

Standards of Performance and Conduct for Teachers

Approved by the State Board of Education, March 1992

Professional Services Division

(70 O.S. Supp. 1990 § 6-101.21 and 101.22)

Teachers are charged with the education of the youth of this State. In order to perform effectively, teachers must demonstrate a belief in the worth and dignity of each human being, recognizing the supreme importance of the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, and the nurture of democratic principles.

In recognition of the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching process and by virtue of the desire of the respect and confidence of their colleagues, students, parents, and the community, teachers are to be guided in their conduct by their commitment to their students and their profession.

Principle I - Commitment to the Students

The teacher must strive to help each student realize his or her potential as a worthy and effective member of society. The teacher must work to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the student, the teacher:

1. Shall not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
2. Shall not unreasonably deny the student access to varying points of view;
3. Shall not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress;
4. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
5. Shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement;
6. Shall not on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, marital status, political or religious beliefs, family, social, or cultural background, or sexual orientation, unfairly
 - a. exclude any student from participation in any program,
 - b. deny benefits to any student, or
 - c. grant any advantage to any student;
7. Shall not use professional relationships with students for private advantage; and
8. Shall not disclose information about students obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose and is permitted by law or is required by law.

Principle II - Commitment to the Profession

The teaching profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service.

In order to assure that the quality of the services of the teaching profession meets the expectations of the State and its citizens, the teacher shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, fulfill professional responsibilities with honor and integrity, promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgement, achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.

In fulfillment of the obligation to the profession, the educator:

1. Shall not, in an application for a professional position, deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications;
2. Shall not misrepresent his/her professional qualifications;
3. Shall not assist any entry into the profession of a person known to be unqualified in respect to character, education, or other relevant attribute;
4. Shall not knowingly make a false statement concerning the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position;
5. Shall not assist an unqualified person in the unauthorized practice of the profession;
6. Shall not disclose information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
7. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about a colleague; and
8. Shall not accept any gratuity, gift or favor that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.

Principle III

A. Subject to the provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act of 1990, a career teacher may be dismissed or not reemployed for:

1. Willful neglect of duty,
2. Repeated negligence in performance of duty,
3. Mental or physical abuse to a child,
4. Incompetency,
5. Instructional ineffectiveness,
6. Unsatisfactory teaching performance, or
7. Commission of an act of moral turpitude.
8. Abandonment of contract.

B. Subject to the provisions of the Teacher Due Process Act, a probationary teacher may be dismissed or not reemployed for cause.

C. A teacher convicted of a felony shall be dismissed or not reemployed unless a presidential or gubernatorial pardon has been issued.

D. A teacher may be dismissed, refused employment or not reemployed after a finding that such person has engaged in criminal sexual activity or sexual misconduct that has impeded the effectiveness of the individual's performance of school duties. As used in this subsection:

1. "Criminal sexual activity" means the commission of an act as defined in Section 886 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes, which is the act of sodomy; and
2. "Sexual misconduct" means the soliciting or imposing of criminal sexual activity.