

Professional Ethics

All Aboard the E-Train! Essential Educator Ethics
Mastering the PDE PE Framework Competencies within
the Newly Revised PA Chapter 49 Requirements

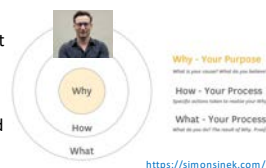
Paul K. Fox, presenter
PMEA Council for Teacher Training,
Recruitment, and Retention
October 14, 2024
Arcola Intermediate School
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<https://paulfox.blog/>



1

Today's Targets - Keeping us "on track!"

- **Why** are we so concerned about continuous professional development in ETHICS?
- **How** do we practice ETHICS?
- **What** is important in the "regs" and our "codes" to understand, review and refresh over the long term?



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2

About "the Fox"

- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Music (Viola) & Master of Fine Arts in Music Education from Carnegie-Mellon University

Currently:

- Five decades involvement in the field of education
- State Coordinator of PMEA Retired Members (10+ years)
- Past State Chair of PA Music Educators Association Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment, and Retention (9+ years)
- Trainer/Instructor for the Thomas W. Bailey PDE-approved Act 45 PIL and Act 48 PD classes on PA educator ethics
- Presenter, author, blogger, and publisher of more than a dozen articles and 22+ workshops/webinars on educator ethics, most material archived at <https://paulfox.blog/category/ethics/>

Retired:

- Performing Arts Curriculum Leader (7 years) & music teacher for the Upper St. Clair Schools (33 years) & Edgewood School District (2 years)
- Director/Producer of 29 Fall Plays, 30 Spring Musicals, & 5 Holiday Musicals
- School (USCSD) publications writer, editor, & photographer (25+ years)
- Secretary/Treasurer for PMEA District One (20 years)



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3

Other Voices on Ethics - "The WHO"



Connecticut Dept. of Ed.
<https://teamteam.org/>
TEAMTEAM - MENTORS



<https://thedanielsongroup.org/>
(The group)



<https://www.pde.pa.gov/pa-act/act-48/act-48-classes/ethics-practice-resources/ethics-practice-resources.aspx>



PDE Approved Act 45/PIL & Act 48 Classes
Court Case Blogs, and Other Resources



<https://www.pdesystems.com/folder/12703932/>



Tracy Hatchings, Senior Policy Advisor
<https://www.nasdtrec.net/>



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4


Starting out with the “WHY”


Quick... Can YOU identify the *exact titles* or *acronyms* of:

- The Code of Conduct that governs all PA educators?
- The PA agency responsible for adjudicating these rules?
- The recently adopted Code of Ethics to which educators can turn for assistance in professional decision-making?

CPPC

PSPC

MCEE



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Professionalism and Leadership

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5

PRE-TEST: “Which statement has the *least* validity?”


a.
Moral professionalism involves being well informed about students, education, and content, confronting parents of underachieving students, cooperating with colleagues to observe school policies, and criticizing unsatisfactory policies and proposing constructive improvement.


b.
Teachers, attorneys, doctors, nurses, counselors, therapists, and the clergy have “fiduciary” duties; own the highest legal duties of good faith and trust and are bound ethically to act in another party’s best interest.

c.
Although not always defined in exact terms of school law or policies, professional ethics are “standards that assist practitioners within situation and systemic contexts in choosing the best course-of-action.”

d.
A code of ethics outlines a set of principles that affect decision making, while a code of conduct delineates specific behaviors that are required or prohibited and governs actions.

e.
The intent of this ethics presentation is to emphasize the “minimum standards of acceptable behavior” and focus on specific illegal and unethical actions that may result in disciplinary actions.






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6

Why is this topic so important NOW?



