

EMPLOYEE CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR ILLINOIS SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENT: SESI Illinois (including Camelot)	POLICY DESCRIPTION: Code of Ethics for all Employees of SESI Schools in Illinois
	REPLACES POLICY DATED: N/A
EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2023	Version: 001
APPROVED BY: Compliance, HR, Legal, and SESI IL	

POLICY:

- A. All SESI employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships, to demonstrate integrity and honesty, to be considerate and cooperative, and to maintain professional and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff members, and others.
- B. The Illinois Educator Code of Ethics, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education, is incorporated into this SESI Schools Employee Code of Conduct in its entirety and applies to all Employees regardless of whether the employee is considered an “Educator” under the Illinois Code (“Employee Code”).
- C. Any Employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. SESI Schools have zero tolerance for any unprofessional conduct.
- D. Standards related to Employee-student conduct shall, at a minimum:
 1. Comply with the Illinois Educator Code of Ethics, adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education;
 2. Prohibited grooming behaviors and sexual misconduct including but not limited to:
 - a. any act, including but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity,
 - b. by an Employee with direct contact with a student,
 - c. that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

 - A sexual or romantic invitation
 - Dating or soliciting a date
 - Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog
 - Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student
 - Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature
 - Sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student

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- E. Employees are expected to maintain professional relationships with students.
 1. Employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and/or inappropriate between an Employee and student.
 2. Employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee’s privately owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained prior permission of the School Director to do so.
 3. Employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices. Student pictures for school sponsored activities used in furtherance of SESI Schools’ educational mission are permitted.
 4. Employees are not permitted to meet with a student or contact a student outside the employee’s professional role. Employees are expected to avoid crossing a line that results in an actual or perceived inappropriate relationship.
- F. Employees are required to complete training for this policy and procedure for Code of Ethics for all Employees of SESI Schools in Illinois

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Employees who deliver services in SESI Schools and Programs in Illinois. See 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5d.

DEFINITIONS:

“Employee Code” is the code of professional ethics described in this policy and procedure, including the Illinois Code of Ethics.

“SESI Schools” includes all schools and programs operated by Specialized Education of Illinois, Inc. or any of its affiliates who interact with or provide services to students in the state of Illinois.

“Employee” any employee of SESI Schools including, but not limited to: Illinois licensed educators, school bus drivers, food service personnel etc.

PROCEDURE:

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All Employees of SESI Schools must annually attest to their compliance with the Employee Code as contained herein:

A. Responsibility to Students

- a. Employees are committed to creating, promoting and implementing a learning environment that is accessible to each student, enables students to achieve the highest academic potential, and maximizes their ability to succeed in academic and employment settings as a responsible member of society. SESI Schools Employees:
 - i. Embody the Standards for the School Support Personnel Endorsements (23 Ill. Adm. Code 23), the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (23 Ill. Adm. Code 24.130), and Standards for Administrative Endorsements (23 Ill. Adm. Code 29), as applicable to the educator, in the learning environment;
 - ii. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect and equal opportunity for each student, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, language or socio-economic status;
 - iii. Maintain a professional relationship with students at all times;
 - iv. Provide a curriculum based on clear expectations for each student that addresses individual differences through the design, implementation and adaptation of effective instruction; and
 - v. Foster in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society,

B. Responsibility to Self

- a. Employees are committed to establishing high professional standards for their practice and striving to meet these standards through their performance. Employees of SESI Schools:
 - i. Assume responsibility and accountability for their performance and continually strive to demonstrate proficiency and understanding of current trends in both content knowledge and professional practice;
 - ii. Develop and implement personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development;

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- iii. Represent their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and
- iv. Demonstrate a high level of professional judgment.

C. Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession

- a. SESI Schools Employees are committed to collaborating with school and district colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning. SESI Schools Employees:
 - i. Collaborate with colleagues in their respective schools and districts to meet local and State educational standards;
 - ii. Work together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate that allows all educators to maintain their individual professional integrity;
 - iii. Seek out and engage in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession;
 - iv. Promote participation in educational decision-making processes;
 - v. Encourage promising candidates to enter the education profession; and
 - vi. Support the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

D. Responsibility to Parents, Families and Communities

- a. Employees will collaborate, build trust and respect confidentiality with parents, families and communities to create effective instruction and learning environments for each student. Illinois educators:
 - i. Aspire to understand and respect the values and traditions of the communities in their learning environments;
 - ii. Encourage and advocate for fair and equal educational opportunities for each student;
 - iii. Develop and maintain professional relationships with parents, families and communities;
 - iv. Promote collaboration and support student learning through regular and meaningful communication with parents, families and communities; and
 - v. Cooperate with community agencies that provide resources and services to enhance the learning environment.

E. Responsibility to the Illinois State Board of Education

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- a. Employees are committed to compliance with the School Code [105 ILCS 5] and its implementing regulations, and to State and federal laws and regulations relevant to their profession. Illinois educators:
 - i. Provide accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all educator licensure matters;
 - ii. Maintain appropriate educator licensure for employment; and
 - iii. Comply with State and federal laws and regulations.

REFERENCES:

1. [105 ILCS 5/22- 85.5](#)
2. [Ill. Admin. Code tit. 23, § 22.20](#)