

OF INTEREST

Forty teachers from across the state will be chosen to participate in DISCOVERIES: AN ACADEMY FOR TEACHERS OF THE GIFTED. The session will run from July 8-19, 2002. The focus will be on math and science this year. For more information and an application, contact Dr. Higdon, MTSU, 615-898-2322.

GIVING TEACHERS A BREAK

President Bush's budget proposal calling for a special tax break for teachers has just become law. The new law allows teachers to claim an above-the-line deduction on their 2002 Federal tax returns when they spend their own money on classroom materials.

Personal payments for continuing education courses also qualify. The deduction applies to up to \$400 of such expenses. This initiative recognizes in a small way the personal sacrifice most teachers make for their students.

LICENSURE WEB SITE

The Tennessee Department of Education has a new addition to its Web site that will allow public access for Tennessee teachers. The site provides the type of license held by a teacher, the areas that the teachers is endorsed to teach, and the issue and expiration date of the license. Only information that is legally accessible to the public is included. This information is available through the department's home page at www.state.tn.us/education or at www.k-12.state.tn.us/tcertinf for direct address.

Information on the numbers of teachers on waiver or permit, by school system and by school, is available on the department's home page at www.state.tn.us/education under "Report Card 2001."

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NO PRIVACY VIOLATION

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled unanimously in February that students may grade each other's work in class without violating federal privacy law.

The 9-0 ruling upheld the common schoolroom practice of having students swap homework, quizzes or other schoolwork and then correct one another's work as the teacher goes over it aloud. Sometimes the teacher has students call out the results, and the teacher records them.

"Correcting a classmate's work can be as much a part of the assignment as taking the test itself," Justice Anthony Kennedy wrote for the court.

The case stemmed from an Oklahoma mother's challenge to the practice after her learning disabled son was ridiculed in class over his test scores. Kristja Falvo claimed the practice is embarrassing and was a violation of a federal law protecting the privacy of student education records, such as transcripts.

Detroit Free Press "Schoolwork: Students grading one another's work is not privacy violation," Feb 20, 2002

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

Have you ever thought about "character"? Sadly, the issue of personal character doesn't come up too often in public discourse. However, it should. There is nothing more important in a life of a school teacher, or for that matter, any public person, than character. It's been said that "character is who you are when no one is looking." Well, that is true, but there are other principles and concepts that can be used to define character, too. Below are some things for you to think about. Your role as a teacher and/or leader in a school system is a reflection of your character and the influence of life and heart.

Use the statement that follows to evaluate and determine your CQ ("character quotient").

Character Driven People:

1. Do what is right (all the time).
2. Are commitment driven.
3. Control their own attitude.
4. Create momentum (in their home, classroom, etc.)
5. Persevere when problems arise.
6. Are steady and dependable.
7. Are leaders. How did you do?

Let me encourage you to develop your character, not by the definition of popular culture, but by "true north" principles that will stand the test of time. God bless you in your quest for authentic and genuine character.

Grace To You, Dr. Bobby Tucker

The Portsmouth Declaration:

A Call for Intellectual and Moral Excellence in Schooling

If we do not turn the hearts of children toward knowledge and character, we will lose their gifts and undermine their idealism....
George W. Bush, January 20, 2001

On January 25-26, 2001 the Link Institute convened a group of scholars to discuss a path-breaking article by Dartmouth College Professor James Bernard Murphy, entitled "Good Students, Good Persons: Intellectual Virtue as the Academic and Moral Aim of Education." Two days of discussions yielded the "Portsmouth Declaration":

American schools have lost their way. In the past thirty years our schools have been asked, and at times compelled by state mandates, to pursue a wide range of non-academic activities and a broad spectrum of ideological agendas. Whether teaching about "safe sex" or multiculturalism, teen parenting or diverse lifestyles, the numerous extraneous demands placed on our nation's schools have taken them off course.

It is time to recall that the primary purpose of schooling is the cultivation of good students, and in and through that process, the development of good persons. We call upon parents, teachers, administrators, and policy makers to recognize that while some schools must alleviate the physical hunger of the children they serve, *all* schools must alleviate the intellectual hunger of students entrusted to their care. While some schools require security systems and teams of counselors, *all* schools must create an ethos of civility that promotes security and fosters learning.