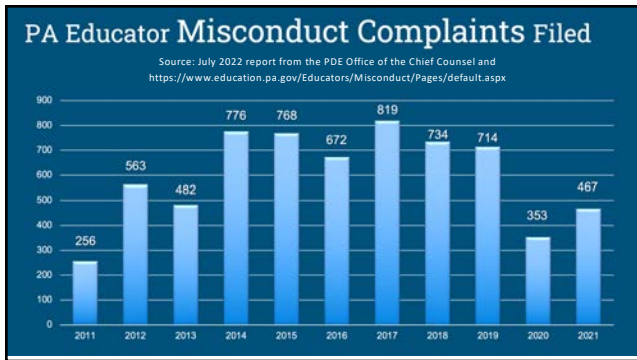




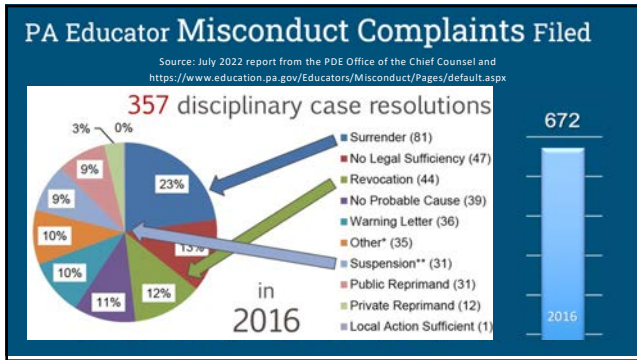
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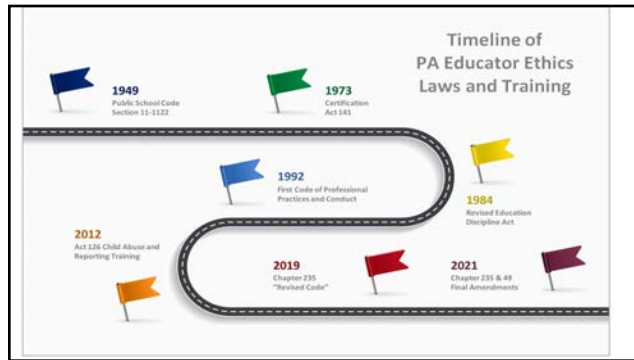
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8



9



10

PA House of Representatives & Senate make up our General Assembly; LEGISLATIVE BRANCH WRITES STATUTES	Governor Shapiro and Department of Education; EXECUTIVE BRANCH WRITES REGULATIONS	PA Commonwealth and PA Supreme Courts make up our Appellate Courts; JUDICIAL BRANCH WRITES CASE LAW
Public School Code of 1949: School Entry's Termination of Educator Contracts; Triggers Laidoff Hearings.	Terminated educators may appeal School Entry decision to PDE for review.	Terminated educators may appeal PDE affirmation to Commonwealth Court.
Educator Discipline Act (EDA): Requirements for Certification; Educator Misconduct Complaints and Mandatory Reporting Requirements.	Educator Misconduct Complaint filed with PDE; PDE discretion to file Notice of Charges with Commission for adjudication; Commission may order PDE to suspend/revoke Educator's Certification. Possible reinstatement of Educator's Certification.	Educators whose certification has been suspended or revoked by Commission may appeal to Commonwealth Court .
Professional Standards & Practices Commission (Commission) created 1973 to enforce EDA.	1992 Commission wrote Code of Professional Practice & Conduct . Amended in 2021.	Educators may attempt to appeal Commonwealth Court decision to PA Supreme Court .
	PDE regulates Pa Code Title 22 Chapter 49 Certification Professional Staff Chapter 233 Commission Rules & Procedures Chapter 235 Code of Professional Practice & Conduct	Bondick v. School District of Mt Pleasant Twp. (1999)

11

What Are PDE's "PE" Requirements?

Professional Ethics (PE) Program Framework Guidelines

- On April 23, 2022, the final form amendments to Chapter 49 (relating to Certification of Professional Personnel) of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code became effective upon publication in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.
- 22 Pa. Code § 49.14(4)(i) requires the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) to identify competencies and develop associated standards for educator training in professional ethics.

PE

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12

What Are PDE's "PE" Requirements?

Professional Ethics (PE) Program Framework Guidelines

Chapter 49 requires instruction in professional ethics to be integrated in educator preparation, induction, and continuing professional development programs as follows.

- Continuing professional development programs must integrate the professional ethics competencies no later than the 2023-24 academic year.
- Educator preparation and induction programs must integrate the professional ethics competencies no later than the 2024-25 academic year.



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13

COMPETENCIES: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS (PE)

Professional educators:

PE.1	Demonstrate their understanding of the PA Code of Professional Practice and Conduct for Educators and the PA Educator Discipline Act.
PE.2	Describe the function of the PA Professional Standards and Practices Commission and its role in professional disciplinary actions for educators.
PE.3	Differentiate between codes of conduct and codes of ethics and explain how each informs professional practice and decision making.
PE.4	Demonstrate their understanding of their responsibility to the profession as described in Principle 1 of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE).
PE.5	Demonstrate their understanding of their responsibility for professional competence as described in Principle 2 of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE).
PE.6	Demonstrate their understanding of their responsibility to students as described in Principle 3 of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE).
PE.7	Demonstrate their understanding of their responsibility to the school community as described in Principle 4 of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE).
PE.8	Demonstrate their understanding of the expectation for responsible and ethical use of technology as described in Principle 5 of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE).

14

WHAT is "The Commission?"

Act 141 of 1973 "Relating to the certification of teachers in the public schools... of the Commonwealth"

"There is hereby created a Professional Standards and Practices Commission (Commission)... members [of which] shall have been actively engaged in teaching or providing... supervisory services in a public school or an approved institution of higher education... for at least five of the eight years immediately preceding their appointment."

Who are they?

- 6 classroom teachers (active or retired);
- 3 school entity administrators;
- 1 college administrator from teacher education program;
- 2 members from public (one school board member); and
- 1 education specialist



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15

WHAT is "The Commission?"

What is the function of "The Commission?"

Make policy recommendations to PA State Board of Education covering:

- Primary education
- Secondary education
- Post-secondary education

Establish high standards for preparation, certification, practice and ethical conduct in the teaching profession.

