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Date

James Martin, Ph.D., Chair

Barbara Brock, Ed.D., Committee Member

Jennifer Moss Breen, Ph.D., Director

Gail M. Jensen, Ph.D., Dean
Abstract

The lack of quantitative studies about the way systems affect teacher misconduct means management systems are not evidence-based, a situation that places students in harm’s way. This study sought to fill that gap and provide a set of evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, teacher credentialing agencies, and school district personnel to manage teacher misconduct. The study analyzed teacher credential sanction data in 12 states over a 10-year period. The author used zero-inflated negative binomial regression and determined that the legislated status and nature of codes of ethics for teachers, average annual teacher salary, states’ right to work status, and union coverage had a relationship with sanctions. Additionally, Kruskal-Wallis H tests determined that there are statistically significant differences in the number of sanctions between school districts in some states. The author recommends implementation of the E-CED approach—ethics codes, ethics education, and ethics data management—to better manage teacher misconduct.

Keywords: Teacher misconduct, codes of ethics, public education, organizational misbehavior, ethics
Dedication

For the students who need us most and the teachers who go above and beyond to serve them.
Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

From the Atlanta cheating scandal in 2013 (Almasy, 2015) to infamous cases of teacher sexual misconduct (Irvine & Tanner, 2007), the media and public have expressed concern about unethical behaviors by teachers. When teachers behave unethically, they present challenges for leadership. Worse, they may cause long-term damage to their students. Preparing teachers for the ethical dilemmas they might face is imperative to protect students, schools, and the profession.

Stereotypes of the heroic teacher contrast starkly against equally pervasive stereotypes of the incompetent or dangerous teacher. Ethical scholars, however, assert that most ethical dilemmas arise as decisions made between a good and a best choice rather than between two bad choices or a right and wrong choice (Johnson, 2012). For teachers, the right vs. right dilemma may mean choosing between giving a grade that reflects a student’s growth or giving a grade that reflects a student’s content mastery, or choosing whether to skip a unit of required content in the curriculum to expand depth of understanding in another unit. Policymakers need to understand the ethical context in which teachers work to manage misconduct fairly, as some teacher misconduct may be the result of complex choices in which no clearly right answer exists.

Much of the scholarly literature about K12 teacher ethics focuses on cases of child harm such as sexual abuse or teacher violence (Johnson, 2010; Knoll, 2010). Policymaking bodies place ethical violations by teachers into broad categories without attention to nuances that could help better understand and prevent teacher misconduct (Forster, 2012; Page, 2013; Terhart, 1998). For example, a 40-year old teacher who has a
sexual encounter with a 13-year old student may be grouped in the same category of misconduct as a 22-year old teacher who dates an 18-year old student, even though the latter is not illegal and would not be considered unethical in other social contexts.

Although teacher misconduct can refer to behaviors ranging from utilizing school property for personal use to pedophilia, there is little research demonstrating which kinds of misconduct occur at what frequency. Nor is there an abundance of research about which policy or social factors may influence the frequency or severity of teacher misconduct. Understanding these factors is important both to protect children and to reduce teacher attrition. This need has grown in importance since the Every Student Succeeds Act has eliminated the highly qualified teacher clause of No Child Left Behind Act of 2002 (Oregon Department, 2015).

**Statement of the Problem**

Policymakers are responsible for managing teacher misconduct in a manner that protects students and the public education system while also maintaining fairness to teachers; however, there is little scholarly research to provide them with evidence-based recommendations to address teacher misconduct. Systems to manage teacher misconduct are inconsistent across state lines. While these systems result in data that could be analyzed for trends that could help policymakers address teacher misconduct more efficiently, consistently, and fairly, I could find no quantitative studies in the United States that utilized this data.

Teacher misconduct places students, schools, and the teaching profession at risk. K12 teachers are responsible for teaching students the knowledge and skills required to be successful. They are also expected to teach students how to be positive, contributing
citizens (Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Manley-Casimir, Piddocke, & Magsino, 1989). Teachers are expected to help students develop moral character (Campbell, 2003; Kliebard, 2004; Strike, 1988). Because of these many expectations, teachers may experience significant pressure to conform to multiple competing norms when making ethical decisions (Colnerud, 1997; Page, 2013; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011).

Teachers also hold a position of power over their students. Specifically, teachers hold coercive and legitimate power which are more susceptible to misuse than other forms of power (Johnson, 2012). Empirical evidence suggests people in powerful positions may behave in ways that are morally suspect more often than people without such power (Keltner, Lagner, & Allison, 2006). The many expectations of teachers, combined with the imbalanced power relationship of teachers and students, makes it vital to understand factors that may contribute to misconduct.

The United States’ teacher shortage is another important reason to explore relationships between systemic factors and sanctions against teaching credentials. While salary, job satisfaction, retiring Baby Boomers, standardized testing, and other constructs are likely contributing factors to the teacher shortage (Strauss, 2015; Westervelt, 2015), suspensions and revocations of teaching credentials also contribute. Nearly 10% of teachers who left teaching after the 2012-2013 school year left the profession involuntarily (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). The results of this study may contribute to a reduction in this segment of teacher attrition through better understanding of antecedents of teacher misconduct.

Finally, some scholars argue that teachers are asked to fulfill unrealistic, or even impossible, role expectations (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Manley-Casimir, Piddocke,
Legislated codes of ethics are one way that policymakers and teacher credentialing agencies demonstrate their expectations for teachers. Determining whether some kinds of legislated codes have a relationship with different categories of teacher misconduct may help policymakers understand and address the potential for role strain in the expectations placed upon teachers.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between codes of ethics used in various states and sanctions against teaching credentials. Most scholarly research about teacher misconduct focuses on individual characteristics such as teachers’ age, experience, and grade level or subject taught. My study sought to determine whether institutional systems could also influence teacher behavior because leadership has little control over a teachers’ individual traits but has much more control over the systems in which teachers work.

