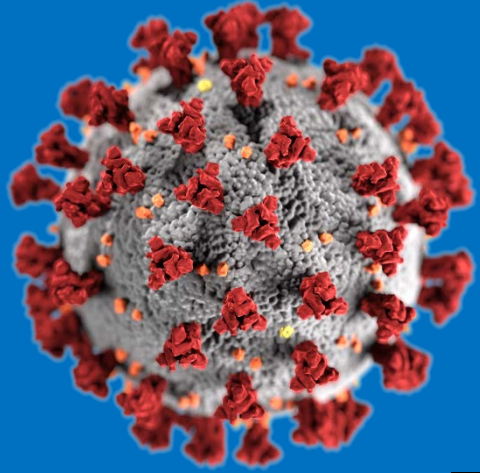


# The Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators



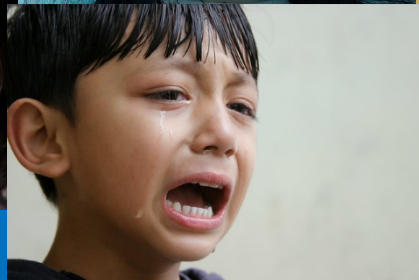
Making Ethical and Professional Decisions Daily

# Transitioning Back to School



# New Reality

(Take time to talk)





# Transitioning Back to School

Here are some of the things we are coming back to:

- Your school year ended abruptly
- Anxiety
- Uncertainty
- Financial concerns
- Family members laid off/furloughed
- Vacations cancelled
- Protests





# Transitioning Back to School

- Depression or anxiety
- Anger, irritability, or restlessness
- Feeling overwhelmed, unmotivated, or unfocused
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Racing thoughts or constant worry
- Problems with your memory or concentration
- Making bad decisions







# Transitioning Back to School

- Create a plan for your classroom and building
- What am I going to do for myself mentally so my students “Get The Best Me”?
  - Be patient
  - Listen
  - Empathy
- As an administrator, what will I do to get our building’s staff and students mentally focused, high functioning, and provide them with the support they need in this current time?





# Who is bound by the Code of Ethics?





# Who is bound by the Code of Ethics?

- All educators who are licensed by the State of Arkansas are bound by the Code of Ethics and can be sanctioned if found to have violated a Standard(s).
- All educators employed under a waiver from licensure.  
(Act 564 of 2017)
- All preservice teachers who are enrolled in an educator prep program. (Act 1090 of 2015)





# Question

How does the  
Professional Licensure Standards Board  
(PLSB) get involved?





# How do we get involved?

## Fact or Fiction:

- We accept anonymous allegations:

**Fiction**

- Once we have an authorized investigation, we conduct video surveillance and you are placed on the No Fly List:

**Fiction**

- Anyone can file an allegation on you:

**Fact**







# How do we get involved?

- An allegation of violation form must be completed and signed. (Under Penalty of Perjury)
- The allegation of violation form must be mailed to the address located at the bottom of the form.
- Once the allegation of violation form is received, the complainant will receive a call from the Chief Investigator in order to validate the complainant's information.





# How do we get involved?

- Once the complaint is validated, the allegation(s) will go before the Ethics Subcommittee at its next scheduled monthly meeting.
- The Ethics Subcommittee will review all information contained in the allegation of violation form and determine whether to authorize an investigation based upon if the allegations were true, would the allegations constitute an ethics violation.
- The Ethics Subcommittee also has the discretion not to authorize an investigation.
- The complainant will be notified by a letter indicating if the Ethics Subcommittee has authorized or denied an investigation.





# What if I am found to have violated any of the Standards of the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators?





# Potential Recommended Sanctions and Fines

- Private Letter of Caution
- Written Reprimand (Fine up to \$100)
- Probation (Fine up to \$250)
- Suspension (Fine up to \$500)
- Revocation/Non-Renewal/Non-Issuance (Fine of \$500)



# If a Standard is Violated

If it is found that an Educator violates the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, a sanction is recommended to the State Board of Education by the Ethics Subcommittee. The recommended sanction is based on the preponderance of the evidence collected during the investigation. (More likely the alleged conduct occurred than not.)

Any sanction may be accompanied by conditions, including but not limited to, training and rehabilitative activities, with all costs paid by the Educator.