- 2021 Code of Professional Practice & Conduct for Educators (Code of Conduct)
- 2022 Implement Model Code of Ethics for Educators as national code of ethics (MCEE)



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16

WHAT is “The Commission?”

For years, PDE’s Office of Chief Counsel (OCC) investigated and prosecuted Educator Misconduct Complaints for professional discipline.

The Secretary of PDE had acted as the fact finder. He/she “adjudicated” the charges against the educator.

In December 1989, the Pennsylvania General Assembly directed the Commission to adjudicate educator misconduct charges.

OCC still investigates allegations and prosecutes the defendant educators.



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17

Paths of Educator Discipline in PA

Local Discipline

Loudermill hearing for alleged violation of Public School Code of 1949 or Local Education Agency (LEA) policy;

Local School Directors hearing.

Possible loss of employment at LEA

State Discipline

Educator Misconduct Complaint filed with PDE for alleged violation of Educator Discipline Act. PDE investigates, may file Notice of Charges with Professional Standards & Practices Commission for hearing. Possible loss of teaching certificate statewide.



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18

State Discipline System



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19

Definitions – “Fiduciary”

• A person or organization that owes to another the duties of good faith and trust.

The highest legal duty of one party to another, it also involves being bound ethically to act in the other's best interests.

• Can you name at least five careers of professionals who are “fiduciaries...” – have a legal responsibility to serve the best interests of their “clients?”



- Medical Professionals
- Lawyers
- Counselors (all types)
- the Clergy, and...
- Teachers



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20

Definitions –“Ethical Equilibrium”



Troy Hutchings

Foundations of what's "right or wrong"

- **Personal Morality:** "Personal values and beliefs derived from one's life experiences... subjective and may or may not align with community mores."
- **Regulations of Law:** "Policies, statutes, and judicial activity that articulate conduct absolutes."
- **Professional Ethics:** "Professional ethical standards that assist practitioners within situation and systemic contexts in choosing the best course-of-action."
- **Professional Dispositions:** "Agreed upon professional attitudes, values and beliefs to be held by educational practitioners"

"Beyond the Obvious" <https://slideslayer.com/slide/12243050/>
 "Ethics in Education" <https://vimeo.com/126979216>



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21

Definitions –“Moral Professionalism”

- Coming to work regularly and on time
- Being well informed about their students and subject-matter
- Planning and conducting classes with care
- Regularly reviewing and updating instructional practices
- Cooperating with, or if necessary, confronting parents of underachieving students
- Cooperating with colleagues and observing school policies so the whole institution works effectively
- Tactfully but firmly criticizing unsatisfactory school policies and proposing constructive improvement

Source: Wynne, E.A. (1995). The moral dimension of teaching. In A.C. Ornstein (Ed.) Teaching: Theory into practice. (pp. 190-202). Boston: Allyn and Bacon



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22

Which Standard Is It? –“Moral” vs. “Ethical”

1. Morality =

- Principles to judge right and wrong
- Often used to define personal character
- More abstract, subjective, more personal, may or may not be religious

A teacher decides not to drink a beer when he sees a student enter the same restaurant?



2. Ethical =

- Behavior expected by the group or profession
- Practical, shared principles promoting fairness & expectations



<https://slideslayer.com/slide/12203932/>



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23

Which Standard Is It? –“Moral” vs. “Ethical”

1. Morality =

- Principles to judge right and wrong
- Often used to define personal character
- More abstract, subjective, more personal, may or may not be religious

A teacher calls in sick to extend her vacation.



2. Ethical =

- Behavior expected by the group or profession
- Practical, shared principles promoting fairness & expectations



<https://slideslayer.com/slide/12203932/>



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24

Which Standard Is It? – “Moral” vs. “Ethical”

1. Morality =

- Principles to judge right and wrong
- Often used to define personal character
- More abstract, subjective, more personal, may or may not be religious

A coach posts pictures of herself online wearing only a bikini while on a beach vacation?

2. Ethical =

- Behavior expected by the group or profession
- Practical, shared principles promoting fairness & expectations

<https://slidesplayer.com/slide/12203932/>

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Do high moral standards make us more vulnerable?

Are you more apt to commit ethics violations or professional misconducts trying to “do good” for your students with the best of intentions?

- Wanting a student to do well results in changing the student’s grade or test scores
- An educator gives out his personal cell phone and states that, “He is there to help, anytime, 24-7.”
- A counselor gives pre-natal vitamins to a student she knows is pregnant, but the parents do not know of the pregnancy.
- A vegan teacher rants on Facebook about farm animal rights while teaching in a community based in agriculture.
- A principal pays for a student to attend a summer camp.

<https://slidesplayer.com/slide/12203932/>

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26

Two Types of “Codes...” Conduct vs. Ethics

#	Violations of IA Teachers Code of Conduct	#	NY State Teachers Code of Ethics
1	Crimes, sexual or other immoral; conduct with or toward a student.	1	Educators nurture the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of each student.
2	Misrepresentation, falsification of information.	2	Educators create, support, and maintain challenging learning environments for all.
3	Misuse of public funds and property.	3	Educators commit to their own learning in order to develop their practice.
4	Violations of contractual obligations.	4	Educators collaborate with colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning.
5	Unethical practice toward other members of the profession, parents, students, and the community.	5	Educators collaborate with parents and community, building trust and respecting confidentiality.
6	Incompetence.	6	Educators advance the intellectual and ethical foundation of the learning community.

