

Revised Code of Ethics Approved by PSC

All licensed and certified Fulton County employees should take a moment to review the revised Georgia Professional Standards Commission Code of Ethics which went into effect on June 15, 2009. A copy of the revised Code can be viewed at <http://www.gapsc.com/Rules/Current/Ethics/505-6-.01.pdf>. Below are a few of the more important changes:

Should to Shall. One consistent change throughout the Code has been to replace the word “should” with the word “shall” in all the standards. This makes all standards now mandatory, rather than discretionary.

Educator Supervision. Standard Two, previously titled “Abuse of Students,” is now called “Conduct with Students.” The revised standard places added emphasis on educator supervision regarding harassment and includes not only the educator who is harassing a student but also the educator who permits the harassment. An educator who is aware of a colleague or student harassing another student and fails to take action is now in violation of the Code of Ethics and could face disciplinary action. With the revisions, greater accountability also has been placed on the educator for student supervision. For example, if students on an overnight trip consume alcohol, even without the teacher’s knowledge, the teacher may be held in violation. This standard acknowledges that educators have a direct supervisory role and an obligation to monitor and/or prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Honesty. “Honesty” is the new title for Standard 4, replacing “Misrepresentation or Falsification.” The new title carries with it a broader implication and may mean that more concern is being placed on omission of information.

Personal Gain. Under Standard Five, “Public Funds and Property,” there is a new section that prohibits using school system property for personal gain. Proposed changes have already been recommended to this rule and, if approved, would go into effect in October.

Testing. There is a new standard emphasizing the importance of test security and integrity of the assessment.

The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia. It is your responsibility to be familiar with the Code and to adhere to the standards and guidelines for ethical conduct.

*The Georgia Professional Standards Commission is considering revisions that would clarify some of the changes that went into effect on June 15. The proposed rule changes are posted at <http://www.gapsc.com/Rules/proposed/ethics/505-6-.001.pdf>