

Code of Conduct

All who work at Roy & Dora Whitman Academy are committed to the safety and protection of all children. The Code of Conduct applies to all faculty, staff, employees, volunteers, students, and contractors who represent the school and interact with young people in both a direct and/or unsupervised capacity.

Roy & Dora Whitman Academy (RDWA) is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). In order to maintain this membership, all full- and part-time personnel and board members must be followers of Christ and acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior. In selecting professional personnel, individuals will be hired who will endeavor to integrate Biblical values into their work, and who consider their work at Roy & Dora Whitman Academy a ministry. These individuals should be positive Christian role models as they seek to help students learn to know God, the world around them, and to develop life-long skills and a Biblical worldview for living as Christians in a complex world. All employees should be accepting of all students regardless of their ethnic, linguistic, gender, or religious backgrounds, physical or mental disabilities, or other differences.

The public and private conduct of faculty, staff, employees, students and volunteers acting on behalf of R&DWA can inspire and motivate those with whom they interact or can cause great harm if inappropriate. All employees must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work.

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The highest standards of ethics are to be maintained by school staff and board members in working with students, their families, and colleagues. These standards include integrity, honesty, fairness, confidentiality, abstinence from abusive behavior, abstinence from substance abuse, and respect for individuals. Personnel are expected to carry out their responsibilities with competence and professionalism, and to abide by the established policies and procedures of the school.

UNITY OF FAITH

All staff members are expected to sign and support the Statement of Faith. When presenting faith positions in a classroom or conversational context beyond the scope of this statement, it should be done in such a manner that students and colleagues are aware that there is diversity in some areas of biblical interpretation; students should also be made aware of what is a personal belief. Personal convictions of staff and students are to be respected. Emphasis is to be placed on the unity in the Faith.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Based upon the teaching of the Bible that marriage between husband and wife is a sacred institution, and sexual conduct is to be within the context of marriage alone, RDWA believes the Bible requires abstinence from other sexual activity. Personnel are expected to abstain from premarital, extra-marital, and homosexual forms of sexual conduct. Personnel are also expected to abstain from any form of harassment, including sexual harassment.

Employees and volunteers should be aware of their own and other persons' vulnerability, especially when working alone with children and be particularly aware that they are responsible for maintaining physical, emotional and sexual boundaries in such interactions. All employees and volunteers must avoid any covert or overt sexual behaviors with those for whom they have responsibility. This includes seductive speech or gestures as well as physical contact that exploits abuses or harasses. It is the responsibility of all adults on campus to provide safe environments for children at all times.

Physical contact with children can be misconstrued both by the recipient and by those who observe it, and should occur only when completely nonsexual or otherwise appropriate, and never in private. One-on-one meetings with a child or young person are best held in a public area; in a room where the interaction can be (or is being) observed; or in a room with the door left open, and another staff member or supervisor is notified about the meeting.

The R&DWA administration must intervene when there is evidence of, or there is reasonable case to suspect, that children are being abused in any way. Suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the appropriate school offices as described in the Child Protection Policy of the school.

Adults should never buy alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, videos, or reading material that is inappropriate and give it to young people; this includes providing information or suggestions to students to access inappropriate websites. Staff members and volunteers should not accept gifts from, or give gifts to children without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.

Communication with children is governed by the key safety concept of transparency. The following steps will reduce the risk of private or otherwise inappropriate communication between R&DWA parents, administration, teachers, personnel, volunteers and minors:

- Communication between R&DWA employees (including volunteers) and minors that is outside the role of the professional or volunteer relationship (teacher, coach, host, etc.) is prohibited.
- Where possible, email exchanges between a minor and a person acting on behalf of the school are to be made using a school email address.
- Electronic communication that takes place over a school network or platform may be subject to periodic monitoring.
- Faculty, staff and volunteers who use any form of online communications including social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and text messaging with minors may only do so for activities involving school business.

Acknowledgement of Code of Conduct for Signature

I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this Code of Conduct as a condition of my providing services to the children in R&DWA programs.

I will:

- Treat everyone with respect, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity and consideration.
- Never be alone with children and/or youth at school activities without another adult being notified.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with children and/or youth.
- Maintain appropriate physical boundaries at all times and touch children- when necessary- only in ways that are appropriate, public and non-sexual.
- Comply with the mandatory reporting regulations of R&DWA in accordance with the R&DWA policy to report suspected child abuse.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth.

I will not:

- Touch or speak to a child and/or youth in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Inflict any physical or emotional abuse such as striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, humiliating, ridiculing, threatening or degrading children and/or youth.
- Smoke or use tobacco products or possess, or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time while working with children and/or youth.
- Give a child who is not my own a ride home alone or without permission from parents.
- Accept gifts from or give gifts to children or youth without the knowledge of their parents or guardians.
- Engage in private communications with children via text messaging, email, Facebook, twitter or similar forms or electronic or social media except for activities strictly involving school business.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and/or youth or R&DWA community members.

I understand that a person working with and /or providing services to children and youth under the auspices of R&DWA, I am subject to a criminal history background check. My signature confirms that I read this Code of Conduct and that a person working with children and youth I agree to follow these standards. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from R&DWA.

Name: _____

Signature and Date: _____

Behavior policies that will protect teachers from false allegations:

- ❖ Avoid situations in which you are alone with a child. This includes not transporting youngsters alone in your car. When it is necessary to speak privately with a child, find a space out of earshot, but within sight of others for your conference.
- ❖ The privacy of children in situations such as toileting, showering and changing clothes should be respected. When it is necessary to supervise children in these situations, at least two adults should be present and intrude only to the extent that the health and safety of the children require. Adult volunteers should preserve their own privacy in these situations also.
- ❖ Avoid touching areas that are normally covered by swimming suits; breasts, buttocks and groin.
- ❖ When hugging is appropriate, hug from the side over the shoulders, not from the front.
- ❖ Sexual jokes, comments of a sexual nature, kissing, sensual messages or sexual gestures are not appropriate behavior for an adult staff member or volunteer.
- ❖ When volunteering to supervise overnight activities, adults should not share sleeping quarters with children other than their own.
- ❖ Revealing personal information about one's sex life by an adult volunteer or staff member is never appropriate.
- ❖ Do not use corporal punishment in any form.

It is the adult's responsibility to set and respect boundaries. When a child attempts to involve an adult in inappropriate behavior, the adult must reject the overture.