Using Real-world Ethical Dilemmas aligned to
Using the Model Code of Ethics for Educators

to Prepare Preservice Educators for
Ethical Decision Making

CAEPCOn
3-24-16
Today’s Audience?
Question #1

How many ethical violations does your state review each month?

a) 0-25  
b) 25-50  
c) 50-100  
d) 100-150  
e) Over 150
Question #2

Does your organization/institution/state instruct educators or educator candidates in the state’s code of ethics (conduct)?

a) Yes
b) No
Today’s Objectives:

Toward the aim of ensuring preservice candidates are ethical professionals in the profession of education:

• Understand the need and uses of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE)

• Increase their knowledge of content, strategies, and various models for embedding instruction in ethics in the pre-service curriculum

• Apply new ethical understandings to practice
A dilemma to ponder...

Mr. Smith is a 23 year-old high school English teacher and volleyball coach who has just finished his first year as a certified educator at Local High School.

In July of his summer break, he stops by his favorite coffee shop to enjoy a cup of fresh-brewed Sumatra. He runs into one of his former student-athletes, Julie, who is 19 years old and is preparing to enter college in the fall.

They end up talking for several hours, and decide to meet the following day at the same coffee shop. They meet several more times that week, and mutually decide to commence a romantic dating relationship.
NASDTEC’S VISION:
NASDTEC believes that all students should have educators who are held to high standards.

NASDTEC’S MISSION:
NASDTEC is dedicated to providing leadership and support to those responsible for the preparation, certification/licensure, ethical and professional practice, and continuing professional development of educators.
Purpose of the Model Code of Ethics (MCEE)

The purpose of the Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE) is to serve as a shared ethical guide for future and current educators faced with the complexities of P-12 education. The code establishes principles for ethical best practice, mindfulness, self-reflection and decision-making, setting the groundwork for self-regulation and self-accountability. The establishment of this professional code of ethics by educators for educators honors the public trust and upholds the dignity of the profession.
The MCEE is rooted in the solid history of NASDTEC

1928  First conference on licensure
1960s NASDTEC formed the Revocation Committee, which became the Clearinghouse
1996  First Professional Practices Institute
2013  NASDTEC committee targets need for model code
2014  Organizational partners convened in D.C.
2014  Task Force selected and convened
2015  Model Code adopted
MCEE NCAEE Communication Partners:
- American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education
- American Federation of Teachers
- Association of Teacher Educators
- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- Educational Testing Service
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Education Association
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- National Network of State Teachers Of the Year
- University of Phoenix
The MCEE Task Force

- 10 classroom teachers
- 1 paraprofessional
- 3 principals
- 2 district superintendents
- 4 representatives of state agencies
- States: TX, FL, NC, VT, IN, MD, AZ, NV, MN, VA, IL, LA, CA, IA, OR, OH, GA, CT
Difference Between a Code of Conduct and a Code of Ethics

Code of Conduct

Code of Ethics
MCEE 5 Key Principles

1. Responsibility to the Profession

The professional educator is aware that trust in the profession depends upon a level of professional conduct and responsibility that may be higher than required by law. This entails holding one and other educators to the same ethical standards.
MCEE 5 Key Principles

2. Responsibility for Professional Competence

The professional educator is committed to the highest levels of professional and ethical practice, including demonstration of the knowledge, skills and dispositions required for professional competence.
MCEE 5 Key Principles

3. Responsibility to Students

The professional educator has a primary obligation to treat students with dignity and respect. The professional educator promotes the health, safety and well being of students by establishing and maintaining appropriate verbal, physical, emotional and social boundaries.
MCEE 5 Key Principles

4. Responsibility to the School Community

The professional educator promotes positive relationships and effective interactions, with members of the school community, while maintaining professional boundaries.
MCEE 5 Key Principles

5. Responsible and Ethical use of Technology

The professional educator considers the impact of consuming, creating, distributing and communicating information through all technologies. The ethical educator is vigilant to ensure appropriate boundaries of time, place and role are maintained when using electronic communication.
A dilemma to ponder...

Mr. Smith is a 23 year-old high school English teacher and volleyball coach who has just finished his first year as a certified educator at Local High School.

In July of his summer break, he stops by his favorite coffee shop to enjoy a cup of fresh-brewed Sumatra. He runs into one of his former student-athletes, Julie, who is 19 years old and is preparing to enter college in the fall.

They end up talking for several hours, and decide to meet the following day at the same coffee shop. They meet several more times that week, and mutually decide to commence a romantic dating relationship.

"Is this ethical?"
Let’s throw in a few “ick” variables…

Mr. Smith is 45 years-old and Julie is 18

Or Perhaps…

Mr. Smith is 45 and has a daughter Julie’s age

Or Perhaps…

Mr. Smith knew that Julie had a crush on him all year

Or Perhaps…

Julie was texting Mr. Smith during her senior year about personal problems

Does this change the ethicality of the situation?
“Is this ethical?”

