

ST. LUCIA TEACHERS' UNION
CODE OF ETHICS

Preamble

The teacher as an individual has a number of responsibilities. One of these is the promotion of the esteem of the Teaching Profession in the eyes of the students and the public.

It must be understood, however, that the promotion of the profession does not mean building an elitist concept of the Teaching Profession; it means earning the respect and recognition of the community at large.

This respect and recognition will be earned as a result of the confidence which parents will place in teachers when they recognize the far reaching influence which the teachers' work has on the development of the society, and also on the significance which their work has for the community.

It is the teacher's personal commitment, love of children, strong sense of duty and identification with the interest of other workers which will (erase the outmoded concept of the teacher and) create and maintain a professional image.

The Code of Ethics of the St. Lucia Teachers' Union seeks to set standards for teachers in the St. Lucian society. It is intended to provide guidelines for the development of desirable conduct which will promote the dignity and integrity of the teacher and enhance the teacher's public image.

The term "TEACHER" as used in the Code of Ethics embraces all categories of teachers, including Principals.

Commitment to Students.

- (1) The teacher shall strive to the best of his/her ability to enhance the intellectual, social and moral growth of students at all times.
- (2) The teacher shall deal justly and considerately with each student regardless of his/her physical, mental or emotional characteristics.
- (3) The teacher shall deal justly and considerately with each student regardless of his/her sex, race, nationality, social or economic status, political or religious affiliation.
- (4) The teacher shall not exploit or violate any relationship between students and teacher through any illicit or immoral activity.

- (5) The teacher shall not divulge, except through professional channels, where it will be to the benefit of the student, any information of a personal or domestic nature concerning students.
- (6) The teacher shall not act in any manner as might lead his or her students into breaches of the law or unaccepted moral or social modes of behaviour.
- (7) The teacher shall refrain from commenting unprofessionally about a student or his/her home.
- (8) The teacher shall speak and act in a respectful and dignified manner with students at all times.
- (9) The teacher shall take all reasonable precautions to protect the safety, dignity and welfare of students.
- (10) The teacher shall evoke/ instill in students a sense of self-worth, patriotism and national pride.
- (11) The teacher shall not subject students to any form of verbal mental or physical torture or abuse.
- (12) The teacher shall never attempt to undermine the confidence of other teachers in students, students in teachers, or students in other students.
- (13) The teacher shall strive constantly to improve learning facilities and the classroom environment of students.
- (14) The teachers' behaviour shall always reflect that he/she is aware that he/she is considered an example to his/her students.
- (15) The teacher shall impress upon his students the value of punctuality and regularity and be himself/herself always punctual and regular for the performance of his duties.

Relation to Colleagues

- (1) The teacher shall extend due respect to his colleagues and be willing to work with them professionally, regardless of age, sex, nationality, ethnic origin, status, religious or political affiliation, qualification or personal differences.
- (2) The teacher shall not undermine the position, status or authority of any colleague.
- (3) The teacher shall be loyal to his colleagues, and shall stand by decisions mutually or collectively agreed upon by the staff.

- (4) The teacher shall not make defamatory remarks concerning another teacher.
- (5) The teacher shall never verbally or physically abuse another colleague more so in the course of duty.
- (6) The teacher shall not accept a post which becomes available as a result of official action that is being contested by the Union, except with the approval of the Union.
- (7) The teacher shall refer to the Union disputes with colleagues arising from his/her work or professional activities if they cannot be resolved satisfactorily.
- (8) The teacher shall cooperate with other teachers in matters accepted as being in the best interest of students and the school.
- (9) The teacher must recognize the authority of school administrators and when necessary seek to influence administrative policies and practices through acceptable channels.
- (10) The teacher – administrator respect staff members and provides opportunities for them to participate in the decision-making process of the school.
- (11) The teacher shall not submit written report about other teachers without their knowledge and with the intention of jeopardizing the teachers' character, job or chances of promotion.
- (12) The teacher in an administrative or supervisory capacity, when dealing with complaints about teachers, shall retain an unbiased position, investigate the matter fully and act in accordance with the principles of natural justice and equity.
- (13) The teacher shall respect the decision of his colleagues in committees on which he has served to submit reports to higher authorities even though he may be opposed to their decisions. He shall, however, retain the right to make counter proposals.
- (14) The teacher, as administrator, shall provide reasonable facilities for helping to maintain and improve the teaching/learning conditions
- (15) The teacher shall render to other members of staff or the profession when they are unjustly accused or mistreated.