# Making it Real

*I am ethical!*



*Why am I here?*

# Arkansas Headlines 2019-2020

PLSB

Investigative  
File

- Arkansas Teacher Accused of Sexually Assaulting Child (March 2020)
- Arkansas Teacher arrested in Rape case (May 2020)
- Arkansas Teacher arrested, accused of sexual assault (Nov 2019)
- Arkansas Teacher arrested for DWI (July 2019)
- Arkansas high school football coach under fire after sending racist text (May 2019)
- Arkansas high school football coach arrested after being accused of trafficking steroids (Oct 2019)

# Arkansas Headlines 2019-2020

PLSB

Investigative  
File

- Ex-Arkansas Teacher Arrested Following Allegations Of Inappropriate Behavior With Student
- Former school counselor in court after arrest in child porn investigation
- Former School Administrator Arrested For Harassment
- Mom claims school paddling left son with severe bruises
- Parents outraged after a teacher gave students poems they say included “profanity” and “sexual content”



- **Selecting the wrong answer on a test is a mistake.**

- Not studying for that test is a bad decision.

The mistake was something you did without intention; the bad decision was made intentionally—often without regard for the consequence.





# Making it Real

- You are in a licensed profession
- You are responsible for the most important thing in parents' lives, their children
- Educators are role models (You have to own it)
- Students recognize and respond to professionalism
- When students trust their teachers they ask more questions
- When you are knowledgeable about the eight (8) Standards for the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, you practice professionalism and protect our students



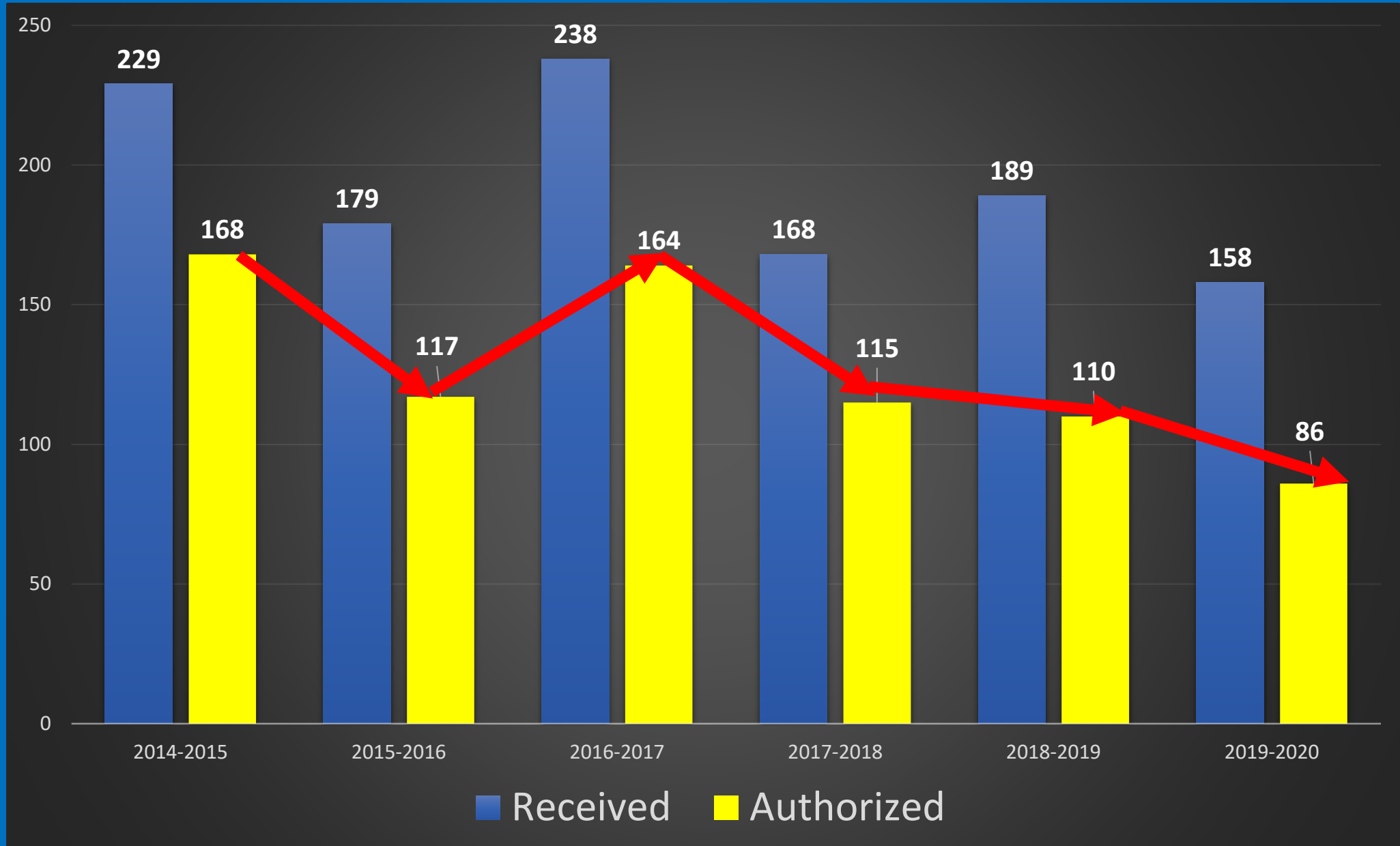


# Ethics Data 2019-2020

A hand is pointing towards a glowing blue data visualization. The visualization features a grid with several lines and data points, suggesting a complex dataset or analysis. The overall theme is data analysis and ethics.

