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Policy GBEA

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR EMPLOYEES

The New Frontiers School Board (NFSB) is committed to high standards of social and educational practice. The success of school communities results from the efforts of all employees. To this end, all employees are expected to observe the highest standards of integrity in their conduct. This Code of Conduct provides clear standards of behavior for employees and a framework within which all practices must be conducted, managed and regulated in accordance with law and generally accepted ethical and responsible practices.

The NFSB is committed to treating all employees fairly, with respect and dignity. To honor this commitment, the NFSB shall take appropriate measures to create and maintain a physically, and emotionally safe and healthy workplace.

REFERENCES

This Professional Code of Conduct for Employees is developed in compliance with applicable laws and regulations; notably the Education Act (R.S.Q., c. I-13.3), the Act Respecting Access to Documents Held by Public Bodies and the Protection of Personal Information (R.S.Q., A-2.1), the Civil Code of Quebec (notably sections 321 to 325 and 2088), as well as Collective Agreements, NFSB by-laws and policies, notably the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, Employee Use of ICT and Social Media Policy and the Assault or Physical Intimidation Policy.

SCOPE

This policy applies to every person working for the NFSB, regardless of position, contract, time worked and level of responsibility. While no set of guidelines can cover every situation, and since every person must be responsible for his/her actions, a clear understanding of this Code of Conduct should prevent inappropriate conduct.

PROFESSIONALISM AND RESPECT

Employees of the NFSB are expected to:

- 1) Foster a positive working climate based on trust and respect where all colleagues feel safe, respected and accepted.
- 2) Exemplify honesty and integrity, and conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner in all relations with students, parents, employees and the general public in both word and deed.
- 3) Respect differences in people, their ideas, and their opinions without discrimination.
- 4) Treat all persons courteously and in a professional manner at all times.
- 5) Make decisions in the course of the exercise of one's functions in the best interest of the students.
- 6) Work co-operatively with colleagues, supervisors and/or subordinates to achieve the objectives, targets and goals of the School Board, commit to support each other in our work and to constructively resolve conflicts that may occur.

WORKPLACE CIVILITY

Workplace disputes and conflicts must be addressed using approaches that foster clear communication and candor, facilitate interactions, and yield solutions of mutual agreement. Promoting civility, respect, and early intervention will reduce the risk of incivility, including workplace harassment and violence.

Employees are expected to exhibit behavior that shows respect for the rights, property and safety of oneself and others, by:

- a) Refraining from the use of verbal abuse, vulgar language and/or gestures.
- b) Coming to work wearing appropriate and professional attire.
- c) Considering safety issues as necessary. Ensuring the safety and well-being of ourselves, students and our colleagues is our primary obligation.
- d) Refraining from being under the influence of alcohol, illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice.

WORKPLACE CIVILITY cont'd

- e) Not posting or engaging in on-line activities that disrespect or insult students, parents or employees, and/or promote false or discriminating information.
- f) Refraining from establishing personal on-line communications with students.
- g) Refraining from personal use of cellular phones, tablets, computers or audio devices during assigned duties.
- h) Exercising proper care and regard for NFSB property and the property of others at all times.
- i) Treating others with dignity and respect.
- j) Showing loyalty to colleagues and avoiding gossip, conversations or actions with others that seek directly or indirectly to undermine or demean another colleague or their work.

LOYALTY, IMPARTIALITY & CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees are bound to carry out their work with prudence and diligence. They must also act faithfully and honestly. In doing so, they must avoid any real or perceived conflict of interest where decisions are based on personal gain rather than the best interest of students or the NFSB. All employees are requested to remember that:

- a) Honesty with the NFSB is expected of all employees.
- b) The interests of the NFSB are to go above those of the employee. Employees must separate personal opinions, activities, and affiliations from the performance of one's professional responsibilities.
- c) Performance of duties and organization of professional functions may reflect on the NFSB. In order to maintain and foster public confidence, these duties and functions are to be conducted with integrity, objectivity and impartiality.
- d) Any direct or indirect interest that they may have as a partner, shareholder, director, officer, employee, agent or consultant of any business related to or involved with the NFSB must be disclosed. If an employee is unsure if he/she is in a conflict of interest situation, contacting the Secretary General is recommended.
- e) Equipment and/or other possessions or services of the NFSB are not to be used for purposes other than those intended by the School Board, unless authorized.
- f) Illegal or irregular situations against the NFSB of which an employee becomes aware are to be disclosed to his/her supervisor.

Employees of the NFSB will not engage in any activity that conflicts with their responsibilities in the school system. More specifically, employees will not:

- a) Solicit or receive compensation, other than from the Board, for performance of his/her duties;
- b) Engage in selling merchandise or services for personal profit to students or parents in the schools of the Board;
- c) Use his/her position to foster interests that differ or are in conflict with those of the School Board or accept gratuities, gifts or favors that might impair or appear to impair professional judgement;
- d) Provide tutorial services for remuneration to one's own students in subjects being taught to those same students (if no alternative is available, for reasons of geographic location of the teacher and student, the principal may authorize an exception to this regulation); or,
- e) Use Board or school facilities (e.g. workshops, material) for personal gain to construct, maintain or repair equipment or property that does not belong to the School Board.

Furthermore, no administrator or supervisor will be directly responsible for the formal performance appraisal of any employee directly related to him/her.

CONFIDENTIALITY & ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Employees may have access to confidential information about the students and employees of the NFSB. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, information, which is not generally known to the public and is of such a nature that it is in the legitimate interest of the parties involved to maintain its privacy. Confidentiality of information and documents must be maintained, at all times, unless disclosure is authorized for legitimate reasons or legally permitted. Without limiting the generality of the above, employees must, during and after work adhere to the following guidelines:

- a) Respect the right of privacy for all employees, students and parents.
- b) Refrain from discussing students' situations unless for professional reasons.
- c) Respect the principle that confidential information may not be used for personal gain.
- d) Refrain from communicating and/or posting personal information regarding others obtained by an employee while exercising his/her duties.
- e) Refrain from communicating with the media, in the name of the NFSB, unless otherwise authorized.

GIFTS & BENEFITS

Employees must refrain from seeking to obtain, while in the exercise of their functions, in any manner whatsoever, gifts, services or advantages for their personal benefit. In addition, they cannot accept any gifts, proof of hospitality or advantages other than those that are common and of minimal value. When in doubt, the employee must disclose the gift to his/her immediate superior.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The New Frontiers School Board reserves the right to impose disciplinary measures, which may include dismissal, for a breach of this code of professional conduct.

End.