**Research Question**

There is a surprising dearth of scholarly literature about systemic factors that may contribute to teacher misconduct. Teachers’ position of power and their role model status make it imperative that we reduce teacher misconduct. Teacher misconduct contributes to the United States’ teacher shortage in two primary ways: through temporary or permanent loss of the teaching credential and through non-renewed contracts. It is also important to better understand whether teachers are being placed into unrealistic role expectations that increase role strain and may lead them to be less effective in their work (Goode, 1960). If teachers are placed into situations in which the expectations of different stakeholders
compete with one another, they may be more likely to commit misconduct. In some states, legislated codes of ethics demonstrate the expectations of teacher credentialing agencies. To that end, the following research question guided this study: Do legislated codes of ethics have a relationship with teacher misconduct?

**Aim of the Study**

The aim of the study was to develop evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, state teacher credentialing agencies, and district or school-level administrators attempting to reduce teacher misconduct.

**Significance of the Study**

Some scholars suggest that students in teacher preparation programs may have less developed moral reasoning than students in other majors; this may increase the likelihood of unethical behavior (Cummings, Dyas, Maddux, & Kochman, 2001). Moral reasoning and moral decision-making can be taught (Johnson, 2012), but little attention has been given to evidence-based programming to prepare teacher education students for the ethical dilemmas they will face as teachers. This study may also contribute to legislative action that could prevent teacher misconduct and protect students.

Research suggests that teachers are subject to unrealistic expectations of moral behavior (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Page, 2013; Short et al, 2012; Terhart, 1998); however, there is little scholarly literature about systemic factors that contribute to the role strain suggested by these expectations. Scholarly literature about teacher misconduct covers academic misconduct by students in teacher preparation programs (Daniel, Blount, & Ferrell, 1991; Ferrell & Daniel, 1995), sexual misconduct and child abuse (Johnson, 2010; Knoll, 2010; Surface, Stader, & Armenta, 2014), moral sensitivity and character
dispositions in teaching (Birmingham, 2009; Campbell, 2003; Carr, 2006; Osguthorpe, 2013; Schussler & Knarr, 2013; Strike, 2003), and how teachers make ethical decisions in their work (Barrett, Casey, Visser, & Headley, 2012; Benninga, 2013; Colnerud, 1997; Cummings, Dyas, Maddux, & Kochman, 2001; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2010). In each of these cases, the focal point is the individual teacher and/or case of misconduct. While some scholarly attention has been given to the impact of legislated codes of ethics for teachers (Forster, 2012; Page, 2013; Shortt et al., 2012; Terhart, 1998), very little of this research has occurred within the United States. Even less attention has been given to other policy factors that may have a relationship with teacher misconduct. This study contributes toward filling this gap.

**Methodology Overview**

I used a quantitative design. The dependent variable was the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct in 12 states: Texas, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Oregon, North Carolina, Nebraska, Iowa, Washington, New Hampshire, Indiana, and New Mexico. Sanction data was collected for a ten-year period spanning 2004 to 2014, immediately following implementation of the Highly Qualified Status clause of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. Independent variables included the nature of codes of ethics for teachers, the legislated status of those codes, the right to work status of each state, union coverage of public employees in each state, the political affiliation of the governor of each state during the year of sanction, and average annual salary.

**Definition of Relevant Terms**

This dissertation utilizes vocabulary defined by the mixed context of the fields of ethics and education. Although many of these words are defined in state legislation, I
have established working definitions that align them between states rather than choosing any individual state’s definition. Terms used throughout this dissertation include:

*Aspirational Code of Ethics*: A code of ethics for teachers that uses primarily values-based language such as “We believe that X is important”

*Behavior-Guiding Code of Ethics*: A code of ethics for teachers that relays specific behaviors teachers are required to follow

*Credentialing Board*: The agency or group of individuals responsible for determining the status of a teacher’s credential, either during the application process or after a complaint has been received

*Legislated Code of Ethics*: An enforceable code of ethics for teachers that has been incorporated into a state’s legal rules and regulations

*Teacher Misconduct*: Any action by a teacher that results in an investigation by the credentialing board and that results in a sanction against the teacher’s credential

*Teaching Credential*: A legal license to teach students in an elementary or secondary school

**Assumptions**

I conducted this study under two assumptions. The primary assumption is that credentialing boards are fair and honest in their investigations regarding teacher misconduct. I examined sanctions in 12 states in the United States, each with a unique teacher credentialing board responsible for determining whether misconduct occurred. In addition, my sample included sanctions administered over the course of ten years. The breadth and depth of the sample provides some protection against flawed investigative findings. Additionally, there are legal processes in place by which teachers can appeal
sanctions issued against their licenses. Teachers appealing sanction decisions may also receive assistance from their unions. For these reasons, it is likely that investigative findings are accurate reflections of the sanction decision and misconduct.

The second assumption is that codes of ethics are intended to guide the ethical behavior of K12 teachers, as well as to provide a mechanism by which teacher credentialing boards can investigate complaints against K12 teachers and issue sanctions. Traditionally, codes of conduct are behavior-oriented and are enforceable while codes of ethics are aspirational and intended to provide a unifying vision of an organization’s values (Johnson, 2012). Although legislation that guides teacher behavior is enforceable, it is also often labeled as a code of ethics and retains some of that aspirational nature.

**Delimitations**

Delimitations help define the scope and boundaries of a study (Simon, 2011). The primary delimitations of this study were related to my sample. My sample included sanctions that occurred between the years of 2004-2014 in 12 states. Both the category of sanction and a narrative explanation of the reason for the sanctions were available in 10 states. Data by school district was available in five of the twelve states.

**Limitations**

Limitations are external restrictions on a study (Simon, 2011). While I tried to include several regions across the United States in the sample, the Midwest and the Southwestern regions are underrepresented in the sample because sanction data was not readily available. The sample size for states with an aspirational code of ethics for teachers was smaller than the sample size for states with no code of ethics for teachers or...
behavior-guiding codes of ethics for teachers. Data by school district was not available for states that had no code of ethics.

In this study, I investigated sanctions that resulted from teacher misconduct and that were investigated by the state’s teacher credentialing board. The findings of this study cannot be generalized to all teacher misconduct as misconduct is underreported (Shakeshaft, 2004) and some cases result in non-disclosure agreements with school districts (Surface, Stader, & Armenta, 2014), and thus, do not result in a sanction.

