

School Employee Code of Professional Conduct

Pursuant to the State of Illinois's Faith's Law requirements, American School has adopted this Code of Professional Conduct for School Employees. American School is required to post this School Employee Code of Professional Conduct on American School's website and to publish this information in the American School Student Handbook and Employee Handbook, both of which are updated annually.

I. Educator Code of Conduct

All American School employees adhere to the following principles:

Principle 1: Responsibility to Students

American School employees are committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that enables students to achieve their highest academic potential, and to succeed as a responsible member of society. They are committed to embodying standards of professionalism in the learning environment; respecting the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect for each student; maintaining a professional relationship with students at all times; providing a curriculum based on high expectations for students; and fostering in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.

Principle 2: Responsibility to Self

American School employees are committed to establishing high professional standards and striving to meet these standards through their performance. They are committed to assuming responsibility and accountability for their performance and striving to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice; developing and implementing personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development; representing their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and using sound professional judgment.

Principle 3: Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession

American School employees are committed to collaborating with fellow educators in the interest of student learning and to meet state educational standards; working together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate for educators to maintain their individual professional integrity; seeking out and engaging in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession; encouraging promising candidates to enter the education profession; and supporting the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.

Principle 4: Responsibility to School Parents and Families

American School employees are committed to collaborating, striving to build trust, and respecting confidentiality with school parents and families; striving to develop and maintain professional relationships with school parents and families; and promoting collaboration and supporting student learning through communication with parents and families.

Principle 5: Responsibility to the ISBE

American School employees are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes as applicable to state and federal laws and regulations and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards for highly qualified educators. They are committed to providing accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters; maintaining appropriate certification for employment; and complying with state and federal codes, laws, and regulations.

Any employee who sexually harasses a student, willfully or negligently fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), engages in grooming as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-25, engages in grooming behaviors, violates boundaries for appropriate school employee-student conduct, engages in sexual misconduct as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5, or otherwise violates an employee conduct standard will be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. American School has no tolerance for any unprofessional conduct.

II. Sexual Misconduct and Grooming Behavior Definitions

I. Sexual misconduct is defined by Faith's Law as any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication or physical activity directed toward or with a minor for the purpose of establishing a romantic or sexual relationship with the minor, including but not limited to a sexual or romantic invitation; dating or soliciting a date; engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog; making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a minor; self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature; and/or a sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the minor (Illinois' Faith's Law, Public Act 102- 0676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5).

II. Grooming behavior is defined by Faith's Law and the Illinois Criminal Code as knowingly using a computer online service, internet service, local bulletin board service, or any other device capable of electronic data storage or transmission, or performing an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or using written communication to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice, or attempt to seduce, solicit, lure, or entice a child, or another person believed by the person to be a child, to commit any sex offense as defined in Section 2 of the Sex Offender Registration Act, to distribute photographs depicting the sex organs of the child, or to otherwise engage in any unlawful sexual conduct with a child or with another person believed by the person to be a child.

III. Expectations of School Employees

American School employees are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries, recognizing the age and the developmental levels of the students with whom they interact.

1. American School employees are strictly prohibited from using any form of communication with students (e-mails, letters, notes, text messages, phone calls, conversations) that includes any subject matter that would be deemed unprofessional and/or inappropriate between an employee and student.

2. American School employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee's privately-owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained the prior permission of the students' parents and American School President to do so.
3. American School employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student on their private devices that would be construed as inappropriate.
4. American School employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship in all interactions with students at all times.

IV. Mandated Reporter and Sexual Harassment Training

All American School employees are required to undergo mandated reporter training on an annual basis and must report suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report of suspected child abuse and suspected child neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services by calling the hotline number at 1-800- 25-ABUSE (1-800-252-2873) whenever the employee has reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the employee in the employee's professional or official capacity may be abused or neglected. All American School employees also are required to undergo sexual harassment training on an annual basis.

Effective 5/1/2024