

Personnel**AR 4319.21(a)****4119.21****PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS****4219.21**

ANTELOPE VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT EMPLOYEE CODE OF ETHICS

As employees of the Antelope Valley Union High School District, we strive to educate all students to their maximum potential. Our success depends on teamwork, trust, and commitment. Our *Code of Ethics* is intended to help us achieve that success by setting professional standards, common expectations, and increasing trust and commitment within the District, and between the District and the community.

Core Principles

To help us achieve success, we are committed to three core ethical principles:

- **Commitment to Excellence**
- **District and Personal Integrity**
- **Responsibility**

Purpose

Our *Code of Ethics* helps develop trust by describing what the public can expect from us, and what we can expect from each other and our District. It plays a central role in our District's commitment to help District personnel achieve the highest ethical standards in their professional activities and relationships. Our goal is to create a culture that fosters trust, commitment to excellence and responsibility, personal and institutional integrity, and avoids conflicts of interest and appearances of impropriety.

Application and Enforceability

The *Code of Ethics* applies to all District personnel including Board members. Provisions of this *Employee Code of Ethics* are supported by State law, and District Board policies, regulations, bulletins, and collective bargaining agreements. Violations of this *Code of Ethics* may result in administrative or disciplinary action under those laws, policies, regulations, bulletins, agreements, and any other authorizing actions of the governing board.

Making Ethical Decisions

While the *Code of Ethics* provides general guidance, it does not provide a complete listing or a definitive answer to every possible ethical situation. When making decisions, we should use good judgment to fulfill the spirit as well as the letter of the *Code*. When making decisions:

- **Evaluate the situation** and identify the ethical issues.

Personnel**AR 4319.21(b)****4119.21****PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS****4219.21**

- **Follow the rules.** Consult the *Code of Ethics*, law, and District rules, regulations, bulletins, policies and procedures, and apply them to the situation.
- **Ask for guidance** from your supervisor. If your supervisor is involved in the problem, contact his or her supervisor for help. Ask for help early – *before* you act.
- **Make and carry out a decision** that is consistent with the rules and develops excellence, integrity, and responsibility.

Commitments and Expectations

To achieve our mission of educating students, we strive to create a District culture that fosters trust and focuses on excellence. Our goal is to develop a culture that is personally fulfilling, supports ethical decision-making, and provides an environment where hard work, creativity, and innovation are the norm. To succeed, we must have the same expectations about how we will practice our *commitment to excellence, integrity, and responsibility* in our everyday work.

A. **Commitment to Excellence.** *We are committed to being the best that we can be. Everything we do has an impact on students, staff, and the community in the Antelope Valley Union High School District.*

1. **Set the example.** *We are committed to providing the best example we can, striving to demonstrate excellence, integrity, and responsibility in our work.*
2. **Create an environment of trust, respect and non-discrimination.** *We are committed to creating an environment of trust, care, and respect. We will not tolerate discriminatory or harassing behavior of students or staff.*
3. **Provide honest, accurate, and timely information.** *We are committed to candor in our work relationships, providing other District personnel including the Board, Superintendent, Cabinet, and supervisors with accurate, reliable, and timely information. We will not tolerate falsification or misrepresentation of issues or facts.*
4. **Identify problems and help create solutions.** *We are committed to identifying areas for improvement within our District, and suggesting and implementing solutions that make us more successful.*

Personnel

AR 4319.21(c)

4119.21

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

4219.21

5. **Keep policies, procedures, and rules.** Our *Code of Ethics* is the foundation of trust and how our District conducts everyday business. It defines our expectations and evaluation criteria. *We are committed to following our Code of Ethics, laws, and District Board policies, regulations, bulletins, and procedures. We will not tolerate improper conduct.*
 6. **Report improper conduct.** When someone does well, it reflects well on all of us. When we make a mistake, we strive to correct it and learn from it. *We are committed to reporting gross mismanagement, significant waste of funds, abuse of authority, threats to safety, violations of our Code of Ethics, laws, regulations, bulletins, policies and procedures, or other conduct that damages our integrity or reputation, to our supervisor.* (For more detailed information, see the *Reference* section.)
 7. **Keep colleagues safe from retaliation.** *We are committed to creating a work environment where problems can be reported and solved. We are prohibited from threatening, harassing, punishing, or retaliating against employees who make good faith complaints.* (For more detailed information, see the *Reference* section.)
- B. District and Personal Integrity.** *To maintain our integrity, we are committed to making decisions in the best interests of the District. We will avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of impropriety.*
8. **Avoid conflicts of interest and improper outside income.** A conflict of interest can exist anytime our position or decisions provide us a financial benefit or improper advantage. We are permitted to receive outside income as long as it does not create a conflict with our District work. *We are committed to declining outside income that is inconsistent, incompatible, or in conflict with our official duties. We will not make decisions or use our position for personal benefit or to gain an improper advantage.* (For more detailed information, see the *Reference* section.)
 9. **Decline gifts.** A gift is a benefit we receive for which we did not pay. Gifts can include merchandise, food, tickets, use of facilities, investments, rebates or discounts not offered to the public, or forgiveness of debt from vendors, lobbyists, parents, students, or others. *We will not accept gifts or gratuities in excess of \$400 from a single source in a single year which gives the appearance that the gift improperly influenced our decisions regardless of the amount. We will not solicit vendors, lobbyists, parents, or others for anything that provides us a personal benefit different from the public.* (For more detailed information, see the *Reference* section.)

