

## Example Scenarios

### DIRECTIONS

Use an ethical decision-making model to discuss the following scenarios with a small group, or use these scenarios to write relevant scenarios for the audience and context.

#### Scenario One

Kathleen, a teacher at a large elementary school, walks past the classroom of a new teacher. Kathleen observes that the class is out of control; there is much swearing, and the teacher is unable to get the students to settle down. Some weeks ago, Kathleen observed the same scenario in this teacher's class and she offered to help her. The teacher, however, refused her help and told her that she would handle her own class in her own way. Kathleen is unsure what she should do. If she refers the matter to someone in the administration team, there might be ramifications for the teacher's ongoing employment. On the other hand, if Kathleen does not act, it is possible that these children may continue to be disruptive and learn very little. What should Kathleen do?

#### Scenario Two

A 13 year old female student has been engaging in self harm and thoughts of suicidal ideation. The special education aid sees some marks on the student's arm and convinces the student to talk with the school counselor. After the student meets the school counselor, the special education aid follows up with the school counselor. The school counselor will not share any information with the aid, and will not even admit to talking with the student or not, citing confidentiality protections. The aid understands that they do not need to know the details of the student's case, but they do want to know how to best support this student and to help keep them safe. The aid talks with the student who says that the counselor was nice. When the aid asked if the counselor talked to her parents, she said the counselor promised to keep this a secret and would not call them. The aid is not sure the best way to proceed, as they are not a trained counselor and feel out of their expertise in handling these topics.

#### Scenario Three

A mother talks to the teacher and tells them that they do not want their child participating in mindfulness meditation at school. They believe meditation is anti-Christian, because if the mind is empty, Satan can do his work. The mind should be full of the word of God and God's teachings. The teacher feels that mindfulness meditation is a helpful practice in schools and wants the student to participate, for their benefit and the benefit of the other students. The teacher has seen a lot of progress in concentration and regulation in their work with previous classes and mindfulness meditation. The mother tells the teacher that if they continue this practice, they will sue them for religious discrimination.

#### Scenario Four

A 5th grade student has special education services and a case manager. The student's family became homeless and were living in their car. The case manager worked to connect the family with the school social worker who got involved. The younger siblings were taken in by a relative, however the relative said they would not take the 5th grader. The parents were going to sleep in their car or wherever, but would feel better knowing the kids were taken care of. The case manager took in the 5th grade student; the case manager had elementary school aged children, there was an extra bedroom in their basement. The student got along very well with the case manager

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and their children. The case manager told you, the classroom teacher, about this situation in confidence and asked that you not tell the school social worker. The case manager said the parents are fine with this arrangement and appreciate the help.

### Scenario Five

Your school is currently meeting in virtual mode of instruction. A teacher calls to consult with you, another teacher, about a middle school student in their class. The teacher saw what she believed to be a cannabis bong in the background during a virtual class session, but that it was not super obvious and she didn't want to call attention to it by mentioning it. The teacher says she contacted the student and asked to talk about how the school year is going and offer support if needed. The teacher mentioned what the teacher thought she saw. The student said that if there were a bong in the room it was their dad's, so don't try to pin this on them. The student's dad is the assistant principal at the high school. You've always liked the dad and think he is an excellent principal. How do you advise the teacher?

### Scenario Six

During a team meeting with the grade level teachers, one of the teachers says aloud that he doesn't understand why 'those kids' are even allowed to go to this school. The teacher is talking about a Hispanic student the teacher believes to be undocumented. The teacher is concerned that the other students in his class are losing out because resources are being used for students who are in the country without legal immigration paperwork. This student has fallen behind in their homework completion and is at risk for failing the class this semester. While some adults seem uncomfortable in the meeting after this comment is said, no one addresses the comment. You, as the art teacher in the same grade level and a trusted adult for the student, agree to meet with the student to talk about barriers to their own success from their perspective. In the meeting with the student, the student says that they feel the teacher is racist against Hispanic students and even if they tried harder the teacher would still fail them. What do you say to the student when they call the teacher racist? Use the ethical decision-making model to determine a course of action.

### Scenario Seven

A student is enrolled mid-year in middle school by his mother. The mother discloses to the principal (in confidence) she left her husband after years of domestic abuse. She has not provided the school with any court order stating she has sole custody and the principal suspects none exists. About 3 months later the student's father shows up at school claiming his wife kidnapped his son and he has spent the last few months trying to find him. He is seeking a court hearing to get custody of his son. In the interim, he wants to immediately see his son and review his son's education records. How should the principal handle this situation?

### Scenario Eight

A 16-year old student reveals to a teacher that she is pregnant, the father is a 17 year old boy who goes to a different school. The student utilized a home pregnancy test, but has not seen a physician and is not receiving prenatal care, because she is afraid her parents might find out from the insurance forms. When the teacher begins to talk to her about telling her parents, the student emphatically says she doesn't want her parents to know about the pregnancy. The student is worried about her parents kicking her out. How should the teacher handle this?