**Leader’s Role and Responsibility in Relation to the Problem**

There are three levels of leadership addressed by this study: legislative and policymaking bodies, school district administration, and teachers themselves. Social identity theory tells us that individuals take on and protect the identity of groups to which they belong (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). As individuals identify more strongly with a group, they may begin to develop antagonistic relationships with other groups (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). Legislators and other policymaking bodies who attempt to mold systems that protect students from teacher misconduct may inadvertently create us vs. them feelings among teachers. Policymakers need evidence-based information to develop the most effective system to prevent and manage misconduct.

At the school level, district and school administrators, as well as the school boards working with them, may be more reactionary than proactive around teacher misconduct. School boards and superintendents make decisions about pay scales and benefits. Principals make decisions about renewing individual teachers’ contracts and whether to report teacher misconduct to the state credentialing board except in those states where it is required to report (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2012). This study provides additional
context for these decisions. Additionally, this study provides empirical evidence that can be utilized to reduce the harm that teacher misconduct can create for effected schools.

Lowney (2003) argues that leadership should not be confined to those with legitimate power, but instead should include all who influence others. Teachers are leaders authorized to use multiple categories of power to accomplish work conducted with a vulnerable population. Each of the five common categories of power—legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, and referential—carries the potential for misuse (Johnson, 2012). Because teachers serve a vulnerable population, it is of paramount importance that we understand systemic factors that may lead them to engage in misconduct.

**Summary**

Teacher misconduct contributes to an undesirable environment for students, negative publicity for school districts and the teaching profession, and teacher attrition. While literature about misconduct, especially sexual misconduct, is available, there have been no formalized studies about systemic factors that may have a relationship with teacher misconduct in the United States. This quantitative study begins to fill that gap while also providing an evidence-based foundation for recommendations to policymakers and school administrators. The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between codes of ethics used in various states and sanctions against teaching credentials.

The research question that guided this study was: Do legislated codes of ethics have a relationship with teacher misconduct? To investigate this question, I used zero-inflated negative binomial regression to examine the relationship between various systemic factors and sanctions issued by teacher credentialing boards against teaching
credentials in twelve states. The results of this study can be used at three levels of leadership: legislative, administrative, and classroom.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a widely-accepted ethical component to teaching (Benninga, 2013; Campbell, 2003; Carr, 2006; Feinberg, 1990; Fenstemacher, 1990; Goodlad, 1990; Sockett, 1990; Strike, 1990a; Thomas, 1990). Even so, the nature of that ethical component has been controversial throughout the history of American public education (Goodlad, 1990), especially as it impacts curricular choices (Kliebard, 2004). Diversity of values and conflicts about the purpose of public education have complicated the issue of ethical expectations of teachers. I begin this chapter with a partial history of the moral expectations of teachers. This history has been central in the development of legislated codes of ethics for teachers. Then I discuss scholarly literature regarding teacher ethical norms. Section two discusses the scant empirical research about legislated codes of ethics for teachers, followed by research about codes of ethics in business. Finally, I discuss workplace misconduct and organizational theory that sheds light on the complexity of implementing legislated codes of ethics for teachers.

Teachers and Moral Behavior Expectations

Historically teachers’ professional and private lives have been subject to moral judgment by governments, parents, and the broader communities in which they work (Goodlad, 1990; Kliebard, 2004; Manley-Casimir, Piddocke, & Magsino, 1989; Moses Hines, 2007; Soder, 1990). Sockett (2016) argues that teaching is a “moral universe” that should be guided by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. Where the purpose of education is knowledge, Sockett (2016) identifies three “dispositions” that teachers must develop to be effective in the moral universe of schooling: truth, open-mindedness, and impartiality. The dispositions of open-mindedness and impartiality
assist the teacher in behaving morally in the presence of differing and unevaluated truths held by students (Sockett, 2016). These dispositions, along with others (Sockett, 1993) can and should be taught to teachers during their pre-service training experience.

The idea of requiring teachers to hold certain dispositions is not without criticism (see Damon, 2005). Some scholars fear that dispositions are a way to control teachers’ ideologies rather than a way to encourage ethical behavior (Moses Hines, 2007). Nonetheless, since 2008 the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has included professional disposition as a required assessment of teacher preparation programs accredited in the United States. This confirms there is widespread acceptance of the idea that teaching is a profession built around moral behavior.

The assumption that teaching is a moral profession dates to Greek philosophy and Plato’s identification of the four cardinal virtues (“Plato’s Ethics,” 2013). Some argue that teachers must behave morally to effectively teach moral behavior (Campbell, 2003; Carr, 2006). Disagreements about curriculum in American schools have often been charged with arguments about the moral nature of the profession (Kliebard, 2004). Moses Hines (2007) suggests that arguments such as these have been used to justify hiring teachers based on qualities unrelated to teaching ability. Others claim that idealized portraits of teachers provide unrealistic role expectations for them (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Shortt, Hallett, Spendlove, Hardy & Barton, 2012; Spendlove, Barton, Hallett & Shortt, 2012).

If teacher preparation programs require assessment of pre-service teachers’ dispositions, and if those assessments are accurate, legislated codes of ethics should impact the tendency of teachers to engage in ethical violations only minimally. If the
codes produce unrealistic role expectations, they would similarly have little effect on the occurrence of ethical violations by teachers. It is possible, however, that such codes of ethics serve as a last resort to manage severe moral deviance. In that case, we should anticipate that sanctions related to ethical violations would be similar in number and category as sanctions in other helping professions.

Some scholars have found that preservice teachers have lower moral sensitivity and are at lower levels of moral development than undergraduates in other professions (Cummings, Dyas, Maddux & Kochman, 2001; Daniel, Blount & Ferrell, 1991; Ferrell & Daniel, 1995). This moral development may improve as teachers gain experience in the field (Schussler & Knarr, 2013), but could contribute to findings that some teachers believe they can accurately identify misconduct while also demonstrating an inability to identify law or policy regarding sexual misconduct (Freeman Rhay, 2009). This situation is especially problematic due to the consistent presence of ethical dilemmas in teaching (Barrett, Casey, Vissar, & Headley, 2012; Clark, 1990; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2010; Shortt et al, 2012; Thomas, 1990).