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27

Two Types of “Codes...” Conduct vs. Ethics

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28

page 1



Mathematics School District

page 1



page 2

STOP

Mathematics Subject District

Professional Standards and Practices
Commission

Discipline System & Reporting

Statutes, Regulations & Forms

Homework? Please review...

- Section 9a Mandatory Reporting
- Section 9b Discipline for Criminal Offenses
- Section 9c Discipline on Additional Grounds

Section 9c. Imposition of Discipline on Additional Grounds--(a) The commission shall direct the department to impose discipline against any educator for conduct found by the commission to constitute:

- (1) Immorality.
- (2) Incompetency.
- (3) Intemperance.
- (4) Cruelty.
- (5) Negligence.
- (6) Sexual misconduct.
- (7) Sexual abuse or exploitation.
- (8) A violation of the code for professional practice and conduct adopted pursuant to section

EDUCATOR DISCIPLINE ACT
CHAPTER 100, § 100.1
NAME OF CHAPTER

Section 1a

Section 1b

Section 2

Section 3

Section 4

Section 5

Section 6

Section 7

Section 8

Section 9

Section 10

Section 11

Section 12

Section 13

Section 14

Section 15

Section 16

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Section 18

Section 19

Section 20

Section 21

Section 22

Section 23

Section 24

Section 25

Section 26

Section 27

Section 28

Section 29

Section 30

Section 31

Section 32

Section 33

Section 34

Section 35

Section 36

Section 37

Section 38

Section 39

Section 40

Section 41

Section 42

Section 43

Section 44

Section 45

Section 46

Section 47

Section 48

Section 49

Section 50

Section 51

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Section 59

Section 60

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Section 63

Section 64

Section 65

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Section 67

Section 68

Section 69

Section 70

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Section 73

Section 74

Section 75

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Section 83

Section 84

Section 85

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Section 100

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

PA Board of Education

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37

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PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

A Code of Ethics Is...

Not defined in exact terms of **law or policies**

Not a focus of family **morals or values** on which you were raised

Not about issues of right/wrong or **black/white**, but shades of **grey**

More **open-ended**: a selection from a set of possible choices

Reflects on decision-making depended on the **circumstances of the situation**

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

PA Board of Education

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38

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PA State Education Agency

Model Code of Ethics for Educators

- National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification

NASDTEC
has served as a professional membership organization representing state departments of education and professional standards boards/commissions that are responsible for the preparation, licensure, and discipline of K-12 educational personnel.

Jurisdiction members include all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, Guam, and the Canadian province of Ontario.

Associate members include constituent organizations with an interest in the preparation, continuing development, employment, and certification of educational personnel.

<http://www.nasdtc.net/>

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

PA Board of Education

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39

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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

- National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification

Development Partners

- American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education
- American Federation of Teachers
- Association of Teacher Educators
- Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Board of Professional Teaching Standards
- National Education Association
- National Network of State Teachers of the Year

Principles

- I. Responsibility to the Profession
- II. Responsibility for Professional Competence
- III. Responsibility to Students
- IV. Responsibility to the School Community
- V. Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

PA Board of Education endorsed MCEE in January 2017; It was fully adopted in 2021.

<https://www.nspc.education.pa.gov/Statutes-Regulations-Policies-Forms/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.nasdtc.net/Process/MCEE-BoC.html>

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

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PA Board of Education

PA Department of Education

PA State Education Agency

40


Applying BOTH “Codes” to Education

I. Pedagogy

A. What to teach

B. How to teach

C. How to assess



CPPC MCEE

III. Resource Allocation

A. Equity issues

B. Fiscal authority and influence

C. Budgets

IV. Relationships

A. Conflicts with colleagues, administrators, or parents

B. Professional boundaries with students

C. Confidentiality

D. Honesty

V. Diversity

DEIBA


II. Enforcement

A. Activities – association, district, or union policies

B. Copyright issues


C. Teaching licensure and credentials

D. Students who break the law



Lien, Joelle L. 2012. Ethical dilemmas of in-service music educators. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*

http://act.maydayzoo.com/articles/01en11_1.pdf



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41

“HOW” & “WHAT” from Successful PD

Looking to 2024 and beyond...
Pennsylvania Educators:
Do you need Act 48 Credits?

Approved 4-Hour
Act 48
Continuing Education
Course


Professional Ethics: PA Codes & School Law

Complete Training on the PDE Chapter 49 Ethics Competencies:
January 9, 16, 23 & 30, 2024
one hour from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m.
For more information, go to
<https://twbaileylaw.com/event>

Professional Ethics: PA Codes & School Law

PDE-Approved Act 48 Class
Four One-Hour Sessions

<https://www.twbaileylaw.com/>



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42

“HOW” & “WHAT” from a Successful PIL

Our Next Class (7th Series) is set for
School System Leaders, CTC Directors, & Administrators:
Do you need Act 45 PIL Credits?

