

# THE FLORIDA EDUCATION PRACTICES COMMISSION

*“By virtue of their leadership capacity, teachers are traditionally held to a high moral standard in a community.”*

*Adam v. State of Florida Professional Practices Council, 406 So. 2nd 1170 (Fla. 1st DCA 1981)*

## Code of Ethics of the Education Profession in Florida

The educator 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.

The educator's primary professional concern will always be for the student and for the development of the student's potential. The educator will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.

Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, of students, of parents, and of other members of the community, the educator strives to achieve and sustain the highest degree of ethical conduct.

## The Education Practices Commission

The State Board of Education originally took disciplinary action on holders of Florida Educator Certificates but it became too time consuming and cumbersome. In 1980, the legislature created the Education Practices Commission (EPC) to take final disciplinary action on holders of Florida Educator Certificates. It was designed so that the commission, in the performance of its power and duties, would not be subject to control, supervision, or direction by the Department of Education.

The EPC is an autonomous, quasi-judicial agency administratively assigned to the Department of Education. It is composed of 8 teachers, 5 administrators, at least 1 of whom shall represent a private school; 7 lay citizens, 5 of whom shall be parents of public school students and who are unrelated to public school employees and 2 of whom shall be former district school board members; and 5 sworn law enforcement officials. All appointees must meet the qualifications as outlined in F.S. 1012.79.

The EPC operates like a circuit court and is not responsible for investigations and prosecutions. These functions are the responsibility of the Commissioner of Education through the staff of Professional Practices Services.

The EPC renders decisions in regard to penalties. A case concerning a complaint against a teacher shall be reviewed and a final order shall be entered by a panel composed of five commission members, at least one of whom must be a parent or a sworn law enforcement officer and at least three of whom

must be teachers. If the educator is an administrator, the panel consists of five commission members, at least one of whom

must be a parent or sworn law enforcement officer and at least three of whom must be administrators.

## The Duties and Responsibilities of the Education Practices Commission

- Interpret and apply the standards of professional practice established by the State Board of Education.
- Revoke or suspend a certificate or take other appropriate action as provided in ss.1012.795 and 1012.796.
- Report to and meet with the State Board of Education at least once each year.
- Adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement provisions of law conferring duties upon it.

## How Commission Members Are Appointed

The Commission members are nominated by the Commissioner of Education after conferring with teaching associations, parent organizations, law enforcement agencies and other involved associations in the state. In making nominations, the commissioner shall attempt to achieve equal geographical representation as closely as possible. From among its members, the commission shall elect a chair who shall preside over meetings of the commission and perform other duties directed by the commission. No Commission member may serve more than eight years.

## Commission Hearings

All meetings or hearings are advertised as required by law and are open to the public. The decisions of the Commission may be appealed to the District Court of Appeal.

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## Filing a Complaint

A complaint may be filed with the **Professional Practices Services, (850) 245-0438**. A complaint should not be filed with the Education Practices Commission.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

CALL OR E-MAIL:

Florida Education Practices

Commission at:

[educationpracticescommission@fldoe.org](mailto:educationpracticescommission@fldoe.org)

or

(850)245-0455

**Education Practices Commission**

Executive Director, Gretchen Kelley Brantley