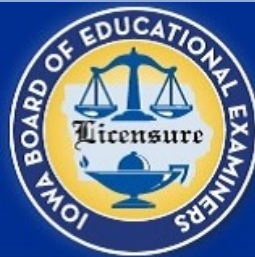


Educator Ethics

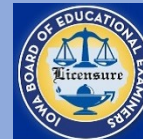
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Why Ethics?

- Educators today face increasing and more complicated ethical dilemmas
- Educators often think that it “won’t happen to them”
- Ethical standards protect students and the profession
- Transparent conversations help us to hold each other accountable
- New national standards – Model Code of Ethics for Educators



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Outcomes

- Discover the difference between morals and ethics
- Explore the national standards – Model Code of Ethics for Educators
- Review the Iowa Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics
- Analyze new dilemmas concerning educators, students, and technology



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Ethics vs. Morals

- Behavior expected by the group or profession
 - Practical, shared principles promoting fairness and expectations
- 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.
- A principal changes an old letter of recommendation to show current dates.
- A coach posts pictures of herself online wearing only a bikini while on a beach vacation.
- A teacher presents only the religious interpretation of creationism in science class.
- A teacher calls in sick to extend her vacation.



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Is it possible that high moral standards sometimes make educators *more* vulnerable to ethics violations or professional risk?



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Codes of ethics are commonly agreed upon standards that inform the course of action related to ethical practice.

They set a higher threshold than codes of conduct, help guide discussions of ethical dilemmas, and establish a framework for ethical decision-making. The MCEE was created in 2015 through NASDTEC collaboratively with professional education organizations.

- promote student safety and welfare,
- guide educator decision-making,
- foster public confidence in the profession



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

- Responsibility to the Profession
- Responsibility for Professional Competence
- Responsibility to Students
- Responsibility to Parents/Guardians, Colleagues, the Community and Employers
- Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle I:

Responsibility to the Profession

The professional educator is aware that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional conduct and responsibility that may be higher than required by law.

This entails holding one and other educators to the same ethical standards.



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle I:

Responsibility to the Profession

- A. The professional educator demonstrates responsibility to oneself as an ethical professional
- B. The professional educator fulfills the obligation to address and attempt to resolve ethical issues
- C. The professional educator promotes and advances the profession within and beyond the school community



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle II:

Responsibility for Professional Competence

The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence.



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle II:

Responsibility for Professional Competence

- A. The professional educator demonstrates commitment to high standards of practice
- B. The professional educator demonstrates responsible use of data, materials, research and assessment
- C. The professional educator acts in the best interest of all students



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle III: Responsibility to Students

The professional educator has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and well being of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle III: Responsibility to Students

- A. The professional educator respects the rights and dignity of students
- B. The professional educator demonstrates an ethic of care
- C. The professional educator maintains student trust and confidentiality when interacting with students in a developmentally appropriate manner and within appropriate limits



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle IV:

Responsibility to the School Community

The professional educator promotes positive relationships and effective interactions, with members of the school community, while maintaining professional boundaries.



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle IV:

Responsibility to the School Community

- A. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with parents/guardians
- B. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with colleagues
- C. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with the community and other stakeholders
- D. The professional educator promotes effective and appropriate relationships with employers
- E. The professional educator understands the problematic nature of multiple relationships



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

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 of time, place and role are maintained when using electronic communication.



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Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle V:

Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

- A. The professional educator uses technology in a responsible manner
- B. The professional educator ensures students' safety and well-being when using technology
- C. The professional educator maintains confidentiality in the use of technology
- D. The professional educator promotes the appropriate use of technology in educational settings



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Iowa Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics

Ethics violations may be reported to the BoEE by:

- A. A parent of a child directly involved
- B. Department of Education, BoEE, Department of Transportation, Department of Revenue
- C. Anyone holding a BoEE license (teachers, administrators, coaches, etc.)
- D. School Board



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BOEE Complaint Resolution Process



Iowa Code 272 requires complaints to be resolved within 180 days
"...unless good cause can be shown for an extension of this limitation."



