

DOREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENT ENGAGEMENT POLICY



2016 - 2019



To be reviewed 2019-20

1 'Teacher' means all persons registered under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*

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SCHOOL PROFILE

Doreen Primary School is a small semi rural school located 40km north east of Melbourne in the foothills of the Great Dividing Range. Its enrolment over the past 10 years has increased from 50 - 136 students. In 2016 it will again increase to 150+ students and with development in the area, the future will see sustained enrolments. Due to an enrolment ceiling, the school will maintain an enrolment around 150.

The school has been a focal point in the community for the last 145 years, both as an educational facility and a community meeting place. With the development of housing estates taking place in the area, the population centre will move away from this setting, with children coming to school by bus or parent transport. Since the development of the first school charter, the enrolment catchment for the school has shown a higher percentage of children from the immediately local area. With development in the local area, as well as two government P-6 schools opening within the development precinct, enrolments will continue at these levels, the new schools catering for an enrolment close to 1000. Along with the existence of 2 independent P-12 schools within 3km of the school, it means the school must continue to cultivate its reputation in the area as a quality educational setting. This could potentially mean a drop in the intake area of this school, but as it is a relatively small school, it attracts parents looking for this type of environment.

Our school has always been actively involved in providing a safe, positive and supportive environment so each individual can reach their full potential. We aim to ensure that our school is looked upon as an extended family environment. At Doreen we believe that education is a partnership between the school, the parents and the community. Development of Student Leadership is entrenched in our culture, and is being developed with focussed programs for all older students. Results from surveys conducted for the recent school review indicate the school community values the focus on developing students on a personal basis as well as academically, and that we are doing it well.

Within this environment we encourage students to develop self discipline, cooperative attitudes, to take pride in their school and their work, to respect others, and to value their achievements. We aim for children to achieve the skills and attitudes necessary to make positive and informed decisions in all aspects of their future. A Junior School Council operates effectively, and children are involved regularly in the development of the Student Code of Conduct.

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Involvement of the stakeholders in our school is always a focus.

The school aims to provide learning experiences in all areas of VELS as required by the Victorian government. A VELS audit of programs indicated our Integrated Curriculum and Yearly planners were providing children to outcomes as required and beyond. A focus on sequential and developmental programs in literacy and numeracy that are consistent across the whole school is encouraged, and Early and Middle Years programs running throughout the School. A Language Intervention program providing a safety net for children at risk runs from P-6. Specialist programs are also run in Music, Art, L.O.T.E. (Italian), ICT and Library by means of the weekly visits of the Whittlesea M.A.R.C. (Mobile Area Resource Centre) Van and a lunch time borrowing system. Swimming, camps, Bike Education, Science, Phys. Ed. and excursions are also integral parts of our program.

Our school combines with other small schools in our area to access additional activities such as interschool sport, cultural experiences and to provide additional opportunity for social interaction. Professional development for staff is also a product of this cooperation. A collegiate group for principals of like schools, and regular combined infant school meetings mean staff isolation is reduced as much as possible.

The school playground provides a large, diverse and interesting environment for children to experience, with features such as a basketball court, a sports field, grassed and paved areas, along with many mature and historically valuable trees. The school buildings are comprised of six (soon to be seven) general classrooms, specialist Art/Craft/Music rooms, library, kitchen, office, and staffroom. Children have access to learning and information technologies regularly, with a focussed skill program ensuring all children can effectively make use of these valuable resources. These facilities provide a stimulating and well resourced learning environment. The school community work together to ensure that facilities are maintained, at a high standard. Our funding resources are maximised in this area by the enthusiastic involvement of our school families. A School Master Plan has been funded and produced to cater for the growth in students, and allows for facility changes which are both functional and environmentally sound. Solar panels, water tanks and sewerage treatment focus on a small environmental footprint.

As Doreen Primary School is located in a growth corridor, the School Council is continually assessing school and students needs; planning future developments; and is

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dedicated to bringing quality education to our students. The Facilities Master Plan was developed to ensure the school is able to respond to enrolment growth in a manner which will not endanger its current culture and atmosphere, which has attracted the current school community. Many current members of the community see the growth of the student population as putting the current culture at risk. This is a management challenge: to keep the present school culture whilst assimilating growth.

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CREATING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

The creation of a positive school culture that is fair and respectful for all is a must for a school to be an effective learning environment. At Doreen Primary School student engagement, regular attendance, punctuality, behaviour and parent participation are actively promoted in the School Newsletter; on the School Website; as well as at assemblies, concerts and Public Meetings.