The American founders considered the twin goals of education to be "the diffusion of knowledge" and "the cultivation of virtue." In the past fifteen years we have, fortunately, seen the rise of parallel education reform movements. One emphasizes rich "content" or knowledge in the curriculum, and another emphasizes character education, or the promotion of virtue. As educators and scholars who have supported both those goals, we recognize that now the two must be as one - inseparable and indivisible. For the successful acquisition of knowl-

edge and skills cannot be divorced from character. Motivation, a disposition of character, is essential. Good students do not simply master certain bodies of knowledge and employ critical thinking skills. They hunger to *know* and seek the truth in those pursuits. The good student strives not for easy answers, but for genuine understanding, persevering in the face of obstacles. The good student wishes not just to "get it done," but to "get it right"; not simply to "get ahead," but to "get the most out of it."

We therefore call upon all educators to place new focus on the intellectual virtues, those traits that motivate our students to care about their work and do it well. While teaching a rigorous academic program, all educators should teach children to love the truth and therefore to be diligent and honest in their work; to be accurate, precise, and thorough in their presentation; to persevere in difficult tasks; to consider both sides of an issue; to be fair to opposing views; to be intellectually courageous in pursuit of truth; and to be humble about assessing what they know in the face of the vast amount they do not know.

We call on those in the field of character education to direct more thought and energy toward an understanding of intellectual virtue, and an understanding of which moral virtues most directly support the intellectual virtues. For the intellectual virtues are a subset of the moral virtues. Philosophers have begun this task and historian Diane Ravitch reminds us that "schools cannot be successful unless they teach children the importance of honesty, personal responsibility, intellectual curiosity, industry, kindness, empathy and courage." Those virtues contribute directly to quality academic work, and to an ethos of civility much needed in our schools.

If we reclaim for our nation's schools the goal of intellectual virtue - which is fundamentally about truth-seeking - we will reap the following rewards:

- ◆ " In the teaching of American history we will reclaim an honest and inclusive telling of our past. We will repudiate "presentism," and discredit the dishonest and destructive "Hate-Our-History" movement.
- ◆ " In the teaching of literature we will

help students recognize literary quality: accurate language, felicitous imagery, delightful cadence, rhythm, and wit. We will not debase literature by redefining it as a tool for gender, racial, ethnic or social activism.

- ◆ " In the teaching of math we will restore concern for *mathematics* as a discipline, for its rigor, precision, accuracy, logic, and universality. We will not be misled by those who believe calculators, guess-work, reflective essays, and unique "cognitive styles" should be emphasized over content, practice, and mastery of fundamentals.
- ◆ " In the teaching of science we will restore a concern for the importance of systematic inquiry grounded in a solid knowledge base and premised on accurate and careful observational skills. We will reject a post-modernist view of science that questions the objectivity of observations and the truth of scientific knowledge.

With a strong national commitment to cultivating intellectual and moral virtue, we can look forward to the day when U. S. test scores will rise to the summit of industrialized nations rather than languishing at the bottom. We can hope for the day when metal detectors at the school door will be unnecessary. We can anticipate a time when foul language will be replaced by civil discourse, and when earnest self-discipline will replace baseless self-esteem.

If we pursue the intellectual virtues, we will advance an initiative that unites the twin concerns of content and character in the classroom. For to be a good student, one who is conscientious in pursuit of the truth and diligent in its acquisition, is in large measure to be a good person. And being a good person, one who is respectful of his peers, responsible in his actions, helpful to others, and committed to the community of which he is a part, is in large measure what it takes to be a good student.

For more information
visit www.linkinstitute.org

DO YOU THINK AS A PROFESSIONAL?

You belong to the Professional Educators of Tennessee, but do you think as a professional? Test yourself, by completing the following statements with the appropriate response.

1. To be recognized as a Professional educator requires you to have:
 - a) a continuing desire for personal growth.
 - b) completed your professional development.
 - c) completed (terminal degree) your education.
 - d) met all federal, state and local educational requirements.

2. When you see the administration about to do something foolish, you should:
 - a) quietly wait for the right time to laugh.
 - b) publicly demand that they change direction.
 - c) tell others what is wrong and wait to be proven right.
 - d) discuss privately with the administration the difficulties with the current direction.

3. When you see a fellow teacher take the school's equipment for personal use, you should:
 - a) deny that either of you were there.
 - b) go buy a replacement before anyone notices.
 - c) check the hall to ensure his not being caught.
 - d) tell him that what he is doing is wrong, and you won't lie for him.

