Spiritual and Professional Norms

All personnel at El Camino Academy (ECA) are expected to follow these practical expressions of biblical and professional ethics. The purpose of these norms is to guide staff as they live with biblical and ethical integrity and serve with excellence together. ECA requires all staff to sign this document annually to show agreement with and commitment to these expectations.

Breaking these norms, especially if done intentionally, consistently, and/or deceitfully, is sufficient cause for a staff member to begin a probation period, participate in required counseling, or even be asked to leave ECA.

A. Commitment to Integrity and Christ-Like Character in my Personal Life

1. I will prioritize and nurture my relationship with Christ through regular Bible reading/study, prayer, and worship, as well as weekly church attendance, seeking to be more Christ-like. I will ensure that my teaching, counsel, and advice are theologically sound and meet the needs of the hearers.
2. I will seek to grow daily in the fruit of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
3. I will handle stress in healthy ways, depending on God's grace to defeat destructive behaviors and seeking help from others when appropriate.
4. I will be teachable and not justify wrong or unethical attitudes, decisions, or actions which are contrary to biblical standards or ECA policy.
5. I will have a grateful heart and resist an attitude of entitlement.
6. Recognizing that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, I will strive to be healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally through adequate exercise, healthy eating habits, and sufficient rest. I will limit the use of alcohol to within biblical norms, and I will not drink in the presence of ECA students who are not my family. I will not use tobacco or marijuana products, vape or participate in any type of smoking activity, or engage in illegal activities, including, but not limited to, the use or abuse of illegal or potentially harmful drugs.
7. I will cultivate purity in my private life and in relationships with members of the same and opposite sex, modeling biblical sexuality. I will not engage in homosexual, premarital, or extramarital relationships or expose myself to pornography. I will not say or do anything that could be perceived as sexual harassment.

B. Commitment to Integrity in my Relationships

1. I will take initiative to be an active part of the ECA community, loving, serving and honoring colleagues, leaders, students, and ECA families.

2. I will show respect verbally and nonverbally, using appropriate vocabulary without vulgarities, indecencies, swear words, or insinuating messages. My speech will be sensitive and not offensive or overly harsh.
3. I will refuse to participate in slander or gossip, being careful not to misrepresent or misstate another person's words or intentions, or practice any form of character assassination. I will strictly respect what is spoken to me in confidence other than disclosures required by law or ECA policy.
4. In the event that I perceive that a community member has sinned against me or I am aware that I might have offended another, I commit to proactively seeking reconciliation.
5. I will support, respect, and obey those in leadership – my church and/or mission leaders, as well as the ECA school board and administration. If I disagree with leadership, I will not undermine them, but will work positively to resolve differences and share my constructive criticism in appropriate ways.
6. I will seek to avoid bringing disgrace, confusion, or division to the body of Christ.
7. I recognize my responsibility to protect members of the ECA community from real or perceived impurity and sin. I will communicate with school authorities and follow published guidelines for reporting sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual activity.
8. I will not date or have a physical relationship with a student. I will avoid inappropriate private one-on-one interaction with students, and set appropriate boundaries.

C. Commitment to Responsibility and Efficiency

1. I will be a good steward of my time and financial resources. I will live within my means, and follow scriptural principles with my finances.
2. I will respect the school calendar, attending scheduled orientation sessions, teacher workdays, staff retreats, and school instructional days, including days before and after vacation. I will appropriately communicate my inability to participate.
3. I will respect the school schedule, punctually arriving at school and to meetings, activities, or commitments. When I am responsible for a class, I will teach each class bell-to-bell.
4. I will teach my part of the curriculum or fulfill my responsibilities in the overall program, submit reports on time, supervise students as needed, and meet individual student needs as appropriate.
5. I will complete written reports, surveys, or requested documentation on time. If I miss a deadline, I will take initiative to work out a solution. My lack of adequate planning should not cause extra work for others.

