

EI DECLARATION ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

1. This declaration represents an individual and collective commitment by teachers and all others involved in education. It is complementary to the laws, statutes, rules and programmes that define the practice of the profession. It is also a tool that aims at helping teachers and education personnel respond to questions related to professional conduct and at the same time to the problems arising from relations with the different participants in education;

DECLARATION ON PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Preamble

2. Quality public education, a cornerstone of a democratic society, has the task of providing equality of educational opportunity for all children and youth and is fundamental to the well being of society through its contribution to economic, social, and cultural development. Teachers and education personnel have a responsibility to foster confidence among the general public in the standards of service that can be expected from all engaged in this important task;
3. The exercise of responsible judgement is at the heart of professional activity and the actions of caring, competent and committed teachers and education personnel to help every student reach his or her potential is a critical factor in the provision of quality education;
4. The expertise and commitment of teachers and education personnel must be combined with good working conditions, a supportive community and enabling policies to allow quality education to take place. In is only when all necessary components are in place that it is possible for teachers and education personnel to fully meet their responsibilities to students and to the communities in which they work;
5. The teaching profession may benefit greatly from a discussion about the core values of the profession. Such raising of consciousness about the norms and ethics of the profession may contribute to increasing job satisfaction among teachers and education personnel, to enhancing their status and self-esteem, and to increasing respect for the profession in society;
6. Teachers and education personnel and their unions, by virtue of their membership in Education International (EI), are committed to the promotion of education that helps develop a person's capacity to live a fulfilled life and to contribute to the wellbeing of society;
7. Recognising the extent of the responsibilities inherent in the teaching process and the responsibility to attain and maintain the highest degree of ethical conduct towards the profession, to students, colleagues and parents, Education International member organisations should
 - a) actively promote the policies and resolutions adopted by the EI Congress and Executive Board including this Declaration on Professional Ethics;
 - b) work to ensure that education personnel benefit from terms and conditions of work that allow them to fulfil their responsibilities by ensuring they have the rights guaranteed to all workers in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up which encompasses:
 - the right to freedom of association;
 - the right to bargain collectively;
 - freedom from discrimination at work;
 - equality at work;
 - freedom from forced, or bonded labour;
 - the elimination of child labour;
 - c) work to ensure that their members have the rights outlined in *the ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers and the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel*;
 - d) combat all forms of racism, bias or discrimination in education due to gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, religion, political opinion, social or economic status, national or ethnic origin;
 - e) cooperate at the national level to promote quality government funded education for all children, to enhance the status and to protect the rights of education personnel;

- f) use their influence to make it possible for all children worldwide, without discrimination, and particularly child labourers, children from marginalised groups or those having specific difficulties to have access to quality education;

8. Taking this into consideration, EI recommends the adoption of the following declaration in order to guide teachers and education workers and their trade unions in respecting the ethical standards required by the profession;

9. Commitment to the profession: Education personnel shall:

- a) justify public trust and confidence and enhance the esteem in which the profession is held by providing quality education for all students;
- b) ensure that professional knowledge is regularly updated and improved;
- c) determine the nature, format and timing of their lifelong learning programs as an essential expression of their professionalism;
- d) declare all relevant information related to competency and qualifications;
- e) strive, through active participation in their union, to achieve conditions of work that attract highly qualified persons to the profession;
- f) support all efforts to promote democracy and human rights in and through education;

10. Commitment to students: Education personnel shall:

- a) respect the rights of all children, especially their students, to benefit from the provisions identified in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* particularly as those rights apply to education;
- b) safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of students and make every effort to protect students from bullying and from physical or psychological abuse;
- c) take all possible steps to safeguard students from sexual abuse;
- d) exercise due care, diligence and confidentiality in all matters affecting the welfare of their students;
- e) assist students to develop a set of values consistent with international human rights standards;
- f) maintain professional relations with students;
- g) acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of each student and provide guidance and encouragement to each student to realise his/her full potential;
- h) give students a feeling of being part of a community of mutual commitment with room for everyone;
- i) exercise authority with justice and compassion;
- j) ensure that the privileged relationship between teacher and student is not exploited in any way but particularly in order to proselytise or for ideological control;

11. Commitment to colleagues: Education personnel shall:

- a) promote collegiality among colleagues by respecting their professional standing and opinions and be prepared to offer advice and assistance particularly to those beginning their career or in training;
- b) maintain confidentiality of information about colleagues obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law;
- c) assist colleagues in peer review procedures negotiated and agreed to between education unions and employers;
- d) safeguard and promote the interests and wellbeing of colleagues and protect them from bullying and from physical, psychological or sexual abuse;
- e) ensure that all means and procedures for the implementation of this declaration are the object of thorough discussions in each national organisation in order to ensure its best possible application;

12. Commitment to Management Personnel: Education personnel shall:

- a) be knowledgeable of their legal and administrative rights and responsibilities, and respect the provisions of collective contracts and the provisions concerning students' rights;
- b) carry out reasonable instructions from management personnel and have the right to question instructions through a clearly determined procedure;

13. Commitment to parents: Education personnel shall:

- a) recognise the right of parents to consultation, through agreed channels, on the welfare and progress of their child;
- b) respect lawful parental authority but give advice from a professional point of view that is in the best interest of the child;

- c) make every effort to encourage parents to be actively involved in the education of their child and to actively support the learning process by ensuring that children avoid forms of child labour that could affect their education;

14. Commitment to the teacher: The community shall:

- a) make it possible for teachers to feel confident that they themselves are treated fairly while attending to their tasks;
- b) recognise that teachers have a right to preserve their privacy, care for themselves and lead a normal life in the community;

Adopted by the Third World Congress of Education International, meeting in Jomtien, Thailand, from 25 to 29 July, 2001.