



# **Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Professional Environmental Educators in Kentucky**

## Statement of Purpose

The environmental educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students of all ages or developmental levels, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, program participants, and members of the community. Environmental educators shall safeguard academic freedom. The Kentucky environmental educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty. The Kentucky environmental educator, in demonstrating ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Kentucky environmental 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.

## Standards

(1) Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices and Performance. (Note: the word student refers to participants of all ages.)

Standard 1.1. The educator will clearly differentiate between education and advocacy when conducting EE programs, allowing students to decide for themselves where they stand on environmental issues. The educator will refrain from making personal advocacy statements when teaching about environmental issues.

Standard 1.2. The educator shall not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of his or her agency or organization.

Standard 1.3. The educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.4. The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.5. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.6. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or impart special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the

acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.7. The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.8. The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other applicable state and federal laws.

Standard 1.9. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

## (2) Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues.

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.

Standard 2.2. The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the organization.

Standard 2.3. The educator shall adhere to written policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

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

Standard 2.5. The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.

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

## (3) Ethical Conduct Toward Students.

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

Standard 3.2. The educator shall not knowingly treat a student in a manner that adversely affects the student's learning, physical health, mental health, or safety.

Standard 3.3. The educator shall not deliberately or knowingly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

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, sex, disability, national origin, religion, or family status.

Standard 3.5. The educator shall not engage in physical or sexual mistreatment of a student.

Standard 3.6. The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any underage student or knowingly allow any underage student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

#### (4) Ethical Conduct Toward the Learning Environment

Standard 4.1 The educator shall maintain student safety by having students follow directions and use appropriate equipment. The educator shall ensure supervision is adequate for the number of students and the particular study site.

Standard 4.2 The educator shall stay within boundaries and ask property owners before collecting artifacts or specimens.

Standard 4.3 The educator shall obey all laws protecting plants and animals. All living things are to be respected.

Standard 4.4 The educator shall collect plants or animals only if the potential benefit greatly outweighs the potential harm and only when required permits have been obtained. The educator should minimize the number of organisms collected, making every effort to keep them alive and return them to their natural habitat. Educators should avoid collecting a rare or endangered species except under special circumstances that would lead to the protection of the species.