




Board Policy and Administrative Procedure: **Employee Code of Professional Conduct Policy – Faith’s Law**

No. BP728

Board Policy Approval Date: 7/25/2022	Board Policy Effective Date: 7/25/2022	Board Policy Revision History: Initial Version
Board Chair Signature: 		Date: 7/25/2022
Regulatory Reference: Illinois State Board of Education, 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5 of the school code; HP 1975		
Cross Reference: Baby Fold BP 710 Confidentiality of Client Record, what about BP407 Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation and Sexual Misconduct		
Applies to: All Employees having contact with students at Hammitt Schools		
Board Policy Statement: It is the policy of The Baby Fold to ensure students are provided safe learning environments and healthy relationships with school personnel to promote students’ success in school. It is important for staff to maintain professional relationships with students at all times and to define staff-student boundaries to protect students from sexual misconduct by staff and staff from the appearance of impropriety.		
<p>Definition:</p> <p><u>Sexual Misconduct</u> is defined as any act, including, but not limited to, any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communications or physical activity by an employee or agent of the Hammitt Schools with direct contact with a student that is directed toward or with a student to establish a romantic or sexual relationship with the student. Such an act includes, but is not limited to, any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sexual or romantic invitation • Dating or soliciting a date • Engaging in sexualized or romantic dialog • Making sexually suggestive comments that are directed toward or with a student • Self-disclosure or physical exposure of a sexual, romantic, or erotic nature • A sexual, indecent, romantic, or erotic contact with the student <p><u>Illinois Educator Code of Ethics</u> - The Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators is a set of core principles, values, and responsibilities that sets expectations to guide practice and inspire professional excellence in relation to federal, state, and local policies, rules, regulations, and collective bargaining agreements.</p> <p>An educator is a person who holds or is applying for a certificate or approval, or is enrolled in an Illinois pre-service education preparation program.</p>		



The Illinois Educator Code of Ethics contains five core principles which provide a foundation for the responsibilities and commitments of Illinois Educators.

1. Responsibility to Students-The Illinois educator is committed to creating, promoting, and implementing a learning environment that is accessible to each student, enables students to achieve the highest academic potential, and maximizes their ability to succeed in academic and employment settings as a responsible member of society. Illinois educators:
 - a. Embody the Standards for the School Service Personnel Certificate (23 Ill. Adm. Code 23), the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards (23 Ill. Adm. Code 24), and Standards for Administrative Certification (23 Ill. Adm. Code 29), as applicable to the educator, in the learning environment;
 - b. Respect the inherent dignity and worth of each student by assuring that the learning environment is characterized by respect and equal opportunity for each student, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, language or socioeconomic status;
 - c. Maintain a professional relationship with students at all times;
 - d. Provide a curriculum based on high expectations for each student that addresses individual differences through the design, implementation, and adaptation of effective instruction; and
 - e. Foster in each student the development of attributes that will enhance skills and knowledge necessary to be a contributing member of society.
2. Responsibility to Self-The Illinois Educator is committed to establishing high professional standards for their practice and striving to meet these standards through their performance.
 - a. Assume responsibility and accountability for their performance and continually strive to demonstrate proficiency and currency in both content knowledge and professional practice;
 - b. Develop and implement personal and professional goals with attention to professional standards through a process of self-assessment and professional development;
 - c. Represent their professional credentials and qualifications accurately; and
 - d. Demonstrate a high level of professional judgment.
3. Responsibility to Colleagues and the Profession-The Illinois Educator is committed to collaborating with school and district colleagues and other professionals in the interest of student learning. Illinois Educators:
 - a. Collaborate with colleagues in the local school and district to meet local and state educational standards;
 - b. Work together to create a respectful, professional and supportive school climate that allows all educators to maintain their individual professional integrity;



