



# Educator Responsibility to Students

## Competency

Educator respects the rights and dignity of students by demonstrating an ethic of care through developmentally and culturally appropriate interactions and boundaries within an educational setting.

## Key Method

The educator accesses and analyzes MCEE, federal and state laws, local district school policy, and ethical dilemmas to demonstrate an ethic of care and respect for the rights and dignity of students through developmentally and culturally appropriate interactions and by setting appropriate boundaries within an educational setting.

## Method Components

### Professional Codes of Ethics

A movement is growing within the greater P-12 and educator preparation educational communities to ensure educators and prospective educators understand how professional decision-making can impact the safety and well-being of children, as well as the culture and mission of the school. Most professions have a strong set of principles to guide decision-making around these principles; in fact, all other professions have clear guidelines for professional ethics. The education profession, however, has not adopted a model code of conduct to assist educators with making ethical decisions and to assist educator preparation program providers (EPPs) in preparing their candidates to make ethical decisions. In the absence of a commonly accepted set of ethical standards, the education profession has often defaulted to judicial decisions and legislative action to govern the conduct of its members.



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## Code of Ethics vs. Code of Conduct

A professional code of ethics sets a higher threshold than regulatory codes of conduct. A code of conduct provides absolutes for employment, licensure, and/or criminal sanctions. The Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE), however, helps mitigate the risks inherent within the profession and is designed as a guide for current and future educators to construct the best course of action when faced with ethical dilemmas, providing a basis for educator learning, self-reflection, and self-accountability.

## The Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE)

The Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE) serves as a guide for future and current educators faced with the complexities of P-12 education. The establishment of this professional code of ethics by educators for educators honors the public trust and upholds the dignity of the profession.

The MCEE:

- Connects the aspirations of professional ethics with the day-to-day realities of the practicing educator
- Facilitates a broad understanding of what constitutes best ethical practice
- Helps ensure that educators are equipped with a framework for ethical decision-making
- Provides a basis for conversations across the profession about the importance of having a common language rooted in professional ethics.

The Model Code of Ethics for Educators consists of five major principles which broadly define critical dimensions of ethical practice expected of the professional educator.

1. Responsibility to the Profession
2. Responsibility for Professional Competence
3. Responsibility to Students
4. Responsibility to the School Community
5. Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

For additional information about the Model Code of Ethics for Educators, the principles and performance indicators, please visit [www.nasdtec.net](http://www.nasdtec.net).

## Respecting the Rights and Dignity of Students:

Educators should respect the rights and dignity of students in the following ways:



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- Respecting students by taking into account their age, gender, culture, setting 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 the student and continually keeps the safety and well-being of the student in mind.
- Avoiding multiple relationships with students which might impair objectivity and increase the risk of harm to student learning or well-being or decrease educator effectiveness.
- Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students
- Considering the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship of any sort with a former student, including but not limited to, any potential harm to the former student, public perception, and the possible impact on the educator's career. The professional educator ensures that the adult relationship was not started while the former student was in school.

## Demonstrating an Ethic of Care:

Educators should use an ethic of care in the following ways:

- Seeking to understand students' educational academic, personal and social needs, as well as students' 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, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture
- Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes the emotional, intellectual, physical, and sexual safety of all students.

## Maintaining Student Trust and Confidentiality

Educators should establish and maintain 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 certain forms of student communication, documents, or information obtained in the course of professional practice.



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- Upholding parents'/guardians' legal rights, as well as any legal requirements to reveal information related to legitimate concerns for the well-being of a student.
- Protecting the confidentiality of student records and releasing personal data in accordance with prescribed state and federal laws and local policies.