4. You see two teachers in an escalating conflict over the administration's inconsistent enforcement of policy. You should:
 - a) keep score, so you know who's winning.
 - b) add fuel to the fire - goad them into a fight.
 - c) talk privately to the administration about how to avoid the blow-up.
 - d) wait until it blows up - so the administration will finally get the message.

5. You are angered by something your supervisor said to you. You should:
 - a) go talk to him/her.
 - b) ignore it and go back to work.
 - c) get somebody to talk to him/her.
 - d) tell everyone what that _____ said.

6. The Board of Education is making assignment changes again, to:
 - a) harm the children.
 - b) make more work for me.
 - c) punish me for doing a good job.
 - d) improve education in the community.

7. The football coach tells you, "Even if I don't have a degree, I sure can make these boys play", you should:
 - a) forget you ever heard it.
 - b) get the principle to check-up on him.
 - c) ask him what he meant by the remark.
 - d) tell everyone "Coach" doesn't have a degree.

If you scored all 7 correct - we stand in awe of your professionalism - You earned an A.
If you scored 5 or 6 correct - you are certainly above average - You earned a B.
If you scored 3 or 4 correct - you are average, but can improve - You earned a C.
If you scored less than 3 correct - you are below standard - You earned an F.

continued on next page,

Before we look at why these are the correct answers we must try to understand what it means to be a professional. First, there are a number of definitions:

pro-fes-sion-al *noun*

1. **member of profession:** somebody whose occupation requires extensive education or specialized training
2. **somebody doing something as a paid job:** somebody who is engaged in an occupation as a paid job rather than as a hobby
3. **somebody very competent:** somebody who shows a high degree of skill or competence
4. **teacher at sports club:** an expert player of a sport who is employed by a golf or other sports club to teach its members

By definition we know, "Those who are paid for their services are professionals". Accordingly, we are all professionals. But, we in PET, believe that being professional means much more than how we are paid. We believe that we represent members who demonstrate a high level of competence an occupation requiring extensive education.

We then look at what the Professional Educators of Tennessee should do to fulfill the responsibilities of a professional association. The first place to look is the definition of a professional association:

pro-fes-sion-al as-so-ci-a-tion *noun*

society of professionals: a society of members of a profession that regulates entry to, and sets and maintains standards for, the profession

A professional association should provide a set of standards for the profession it represents. By definition **professional standards** are: the skill, competence, or character expected of a member of a highly trained profession. This month we are introducing those standards: the Professional Educators of Tennessee "Code of Ethics" (found at the end of this article). It has been developed by your elected Board of Directors over the last few years after the review of numerous similar documents.

The real value of a "Code of Ethics" is not in its writing but in its use. *"The professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance ..."*¹ Therefore, let's go back and take a look at the quiz answers in light of the "Code of Ethics".

ANSWERS: 1, a); 2, d); 3, d); 4, c); 5, a); 6, d); 7, c)

1. a) A true professional would not be satisfied remaining stagnant at any level, recognizing that there is always opportunity to improve. *"The professional educator continues professional growth."*^A
2. d) A professional would not desire the humiliation of another individual or allow others to make mistakes just to make themselves look good. A professional would choose to build a cooperative relationship as opposed to an adversarial one. *"The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession."*^A
3. d) A professional recognizes that every individual is responsible for his/her own action. You can not change what the person has done, but must maintain your own reputation. *"The professional educator endeavors to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law and demonstrating personal integrity."*^A

¹ Quoted from the Professional Educators of Tennessee - **Code of Ethics**

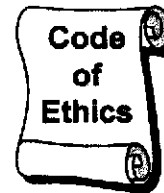
4. c) A professional would recognize the amount of time and energy this takes away from the classroom (the children) and would choose to eliminate the cause of the friction. Continuing strife creates an environment that is a hindrance to children's learning. Going to the administration and offering a solution to the problem is a way to develop a cooperative relationship. *"The professional educator makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety."*
*"we believe all educators are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, ..."*¹

5. a) As a professional you know that you are responsible for your actions and reactions. If your reaction is one that affects your ability to perform your job, you must choose what your response will be to resolve the problem. *"The professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence."*¹

6. d) If you answered b) or c), please get over your paranoia! Generally people who strive for underpaid, thankless public service jobs do so to make the world better (admittedly there are exceptions). People who serve on the Board of Education are there to improve education in the community. *"The professional educator recognizes that quality education is the common goal of the public, boards of education and educators, and that a cooperative effort is essential among these groups to attain that goal."*¹

