

# Downey Unified School District

## ADMINISTRATION

### CODE OF ETHICS

BP 7700

Because public schools prosper to the extent they merit the confidence of the people and society is influenced to a considerable degree by the character and quality of their administration, it is the belief of the Board of Education that school administrators in general, and the Superintendent of Schools in particular, have an obligation to exercise professional leadership and meet these challenges. This Code of Ethics is recommended as a guide to render effective and efficient service to the community.

1. The Professional School Administrator Obeys Local, State, and National Laws, Holds Him/Herself to High Ethical and Moral Standards, and Gives Loyalty to His/Her Country and to the Cause of Democracy and Liberty.
  - a. A professional school administrator, in common with other citizens, has a right and in many instances an obligation to express his/her opinion about the wisdom or justice of a given law. An opinion questioning a law, however, does not justify failure to fulfill the requirements of that law.
  - b. The ideals of his/her profession require a school administrator to resist ideological pressures that would contravene the fundamental principles of public education or would pervert or weaken public schools, their educational program, or their personnel.
2. The Professional School Administrator Accepts the Responsibility Throughout His/Her Career to Master and to Contribute to the Growing Body of Specialized Knowledge, Concepts, and Skills Which Characterize School Administration as a Profession.
  - a. The school administrator has a leadership responsibility for the professional growth of his/her associates which requires encouragement of their attendance at appropriate professional meetings and their participation in the work of local, state, and national committees and associations.
  - b. Concern for improving his/her profession, and for education generally, requires that the school administrator seek out promising educational practices and relevant research findings and that he/she share with others any significant practices and research from within his/her own institution.

# Downey Unified School District

## ADMINISTRATION

### CODE OF ETHICS - continued

BP 7700

3. The Professional School Administrator Strives to Provide the Finest Possible Educational Experiences and Opportunities to All Persons in the District.
  - a. The school administrator has an obligation to inform the Board and the community of deficiencies in educational services or opportunities.
  - b. A school administrator resists all attempts by vested interests to infringe upon the school program as a means of promoting their selfish purposes.
4. The Professional School Administrator Applying for a Position or Entering into Contractual Agreements Seeks to Preserve and Enhance the Prestige and Status of His/Her Profession.

A school administrator is morally committed to honor employment contracts. He/she shall refuse to enter into a new contractual agreement until termination of an existing contract is completed to the satisfaction of all concerned.

5. The Professional School Administrator Carries Out in Good Faith All Policies Duly Adopted by the Local Board and the Regulations of State Authorities and Renders Professional Service to the Best of His/Her Ability.
  - a. Adoption of policies not in conformity with the administrator's recommendations or beliefs is not just cause for refusal by the administrator to support and execute them.
  - b. It is improper for an administrator to refuse to work at his/her optimum level.
  - c. A school administrator has an obligation to support publicly the school board and the instructional staff if either is unjustly accused. He/she should not permit himself/herself to become involved publicly in personal criticism of the Board or staff members. He/she should be at liberty, however, to discuss differences of opinion on professional matters directly with the person involved.
6. The Professional School Administrator Honors the Public Trust of His/Her Position Above Any Economic or Social Rewards.

The school administrator has a commitment to his/her position of public trust to resist unethical demands by special interest or pressure groups.

# Downey Unified School District

## ADMINISTRATION

### CODE OF ETHICS - continued

BP 7700

He/she refuses to allow strong and unscrupulous individuals to seize or exercise powers and responsibilities which are properly his/her own.

7. The Professional School Administrator Recognizes That the Public Schools Are the Public's Business and Seeks to Keep the Public Fully and Honestly Informed About their Schools.
  - a. A school administrator has an obligation to interpret to the community the work and activities of the school system, revealing its weaknesses as well as its strengths. It is unethical for a school administrator to present only the favorable facts to the patrons of the District.
  - b. A school administrator maintains confidences or qualified privileged communications entrusted to him/her in the course of executing the affairs of the public schools. These confidences shall be revealed only as the law or courts may require or when the welfare of the school system is at stake.
  - c. A school administrator considers that those with whom he/she deals are innocent of any disparaging accusations until valid evidence is presented to substantiate any charges made, while always accepting statements of concern in the spirit they are given.
8. High Standards of Ethical Behavior for the Professional School Administrator Are Essential and Are Compatible with His/Her Faith in the Power of Public Education and his/her Commitment to Leadership in the Public Schools.

The true sense of high calling comes to the Superintendent of Schools as he/she faces squarely such widely held beliefs as the following:

1. The effectiveness of the schools and their programs is inescapably the responsibility of the Superintendent.
2. Every act, or every failure to act, of the Superintendent has consequences in the schools and in the lives of people.
3. In many situations and to many people in a community the Superintendent is the living symbol of their schools.

Downey Unified School District  
ADMINISTRATION

CODE OF ETHICS - continued

BP 7700

4. The public entrusts both the day-by-day well-being and the long-range welfare of its children and of its school system to the Superintendent and Board of Education.
5. In the long run, what happens in and to the public schools of America happens to America.

Adopted: 7/6/71