- c. Seek out and engage in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession;
 - d. Promote participation in educational decision making processes;
 - e. Encourage promising candidates to enter the education profession; and
 - f. Support the preparation, induction, mentoring and professional development of educators.
4. Responsibility to Parents, Families and Communities-The Illinois Educator will collaborate, build trust, and respect confidentiality with parents, families, and communities to create effective instruction and learning environments for each student. Illinois Educators:
- a. Aspire to understand and respect the values and traditions of the diversity represented in the community and in their learning environments;
 - b. Encourage and advocate for fair and equal educational opportunities for each student; ▪
 - c. Develop and maintain professional relationships with parents, families, and communities;
 - d. Promote collaboration and support student learning through regular and meaningful communication with parents, families, and communities; and
 - e. Cooperate with community agencies that provide resources and services to enhance the learning environment
5. Responsibility to the Illinois State Board of Education-The Illinois Educator is committed to supporting the Administrative and School Codes, state and federal laws and regulations, and the Illinois State Board of Education’s standards for highly qualified educators. Illinois Educators:
- a. Provide accurate communication to the Illinois State Board of Education concerning all certification matters;
 - b. Maintain appropriate certification for employment; and
 - c. Comply with state and federal codes, laws, and regulations

Overview:

As per Illinois state law, Hammitt schools and of all our serving school districts uphold the State Board of Education’s Code of Ethics for Illinois Educators and have an employee code of professional conduct policy.

This policy will be posted where other policies, rules or standards of conduct are posted in the school, as well as on The Baby Fold’s agency website (www.thebabyfold.org) It will be included in handbooks. It will be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students and school personnel, including new employee when hired.



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Last Date of Procedure Review:	Effective Date of Procedure:	Revision History of Procedure:
CEO Signature: <i>Deanne Schultz</i>	Date: <i>7-25-22</i>	
RESPONSIBILITY ASSIGNED TO:	PROCEDURE:	
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>1. <u>Expectations/Boundaries for Employees and Agents of the School</u></p> <p>Hammitt staff serves students, ages 5-22 years old, with special education needs and varying developmental levels. Staff members are expected to maintain professional relationships and boundaries with students. Staff members must also respect the following guidelines:</p> <p>a. Do not disclose any confidential or proprietary information regarding The Baby Fold or our students or clients. Do not post pictures or audio/video recordings of students or clients taken in the workplace. Employees will be held to the same standards set forth by the agency in the Employee Handbook regarding Confidentiality of Personal and Business Information. Only when an announcement has been posted in a public agency publication, on the website, or announced for public awareness is it acceptable to personally post or announce that information (BP710).</p>	
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>b. No one is ever permitted under Illinois and Federal law, including HIPAA, to discuss a patient/client matter, or post patient/client pictures on a site where the he/she may be identified, even if you have changed the identifying information. Any malicious or negative comments regarding students and clients is strictly prohibited (BP710).</p>	
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>c. Do not befriend students via your personal social network. This is important to protect proper ethical boundaries between you and our students. It also lessens the likelihood that a person will have personal information on you that may be used to your detriment (BP710).</p>	
All Employees having contact with students	<p>d. If you discover that a student or client has been on your personal website or has access to your personal information through the</p>	



