

UCP Early Beginnings

Standards of Ethical Conduct

All instructional personnel and school administrators espouse the worth and dignities of every person by creating a culture of helping each student reach his or her optimum learning potential. An environment of compassionate community exists. Reporting of Ethical Misconduct is required by law and is the duty of professionals entrusted with the safety and welfare of students. Florida Statute section 39.203 and section 768.095 protect the person reporting ethical misconduct from reprisal by the individual reported or the employer if the report was made in good faith without malicious intent.

All employees are responsible for both the integrity and consequences of their own actions. The highest standards of honesty, integrity and fairness must be followed by each and every employee.

The following principles of professional conduct shall be followed:

1. Our school values the worth and dignity of every person, the pursuit of truth, devotion to excellence, acquisition of knowledge, and the nurture of democratic citizenship. Essential to the achievement of these standards are the freedom to learn and to teach and the guarantee of equal opportunity for all.
2. Our primary concern is the student and the development of the student's potential. Employees will therefore strive for professional growth and will seek to exercise the best professional judgment and integrity.
3. Concern for the student requires that our instructional personnel:
 - a. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.
 - b. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.
 - c. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.
 - d. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.
 - e. Shall not intentionally expose a student to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
 - f. Shall not intentionally violate or deny a student's legal rights.
 - g. Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination.
 - h. Shall not exploit a relationship with a student for personal gain or advantage.
 - i. Shall keep in confidence personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
4. Aware of the importance of maintaining the respect and confidence of colleagues, of students, of parents, and of the community, employees of our school must display the highest degree of ethical conduct. This commitment requires that our employees:
 - a. Shall maintain honesty in all professional dealings.
 - b. Shall not on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition if otherwise qualified, or social and family background deny to a colleague professional benefits or advantages or participation in any professional organization.

- c. Shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political or civil rights and responsibilities.
- d. Shall not engage in harassment or discriminatory conduct which unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance of professional or work responsibilities or with the orderly processes of education or which creates a hostile, intimidating, abusive, offensive, or oppressive environment; and, further, shall make reasonable effort to assure that each individual is protected from such harassment or discrimination.

Training Requirements

All staff, instructional personnel, educational support employees and administrators are required as a condition of employment to complete training on these standards of ethical conduct.

Reporting Misconduct by Instructional Personnel and Administrators

All employees, educational support employees, and administrators have an obligation to report misconduct by instructional personnel and school administrators, which affect the health, safety, or welfare of a student. Examples of misconduct include obscene language, drug and alcohol use, disparaging comments, prejudice or bigotry, sexual innuendo, cheating or testing violations, physical aggression, and accepting or offering favors.

Reports of misconduct of employees should be made to your school director/principal.

Maria Alva, Principal – (954) 584-7178 Ext.6-2225

Reports of misconduct committed by administrators should be made to the Chief Operating Officer of UCO of South Florida.

Tamika Lewis, Chief Operating Officer, UCO of South Florida – (954) 315-4099 Ext. 62223

Legally sufficient allegations of misconduct by Florida certified educators will be reported to the Office of Professional Practices Services. Policies and procedures for reporting misconduct by instructional personnel or school administrators which affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student are posted on the school's main bulletin board within the school and may be found on our website at <https://www.unitedcommunityoptionssfl.org/who-we-are/compliance>.

Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment or Neglect

All employees and agents have an affirmative duty to report all actual or suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect. Call 1-800-96-ABUSE or report online at <http://www.def.state.fl.us/abuse/report/>.

Signs of Physical Abuse - the child may have unexplained bruises, welts, cuts, or other injuries; broken bones; or burns. A child experiencing physical abuse may seem withdrawn or depressed, seem afraid to go home or may run away, shy away from physical contact, be aggressive, or wear inappropriate clothing to hide injuries.

Signs of Sexual Abuse - the child may have torn, stained or bloody underwear, trouble, walking or sitting, pain or itching genital area, or a sexually transmitted disease. A child experiencing sexual

abuse may have unusual knowledge of sex or act seductively, fear a particular person, seem withdrawn or depressed, gain or lose weight suddenly, shy away from physical contact, or run away from home.

Signs of Neglect - the child may have unattended medical needs, little or no supervision at home, poor hygiene, or appear underweight. A child experiencing neglect may be frequently tired or hungry, steal food, or appear overly needy for adult attention.

Patterns of Abuse: Serious abuse usually involves a combination of factors. While a single sign may not be significant, a pattern of physical or behavioral signs is a serious indicator and should be reported.

Information concerning registered sex offenders and predators in Florida may be obtained by visiting <http://www.fdle.state.fl.us> , the Florida Department of Law Enforcement Sexual Offenders database. Information may also be obtained by contacting the FDLE's toll free telephone number: 1-888-FL-PREDATOR (1-888-357-7332).

The school performs criminal-background checks on its employees and volunteers with unsupervised access to children, but cannot attest to the background of the various parents with whom their student may associate away from school.

Liability Protections

Any person, official, or institution participating in good faith in any act authorized or required by law, or reporting in good faith any instance of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the department of any law enforcement agency, shall be immune from any civil or criminal liability which might otherwise result by reason of such action.

768.095 An employer who discloses information about a former or current employee to a prospective employer of the former or current employee upon request of the prospective employer or of the former or current employee is immune from civil liability for such disclosure or its consequences unless it is shown by clear and convincing evidence that the information disclosed by the former or current employer was knowingly false or violated any civil right of the former or current employee protected under F.S. Chapter 760. (F.S.768.095)