

Embarking the E3-Train – Essentials for Educators

Ethos, Ethics, & Engagement Session by Paul K. Fox – Supplemental Handout with Additional Scenarios & Resources
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INTRODUCTION

Do you know the meaning of “fiduciary,” “moral professionalism,” and “ethical equilibrium?” You should if you ever want to become an educator and work with children! Or can you name the difference between a “moral principle” and an “ethical standard,” both of which will be used to guide your daily decision-making? What are the two types of “codes” that all professionals must embrace in their job, and why are they more essential than becoming a “content expert” in a preferred subject or teaching level?

During this session, we will introduce the Model Code of Ethics for Educators of the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification. Fostering open and interactive discussion, we will empanel a mock “ethics jury” (volunteers from the attendees) to assess fictitious “fact scenarios” of potential ethical issues, hazardous choices or vulnerabilities, and even tackle a few “conundrums” or problems in educator decision-making.

TARGETS

Attendees will appraise, critique, differentiate, justify, and internalize knowledge and understanding of the following:

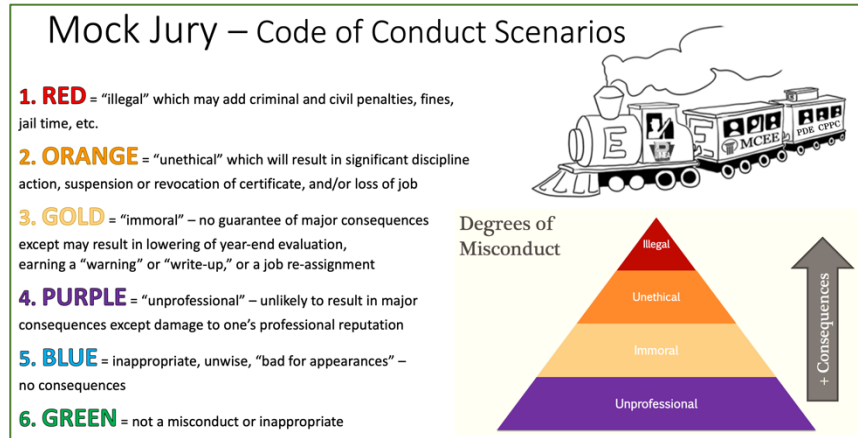
- Definitions, philosophy, and best practices of Troy Hutching’s “ethical equilibrium,” professional standards, responsibilities, and the types of “codes” that serve as an educator’s moral compass.
- Analysis of educator decision-making and proactive choices from scenarios of ethical issues/problems.
- Professional nature of teachers’ relationships with students, parents, and other professionals, and appropriate student-teacher boundaries.
- Values set forth in the revised National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification “Model Code of Ethics for Educators.”

RESOURCES

- Author’s article series and blogsite: <https://paulfox.blog/category/ethics/> or <https://paulfox.blog/>
- Model Code of Ethics for Educators http://www.nasdtdec.net/?page=MCEE_Doc
- Connecticut State Department of Education Teacher Education and Mentoring Program: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/team/module_5_facilitator_guide_january_2015.pdf
- Iowa Board of Educators Examiners <https://slideplayer.com/slide/12203932/>
- Pennsylvania Educator Ethics and Conduct Toolkit by Dr. Oliver Dreon, Sandi Sheppeard, PA State System of Higher Education, and the PA Professional Standards and Practices Commission: <http://www.pspc.education.pa.gov/Promoting-Ethical-Practices-Resources/Ethics-Toolkit/Pages/default.aspx>
- Nebraska Professional Practices Commission: <https://nppc.nebraska.gov/videos>
- RedOrbit: Teacher Ethical Dilemmas – What Would You Do? https://www.redorbit.com/news/education/1141680/teachers_ethical_dilemmas_what_would_you_do/
- American Board: “Social Media Rules for Educators” <https://www.americanboard.org/blog/10-social-media-rules-for-teachers/>

“MOCK” CASE STUDIES FOR MORE SESSIONS OF INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION

1. Mr. S is a high school teacher who has been tutoring Melissa on an Advanced Placement course after school for several months. Although Melissa’s academic performance has been improving, Melissa’s parents meet with the principal about concerns they have regarding Mr. S’s relationship with Melissa. During their tutoring sessions, Mr. S has



given Melissa gift cards as rewards for her academic progress, driven Melissa home after tutoring sessions, and even begun to communicate with Melissa via text messaging during the evenings. While they have no proof of any impropriety, Melissa’s parents are concerned. When the principal meets with the teacher, Mr. S argues that his behavior is not inappropriate and that he is simply offering assistance to a student in need.

2. During lunch, Steven R. often walks around the faculty room giving his female colleagues back massages to help them “relax.” Some of the teachers look visibly uncomfortable with the contact and attempt to avoid his massages.
3. Melissa S. is a third-grade teacher in a rural school. Near the end of the year, Rodrigo enrolls in her class, even though he cannot speak English. Ms. S. is frustrated because she feels she does not have the training to work with a student like Rodrigo and complains in class that “people shouldn’t come here if they can’t even speak our language.” One of the students complains to her parents about what Ms. S said.
4. In the hallway one day, students from one of your classes stop and ask you what you think of Mr. T. When you ask why this would be important to them, they explain that Mr. T. had gone on a tirade in their class and complained about your ability as a teacher. One of them says that Mr. T. says that you were the worst teacher in the school.
5. An itinerant special needs teacher travels from school to school. After leaving Elm elementary school, the teacher travels to Central elementary. A Central teacher has a biological child who attends Elm elementary. Because of recent discipline issues with some of the special education students, the teacher at Central begins to ask the itinerant instructor about the behavior of some of the children at Elm elementary. The itinerant begins to share some of the concerns and specifics about the IEPs of those children who were involved in a recent behavioral incident.
6. Elizabeth L. taught at Webster Hills Middle School. In her free time, Ms. L. was also a cheerleader for a local sports team. As a reward for their performance on a recent exam, Ms. L. performed one of her cheerleading routines for her eighth graders in her classroom. Unbeknown to Ms. L, one of the students in the class used his cell phone to videotape the cheerleading routine. The student posted the video online and the video drew the attention of district personnel and community members. Several parents were outraged and complained about the suggestive nature of the cheerleading routine.

Connecticut State Dept. of Ed. In Depth Discussion Questions

1. What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?
2. How could this situation become a violation of your state’s code of conduct or other regulation, school entity policy, the MCEE, or caselaw?
3. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the students, fellow educators, and the school community?
4. At this point, what responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?