Examinations of ethical tensions in teaching reveal that conflicting values are ubiquitous. Colnerud (1997) identified five categories of ethical norms in teachers in Sweden: interpersonal norms, professional norms emanating from the task, institutional norms, social conformity norms, and self-protecting norms. Ethical dilemmas often require teachers to decide between two categories of norms (Colnerud, 1997). Tension between competing norms may place teachers into positions in which no clearly right path exists. Although Colnerud’s (1997) study was conducted in Swedish schools, there is support for the existence of these competing norms in literature elsewhere in the world.
Legislatively, teachers may have professional norms that impact the way they view these ethical dilemmas. Barrett et al (2012) identified four groups of ethical norms among teachers. In this study, teachers perceived ethical dilemmas by seriousness and how often they believed certain ethical misconduct by teachers occurs. While Barrett et al’s study focused on behaviors that were clearly wrong, such as insulting a student or taking school property, the categories that emerged can be used to help us understand how teachers approach ethical dilemmas where no clear answer exists. If perceptions of the severity and frequency of misconduct affects teachers’ attention to the ethical nature of their work, legislated codes of ethics may be counterproductive just as Terhart (1998) argued.

Even so, teachers receive little guidance regarding the ethical aspects of teaching or how to address ethical dilemmas (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Sockett; 1990; Strike, 1990b). Conflicting norms within the educational setting combined with this lack of ethical understanding and lower moral sensitivity (Cummings, Dyas, Maddux & Kochman, 2001; Daniel, Blount & Ferrell, 1991; Ferrell & Daniel, 1995) lend support to the need for a mode of guiding teacher behavior. Legislated codes of ethics may provide such guidance if they address individual behaviors and contextual components of teaching. Sockett (1990) argues that such documents should be developed at the school level, in partnership with all stakeholders, to be effective. Current legislated codes of ethics are developed at the state level with little local input. As a result, these codes may not be effective at providing the behavioral guidance they are intended to support.
Teachers perceive collegial loyalty as a significant ethical norm in their work (Barrett et al., 2012; Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). Because principals view ethical breaches as cause for teacher dismissal (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2012) or non-hire (Griffin & Lake, 2012), teachers may feel pressure to maintain the confidence of their colleagues by not reporting ethical violations even when those violations compete with other norms and ethical responsibilities. Such collegial loyalty is consistent with social identity theory in which groups of people develop intense loyalty to one another when they feel threatened by outside groups (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). Pressure from outside sources likely strengthen collegial loyalty of teachers and could play a role in underreporting of misconduct and immorality (Campbell, 1996). A strong sense of loyalty within an organization can reduce the ethical climate of the organization (Johnson, 2012) as it did in the Penn State scandal (Albino, 2013). As such, collegial loyalty may dampen the effect of legislated codes of ethics.

Codes of Ethics and Conduct

While scholars generally agree that there is an ethical component to teaching (Campbell, 1993; Goodlad, Soder, & Sirotnik, 1990; Strike, 1988), there is a dearth of scholarly literature about legislated codes of ethics for K12 teachers. The literature that does exist is limited to content analysis methodologies and measurement of perceptions of ethics that only hint at the potential for codes of ethics to impact teacher misconduct. The field of business ethics contains a significant amount of scholarly literature about codes of ethics and conduct, but also shares some of the limitations of scholarly literature in education. Studies in business ethics often measure perceptions or intent rather than behavior (O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005).
There are important differences between legislated codes of ethics for teachers and codes of ethics in corporations. Teachers are public employees who work at sites that may be quite different from one another. The role of an elementary school teacher in a rural community is as different from the role of a high school teacher in the inner city as the cultural contexts in which they work. Teachers answer to district-level administrators who are not the authors of legislated codes of ethics for teachers. In the corporate environment, multiple sites are likely to share key characteristics and to encounter similar ethical dilemmas. Codes of ethics in business are often written by top-level management who work in the corporation (Long & Driscoll, 2008; Smythe, 2013).

Even so, there are enough similarities between codes of ethics for teachers and codes of ethics in business to suggest that a review of business ethics literature can be instructive to the field of education. First, in both education (Terhart, 1998) and business (Smythe, 2013), codes of ethics are usually developed by an external authority to the group of people required to follow them. In education, this authority is the legislature or the teacher credentialing board. In business, this authority is senior management and the board of directors, sometimes at the insistence of government regulations such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002.

The consequences of misconduct in business and education have both similarities and differences. In both business and education, sanctions can range from reprimand to dismissal (Terhart, 1998; Smythe, 2013; Strike, 1990). Both employees and teachers should have similar perceptions of consequences. However, in business, the person or persons who issue the sanction are usually authorities within the organizational context in which the employee works (Smythe, 2013). Additionally, it would be rare for business
employees’ sanctions to be public record except in the case of egregious misconduct reported in the media. Teachers found guilty of violating the code of ethics may carry a public record of the sanction and may be forced to find employment in another field as well as another organization (Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, 2016; Strike, 1990). This context is important for making comparisons between business ethics literature and education ethics literature because the severity of consequences may be a key component in ethical decision making (O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005).

In this section, I first discuss literature about codes of ethics in education. Then I review literature in business ethics and demonstrate areas of concert between the two fields. Finally, I discuss the implications of the literature for the current study.

**Codes of Ethics in K-12 Education**

There have been many calls for codes of ethics for teachers (Barrett et al, 2012; Sockett, 1990; Strike, 1990b). Other groups decry such measures in favor of more professional autonomy (Forster, 2012; Terhart, 1998). As such, it is surprising that there are few empirical studies of codes of ethics in education. In his landmark study of legislated codes of ethics for teachers in four countries, Terhart (1998) suggests that codes of ethics for teachers are not advantageous. Teachers may not behave in accordance with the codes because they require professional autonomy, but the public may conclude that codes assure ethical behavior by teachers (Terhart, 1998). Codes of ethics may be inflexible to societal changes while undermining teachers’ individual moral sensitivities (Terhart, 1998). These conclusions are based upon content analysis of the language of the codes of ethics rather than behaviors by teachers, administrators, or the public (Terhart, 1998). Empirical data is needed to support or refute these findings.
Other scholars have built on Terhart’s work (1998) with additional content analysis of legislated codes of ethics for teachers. Forster (2012) completed a comparative analysis of legislated codes of ethics in Australian provinces and territories. She found that two categories of codes were in use. One category was normative. The other was legalistic and included disciplinary measures. Forster (2012) found more of the former than the latter. She concluded that aspirational codes pressing normative values were too ambiguous or vague to be useful to teachers while regulatory codes had the potential to undermine teachers’ autonomous, ethical decision-making. Forster’s (2012) shares the limitations of Terhart’s (1998) study.