At Doreen Primary School we endeavour to provide our students with a secure learning environment free from harassment, and one in which individuals are treated with respect, courtesy and care. These expectations are extended to include teachers and parents.

Developing a supportive learning environment is a focus, where children are encouraged to be independent, resilient and diligent people. The concept of "my best is good enough" is mandated, and children are encouraged to develop goals and plans to achieve positive outcomes. Consequences of actions are not only seen as a result of poor behaviour, but the good things that happen when a child achieves a good result. Whilst physical rewards in the form of certificates and awards are present in the school, the values of intrinsic rewards are always promoted. Children are encouraged to enjoy their successes by their peers, teachers and parents.

Restorative Justice is the first action taken by staff when dealing with altercations and problems in the school. The focus on children understanding the position of their peers in a dispute creates understanding and empathy between children, a positive in any school yard.

School programs are focussed on allowing children to reach their full potential across many curriculum areas. The Curriculum at this school is rich and diverse, allowing for the diverse talents and interests of our students. The school has a Teaching and learning Policy which promotes sequential, developmental programs which call on teachers to use a variety of methods to engage and educate their students. Explicit teaching is the skeleton to all programs, with the use of ICT among the many resources used to enhance concepts and skills.

The education process is seen as a seven year progression at Doreen Primary School, where the outcomes of our students are seen as paramount in all decision making. Repeat years are an option, as are intervention programs and

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extension activities. All programs are held to account against student engagement and student outcomes, as well as effectiveness.

Junior School Council is an area that brings student voice into the school. It is promoted, valued and an activity that enjoys the physical presence of all students in a meeting once a week, with elected Student Leaders in charge.

Children not only deal with local issues, but raise money for charities, events, a school pet and a sponsored child in Cambodia.

STUDENT WELFARE POLICY

Rationale:

The school has the responsibility to maintain a caring, safe, ordered and stimulating learning environment in which the individual needs of all students are considered carefully and catered for appropriately.

The school's Student Code of Conduct is based on the following:

- The right to be safe
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to work and play without interference
- All children will be encouraged to exhibit pride in their school

Aims:

- To create a positive, caring, co-operative and safe environment
- To develop appropriate self discipline
- To develop effective communication between children, staff, parents and the wider community
- To establish a consistent whole school approach in dealing with children
- To gain support from parents for the Student Code of Conduct.

Implementation:

- All staff will be responsible for implementation for the Student Code of Conduct, including sanctions.
- Student Code of Conduct Booklet will be reviewed each year by all students.
- Classroom rules are negotiated with the class at the beginning of each school year. These support and reinforce the school values (respect, honesty, determination, enthusiasm and cooperation) and are written in child friendly language.

Evaluation:

- Student welfare meetings held on Thursdays
- Review processes of welfare will be at least every three years

CODES OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

Student code of conduct and consequences

At Doreen Primary School we endeavour to provide our students with a secure learning environment free from harassment, and one in which individuals are treated with respect, courtesy and care. The School Code will revolve around the following basic principles.

1. No student has the right to interfere with any other person's learning or normal school activity.
2. No student will endanger the safety of themselves or any other person.
3. Each student in the School will be expected to be courteous to each other, parents, teachers and visitors.
4. Students attending Doreen Primary School will be expected to take pride in their work, themselves and the school.
5. Students have the right to work and play without interference from any form of harassment. This includes any items, literature or electronic resources which are deemed inappropriate by the Principal.
6. Students have the right to feel safe at all times.
7. Tolerance, sharing and cooperation will be encouraged between students.
8. Positive self esteem will be fostered for all students.
9. Students are to accept responsibility for their own actions.
10. Parents are encouraged to support the school in its efforts to provide a productive teaching and learning environment.
11. Staff in conjunction with students has an obligation to implement the Code of Conduct fairly, reasonably and consistently.
12. At no stage will corporal punishment be used as a consequence.

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SCHOOL RULES

School rules are short and concise; they are designed to maintain order and a safe environment in which individuals can pursue their activities in an orderly manner without interference.

1. Move and play safely.
2. Care for yourself, others and all property.
3. Resolve problems calmly, sensibly and fairly.
4. Maintain respect of others through speech and manners
5. Work to the best of your ability and allow others to do the same.

