

FACULTY HANDBOOK

MONTOURSVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL

MONTOURSVILLE AREA HIGH SCHOOL | [700 MULBERRY STREET MONTOURSVILLE, PA 17754]

MISSION STATEMENT	2
PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION--HIGH SCHOOL.....	2
AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM	3
CLASS ADVISOR GUIDELINES	4
POSITION ON SERIOUS DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS	4
PROFESSIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	5
GRADING POLICIES	6
PASS/FAIL OPTION	6
MIDTERMS AND FINAL EXAMS	7
RECORDING GRADES	7
REQUIREMENTS FOR EVENTUAL PROMOTION OF FAILING PUPILS.....	8
ATTENDANCE RECORDS	8
LOCKERS	8
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOLDERS	9
DISCIPLINE INFORMATION.....	9
DETENTION.....	9
IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION.....	9
SATURDAY SCHOOL DETENTION	9
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	10
TELEPHONE CALLS.....	10
FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES	10
PENNSYLVANIA’S CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS	12

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Montoursville Area School District is to provide comprehensive programs that emphasize the Pennsylvania and National Academic Standards. This will empower all students to use their individual abilities and capabilities to be life-long learners and successful contributors to a global society.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION--HIGH SCHOOL

Our service of providing educational growth with all its ramifications takes into consideration the socio-economic nature of the community we are serving now and the future needs of this citizenry as they remain in this locale or migrate to other areas of the world. Our goals are based on the premise that we are serving a community which is about 60 percent rural and 40 percent suburban with a diversity of occupations and industry with a curve distribution slightly above normal in regard to wealth, intelligence, social habits, and aspirations.

It is our desire to provide the necessary vehicle so that our pupils will react now, and in the future, as rational, sensible, and humane citizens destined to live a purposeful life with a profound respect for the dignity of mankind.

We recognize the right of all students to a type of education that will permit them to perform in and effectively contribute to our changing democratic society and that will allow them to respect the personal and property rights of its citizens.

The formal curriculum, as well as the activities and other facets of the school program, is important and is designed to accommodate a wide range of differences and the many ramifications with regard to the pupil's present needs as well as their future potential.

We recognize and must prepare the student with a background in the fundamental skills that will serve as foundations for future and specialized learning. In addition to these fundamentals, certain immediate post high school employment-oriented needs should also be accommodated.

We feel that a wholesome, day-to-day, present state of mental outlook, attitudes and physical well-being are important to the pupils now and will affect their future. We shall, through our resources, try to maintain and cultivate this wholesomeness.

The student-teacher-parent relationship is to be viewed as one of mutual respect, trust, and consideration for the efforts, rights, and positions of each.

It is our intent to have the educational process occur in an orderly but friendly and unrepressed atmosphere. Paramount is each student's right to an education without interference from others.

The final decisions, although made by the administration and/or the school board, shall take into serious consideration opinions, ideas, and facts presented by the faculty, students, or the general public. It is important that avenues of communication be kept open and uninhibited so that a free exchange among these parties may occur.

It is our primary commission to teach, to foster learning and to encourage each pupil to achieve his/her potential.

Revised July 2002

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

To substantiate our philosophy, we set forth the following aims and objectives:

- I. A pupil-centered educational program shall be provided. This program shall consider each pupil as an individual with individual differences in ability, interests, aptitudes, emotions, needs, and personality. It shall be our task to develop the individual pupil to the fullest extent possible with the resources available and in accordance with the Strategic Plan and the Pennsylvania Academic Standards.
- II. The educational program shall provide the pupil with a fundamental core of knowledge, concepts, and ideas so that future learning in a complex and changing world shall be aided and encouraged.
- III. The educational program shall develop deep, worthwhile, and lasting values and attitudes in the pupil. These values and attitudes shall enable the student to have the moral fiber to make decisions that will be of benefit both to the student and to society. Sound values and attitudes which will lead to sound, worthy decisions shall be developed through the formal curriculum and day-to-day activities.
- IV. The program shall develop in the student an appreciation for a democratic free society and a keen respect for the human dignity of all people.
- V. The educational program shall be more than the acquiring of facts and knowledge through formal classroom instruction. The co-curricular program must make a fundamental contribution to the worthy development of the individual pupil. Under no circumstances shall the student be exploited or imposed upon regardless of the benefits to other individuals, groups, or the school that might accrue.
- VI. The educational program shall be as broad as possible to accommodate the range of socio-economic backgrounds of the student body.
- VII. Since the world is in a continuous state of change, the educational program shall change as research, study, and careful consideration dictate. This program shall be implemented with the policies, procedures, practices, and techniques best suited to the individual teacher and student.
- VIII. To utilize all resources both human and physical in the attainment of desirable goals requires avenues of communication among the faculty, administration, and school board. Each shall respect the integrity, dignity, opinions, deeds, and areas of operation of the other.
- IX. The program shall develop in pupils a critical, analytical, logical, rational thought process approach to problem solving, forming opinions, drawing conclusions and arriving at decisions. This shall be encouraged and employed in all contacts with the pupils both in the formal and informal areas of education