Using a different approach, Page (2013) reviewed 300 disciplinary orders of the General Teaching Council for England (GTCE) issued prior to its dismantling in 2012. Page (2013) identified 21 categories of misconduct, both internal and external to the classroom and school environments for which teachers were sanctioned. He suggests that the language of the disciplinary orders places the onus for misbehavior at the individual level without regard to organizational factors that could contribute to poor ethical decision-making. These findings speak to the need for rigorous, empirical study of codes of ethics and teacher misconduct.

Content analysis, using a Structuralist approach, of the GTCE Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers suggests that the code was characterized by tensions between teacher-as-controller and teacher-as-controlled, mythologizing teachers in ways that may undermine ethical decision-making (Shortt, Hallett, Spendlove, Hardy, & Barton, 2010). While several scholars have suggested an undermining effect to moral decision-making (Forster, 2012; Page, 2013; Shortt et al, 2010; Terhart, 1998), there is no
empirical evidence demonstrating a correlation in either direction. While these analyses help provide context for discussion of codes of ethics for teachers, they also support the need to assess the relationship between these codes and teacher misconduct.

**Codes of Ethics in Business**

Like research about codes of ethics in education, many studies of codes of ethics in business use content analysis and other simplified methods (for a detailed discussion, see Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008 or O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). In one of the most-cited articles on this topic, Adams, Taschian, and Shore (2001) found that the mere presence of a code of ethics increases ethical behavior in corporations even if employees do not remember what the code says. There are two important considerations about this study. First, the study did not measure ethical behavior, but rather perceptions of ethical behavior among employees using a non-random sample. The perception of ethical behavior may or may not reflect actual behavior among employees (for an in-depth discussion of the limitations of measuring intent instead of behavior, see O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). Second, the study was conducted prior to the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 which requires registration of codes of ethics for publicly-traded companies. It is possible that codes of conduct and ethics have lost some symbolic power in corporations now that they are required by law.

The idea that codes serve primarily regulatory or self-interested purposes has some support in the literature. Long and Driscoll (2008) analyzed seven codes of ethics in corporations and found that the language of these codes provided mostly strategic legitimacy to outside stakeholders. The self-interested nature of the codes may serve to reduce ethical decision-making by employees, but the study did not quantify misconduct.
or compare incidents of employee misconduct with the analyzed codes. If teachers perceive legislated codes of ethics primarily as a means by which authorities wish to control their behavior or protect schools from legal liability, teacher misconduct may be more prevalent as a result of code implementation.

In contrast to Adams et al, Valentine and Barnett (2003) found that the presence of a code of ethics did not have a statistically significant relationship with perceptions of ethical behavior in corporations. Analyzing 373 surveys returned from a random sample of 3,000, the study found that perceptions of ethical behavior by managers was a more important variable to increase perceptions of corporate ethics than the presence of a formalized ethical document. This finding suggests that teacher misconduct may be better curbed by ethical role-modeling of principals and administrators.

Scholars do not agree about the general efficacy of codes of ethics alone to prevent misconduct. In addition to the landmark studies noted above, empirical research has found that codes of ethics increase perceptions of ethical climate (Cleek & Leonard, 1998; Vitell & Hidalgo, 2006; Webley & Werner, 2008), that codes are helpful but only if included as part of a larger ethics program (Stapenhurst & Pelizzo, 2004), and that codes of ethics are generally concerned with self-interest and have little effect on behaviors or ethical climate (Long & Driscoll, 2008).

One study may bring these opposing views together. Schwartz (2001) found that the effects of codes of ethics are related to individual personality characteristics and the purpose for which the individuals are utilizing the codes. According to Schwartz (2001), individuals do not comply with codes of ethics when the codes compete with self-interest, they are dissatisfied with their jobs, the work environment is oppositional to the code,
they believe it is in the organization’s best interest to violate the code, or they are ignorant of the code. In this view, teachers could view collegial loyalty as imperative to protecting the profession and thereby would not follow a legislated code of ethics if it competed with that value. Teachers may be ignorant of legislated codes of ethics. Finally, we might expect to see higher rates of sanctions against teachers in work environments with low wages and other factors related to teacher job dissatisfaction.

Schwartz (2001) also found several reasons that people complied with codes of ethics. First, when an organization’s values were consistent with the employee’s values, they were more likely to comply. Second, employees were more likely to comply with codes of ethics when they were afraid of discipline. Finally, loyalty to the organization was related to increased compliance. Based on these findings, we could expect to find lower rates of sanctions when codes of ethics were consistently enforced and factors related to teacher job satisfaction, such as class size and salary, were high.

**Organizational Misbehavior**

Scholarship in education often approaches teaching as an institution separate from the context of the environments in which teachers work. This view neglects the reality that public education in the United States is split into distinct organizations with different histories, goals, and community expectations. While we know intuitively that there are contextual differences between an inner-city school, a suburban school, and a rural school, scholarship rarely accounts for these differences. Using this approach, we may miss important contextual clues to the behaviors and institutions we are studying. These institutions are likely to have more than one set of rules and norms by which the members of the institution determine the most appropriate behavior (Ostrom, 2005).
To more completely understand teacher misconduct, we must understand teaching as an activity that occurs within an organizational framework (Page, 2013) and that those organizational frameworks are different from site to site (Sockett, 2016). In this section, I review literature about organizational misbehavior (OMB) and the organizational factors that may contribute to its occurrence. Then I explain how this literature informs discussion about legislated codes of ethics for teachers and teacher misconduct.