Early each year teachers will negotiate a set of classroom rules for their own grades that are consistent with the "School Rules".

School and grade rules are to be displayed in conspicuous positions around the school ground and classrooms.

Code of conduct for school councillors

School councils in Victoria are public entities as defined by the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

School councillors must abide by the Directors' Code of Conduct issued by the Public Sector Standards Commissioner. The code of conduct requires councillors to:

- Act with honesty and integrity (be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any conflict of interest should it arise)
- Act in good faith in the best interests of the school (work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students foremost in their minds)
- Act fairly and impartially (consider all sides of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and never act from self interest)
- Use information appropriately (respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available)

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- Use their position appropriately (not use their position as a councillor to gain an advantage)
- Act in a financially responsible manner (observe all the above principles when making financial decisions)
- Exercise due care, diligence and skill (accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school)
- Comply with relevant legislation (know what legislation is relevant for which decisions and obey the law)
- Demonstrate leadership and stewardship (set a good example, exercise care and responsibility to keep the school strong and sustainable).

Staff Code of Conduct

- As per VIT Code of Conduct being formulated at present.

Appendix 1 - The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics

Parent Code of Conduct

Rationale:

- Doreen Primary School seeks to provide a safe teaching and learning environment for all members of the school community and visitors to our school.
- The school community has identified the following core values and expectations for students, parents and staff:

RESPECT LEARNING CONSEQUENCES RESPONSIBILITY CARING
COMMUNITY RESILIENCE ENVIRONMENT INDEPENDENCE

Implementation:

- Parents, caregivers and community members are expected to:
 - Conduct themselves in a respectful and courteous manner that recognises and respects the rights and good names of others and is in compliance with the law.
 - Respect and comply with reasonable requests and directions of the Principal and other members of staff.
 - Support staff in maintaining a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students
 - Model appropriate behaviour at all times within the school setting. It is not appropriate to involve others in a disagreement or take sides in an argument.
 - Work in partnership with the school to enhance the learning outcomes, well-being and conduct of their child.
 - Raise any concerns about their child's learning, conduct or well-being privately with the Class Teacher, Wellbeing Officer or Principal – preferably by appointment.
- It is not appropriate to approach a student with concerns. Such an approach may have legal consequences.
- Any person entering the grounds or premises of Doreen Primary School, who is abusive, threatening, uses inappropriate language or otherwise presenting a risk to children, staff or other members of the school community will be asked to leave. If this does not occur immediately, the Police will be called.
- Abusive or threatening telephone calls will not be tolerated and the Police may be notified.
- A breach of this code of conduct by a parent or caregiver will result in a warning and if this behaviour persists, the matter will be referred to the Department of Education and Training who have legal procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all.
- This Policy will be included in the Student Engagement Policy.

Evaluation:

- The effectiveness of this Policy will be evaluated through a variety of measures including:
 - Feedback from staff and the school community in general.
 - Student and parent surveys.

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Student Conflict resolution procedures

STRATEGY FOR BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Stage One - "Working Out" stage between pupil and teacher

Process: Discussion. During discussion between teacher and student an attempt will be made to reach understanding.

Possible consequences:

- A. Warning with agreed consequences in the event of subsequent misdemeanour.
- B. Removal of privileges.
- C. Community service assisting the school community by cleaning areas of the school ground during recess and/or lunchtimes.
- D. Time out, this means physical isolation within the room, activity centre or yard where the child can be observed by the teacher.

Stage Two - Unresolved and/or continual problems

Process: Interview/discussion. Parent/teacher/pupil interview, anecdotal record of discussion and decisions reached to be maintained.

Possible consequences:

- A. Removal of privileges.
- B. Extended community service.
- C. Exclusion from room/yard - in appropriate space with supervision.
- D. Seeking specialist assistance - eg Student Services.

Stage Three - Continued or major misconduct stage

Process: Recorded interview.

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Possible consequences: Parent and student will be informed that unless an acceptable solution can be reached and maintained, the only recourse for the school is suspension. Assistance may be sought from outside agencies to assist in the development of appropriate individualised behaviour modification programs.

