

Professional Teaching Practices Commission



The Professional Standards set in Alaska's [Code of Ethics](#) of the Education Profession should be seen as a tool to guide your basic professional behaviors. It is codified in statute (AS 14.20.370) so that it is enforceable in administrative sanctions against teaching certificates.

SOCIAL MEDIA

I'm invariably asked about the First Amendment. Doesn't it protect what teachers say online? "Great question," I reply, "but in general, no." warns [Cybertraps](#) author Frederick Lane

Educators are obligated to students, the public and to the profession.

There are so many opportunities for you to decide what is best for your students, your colleagues, school community and for your professional integrity and the reputation of all educators. As educators you make thousands of non-trivial decisions every day. (Danielson)

Professional decision making requires balance. You do this by creating and maintaining professional boundaries.

The Supreme Court has placed serious restrictions on what school employees can say without fear of job repercussions.



If your social media post causes disruption in the classroom or the broader school community or lessens your effectiveness as an educator, then your district can take disciplinary action against you. (Lane)

For more information from Frederick Lane see:

[Five Cybertraps Teachers Should Avoid in 2020](#)

Follow Lane's real case studies:

[The Cybertraps Observer \(30 Dec. 2019-5 Jan. 2020\)](#)

These boundaries allow you to deliver the appropriate standard of care for your students while maintaining the professional distance to make thoughtful and responsible decisions. You will build trust with students and families, achieve work life balance, support the integrity of the profession and increase public trust.

Resolve to use technology in an ethical and responsible manner and to avoid causing harm or injury to students, colleagues, and the school community.

The care and teaching of Alaska's students requires high ethical standards for educators.



Smart educators **think** before they post!

PTPC SANCTIONS

At two recent meetings of the Professional Teaching Practices Commission, the commission ordered a warning to four educators, ordered one year suspensions of three educators' certificates, accepted the surrender of five educators' certificates, and revoked one educator's certificate.

The commission also reviewed the dismissal of eight complaints, upholding all but one of the dismissals. For more information see Recent Commission Action on the [PTPC webpage](#).

The Professional Teaching Practices Commission meets three times a year to adjudicate sanctions against the teaching certificate of those who violate the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession. PTPC next meets April 23 -24, 2020.

COMMISSION MEMBERS

Maureen van Wagner (chair) - Teacher
Diane Kardash (vice chair) - Higher Education
Kent Runion (secretary) - Teacher
David DeVaughn - Teacher
Janine Todd - Teacher
Tony Graham - Principal
Chris Rietan - Superintendent
Lem Wheelles - Teacher
Tamara Van Whye - DEED

[Melody Mann](#) - Executive Director
Professional Teaching Practices Commission
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1240
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 269-6579
[PTPC webpage](#)

Contact PTPC for presentations on Professionalism and the Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.

A responsible, reliable professional earns trust.

LOOK AHEAD

Election season is upon us again, and to protect yourself from potential complaints:

Remember

"(b) in fulfilling obligations to students, an educator (2) may not deliberately distort, suppress, or deny access to curricular materials or educational information in order to promote the personal view, interest, or goal of the educator;"

And

"(c) In fulfilling obligations to the public, an educator (2) shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between the educator's personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the educator is affiliated;"(5) may not use institutional privileges for private gain, to promote political candidates, or for partisan political views;"

In these divisive political times it is best to save your personal political opinions and activity for your personal time away from the school building.

You are responsible for renewing your [Teaching Certificate](#).

Signing your teaching contract requires careful thought and commitment. Do not sign a contract with a district while looking for a position elsewhere. Consider the consequences of breaching a contract. PTPC issues one year suspensions for breach of contract.

Knowing your **School Board Policy** on political activity, electronic communications, confidentiality requirements, contract termination requirements, and student supervision expectations allows you to become the trusted professional your school district and students need.