

The Board believes employees are role models in the community and their personal and professional conduct is under constant scrutiny. Employee demeanor expresses both the person's integrity and/or reputation as well as that of the school system. Employees shall perform their jobs in a professional, competent, lawful and ethical manner. Expected standards include, but are not limited to:

- **Agreeing that the welfare of children is the first concern of the school system.**
- **Complying with all school board policies and administrative guidelines, State Board of Education and Department of Public Instruction policies, rules, procedures and regulations, and federal, state and local statutes, regulations and ordinances governing public school employees.**
- **Understanding that appointments to positions and promotions are required to be based solely on merit. The use of pressure on school officials for appointment or promotion is unethical.**
- **Maintaining just, courteous, and professional relationships with students, parents, staff members and others.**
- **Reporting situations of which the employee is aware involving inappropriate conduct of staff with students, parents, staff members and others and complying with all district investigations.**
- **Utilizing efficiency in techniques and keeping abreast of the latest developments in their fields of work.**
- **Transacting of all official business with the properly designated authorities of the school system.**
- **Restraining from school usage of connections and privileges as a public forum or in connection with school instruction or other school activities to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views, or propaganda of any kind.**
- **Using constructive criticism made directly to the particular school employee with the administrative authority to improve the situation, and then to the Superintendent, if necessary.**
- **Properly using and protecting of all school property, equipment, staff time and materials.**
- **Maintaining strict professional confidentiality in all school related matters.**

- **Demonstrating conduct which exemplifies high ethical and moral standards and which sets a good example for others.**
- **Soliciting or accepting any gifts, favor, reward, service or promise of reward, including a promise of future employment, in exchange for recommending, influencing or attempting to influence the award of a contract is expressly prohibited.**

The absence of law, policy or regulation covering a particular situation does not relieve an employee from the responsibility to exercise the highest ethical standards at all times. Employees should avoid conduct, actions, and appearances unbecoming to an education professional, or which bring disrepute on the schools.

The Board believes that the appearance and the conduct of its employees are important. All personnel will dress in good taste, appropriately attired for the work to be done. A well-groomed professional is a positive influence on everyone.

PERSONNEL-POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The Board recognizes the right of employees to participate in political affairs. Employment or volunteer service with the district does not preclude an individual from participating in political activities, such as registering, voting, being active members of a political party, campaigning for candidates, seeking, campaigning for, and serving in public office, attending political events, and contributing funds to partisan groups or candidates. When engaged in such activities, it should be clear that the employee is acting as an individual and in no manner represents the views of the district. These political activities must not: (1) take place during work hours or on any Board property; (2) involve district funds or materials; or (3) make use of an official school position to encourage or to coerce students, employees, or others to support or oppose a political party, candidate or issue.

A teacher, upon request to the Superintendent and Board, may be granted a leave of absence without pay for the purpose of serving in any elective office, other than the Board of Education.

Employees shall not involve students in partisan political activities on school time, campaign on school time, or use school equipment or supplies while participating in partisan political affairs. The position of any personnel will not be in jeopardy due to his/her political activity as long as he/she adheres to the terms of this policy.

This policy should not be construed as prohibiting the impartial study and discussion of political or other controversial issues in the classroom setting. However, employees must be mindful of their responsibility to deliver the curriculum of the school system and may not present their personal political views to students in the classroom or when otherwise engaged in the instruction of

students. Teachers will always present political and civic issues without personal bias and with reasonable effort to present all sides of issues.

UCPS employees shall promote the following concepts:

- The United States of America is comprised of persons whom are created equally.
- One race or sex is not inherently superior to another race or sex.
- An individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, is not inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.
- An individual shall not be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment solely or partly because of his or her race or sex.
- An individual's moral character is not determined by his or her race or sex.
- No individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.
- No individual, solely by virtue of his or her race or sex, should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or any other form of psychological distress.
- That the belief that the United States is a meritocracy is not an inherently racist or sexist belief, or that the United States was not created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race or sex.

For the purposes of this policy, "promote" shall mean any of the following:

1. Compelling students, teachers, administrators, or other school employees to affirm or profess belief in the concepts described in subsection of this policy
2. Including concepts described in the section above in curricula, reading lists, seminars, workshops, trainings, or other educational or professional settings in a manner that could reasonably give rise to the appearance of official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement.
3. Contracting with, hiring, or otherwise engaging speakers, consultants, diversity trainers, and other persons for the purpose of advocating concepts described in the above section.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The Board encourages participation in community activities by school personnel to fulfill civic responsibilities, to increase general public awareness of the school system and to promote a progressive community spirit. The Board shall limit or discourage participation in community activities only if such participation could cause interference with the activities of the school system or substantial interference with the employee's ability to function effectively.

Staff members are reminded that they may be viewed by the community as representatives of the school system. However, staff members will not claim to be official school system representatives unless they have been so designated by the Superintendent or the Board.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Board encourages membership in professional organizations for improved knowledge of subject(s) and teaching techniques, growth in professional and ethical understanding, and improvement of the teaching profession. However, membership in professional organizations is matter of personal choice and shall not adversely affect employment status.

TUTORING FOR PAY

Principals and teachers will make every reasonable effort to assist students experiencing difficulties at school before recommending that parents engage a tutor.

Should individual tutoring be recommended, the Superintendent is directed to establish and disseminate to all personnel such rules as will protect both the school system and the teachers from charges of conflict of interest. Except for tutoring through a UCPS approved program, no employee may receive financial compensation for tutoring a student for whom the employee has instructional, administrative, or supervisory responsibility. When a teacher tutors a student for whom he/she does not have teaching, administrative, or supervisory responsibility, a fee may be charged for the tutoring sessions. Tutoring sessions for which a fee is charged should take place off campus and after regular teacher work hours. Permission for tutoring sessions to be held on a school campus for which a fee is charged is at the discretion of the principal.

LEGAL REF.: U.S. Const., Amendment I; 5 USC § 1501 et seq.; N.C.G.S. §§ 115C-36, -46.1, -47(18), -274, -276, -278, -288, -307, -325, -527 and § 163-99, and 16 NCAC 6C.0602, 16 NCAC 6C. 0306; Boring v. Buncombe County Bd. of Educ., 136 F.3d 364 (4th Cir. 1998); Lee v. York County Sch. Div., 484 F.3d 687 (4th Cir. 2007)

CROSS REF.:

- 2-8 Annual Independent Audit
- 3-1 Staff Responsibilities
- 3-3 Recruitment and Selection of Personnel
- 3-6 Staff-Student Relations
- 3-7 Prohibition against Racism, Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying (Employees)
- 3-8 Job Descriptions
- 3-9 Personnel File
- 3-10 Grievance Procedure for Employees

- 3-12 Use of Employee Mailboxes and Bulletin Boards**
- 3-20 Growth and Improvement Plans for Licensed Employees**
- 3-21 Reduction in Force**
- 3-31 Criminal Arrests and Convictions**

UNION COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

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