Stage Four - Internal/External Suspension or Expulsion as per Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

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Teaching and Learning strategies

TEACHING FOR CURIOSITY AND ACHIEVEMENT

WHOLE SCHOOL THEORIES OF ACTION

1. When schools and teachers set **high expectations and develop authentic relationships** then student confidence, curiosity and commitment to education increases and the school's ethos and culture deepens and curiosity can flourish.
2. When explicit teaching occurs, students are engaged in developmental and sequential programs that build scaffolding for extension into Enquiry based activities.
3. When teacher directed instruction becomes more **Inquiry focused** the level of student engagement and achievement increases. This is the foundation stone for high quality teaching and the development of curiosity. A greater emphasis on inquiry leads to improved achievement and curiosity is enhanced.
4. By consistently adopting **protocols for teaching** student behavior and engagement is enhanced.
5. **Learning protocols** enhance student capacity to learn, develop skills, confidence and curiosity and ensure that this happens in all classes.

THEORIES OF ACTION FOR TEACHERS

1. **Learning intentions, pace and narrative** lead to students being more secure about their learning (and more willing to take risks); and achievement and understanding is increased and curiosity enhanced.
2. Teachers systematically using **higher order questioning** leads to the level of student understanding deepening and the level of achievement increasing. Students who are regularly required to analyse, synthesise and evaluate are more likely to be curious.

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3. When **cooperative group structures/techniques** are used to mediate between whole class instruction and students carrying out tasks, then the academic performance of the whole class will increase as well as the spirit of collaboration and mutual responsibility. Curiosity will be developed as students learn from each other in a structured manner.
4. When teachers consistently use **feedback and data** on students' actions and performance, then behavior becomes more positive, progress accelerates and curiosity is enhanced.
5. When **peer assessment and assessment for learning** are consistently utilized student engagement, learning and achievement accelerates. Curiosity will be enhanced as the depth of student understanding increases.
6. When **learning tasks** are purposeful, clearly defined, differentiated and challenging, (according to the student's Zone of Proximal Development) then the more powerful, progressive and precise the learning for all students. Curiosity will be enhanced and students work at a level appropriate to their understanding.
7. When explicit teaching takes place, all stake holders are engaged and focused on outcomes.

THE VICTORIAN TEACHING PROFESSION CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

The Code of Conduct has been developed for and by the Victorian teaching profession. It identifies a set of principles, which describe the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of a teacher¹ by their colleagues and the community.

It is based on the values set out in the accompanying Code of Ethics, namely

Integrity

Respect

Responsibility

and draws on the Victorian Institute of Teaching's Standards of Professional Practice, and Codes of Conduct for teachers developed by schools and other registration authorities.

PURPOSE

The Code of Conduct codifies what is already common practice within the teaching profession.

Its purpose is to:

- promote adherence to the values teachers see as underpinning their profession
- provide a set of principles which will guide teachers in their everyday conduct and assist them to solve ethical dilemmas
- affirm the public accountability of the teaching profession
- Promote public confidence in the teaching profession.

The Code of Conduct is not a disciplinary tool.

The Code of Conduct will not cover every situation. There may be policies or procedures set down by the sector/school in which the teacher works, or there may be specific issues that are covered by an industrial agreement or award.

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INTEGRITY

SECTION 1: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Teachers' professional conduct is characterised by the quality of the relationships they have with their students, their students' parents (guardians and caregivers), families and communities and their colleagues.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

PRINCIPLE 1.1: TEACHERS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL STUDENTS TO LEARN

The main focus of teaching is student learning. Teachers demonstrate their commitment to student learning by:

- a knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities
- b maintaining a safe and challenging learning environment
- c accepting professional responsibility for the provision of quality teaching
- d having high expectations of every student, recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents
- e considering all viewpoints fairly
- f communicating well and appropriately with their students.

PRINCIPLE 1.2: TEACHERS TREAT THEIR STUDENTS WITH COURTESY AND DIGNITY

Teachers:

- a work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- b model and engage in respectful and impartial language
- c protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm
- d enhance student autonomy and sense of self worth and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values
- e respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate. That is: if the student has consented to the information being used in a certain way to prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of a person (including the student) as part of an investigation into unlawful activity if the disclosure is required or mandated by law to prevent a crime or enforce the law
- f refrain from discussing students' personal problems in situations where the information will not be treated confidentially
- g use consequences commensurate with the offence when disciplining students.

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PRINCIPLE 1.3: TEACHERS WORK WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL EXPERTISE

In fulfilling their role, teachers carry out a wide range of responsibilities. They support students by knowing their strengths and the limits of their professional expertise.

