

Code of Ethics: Duty, Procedure, Liability Protections

Mulberry Christian Academy's policy on ethical conduct of instructional personnel and school administrators

Mulberry Christian Academy seeks to maintain the highest standards of ethics and conduct in our staff, all instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administration. To that end, we have adopted the "Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida" and the "Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida" as outlined in Florida Rule 6A-10.080 and 6A-10.081.

A link to the full text of those rules is found below.

Training Requirement

All instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators

In accordance with section 1006.061 and section 1012.796 of the Florida Statutes, all employees, educational support 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 instructional personnel or school administrators have knowledge of a violation of section 1012.795 or the Principles of Professional Conduct, employees shall immediately report the nature of the misconduct. Failure to report suspected misconduct may result in penalties up to termination of employment and revocation of an educator's certificate.

Reports of Misconduct by staff or instructional personnel should be reported to:

Pastor Terry Grimsley

Contact Email & Phone: mrgrimsley@yahoo.com (863) 425-1241

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to:

Steve Bedsole

Contact Email & Phone: mulberrychristian316@gmail.com 863-670-0938

Responsibility to Report Suspected Child Abuse

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Families at 1-800-96-ABUSE or <https://reportabuse.dcf.state.fl.us/>. All actual or suspected cases of child abuse must also be reported to Mulberry Christian Academy's administrator. All instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on the requirement to report all suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. A poster explaining the signs of possible abuse is found below. 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.

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. 768.095)

WORKPLACE STANDARDS AND POLICIES

As a representative of Mulberry Christian Academy, all personnel, educational support employees, and administrators must demonstrate and uphold standards of ethical conduct both in and outside of the classroom. As a Mulberry Christian Academy employee and a role model to students, all instructional personnel, educational support employees, and school administrators have a duty, at all times, to:

Abide by the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida (Rule 6B-1.001, F.A.C.)

1. The educator values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

Uphold the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida (Rule 6B-1.006, F.A.C.)

1. Obligation to the student requires that the individual:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental 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, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.

i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

2. Obligation to the public requires that the individual:

- a. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
- b. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- c. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
- d. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
- e. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages.

3. Obligation to the profession of education requires that the individual:

- a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
- b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, 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.
- f. Shall not use coercive means or promise special treatment to influence professional judgments of colleagues.
- g. Shall not misrepresent one's own professional qualifications.
- h. Shall not submit fraudulent information on any document in connection with professional activities.
- i. 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.
- j. Shall not withhold information regarding a position from an applicant or misrepresent an assignment or conditions of employment.
- k. Shall provide upon the request of the certificated individual a written statement of specific reason for recommendations that lead to the denial of increments, significant changes in employment, or termination of employment.
- l. Shall not assist entry into or continuance in the profession of any person known to be unqualified in accordance with these Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida and other applicable Florida Statutes and State Board of Education Rules.
- m. Shall self-report within forty-eight (48) hours to appropriate authorities (as determined by district) 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 or Nolo Contendere for any criminal offense other than a minor traffic violation within forty-eight (48) hours after the final judgment.

3. When handling sealed and expunged records disclosed under this rule, school districts shall comply with the confidentiality provisions of Sections 943.0585(4)(c) and 943.059(4)(c), Florida Statutes.

n. Shall report to appropriate authorities any known allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

o. Shall seek no reprisal against any individual who has reported any allegation of a violation of the Florida School Code or State Board of Education Rules as defined in Section 1012.795(1), Florida Statutes.

p. Shall comply with the conditions of an order of the Education Practices Commission.

q. Shall, as the supervising administrator, cooperate with the Education Practices Commission in monitoring the probation of a subordinate.

Abide by all school policies and procedures with steadfast adherence to the following:

- Immediately report known or suspected child abuse or neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Families Toll-Free Hotline (1-800-96-ABUSE).

And

Immediately contact and report suspected misconduct to Mulberry Christian Academy's School Principal Terry Grimsley

- The Mulberry Christian Academy (administration) designee to report to: Terry Grimsley

- Call Terry Grimsley at: 863-425-1241.

- Email Terry Grimsley at: mulberrychristian316@gmail.com

- To make an appointment to meet with the Mulberry Christian Academy's school administrator, call the school's main office 863-425-1241 and request a scheduled meeting with Terry Grimsley.

In accordance with section 39.201, FL Statutes, any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Central Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE.

Instructional personnel and school administrators may report such information to DCF in unison, but reporting to another school employee does not fulfill the legal obligation to report to DCF.

A person who is required by statute to report known or suspected abuse or neglect and fails to do so, is subject to disciplinary action by the employer, by the State Department of Education and/or through criminal prosecution.

768.095 Employer immunity from liability; disclosure of information regarding former or current employees.—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 chapter 760.

LIABILITY: In accordance with section 39.203, Florida Statutes, any person who reports in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department of Children and Families or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. Immediately report to Mulberry Christian Academy Administration any alleged misconduct that affects the health, safety or welfare of a student, by other instructional personnel or school administrators.

In accordance with section 1012.795(1)(b) Florida Statutes, all instructional personnel, educational support employees, administrator must report alleged misconduct that affects the health, safety or welfare of a student by instructional personnel or school administrators. If instructional personnel or school administrators have knowledge of a violation of section 1012.795 or the Principles of Professional Conduct or the district code of conduct, designated employees shall immediately report the nature of the misconduct to the district designee.

Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to:

- Mulberry Christian Academy (administration) designee to report to: Terry Grimsley.
- Phone: 863-425-1241
- Email: mrgrimsley@yahoo.com

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to:

- Steve Bedsole
- Phone: 863-670-0938
- Email: mulberrychristian316@gmail.com