PDE Approved
Continuing Education
Course
25 PIL Hours

**PA Educators: Your Ethical
Codes & School Law**

PIL Session 1

October 22, 29, November 5, 12, 2024
Online from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.
<https://twbaileylaw.com/event>

**PA Educators: Your Ethical
Codes & School Law**

PIL Session 1



<https://www.twbaileylaw.com/>

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43



For School/System Leaders, CTC Directors, and PD Administrators:

**25-hour
PIL Ethics
Continuing
Education Course**

Discussion Topics:

- PA Model Code of Ethics for Educators
- PA Code of Professional Practices and Conduct
- Due process steps taken by PDE & the Professional Standards & Practices Commission to investigate & adjudicate Educator Misconduct Complaints
- 16 of the 19 Sections of the Educator Discipline Act

Class Member Activities:

- Engage in facilitated discussions of self-named issue studies;
- Research much of the course content to PLC members from within their LEA; and
- PLC members teach a model lesson to their students based upon an ethical code of student conduct.

“I looked forward to taking this course to build my understanding of Professional Ethics and possible legal implications... This upcoming year, Act 49 will require the integration of professional ethics and couldn't have found this course more relevant for the time.”

—Middle School Principal
March 15, 2023

Session #1

- PDE Educator Misconduct Data;
- Pennsylvania Standards & Practices Commission (Commission);
- Course Overview;
- Explanation of Collaborating Project;
- Collaborating Project tasks due Week 2; and
- Tour of Commission Website Resources.

Session #2

- Model Code of Ethics for Educators;
- Code of Ethics vs. Code of Conduct;
- Comparative Code of Conduct for Educators & PA Code of Professional Practice & Conduct for Educators;
- Collaborating Project tasks due Week 3; and
- The Study Hall Teacher Case Study #1.

Session #3

- Local Discipline Process;
- Parental Due Process Case Study #2;
- State Discipline Process: Educator Discipline Act;
- What/How/When Teacher's Immediate Suspension for New Criminal Charges Case Study #3;
- Collaborating Project tasks due Week 4; and
- Discipline Effect vs. Suspension?

Session #4

- School Leaders as Advocates;
- William Penn SD – PDE example;
- Regulatory Framework of statistics, regulations and case law;
- Hawkins v. Mt. Pleasant Twp. SD; and
- Collaborating Project tasks due in 21 days.

For more information and the next series of PIL, share dates, visit <https://www.twbaileylaw.com/>



44

(Ideal) Steps to Analyzing Case Studies

Mock Practice in Professional Ethical Decision-Making

1. Establish "safe" learning networks (informal?) with fellow educators.
2. Share a(n) incident or "hypothetical" scenario.
3. Discuss the conflicts & consequences (use the **CSDE TEAM** questions?)
4. Consider divergent opinions with an open mind.
5. In formal settings (PLCs or department/faculty meetings), summarize the responses from the members of your group.

Although fictional, most of the fact scenarios are based on actual past adjudications of the PA Professional Standards and Practices Commission.



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45

Small Group Discussion Questions:

Adapted from Module 5 of the Connecticut State Department of Education *Teacher Education and Mentoring Manual*

"Teachers must engage in district-facilitated conversations that focus on ethical and professional dilemmas and their professional responsibility to students, the larger school/district educational community, and to families."

1. What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?



2. How could this situation conflict with school policy, the PA Code of Conduct/EDA, Model Code of Ethics for Educators, or case law?

3. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the educator's students, fellow educators and the school community-at-large?

4. What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?

5. Please take 10 minutes to prepare a reply with educators in your breakout room.

You need not agree!






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46

Models for Ethical Scenario Analysis

- Code of Conduct – *Degree of Misconduct*





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47

Mock Jury – Code of Conduct Scenarios

1. RED = "illegal" which may add criminal and civil penalties, fines, jail time, etc.

2. ORANGE = "unethical" which will result in significant discipline action, suspension or revocation of certificate, and/or loss of job

3. GOLD = "immoral" – no guarantee of major consequences except may result in lowering of year-end evaluation, earning a "warning" or "write-up," or a job re-assignment

4. PURPLE = "unprofessional" – unlikely to result in major consequences except damage to one's professional reputation

5. BLUE = inappropriate, unwise, "bad for appearances" – no consequences

6. GREEN = not a misconduct or inappropriate

Degrees of Misconduct

1
Red



2
Orange

3
Gold

4
Purple

Unprofessional

↑
Consequences



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48

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12

Scenario: "Counseling Sessions"

Reflections:

A. What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?

B. How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school/district policies?

C. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the teacher and the student?

JURY: What is your judgement?

How do you find?