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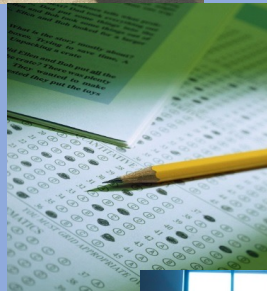
	BoEE Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics		
	Standard 1 – conviction of crimes, student abuse, sexual misconduct	Criminal convictions, inappropriate relationships, abuse	
	Standard 2 – alcohol and drugs	Under the influence on school property or school event	
	Standard 3 – falsification of information	Special education IEPs, test scores, HR documents	
	Standard 4 – misuse of funds or property	Stealing or converting money or equipment, false reimbursements	
	Standard 5 – contractual violations	Leaving a contract without being released	
	Standard 6 – general unethical conduct	Failure to protect child, bullying, financial gain, improper assignments	
	Standard 7 – debts to local government	Failure to pay state taxes, student loans, child support	
Standard 8 - incompetence			

Mandatory Reporting Items

School districts are required to report every instance of disciplinary action in four areas:



Inappropriate relationships, including flirting



Falsification of official documents



Misuse of public funds and property

NEW - signed into law 2017



Consumption of/or having consumed alcohol or drugs on school property/activity



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The following situations increase risk for educators, especially when they fall outside the norm:

TIME

LOCATION

ROLE/RESPONSIBILITY

For each of the next scenarios, consider the following questions:

What are the main issues?

What are the possible ethics (MCEE or BoEE) or school/district violations?

What are the possible negative consequences?

What are the responses/actions, or proactive measures that should be considered?



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MCEE Principle 1 – Responsibility to the Profession

Scenario 1: Online Discovery

Mr. Y is a first year high school teacher. He received a friend request from his mentor, Mr. Z on Facebook. Mr. Z has been teaching for over 30 years and is a respected member of the faculty. Mr. Y noticed that the mentor's page is full of derogatory and vulgar comments about women. Mr. Y did not say anything to his mentor or to the principal, especially since there are other teachers who are also "friends" with Mr. Z on Facebook, and they seem to appreciate his sense of humor.



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MCEE Principle 2 – Responsibility for Professional Competence

Scenario 2: Unlicensed Coach

Mr. C was hired in the spring to be the fall football coach. He was told by the principal to make sure he obtained his coaching authorization prior to the start of the season. He completed the required coaching class, but he forgot to apply for the coaching

Optional follow-up scenario:

A principal reassigns a teacher outside endorsement areas. He doesn't report that the new teacher has not yet passed the fall Department of Education BEDS required Praxis tests, and consequently does not yet hold an Iowa teaching license. The principal fills the position with a substitute teacher to serve alongside the unlicensed teacher to start the year. What are some possible issues and solutions?

Optional follow-up scenario:

In April, a principal hires a new teacher to start in August. When school begins, the principal finds out that the new teacher has not yet passed the required Praxis tests, and consequently does not yet hold an Iowa teaching license. The principal fills the position with a substitute teacher to serve alongside the unlicensed teacher to start the year. What are some possible issues and solutions?

MCEE Principle 2 – Responsibility for Professional Competence

Scenario 3: Special Education Reporting

Mr. S is a middle school special education teacher with two years of experience. He didn't plan on teaching special education but decided to give it a try to get his "foot in the door." He has a valid teaching license, but hasn't had much time to develop his skills in this area. Recently, someone at the AEA noticed that Mr. S was teaching special education.

Optional follow-up scenario:

A special education teacher frequently uses a self-contained room to assist other teachers. Students are left with the paraprofessionals. What are some possible issues and solutions?

Optional follow-up scenario:

Student R has been acting out in class. His teacher informs the parents that he thinks their son has ADHD and should be medicated. The teacher also recommends that student R's cell phone be taken away, and that he should be removed from all sports until student R's behavior improves in this class.



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MCEE Principle 3 – Responsibility to Students

Scenario 4: Graduation Party

Mrs. G is a high school teacher who enjoys attending graduation parties for her departing senior students. During one of the parties, Mrs. G notices that there are many high school students present who are consuming alcohol. Mrs. G also notices that the parents of the students are joking that they would rather have the students drink in front of them where they can monitor it instead of hiding it. Mrs. G decides not to say anything since the parents are clearly in favor of the drinking behavior.



MCEE Principle 3 – Responsibility to Students

Scenario 5: Ride Home

Mrs. R is a very successful coach who often gives rides to students in her own car. She drives them home after school, after practice, or after games, which can be very late at night or on weekends. She enjoys spending extra time with the students to get to know them better. She feels that this is helping students to participate who may not otherwise be able. She is concerned about students who have to walk home in the dark or when it is very cold.

Optional follow-up scenario:

Due to budget cuts, district transportation to events is limited. When events occur less than 20 miles away, the district decides to have students transport themselves. What are some possible issues and solutions?



MCEE Principle 3 – Responsibility to Students

Scenario 6: Boys Will Be Boys

Mrs. J is a middle school teacher with 25 years of experience. A 6th grade female student approached her complaining that a group of boys were snapping her bra closure on her back and purposefully bump into her in the hallway.

Optional follow-up scenario:

A middle school principal sends home a letter to parents and students about the school's dress code. The school is also banning girls' leggings and yoga pants as they are too distracting for the boys. What are some possible solutions?

