

CLA Professional Conduct and Abuse Reporting Policy and Procedures

Standards of Ethical Conduct

(Adapted from the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida and Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida)

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 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.
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. This 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 that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.
 - e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague or CLA.

TRAINING REQUIREMENT: All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Obligations for 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: Tina Hinton

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to: Peter Boulware. If the alleged misconduct is by Peter Boulware, then report to Tina Hinton.

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 CLA Employee Handbook and on our website at: www.clatallahassee.org.

This Notice Must Be Displayed in Teacher Copy Room:

http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7725/urlt/0072451-educatormisconductposter_portrait_2-4.pdf

Teacher Brochure:

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7725/urlt/0072452-educatormisconductbrochure.pdf>

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/>

- **What is abuse?**

For children: "Abuse" means any willful act or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that causes or is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Abuse of a child includes acts or omissions. Corporal discipline of a child by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child.

For adults: "Abuse" means any willful act or threatened act by a relative, caregiver, or household member which causes or is likely to cause significant impairment to a vulnerable adult's physical, mental, or emotional health. Abuse includes acts and omissions.

What is neglect?

For children: "Neglect" occurs when a child is deprived of, or is allowed to be deprived of, necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment or a child is permitted to live in an environment when such deprivation or environment causes the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired or to be in danger of being significantly impaired.

For adults: "Neglect" means the failure or omission on the part of the caregiver or vulnerable adult to provide the care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the physical and mental health of the vulnerable adult, including, but not limited to, food, clothing, medicine, shelter, supervision, and medical

services, which a prudent person would consider essential for the well-being of a vulnerable adult. The term "neglect" also means the failure of a caregiver or vulnerable adult to make a reasonable effort to protect a vulnerable adult from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by others.

- A one-hour course designed for K-12 teachers, "Identifying and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect" is available at <http://www3.fl-dcf.org/RCAAN/>

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)

This Notice must be displayed in the CLA Teacher Break Room

<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7725/urlt/0072440-mandatoryabusereport08.pdf>

The Department of Children and Families provides the following information as advice for mandated reporters of abuse.

If a child tells YOU about abuse:

- 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 it's reported, the sooner the child and their family can be helped.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Employee Acknowledgement of Conduct and Abuse Reporting Policy

I have received training on the Standards of Ethical Conduct for Education Professionals and on Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect. I understand my duty to report misconduct by educators and administrators and my duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

Employee Signature

Date

Certificate of Acknowledgements

I, _____, have been provided access to Community Leadership Academy's (CLA) Employee Handbook and am aware of my responsibility to read, understand and comply with the organization's policies and procedures.

I further understand that neither the Employee Handbook nor this "Certificate of Acknowledgements" is a contract or an offer to enter into a contract with CLA. I acknowledge and agree that no contract of guaranteed employment exists between CLA and me. Further, I understand that nothing in this handbook is intended to interfere with my right to engage in protected activity in accordance with applicable federal and state law, including Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act. I further understand that if I am a new or rehired employee, I am subject to a ninety (90) day probationary period, and that during this time I may be released at any time for any reason other than for any status or condition protected by law. I further understand that if I am released within the initial probationary period, I may not be eligible for unemployment benefits through CLA.

At all times, while employed by CLA, my employment will be "at will"; I will not rely on any written or verbal statements to the contrary. Consequently, as an "at will" employee, I have the right to resign at any time and for any reason; similarly, CLA has the right to end the employment relationship at any time, as management deems appropriate.

I further acknowledge, understand and agree that:

1. CLA reserves that right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate or change any plans, policies or procedures, in whole or in part, at any time with or without notice.
 2. There are no prior personnel policies, handbooks, manuals, practices, procedures, contracts, or agreements, verbally made or otherwise written, implying or expressing any offer of guaranteed employment between my employer and myself.
 3. I have been informed and agree that if I do not call or show up to work for even one (1) day without proper notification, an acceptable reason and acceptable documentation, I may be considered to have "voluntarily quit" and that unemployment benefits may be denied.
 4. I will comply with any drug/alcohol testing policy CLA may adopt and, specifically, I agree to submit to drug/alcohol testing, including pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-accident and random screening as permitted by law.
 5. I will comply with any current or future policy that has been established to protect the safety and welfare of my co-workers, students and/or CLA. In this regard, I agree to the inspection of any personal belongings that I bring onto the property of CLA, including but not limited to any handbag, briefcase, computer case, bag, container or vehicle.
 6. If, at any time during my employment, I am subject to any type of harassment, discrimination or retaliation, or if I am subjected to violation of any local, state and/or federal law, regulation ordinance or directive of rule whatsoever, I will immediately contact Mr. or Mrs. Boulware in order to obtain assistance with resolution of such matters. If I believe Mr. and/or Mrs. Boulware are the source of the harassment, I agree to report the offending conduct to Tina Hinton.
 7. In recognition of the fact that any work-related injuries which might be sustained by me are covered by state workers' compensation statutes, and to avoid the circumvention of such state statutes which may result from suits against CLA based on the same injury or injuries, and to the extent permitted by law, I hereby waive and forever release any rights I might have to make claims or bring suit against CLA for damages based upon injuries which are covered under such workers' compensation statutes and, instead, will pursue remedies under the Florida Workers' Compensation Law.
 8. I understand that I am covered under CLA's workers' compensation policy and that it is my responsibility to report any and all workplace accidents and injuries to a supervisor as soon as they occur or become known to me. I understand that management will deal promptly with legitimate claims and injuries and investigate any fraudulent claims.
 9. I agree to not install or use unapproved software, programs, platforms, or devices, or access inappropriate websites on my employer's computers.
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Employee Acknowledgement: *By my signature below, I certify that I have read and understand all parts of this Certificate of Acknowledgements, have been provided with access to the Employee Handbook and have been advised to read its contents. I further understand that my failure to comply with CLA's policies and procedures, written or orally communicated may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or denial of unemployment benefits.*

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____