

Standards of Ethical Conduct

(adapted from the Code of Ethics of the Education profession in Florida and Principles of professional Conduce for the Education Profession in Florida)

All FUMS employee's will complete training on these standards at the beginning of each year, that you have read and understand FUMS code of ethics – this will be included on your yearly contract.

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, the nurture of democratic citizenship, and the spiritual growth of each student. Essential to the achievement of these standards is the freedom to learn, to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. Our primary professional concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Employees will, therefore, strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern and obligation for the student requires that our instructional personnel:
 - a) Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning, and/or the student's mental health and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b) Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c) Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d) Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e) Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f) Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g) Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, handicapping condition, or social and family background, exclude a student from participation in a program; deny a student benefits; or grant a student advantages and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h) Shall not exploit a professional relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - i) Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional services, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

Principles of Professional Conduct

The following disciplinary rule shall constitute the Principles of Conduct for the education profession of FUMS and shall apply to all employees. Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to a possible loss of employment in the ministry of FUMS, and/or the other penalties as provided by law.

4. The Christian educator shall be aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the members of the community. The Christian educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical, moral' and spiritual conduct. The maintenance of a Biblical Christian testimony is paramount.

Obligation to the profession of education requires that our instructional personnel:

- a) Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
- b) Shall not on the basis of race, color, 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.
- c) Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
- d) Shall 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.
- e) Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague and shall observe the principles of Matthew 18 to resolve all human relationship conflicts.
- f) Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
- g) Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- h) Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
- i) Shall maintain a Biblical Christian testimony at all times in the classroom and in the community.
- j) Shall support and practice the philosophy of FUMS and shall work diligently to implement the mission of FUMS with particular emphasis on leading students to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- k) Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
- l) Shall not misrepresent one's own professional activities.
- m) Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
- n) Shall not make any fraudulent statement or fail to disclose a material fact in one's own or another's application for a professional position.
- o) Shall not knowingly withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
- p) Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to the FUMS Director 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-report any conviction, finding of guilt, withholding of adjudication, commitment to a pretrial diversion program, or entering of a plea of guilty.
- q) Shall report to appropriate authorities any known violation of FUMS Code of Ethics.

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. If you suspect misconduct, please contact: Pastor Dave Barkalow, First United Methodist Church or Denise A. Severson, FUMS Director. Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in FUMS School Office.

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect

All employees have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 7-800-96-ABUSE or report on line at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report>. 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, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

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. 768.0)

Be committed to your work. This is a God-given ministry and deserves your best attention, preparation, and energy.

Be loyal to the Director/Pastor/School Board and rules of the school. Enforce all school policies. Avoid gossip; stay clear of school and church politics. Be positive. Keep your professional confidential duties in check. Keep student's and parent's confidences as long as there is not a breach of school policy. If you are told something that you cannot keep confidential because it must be dealt with, tell the person who told you what you must do. Keep the director abreast of any and all situations.