## Ethical Decision-Making

Educators can use the following process to support ethical decision-making:

1. Recognize and define the ethical dilemma.
2. Gather and identify the important facts of the dilemma.
3. Define the educator's role and mandate.
4. Discuss possible solutions that address, resolve, and prevent future dilemmas.
5. Address each dilemma and solution in compliance with MCEE, NEA Code of Conduct, state laws, and district school policy.
6. Create a plan(s) that aligns to MCEE, NEA Code of Conduct and district school policy.
7. Implement the plan.
8. Reflect on the results and adjust as needed

## Supporting Rationale and Research

Ashraf, H., Hosseinnia, M., & Domsy, J. G. H. (2017). EFL teachers' commitment to professional ethics and their emotional intelligence: A relationship study. *Cogent Education*, 4(1)

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Darden, E. (2014). Ethics at school: Let your conscience be your guide. *EdLaw-Phi Delta Kappan*. February 2014. DOI: 10.1177/003172171409500516

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[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294105993\\_A\\_Five-Country\\_Survey\\_on\\_Ethics\\_Education\\_in\\_Preservice\\_Teaching\\_Programs](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294105993_A_Five-Country_Survey_on_Ethics_Education_in_Preservice_Teaching_Programs)

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# Resources

## Standards

[InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards and Learning Progressions for Teachers 1.0: A Resource for Ongoing Teacher Development](#) Download standards here

## Videos

[Code of Ethics with Troy Hutchings and Phil Rogers \(Part 1 of 2\)](#)

[Code of Ethics with Troy Hutchings and Phil Rogers \(Part 2 of 2\)](#)

[Overview of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators \(MCEE\)](#)

## Articles

[The importance of ethics in education](#)

[Professional Ethics in the Classroom](#)

[Now What? Confronting and Resolving Ethical Questions A Handbook for Teachers](#)

[The Model Code of Ethics for Educators](#)

[Rationale for the MCEE](#)

[National Council for the Advancement of Educator Ethics \(NCAEE\)](#)

[ESP Professional Growth Continuum](#)

[Great Teaching and Learning: Creating the Culture to Support Professional Excellence](#)

[Code of Ethics](#)

[State schools suffer with no code of ethics](#)

## Podcasts

[Focusing on Ethics: Smartphones in the classroom](#)

[Blurred Lines: Protecting educators from social media mishaps](#)

[Educator Ethics in the Classroom](#)



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# Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and be proficient for all components in Part 2.

## Part 1. Overview Questions (Provides Context)

300-500 words

Please use the suggested word count as a guide to answer the following contextual questions. This will help our assessor understand your current context for working on this micro-credential.

Please answer the following contextual questions to help our reviewer understand your current situation. Do not include any information that will make you or others identifiable to our reviewers.

1. List your Career/Membership category, specific position and title, number of years working in education and a basic description of your worksite (grades, student population, demographics), community information (urban/rural/suburban), and other relevant information.
2. Describe your current knowledge of ethics in education. Have you had any training in educational ethics? How do you know if something is ethical? Be sure to fully explain your response with examples and details.

**Passing:** Responses completely answer each question and include specific examples that clearly illustrate understanding. Writing is easy to organize and understand.

## Part 2. Work Examples/Artifacts/Evidence

To earn this micro-credential, please submit the following **three artifacts** as evidence of your learning. *Please do not include any information that will make you or your students identifiable to your reviewers.*

### **Artifact 1: District Policy and Common Practices**

(250–500 words)

Compare NEA Code of Conduct, your federal/state laws with your school/district policy in reference of Responsibility to the Student (Principle 3 of MCEE) to answer the following questions:

1. How do your current district/ school policies support and align with the MCEE?
2. What discrepancies exist? Discuss 1–2 possible solutions to align with MCEE.
3. Discuss 1–2 possible improvements to your district/school policy to align with MCEE.



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## Artifact 2: Ethical Decision-Making

(600-1000 words)

Use a real-world ethical dilemma. Use the Ethical Decision Making Guide in the method components section to resolve the problem. Then write and submit a summary of the process. Your summary should include:

1. Context
  - a. Description of the dilemma
  - b. Reasons for choosing this particular dilemma.
2. Process
  - a. Who is involved with the process? (Use nicknames or initials and include their role.)
  - b. How did you work together to come up with a final decision?
  - c. What solutions were discussed and how are each of these solutions aligned with MCEE, NEA Code of Conduct, state laws, and district school policy?
  - d. Your final decision(s) and justification for this decision.
  - e. How Does your decision align to MCEE, NEA Code of Conduct and district school policy?
3. Reflection
  - a. on the process
  - b. on the results .

## Artifact 3: Presentation

(15–20 slides)

Create a 30-minute professional learning activity that you will share at a staff meeting, department meeting, or other professional learning opportunity.

