

THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR MONTANA EDUCATORS

*Adopted by the
Certification Standards and Practices Advisory Council*

The Standards.....and the Standard Questions.

Montana educators make the well being of students the fundamental value in all decisions and actions.

- *Do I help students recognize and reach their academic potential?
- *Do I make every effort to protect students from conditions harmful to learning or health and safety?
- *Do I take care not to expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement?
- *Do I treat all students with concern and respect?
- *Do I choose discipline strategies carefully, as means to instruct and assert principles, rather than to vent anger?
- *Do I forgive students their indiscretions, not giving in to vindictiveness or recrimination?
- *Do I allow students access to varying points of view?

Montana educators fulfill professional responsibilities with diligence and integrity.

- *Do I fulfill my obligations in a timely manner?
- *Do I take care not to make personal use of school property?
- *Do I refuse any gift, favor or gratuity which might influence, or appear to influence, my professional judgment?
- *Do my extracurricular involvement enhances, rather than interfere with, my effectiveness as an educator?
- *Do I refrain from using coercion or the promise of favor to influence colleagues?
- *Am I honest about my qualifications and those of fellow educators?

Montana educators protect the civil and human rights of all students and colleagues.

- *Do I provide equal opportunities for all students?
- *Do I keep personal information about a student or colleague confidential unless disclosure serves a compelling professional or legal purpose?
- *Do I refrain from interfering with colleagues' exercise of their political and professional rights and responsibilities?
- *Do I recognize that students have a right to privacy and to due process?
- *Do I show a tolerance for points of view, which differ from, mine, both in and out of the classroom?

Montana educators know the rules, policies, regulations, and laws governing their professional conduct.

- *Am I aware of the statutes that regulate my conduct as an educator?
- *Have I read my contract and do I understand its demands upon my employer and me?
- *Do I familiarize myself with school rules and policies that affect my conduct?

Montana educators pursue appropriate measures to change rules, policies, regulations, and laws that are not consistent with sound educational goals.

- *Do I use professional procedures to evaluate conditions and practices?
- *Do I report unsound educational practices to the appropriate person?
- *Do I attempt to keep my employer informed of conditions that make it difficult or impossible for me to fulfill my contract?
- *Do I work through appropriate channels to improve the contract?
- *Do I work to change unsound policies, rules, regulations and laws?

Montana educators recognize parents and the public as integral parts of the school community and encourage their involvement in education.

- *Do I keep parents informed about the progress of their children?
- *Do I seek parents' help in educating their children?
- *Do I take care not to suppress or distort information relevant to students' progress?
- *Do I present facts about educational matters accurately in direct and indirect public expressions?
- *Do I recognize the right of the public to participate in the formulating of the educational program?
- *Do I endeavor to know and understand the community cultures and the home environments of my students?
- *Do I assist in creating an educational program that reflects the needs and standards of the community and society?

Montana educators maintain professional standards and seek to improve the effectiveness of the profession.

- *Do I assess my own professional effectiveness and take steps to improve it?
- *Do I involve myself in professional organizations and activities?
- *Do I refrain from making critical or malicious comments about colleagues?
- *Do I cooperate in the selective recruitment of prospective educators?
- *Do I assist in the orientation of novice teachers, interns and student teachers?
- *Do I work with my colleagues to build a positive environment?

Montana educators exemplify and foster a philosophy of education that encourages a lifelong pursuit of learning.

- *Do I seek to further my education in and beyond my field, to keep current, to broaden my knowledge and to expand my expertise?
- *Do I take care not to suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's intellectual growth?
- *Do I encourage students to take independent action in their own pursuit of learning?
- *Do I encourage a love of learning in my students.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the National Education Association (NEA) has each published their own code of ethics for the profession. These codes are very similar to the Montana code, focusing on a commitment to the student, to the profession, honesty within profession relationships, and integrity of purpose.