Optional follow-up scenario:

A high school teacher sees conversations online which indicate that one of her students is the victim of cyberbullying. The student is quiet and withdrawn at school. The teacher decides not to talk to the student about it, since it happened online at night and not during school hours. What are some possible issues and solutions?



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MCEE Principle 3 – Responsibility to Students

Scenario 7: Marker Joke

Mr. M is a 15-year veteran middle school teacher known for his humor and sarcasm. When students fall asleep in his class, he writes “ZZZZZ” in permanent marker on their arms and hands. The other students in the class watch and laugh along with Mr. M when this occurs. Mr. M believes that he is sending an effective message since students never fall asleep twice. The other teachers in the school do not approve of the behavior because it’s just “Mr. M”.

Optional follow-up scenario:

A coach uses running laps as punishment for student behavior. What are some possible issues and solutions?



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MCEE Principle 3 – Responsibility to Students

Scenario 8: Sharing is Not Always Caring

Mr. L teaches high school English/Language Arts and directs the school play. Student K is a very outgoing sophomore male student who enjoys acting, and he was cast in a small role last year. There are a few rumors around school that Student K might be gay, and Mr. L has also heard these rumors (Student K is gay, but he has not told anyone including his parents). During the auditions, Mr. L felt that Student K was hanging around him a little too much, and he thought Student K might be flirting with him. He called a meeting with

Optional follow-up scenario:

A teacher hears a student laughing and saying “that’s so gay” (in the context of something negative) during a group discussion in her classroom. The teacher ignores the comment and quickly tries to move on to the next topic. What are some possible issues and solutions?

Student K’s behavior, I don’t think that it will be best if they have to make the other



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MCEE Principle 4 – Responsibility to the School Community

Scenario 9: Mentor Buddies

Ms. N is a new 4th grade teacher, and her mentor is Mrs. E, who has 20 years of experience as an elementary teacher. They have been neighbors for many years and attend the same church. Mr. F, who is a veteran coach, don't need to meet as mentor/mentee because Ms. N is excellent". The district pays for the tea

Optional follow-up scenario:

A high school social studies teacher has a "Black Lives Matter" bumper sticker on his car. Another teacher notices it, and decides to distribute "All Lives Matter" flyers to teachers through the office mailboxes. What are some possible issues and solutions?

Optional follow-up scenario:

A veteran coach working in a small community knows many of the families personally. The families expect their children to have more playing time etc. since they know the coach. What are some possible issues and solutions?



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MCEE Principle 5 – Responsible Use of Technology

Scenario 10: Email Rant

Mrs. D is an elementary special education teacher with 30 years of experience. She is greatly looking forward to meeting other teachers after work for some adult beverages and food after a very tough week with students. She sends an email to the other teachers, with the following text: “Hey all – I will probably be late after school ☹️ I have

Optional follow-up scenario:

Two teachers are venting after school about their day including discussing specific students. One of the students is outside the door, and begins live tweeting the entire conversation. What are some possible issues and solutions?

so-called “learning
crazy :-/!!”



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MCEE Principle 5 – Responsible Use of Technology

Scenario 11: Texting and Social Media

Ms. F has been teaching for 10 years and is very popular with students. She frequently offers students extra help after school, so it's not uncommon to see students visiting her classroom after school. She has tutored one of her HS students in a variety of subjects over a two-year period. During that time, Ms. F has used Facebook private messaging and texting to communicate with the student. At first, the exchanges were very general, sometimes unrelated to school

Optional follow-up scenario:

A helpful teacher leaves her cell phone unlocked on the corner of her desk so that students can use it as a calculator or to connect to the internet. What are some possible issues and solutions?

she was getting along with about more personal



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MCEE Principle 5 – Responsible Use of Technology

Scenario 12: Summer Painting

Mr. D, a 4th grade teacher, has a house painting business on the side to generate extra income in the summer. He often uses his school computer to update his website and to generate invoices. He is careful to only do this during before and after school hours and during the

Optional follow-up scenario:

A district is getting rid of some older laptops. A teacher is in charge of donating them to a local charity. He decides to keep one of the laptops because it is better than what his son has at home, and the district has already removed them from the inventory anyway.

What are some possible issues and solutions?

