

THE SWAZILAND NATIONAL

ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS (SNAT)

CODE OF ETHICAL STANDARDS

AND

PRACTICES FOR

TEACHERS OF SWAZILAND

PREAMBLE

The Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT) strongly believes that all this country's teachers should subscribe and also conform to a commonly understood and rigorously enforced Code to Ethics and Professional Conduct.

The Belief is founded upon a number of universally accepted considerations:

- i) That teachers have the inescapable responsibility of supporting and exemplifying the values, virtues and ideals of the society in which they teach, and of working with the parents and government to help young people become moral and knowledgeable citizens.
- ii) That teachers, by virtue of their education and experience, have an important role to play in the life of their own communities, both within and beyond their schools. It is essential that teachers earn recognition as men and women of commitment and integrity.
- iii) That competent and effective teaching practices within schools depend upon a shared and collective sense of purpose and devotion to duty.

Individual effectiveness cannot survive in a disorderly and unstable situation.

- iv) That, in order to attract and retain good teachers, the profession must have status and dignity.
- v) That teachers have special responsibility for the education, care and guidance of the children and youth who have been entrusted to them, and that any abuse of this trust must not be tolerated.
- vi) That any code of conduct, in any educational must apply equally and uniformly to all teachers without exception.
- vii) That teachers themselves, through their professional organization, should bear the primary responsibility of developing, disseminating, and enforcing adherence to a code of conduct, under the authority of, and with ultimate reference to the Ministry of Education. We therefore propose the following:

1. GENERAL DUTIES:

A member shall strive, at all times, to achieve and maintain the highest degree of professional competence and to uphold the honor, dignity, integrity and ethical standards of the teaching profession.

2. DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO EDUCATION AUTHORITY

A. Members shall;

- a) Comply with the Acts and Regulations Administered by the Ministry of Education;
- b) Co-operate with the Ministry of Education in all activities related to the establishment of improvement of education programs;
- c) Respect the legal authority of the Teaching Service Commission in the management of the schools and in the employment of teachers;
- d) Produce in the proper manner such documentation, records and reports as required for the effective administration of the educational system;
- e) Presenting the proper manner, to the appropriate authority, the consequences to be expected from policies or practices which, in their professional opinion, are educationally unsound or seriously detrimental to the interest of students.

B. Members shall not;

- a) Break their teaching contracts, or otherwise violate the terms and conditions under which they were originally employed;
- b) Apply for any position or post which had not been declared vacant. On its part the employer shall not offer any position or post which has not been properly declared;
- c) Misrepresent their qualifications, or uses any improper means to enhance their prospects of employments or reassignment.

3. DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO STUDENTS

A. Members shall;

- a) Regard as their duty the effective education of students under their care, and the maintaining of high degree of competence in their own teaching;
- b) Endeavour to develop in their students the desire to work diligently at their studies, and develop an appreciation of standards of excellence;
- c) Endeavour to in- calculate in their students an appreciation of the principles and values of good citizens;

- d) Concern themselves with the health, safety and general welfare of students while they are under professional supervision;
- e) Show understanding, consideration and consistent justice in all relations with students, especially in matters of evaluation and discipline;
- f) Be willing to provide extra-curricular support for students activities;
- g) Be willing to provide additional instruction to students who are experiencing academic or learning difficulties.

B. Members shall not;

- a) Engage in improper intimate relationship with students under their care;
- b) Neglect professional obligations for personal considerations, or create situations whereby students are left without supervision or instruction.
- c) While in the performance of their professional duties behave in any manner which sets an unsavory example for students, or detracts from professional image of teaching. members, who consume alcohol, use prescribed drugs, engage in violent or disorderly conduct, or use profane language in the presence students, shall be liable to immediate discipline, and the possibility of suspension;
- d) Engage in arbitrary and unreasonable punishment of students under their care. The disciplining of students shall be in accordance with government regulations and shall occur under the supervision or with the approval of the head teacher of each school.

4. DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO THE COMMUNITY

Members shall;

- a) Provide, through their everyday department, a positive image of teachers and the teaching profession to the community in which they serve;
- b) be accessible to parents and other community members who desire consultation with them on school matters or student progress;
- c) Involve themselves in community structures and activities, such as Parent Teachers Association, School Communities, Parent's days, School visits and other activities which extend the public knowledge of and about the teaching profession.

5. DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO FELLOW MEMBERS

Members shall;

- a) Attempt to evolve cooperative and congenial working relationships with their colleagues in order to establish a school environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning
- b) Avoid interfering in normal professional duties of their colleagues, or with the students under care of their Colleagues;
- c) Involve themselves, as circumstances permit, in those activities which lead towards professional growth and development, or the upgrading of professional qualifications;
- d) Where they are in position of administrative or supervisory, make an honest and determined attempt to provide help and counsel to a teacher who is in professional difficulty before subscribing to the dismissal of that teacher;

6. DUTIES OF MEMBERS TO THE ASSOCIATION

Members shall;

- a) Be co-operative with the Association to improve and promote the welfare of the teaching profession and to advance the cause of education in Swaziland;
- b) Avoid deeds and actions which will have the effect of bringing the Association into disrepute;

This code was approved and adopted at the Annual General Conference of Delegates that was held at Ngwane College in August, 1989.

EDUCATION INTERNATIONAL (EI) DECLARATION ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

1. This declaration represents an individual and collective commitment by education personnel towards all actors of education and society as a whole. It is complementary to the laws, statutes, rules and programs that define the practice of the profession. It is also a tool that aims at helping teachers and education personnel respond to questions related to professional conduct and at the same time to the problems arising from relations with the different participants in education.