Degree of Misconduct

Unprofessional

Minor

Major

↑

Mrs. K is a high school teacher whose husband recently divorced her. During a lesson one day, Mrs. K breaks down emotionally in front of her class. To calm everybody, she explains her emotional state to her students and discusses the end of her marriage. After school that day, a male student visits Mrs. K to see if she has recovered. The student explains that his parents are also divorcing, and he understands her feelings. The student begins stopping in to see Mrs. K more frequently and the pair begins spending more time outside of class supporting each other. Her colleagues become suspicious of her relationship with the student and report the teacher's actions to their principal.

49

Scenario: "Counseling Sessions"

Reflections:

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C. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the teacher and the student?

JURY: What is your judgement?

How do you find?

Degree of Misconduct

Unprofessional

Minor

Major

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Mrs. K is a high school teacher whose husband recently divorced her. During a lesson one day, Mrs. K breaks down emotionally in front of her class. To calm everybody, she explains her emotional state to her students and discusses the end of her marriage. After school that day, a male student visits Mrs. K to see if she has recovered. The student explains that his parents are also divorcing, and he understands her feelings. The student begins stopping in to see Mrs. K more frequently and the pair begins spending more time outside of class supporting each other. Her colleagues become suspicious of her relationship with the student and report the teacher's actions to their principal.

Ethics Violation – JOB LOSS?

CPCC: 235.5a (b) 2 "boundaries"

50

Scenario: "Losing Contest Winner"

Reflections:

A. What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?

B. How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school/district policies?

C. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the teacher and the student?

JURY: What is your judgement?

How do you find?

Degree of Misconduct

Unprofessional

Minor

Major

↑

Jane S. was a first-year second-grade teacher who took a sick day to compete in a bikini contest on the Howard Stern show. In addition to appearing in a bikini on the show, Mrs. S. also discussed her sexual relationship with her husband.

Ethics Violation – JOB LOSS!

CPCC: 235.5a (b) 13

51

Scenario: "Losing Contest Winner"

Reflections:

A. What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?

B. How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school/district policies?

C. In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the teacher and the student?

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52

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13

53

54

55

56



PRINCIPLE I

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION

The professional educator knows that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional responsibility that may be higher than the minimal standard of policy and law. This responsibility entails holding oneself and other educators to the same ethical standards.

A. The professional educator demonstrates responsibility to oneself and the profession by:

1. Holding oneself responsible to Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE) and other recognized professional ethics standards.
2. Knowing and upholding the procedures, policies and laws relevant to professional practice regardless of personal views.
3. Monitoring and maintaining sound mental, physical and emotional health necessary to perform duties and services of any professional assignment and taking appropriate measures when personal or health-related issues may interfere with work-related duties.
4. Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community.
5. Refraining from using one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety.
6. Taking responsibility and credit only for work actually performed or produced, and acknowledging the work and contributions made by others, and
7. Recognizing a lack of knowledge or understanding of the MCEE is not, in itself, a defense of unprofessional conduct.

B. The professional educator fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues by:

1. Identifying and taking reasonable steps to resolve conflicts between the MCEE and the implicit or explicit demands of a person or organization.
2. Maintaining fidelity to the MCEE by taking proactive steps when having reason to believe that another educator may be approaching or involved in an ethically compromising situation.
3. Refraining from discriminating or retaliating against a person on the basis of having made an ethics complaint.
4. Refraining from filing or encouraging frivolous ethics complaints solely to harm or retaliate, and
5. Cooperating fully and honestly during investigations and proceedings.

C. The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community by:


1. Engaging in respectful discourse regarding issues that impact the profession.
2. Influencing and supporting decisions and actions that positively impact teaching and learning, educational leadership and student services.
3. Staying current with ethics guidelines and decisions from professional organizations and other relevant sources.
4. Engaging with the greater educational community through professional organizations and associations, and
5. Advocating for adequate resources and facilities to a equitable opportunities for all members within the school community.

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57



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58



PRINCIPLE II

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice.

A. The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice through:

1. Using the MCEE and other ethics codes unique to one's discipline to guide and frame educational decision-making.
2. Incorporating into one's practice state and national standards, including those specific to one's discipline.
3. Advocating for equitable educational opportunities for all students.
4. Accepting the responsibilities, performing duties and providing services corresponding to the area of certification, licensure and/or training of one's position.
5. Reflecting upon and assessing one's professional skills, knowledge and competency on an ongoing basis, and
6. Committing to ongoing professional learning.

B. The professional educator demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, research, and assessment by:

1. Recognizing others work by appropriately citing data or materials from published, unpublished or electronic sources when disseminating information.
2. Using appropriate assessments for the purposes for which they are intended and for which they have been validated to guide educational decisions.
3. Conducting research in an ethical and responsible manner with appropriate permission and expertise.
4. Seeking and using evidence, instructional data, research and professional knowledge to inform practice.
5. Creating, maintaining, disseminating, storing, retaining and disposing of records and data relating to one's research and practice in accordance with, but not limited to, official guidelines, policy and laws, and
6. Using data, data sources, or findings accurately, reliably and ethically.

C. The professional educator demonstrates competence by acting in the best interest of all students by:


1. Increasing student access to the curriculum, activities and resources in order to provide a quality and equitable educational experience.
2. Working to engage the school community to close achievement, opportunity and attainment gaps, and
3. Protecting students from any practice that harms or reasonable potential to harm.

