

Family Christian Academy Standards of Ethical Conduct

All employees of Family Christian Academy ('FCA') will adhere to the following Standards of Ethical Conduct.

A. Standards.

1. FCA values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of Biblical 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 our students and the development of the students' potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern for our students requires that our instructional personnel:
 - a. Shall make reasonable efforts to protect the students from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the students' 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 or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - i. 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 FCA 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, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background 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 or discrimination.
- e. Shall not make malicious or intentionally false statements about a colleague.

B. Training Requirement.

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

C. Disqualification from Employment.

All employees are subject to the criminal background process. The School will perform criminal background checks (including fingerprinting checks) on all new employees at the time of hire. For existing employees, the School will periodically update the criminal background check. The School will determine, in its discretion, whether the employee's background makes him/her fit for employment or continued employment. All employees must report any arrests or changes to their criminal background to the Head of School's office within 24 hours of the occurrence so that the School can determine whether the employee's status should change. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment.

D. Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators.

All employees, educational support, instructional personnel 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 committed by administrators and employees should be made to Brian Jernigan, Executive Pastor, at 941-629-0444.

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted in the teachers' lounge and Faculty & Staff Handbook.

E. Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect.

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect in accordance with the procedures set forth in FCA's Abuse Prevention and Reporting Policy. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.

4. 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.

F. Reference Requests.

All requests for information about current or former employees must be directed to the Head of School for handling. Any employee who responds to a reference request without first obtaining permission from the Head of School will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Any person authorized to respond to such references who does so at the request of a prospective employer, or the current or former employee will be immune from liability pursuant to Fla. Stat. 768.095, as long as such response is truthful and not intended to violate the current or former employee's civil rights

G. 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).