

# Northwest Territories Teachers' Association

## CODE OF ETHICS

### PREAMBLE

To ensure high standards of professional service the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association (NWTAA) Code of Ethics sets out standards of conduct required to be observed by Association members.

NWTAA members are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner when interacting with students, the public, the Association, colleagues, other Association members, coworkers, and the employer. Professional conduct includes members speaking and acting in a respectful manner, and being mindful of the rights and responsibilities of others, as well as their own.

### MEMBER-STUDENT RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Know that their first responsibility is to students
2. Keep in mind that the intellectual, moral, physical and social welfare of students is the goal of education
3. Remain as objective as possible when discussing controversial matters with their class including topics of a political, religious or racial nature
4. Understand that a privileged relationship exists between teachers and students and refrain from exploiting that relationship
5. Recognize and respect the confidential nature of information concerning students and do not divulge any personal information about the student or the student's home, except through official channels to authorized persons, officials, or agencies directly concerned with student welfare except when otherwise required by law
6. Respect the individual rights, the ethnic traditions and the religious beliefs of their students and the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their students
7. Inform a student's parent/guardian, regular teacher and administration before accepting a student for private tutoring
8. Do not accept remuneration for tutoring their own students, except in exceptional circumstances



### MEMBER-ASSOCIATION RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Know that it is their right and responsibility to participate in, be informed of, and inform themselves about Association business, and where appropriate, make informed criticisms as the facts warrant
2. Refrain from making unauthorized representations to employers or outside bodies in the name of the Association or in the name of Regional Association
3. Refrain from making unauthorized representations to the Central Executive of the Association about matters appropriately dealt with by Regional Association
4. Acknowledge and respect the authority and responsibilities of the Association and its officers, and refrain from acting in a manner prejudicial to collective bargaining strategies or other interests of the Association
5. Cooperate with the Association during an investigation of all complaints of professional misconduct
6. Cooperate with the Association during investigation and processing of grievances under the collective agreement, and honour commitments made on their behalf by the Association
7. Maintain a positive relationship with the Association

### MEMBER-PUBLIC RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Portray the teaching profession as desirable so that high calibre people are attracted to the profession
2. Review long range plans and teaching practices with the parents/guardians of their students
3. Seek and hold public office if they so choose. In this instance they can expect to receive a reasonable allowance of release and relief from teaching duties so they can fulfill their public office duties.
  - However, if an unreasonable amount of time is required and this interferes with professional duties, members shall apply for leave of absence without pay from their teaching position.
4. Use their best efforts to broaden educational opportunities and improve the quality of education in the Northwest Territories
5. Show respect when they speak and interact with members of the public so that the prestige of the profession is maintained

### MEMBER-MEMBER RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Understand that administrators and their teacher colleagues (including Yellowknife Education District No. 1's Education Assistants) are members of the Northwest Territories Teachers' Association and as such have corresponding expectations, rights and responsibilities associated with membership in this professional organization
  - Recognize that administrators and their teacher colleagues work together to provide optimal learning conditions for students and optimal working conditions for teachers
  - Acknowledge the differences between the roles of administrators and teachers, and the responsibilities inherent within those roles
2. Maintain a harassment free and collegial work environment through open communication, respect and professionalism
3. Seek to address issues of concern and/or those requiring corrective action in private, directly with the person involved with an attitude of seeking to understand and the intent of finding a mutually beneficial resolution. If the members are not reaching a resolution, then the following is suggested: First: Direct criticism of teaching performance to that teacher in private. Second: After informing the teacher in writing of the intention to do so, direct said criticism in confidence to appropriate individuals/levels of authority (this may include, but is not limited to, NWTAA Officers and/or staff who may be able to offer advice and assistance on issues concerning the teacher's performance and related work).
  - 4. Refrain from making negative comments about the professional competence of other Association members, except within protocol:
    - First: Direct criticism of teaching performance to that teacher in private
    - Next: After informing the teacher in writing of the intention to do so, direct said criticism in confidence to appropriate individuals/levels of authority (this may include, but is not limited to, Association officers and/or staff who may be able to offer advice and assistance on issues concerning the teacher's performance and related work)
  - 5. Refrain from acting in a manner that undermines the confidence of the students of other members
  - 6. Report matters harmful to the welfare of the school through proper communication channels and exhaust lower levels of authority before proceeding to higher levels of authority
  - 7. Maintain a positive relationship with other Association members
  - 8. Follow legal requirements when communicating with officials in cases of suspected child abuse

### MEMBER-EMPLOYER RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Follow the collective agreement
2. Maintain a positive relationship with the employer
3. Ensure non-school activities do not impinge upon school time or performance of professional duties
4. Check to ensure that the extra-curricular activities they choose to participate in are sanctioned by the Principal
  - A Principal may request, but not require, a member to engage in extra-curricular activity
  - If members take on extra-curricular activities they should be compensated in the regular school timetable so that all members equally share in school program responsibilities
5. Engage in on-going professional growth and improvement through study, research, travel, and attendance at conferences and professional meetings

### MEMBER-COWORKER (Not NWTAA) RELATIONS

Members of the Association...

1. Maintain a harassment free and collegial work environment through open communication, respect and professionalism
2. Seek to address issues of concern and/or those requiring corrective action in private, directly with the person involved with an attitude of seeking to understand and the intent of finding a mutually beneficial resolution. If the co-workers are not reaching a resolution, then the following is suggested: First: Direct criticism of the co-worker in private. Second: After informing the co-worker in writing of the intention to do so, direct said criticism in confidence to appropriate individuals/levels of authority.
3. Refrain from making negative comments about the competence of co-workers, except within protocol
4. Refrain from acting in a manner that undermines the confidence of the students or co-workers
5. Report matters harmful to the welfare of the school through proper communication channels and exhaust lower levels of authority before proceeding to higher levels of authority