attending Hammitt Schools	internet that might compromise your professional relationship or your security, notify your supervisor immediately (BP710).
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	e. All employees are mandated reporters under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act and under Title IX of the federal Education Amendments of 1972. School staff must complete the Illinois Mandated Reporter Training annually and submit their completion certificate to the school.
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>2. <u>Transporting a Student</u> Any employee who transports Hammitt students, whether in agency-owned vehicles or in privately owned vehicles, must ensure they are using age-appropriate passenger restraint systems at all times when the vehicle is in motion.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a. All passengers under the age of twelve are to be in the back seat(s) of vehicles.</p>
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p style="margin-left: 40px;">b. Illinois State law requires children 7 and younger to use appropriate child restraints. General guidelines recommend rear facing infant car seats – even up to 30 or 35 pounds (or until child is too tall). Booster seats are required for most children between ages 4 and 7. Booster seats are recommended until the manufacturer’s weight limit is reached, or until the child can use the adult safety belt harness safely (usually around 8 years old or 4’9” tall).</p>
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p style="margin-left: 40px;">c. No client is to be left in a vehicle without supervision from the responsible employee, foster parent, volunteer, intern or contractor.</p>
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p style="margin-left: 40px;">d. While on duty as a TBF Employee, no cell phone, personal or business, may be used while operating a moving agency vehicle, including hands-free operation.</p>
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>3. <u>Taking or Possessing a photo or video of a student</u> Hammitt School may occasionally use photos of students for public use, when parents have granted permission for us to do so. Photo approval is at the sole discretion of the student’s parent or guardian.</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">a. Student photos may be used in the local media if special school events are publicized, on our social media pages or in</p>



	<p>agency brochures. No photos of students will be used in this manner unless the student’s parent or guardian has provided signed consent to do so.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>b. Staff members may not possess photos or videos of students on their personal devices.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>4. <u>Meeting with a student or contacting a student outside of the employee’s or agent’s professional role</u> Dual or multiple relationships exist when employees relate to clients/students in more than one relationship, whether professional, social or business.</p> <p>a. Employees should not engage in dual or multiple relationships with students or former students.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>b. Employees should not be meeting with students outside of their role with the student or during non-working hours.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>c. Employees are responsible for identifying dual or multiple relationships, as defined above, and consulting with their supervisors to ensure that services to the individuals involved are not jeopardized in any way.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>d. Employees and supervisors should request guidance from supervisors, program directors, vice presidents and Human Resources as needed to satisfactorily address these situations.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>5. <u>Training</u> a. Annual Mandated Reporter training to be completed by all school staff</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>b. All school staff will review this board policy and procedure, BP 728, on an annual basis to address Sexual Abuse training and Employee Code of Professional Conduct training requirements</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students</p>	<p>c. Hiring process for the agency includes reference checks from prior employers as well as other professional references. Questions included in the reference form</p>



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<p>attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>address the agency’s ability to know if any of its educators have violated professional staff-student boundaries in previous employment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - These questions ask about whether the applicant would be recommended to work with children and whether the applicant has ever demonstrated behavior that poses a risk to the workplace.
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>d. Required background checks are also completed in the hiring process. Refer to the Employee Handbook for details regarding the checks completed.</p>
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>6. <u>Investigation and Addressing Reports of Sexual Misconduct</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any staff person who becomes aware of and/or witnesses any sexual misconduct will call the 1-800-25-ABUSE Child Abuse & Neglect hotline to report the incident to proper authorities.
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Staff will complete the Agency Incident Report form, as well as the CANTS-5 <u>Written Confirmation of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Report: Mandated Reporters</u>. Documentation to be immediately forwarded to the individuals designated on the forms.
<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Staff, as well as the agency, will cooperate with authorities if an investigation ensues.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. As per the Employee Handbook Section C Ethics & Professional Conduct, any complaints of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or sexual misconduct received by supervisors or program directors must be forwarded within one business day (Monday through Friday, excluding agency holidays) to the Vice President of Human Resources. The Vice President of Human Resources will assess whether the complaint appears to meet the definition of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or sexual misconduct, as defined by the policy. If it does meet the definition, the Vice President of Human Resources will inform the complainant, CEO, and Corporate Compliance Officer that the complaint will be investigated per this policy and a formal investigation will occur. Please refer to Section C for the investigation procedure.



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<p>All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools</p>	<p>7. <u>Disciplinary Actions</u> Hammitt Schools will discipline educators for breaches of its employee code of professional conduct policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Violation of the employee code of professional conduct policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. Failure to report a violation of the employee code of professional conduct policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.
<p>Form Reference:</p>	<p>Agency IR incident report, CANTS 5, Employee Handbook</p>