

# **Dancetown Homeschool Academy**

## **Standards of Ethical Conduct**

1. Our school 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. Our primary 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 for the student requires that our instructional personnel:
  - 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 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.
4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the community, employees of our school must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. The commitment requires that our employees:
  - 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, 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.

### **Training Requirement**

All instructional personnel 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**

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. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to the school director/principal, Mrs. Lory Castro. Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to owner and chief administrative officer, Mr. Manuel Castro.

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 the main office as well as copies given to all employees and administrators, and posted on our website [www.dancetownsouthflorida.com](http://www.dancetownsouthflorida.com) information or testing violations

#### **The following behavior may be indicative of misconduct that should be reported:**

- being alone with a student dark or closed room or secluded area
- behaving in an overly friendly or familiar way or failing to maintain an appropriate professional boundary with a student
- using forceful or unnecessary physical contact with a student
- administering discipline not compliant with district policy
- accepting or offering of gifts for return of a favor or privilege from students or colleagues
- badgering or habitually teasing a student
- mocking or belittling a student
- chronically embarrassing a student
- displaying prejudice or bigotry against a student
- suspicion of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- failing to properly supervise students or to ensure student safety
- cheating, falsifying information or testing violations



- retaliating against a student or colleague for reporting misconduct
- bantering or engaging in colloquial or slang communications with a student
- directing or using profane, offensive, or explosive language in the presence of students
- making lewd or suggestive comments or overtures toward a student or colleague

**Failure to report misconduct:** Possible penalties for personnel, employees, and administrators who fail to report misconduct may include:

- a). Written reprimand
- b). Suspension with or without pay
- c). Termination of employment
- d). Discipline/Sanctions on an educator's certificate

### **Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect**

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

#### **Signs of Physical Abuse:**

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, 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.

#### **What to do if abuse is suspected:**



- Be a good listener. Show that you understand and believe what the child tells you. Encourage, but don't pressure him/her to talk. Ask open ended questions.
- Be supportive. Tell the child he/she did the right thing by coming to you. Stress that he/she is not to blame. Let the child know that you want to help.
- Don't overreact. This can frighten the child or prevent him/her from telling you more. Do not talk negatively about the suspected abuser in front of the child.
- Document and report it. Document your conversation as soon as you can. If possible, write down the child's exact words.
- Don't delay. Never assume someone else will report the abuse. The sooner its reported the soonest the child and their family can be helped.

### **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 bt reason of such action. (F.S. 39. 203) .

Any 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)