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59



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60



"Never touch a student!" III. A. 6.

PRINCIPLE III

RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS

The professional educator has a primary obligation to promote the health, safety and well-being of all students. The professional educator treats students with dignity and respect, and establishes and maintains appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.

A. The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of all students by:

1. Respecting students by taking into account their individual characteristics, including but not limited to age, gender, culture, setting, ability and socioeconomic context.
2. Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings.
3. Communicating with students in a clear, respectful and culturally sensitive manner.
4. Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one's interactions and relationships with students.
5. Considering the implications of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students.
6. Engaging in physical contact with students only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits students and continually keeps their health, safety and well-being in mind.
7. Avoiding multiple relationships with students that might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to their well-being or decrease educator effectiveness.

B. The professional educator demonstrates an ethics of care through:

1. Seeking to understand students' educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as their values, beliefs and cultural background.
2. Respecting the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, racial and personal gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ethnic, racial, ethnic, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and culture, and
3. Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical and social safety of all students.

C. The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:

1. Respecting the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence certain forms of student communication, documents or information obtained in the course of professional practice.
2. Limiting parents/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements, to reveal information related to highest for the well-being of a student, and
3. Preserving the confidentiality of student records and in personal data in accordance with prescribed state and local policies.

It's all about context!


- Motivation - the "why?"
- Purpose in terms of the needs of student?
- Length of touch?
- Location (in public)?
- Frequency or repetition?
- Accepted or welcomed by student?

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61



"It's just a gift!" III. A. 5.

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62



"Wait 'til you hear what happened today" III. C. 1.

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63



"Don't tell my parents!" IV. A. 1.

PRINCIPLE IV

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The professional educator promotes appropriate relationships and effective interactions with members of the school community.

A. The professional educator promotes appropriate and effective relationships with parents/guardians by:

1. Communicating with parents/guardians in a timely, respectful and culturally sensitive manner that represents the student's best interests.
2. Demonstrating a commitment to equality, equity, diversity and inclusion with parents/guardians.
3. Considering the implications of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to parents/guardians, and
4. Maintaining appropriate confidentiality with respect to student information disclosed by or to parents/guardians unless required by law.

B. The professional educator promotes appropriate and effective relationships with colleagues by:

1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise.
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully and in accordance with policy.

C. The professional educator promotes appropriate and effective relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:


1. Maintaining the highest professional standards of accuracy, honesty and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school or district within the community and in public communications.
2. Advocating for policies and best practices within the school community.
3. Collaborating with community agencies, organizations and individuals to enhance students' best interests.

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64



"Did you hear what he said about you?" IV. B. 1-2.

PRINCIPLE IV

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1. Respecting colleagues as fellow professionals and maintaining civility when differences arise.
2. Resolving conflicts, whenever possible, privately and respectfully and in accordance with public policy.


C. The professional educator promotes appropriate and effective relationships with the community and other stakeholders by:

1. Maintaining the highest professional standards of security, honesty and appropriate disclosure of information when representing the school to district within the community and in public communications.
2. Advocating for public and best benefiting state within the school community, and
3. Collaborating with community agencies, agencies and individuals in order to advance student best interests.


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65



"Don't ask for permission. Beg for forgiveness!"

PRINCIPLE IV

RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

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66



"Isn't the use of social media forbidden?" V. A. 1.

PRINCIPLE V

RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The professional educator considers the impact of consuming, creating, distributing and communicating information through all technologies. The ethical educator is vigilant to ensure appropriate boundaries associated with role, time and place are maintained when using electronic communication.

A. The professional educator uses technology in a responsible manner by:

1. Using social media transparently and primarily for purposes of teaching and learning per school and district policy. The professional educator considers the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology with one's interactions with students, colleagues and the general public.
2. Staying current with trends and uses of school technology.
3. Evaluating information obtained electronically for reliability and bias.
4. Respecting individual privacy rights, copyright and fair use when accessing, using and documenting proprietary materials.
5. Understanding and abiding by policy and procedures on the use of technology and communication.
6. Recognizing that some electronic communications are records under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and state public access laws.
7. Considering the implications of sharing legally protected or other sensitive information electronically either via professional or personal devices/accounts, and
8. Exercising vigilance in maintaining separate and professional virtual profiles and keeping personal and professional lives distinct.

B. The professional educator ensures students' safety and well-being when using technology by:

1. Being vigilant in identifying, addressing and reporting when appropriate and in accordance with local, state, and federal policy, inappropriate and illegal materials/images in electronic or other forms.
2. Respecting the privacy of students' presence on social media unless there is a possible risk of harm to the student or others, and
3. Being effective to post appropriate reporting information concerning possible cyber bullying incidents and their potential impact on the student learning environment.

C. The professional educator maintains confidentiality with the use of technology by:

1. Taking appropriate and reasonable measures to maintain confidentiality of proprietary information and stored or transmitted educational records.
2. Understanding the intent of Federal Educational Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) and how it applies to sharing student records electronically.
3. Ensuring the rights of third parties, including the right of privacy, are not violated by the use of technology, and
4. Protecting information from being shared with unintended third parties through technology.


