

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

TAC §247.1 states:

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator, in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification.

The SBEC is solely responsible for enforcing the Educators' Code of Ethics for purposes related to certification disciplinary proceedings. The Educators' Code of Ethics is enforced through the disciplinary procedure set forth in [Chapter 249](#) of this title (relating to Disciplinary Proceedings, Sanctions, and Contested Cases) pursuant to the purposes stated therein.

§247.2. Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators.

Enforceable Standards.

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance.

(A) Standard 1.1. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

(B) Standard 1.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

(C) Standard 1.3. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

(D) Standard 1.4. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

(E) Standard 1.5. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or that are used to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

(F) Standard 1.6. The educator shall not falsify records or direct or coerce others to do so.

(G) Standard 1.7. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.

(H) Standard 1.8. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

(I) Standard 1.9. The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

(J) Standard 1.10. The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

(K) Standard 1.11. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

(L) Standard 1.12. The educator shall refrain from the illegal use, abuse, or distribution of controlled substances, prescription drugs, and toxic inhalants.

(M) Standard 1.13. The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

(N) Standard 1.14. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on diversity, equity, and inclusion duties in Texas Education Code (TEC), §11.005.

(O) Standard 1.15. The educator shall comply with the prohibitions on assistance with social transitioning in TEC, §11.401.

(P) Standard 1.16. The educator shall comply with the restrictions on instruction regarding sexual orientation and gender identity in TEC, §28.0043.

(Q) Standard 1.17. The educator shall comply with the requirements to provide full information to a parent concerning a student in TEC, §26.008.

(R) Standard 1.18. The educator shall not promote, advocate, or encourage, in a manner that is reasonably accessible or visible to students, illegal conduct:

(i) described by TEC, §22A.201(a); or

(ii) directly related to student behavior or school property.

(2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

(A) Standard 2.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(B) Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

(C) Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

(D) Standard 2.4. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

(E) Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

(F) Standard 2.6. The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

(G) Standard 2.7. The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or who provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

(H) Standard 2.8. The educator shall not intentionally or knowingly subject a colleague to sexual harassment.

(3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

(A) Standard 3.1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

(B) Standard 3.2. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

(C) Standard 3.3. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

(D) Standard 3.4. The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

(E) Standard 3.5. The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

(F) Standard 3.6. The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

(G) Standard 3.7. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

(H) Standard 3.8. The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard. Factors that may be considered in context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether appropriate boundaries were maintained include, but are not limited to:

(i) physical proximity or physical contact beyond the professional role or that the student has indicated is unwelcome, unless such contact is professionally required;

(ii) contacting or meeting the student beyond the professional role or making efforts to gain access to or time alone with a student with no discernible professional purpose;

(iii) transporting the student without permission from the student's legal guardian or in violation of school board policy, unless for an emergency;

(iv) taking or possessing a photo or video of the student beyond the professional role or in violation of school board policy; and

(v) showing favoritism or isolation through gifts, rewards, or privileges.

(I) Standard 3.9. The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in context and on the totality of the circumstances in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

- (i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;
- (ii) the subject matter of the communication;
- (iii) whether the communication was made openly, or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;
- (iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;
- (v) whether the communication was sexually explicit;
- (vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student; and
- (vii) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as threatening the welfare and/or safety of the student.

Statutory Authority: The provisions of this §247.2 issued under the Texas Education Code, §§21.031(a); 21.035; 21.044(a); 21.0581; 21.060; 21.065; 21.105(a), (c), (e), and (f); 21.160(c), as amended by HB 2, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; (e), (f), and (g), as added by HB 2, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; 21.210(c), as amended by HB 2, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; (e); (f); and (g), as added by HB 2, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; 22.082; 22.0831; 22.087; and 22A.001; 22A.051(a), (c), (d), (h), and (i); 22A.052; 22A.054; 22A.055(f); 22A.151; 22A.157; 22A.201; 22A.202; 22A.203; and 22A.301, as added, redesignated, and amended by SB 571, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; Texas Government Code (TGC), §§411.090, 2001.054(c), 2001.058(e), and 2001.142(a); Texas Family Code, §261.308(d) and (e); §261.406(a) and (b), as amended by SB 571, 89th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2025; Texas Occupations Code (TOC), §§53.021(a); 53.022-53.025; 53.051; 53.052; and 56.003; and Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 United States Code, §7926.

*Source: The provisions of this §247.2 adopted to be effective March 1, 1998, 23 TexReg 1022; amended to be effective August 22, 2002, 27 TexReg 7530; amended to be effective December 26, 2010, 35 TexReg 11242; amended to be effective December 27, 2016, 41 TexReg 10329; amended to be effective October 21, 2018, 43 TexReg 6839; **amended to be effective August 2, 2026, 51 TexReg 4867.***