Personal Morality
- Right vs Wrong
- Good vs Evil
- Us vs Them
- Personal Values

Defer to the Law
- Right vs Wrong
- Good vs Evil
- Us vs Them

Is this even the right question?
Let’s Reframe the Question...

Does their dating pose any risks to:
- his responsibility to students (past, present, and future)?
- his responsibility to the profession?
- his responsibility to himself?

... and that’s exactly what a code of ethics does
Ethical Equilibrium

Dispositional Framework
Professional attitudes, values and beliefs that guide decision-making

Regulatory Framework
Policies, statutes, and case law that guide decision-making (sanctionable conduct absolutes)

Ethical Framework
Individual decisions ~ Situational contexts ~ Systemic variables
Professional ethical standards that guide decision-making
Trajectory of decision-making
Personal-professional considerations

(Hutchings, 2014)
Applying the MCEE

Working with your elbow partner, use the MCEE to determine where within the code would you find guidance for this situation?
Model Code of Ethics for Educators

Principle III: Responsibility to Students

A (8): Acknowledging that there are no circumstances that allow for educators to engage in romantic or sexual relationships with students.

A (9): Considering the ramifications of entering into an adult relationship of any kind with a former student, including but not limited to, an potential harm to the former student, public perception, and the possible impact on the teacher’s career. The professional also ensures that the adult relationship was not started while the former student was in school.
Model Code of Ethics for Educators

“To text or not to text…”

Principle IV: Responsible and Ethical Use of Technology

The ethical educator is vigilant to ensure appropriate boundaries of time, place and role are maintained when using electronic communication.

A (1): Using social media responsibly, transparently, and primarily for purposes of teaching and learning per school and district policy. The professional educator considers the ramifications of using social media and direct communication via technology on one’s interactions with students, colleagues, and the general public;
Question #3

If you do instruct educator candidates in the state’s code of ethics (conduct) and/or ethical principles to guide decision making, what delivery method is used?

a) A course devoted to educational law, policy and/or case law
b) A unit of study embedded in other coursework
c) A seminar as part of student teaching
d) I don’t know
Question #4

How might your entity/organization utilize the MCEE?

a) Work with SEA to align the MCEE with your state’s code of ethics/conduct.

b) Filter ethical dilemmas with candidates through the MCEE principles and performance indicators.

c) Integrate the content of the MCEE into curriculum

d) Require evidence of understanding of MCEE for program completion
Your Story

What is an ethical dilemma involving interactions with P-12 students that you or your candidates/colleagues have experienced?

What guidance does the MCEE provide toward that dilemma?
Applying the MCEE

1. Consider the following three entities
   • State
   • P-12
   • EPP

2. Individually consider how the MCEE can be applied to one or more of these entities.
Applying the MCEE

3. With you elbow partner, take 2 minutes and share your lists.

4. Discuss:
   • What can you do now?
   • What can you do in the future?
Question #5

In which of the following ways does your program require students to apply their professional values, and practice dealing with ethical and regulatory challenges?

a) How to appropriately have 1:1 meetings with students
b) How to help students with problems, without sacrificing professional distance and objectivity
c) When to report a colleague’s conduct
d) What are the limits when discussing student issues with colleagues in a public place
e) In what circumstances it is inappropriate to offer tutoring services
f) More than one of these topics
g) None of these topics
No profession can really exist without a code of ethics to guide the conduct of its members. Doctors, lawyers, and clergymen have their ethical codes, but teachers can scarcely be said to have such a code. Until they have developed a professional spirit which is characterized by loyalty to the recognized standards, they cannot rank with the learned professions (Ontario Minister of Education, 1915).


Why have Professional Ethical Standards?
Advance ethical understanding and practice across the profession by:

• Championing the Model Code of Ethics for Educators
  – Ensure educators and partners know about the code and its use, including knowing about the Council and its purpose, work, and resources

• Raising awareness of the professional responsibility for ethical practice
  – Establishing and reinforcing the need for an intentional, preventive focus on ethics
• Equipping educators in ethical understanding
  – Providing avenues for instruction in ethical principles to guide decision making
  – Other initiatives aimed at ethical instruction

• Supporting educators’ ethical decision making
  – Producing resources that support ethical instruction
  – Working to produce video resources around exemplars regarding each of the principles
  – Establishing and maintaining an asynchronous communication support structure for ethics inquiries
Elevating the Profession: An Invitation
Question #6

What are your new understandings from this presentation:

a) I have a new appreciation for the importance of ethics instruction in educator preparation programs.
b) I plan to explore how to better incorporate ethics and conduct into my curriculum.
c) I plan to examine research models regarding ethics.
d) All of the above.