Revised July 2012

CLASS ADVISOR GUIDELINES

There are particular guidelines to assist class advisors in managing students and funds over the course of four years. Certain milestones must be accomplished at specific times; the following is a rough outline for the four years of class advising:

Junior Prom -	\$4,000.00
Yearbook Donation (\$500 per Year) -	\$2,000.00
Baccalaureate/Graduation -	\$900.00
Miscellaneous Class Items, i.e., pizza parties, etc. - _____	\$400.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES -	\$7,300.00

Fundraisers or buyouts should be conducted to raise the money needed to cover the expenditures.

9 th Grade -	Organize class structure and fundraiser.
10 th Grade -	At the end of the sophomore year, reserve a location for the Junior-Senior Prom in advance. Work with the high school administration on both location and date of the prom. Additionally, reserve a photographer and music for the event.
11 th Grade -	During this year, a prom committee should be formed so that students can select a theme, prom court, decorations, favors, etc. for the prom. After the prom, the class must prepare a song for Class Day.
12 th Grade -	Remind students about graduation requirements, and then work toward preparing the Class Day slide show and program. The mantle should also be prepped for transfer to the Junior class president.

Plan to conduct regularly scheduled class meetings.

POSITION ON SERIOUS DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS

We believe that in the end, the primary objective of discipline is to produce an enlightened change of behavior on the part of the student. Discipline should never degenerate to a simple reflexive punishment reaction to a seemingly deserving student. We prefer to assume that the more severe discipline problems have rational (on the part of the student at least) motivating forces; it is our professional responsibility to uncover and deal with these forces in a calm and humane manner.

Punishment at best is a temporary and possibly necessary expediency in dealing with a discipline problem. Punishment alone may even complicate and intensify an undesirable situation rather than correct it.

The entire professional staff should, whenever possible, approach the problems from the point of view of reconciling the motivating forces. The administration, guidance staff, and health service staff, in cooperation with the teaching staff, is in a favorable position to pursue this course of action.

It is also recognized that the classroom teacher, in dealing directly with a group, is forced at times to use expedient, short range measures of coping with problems; whereas, the other personnel enumerated above, can and should use a long-range approach to resolving the problem. Classroom teachers not directly involved, may contribute in a wholesome positive manner to the solution of discipline problems, friendly counseling, change in classes, etc.

We must also recognize that many of the problems require patience and effort applied over a rather lengthy period of time.

The entire staff should be ever alert to anticipating problems and resolving them before they develop into a "showdown" situation.

The entire staff must realize that the formal educational phase of a pupil's life is a relatively major part of their life and affects them for the rest of their life. Many times, a school's discipline problems may be met quickly and expediently if only the school scene is to be considered. But the big question is--In the course of eliminating our discipline problems, are we creating a problem which the pupil and society must cope with and finance for many years to come? This long-range consideration of the pupil's well-being must be kept constantly in view.

PROFESSIONAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to general responsibilities below, please refer to the Pennsylvania Professional Code of Conduct distributed at the beginning of each school year and on Page 13 of this handbook.