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2. Quality public education, a cornerstone of a democratic society, has the task of providing equality of educational opportunity for all children and youth and is fundamental to the well-

being of society through its contribution to economic, social and cultural development. Teachers and education personnel have a responsibility to foster confidence among the general public in the standards of service that can be expected from all engaged in this important task.

3. The exercise of responsible judgment is at the heart of professional activity and the actions of caring, competent and committed teachers and education personnel to help every student reach in his or her potential is a critical factor in provision of quality education.

4. The expertise and the commitment of teachers and education personnel must be combined with good working conditions. A supportive community and enabling policies to allow quality education to take place. It is only when all necessary components are in place that it is possible for teachers and education personnel to fully meet their responsibilities to students and to the community in which they work.

5. The teaching profession may benefit greatly from discussion about the core values of the profession. Such rising of consciousness about the norms and the ethics of the profession. Such raising of consciousness about the norms and ethics of the profession may contribute to increasing job satisfaction among teachers and educational personnel, to enhance their status and self esteem, and to increasing respect for the profession in society.

6. Teachers and education personnel and their unions by virtue of their membership in Education International (EI) are committed to the promotion of education that helps develop a person's capacity to live a fulfilled life and contribute to the wellbeing of society.

7. Recognizing the extent of the responsibilities inherent in the teaching process and the responsibility to attain and maintain the highest degree of ethical conduct towards the profession, to students, colleagues and parents. Educational International member organisations should;

a) Actively promote the policies and resolutions adopted by the EI Congress and Executive Board including this declaration on professional Ethics;

b) Work to ensure that education personnel benefit from terms and conditions of work that allow them to fulfill their responsibilities by ensuring they have the rights guaranteed to all workers in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at work and its follow-up which encompasses:

- The right to freedom of association;
- The right to bargain collectively;
- Freedom from discrimination at work;
- Equality at work;
- Freedom from forced or bonded labour;

- The elimination of child labour.

c) Work to ensure that their members have the rights outlined in the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers and the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel.

d) Combat all forms of racism, bias or discrimination in education due to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, political opinion, social or economic status, national or ethnic origin.

e) Co-operate at the national level to promote quality government funded education for all children, to enhance the status and to protect the rights of educational personnel.

f) Use their influence to make it possible for all children worldwide, without discrimination, and particularly child labour, children from marginalized groups or those having specific difficulties to have access to quality education.

8. Taking this into consideration, EI recommends that adoption of the following declarations in order to guide teachers and education workers and their trade unions in respecting the ethical standards required by the profession.

9. COMMITMENT TO THE PROFESSION

Education personnel shall;

a) Justify public trust and confidence and enhance the esteem in which the profession is held by providing quality education for all students;

b) Ensure that professional knowledge is regularly updated;

c) Determine the nature, format and timing of their lifelong learning programs as an essential expression of their professionalism;

d) Declare all relevant information related to competency and qualifications;

e) Strive through active participation in their union, to achieve conditions of work that attract highly qualified persons to the profession;

f) Support all efforts to promote democracy and human rights in and through education

10. COMMITMENT TO STUDENTS

Education personnel shall;

- a) Respect the rights of all children, especially their students, to benefit from the provisions identified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child particularly as those rights apply to education;
- b) Safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of students and make every effort to protect students from bullying and from physical or psychological abuse;
- c) Take all possible steps to safeguard students from sexual abuse;
- d) Exercise due care, diligence and confidentiality in all matters affecting the welfare of their students;
- e) assist students to develop a set of values consistent with international human rights standards;
- f) maintain professional relations with students.
- g) acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of each student and provide guidance and encouragement to each student to realize his or her full potential;
- h) give students a feeling of being part of a community of mutual commitment with room for everyone;
- i) exercise authority with justice and compassion.
- j) ensure that the privileged relationship between teacher and student is not exploited in any way but particularly in order to proselytize or for ideological control.

11. COMMITMENT TO COLLEAGUES

Education personnel shall;

- a) promote collegiality among colleagues by respecting their professional standing and opinions and be prepared to offer advice and assistance particularly to those beginning their career or in training.
- b) maintain confidentiality of information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
- c) assist colleagues in peer review procedures negotiated and agreed to between education unions and employers.
- d) safeguard and promote the interests and well being of colleagues and protect them from bullying and from physical psychological or sexual abuse.

e) ensure that all means and procedures for the implementation of this declaration are the object of thorough discussions in each national organization in order to ensure its best possible application.

12. COMMITMENT TO MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

Education personnel shall;

- a) be knowledgeable of their legal and administrative rights and responsibilities, and respect the provisions of collective contracts and the provisions concerning student's rights;
- b) carry out reasonable instructions from management personnel and have the right to question instructions through a clearly determined procedure;

13. COMMITMENT TO PARENTS

Education personnel shall;

- a) Recognize the right of parents to consultation, through agreed channels, on the welfare and progress of their child;
- b) Respect lawful parental authority but give advice from a professional point of view that is in the best interest of their child;
- c) make every effort to encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of their child and to actively support the learning process by ensuring that children avoid forms of child labour that could affect their education;

14. COMMITMENT TO THE TEACHER

The Community shall;

- a) Make it possible for teachers to feel confident that they themselves are treated fairly while attending to their tasks;
- b) Recognize that teachers have a right to preserve that privacy, care for themselves and lead a normal life in the community.