Personnel

AR 4319.21(d)

4119.21

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

4219.21

10. **Improper influence of family members and associates.** *We are committed to abstaining from decisions that could result in a direct benefit to a close relative or cohabitant including, but not limited to, hiring, promotion, discipline, evaluation or direct supervision. (For more detailed information, see the Reference section.)*
 11. **Maintain appropriate relationships with students.** *We are committed to ensuring that employee-student relationships are positive, professional, and non-exploitative. We will not tolerate improper employee-student relationships. (For more detailed information, see the Reference section.)*
 12. **Keep procurement information confidential.** *To reinforce public trust and confidence in our procurement processes, we are committed to ensuring that procurement information is kept confidential and used only in the performance of our duties. (For more detailed information, see the Reference section.)*
 13. **Keep the contracting process objective.** *We are committed to making contract award recommendations in the best interest of the District. (For more detailed information, see the Reference section.)*
 14. **Uphold District interests in hiring and promotion.** *We are committed to hiring and promoting District personnel based on their qualifications and the job criteria of the position, and will not tolerate improper hiring practices.*
- C. **Responsibility.** *We are committed to holding each other responsible for our performance as a District and as individuals.*
15. **Proper use of public position.** *We are committed to ensuring that our power and authority are used in an appropriate, positive manner that enhances the public interest and trust. We will not use our authority to improperly influence people or obtain preferential treatment.*
 16. **Proper use of public resources.** *Except for occasional and limited personal use that does not interfere with performance of duties or create an appearance of impropriety, we are committed to ensuring that District facilities, equipment, supplies, mailing lists, or other District resources are used for District purposes only.*
 17. **Use of District time.** *We are committed to ensuring that District personnel are tasked to perform only District work on District working-time. We will not direct or permit District personnel to perform personal services on District working time.*

Personnel

AR 4319.21(e)

4119.21

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

4219.21

18. **Uphold confidentiality.** To achieve excellence, our District employees, parents, and students must be able to discuss issues frankly and, when appropriate, in confidence. *We are committed to abiding by all laws and District policies concerning confidential information, including student records, personnel files, agreements, and District records and policies.* (See the *Reference* section.)
19. **Waivers.** The AVUHSD Superintendent or his/her designee, upon a showing of cause, may waive an ethics prohibition *in writing* with notification to the Board of Education.

References

These references are intended to provide additional, though not necessarily comprehensive, guidance for professional situations. These references are updated periodically.

6. **Report improper conduct.**
- *California Education Code Section 44110*
7. **Keep colleagues safe from retaliation.**
- *California Education Code Section 44113*
8. **Conflicts of interest and outside income.**
- *California Government Code Sections 87100, 87103, 87200, 1090, 1098, 1126*
 - *California Fair Political Practices Commission*
9. **Decline gifts.**
- *California Government Code Sections 89500, 89503*
 - *California Fair Political Practices Commission*
10. **Improper influence of family members and associates.**
- *California Government Code Sections 87100-87103*
11. **Maintain appropriate relationships with students.**
- *California Education Code Section 44932*
12. **Keep procurement information confidential.**
- *California Government Code Section 1098*
13. **Keep the contracting process objective.**
- *California Government Code Section 1098*
18. **Uphold confidentiality.**
- *California Government Code Section 1098*
 - *California Education Code Sections 49073-49079*

ANTELOPE VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regulation approved: September 3, 2008

Lancaster, California

Personnel	E1	4319.21(a)
		4119.21
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS		4219.21

COMMITMENT TO OUR AVUHSD CODE OF ETHICS

As an employee of the Antelope Valley Union High School District, I am an important part of a team whose mission is to educate all students to their maximum potential. My success and the success of our District depend on the teamwork, trust and commitment I demonstrate everyday in my work.

I am committed to demonstrating and helping the District achieve the highest ethical standards including:

- **A commitment to excellence** as we strive to become the best school district and employees we can be
- **A commitment to integrity** by making decisions that are in the best interests of the District, and by avoiding conflicts of interest and the appearance of impropriety
- **A commitment to responsibility** by holding each other responsible for our performance as a District and as individuals

Employee Signature: ► _____

Name: ► _____

Date: ► _____

Notice: Your signature acknowledges receipt of a copy of the AVUHSD Code of Ethics. Refusal to sign does not release you from your responsibility to abide by it.