7. c) It is important to establish what the facts are first. *"The professional educator does not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system."*¹ If you answered b), you may be rushing the case, but if you find that the coach does not have a degree, you do have a responsibility to take that information to the administration. *"The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless required by law."*¹

¹ Quoted from the Professional Educators of Tennessee - **Code of Ethics**



PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS OF TENNESSEE

PRINCIPLE I:

Ethical Conduct Toward Students

The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students character qualities that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices. We strongly affirm parents as the primary moral educators of their children. Nevertheless, we believe all educators are obligated to help foster civic virtues such as integrity, diligence, responsibility, cooperation, loyalty, fidelity and respect—for the law, for human life, for others, and for self.

The professional educator, in accepting their position of public trust, measures success not only by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her personal potential, but also as a citizen of the greater community of the republic.

1. The professional educator deals considerately and justly with each student and seeks to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy.
2. The professional educator does not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
3. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning students, unless required by law.
4. The professional educator makes a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
5. The professional educator endeavors to present facts without distortion, bias or personal prejudice.

PRINCIPLE II:

Ethical Conduct Toward Practices and Performance

The professional educator assumes responsibility and accountability for his or her performance and continually strives to demonstrate competence.

The professional educator endeavors to maintain the dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law and demonstrating personal integrity.

1. The professional educator applies for, accepts, or assigns a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications and adheres to the terms of a contract or appointment.
2. The professional educator maintains sound mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of any professional assignment.
3. The professional educator continues professional growth.

continued on next page

4. The professional educator complies with written local school policies and applicable laws and regulations.
5. The professional educator does not intentionally misrepresent official policies of the school or educational organizations and clearly distinguishes those views from ones own personal opinions.
6. The professional educator honestly accounts for all funds committed to ones charge.
7. The professional educator does not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

PRINCIPLE III:

Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues

The professional educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, accords just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

1. The professional educator does not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless required by law.
2. The professional educator does not willfully make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
3. The professional educator does not interfere with a colleague's freedom of choice and works to ~~eliminate coercion~~ that forces educators to support actions and ideologies that violate individual professional integrity.

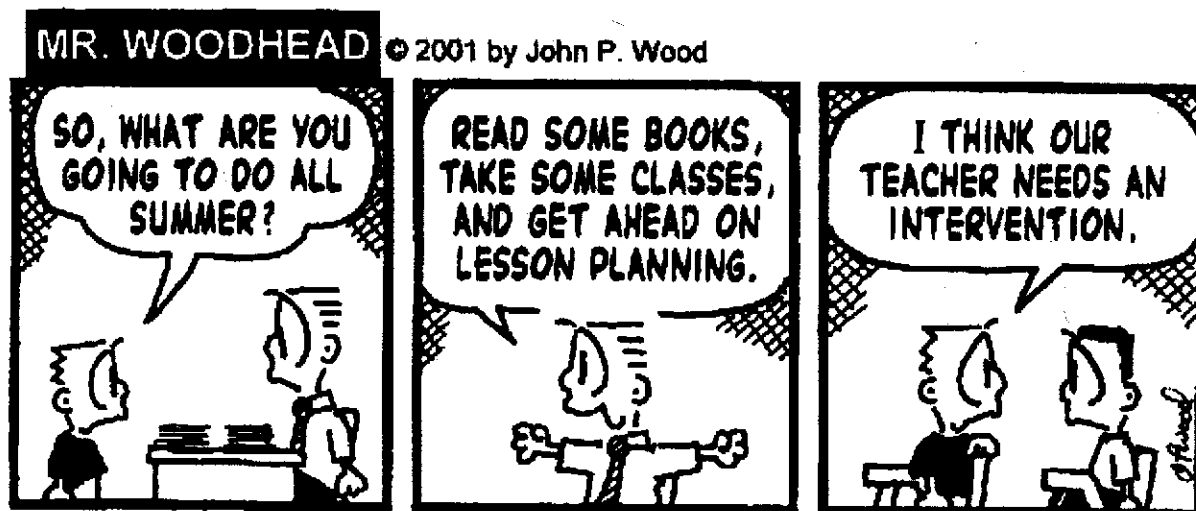
PRINCIPLE IV:

Ethical Conduct Toward Parents and Community

The professional educator pledges to protect public sovereignty over public education and private control of private education.

