

# STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

## Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville

1. Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville 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 professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. Our employees 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, Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

The following disciplinary rules shall constitute the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida.

Violation of any of these principles shall subject the individual to revocation or suspension of the individual educator's certificate, or the other penalties as provided by law.

1. Obligation to 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 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 our instructional personnel:
  - 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 our instructional personnel:
  - 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.

### **Training Requirement**

All instructional personnel and administrators at Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville 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 of Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville 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 of Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville should be made to Cynthia S. Robinson, Co-Director or to Alisa Demico, Co-Director at (904) 880-9001 and by email at [crobinson@clarkeschools.org](mailto:crobinson@clarkeschools.org) or [ademico@clarkeschools.org](mailto:ademico@clarkeschools.org) or in the case of their absence to Tina Morris, Operations Manager at (904) 880-9001 and by email at [tmorris@clarkeschools.org](mailto:tmorris@clarkeschools.org). Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to Karen Katsanos, Chief Human Resource Officer, Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech, Northampton, MA at 413-582-1155 and by email at [kkatsanos@clarkeschools.org](mailto:kkatsanos@clarkeschools.org). 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 at Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the office of Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville.

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

All employees and agents at Clarke Schools for Hearing and Speech/Jacksonville 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.dct.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

#### 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. 768.095)