

NARST Code of Ethical Conduct **(Revised: 20 September 2018)**

The purpose of the National Association of Research in Science Teaching (NARST) Code of Ethical Conduct is to articulate a set of aspirational principles to guide and support members as they engage in professional activities—research, teaching, and service. NARST members are science education professionals who include researchers, practitioners, and graduate students from various cultures worldwide. These aspirational principles align with and support the mission of the organization to help all members achieve, develop, and contribute meaningfully to the improvement of science teaching and learning through research. NARST expects its members to adhere to the highest ethical standards. The Code of Ethical Conduct serves as a guide to the everyday professional conduct of science educators. Unfamiliarity with NARST’s Code of Ethical Conduct is not a valid defense for engaging in or failing to challenge observed unethical behavior. We accomplish this through our Code of Ethical Conduct where there is:

A. Professional Competence

Science education professionals strive to maintain the highest levels of competence in their work; they recognize the limitations of their expertise; and they undertake only those tasks for which they are qualified by education, training, or experience. They recognize the need for ongoing education in order to remain professionally competent; and they utilize the appropriate scientific, scholarly, professional, technical, and administrative resources needed to ensure honesty and integrity. Science education professionals conduct research, teach, practice, and provide service only within the boundaries of their competence, based on their education, training, supervised experience, or appropriate professional experience. They consult with other professionals when necessary for the benefit of their students, research participants, and clients. They maintain awareness of current scientific, scholarly, and professional information in their fields of activity and undertake continuing efforts to maintain competence in the skills they use. Importantly, professional competence must also include a willingness to accept and integrate new information and experiences, regardless of the effect that process has on research outcomes.

B. Integrity

It is the social responsibility of science education professionals to maintain integrity in all conduct, publications, and forums, and give due credit to the contributions of others. Adhering to this standard means science education professionals do not fabricate, falsify, or plagiarize. Public comments on matters of importance that are relevant to science education must be made with care and accuracy. Adhering to this standard means science education professionals do not use deficit language, deceptive statements concerning research data, or otherwise knowingly make false, misleading or deceptive statements in practicing and presenting research. Comment and debate within the bounds of collegiality and professionalism that keep the organization moving forward and current with emergent issues and perspectives are encouraged. Adhering to this standard means science education professionals do not use dismissive remarks or gestures, restrict multiple voices, or use derogatory language. In short, science education professionals conduct their professional activities in ways that engender trust and confidence.

C. Professional and Scholarly Responsibility in Science Teaching, Learning, and Research

Science education professionals have a responsibility to use research practice and policy to advance NARST members' understanding of the teaching and learning of science in all learning contexts—formal, informal, local, and global—through research, practice, and policy. They adhere to the highest scholarly and professional standards within their field of expertise and accept responsibility for adherence to those standards. Science education professionals should regard the tutelage of graduate students and early career faculty as a trust conferred by the organization for which they work, as well as NARST, for the promotion of these individuals' learning and professional development.

Science education professionals understand that they form a community and show respect for other science education professionals even when they disagree on theoretical, methodological, or personal approaches to professional activities. In activities involving marginalized populations, it is essential that responsible science education professionals seek out the voices and experiences of members of these groups and treat them as critical to their scholarship. While always endeavoring to be collegial, science education professionals must never let the desire to be collegial outweigh their shared responsibility for ethical behavior. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues, NARST's Equity and Ethics Committee, or organizational entities such as their institutional review board in order to prevent, avoid, or challenge unethical conduct.

D. Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity

Science education professionals respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all people in their professional activities. They treat other professionals, students, research participants, and members of the organization fairly, respectfully, and without exploitation or harassment. Science education professionals acknowledge the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own and take reasonable steps to avoid harm to others in the conduct of their work. They learn with others, share ideas honestly, give credit for others' contributions, and encourage others to contribute their unique skills, knowledge, and interests in professional environments. Science education professionals are sensitive to cultural, individual, and role differences in teaching, studying, and providing service to groups of people with distinctive characteristics, as well as the power differential that might result from such differences. Science education professionals carefully avoid discrimination and bias toward individuals and groups based on race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, presence of disabilities, educational background, socioeconomic status, or other personal attributes. They refrain from making biased assumptions about others and perpetuating demeaning attitudes and stereotypes. Science education professionals do not accept any forms of discrimination and actively challenge implicit and explicit forms of discrimination.

E. Social responsibility

Science education professionals are aware of their scientific and professional responsibility to the communities and societies in which they live. This awareness extends to their involvement and service to an increasingly diverse and international NARST community. NARST members are guided by the values and standards that reflect the professional literature. They strive to promote equity and the public good by advancing scientific and scholarly knowledge. Science education professionals are aware of the differences in society and culture that impact scholarly knowledge and academic work. They value and

embrace the public trust in research and teaching and are concerned about their ethical behavior and the behavior of other science education professionals that might compromise that trust. Science education professionals should reasonably expect of themselves and others to be guided by a code of ethics that supports efforts to resolve ethical dilemmas.

References

- AERA Council. (2011). Code of ethics: American Educational Research Association. *Educational Researcher*, 40(3), 145-146.
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