

# **First Pentecostal Ministries, Inc. (Lake Rose Christian Academy)**

## **Code of Ethics for Educators**

This Code of Ethics for Educators was developed by our Board of Advisors and adopted on December 7, 2009. Changes were made and adopted by our Board of Advisors on January 21, 2016.

### **I. OVERVIEW**

- A. 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. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
- B. 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.
- C. 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.

### **II. PRINCIPLES OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Educator. 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.

#### **A. Ethical Conduct toward Students**

- 1. 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.
- 2. The professional educator, in accepting his or her position of public trust, measures success not only by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her personal potential, but also as a citizen of the greater community of the republic.

3. The professional educator deals considerately and justly with each student, and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy.
4. The professional educator does not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.
5. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning students, unless required by law.
6. The professional educator makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
7. The professional educator endeavors to present facts without distortion, bias, or personal prejudice.
8. The professional educator does 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.

B. Ethical Conduct toward Practices and Performance

1. The professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence.
2. The professional educator endeavors to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, and by demonstrating personal integrity.
3. The professional educator applies for, accepts, or assigns a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications, and adheres to the terms of a contract or appointment.
4. The professional educator maintains sound mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of any professional assignment.
5. The professional educator continues professional growth.
6. The professional educator complies with written school policies and applicable laws and regulations that are not in conflict with this code of ethics.

7. The professional educator does not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school or educational organizations, and clearly distinguishes those views from his or her own personal opinions.
8. The professional educator honestly accounts for all funds committed to his or her charge.
9. The professional educator does not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

C. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

1. The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.
2. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless required by law.
3. The professional educator does not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
4. The professional educator does not interfere with a colleague's freedom of choice, and works to eliminate coercion that forces educators to support actions and ideologies that violate individual professional integrity.
5. The professional educator maintains honesty in all professional dealings.
6. The professional educator does not on the basis of race, color, religions, 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.
7. The professional educator does not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
8. The professional educator does not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence the professional judgments of colleagues.
9. The professional educator will 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.

D. Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community

1. The professional educator pledges to protect public sovereignty over public education and private control of private education.
2. The professional educator recognizes that quality education is the common goal of the public, boards of education, and educators, and that a cooperative effort is essential among these groups to attain that goal.
3. The professional educator makes concerted efforts to communicate to parents all information that should be revealed in the interest of the student.
4. The professional educator endeavors to understand and respect the values and traditions of the diverse cultures represented in the community and in his or her classroom.
5. The professional educator manifests a positive and active role in school/community relations.
6. The professional educator takes reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
7. The professional educator will not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
8. The professional educator will not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
9. The professional educator will accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
10. The professional educator will offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

E. Ethical Conduct toward the Profession of Education

1. The professional educator will not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
2. The professional educator will not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
3. The professional educator will not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
4. The professional educator will not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.

5. The professional educator will 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.
6. The professional educator will self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to either the School Administrator or the Pastor/President 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-support 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 Section 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.
7. The professional educator will 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.
8. The professional educator will seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Educational Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

### III. IDENTIFYING AND REPORTING PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

- A. The professional educator shall report allegations or suspicion of misconduct by an instructional personnel member to the school administrator.
- B. The professional educator shall report allegations or suspicion of misconduct by a school administrator to the Pastor/President.
- C. The professional educator shall document the activities or details of the event and secure evidence (if applicable).
- D. Behavior that may be indicative of misconduct that should be reported:
  1. being alone with a student in a dark or closed room or secluded area
  2. behaving in an overly friendly or familiar way or failing to maintain an appropriate professional boundary with a student.
  3. using forceful or unnecessary physical contact with a student
  4. administering discipline not compliant with district policy

5. accepting or offering of gifts for return of a favor or privilege from students or colleagues
6. badgering or habitually teasing a student
7. mocking or belittling a student
8. chronically embarrassing a student
9. displaying prejudice or bigotry against a student
10. suspicion of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
11. failing to properly supervise students or to ensure student safety
12. cheating, falsifying information or testing violations
13. retaliating against a student or colleague for reporting misconduct
14. bantering or engaging in colloquial or slang communications with a student
15. directing or using profane, offensive, or explosive language in the presence of students
16. making lewd or suggestive comments or overtures toward a student or colleague

E. Who should you report?

1. Classroom teachers
2. Paraprofessionals or aides
3. Substitute teachers
4. Librarians, guidance counselors and social workers
5. Career specialists and school psychologists
6. Administrators, Principals and Assistant Principals

F. Failure to Report Misconduct

Possible penalties for instructional personnel or site administrators who fail to report misconduct may include:

1. Written reprimand
2. Suspension with or without pay
3. Termination of employment
4. Discipline/Sanctions on an educator's certificate

## G. How to Report Misconduct

**Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators** All employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators 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 Brandon Jones, Administrator at 407-297-6995 or 407-915-3364 or by email at [brandon@mylrca.com](mailto:brandon@mylrca.com). Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to George F. Jones, II, Pastor/President at 407-297-6995 or 407-235-5535 or by email at [fpcgeorge@gmail.com](mailto:fpcgeorge@gmail.com).

**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.

**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)

#### IV. Confidentiality Agreements

- A. This school will not enter in to a confidentiality agreement 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.

#### V. Employee Liability Protections provided under ss. 39.203 and 768.095, Florida Statutes

##### 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 Requirement** All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.



**EDUCATOR MISCONDUCT REPORTING FORM**

Office of Professional Practices Services

**REPORTER INFORMATION:** \_\_\_ Public School \_\_\_ Charter School \_\_\_ Private School  
\_\_\_ FSDB \_\_\_ Lab School

**REPORTER CONTACT INFORMATION:** School/District:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Address and Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**INFORMATION REGARDING THE EDUCATOR BEING REPORTED**

EDUCATOR'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
SSN: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ DOE CERTIFICATE # \_\_\_\_\_  
ASSIGNED SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION: \_\_\_\_\_  
SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS EXPERIENCE: \_\_\_\_\_  
CONTRACTUAL STATUS: \_\_\_\_\_  
CURRENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF THE ALLEGATION:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Reporting Directions** For questions, contact our office at 850.245.0438 **In addition to the reporting form, submissions to the Office of Professional Practices Services should include:** 1. All investigative materials, reports, evidence, documents or related materials (Examples include, victim or witness statements, arrest reports or court documents, newspaper articles, computer evidence, video or audio tapes, text messages or cell phone records, photographs, grade books or calendars, gifts/items, statements, arrest report(s), court documents, local investigative reports, termination or disciplinary documents, letter of resignation, district disciplinary action documents, DOAH Orders, and class rosters). **Do not send sanitized or redacted documents.** 2. The educator's current certification information and any applications processed or renewed at the local level 3. Name and contact information for all victims and witnesses (see and duplicate page two as necessary). **Direct all correspondence via regular mail to:** Florida Department of Education, Office of Professional Practices Services, 325 West Gaines Street, Suite 224-E, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400

**EDUCATOR MISCONDUCT REPORTING FORM**  
**PAGE TWO**

**VICTIMS**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_

Current School: \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESSES**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

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