Teachers will be required to meet the following responsibilities:

1. All measures outlined in the Health and Safety Plans for COVID-19 will be followed.
2. Maintain a Google Classroom presence that would allow for remote learning.
3. Be in the respective place of responsibility at times designated by the building principal. Teachers are to be in their rooms or in the hall adjacent to their rooms. Teachers not assigned to specific tasks will be assigned to other areas of the building for the purpose of supervising students. Teachers who have coaching duties will report to their coaching assignments after the students have dismissed.
4. Be prompt about starting the regular activities of the school day.
5. Be familiar with each pupil's capabilities so that their work can be evaluated according to their own ability. Do not compare students with older brothers or sisters.
6. Be familiar with each student's background, needs, and interests.
7. Be ethical and professional and exercise good judgment in all dealings with students, faculty and parents. Do not discuss students with parents other than their own.
8. Be concerned about the safety and welfare of all students.
9. Assist in supervising the conduct of the pupils in the hallways, lavatories, cafeteria, auditorium, gymnasium, and on the school grounds as well as in the classroom. **Students are not to sit on windowsills, tables or desktops.** Teachers will not send more than one student to the restroom at one time. Do not send two students to the office on an errand if one can do the job.
10. **Station yourself in the hall while classes are passing and do not leave classes or study halls unattended at any time.**
11. Attend all faculty and department meetings unless excused by the principal.
12. Do not excuse students from school or send them on errands for any reason. Pupils are to report to the office for permission to leave the building.
13. Refrain from soliciting or collecting any money from pupils for any project without the consent of the principal.
14. Make suggestions to the administration on matters that would increase the effectiveness of the instructional program.

15. Remain in the building during working hours unless permission to leave is granted by the building principal.
16. Submit a copy of the lesson plans for the following week on your individual website by first school day of each week. Lesson plans should contain enough information to allow a substitute teacher to carry out the lesson. Title of book, page number, topic to be covered, worksheets etc. would be very helpful.
17. Maintain classroom control so that effective teaching and learning can take place.
18. Submit all reports on time and have them complete and exact.
- 19. Teachers are expected to be in attendance at all assemblies.**
20. Perform such other duties as may be assigned by the administration.
21. **Check and reply to your e-mail on a daily basis.**

GRADING POLICIES

In our school, all subjects are graded on a percentage basis. However, one should not assume that a passing percentage guarantees that credit has been earned. A percentage above 70 is required to earn credit, but it is not the sole factor in the determination of a grade. Other criteria for earning credit may include:

- (A) Satisfactory completion of all assignments required by the teacher; e.g. book reports, term papers, and projects. etc.
- (B) Taking and completing all tests and quizzes.
- (C) Daily attendance in class except when the absence is properly authorized.
- (D) Punctuality in daily class attendance.
- (E) Follow-through in making all necessary arrangements for making up work missed because of absence from class.
- (F) Effort in other areas required by the teacher; e.g. class participation, maintaining a notebook, etc.

At the beginning of the course, teachers will provide a written statement of all course requirements for students. Students will be given an opportunity to sign a paper stating that they have "read and understand" the requirements. All course requirements must be approved by the administration. However, teachers have the academic freedom to determine how their various requirements will be scored for determining grades based on a points system.

Student records should be maintained in the on-line grade book in such a manner as to verify a student's grade at any given time. Remember that your record of a student's achievements is an accounting of that student's activities and should be auditable.

PASS/FAIL OPTION

Students in grades 10, 11 and 12 may select one elective course per year to be taken pass/fail. An **elective course** is defined as a course beyond the minimum required for graduation (i.e. once three math or science credits have been passed, then an additional math or science course may be considered elective in nature and taken pass/fail). The following guidelines apply to the pass/fail option:

- ◆ The requirements and standards for the students who select the pass/fail option would be the same as other students in the course.
- ◆ Once the selection of the pass/fail option has been made, this may not be changed.
- ◆ The pass/fail grade will be determined by a number grade (cut off for passing is 70%).

- ◆ The final pass/fail grade will be determined by the average numerical grade from the four marking periods, the Mid-term examination and the final examination.
- ◆ The required courses in English, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education may not be taken pass/fail.
- ◆ Pass/fail courses will **NOT** be computed in class rank.
- ◆ Tutored courses may **NOT** be taken pass/fail.
- ◆ Summer courses taken pass/fail will count as a pass/fail selection for the following school year.
- ◆ Courses not taken at Montoursville High School may **NOT** be considered pass/fail.
- ◆ When any course is dropped after the approved change period, the replacement course may **NOT** be taken pass/fail.
- ◆ Signed parent permission will be required for the pass/fail option.
- ◆ Students may select the pass/fail option the week following the approved course change period. Students do not have to choose this option.
- ◆ **Students may NOT take weighted courses Pass/Fail**

MIDTERMS AND FINAL EXAMS

Midterm and Final Exams will be administered by the teacher. Midterms and Finals will be administered during a regular class day with no alteration to the bell schedule. Mid-Terms and Finals count as follows:

1. Mid-Terms and Final Exams will be given in all core courses.
2. Electives will be determined by the teacher of the elective.
3. The exams can be written or project-based.
4. AP Exams – The teacher of the AP course will determine how this is used.
5. Mid-Term exam grades will not appear on the report card until the end of the school year. This will give individual teachers flexibility in scheduling mid-term exams at natural breaks in the curriculum.
6. The Mid-Term and Final are averaged together and make up 20% of the final course grade.