6. When I need to be absent due to illness, an emergency, or personal reasons, I will notify my supervisor as early as possible, and record the absence appropriately.
7. I will schedule off-campus appointments during nonclass/nonwork time when within my control.
8. I will use the Internet responsibly. I will not visit inappropriate sites and will manage online time wisely. I will use external support and tools (filters, apps, accountability partners, etc.) as necessary to ensure proper Internet use.
9. I will use social media responsibly, ensuring that pictures or posts will not cast a negative light on myself or ECA, based on biblical values and guidelines in these Spiritual and Professional Norms. I will also limit the time invested in social media in a way that allows me to focus on the ministry God has called me to.
10. I will refrain from using a cell phone for nonwork-related tasks while on duty (teaching, supervision, staff meetings, etc.).
11. I will seek needed approval before starting a project or making a purchase.
12. I will bring questions and concerns directly to the appropriate person, so that issues may be properly handled by those in authority.

D. Commitment to ECA Standards

1. I will support ECA's purpose, mission, core values, goals, objectives, and institutional framework, and will serve as needed and able.
2. I agree with all points of the ECA Statement of Faith, and will refrain from teaching any doctrine that is contrary to it.
3. I will fulfill my responsibilities as stated in my contract.
4. I will strive to be a proactive team member by sharing information, accepting input, and working cooperatively with the administration, my colleagues, and all members of the ECA community.
5. I will support consistent and healthy discipline according to the Handbook inside the classroom and throughout the campus.
6. I will model behavior according to the Handbook, including dressing in a respectful and appropriate manner. See the Staff Dress Code for clarification.
7. I will model respect for and sensitivity to the multiple cultures represented in our community.

E. Commitment to Teaming with Parents

1. I will work with parents to help students learn and grow. I will provide parents clear, timely information using appropriate communication methods.

2. Since ECA is a Christian school serving families from a variety of theological backgrounds, I agree to treat people who have doctrinal viewpoints that differ from my own with love and respect, and to lean on the authority of scripture above my personal opinions. I will seek truth and also help others to pursue truth in an environment of harmony and intellectual rigor.
3. I will work with parents when their child is not responding to normal behavioral correction and/or when there are serious issues that need parental support.
4. I will participate in functions involving parents whenever possible.

F. Commitment to Educational Excellence

1. I will model academic excellence and an enthusiasm for learning.
2. I will hold students to high standards and help them grow as much as they are able.

G. Commitment to Discipleship and Spiritual Formation as a Community

1. In my individual, small, and large group interactions with students, I will strive to fulfill the Great Commission by seeking to make disciples and disciple-makers.
2. I will participate in corporate prayer when possible, and commit to upholding ECA's ministry in personal prayer.
3. I will participate in spiritual development activities provided by ECA per my professional responsibilities.

H. Commitment to Managing Conflict Biblically

I will promote a work environment of clear communication, peaceful conflict resolution, informal and/or institutional mediation, and the restoration of workplace relationships.

Based on Matthew 5 and 18, and Ephesians 4, I commit to:

1. Resolve Conflicts Directly (if safe and viable)
    - I will honestly reflect before God and examine my own behavior in relation to the situation.
    - I will resolve disagreements through private, respectful, and constructive conversation, avoiding public confrontation and aiming to restore the relationship.
    - I will express concerns clearly, honestly, empathetically and sincerely without the intent to offend, promoting assertive communication that fosters problem-solving and restoring trust.
    - I will be an active listener and seek to understand the other's perspective, seeking to agree and commit to restoring a good working relationship.

2. Seek a Facilitator if Needed

    - I will request the intervention of a neutral third party as needed, such as a supervisor or a member of the leadership team, who will facilitate the conversation to clarify the problem and help both parties reach a mutually acceptable solution, while maintaining confidentiality and respect at all times.
    - If additional help is needed, I will approach Human Resources or the Occupational Health Committee (COPASST - *Comité Paritario de Seguridad y Salud en el Trabajo* or) to document the situation and receive guidance on the next steps.

3. Use Available Means for Restoration

    - Restorative dialogue spaces: These are promoted to allow for conversations mediated by the Spiritual Care Coordinator, the Human Resources Coordinator, or a designated delegate. These spaces enable participants to express how they are feeling, acknowledge mistakes, and identify strategies to move forward.
    - Culture of reconciliation and forgiveness: I will aim to restore affected relationships, strengthen mutual respect, and encourage the spiritual and professional growth of everyone involved.
    - Commitment to improve: I will draw up an action plan to responsibly work on rebuilding trust and maintaining a healthy work environment.