

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

Background

The Fort McMurray Catholic School District maintains high standards for the ethical conduct of its staff members. Such standards contribute to making our organization healthy, respectful and effective. The manner in which staff members carry out their work reflects on the District as a whole.

The Board holds its staff members to a high standard of ethical conduct. This administrative regulation is intended to outline general guidelines for conduct, and a process for reporting allegations of misconduct. It cannot provide for every situation or circumstance. It is expected that staff members will behave in a manner which reflects common sense, good judgment, and discretion, and will adhere to all Board Policies, Administrative Procedures and Guidelines.

If staff are in doubt about a situation, they should seek clarification from their immediate supervisor or School Principal who may refer the inquiry to the Superintendent or other Senior Manager.

Procedures

1. General

- 1.1 Staff members shall adhere to the policies, regulations and guidelines of the District, and not knowingly violate the collective agreements between the District and its unions or staff groups, or any other legal agreement between the District and an outside agency.
- 1.2 Staff members shall be respectful in all their interactions with students, parents, community members, other District employees and contractors.
- 1.3 Staff members shall conduct their employment responsibilities in an honest, faithful and diligent manner.
- 1.4 Private endeavours must not provide the appearance of an opportunity for wrongdoing or unethical conduct. Private endeavours include aspects of a staff member's activity outside those connected with official District duties. These may include:
 - 1.4.1 Financial interest;
 - 1.4.2 Paid and unpaid activities beyond official duty; and

- 1.4.3 Relationships with third parties who may be:
 - 1.4.3.1 Employed by the District.
 - 1.4.3.2 Doing business with the District.
 - 1.4.3.3 Seeking employment or benefits from the District.
- 1.5 Staff members shall disclose to their supervisor any financial, business or commercial interest, which may conflict with their duty to the District or the proper execution of their duties. Where potential conflict is identified by the supervisor, the matter will be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources for review.
- 1.6 These principles are intended to complement any Code of Ethics that a staff member would follow because of his or her professional affiliation e.g. the ATA Code of Professional Conduct, CUPE Equality Statement and Oath of Obligation, or a professional association code of conduct.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 All staff members are responsible for adhering to the District Staff Code of Conduct.
- 2.2 The Director of Human Resources is responsible for compliance with the policy and shall review any investigative report and accompanying responses, and determines what, if any, action is to be taken.
- 2.3 Principals and managers are responsible for ensuring that staff are informed about the code of conduct.
- 2.4 The Secretary-Treasurer is responsible for the process of managing complaints, including providing information to parties and arranging for investigations.

3. Conflict of Interest

- 3.1 Staff members shall not, without the prior approval of the Superintendent or designate:
 - 3.1.1 Use information or materials belonging to the District to gain financial benefit either directly or indirectly;
 - 3.1.2 Enter into a contract on-behalf of the District, either personally or through a third party.

4. Gifts, Payments and Rewards

- 4.1 Staff members shall not accept a gift, payment, favour or service from any individual or organization in the course of their assigned duties if that gift, payment, favour or service:
 - 4.1.1 Is other than a normal exchange of hospitality between people doing business, or
 - 4.1.2 Affects the fair and unbiased evaluation or acquisition of the materials or services offered to the District.

5. Use of District Property

- 5.1 District property, including buildings, vehicles, equipment and material, shall not be used for personal benefit or non-District purposes without District approval.
- 5.2 The Superintendent or designate may authorize the use of supplies or equipment by district staff if they feel that such use will assist staff members in their assigned work. It may be required that some staff regularly retain board-owned supplies or equipment in their possession.
- 5.3 A written record of the authorization of the use of supplies or equipment shall be maintained indicating the time of release, the signature of the user, and the date on which the item is returned.
- 5.4 Staff members are responsible for exercising all reasonable care to prevent abuse to, excessive wear of, or loss of District-owned equipment or material entrusted to their care.

6. Use of Time

- 6.1 Staff members are expected to use work time for work purposes.

7. Employment External to the District

- 7.1 If a staff member takes supplementary employment, including self-employment, it shall not:
 - 7.1.1 Appear to be an official act or to represent an opinion of the District, and
 - 7.1.2 Interfere with, negatively influence or affect the performance of their duties for the District.
- 7.2 Staff members who author or create print or non-print courseware, software or any other instructional or educational resource material are deemed to be the owners of this material only if the development of such material is not part of the staff member's assigned duties and the materials are developed on the staff member's own time and without the use of District resources.
- 7.3 Staff members are advised that they should seek approval from their Principal or supervisor prior to the commencement of the work.
- 7.4 Approval should also be obtained if any District resources are to be used in the development of the materials.

8. Criminal Conduct and Verification

- 8.1 Staff members shall be expected to notify the Director of Human Resources of all criminal charges at the time the charge is issued.
- 8.2 Conviction of any criminal offence may result in termination of employment with the District.
- 8.3 Applicants for employment are required to disclose all criminal charges and convictions.
- 8.4 Prior to commencing employment, new staff must provide a Criminal Record Check including a vulnerable sector dated not earlier than six (6) months prior to the start of employment.

- 8.4.1 If a Criminal Record Check is not available, proof of application must be provided with the applicable documents to be provided to Human Resources no later than eight (8) weeks after the start of employment.
- 8.5 Staff employed in Child Care Services must provide a new Criminal Record Check every three (3) years.
- 8.6 Criminal Record Verification is a condition of employment. Staff are responsible to apply for the verification and pay any related fees if required.

9. Reporting of Allegations of Misconduct

- 9.1 Any staff member who has reasonable grounds for believing that another staff member has engaged in conduct that is dishonest, illegal, abusive or detrimental to the interests or reputation of the District shall report the conduct to that staff member's immediate supervisor or the Director of Human Resources as soon as possible.
- 9.2 Teachers making such an allegation against another teacher should seek advice on how to address the situation from a staff officer in Member Services, Alberta Teachers' Association, to ensure they are in compliance with the ATA Code of Professional Conduct. Similarly, CUPE members may contact their union representatives to ensure compliance with the CUPE Equality Statement and Membership Oath of Obligation.
- 9.3 Where the conduct involves imminent threat or danger to any person or property of the District a staff member should report the conduct immediately.
- 9.4 A supervisor or Principal who receives a report shall inform the Director of Human Resources as soon as possible.
- 9.5 The Superintendent or designate shall determine the action to be taken.
- 9.6 The Superintendent's decision regarding the outcome of an investigation will be final.

10. Protection for Reporting an Allegation of Misconduct

- 10.1 If an allegation is made in good faith, and is not found to be vexatious, the staff member making the allegation will not be disciplined, regardless of the outcome of the investigation.
- 10.2 The staff member making the allegation and anyone who provides information will be protected from any form of retaliation related to their employment from either co-workers or superiors under this Administrative Procedure.
- 10.3 A staff member who has encountered retaliation may submit a complaint in writing within six (6) months to the Superintendent or designate. Teachers must be mindful of their responsibilities under the Code of Professional Conduct.
- 10.4 The complaint will be investigated as per the District process.
- 10.5 Any staff member who makes an allegation of misconduct that is not in good faith or who retaliates against a staff member for making a report of misconduct in good faith shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- 10.6 The Superintendent's decision shall be final.

Approved: May 1, 2019

Reference: Teaching Profession Act
Collective Agreements