The professional educator recognizes that quality education is the common goal of the public, boards of education and educators, and that a cooperative effort is essential among these groups to attain that goal.

1. The professional educator makes concerted efforts to communicate to parents all information that should be revealed in the interest of the student.
2. The professional educator endeavors to understand and respect the values and traditions of the diverse cultures represented in the community and in his or her classroom.
3. The professional educator manifests a positive and active role in school/community relations. ☺



New Teachers Face NCATE Litmus Test on Diversity—

Educators must exhibit “correct” attitudes toward race and lifestyles

By Robert Holland



Robert Holland

Multicultural Education (NAME).

Donna Gollnick unveiled new standards for schools, colleges, and departments of education promulgated by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). That Gollnick is both NAME president and senior vice president of NCATE suggests the close relationship the two organizations have developed.

Gollnick pointed out how multicultural diversity will be a factor in education schools implementing four of the six NCATE standards, while a fifth standard is entirely about diversity.

For instance, Standard One, which has to do with the “knowledge, skills, and dispositions” of teacher candidates, will have a “performance-based” evaluation to determine if would-be teachers exhibit what the examiners deem to be racist or sexist attitudes unacceptable to NCATE.

On Standard Two, dealing with field experiences, NCATE will insist this work be done “in diverse settings.” In Standard Five, faculty will be expected to “integrate diversity in their own teaching” by way of modeling what NCATE deems “best practices.”

Overall, the emphasis on diversity is so single-minded as to suggest intellectual conformity rather than diversity of thought.

Limiting Choice

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), based at Teachers College, Columbia University and funded by the Carnegie Foundation, wants

The tight link between political advocacy of multicultural diversity and accreditation of the higher education institutions that train the nation's K-12 teachers was on display during the recent annual convention of the National Association for

to see all teachers compelled to graduate from education schools that are NCATE-accredited. Such a requirement would severely limit choice in education for parents and teachers alike. The National Education Association [NEA], the nation's largest teacher union, was one of NCATE's founders and remains influential in its affairs.

At a NAME institute just before the start of a convention attended by 1,000 educators from all fifty states, Gollnick stressed repeatedly how diversity is the single yardstick NCATE will use above all to measure the work of teacher trainers.

What does NCATE mean by diversity? Here is its official definition, as stated in the glossary of its Professional Standards:

“Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientation, and geographical area.”

Looking for Diversity

Gollnick explained NCATE would look for diversity not only in faculty numbers but also in how professors teach their classes. NCATE seeks “performance-based assessment” so that, through videos or portfolios of work, teachers at all levels will have to show they are “teaching multiculturally.”

The NCATE standards repeatedly emphasize the necessity for teacher trainers and future teachers to exhibit the correct “dispositions” with regard to diversity. What does that mean? Another presenter, G. Pritchey Smith, an education professor at the University of North Florida, made the point more explicitly.

Lamenting the fact that 80 percent of teacher-education students are white, Smith said, “Many do not have the requisite attitudes and lifestyle diversity. I have yet to be convinced that a student who is racist can teach.” “We should be more aggressive,” he concluded. “We should hire people who are anti-racists and encourage them to create a new world order. Social justice is the way to

close the achievement gap. This should be the central ‘disposition.’”

Smith commended long lists of books and other curricular materials to teach teachers to value the kinds of diversity valued by NCATE and NAME. Among the recommended works were ones sympathetic to black English or Ebonics, the special needs of gay and lesbian students, and bilingual education to help children retain their non-English first language.

Elevating Fact over Feeling

While saying much about the differences known as diversity, the new NCATE standards have little to say about raising student achievement. That could be because the view of NCATE accreditors pretty much corresponds with the dominant view of the NAME conference: standardized tests are unfair impediments to diversity.

For example, keynote speaker Peggy McIntosh, associate director of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, criticized tests for a “get-it-right syndrome” that elevates fact over feeling.

“African-Americans learn holistically,” elaborated Smith. “They are not so concerned about specific little details. Most white kids have respect for validated knowledge. In other cultures, it has to feel like the truth.”

So, if the professional multiculturalists have their way, there can never be meaningful intellectual standards tied to a common core curriculum. There can only be standards for celebrating and accentuating cultural differences. If NCATE and NAME get their way, this is how all future teachers will teach. **EM**

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