## Data Analysis

# Six-Year Snapshot of Received and Authorized Allegations





## During the 2019-2020 school year, the PLSB authorized allegations

Out of the 86 authorized investigations:

- 59 = Classroom Teachers
- 09 = Administrators
- 08 = Special Education
- 05 = Coaches
- 02 = Counselor
- 02 = Specialist
- 01 = Fine Arts
- 00 = Student Interns





# Ethics Data

- **Administrators** were investigated the most for Standard 2 and Standard 3
- Out of 86 investigations, **parent complaints** constituted 14% of our investigations
- **Special Education** teachers were investigated the most for Standards 1, 2, and 3
- **Standard 1** and **Standard 2** remain our most investigated Standards





# 14 of the 86



total authorized cases involved educators who engaged in sexual dialogue, grooming behaviors, and/or sexual contact.



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As a result, **16%** of the investigations the PLSB office conducted was concentrated on inappropriate and unprofessional relationships between educators and students.

---

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16%

Of Arkansas Educators made a decision to  
engage in Sexual Physical Contact, Sexual  
Dialog/Engage in Grooming Behaviors

---

Of the **14 educators** that engaged in inappropriate sexual contact, sexual dialog, and/or grooming behaviors:



- **2/14 were female educators**
- **12/14 were male educators**

- **13/14 were classroom teachers**
- **1/14 was a special education teacher**

What do you think the average age is of educators who were under investigation during the 2018-2019 school year?

Please choose from the following choices below:

---

A. 56

B. 63

C. 25

D. 43

E. 29

F. 33

---

The correct answer is...





# The Standards

What are the 8 Standards of the  
Code of Ethics?

Making Ethical and Professional Decisions Daily







# Standard 1

An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.





**Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.**

Standard 1 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Sexual Abuse of a Student
- Verbal abuse/threatening language and/or physical contact with a student in an angered state of mind
- Inappropriate communication with a student (in person, via social media, and/or any electronic communication)
- Cursing/Embarrassing a student
- Drinking/using drugs in front of students, and/or purchasing alcohol/drugs for students
- Allowing students to engage in inappropriate activities





Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.

Allegations concerning  
SOCIAL MEDIA  
fall under Standard 1 and sometimes  
Standard 4.





Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.

- Contact with students should be transparent and accountable
- Do not friend and/or follow students on social media
- Your communication with a student should always serve an educational purpose
- Keep your personal social media presence personal
- Maintain professional boundaries
- COMMUNICATE with the student's parents via school email account (You have documentation of conversations)





Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.

We encourage utilizing SOCIAL MEDIA as a tool that serves an educational purpose like the following examples:

- Classroom Page
- Team Page
- Cheer Page
- Band Page
- Teacher Page





# Social Media



askfm



hily



Instagram



Examples of good communication tools via texting apps with administration approval, parent permission, and with their inclusion in the communication: (*Transparent and Accountable*)



The best way to chat with everyone you know



A safe way for teachers to text message students and stay in touch with parents. **Free.**





# Standard 2

An educator maintains competence regarding his or her professional practice, inclusive of professional and ethical behavior, skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position.





Standard 2: An educator maintains competence regarding his or her professional and ethical behavior, skills, knowledge, disposition, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position

Standard 2 violations include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Habitually not coming to work on time
- Leaving your class unattended
- Failing to check your school bus after you think you have dropped off all students
- Failing to follow any district policies
- Not following a student's IEP
- Failing to obtain professional development hours
- Showing up to work under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs
- Failing to keep proper documentation and/or records/receipts as it relates to student's grades and/or the collection of monies
- Purposely creating/providing fraudulent documentation





# Standard 3

An educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with professional practices.





## Standard 3: An educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with professional practices.

Standard 3 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Falsifying the reporting of grades
- Failing to Report Child Maltreatment to the DHS Hotline as a Mandated Reporter
- Falsifying grant information to obtain money and/or equipment fraudulently
- Knowingly playing an ineligible player during an athletic event
- Falsifying teacher of record
- Falsifying/Manipulating student information
- Falsifying travel reimbursements





An educator and entrusted with public funds and property, including school sponsored activity funds, honors that trust with honest, responsible stewardship.





