document its efforts.

Please note that there is no standardized format for conducting and documenting employment history checks for private school personnel and administrators; however, verification efforts and findings should be documented in writing and maintained in the individual employee's file.

**3. Participating private schools must screen new instructional personnel or school administrators using the two employee screening tools developed by the Department of Education. New instructional personnel or school administrators are those individuals employed after the law became effective on July 1, 2008.**

a. Professional Practices Database of Disciplinary Action

This database provides access to final orders issued by the Education Practices Commission and displays a summary of any disciplinary action taken against an individual's Florida educator certificate. Private schools should begin using this tool immediately to search the names of all instructional personnel and school administrators hired after July 1, 2008, and document the findings.

**b. Teacher Certification Database (BEC-PASS) \*\*\*UPDATED\*\*\***

This database (also known as the **Bureau of Educator Certification Partnership Access & Services System -- BEC-PASS**) provides information related to an educator's current certification status and employment history data.

Access to this database is available through the Employment Screening Request link on the quick navigation bar when logged in as a private school. The link will redirect the user to the Educator Certification Web site.

On the Educator Certification Web site, private school users may search for a candidate by Social Security number, DOE number, or First and Last Name. If you search by Name and find too many applicants, you can further narrow your search by adding a Date of Birth to the search criteria.

After submitting a candidate for screening, the private school may print the results by selecting the **Print** link at the top, right corner of the screen. Additional

instructions are available in the Web Application User Manual that is accessible by clicking the **Help** link and a Reference Tool has been developed to assist private schools in understanding the Employment Screening responses that you will receive.

Private schools must screen all instructional personnel and school administrator employed after July 1, 2008. The findings may be used to support informed decision making, and the private school should maintain the findings in the individual employee's file.

**Please submit any inquiries related to the Teacher Certification System to EmploymentScreening@fldoe.org.**

### **Duty to Report Misconduct**

The private school standards of ethical conduct must establish the **duty to report**, and **procedures for reporting**, alleged employee or administrator misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. *The procedure for reporting such misconduct is as follows:*

1. *Misconduct of an employee or volunteer shall be reported to our principal, Chris Walters. His cell phone number is 352-328-8428.*
2. *Misconduct of our principal shall be reported to Sandy Register (the head of our school committee). Her home phone number is 352-375-3591.*
3. The standards must provide an **explanation of the employee liability protections** provided under ss. 39.203 and 768.095, F.S.
4. Private schools must post a notice at the school stating that all employees have a duty to report actual cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. The notice must include the statewide toll-free child abuse hotline number 1-800-96ABUSE. *Windsor Christian Academy posts our duty to report child abuse posters in both our entrance alcove next to our student restrooms and just inside our school office door.*

### **39.203 Immunity from liability in cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.--**

(1)(a) Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by this chapter, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any

law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

(b) Except as provided in this chapter, nothing contained in this section shall be deemed to grant immunity, civil or criminal, to any person suspected of having abused, abandoned, or neglected a child, or committed any illegal act upon or against a child.

(2)(a) No resident or employee of a facility serving children may be subjected to reprisal or discharge because of his or her actions in reporting abuse, abandonment, or neglect pursuant to the requirements of this section.

(b) Any person making a report under this section shall have a civil cause of action for appropriate compensatory and punitive damages against any person who causes detrimental changes in the employment status of such reporting party by reason of his or her making such report. Any detrimental change made in the residency or employment status of such person, including, but not limited to, discharge, termination, demotion, transfer, or reduction in pay or benefits or work privileges, or negative evaluations within a prescribed period of time shall establish a rebuttable presumption that such action was retaliatory.

**768.095 Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former or current employees.**--An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under chapter 760.

### **Training on Ethical Conduct**

The standards must require private school instructional personnel and administrators to **complete training** on the adopted standards of ethical conduct. Documentation demonstrating that training was completed by each employee and school administrator will be required as part of the compliance application/renewal process.

### **Disclosure of Misconduct**

**Participating private school must prohibit confidentiality agreements with instructional personnel or school administrators who are dismissed, terminated, or resign in lieu of termination due to misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.** Any reference provided to a potential employer in an educational setting must disclose the misconduct.

### **Posting of Notices**

**Participating private schools must post a notice at the school stating that all employees have a duty to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.** The notice must include the statewide toll-free abuse hotline number (1-800-96ABUSE).