**Forms of Misconduct**

Teacher misconduct that leads to sanctions includes a wide range of behaviors. Some behaviors may be harmful to the teacher committing the misconduct, such as the use of illegal substances. Other behaviors may be directed at individuals or groups outside of the organization, as in the case of committing burglary or targeting minorities, or directed internally at individuals, groups, or the organization itself, such as abusing the children under their care or stealing school property. Although these behaviors are each destructive in their way, they are treated differently in the literature. Three categories of misconduct emerge.

The first category is counterproductive work behavior (CWB). CWB is defined as “any intentional behavior on the part of an organization member viewed by the organization as contrary to its legitimate interests” (Gruys & Sackett, 2003, p. 30). In education, CWB might take the form of teachers leaving early or arriving late, missing deadlines for paperwork, or misusing their preparation time. It might also include behaviors such as gossiping about the school system to the public or sharing information from private meetings with individuals outside of those meetings. In the first case, CWB represents issues of competence. We would be unlikely to see many of these behaviors in
the sanctions data due to evaluation systems, unions, and the lack of competence measures as part of legislated codes of ethics for teachers. We may, however, see the second kind of behavior in the data because the legal guidelines for dismissing a teacher for moral reasons rest in part on the effect the behavior has on the education of students and the school system (Fulmer, 2002; Strike, 1990; Summerville, 2010).

The second category has been called workplace deviance (Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000; Liu & Deng, 2012), deviant workplace behaviors (Yen & Teng, 2012), employee misconduct (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2011; Werbel & Balkin, 2010), or employee deviance (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). These behaviors include actions that are harmful and that violate social norms such as theft, harassment, or aggression. In public education, this would include verbally or physically abusing the children in one’s care, sexually harassing colleagues, lying to an administrator, or other behaviors that are not targeted at the school or the institution of public education. Because these behaviors violate social norms, they are likely less visible and are also likely to be underreported just as they are in other industries (Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000).

The third category of misconduct is organizational misbehavior (OMB). Andreoli and Lefkowitz (2009) citing Vardi and Weitz (2004) define organizational misbehavior as “intentional antisocial or harmful acts targeting primarily the organization or institution” (p. 310). OMB is further divided into three categories (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). OMB Type S includes behaviors completed because they benefit the individual engaging in the behavior (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). In education, this would include actions like theft of school property or misuse of donated funds. OMB Type O includes behaviors that target people external to the organization (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). In
education, this might include gossiping about parents, vandalizing or allowing students to vandalize rented community property, or deliberately misrepresenting outside organizations while speaking with students. OMB Type D includes deliberately harmful and destructive behaviors targeted at people inside the organization or at the organization itself (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). In education, these behaviors might include sexual harassment or having a violent encounter with someone on school grounds.

Because teachers are held to a high moral standard, counterproductive work behaviors, employee deviance, and organizational misbehavior may all be cause for sanctions against a teacher’s credential. Significantly, different factors may correlate with different forms of CWB (Gruys & Sackett, 2003), employee misconduct (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), and OMB (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Legislated codes of ethics address all three constructs in the same manner. Further, the expectations in legislated codes of ethics are removed from the organizational context in which the behaviors occur. As such, legislated codes of ethics may affect different categories of behavior differently.

**Behaviors of Self-Interest / OMB Type S**

Some behaviors serve or appear to serve an employee’s self-interest. Examples include calling in sick when not actually sick, arriving a few minutes late or leaving a few minutes early every day, using work computers for personal purposes, turning in poor quality work, or lying. In the OMB framework, these kinds of behaviors would be classified as OMB Type S (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Under a rational choice model, individuals carefully weigh the possible benefit against the risk of being caught before engaging in these kinds of behaviors (Werbel & Balkin, 2010). This process of decision-making is consistent with Vardi and Wiener’s (1996) description of OMB Type S.
Legislated codes of ethics provide a method of enforcement when teacher misconduct occurs. Having an enforcement mechanism with serious consequences may increase the perception of risk. Therefore, legislated codes of ethics should have a negative relationship with OMB Type S behaviors. Other factors, however, may also play a role. Age and experience have been consistently shown to have a negative correlation with workplace deviance (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000). We may expect that teachers who are younger or who have less job tenure are more likely to take the risk of OMB Type S behaviors, but the teachers’ intention to continue teaching as a long-term career goal may also increase their perceived level of risk (Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000).

Two additional factors may increase the risk of OMB Type S behaviors. High stakes performance goals may increase the risks that individuals are willing to take (Werbel & Balkin, 2010). This finding is consistent with rational choice theory because the perceived reward outweighs the perceived risk. Overqualification has also been positively correlated with misconduct (Luksyte, Maynard, & Spitzmueller, 2011). Legislated codes of ethics may compete directly with these two factors. In the first case, teachers may be expected to follow strict ethical rules while simultaneously being threatened with sanctions or promised rewards based on accountability measures such as high student test scores. Regarding the latter, the combination of high certification standards, including the requirement for ongoing professional development, may lead teachers to perceive themselves as overqualified when asked to follow a strict code of ethics that removes personal autonomy from the ethical decision-making process.
Harm to External and Internal Sources / OMB Type O and OMB Type D

OMB Type O behaviors are those that create harm outside of the organization (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Immoral behaviors that occur outside of the school environment are perceived as potentially having a negative impact on individuals inside the school, especially students (Fulmer, 2002; Summerville, 2010). For example, teachers cited for driving while under the influence may be subject to sanctions even though the behavior occurred off campus (Fulmer, 2002). It is necessary to clarify the difference between OMB Type O behaviors and OMB Type D behaviors.

OMB Type D behaviors are those that are intended to cause harm to the organization or to individuals within the organization (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Sexual harassment is an example of OMB Type D behavior. OMB Type D behaviors may be more likely to receive attention from the media. Teachers found guilty of these behaviors may be sanctioned more heavily than teachers found guilty of other types of misconduct.

Antecedents of misconduct are highly varied (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009) and are likely different for OMB Type D and OMB Type O behaviors (Vardi & Wiener, 1996). Organizational factors are more likely to be correlated with misconduct than individual factors (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009), but legislated codes of ethics may not be perceived as an organizational factor given their distance from the organizations in which they are expected to be enforced.

