



Ethical Behavior in the Educational Workplace

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Business/Educational Ethics:

The purpose of this training is

- To demonstrate an understanding of Ethical Behavior in the Educational Workplace

Establishing and Maintaining Ethical Boundaries in Education

- The relationship between students/their parents and the teacher/academic institute is a professional one
- Ethical boundaries need to be established in order to protect both parties from the potential (or supposed) abuse of “power, control and/or influence”
- Ethical boundaries are only recently beginning to be discussed at length in the educational field
- Establishing ethical boundaries or codes seems contradictory to the teaching process; it fosters impersonal connections with students when research shows this is the opposite of what they need

What are these Ethical Boundaries?

- Not a definitive source on what the ethical boundaries are in regards to the teacher student relationship
- Ethical guidelines of other professions do not seem totally applicable
- Familiarize yourself with the rules and regulations of your school (know your policies!)
- Consider the following boundaries that were identified as being helpful in maintaining a professional stance in a 2009 study *

* Aultman, Lori Price (et al.). Boundary dilemmas in teacher-student relationships: Struggling with “the line”. Teaching and Teacher Education. Vol. 25

What are these Ethical Boundaries?

- Curricular Boundaries: Discussion of morality or emotionally charged issues with vulnerable populations
- Emotional Boundaries: Masking and controlling our own emotions
- Relationship Boundaries: Engaging in inappropriate relationships or intimate gestures
- Power Boundaries: Not using our authority to harm a student; not rewarding or punishing a student based on their own ethical beliefs
- Institutional Boundaries: Requiring consistency within a school for educators to uphold curriculum expectations

Kantian Theory

Kantianism can be utilized to support this workshop.

- Humans have an intrinsic worth - dignity.
- We should not use other people as a means to an end.
 - We should never manipulate people to achieve a purpose or satisfy our own personal goals, no matter how good these goals/purposes may be.
 - We cannot trick people into believing something; it is better to be upfront, because lying is wrong.
- Categorical Imperative

Utilitarianism Theory

Additionally, Utilitarianism can be utilized to support this workshop.

- Consequences are the focus, so it is important to choose the best outcome possible.
 - Negative consequences will exist in the workplace if boundaries are not valued. This could lead to a slippery slope of repetitive behaviors.
- Greatest Happiness principle - promoting happiness for the majority.
- However: What if the demands of justice conflict with demands of utility?
Sometimes rights of one individual are violated at the expense of promoting happiness to a majority
 - Rule Utilitarianism helps bridge the gap...there can be exceptions when following a rule yields horrible circumstances.

“Decide, Debate, Discuss”

An ethical dilemma in the educational workplace”

Mr. Adams, an experienced teacher, has recently been assigned to teach one of eight sections of Grade 10 Science, which includes the study of Evolution and Darwin’s Natural Selection Theory as a part of the curriculum expectation. For religious reasons, this teacher has replaced this part of the curriculum with the study of Creationism.

If you were the administrator of the school, what would you do, and why??

Key Takeaways:

- Implement a “Professional Responsibility of Educators”
- Model professional and ethical behavior for students to help develop their awareness so that they in turn can be successful in their future workplaces

References

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Thank you!