RECORDING GRADES

Progress report grades will be entered in the computer as per printed schedule (approximately 4-1/2 weeks). The guidance office will print progress reports and mail them home as per printed schedule.

Grades for the nine-week's period will be entered in the computer as per printed schedule.

A great deal of care should be taken in the correction of assignments. It is strongly recommended for legal implications that students not assist with the correction of assignments. Teacher on-line grade books are to be updated by 8:00 A.M. each Monday morning or the first day of the work week. The following guidelines to return and post grades to the portal are suggested for timely return of assigned work to students:

Type of Assignment	School Days
Daily Homework	Within 3 Days
Objective Quizzes	Within 3 Days
Quizzes with Writing	Within 5 Days
Objective Tests	Within 5 Days
Tests with Writings/Essays	Within 7 Days
Short Writings (1 to 2 pages) & Short Projects	Within 7 Days
Intermediate Writings (3-5 pages)	Within 10 Days

Major Writings (6 or more pages) & Major Projects	Within 14 Days
Summer Projects	Within 21 Days (Beginning of School)

REQUIREMENTS FOR EVENTUAL PROMOTION OF FAILING PUPILS

1. Repeat the failed course in a regular class during the school year.
2. Make up the failure during a regular summer school program.
3. The failure may be made up on a tutorial basis.
 - a. The tutor and the teacher who failed the student should meet to better coordinate the program to meet the needs of the individual student.
 - b. The instruction must be given at some time other than the normal school hours.
 - c. The teacher/tutor is to be compensated for instruction given at the rate determined by the teacher. The estimate of total time and price will be completed before instruction begins

All the make-up routes except 1 and 2 above must have prior approval of the administration.

Students may not tutor more than 2 courses per school year.

Students receiving a grade of 50% or higher will have a minimum of 15 tutored hours. Students receiving below a grade of 50%, will require a minimum of 30 tutored hours.

The teacher doing the tutoring must be certified in the subject field that is being tutored.

On a cumulative record card, both the failing grade and the new, tutored grade will be listed. The original grade is used in figuring the class rank.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

1. On the first day of school, each homeroom teacher will receive a Roll Sheet. Some students on your list may not report. Try to learn from the other students why they did not enroll and write the reason after the name. After the first day of school, please notify the office of any discrepancies.
2. On each school day of the year, the first period teacher is responsible for reporting attendance to the office, via on-line reporting. Teachers shall assume personal responsibility for attendance reporting. **DO NOT PERMIT STUDENTS TO TAKE ATTENDANCE.**
3. **Pupils will be required to present an excuse to the attendance office within three days after they return to school following an absence.**
4. **Accurate attendance reporting MUST be observed.**

LOCKERS

The office will issue lockers and combinations. This information is located on the student's schedule that they receive on the first day of school. Students should be reminded to keep that information confidential.

Combination locks are available for lockers in the boys' and girls' locker rooms. A deposit of \$2.00 is required for each lock that will be refunded when the lock is returned in satisfactory condition. A pupil may keep the lock for his entire school career.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER FOLDERS

All teachers must prepare a folder for substitute teachers. Each folder will contain the following:

1. seating charts
2. time schedules
- 3. student attendance sheet (Please instruct the substitute teacher to send this to the office)**
4. any other information the substitute should be made aware of
5. a copy of the weekly lesson plan
6. routine first-aid practices
7. a copy of the district's Sexual Harassment Policy
- 8. Emergency Procedures Manual**

DISCIPLINE INFORMATION

Refer to the Student Handbook for the complete Discipline and Responsibility Guidelines of our students. Below is a summary of some of the consequences used for inappropriate actions.