Teachers:

- a seek to ensure that they have the physical, mental and emotional capacity to carry out their professional responsibilities
- b are aware of the role of other professionals and agencies and when students should be referred to them for assistance
- c are truthful when making statements about their qualifications and competencies.

RESPECT

PRINCIPLE 1.4: TEACHERS MAINTAIN OBJECTIVITY IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

In their professional role, teachers do not behave as a friend or a parent. They:

- a interact with students without displaying bias or preference
- b make decisions in students' best interests
- c do not draw students into their personal agendas
- d do not seek recognition at the expense of professional objectivity and goals.

PRINCIPLE 1.5: TEACHERS ARE ALWAYS IN A PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE STUDENTS IN THEIR SCHOOL, WHETHER AT SCHOOL OR NOT

Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits. A professional relationship **will** be violated if a teacher:

- a has a sexual relationship with a student
- b uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students
- c touches a student without a valid reason
- d holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without a valid context
- e accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents.

A professional relationship **may** be compromised if a teacher:

- a attends parties or socialises with students
- b invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

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RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS (GUARDIANS, CAREGIVERS), FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

PRINCIPLE 1.6: TEACHERS MAINTAIN A PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS (GUARDIANS AND CAREGIVERS)

Teachers should be respectful of and courteous to parents. Teachers:

- a** consider parents' perspectives when making decisions which have an impact on the education or wellbeing of a student
- b** communicate and consult with parents in a timely, understandable and sensitive manner
- c** take appropriate action when responding to parental concerns.

PRINCIPLE 1.7: TEACHERS WORK IN COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS' FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Teachers recognise that their students come from a diverse range of cultural contexts and seek to work collaboratively with students' families and communities within those contexts.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES

PRINCIPLE 1.8: COLLEGIALITY IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE WORK OF TEACHERS

Teachers demonstrate collegiality by:

- a** treating each other with courtesy and respect
- b** valuing the input of their colleagues
- c** using appropriate forums for constructive debate on professional matters
- d** sharing expertise and knowledge in a variety of collaborative contexts
- e** respecting different approaches to teaching
- f** providing support for each other, particularly those new to the profession
- g** sharing information relating to the wellbeing of students.

RESPONSIBILITY

SECTION 2: PERSONAL CONDUCT

PRINCIPLE 2.1: THE PERSONAL CONDUCT OF A TEACHER WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE PROFESSIONAL STANDING OF THAT TEACHER AND ON THE PROFESSION AS A WHOLE

Although there is no definitive boundary between the personal and professional conduct of a teacher, it is expected that teachers will:

- a be positive role models at school and in the community
- b respect the rule of law and provide a positive example in the performance of civil obligations
- c not exploit their position for personal or financial gain
- d ensure that their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties
- e act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing workplace issues.

SECTION 3: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

PRINCIPLE 3.1: TEACHERS VALUE THEIR PROFESSIONALISM, AND SET AND MAINTAIN HIGH STANDARDS OF COMPETENCE

Teachers:

- a are knowledgeable in their areas of expertise
- b are committed to pursuing their own professional learning
- c complete their duties in a responsible, thorough and timely way.

PRINCIPLE 3.2: TEACHERS ARE AWARE OF THE LEGAL REQUIREMENTS THAT PERTAIN TO THEIR PROFESSION. IN PARTICULAR, THEY ARE COGNISANT OF THEIR LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO:

- a discrimination, harassment and vilification
- b negligence
- c mandatory reporting
- d privacy
- e occupational health and safety
- f teacher registration.

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THE VICTORIAN TEACHING PROFESSION CODE OF ETHICS

As teachers, we use our expert knowledge to provide experiences that inspire and facilitate student learning. We are a significant force in developing a knowledgeable, creative, productive and democratic society. The values that underpin our profession are **integrity**, **respect** and **responsibility**.

We hold a unique position of trust and influence, which we recognise in our relationships with students, parents (caregivers and guardians), colleagues and the community.

We demonstrate our **integrity** by:

- a acting in the best interest of students
- b maintaining a professional relationship with students, parents, colleagues and the community
- c behaving in ways that respect and advance the profession.

We demonstrate our **respect** by:

- a acting with care and compassion
- b treating students fairly and impartially
- c holding our colleagues in high regard
- d acknowledging parents as partners in the education of their children.

We demonstrate our **responsibility** by:

- a providing quality teaching
- b maintaining and developing our professional practice
- c working cooperatively with colleagues in the best interest of our students.