Your presentation should include:

- Introduction to MCEE and other applicable laws in comparison with your district/school policy related to your responsibilities to the students.
- Decision-making process
- Opportunities for ethical dilemma discussions and ethically compliant role playing
- Final reflection activity.

## Part 2. Rubric

	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Basic</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<b>Artifact 1:</b> District Policy and Common Practice	All questions are answered thoughtfully and completely.	Not all questions are answered and may not be answered	Most questions are not answered thoughtfully and/or completely.



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	<p>Examples used are relevant to the topic.</p> <p>Solutions are realistic and viable.</p> <p>Solutions align with MCEE and local policies.</p> <p>Clearly organized and easy to understand.</p>	<p>thoughtfully and/or completely.</p> <p>Examples used may not be relevant to the topic .</p> <p>Solutions may not be realistic and viable.</p> <p>Solutions may not align with MCEE and local policies.</p> <p>May not be clearly organized and/or easy to understand.</p>	<p>Examples used are not relevant to the topic.</p> <p>Solutions are not realistic and/or viable.</p> <p>Not organized and/or not easy to understand.</p>
<p><b>Artifact 2:</b> Ethical Decision Making</p>	<p>Dilemma is a real-world example.</p> <p>The ethical decision-making process was followed.</p> <p>Stakeholders were diverse and representative of your school population.</p> <p>Includes a context section that provides the reviewer with enough background information to understand the dilemma and the local/historical context .</p> <p>The process is clearly explained and follows the decision-making process laid out in the</p>	<p>Dilemma may not be a real-world example.</p> <p>Steps may have been skipped in the ethical decision-making process.</p> <p>Stakeholders did not represent your school population.</p> <p>Context section is missing key information and may not provide the reviewer with enough background information to understand the dilemma and the local/historical context.</p> <p>The process is explained, but may be confusing to the</p>	<p>Dilemma is not a real-world example.</p> <p>The ethical decision-making process was not followed at all.</p> <p>No stakeholders were involved.</p> <p>Context section did not provide the reviewer with enough background information to understand the dilemma and the local/historical context.</p> <p>The process is not clearly explained and/or does not follow the decision-making process laid out in the</p>



	<p>Method Components section.</p> <p>Reflection is thoughtful and includes thoughts about the process <b>and</b> the results.</p>	<p>reader and/or it is missing steps in the decision-making process laid out in the Method Components section.</p> <p>Reflection includes thoughts about the process <b>and</b> the results.</p>	<p>Method Components section.</p> <p>Reflection is brief and/or not thoughtful and/or doesn't include thoughts about the process <b>and/or</b> the results.</p>
<p><b>Artifact 3:</b> Facilitate Professional Learning</p>	<p>Presentation is about 30 minutes <b>and</b> includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Information on MCEE and policies that relate to educator responsibility to students</li> <li>-The ethical decision-making process</li> <li>-Opportunities for deep discussions using scenarios and role playing</li> <li>-Debrief and reflection activity at the end.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation is less than 30 minutes <b>and</b> includes some of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Information on MCEE and policies that relate to educator responsibility to students</li> <li>-The ethical decision-making process</li> <li>-Opportunities for deep discussions using scenarios and role playing</li> <li>-Debrief and reflection activity at the end.</li> </ul>	<p>Presentation is less than 30 minutes <b>and</b> is missing most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Information on MCEE and policies that relate to educator responsibility to students</li> <li>-The ethical decision-making process</li> <li>-Opportunities for deep discussions using scenarios and role playing</li> <li>-Debrief and reflection activity at the end.</li> </ul>



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## Part 3 Reflection

(300–500 words)

Use the word count as a guide to write a personal reflection about your work on this micro-credential. For tips on writing a good reflection review the following resource:

[How Do I Write a Good Personal Reflection?](#)

Please answer the following reflective question. *Please do not include any information that will make you identifiable to your reviewers.*

Within the realm of this micro-credential, based on your new understanding of level of risk, what do you plan to do differently when encountering risky situations, especially as you interact with students, parents, community, and/or colleagues?

**Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal and/or work-related experiences to support claims. Also included are specific actionable steps that demonstrate how new learning will be integrated into future practices.



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