

East Central Area Literacy Council

Statement of Values and Code of Ethics

This Statement of Values and Code of Ethics is a starting point for what is expected of our trustees, staff and volunteers. Adherence to the law is the minimum standard of expected behavior. Yet, we must do more than simply obey the law. We must embrace the spirit of the law, often going beyond legal requirements to make sure what we do is matched by what the public understands about what we do. Transparency, openness and responsiveness to public concerns must be integral to our behavior, therefore:

I. Personal and Professional Integrity

All staff, board members and volunteers of the organization act with honesty, integrity and openness in all their dealings as representatives of the East Central Area Literacy council. The Council promotes a working environment that values respect, fairness and integrity.

II. Mission

The Council has a clearly stated mission and purpose, approved by the board of directors in pursuit of the public good. All of its programs support that mission and all who work for or on behalf of the organization understand and are loyal to that mission and purpose. The mission is responsive to the constituency and communities served by the organization and of value to the society at large.

III. Governance

- a. The Council has an active governing body that is responsible for setting the mission and strategic direction of the organization and oversight of the finances, operations, and policies of the organization. The governing body:
- b. Ensures that board members have the requisite skills and experience to carry out their duties and that all members understand and fulfill their governance duties acting for the benefit of the organization and its public purpose;
- c. Has a conflict of interest policy that ensures that any conflicts of interest or appearance thereof are avoided or appropriately managed through disclosure, recusal or other means; and

- d. Is responsible for the hiring, firing, and regular review of the performance of the executive director and ensures that the compensation of the chief executive officer is reasonable and appropriate;
- e. Ensures that the executive director and appropriate staff provide the governing body with timely and comprehensive information so that the governing body can effectively carry out its duties;
- f. Ensures that the Council conducts all transactions and dealings with integrity and honesty;
- g. Ensures that the Council promotes working relationships with board members, staff, volunteers, and program beneficiaries that are based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- h. Ensures that the Council is fair and inclusive in its hiring and promotion policies and practices for all board, staff and volunteer positions;
- i. Ensures that policies of the Council are in writing, clearly articulated and officially adopted;
- j. Ensures that the resources of the Council are responsibly and prudently managed; and,
- k. Ensures that the Council has the capacity to carry out its programs effectively.

IV. Responsible Stewardship

- a. The Council and its subsidiaries manage funds responsibly and prudently. This includes the following considerations:
- b. It spends a reasonable percentage of its annual budget on programs in pursuance of its mission;
- c. It spends an adequate amount on administrative expenses to ensure effective accounting systems, internal controls, competent staff, and other expenses critical to professional management;
- d. The Council compensates staff, and any others who may receive compensation, reasonably and appropriately;
- e. The Council has reasonable fundraising costs, recognizing the variety of factors that may affect fundraising costs;
- f. The Council does not accumulate operating funds excessively;
- g. The Council prudently draws from endowment funds consistent with donor intent and to support the public purpose of the organization;

- h. The Council ensures that all spending practices and policies are fair, reasonable, and appropriate to fulfill the mission of the organization; and
- i. All financial reports are factually accurate and complete in all material respects.

V. Openness and Disclosure

The Council provides comprehensive and timely information to the public, the media and all stakeholders and is responsible in a timely manner to reasonable requests for information. All information about the organization will fully and honestly reflect the policies and practices of the Council. Basic informational data about the Council, such as the Form 990, reviews and compilations, and audited financial statements will be made available to the public and may be posted to the organization's website. All solicitation materials accurately represent the Council's policies and practices and will reflect the dignity of program beneficiaries. All financial, organization, and program reports will be complete and accurate in all material respects.

VI. Program Evaluation

The Council regularly reviews program effectiveness and has mechanisms to incorporate lessons learned into future programs. The Council is committed to improving program and organizational effectiveness and develops mechanisms to promote learning from its activities and the field. The Council is responsive to changes in its field of activity and is responsive to the needs of its constituencies.

VII. Inclusiveness and Diversity

The Council has a policy of promoting inclusiveness and its staff, board and volunteers endeavor to reflect diversity in order to enrich its programmatic effectiveness. The Council takes meaningful steps to promote inclusiveness in its hiring, retention, promotion, board recruitment and constituencies served.

VIII. Fundraising

The Council is truthful in its solicitation materials. The Council respects the privacy concerns of individual donors and expends funds consistent with donor intent. The Council will make available important and relevant information to potential donors.

In raising funds from the public, the Council will respect the rights of donors as follows:

- a. To be informed of the mission of the Council, the way resources will be used and their capacity to use donations effectively for their intended purposes;
- b. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the Council's governing board and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgment in its stewardship responsibilities;
- c. To have access to the Council's most recent financial reports;
- d. To be assured their gifts will be used for the purposes for which they were given;
- e. To receive appropriate acknowledgement and recognition;
- f. To be assured that information about their donations is handled with respect and with confidentiality to the extent provided by the law;
- g. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing organizations of interest to the donor will be professional in nature;
- h. To be informed whether those seeking donations are volunteers, employees of the Council or hired solicitors;
- i. To have the opportunity for their names to be deleted from mailing lists that an organization may intend to share; and
- j. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation and to receive prompt, truthful and forthright answers.