**Section 26.270 Professional Conduct and Leadership**

The competent early childhood teacher understands education as a profession, maintains standards of professional conduct, and provides leadership to improve children's learning and well-being.

a) Knowledge Indicators – The competent early childhood teacher:

1) understands the unique characteristics of education as a profession and the ethical considerations that apply to educators.

2) understands how school systems are organized and operate.

3) understands school policies and procedures.

4) understands legal issues in education.

5) understands the importance of active participation and leadership in professional education organizations.

b) Performance Indicators – The competent early childhood teacher:

1) demonstrates an understanding of conditions of children, families, and professionals; current issues and trends; legal issues; and legislation and other public policies affecting children, families, programs for young children, and the early childhood profession.

2) demonstrates an understanding of the early childhood profession, its multiple historical, philosophical, and social foundations, and how these foundations influence current thought and practice.

3) acts in accordance with current legal directives.

4) serves as an advocate on behalf of young children and their families, improved quality of programs and services for young children, and enhanced professional status and working conditions for early childhood educators.

5) demonstrates an understanding of basic principles of administration, organization, and operation of early childhood programs, including supervision of staff and volunteers and program evaluation.

6) recognizes signs of emotional distress, child abuse, and neglect in young children and understands the responsibility and procedures for reporting known or suspected abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.

7) communicates effectively with other professionals concerned with children and with agencies in the larger community to support children's development, learning, and well-being.

8) follows school policy and procedures, respecting the boundaries of professional responsibilities, when working with students, colleagues, and families.