GENERAL INFORMATION

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.