

**ETHICS IN EDUCATION POLICY  
FOR  
LAKE WORTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**



**7592 High Ridge Road**

**Lake Worth, Florida 33467**

**561-586-8216**

**[www.lwcs.org](http://www.lwcs.org)**

**Ethics in Education Policy  
McKay Scholarship Program**

### **[Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes.](#)**

Lake Worth Christian School Inc, requires a Level 2 criminal history report received for any employee (obtained through the VECHS program). LWCS also requires volunteers to complete a Level 2 criminal history screening.

Any employee convicted of an offense listed in [Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes](#) is disqualified from employment. The school also continues to screen employees for the offenses listed in [Section 435.04, Florida Statutes](#).

### **Lake Worth Christian School Administration conducts an employment history check before employing instructional personnel or school administrators in any position that requires direct contact with students.**

This is completed by contacting the individual's previous employer and documenting the findings. If unable to contact a previous employer, the Principal will document its efforts. Verification efforts and findings are documented in writing and maintained in the individual employee's file.

### **Lake Worth Christian School Administration screens new instructional personnel or school administrators using the two employee screening tools developed by the Department of Education. New instructional personnel or school administrators are those individuals employed after the law became effective on July 1, 2008.**

### **Training Requirement**

All instructional personnel and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards and ethical conduct.

### **Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators**

All employees and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors. Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to James Harwood, Superintendent – Lake Worth Christian School. Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to Lake Worth Christian School's Board President.

Ethics in Educational Notice and information for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the Faculty Rooms and hallways, included in the Teacher/Staff Handbook and on the web site at [www.lwcs.org](http://www.lwcs.org).

Lake Worth Christian School Administration uses the [Professional Practices Database of Disciplinary Action](#) database to gain access to final orders issued by the Education Practices

Commission for a display of a summary of any disciplinary action taken against an individual's Florida educator certificate.

### **Employee Standards of Ethical Conduct**

#### **(adapted from the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida and Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida)**

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.

2. Our primary concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.

3. Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel:

a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.

b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.

c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.

d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.

e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.

f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.

g. Shall not harass any student on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, or handicapped condition, and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment.

h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the community, employees of our school must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. This commitment requires that our employees:

a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.

b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, handicapped condition if otherwise qualified, deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.

c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.

d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or

oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment.

e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

The code of ethics established for Florida certified educators that is available on the [Office of Professional Practices Services Web site](#) has served as a resource

**In addition, teachers receive yearly trainings at the beginning of the school year on the following points.**

- A review of ethical conduct to establish the **duty to report**, and **procedures for reporting**, alleged employee or administrator misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student.
- A review of the standards must provide an **explanation of the employee liability protections** provided under ss. [39.203](#) and [768.095](#), F.S.

**Lake Worth Christian School prohibits confidentiality agreements with instructional personnel or school administrators who are dismissed, terminated, or resign in lieu of termination due to misconduct that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Any reference provided to a potential employer in an educational setting must disclose the misconduct.**

**LWCS has posted a notice at the school stating that all employees have a duty to report actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. These are located in the Teacher's Lounges of both the elementary and middle/high school buildings.**

The notice includes the statewide toll-free abuse hotline number (1-800-96ABUSE).

The sample notice downloaded from the [Office of Professional Practices Services Web site](#) under the "Abuse" heading is used. Further information about reporting abuse may also be found on the [Department of Children and Families \(DCF\) Web site](#).

### **Liability Protections**

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department or any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action. (F.S. 39.203) An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S. 768.095)

## **Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect**

### Signs of Physical Abuse:

The child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

### Signs of Sexual Abuse:

The child may have torn, stained or bloody underwear, trouble walking or sitting, pain or itching in genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

### Signs of Neglect:

The child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention. Patterns of Abuse Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors.

While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at:

<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.