The Role of Organizational Climate

Organizational climate has been found to have the greatest impact on OMB, CWB, and employee misconduct (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; Vardi, 2001). Liu and Ding (2011) propose that perceived organizational support and interactional
justice are key characteristics of ethical climate that are likely negatively correlated with OMB. High ethical climates tend to produce higher ethical behavior by employees (Johnson, 2012). Organizational cultures with strong values and norms tend to create strong organizations (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013).

There are two reasons that organizational climate is important to this study. First, as previously mentioned, legislated codes of ethics for teachers do not come from the organization but from an external authority. Since employees are more likely to take ethical cues from leadership and organizational norms (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Johnson, 2012), we can expect legislated codes of ethics to have little impact on teacher behavior. Second, silos within organizations provide subgroups with individualized norms that may be decentralized from the larger ethical climate (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Ostrom, 2005). It is difficult to imagine a more siloed organization than a public school district, especially at the secondary level. Again, this supports the idea that legislated codes of ethics will have little effect on occurrences of misconduct. It also suggests that teacher misconduct may occur more often at the secondary level where siloes are a prominent feature and that there may be significant differences in levels of misconduct across school districts where leadership is different.

Summary

In this chapter, I first discussed the historical underpinnings of teacher morality. Many scholars view teaching as an occupation wrought with moral considerations (Campbell, 2003; Carr, 2006; Goodlad, 1990; Sockett, 1990; Sockett, 1993; Sockett, 2016; Strike, 1990). As a result, teachers are subject to intense scrutiny in both their public and private lives. Some scholars suggest that teachers are subject to unrealistic role
expectations (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Terhart, 1998), which may exacerbate the occurrence of misconduct among teachers.

I then discussed codes of ethics as they relate to teachers and business. Codes of ethics in education are viewed as both necessary (Barrett et al, 2012; Sockets, 1990; Sockets, 2016) and ineffective (Forster, 2012; Page, 2013; Shortt et al, 2012; Spendlove et al, 2012; Terhart, 1998), but there is little empirical evidence for either case. In business, studies about the effectiveness of codes of ethics have also shown mixed results (see O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005).

In the last section of this chapter, I discussed counterproductive work behavior, workplace deviance, and organizational misbehavior. OMB Type S, behaviors that benefit the self (Vardi & Wiener, 1996), are the only kinds of behavior that appear likely to be affected by legislated codes of ethics for teachers. This view is tenuous due to other contributing factors such as age, job tenure, and career stakes. OMB behaviors that cause harm to external and internal sources are unlikely to be affected by legislated codes of ethics because they are too far removed from the organizational climates they are intended to oversee. In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology used in this study.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Teacher misconduct contributes to attrition through involuntarily removal from the profession (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). More importantly, teacher misconduct may result in significant harm to students and schools. The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between codes of ethics used in various states and sanctions against teaching credentials. In this chapter, I present the research question that guided this study and my hypotheses based on the literature. I then explain the research design and data collection procedures. Finally, I describe ethical considerations in the context of this study.

Research Question and Hypotheses

One way that legislators attempt to address teacher misconduct is to legislate a code of ethics. Yet, there is little empirical research about the effectiveness of codes of ethics for teachers (Forster, 2012; Page, 2013; Shortt et al., 2012; Terhart, 1998) and nearly all are qualitative and conducted outside of the United States (Forster, 2012; Shortt et al., 2012; Terhart, 1998). Findings about the effectiveness of codes of ethics in business have been mixed (Kaptein & Schwartz, 2008; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010; O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). This study was guided by the research question: Do legislated codes of ethics for teachers have a relationship with teacher misconduct?

Variables

The unit of analysis for this study was the state and school year. Additionally, I collected data by school district and school year which allowed me to compare both within group and among group variables and to test for patterns over time. The dependent
variable was the number of sanctions against teaching credentials for teacher misconduct in each year, state, and school district where available. Teacher misconduct was further categorized as counterproductive work behavior (CWB), OMB Type S, OMB Type D, or OMB Type O behavior because research suggests that these types of behavior may have different antecedents (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Vardi & Wiener, 1996).

The primary independent variable to answer my research question was the existence and nature of legislated code of ethics for teachers in each of the 12 states in this study. I placed codes of ethics into aspirational or behavior-guiding categories because the literature suggests that people may respond differently to these two types of codes (Johnson, 2012). Additionally, scholars have suggested that codes of ethics for teachers in Australia were too aspirational to guide teacher behavior constructively (Forster, 2012; Terhart, 1998). I also categorized codes of ethics as absent, legislated for public employees only, or legislated specifically for teachers.

Job satisfaction is closely associated with employee misbehavior (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Huiras, Ugggen, & McMorris, 2000; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010). Teachers have identified a 10% increase in salary as one way to increase job satisfaction (Halpert, 2011). Perceptions of overqualification may contribute to higher levels of CWB (Luksyte, Maynard, & Spitzmueller, 2011). Average annual salary was a secondary independent variable for this reason.

Teachers’ unions often provide representation for teachers who are accused of misconduct, which may affect the number of sanctions (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2012). Collective bargaining may affect job satisfaction by improving fringe benefits, salary,
and other factors related to job climate (Winkler, Scull, & Zeehandalaar, 2012), including merit pay systems which may increase individuals’ willingness to deviate from workplace norms (Werbel & Balkin, 2010). To test the impact of teachers’ unions, I included the percentage union coverage of public employees in each state by year as well as the right to work status of each state.

Confounding variables are variables that may affect the outcome of the study but are not measured by the researcher (Creswell, 2012). Highly ethical organizational climates may contribute to reduced incidents of both CWB and OMB (Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; Vardi, 2001); however, organizational climate was not measured in this study. Additionally, individuals typically take ethical cues from leadership and organizational norms (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Johnson, 2012; O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). Therefore, organizational climate may be a confounding variable.

**Hypotheses**

In this study, I tested whether the nature or legislated status of codes of ethics for teachers affected sanctions related to teacher misconduct. Additionally, I tested other systemic variables, as well as whether some variables affected different forms of OMB differently. Effective codes of ethics are developed with the individuals who are expected to follow them (Johnson, 2012; Smythe, 2013; Wood & Rimmer, 2003). Yet, scholars have found that codes of ethics by themselves are not effective (Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010; O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Schwartz, 2001; Valentine & Barnett, 2003; Webley & Werner, 2008; Wood & Rimmer, 2003).

