

Standard Indicator 6.2: Professional Conduct

The leader models and establishes a culture in which a high degree of professionalism is practiced by all stakeholders.

Accomplished principals know that effective leadership emanates from their competence and their consistent, ethical behavior—not from their title alone. By modeling personal and professional ethics, accomplished principals establish trusting relationships with all stakeholders as they adhere to and advocate for the creation of policies, procedures, laws, and contracts. Personally and professionally, these principals operate legally, consistently, and fairly in their words and actions.

Accomplished principals exercise confidentiality with discretion, while encouraging others to do the same. These principals clearly communicate ethical expectations and ensure those expectations are aligned with the vision and mission of the learning community. These principals immediately address ethical challenges, particularly those that detract from teaching and learning, in a professional manner. They resolve conflicts in a way that communicates strong ethics while maintaining respect for all individuals. Accomplished principals know and consider the ethical expectations of the community, the ways in which they compete and converge, and the manner in which these competing expectations are resolved. Accomplished principals model adherence to norms and policies in their everyday interaction with students, staff, and parents. They also model and expect ethical behavior in all mediums of communication. For example, they navigate the fine line between personal rights and professional implications when members of the learning community use online social networks.

Adapted from NBCEL, *Accomplished Principal Standards*, 1st ed. (2010, pp. 61–63).

Key Elements of Leader Practice and Questions for Reflection and Planning Related to Standard Indicator 6.2

- Articulating and modeling to staff the expectations for employing words and actions that represent professionalism in all interactions with students and other stakeholders
 - *In what ways do I model professional behavior in my interactions with staff and the greater community? Are there areas of professionalism that I need to model better in my own words and actions? How might I gain feedback related to this area of my practice?*
- Coaching staff about the expectations and behaviors that represent professionalism in, and beyond, the immediate school setting
 - *How do I ensure staff are aware of the expected professional behavior at the school?*
 - *What topics/concerns related to social media and other community interactions should I address proactively through conversations and/or professional development opportunities? Are there policies in place to guide staff toward the expectations for conduct in this area?*

Core Proposition 6: Ensuring Professionalism

- Creating, in partnership with the staff, a culture and climate of professionalism where each member of the staff feels empowered and supported to take the initiative to challenge one another when unprofessional conduct is exhibited
 - *What is the current culture of professionalism at my school? How do I know what behaviors and structures are contributing positively to this culture and which are detracting from it?*
 - *What expectations of professionalism does the staff hold? Is it consistent with mine? How do I work with other key influencers within the staff to communicate and model these expectations?*
 - *How have I engaged the staff in creating a culture of professionalism? What level of ownership does the staff hold for creating and maintaining a professional culture and positive climate within the organization? Is there anything I can do differently to impact this in a positive way?*

- ***What concrete sources of evidence will I need to gather to demonstrate effective practice related to these Key Elements?***

Professional Learning to Advance This Leadership Practice

- Seeking resources and examples of professional conduct guidelines that have been implemented successfully in other organizations as the basis for creating or revising guidelines within the leader's school
- Examining research and frameworks that both identify and address the factors impacting a professional culture and climate within a school and selecting strategies to apply within the leader's context
- Reviewing protocols to work with staff members in collaboratively identifying, communicating, and monitoring expectations for professional behavior among colleagues within an organization
- Researching and applying protocols or processes for gathering evidence, providing feedback, and documenting progressive disciplinary steps to address unprofessional conduct

Core Proposition 6: Ensuring Professionalism

6.2 Professional Conduct: The leader models and establishes a culture in which a high degree of professionalism is practiced by all stakeholders.				
	Ineffective (1) At this level, the leader...	Developing (2) At this level, the leader...	Effective (3) At this level, the leader...	Distinguished (4) At this level, the leader does one or more of the following. The leader...
LEPG Rubric Performance-Level Descriptors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not act professionally or ethically during one or more instances. Does not communicate expectations for professionalism or ethical behavior to staff or others employed by the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts professionally and ethically. Communicates schoolwide expectations for professionalism and ethical behavior by staff or others employed by the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Models professionalism in his or her communications and actions. Establishes new staff onboarding processes that include expectations for professional behavior in the school. Monitors staff and others employed by the school (personally and/or through efforts of the school leadership team) to hold them accountable for inappropriate, unethical, or unprofessional behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds capacity of assistant principal(s), teacher leaders, and others on how to maintain a high degree of professionalism and ethical behavior. Creates a culture that empowers staff to hold one another accountable for professional behavior.
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader discusses a student's discipline issues with another parent. The leader indicates that professionalism expectations should be inherent to staff members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader reminds parents that she is unable to discuss another student with them in order to protect the student's privacy. The leader outlines expectations in the faculty handbook but does not review it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the leader observes two teachers discussing a student's home life in front of other students, the leader models appropriate behavior by changing the conversation for them and then privately reminding them of the expectations. The leader personally reviews expectations of professionalism with new staff, warning them of easy pitfalls they could avoid, such as e-mailing inappropriate comments about students, families, or other teachers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader has staff solve ethical dilemmas and then create a "dos and don'ts" of ethical behavior as it relates to discussing students. The leader has the leadership team conduct the ethical behavior training, allowing staff to take ownership of creating a culture of professionalism at their school.