D. The professional educator promotes the appropriate use of technology in educational settings by:

1. Advocating for equal and equitable access to technology for all students.
2. Promoting the benefits and curbing the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents and community members.
3. Promoting and advocating for cybersecurity to protect the learning and learning process, and
4. Promoting and advocating for cybersecurity to protect the integrity of the network.


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67



Or curated your old social media posts?" V. A. 8.

PRINCIPLE V

RESPONSIBLE AND ETHICAL USE OF TECHNOLOGY

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B. The professional educator ensures students' safety and well-being when using technology by:

1. Being vigilant in identifying, addressing and reporting when appropriate and in accordance with local, state, and federal policy, inappropriate and illegal materials/images in electronic or other forms.
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3. Ensuring the rights of third parties, including the right of privacy, are not violated by the use of technology, and
4. Protecting information from being shared with unintended third parties through technology.


D. The professional educator promotes the appropriate use of technology in educational settings by:

1. Advocating for equal and equitable access to technology for all students.
2. Promoting the benefits and curbing the limitations of various appropriate technological applications with colleagues, appropriate school personnel, parents and community members.
3. Promoting and advocating for cybersecurity to protect the learning and learning process, and
4. Promoting and advocating for cybersecurity to protect the integrity of the network.

Used for Teacher Training

Prohibited and Restricted

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68

Models for Ethical Scenario Analysis

- Code of Conduct – *Degree of Misconduct*
- Code of Ethics – *Voices in My Head*
- Both “Codes” – *Find the Standard*

“Timed Final Exam”





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69

“My students are my friends!” III. A. 7.



§ 235.5a. Commitment to students.

- The primary professional obligation of educators is to the students they serve.
- In fulfillment of the commitment to students, educators:
 - Shall maintain appropriate professional relationships and boundaries with all students at all times, both in and outside the classroom.



Ready,
Get Set,
Go...
(Name the exact # & paragraph)

When you find it in the CPPC, raise your hand and remember your time.



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70

“My students are my friends!” III. A. 7.

PRINCIPLE III

RESPONSIBILITY TO STUDENTS

The professional educator has a primary obligation to promote the health, safety and well-being of all students. The professional educator treats students with dignity and respect, and establishes and maintains appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.

A. The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of all students by:



- Respecting students by taking into account their individual characteristics, including but not limited to age, gender, culture, setting, ability, and socioeconomic context.
- Interacting with students with transparency and in appropriate settings.
- Communicating with students in a clear, respectful and culturally sensitive manner.
- Taking into account how appearance and dress can affect one's interactions and relationships with students.
- Considering the implications of accepting gifts from or giving gifts to students.
- Engaging in physical contact with students only when there is a clearly defined purpose that benefits students and continuously keeps their health, safety, and well-being in mind.
- Avoiding multiple relationships with students that might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to their well-being or decrease educator effectiveness.

B. The professional educator demonstrates an ethic of care through:



- Seeking to understand students' educational, academic, personal and social needs as well as their values, beliefs and cultural background.
- Respecting the dignity, worth and uniqueness of each individual student including, but not limited to, actual and perceived gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, and relationship status, race, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and culture, and
- Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical and social safety of all students.

C. The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits by:

- Respecting the privacy of students and the need to hold in confidence personal or student information, academic or information obtained in the course of professional practice.
- Limiting personal questions to those that are necessary for the well-being of a student, and
- Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing student data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.



Ready,
Get Set,
Go...
(name the principle, section, and standard)






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71

Additional Scenarios for Discussions

Blogsites on Ethics Case Studies

- Ethics for Music Educators - Part III Case Studies
<https://paulfox.blog/2017/09/01/ethics-for-music-educators-iii/>
- Ethical Scenarios
<https://paulfox.blog/case-studies/ethics/>
- Ethical Conundrums Revisited - Part I
<https://paulfox.blog/2018/08/20/ethical-conundrums-revisited-part-i/>
- Ethical Conundrums Revisited - Part II
<https://paulfox.blog/2018/10/14/ethical-conundrums-revisited-part-ii/>
- Studies in PA Educator Ethics Case Law
<https://paulfox.blog/2021/06/26/studies-in-pa-educator-ethics-case-law/>



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72

THE CHOICES WE MAKE...

*You said that you had things to teach me.
And now, I see it all so clear.
We're led, each moment that we live in,
To the only choice we're given.
Will we live by love or fear?
And you, you knew it's never easy.
It's never black or white,
Just shades of grey.
All we do, is face up to those choices,*

*And obey our inner voices
And hope we find our way,
And all the choices we make
Will shape our lives forever,
Ev'ry path we take
When push comes down to shove,
Ev'ry moment counts.
It's always now or never.
And although, god knows,*

*You chose the life you chose,
I'm here because, just once,
You chose to love...*



Feel free to reach out to paulkfox.usc@gmail.com

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