DETENTION

A detention hall will be maintained on Monday and Wednesday from 3:20 until 4:05 p.m. Detention hall assignments should be placed in the Assistant Principal's mailbox the day the detention is assigned.

All students should have a one-day notice of detention assignments, and those students who ride the bus should have a two-day notice so that the parents may make the necessary arrangements for transportation.

Any student who accumulates a total of 10 hours of detention will be turned over to the assistant principal for further disciplinary action. At this point a letter will be sent to their parents.

Teachers who assign detention **MUST** contact the parents by phone to alert the parents of the student's behavior.

Students who fail to take detention within two weeks of the assigned date will be placed in Saturday school detention.

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (MOTIVATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER)

An in-school suspension room may be maintained Monday and Wednesday from 8:20 a.m. until 3:15 p.m.

If a student is assigned to in-school suspension, he or she may not participate in any school related activity that day. This includes practice for any activity.

SATURDAY SCHOOL DETENTION

Saturday School takes place at Montoursville Area High School from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. will not be admitted and will face further disciplinary action.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination prohibited by Titles VII and IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act. Both the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission have attempted to define sexual harassment by issuing guidelines. The purpose of Montoursville Area School Board Policy 4096 is to provide a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is hereby prohibited. Furthermore, the purpose of the policy is to eliminate unacceptable behavior in the workplace without intruding on the friendly social relationships that flourish in a healthy work and school environment. Any sexual harassment allegations should be reported immediately to the building principal unless he/she is the focus of the report. In the case the principal is the focus, it should be reported to the Superintendent.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Telephone calls should be made from the faculty room phone or by using the phone in the classroom.

BUILDING SURVEILLANCE CAMERA NOTICE

The Montoursville Area School District uses electronic video surveillance system in its schools. This system covers the interior and exterior of the district's buildings and grounds to protect district property and ensure the safety of students, staff, community, and visitors. District surveillance cameras will only be utilized in public areas where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy and in areas deemed to be at risk for either vandalism or student misconduct. Any activities detected through use of video surveillance cameras that present a violation of school rules, breach of security, or possible criminal activity will be reported immediately to the appropriate authority and appropriate disciplinary action will be administered and/or criminal charges filed consistent with Board policy and procedures. Appropriate signage will be posted at entrances to the school campus and/or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff and the general public of the District's use of surveillance cameras.

SCHOOL BUS AND VAN SURVEILLANCE CAMERA NOTICE

Employees should be aware that Montoursville Area School District school buses and vans have cameras monitoring bus/van passengers and drivers. The cameras record both video and audio at different locations throughout each bus and van. Camera recordings are reviewed by school officials for discipline and safety purposes and may be provided to police or used in school disciplinary proceedings. Employees should understand that their actions while on school buses and vans will be recorded; therefore, they should have no expectation of privacy when riding school buses or vans. Riding school buses and vans constitutes consent to the recordings by the surveillance cameras.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

In the event of a fire drill, teachers should make sure all windows are closed, utilities are turned off and all doors closed. Students should observe the following rules:

1. Walk to the designated exit. **DO NOT RUN**
2. Be orderly--no talking or horseplay is permitted
3. Proceed to the exit designated.
4. Follow the instructions of the teacher carefully.
5. Stay with your group.

Teachers should be sure to take attendance sheets with them in order to take careful attendance outside. This is extremely important!

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS
and
ASSIGNED RECOVERY AREA MONITORS

<u>EXIT</u>	<u>PRIMARY MONITOR</u>	<u>BACK-UP MONITOR</u>	<u>REPORT TO</u>
<u>Front Door</u> (Main Entrance – Mulberry St) 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207 300, 301, 301C, 302, 303, 304, 306 USE NORTH STAIR TOWER Black Box Theater	Barbour	Smith	Musto
<u>Side Door</u> (Side Entrance – Practice Field) 209, 210, 211, 212, 213 309, 310, 311, 312, 313 Cafeteria USE MIDDLE TOWER	Cozza	DeLong	Temple
<u>Back Door</u> (Back Entrance – Service Drive) 214, 215, 216, 217, 219 314, 315, 316, 317, 319 <i>(Past courtyard)</i> Coaches’s Room, Training Room	Wentzler	S. Trick	King
<u>Art Room Doors</u> (Art Patio – Practice Field) Art Rooms – 105, 107	Fuller	Lechler	Temple
<u>Aux Gym Doors</u> (Aux Gym Entrance – DO Parking Lot) Boys’ and Girls’ Locker Rooms	Keefer	Ostrander	King
<u>Music</u> (Nearest Exit to Student Parking Lot – NW) Band, Chorus, Music Rooms, Dressing Rooms	Gist/C. Morgan	Earl	Musto
<u>Second floor Band Wing:</u> 223, 224, 225, 226, 228, 229, 230, 231, 233	Mazzante	Earl	Musto
<u>Shops</u> (Rear exit of your respective shop)	MacInnis	Woolever	King

