

Standards of Ethical Conduct & Employee Ethics Policy

Still We Rise Excellence Academy

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

1. Purpose and Core Values

Still We Rise Excellence Academy values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, the acquisition of knowledge, and the cultivation of responsible citizenship. Essential to achieving these standards are:

- Freedom to learn and to teach.
- Equal opportunity for all students and staff.
- Integrity, honesty, and accountability in all professional actions.

Our primary concern is the student and the development of their potential. All employees are expected to strive for professional growth, exercise sound professional judgment, and uphold the highest standards of ethical conduct.

2. Responsibilities to Students

All instructional personnel and staff shall:

- a. Make reasonable efforts to protect students from harmful conditions affecting learning, mental or physical health, or safety.
- b. Not unreasonably restrain a student from independent learning.
- c. Not deny access to diverse points of view.
- d. Present subject matter accurately without suppression or distortion.
- e. Avoid unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement of students.
- f. Respect and protect students' legal rights.
- g. Not harass or discriminate against students on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, or social/family background.
- h. Not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
- i. Maintain confidentiality of personally identifiable information unless required by law or serving a legitimate professional purpose.

3. Responsibilities to Colleagues

Employees shall:

- a. Maintain honesty and professionalism in all professional dealings.
 - b. Not deny a colleague professional benefits or opportunities based on any protected category.
 - c. Respect colleagues' political and civil rights.
 - d. Avoid harassment, intimidation, or discriminatory conduct that interferes with an individual's work performance or creates a hostile environment.
 - e. Refrain from making malicious or knowingly false statements about a colleague.
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4. Legal and Institutional Compliance

All employees must comply with:

- Federal, state, and local laws.
 - All school policies and procedures.
 - Mandatory reporting obligations for misconduct, child abuse, abandonment, or neglect under Florida law.
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5. Reporting Professional Misconduct

Employees must report misconduct by instructional personnel, educational support staff, or administrators that affects student health, safety, or welfare. Examples include:

- Obscene or inappropriate language.
- Drug or alcohol use on campus.
- Disparaging comments, prejudice, or bigotry.
- Sexual innuendo or inappropriate contact.
- Cheating, testing violations, or tampering with assessments.
- Physical aggression.
- Accepting or offering improper favors.

Reporting Contacts:

- **Tim Quainoo** – t.quainoo@stillweriseonline.org
- **For reports involving administrators:**
John Allen – j.allen@srcog.org | (407) 847 – 3500

Legally sufficient allegations involving Florida-certified educators will be reported to the **Florida Department of Education's Office of Professional Practices Services**. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct are posted in the school's front office, break room, and on the school website: <https://www.stillweriseonline.org/ethicspolicy>

6. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect

All employees have a legal duty to report suspected or known cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

- **Phone:** 1-800-96-ABUSE
 - **Online:** <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>
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7. Recognizing Signs of Abuse or Neglect

Physical Abuse:

- Unexplained bruises, burns, fractures.
- Withdrawal, fear of going home, aggression.
- Wearing clothing to hide injuries.

Sexual Abuse:

- Pain or injury in the genital area, STDs, or pregnancy.
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behavior.
- Fear of specific individuals, withdrawal, sudden weight change.

Neglect:

- Poor hygiene, hunger, inadequate supervision.
- Untreated medical needs.
- Frequent fatigue, excessive need for adult attention.

Patterns of Abuse:

Multiple or recurring signs should be reported immediately, even if individual indicators seem minor.

8. Use of Technology and Social Media

Employees must use technology and social media professionally, ensuring that personal use does not interfere with duties or harm the reputation of the school. Online conduct should reflect the school's ethical standards.

9. Training Requirement

All instructional personnel, educational support employees, and administrators must complete annual training on:

- Ethical standards and professional conduct.
 - Child safety and abuse reporting.
 - Confidentiality and boundaries.
 - Reporting procedures.
 - Legal compliance.
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10. Liability Protections

- Any person acting in good faith to report abuse or misconduct is immune from civil or criminal liability under **F.S. 39.203**.
 - Employers providing employment references in good faith are immune from liability unless information is knowingly false or violates civil rights (**F.S. 768.095**).
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11. Accountability and Disciplinary Action

Violations of this policy may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings.
 - Suspension.
 - Termination of employment.
 - Referral to law enforcement or licensing agencies.
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12. Oversight and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to comply with law, incorporate best practices, and meet the needs of Still We Rise Excellence Academy. Amendments will be communicated to all staff.