PRINCIPLE I
RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION
The professional educator is aware that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional conduct and responsibility that may be higher than required by law. This entails holding one and other educators to the same ethical standards.

A. The professional educator demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional by:
1. Acknowledging that lack of awareness, knowledge, or understanding of the Code is not, in itself, a defense to a charge of professional conduct;
2. Knowing and upholding the procedures, policies, laws and regulations relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views;
3. Holding oneself responsible for ethical conduct;
4. Monitoring and maintaining sound mental, physical, and emotional health necessary to perform duties and services of any professional assignment; and taking appropriate measures when personal or health-related issues may interfere with work-related duties;
5. Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one’s effectiveness within the school community;
6. Avoiding the use of one’s position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety.

B. The professional educator fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues by:
1. Confronting and taking reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the Code and the implied or explicit demands of a person or organization;
2. Maintaining 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;
3. Neither discriminating nor retaliating against a person on the basis of sex, socio-economic status, and culture; and
4. Neither engaging in nor encouraging frivolous ethical complaints solely to harm or retaliate;
5. Cooperating fully during ethical investigations and proceedings.

C. The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community by:
1. Influencing and supporting decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services;
2. Engaging in respectful discourse regarding issues that impact the profession;
3. Enhancing one’s professional effectiveness by staying current and beyond the school community by:
1. Incorporating into one’s practice state and national standards, including those specific to one’s discipline;
2. Using the Model Code of Educator Ethics and other ethics codes unique to one’s discipline to guide and frame educational decision-making;
3. Advocating for equitable educational opportunities for all students;
4. Accepting the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure, and training of one’s position;
5. Reflecting upon and assessing one’s professional skills, content knowledge, and competency on an ongoing basis; and
6. Committing to ongoing professional learning.

B. The professional educator demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, and professional knowledge by:
1. Appropriately recognizing others’ work by citing data or materials from published, unpublished, or electronic sources when disseminating information;
2. Using developmentally appropriate assessments for the purposes for which they are intended and for which they have been validated to guide educational decisions;
3. Conducting research in an ethical and responsible manner with appropriate permission and supervision;
4. Seeking and using evidence, instructional data, research, and professional knowledge to inform practice.
5. Creating, maintaining, disseminating, storing, retaining and disposing of records and data related to one’s research and practice, in accordance with district policy, state, and federal laws; and
6. Using data, data sources, or findings accurately and reliably.

C. The professional educator acts in the best interest of all students by:
1. Increasing students’ access to the curriculum, activities, and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience;
2. Working to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity, and attainment gaps; and
3. Protecting students from any practice that harms or has the potential to harm students.

PRINCIPLE II
RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE
The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence.

A. The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice by:
1. Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting and socioeconomic context;
2. Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings;
3. Communicating with students in a clear, respectful, and culturally sensitive manner;
4. Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one’s interactions and relationships with students;
5. Considering the implications of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students;
6. Engaging in physical contact with students only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits the student and continually keeps the safety and well-being of the student in mind;
7. Avoiding multiple relationships with students which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to student learning or well-being or decrease educator effectiveness;
8. Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students;
9. Considering the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship with any kind of former student, including but not limited to, any potential harm to the former student, public perception, and the possible impact on the educator’s career. The professional educator ensures that the adult relationship was not started while the former student was in school.

B. The professional educator demonstrates an ethic of care through:
1. Seeking to understand students’ educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as students’ values, beliefs, and cultural context;
2. Respecting the dignity, worth, and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, actual and perceived gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture; and
3. Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and social safety of all students.

C. The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:
1. Respecting 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;
2. Upholding parents’/guardians’ legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student; and
3. Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

PRINCIPLE III
RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS
The professional educator has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and well being of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.

A. The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of students by:
1. Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting and socioeconomic context;
2. Collaborating with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in order to advance students’ best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration; and
3. Maintaining student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:
1. Respecting 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;
2. Upholding parents’/guardians’ legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student; and
3. Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

B. The professional educator fosters effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues by:
1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise;
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully and in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws;
3. Keeping student safety, education, and health paramount by maintaining and sharing educational records appropriately and objectively in accordance with local policies and state and federal laws;
4. Aiding colleagues in a manner that supports academic achievement and champions goals that promote the best interests of students;
5. Enhancing the professional growth and development of new educators by supporting effective field experiences, mentoring or induction activities across the career continuum;
6. Ensuring that educators who are assigned to participate as mentors to new educators or cooperating teachers, or other teacher leadership positions are prepared and supervised to assume these roles;
7. Ensuring that educators are assigned to positions in accordance with their educational credentials, preparation, and experience in order to maximize students’ opportunities and achievement; and
8. Working to ensure a workplace environment that is free from harassment.

C. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:
1. Advocating for policies and laws that the educator supports as promoting the education and well-being of students and families;
2. Collaborating with community agencies, organizations, and individuals in order to advance students’ best interests without regard to personal reward or remuneration; and
3. Maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty, and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public communication.

PRINCIPLE IV
RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY
The professional educator promotes positive relationships and effective interactions, with members of the school community, while maintaining professional boundaries.