

# Administrative Procedure 401

## Human Resources

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# CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT FOR TEACHERS AND TEACHER LEADERS

## BACKGROUND

The Charter Board is committed to ensuring that each staff member employed at a Westmount Charter School (WCS) campus or Central Office is provided with a safe and caring working environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours, while respecting diversity and promoting a sense of belonging.

This document reflects the requirements outlined in Schedule 1.1 of the Professional Conduct and Competency for Teachers and Teacher Leaders Regulation and aligns with the expectations of Alberta Education and Childcare, the *Education Act*, and applicable WCS Administrative Procedures.

## Definitions

1. In this Regulation,

- (a) “Ideological advantage” means perspectives taught to students in a biased manner with the intent to take advantage of a student’s uninformed or under-informed opinions, but does not include programs of study established under the *Education Act*;
- (b) “Student”, for the purposes of the code of professional conduct referred to in Section 225.5 of the *Education Act*, includes a child enrolled in an early childhood services program.

## Preamble

This code of professional conduct for teachers and teacher leaders is established in accordance with Section 1.1 of this Regulation.

This code does not prejudicially affect any right or privilege guaranteed by the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, or any constitutionally protected right or privilege of religious instruction under section 93 of the *Constitution Act, 1867*.

Teachers and teacher leaders shall comply with this code.

Sections 225.4, 225.5, 225.91 and other sections of the *Education Act* provide the legal framework for this code, including mandatory compliance and procedures for alleged non-compliance.

Conduct that does not comply with this code constitutes unprofessional conduct in accordance with the *Education Act*.

Any person may make a complaint pursuant to the *Education Act* about alleged unprofessional conduct of a teacher or teacher leader, which may result in disciplinary action impacting a teacher’s or teacher leader’s suitability to hold a certificate.

Unprofessional conduct and professional incompetence are defined separately in the *Education Act*. This code does not apply for the purpose of determining professional incompetence.

The Teaching Quality Standard (TQS), Leadership Quality Standard (LQS), and Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard (SLQS) establish professional development requirements for teachers and teacher leaders.

This code applies to the conduct of an individual teacher or teacher leader. Matters about the

administration of school authorities are subject to applicable legislation.

The conduct of teachers and teacher leaders, both on and off duty, directly affects the community's perception of their ability to fulfill their unique position of trust and influence. Teachers and teacher leaders are entrusted with positions of significant responsibility and are therefore held to a high standard of professional conduct by students, families, colleagues, and the broader school community. They are accountable for their conduct, both on and off duty, and are expected to conduct themselves with due regard to the honour, dignity, welfare, rights and best interests of students and the teaching profession.

### **Professional Conduct Requirements**

#### 1. In relation to students,

- (a) The teacher or teacher leader shall respect the dignity and rights of all students and persons without prejudice as to the prohibited grounds of discrimination set out in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and with regard to rights provided for in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and be considerate of the circumstances of students and persons.
- (b) The teacher or teacher leader is required to demonstrate a safe and caring learning environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviours, while respecting diversity and promoting a sense of belonging, as students are entitled to under the *Education Act*.
- (c) The teacher or teacher leader shall teach or lead in a manner that does not intentionally contravene applicable legislation and policies of Alberta Education.
- (d) The teacher or teacher leader shall not
  - (i) Intentionally harm or abuse a student verbally, psychologically or emotionally; or
  - (ii) Harm or abuse a student physically or sexually.
- (e) The teacher or teacher leader shall not
  - (i) Intentionally engage in an illegal activity or other activities that may cause a student to be put at or to remain at risk of harm or abuse; or
  - (ii) Knowingly encourage or enable a student to engage in an illegal activity or other activities that may cause a student to be put at or to remain at risk of harm or abuse.
- (f) The teacher or teacher leader shall not disclose information received about a student in confidence or while performing the teacher's or teacher leader's professional duties except
  - (i) As required by law; or
  - (ii) Where
    - (A) In the teacher's or teacher leader's judgment, it would be in the best interests of the student to disclose the information; and
    - (B) The disclosure of the information is permitted by law.
- (g) The teacher or teacher leader shall not
  - (i) Accept pay for tutoring a student in any subjects in which the teacher or teacher leader is responsible for giving classroom instruction to that student, but may provide tutoring to other students not in the teacher's or teacher leader's charge, subject to local school policy;
  - (ii) Take advantage of a professional position to profit from the sale of goods or services to or for students in the teacher's or teacher leader's charge; or
  - (iii) While in a position of authority, teach or lead in a manner that exploits the teacher's or teacher leader's relationship with students for ideological advantage, material advantage or other advantage.

- (h) The teacher or teacher leader may delegate specific and limited aspects of instructional activity to non-certificated personnel, provided that the teacher or teacher leader supervises such activity.

2. In relation to parents of students, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) Respect parents and be considerate of their circumstances;
- (b) Treat information received from and about parents with discretion;
- (c) Be respectful in communications with and about parents; and
- (d) Not discuss other students except where the matters being discussed are relevant to their child and then only to the extent that, in the teacher's or teacher leader's judgment, is necessary.

3. In relation to parents of students, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) Not undermine the confidence of students in other teachers or teacher leaders;
- (b) Not criticize the professional competence or professional reputation of another teacher or teacher leader, except;
  - i. In confidence to appropriate officials; or
  - ii. In making a complaint about the alleged unprofessional conduct or alleged professional incompetence of a teacher or teacher leader under the *Education Act*.
- (c) Not take any steps to pursue the discipline or dismissal of another teacher or teacher leader because of animosity or for personal advantage; and
- (d) In addition to other reporting required by law, report to the Commissioner the conduct of another teacher or teacher leader who is alleged to cause or have caused psychological, emotional, physical or sexual harm or abuse to a student.

4. In relation to the teaching profession, the teacher or teacher leader shall

- (a) Behave in a manner that maintains the honour and dignity of the profession; and
- (b) Not engage in activities that adversely affect the quality of the teacher's or teacher leader's professional service.

**Legal Reference:** *Education Act*  
*Practice Review of Teachers Regulation*

**Cross Reference:** AP-409 Personal Harassment

**Date of Adoption:** December 6, 1999

**Date of Revision:** December 5, 2003, February 11, 2009, October 19, 2015, September 9, 2016,  
October 2, 2019, June 1, 2023, June 16, 2026

**Due for Review:** June 16, 2029