

Ethical Concerns and Policies

1. Standards of Ethical Conduct toward Students

- A. The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students, character qualities that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices. We strongly affirm parents as the primary moral educators of their children. Nevertheless, we believe all educators are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, loyalty, fidelity, and respect-for the law, for human life, for others, and for self.
- B. The professional educator deals considerately and justly with each student, and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy.
- C. The professional educator does not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
- D. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning students, unless required by law.
- E. The professional educator makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
- F. The professional educator endeavors to present facts without distortion, bias, or personal prejudice.
- G. The professional educator shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view nor deny a student's legal rights.
- H. The professional educator shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, handicapping condition, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
- I. The professional educator shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

2. Standards of Ethical Conduct toward Colleagues

- A. The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.
- B. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless required by law.
- C. The professional educator does not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- D. The professional educators shall not discriminate or deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization based on race, color, religion, gender, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified.

3. Training Requirement

All instructional personnel and Administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct which occurs during Teacher-In-Service week at the beginning of every school year or during new teacher orientation.

4. Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators

All employees have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional or administrative staff which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors.

Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to the school Administrator.

Reports of misconduct committed by the Administrator should be made to a member of the administrative staff or a current board member.

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional or administrative personnel which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the staff handbook and on our website at www.covenantacademyfl.org.

5. Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

- **Signs of Physical Abuse**

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

- **Signs of Sexual Abuse**

The child may have torn, stained or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

- **Signs of Neglect**

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.

- **Patterns of Abuse**

Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

6. Liability Protections

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, 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. (F.S. 39.203)

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 F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