Standard 4: An educator entrusted with public funds and property, including school sponsored activity funds, honors that trust with honest, responsible stewardship.

Standard 4 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Failing to keep proper financial documentation/receipts
- Misuse of funds collected for the school
- Embezzlement
- Using your school district issued laptop inappropriately
- Using the school driver's education vehicle for inappropriate purposes
- Using school equipment the school has rented and/or purchased for personal use
- Using a school district vehicle/bus for personal use that was not authorized
- Stealing any school supplies and/or food





An educator maintains integrity regarding the acceptance of gratuity, gifts, compensation, or favors that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions and shall refrain from using the educator's position for personal gain.







Standard 5: An educator maintains integrity regarding the acceptance of gratuity, gifts, compensation, or favors that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions and shall refrain from using the educator's position for personal gain.

Standard 5 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Failure to disclose to your school district that you have a financial interest in a company that the district is considering and/or uses where you personally receive compensation
- Starting a band booster club where you are the only member and utilizing the money for personal use
- Not following Grant procedures and/or misusing grant money
- Receiving free merchandise due to utilizing products and/or accepting bids





# Standard 6

An educator keeps in confidence secure standardized test materials and results, and maintains integrity regarding test administration procedures.





Standard 6: An educator keeps in confidence secure standardized test materials and results, and maintains integrity regarding test administration procedures.

Standard 6 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Leaving students or test materials unattended, for any length of time
- Copying information from the test materials
- Testing family members
- Utilizing cell phones to take pictures of the test or students' responses
- Discussing test information with colleagues (as a heads up)
- If you don't understand the rules, DO NOT sign the security agreement until you do

Call the ADE Office of Student Assessment to report any testing improprieties at  
(501) 682-4558





# Standard 7

An educator maintains the confidentiality of information about students and colleagues obtained in the course of the educator's professional services that is protected under state law or regulations, federal law or regulations, or the written policies of the educator's school district, unless disclosure serves a professional purpose as allowed or required by law or regulations.





Standard 7: An educator maintains the confidentiality of information about students and colleagues obtained in the course of the educator's professional services that is protected under state law or regulations, federal law or regulations, or the written policies of the educator's school district, unless disclosure serves a professional purpose as allowed or required by law or regulations.

Standard 7 violations could include, but are not limited to, the following examples:

- Inappropriately discussing a student's IEP outside of the student's team that serves no educational purpose and/or legitimate educational interest
- Inappropriately sharing medical information that serves no educational purpose
- FERPA
- Inappropriately discussing/sharing test scores/grades/assignments with other students that serves no educational purpose and/or legitimate educational interest
- Unprofessionally discussing colleague information to students or other educators





# Standard 8

An educator, while on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students, refrains from:

- A) using, possessing and/or being under the influence of alcohol or unauthorized drugs/substances and/or possessing items prohibited by law
- B) possessing or using tobacco or tobacco-related products, e-cigarettes, e-liquid, or vapor products
- C) abusing/misusing prescription medications or other authorized substances as evidenced by impairment while on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students.







# Administrator Radar

Leadership is not about being in charge



Leadership is about taking care of those in your charge



# Administrator Radar

- *How does your district policy address cell phone usage/texting (Between Teachers and Students/during instructional time?)*
- *Are teachers allowed to friend students on social media?*
- *Is this addressed during any type of professional development and/or policy?*
- *Is there guidance within your district on how teachers should communicate with students?*
- *Who monitors pages set up by the teachers?*
- *Is there someone that is responsible for professional development on this topic (Social Media)*
- *Is there someone responsible for professional development on the Code of Ethics for Arkansas educators?*







# Administrator Radar

- Conduct risk audits of programs at your school
- Bookkeepers
- Audit/review invoices
- What are the current procedures
- Collection of monies (Who/Why/Accounts)
- PD for staff
- What about PD with Staff and Students
- Do you know how to conduct an investigation
- Become familiar with Title IX (Sexual Harassment)

**COVID19 considerations:**







# Administrator Radar

- Have building awareness in order to mitigate the risk for your students and staff

- Error on the side of caution and call the Child Abuse Hotline

1-800-482-5964

- Administrators are required to report the sexual abuse of a student by law. Failure to do so would also be a Code of Ethics violation





# Quotes

*“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”*

*- John Wooden*





# Quotes

*“If you don't have time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?”*

*- John Wooden*







# Thank you for all you do!

To schedule and/or receive information on a training, please  
contact:

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Chief Investigator

501-682-3777

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