He is close friends with the athletic coach and the industrial arts teacher who has tools in the room



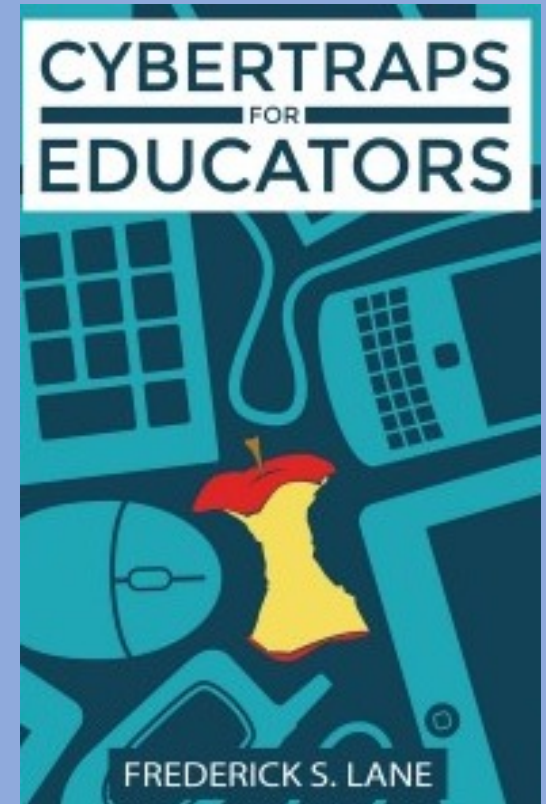
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CYBERTRAPS!

How does free speech affect an educator's rights on social media?

The first amendment can protect you in most cases from getting charged with a crime, but there can still be consequences (getting fired, etc.)

Cybertraps for Educators by Frederick Lane is a good resource for examining the issues surrounding social media, texting, email, and other electronic concerns.



Other Social Media Examples (educators were fired for these posts):

“I guess that’s what happens when you flunk out of school and have no education...I’m almost to the point of wanting them all segregated on one side of town so they can hurt each other and leave the innocent people alone.”

“I don’t know him, but I hate him #pothead #STEM #wannabecool #dorkywhiteboy”

A teacher was fired from a Christian school. The school did not tell him specifically what was posted on social media to get him fired, but he was led to believe it was a picture of himself and his wife holding a bottle of alcohol.



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Other Social Media Examples (educators were fired - continued):

“an impressive turnout. Lots of pink hats & stuff. Then they all went home to make dinner. Well done, ladies!” The tweet included a photo of the women’s march, along with a 1952 advertising stock photo of a smiling woman wearing a dress and apron while she stirs a bowl in a kitchen.

When the student asked @FCPSMaryland over Twitter on Jan. 5 for school to be closed “tammarrow,” Katie Nash, 33, replied, “but then how would you learn how to spell ‘tomorrow’? :)”

The teacher had disparaged students as “rude, disengaged, lazy whiners,” “frightfully dim,” “utterly loathsome,” “The Queen of Drama” and “A.I.R.H.E.A.D.” in her blog, which was meant for a few friends but shared on Facebook by a student who found it.



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Other Social Media Examples (educators were fired - continued):

"The funny thing about immigrants staying home is the rest of us who pay for them are at work like we've always been. Looks like less mouths to feed today. Have fun while you still can. So glad to hear about massive deportation. Let's make America great again. Thanks Donald Trump!!"

"Field day with my little [expletives] that I somehow still love."
A student wearing a traditional Mexican hat or sombrero- is captioned: "This is an African American Mexican."

"The only good Trump supporter is a dead Trump supporter"



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Other Social Media Examples – reaction to recent legislation:

[Redacted] a walkout then..??
remember..it was a strike that brought about chapter 20 in the first place..
Like · Reply ·  3 · April 20 at 10:36am
^ Hide 15 Replies

[Redacted] It would have to be a sick out or something. Collective bargaining was agreed to with the caveat of the no strike clause. Historically, it was the continuous teacher strikes that caused the state to the table that brought us collective bargaining.
Like · Reply ·  2 · April 20 at 10:37am

[Redacted] Sounds like Blue Flu
Like · Reply ·  1 · April 21 at 5:16pm



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Recommendations:

- Foster an environment that encourages open and collaborative discussions around ethics. Continue to facilitate conversations on a regular basis.
- Review district and state policies and guidance around hiring, state reports, transportation, technology, and other commonly reported areas
- Emphasize that caring and connecting with students is still important, but that educators also have the responsibility to do so within professional boundaries.
- Encourage transparency, which is usually the key to solving many ethical dilemmas.



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Resources and Acknowledgements

National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and
Certification (www.nasdtec.net)
[Model Code of Ethics for Educators \(2015\)](#)

Iowa Board of Educational Examiners (www.boee.iowa.gov)
[Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics](#)
[Board Decisions](#)

Lane, Frederick. (2015) Cybertraps for Educators. Frederick Lane (self-
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Connecticut Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators (and
sample scenarios)
<http://www.ctteam.org/>



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