Students should continue to move away from the building until the last student is at least 30 feet from the exit.
Office personnel (REPORT TO COLUMN) will get the reports from the PRIMARY/BACK-UP MONITOR.
Office personnel (REPORT TO COLUMN) will report to the Building Principal.

PENNSYLVANIA'S CODE OF PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE AND CONDUCT FOR EDUCATORS

Section 1. Mission

The Professional Standards and Practices Commission is committed to providing leadership for improving the quality of education in this Commonwealth by establishing high standards for preparation, certification, practice and ethical conduct in the teaching profession.

Section 2. Introduction

(a) Professional conduct defines interactions between the individual educator and students, the employing agencies and other professionals. Generally, the responsibility for professional conduct rests with the individual professional educator. However, in this Commonwealth, a Code of Professional Practice and Conduct (Code) for certificated educators is required by statute and violation of specified sections of the Code may constitute a basis for public or private reprimand. Violations of the Code may also be used as supporting evidence, though may not constitute an independent basis, for the suspension or revocation of a certificate. The Professional Standards and Practices Commission (PSPC) was charged by the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. § § 12-1251 - 12-1268), known as the Teacher Certification Law, with adopting a Code by July 1, 1991. See 24 P. S. § 12-1255(a)(10).

(b) This chapter makes explicit the values of the education profession. When individuals become educators in this Commonwealth, they make a moral commitment to uphold these values.

Section 3. Purpose

(a) Professional educators in this Commonwealth believe that the quality of their services directly influences the Nation and its citizens. Professional educators recognize their obligation to provide services and to conduct themselves in a manner which places the highest esteem on human rights and dignity. Professional educators seek to ensure that every student receives the highest quality of service and that every professional maintains a high level of competence from entry through ongoing professional development. Professional educators are responsible for the development of sound educational policy and obligated to implement that policy and its programs to the public.

(b) Professional educators recognize their primary responsibility to the student and the development of the student's potential. Central to that development is the professional educator's valuing the worth and dignity of every person, student and colleague alike; the pursuit of truth; devotion to excellence; acquisition of knowledge; and democratic principles. To those ends, the educator engages in continuing professional development and keeps current with research and technology. Educators encourage and support the use of resources that best serve the interests and needs of students. Within the context of professional excellence, the educator and student together explore the challenge and the dignity of the human experience.

Section 4. Practices

(a) Professional practices are behaviors and attitudes that are based on a set of values that the professional education community believes and accepts. These values are evidenced by the professional educator's conduct toward students and colleagues, and the educator's employer and community. When teacher candidates become professional educators in this Commonwealth, they are expected to abide by this section.

(b) Professional educators are expected to abide by the following:

(1) Professional educators shall abide by the Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § § 1-101 - 27-

2702), other school laws of the Commonwealth, sections 1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4) of the Public Employee Relations Act (43 P. S. § 1101.1201(a)(1), (2) and (4) and (b)(1), (2) and (4)) and this chapter.

(2) Professional educators shall be prepared, and legally certified, in their areas of assignment.

Educators may not be assigned or willingly accept assignments they are not certified to fulfill.

Educators may be assigned to or accept assignments outside their certification area on a temporary, short-term, emergency basis. Examples: a teacher certified in English filling in a class period for a physical education teacher who has that day become ill; a substitute teacher certified in elementary education employed as a librarian for several days until the district can locate and employ a permanent substitute teacher certified in library science.

(3) Professional educators shall maintain high levels of competence throughout their careers.

(4) Professional educators shall exhibit consistent and equitable treatment of students, fellow educators and parents. They shall respect the civil rights of all and not discriminate on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status, disabling condition or vocational interest. This list of bases or discrimination is not all-inclusive.

(5) Professional educators shall accept the value of diversity in educational practice. Diversity requires educators to have a range of methodologies and to request the necessary tools for effective teaching and learning.