Commitment to the Profession

- (1) The teacher shall improve himself professionally through continual study, research and reading literature on developments in his field.
- (2) The teacher shall participate in a responsible manner in the development and implementation of policies affecting education.
- (3) The teacher shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession in the exercise of their professional rights and responsibilities.
- (4) The teacher shall not behave in a way that brings the teaching profession into disrepute.
- (5) The teacher shall honour his responsibility to his students and refrain from any illicit or inappropriate relationships.
- (6) The teacher shall speak and act in such a manner as to be a worthy role model for his students.
- (7) The teacher shall dress in a manner consistent with the dignity and honour of the profession, not in a manner to distract attention from the teaching/learning process.
- (8) The teacher shall not denigrate the teaching profession so that able persons lose desire to enter it.
- (9) The teacher shall be unselfish in response to colleagues who seek professional assistance.
- (10) The teacher shall not allow prejudice to influence his evaluation of the work of other teachers.
- (11) The teacher shall maintain his/her integrity when dissenting by basing his/her public criticism of education on valid assumptions as established by careful evaluation of facts and hypothesis.
- (12) The teacher shall allow no gratuities or gifts to influence his/her judgment in the exercise of his/her professional duties.
- (13) The teacher shall not betray trust under which confidential information is exchanged.
- (14) The teacher shall maintain high standards of professional competence and make appropriate use of time granted for professional purposes.

- (15) The teachers shall not be engaged in actions which disrupt the order, discipline or work of the institution in which he/she is employed or any other institution to which he/she has access except for industrial action agreed upon by the UNION.

Commitment to the SLTU

- (1) The teacher shall accept service in the SLTU as a responsibility of membership and shall not recognize any other group as the official voice of the teachers.
- (2) The teacher shall adhere to the UNION's policy and the decisions of its governing bodies and must seek to change these only through THE UNION's constitutional channels.
- (3) The teacher shall accept as a professional obligation personal participation and support in the activities of The UNION.
- (4) The teacher wishing to criticize the UNION shall do so using the structures specially provided for by the UNION for this purpose.
- (5) No group of teachers or individual teachers purporting to speak on behalf of such group shall make representation to government, its members or officials or any other authority on matters affecting teachers generally or shall advocate a change in educational policy without the knowledge and consent of The UNION.
- (6) The teacher shall recognize that a Professional Organisation such as this, must accept responsibility for the conduct of its members and understand that his/her own conduct may be regarded as representative.

Commitment to the Community

- (1) The teacher shall help in the upliftment of the cultural and social consciousness of the community as his/her immediate concern since the children under his/her care and guidance are part of the community.
- (2) The teacher shall develop positive attributes in his/her pupils by exposing them to situations which would enable them to exercise fidelity in all forms of duty and service which demand courage, self denial, tolerance, social justice and a proper sense of values.
- (3) The teacher shall instill in his/her students, as well as the community respect for workers at all levels of society.
- (4) The teacher shall acknowledge the right and responsibility of the public to participate in the formulation of educational policy.

- (5) The teacher shall assume full political and citizenship responsibility, but refrain from exploiting the institution privileges of his/her professional position to promote political candidates or partisan activities.
- (6) The teacher shall protect the educational programme against undesirable infringement.

CONCLUSION

A person who accepts a teaching position willingly places himself and his conduct in the arena of public attention. What may be acceptable in other walks of life takes on an entirely different aspect when engaged in by the teacher.

A teacher accepts a special place within the community.

A teacher's influence and effect on students and the community extends beyond the classroom and the school.

A teacher is responsible for the well being of all students.

A teacher is all of these and more.