

## Principle IV

### Commitment to the Professional Employment Practices

The educator regards the employment agreement as a pledge to be executed both in spirit and, in fact, in a manner consistent with the highest ideals of professional service. He/she believes that sound professional personnel relationships with governing boards are built upon personal integrity, dignity and mutual respect. The educator discourages the practice of his/her profession by unqualified persons.

*In fulfilling his/her obligation to professional employment practices, the educator –*

1. Shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications.
2. Shall apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant, and shall refrain from underbidding or commenting adversely about other candidates.
3. Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
4. Shall give prompt notice to the employing agency of any change in availability of service, and the employing agent shall give prompt notice of change in availability or nature of a position.
5. Shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment, unless these terms have been legally terminated, falsely represented, or substantially altered by unilateral action of the employing agency.
6. Shall conduct professional business through channels, when available, that have been jointly approved by the professional organization and the employing agency.
7. Shall not delegate assigned tasks to unqualified persons.
8. Shall permit no commercial exploitation of his/her professional position.
9. Shall use time granted for the purpose for which it is intended.

## Provisions for Enforcement

*Bylaws, Pennsylvania State Education Association*

### Article IV, Section A.4

The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Commission shall have the power to investigate cases of alleged violations of the PSEA Code of Ethics of the Education Profession. After investigation, due notice, and hearing, the Professional Rights and Responsibilities Commission shall have the power to recommend to the board of directors censure, suspension, or expulsion of any member for violation of the code.

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The Professional Rights and Responsibilities Commission . . . after investigation, due notice, and hearing, shall have the responsibility to recommend to the

board of directors the application of a sanction to any member, individual, or agency.

The board of directors shall have the power to review and to accept, reject, or modify after hearing, if requested, the recommendation of the Professional Rights and Responsibilities Commission . . . .

Any member subject to censure, suspension, or expulsion shall have a right to appear in his or her own behalf before the board of directors. The board of directors shall have the power to reinstate any suspended or expelled member.

### Article X, Section C, Member Discipline

1. A member may be censured, suspended, or expelled for a violation of the appropriate code of ethics of the Association or for conduct which is inconsistent with the Association's stated purpose or objectives.  
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3. A charged member shall be provided with due process guarantees.

### Code Development

It is the duty of the PSEA Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities to maintain a continuous review of the "Code of Ethics of the Education Profession." Amendments or revision of the Code shall be presented for approval to the PSEA House of Delegates.

### Interpretations of the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

A request for interpretation of the Code shall be in writing and shall describe the matter to be interpreted in sufficient detail to enable the members of the Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities to evaluate the request in all its aspects.

### PSEA Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities

*Changes in the above text may not be made in reprints without permission of the Commission.*



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COMMISSION ON  
PROFESSIONAL RIGHTS AND  
RESPONSIBILITIES

## Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

*Adopted by the  
PSEA House of Delegates  
December 1968*

*Amended May 1971,  
May 1992, May 2006, May 2010*

# Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

Adopted by the PSEA House of Delegates, December 1968  
Amended May 1971, May 1992, May 2006, May 2010

## **PREAMBLE**

*The educator believes in the worth and dignity of each human being and recognizes the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nature of democratic citizenship. The educator regards as essential to these goals the protection of freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal educational opportunity for all. The educator accepts the responsibility to practice his/her profession according to the highest ethical standards.*

*The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility he/she has accepted in choosing a career in education, and engages himself/herself, individually and collectively with other educators, to judge his/her colleagues, and to be judged by them, in accordance with the provisions of this code.*

## **Principle I**

### **Commitment to the Student**

The educator measures his/her success by the progress of each student toward realization of his/her potential as a worthy and effective citizen. The educator, therefore, works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

#### *In fulfilling his/her obligation to the student, the educator —*

1. Shall not without just cause restrain the student from independent action in his/her pursuit of learning, and shall not without just cause deny the student access to varying points of view.
2. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter for which he/she bears responsibility.
3. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
4. Shall conduct professional business in such a way that he/she does not expose the student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
5. Shall not on the ground of race, color, creed, gender, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation exclude any student from participation in or deny him/her benefits under any program, nor grant any discriminatory consideration or advantage.
6. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage.
7. Shall keep in confidence information that has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
8. Shall not tutor for remuneration students assigned to his/her classes, unless no other qualified teacher is reasonably available.

## **Principle II**

### **Commitment to the Public**

The educator believes that patriotism in its highest form requires dedication to the principles of our democratic heritage. He/she shares with all other citizens the responsibility for the development of sound public policy and assumes full political and citizenship responsibilities. The educator bears particular responsibility for the development of policy relating to the extension of educational opportunities for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public.

#### *In fulfilling his/her obligation to the public, the educator —*

1. Shall not misrepresent an institution or organization with which he/she is affiliated, and shall take adequate precautions to distinguish between his/her personal and institutional or organizational views.
2. Shall not knowingly distort or misrepresent the facts concerning educational matters in direct and indirect public expressions.
3. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
4. Shall not use institutional privileges for private gain or to promote political candidates or partisan political activities.
5. Shall accept no gratuities, gifts, or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment, nor offer any favor, service, or thing of value to obtain special advantage.

## **Principle III**

### **Commitment to the Profession**

The educator believes that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influence the nation and its citizens. He/she, therefore, exerts every effort to raise professional standards, to improve his/her service, to promote a climate in which the exercise of professional judgment is encouraged, and to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education. Aware of the value of united effort, he/she contributes actively to the support, planning, and programs of professional organizations.

#### *In fulfilling his/her obligation to the profession, the educator —*

1. Shall not discriminate on the ground of race, color, creed, gender, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation for membership in professional organizations, nor interfere with the free participation of colleagues in the affairs of their association.
2. Shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities.
3. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues.
4. Shall withhold and safeguard information acquired about colleagues in the course of employment, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
5. Shall not refuse to participate in a professional inquiry when requested by an appropriate professional association.
6. Shall provide upon the request of the aggrieved party a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
7. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications.
8. Shall not knowingly distort evaluations of colleagues.