(6) Professional educators shall impart to their students principles of good citizenship and societal responsibility.

(7) Professional educators shall exhibit acceptable and professional language and communication skills. Their verbal and written communications with parents, students and staff shall reflect sensitivity to the fundamental human rights of dignity, privacy and respect.

(8) Professional educators shall be open-minded, knowledgeable and use appropriate judgment and communication skills when responding to an issue within the educational environment.

(9) Professional educators shall keep in confidence information obtained in confidence in the course of professional service unless required to be disclosed by law or by clear and compelling professional necessity as determined by the professional educator.

(10) Professional educators shall exert reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions which interfere with learning or are harmful to the student's health and safety.

Section 5. Conduct

Individual professional conduct reflects upon the practices, values, integrity and reputation of the profession. Violation of § § 235.6-235.11 may constitute an independent basis for private or public reprimand, and may be used as supporting evidence in cases of certification suspension and revocation.

Section 6. Legal obligations

(a) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by the act of December 12, 1973 (P. L. 397, No. 141) (24 P. S. § 12-1251-12-1268), known as the Teacher Certification Law.

(b) The professional educator may not engage in conduct prohibited by:

(1) The Public School Code of 1949 (24 P. S. § 1-101-27-2702) and other laws relating to the schools or the education of children.

(2) The applicable laws of the Commonwealth establishing ethics of public officials and public employees, including the act of October 4, 1978 (P. L. 883, No. 170) (65 P. S. § 401-413), known as the Public Official and Employee Ethics Law.

(c) Violation of subsection (b) shall have been found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.

Section 7. Certification

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Accept employment, when not properly certificated, in a position for which certification is required.
- (2) Assist entry into or continuance in the education profession of an unqualified person.
- (3) Employ, or recommend for employment, a person who is not certificated appropriately for the position.

Section 8. Civil Rights

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Discriminate on the basis of race, National or ethnic origin, culture, religion, sex or sexual orientation, marital status, age, political beliefs, socioeconomic status; disabling condition or vocational interest against a student or fellow professional. This list of bases of discrimination is not all-inclusive. This discrimination shall be found to exist by an agency of proper jurisdiction to be considered an independent basis for discipline.
- (2) Interfere with a student's or colleague's exercise of political and civil rights and responsibilities.

Section 9. Improper personal or financial gain

- (1) Accept gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgment.
- (2) Exploit a professional relationship for personal gain or advantage.

Section 10. Relationships with students

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Knowingly and intentionally distort or misrepresent evaluations of students.
- (2) Knowingly and intentionally misrepresent subject matter or curriculum.
- (3) Sexually harass or engage in sexual relationships with students.
- (4) Knowingly and intentionally withhold evidence from the proper authorities about violations of the legal obligations as defined within this section.

Section 11. Professional relationships

The professional educator may not:

- (1) Knowingly and intentionally deny or impede a colleague in the exercise or enjoyment of a professional right or privilege in being an educator.
- (2) Knowingly and intentionally distort evaluations of colleagues.
- (3) Sexually harass a fellow employee.
- (4) Use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional decisions of colleagues.
- (5) Threaten, coerce or discriminate against a colleague who in good faith reports or discloses to a governing agency actual or suspected violations of law, agency regulations or standards.

Frequently Asked Questions

Act 31 – Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Requirements

All health-related licensees/certificate holders and funeral directors are considered “mandatory reports” under section 6 of the Child Protective Services Law (23 P.S. § 6311). Therefore, all persons applying for issuance of an initial license or certificate from any of the health-related boards (except the State Board of Veterinary Medicine) or from the State Board of Funeral Directors are required to complete, as a condition of licensure, 3 hours of training approved by the Department of Human Services (DHS) on the topic of child abuse recognition and reporting.

As a condition of biennial renewal, you are required to complete 2 hours of approved training on the topic of child abuse recognition and reporting from an approved provider. If your license is close to expiration, we recommend that you check with the approved provider of your course to confirm the time-frame in which they plan to submit the results.

Continuing education results must be submitted electronically from the provider. This process can take up to seven days. If you have questions regarding the submission of the continuing education, please contact the approved provider directly before contacting the Board.

For more information on the mandatory reporting requirements, please visit <http://keepkidssafe.pa.gov/>

For additional frequently asked questions on Act 31, [click here](#)