

**MONTESSORI SCHOOL OF LEMONT
AKA MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF SOUTHWEST COOK COUNTY
Employee Code of Professional Conduct Policy**

Montessori Elementary School of Southwest Cook County (Montessori School of Lemont or the “School”) adopts this Employee Code of Professional Conduct pursuant to Illinois’s Faith’s Law requirements and applies to all employees, directors and officers of the School. Many of the provisions below are contained in existing policies of Montessori School of Lemont, but are restated to comply with the law.

I. ILLINOIS EDUCATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Pursuant to Illinois law, the School adopts and incorporates the relevant portions of the Illinois Educator Code of Conduct, as follows.

A. Responsibility to Students

Educators 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.

B. Responsibility to Self

Educators 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.

C. Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession

Educators are committed to collaborating with school colleagues and other professionals 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.

D. Responsibility to School Parents and Families

Educators 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.

E. Responsibility to the Illinois State Board of Education

Educators are committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes, state and federal laws and regulations, and the Illinois State Board of Education's standards, as applicable to non-public schools. 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 the state and federal codes, laws, and regulations that apply to non-public schools.

II. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT DEFINITION

The School prohibits and has zero tolerance for any sexual abuse or misconduct. Pursuant to Faith's Law, the School has incorporated into its existing policies the following definitions of acts constituting sexual abuse of a minor:

A. Sexual misconduct

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 1020676, (105 ILCS 5/22-85.5).

B. Grooming behavior

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 performs an act in person or by conduct through a third party, or uses 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

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

- A. 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.
- B. Employees are not permitted to transport students in the employee's privately owned vehicle, unless the employee has obtained prior permission, in writing, from the child's parent and has been given permission from the Executive Director.
- C. Employees are not permitted to take or possess a photo or video of a student that would be construed as inappropriate.
- D. Employees are expected to maintain a professional relationship in all interactions, both in and out of school.

IV. MANDATED REPORTING

The School restates here of the requirement that its employees, directors and officers are required to report suspected child abuse and suspected child abuse. Pursuant to the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, (325 ILCS 5/4), school employees are required to make a report 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.

V. TRAINING

As required by law, Montessori School of Lemont requires its employees, officers and directors to be trained annually on what constitutes abuse and molestation, and the prevention, detection and proper response to sexual harassment and misconduct.

VI. VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY

A violation of the Employee Code of Professional Conduct Policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. Failure to report a violation of the Employee Code of Professional Conduct Policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.