Aspirational codes of ethics are those codes which describe ideal behaviors (Johnson, 2012). Codes of ethics for teachers in Australia were found to be highly
aspirational (Forster, 2012; Terhart, 1998). Because legislated codes of ethics are enforceable with sanctions, aspirational codes of ethics may lead to unrealistic role expectations that translate to higher rates of CWB and OMB. Therefore, I hypothesized:

\[ H_1: \text{States with aspirational codes of ethics will have higher incidents of CWB and OMB than states without legislated codes of ethics or states with behavior-guiding codes.} \]

Individuals may use codes of ethics as a rule-book or signpost for expected behavior (Schwartz, 2001). Fear of discipline is one reason that individuals comply with codes of ethics (Schwartz, 2001). Clearly defined behavioral expectations may increase the ability of individuals to comply with codes of ethics (Johnson, 2012; Wood & Rimmer, 2003). Some scholars suggest that codes of ethics should address specific dilemmas faced in an industry (Smythe, 2013). Finally, it may be easier to enforce behavior-guiding codes of ethics. Consistent enforcement is a key factor to increasing the perception of risk to individuals considering CWB or OMB (Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010; O’Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Vitell & Hidalgo, 2006; Webley & Werner, 2008). I hypothesized that:

\[ H_2: \text{States with behavior-guiding codes of ethics will have lower incidents of CWB and OMB than states without legislated codes of ethics or states with aspirational codes.} \]

Higher job satisfaction results in more ethical behavior (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000; Kish-Gephart, Harrison, & Treviño, 2010). Higher average annual salaries may increase teacher job satisfaction (Halpert, 2011). Additionally, individuals are more likely to comply with ethical expectations when they
perceive that they have organizational support (Liu & Ding, 2012; Schwartz, 2001). Teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when they perceive that they have support from their administrators (Halpert, 2011). I hypothesized:

\( H_3 \): Districts with higher average annual salaries will have fewer incidents of CWB and OMB Type S behaviors.

\( H_4 \): Districts with lower average annual salaries will have more incidents of OMB Type D and OMB Type O behaviors.

**Research Design**

In this study, I was trying to determine whether there is a relationship between legislated codes of ethics and teacher misconduct. Other systemic factors such as average teacher salary and union coverage may also have a relationship with teacher misconduct and were included in this study. I used a quantitative design to test these variables with zero-inflated negative binomial regression. To test for differences between districts, I used a Kruskal-Wallis H test.

Legislated codes of ethics differ between states and needed to be aligned prior to statistical analysis. Additionally, investigative findings associated with sanctions against teacher credentials provided details necessary to categorize teacher misconduct incidents into CWB, OMB Type S, OMB Type D, or OMB Type O behaviors.

**Data Sources and Collection Procedures**

The data I utilized for this study is public record. I applied for and received approval for this study from Creighton University’s Institutional Review Board on March 6, 2017. Documentation of approval is available in Appendix A.
I collected legislated codes of ethics from governmental websites containing administrative rules or statutes for each state that I investigated. I reviewed the legislative history of these codes to determine dates of implementation and revision that applied to my data set.

I requested the number of sanctions against teaching certifications by type of sanction, school year, and school district for the years 2004-2014 from 27 states. Of those, 13 states responded. Three states were deemed cost prohibitive to retrieve data. Three states refused public information requests; 1 because data was protected by law as personnel information and 2 because data was not collected. Data received from two states was not usable for this study. These requests resulted in usable data from Maryland, Indiana, Virginia, Texas, New Hampshire, and New Mexico. Sanction data was retrieved from governmental websites from Washington, Oregon, North Carolina, Iowa, Pennsylvania, and Nebraska.

Investigative findings or narrative descriptions of the reason for sanctions were available from all states except Washington and New Mexico. These descriptions were reviewed to classify the misconduct behavior that led to sanction as CWB, OMB Type S, OMB Type D, or OMB Type O. When investigative findings revealed more than one behavior in multiple categories, the behavior that led to the involvement of the credentialing board was used for categorization purposes. Sanctions that occurred because of misconduct that occurred while the teacher was not employed by a public school district were excluded, as were sanctions against the certifications of administrators, counselors, and paraprofessionals. School districts and years with no behaviors resulting in sanctions were included in the sample.
Legislated codes of ethics are those codes formalized in state statutes. Non-legislated codes are those that are created by a source outside of a state’s legislature, such as the state’s teaching certification board. Public employee codes are codes of ethics written for all public employees rather than just teachers.

Average annual salary was used as an independent variable. This data was collected from public sources that differed by state. Table 1 shows from which organizations I collected average annual teacher salary by state.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Annual Teacher Salary Data Sources</th>
<th>Average Annual Teacher Salary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>Institute of Educational Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>Institute of Educational Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>Maryland Public Schools Website Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>Salary Schedule Pages, Nebraska State Education Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>Institute of Educational Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>State of New Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>Legislated statewide salary schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>Annual Survey of Teachers Salary and Benefits – Oregon School Board Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>openPAgov.org database – Information from 2009-now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>Texas Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>Teacher Salary Report, VA Dept. of Ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>Institute of Educational Statistics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additionally, I collected the political affiliation of the governor of each state by school year, percentage of public employees covered by unions, and the right to work status of each state from public records.

Because I was using a Maximum Likelihood Model for statistical analysis, I coded independent variables from least strict to strictest characteristic, with the exception of political affiliation. This system allowed me to determine whether sanctions related to
teacher misconduct increased or decreased as the strictness of independent variables increased using zero-inflated negative binomial regression. Table 2 shows how I coded each independent variable for analysis.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 2</th>
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*Codes for Independent Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legislated Status</td>
<td>0 Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Public Employee Code Only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Legislated for Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of Code</td>
<td>0 Absent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Aspirational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Behavior-Guiding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work Status</td>
<td>0 No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>0 Democrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Republican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Independent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: For Independent political affiliation, n = 0*

**Data Analysis**

First, legislated codes of ethics were analyzed and categorized as absent, aspirational, or behavior-guiding. Then, legislated codes of ethics were categorized as absent, for public employees only, or legislated for teachers. Investigative findings were reviewed and classified as CWB, OMB Type S, OMB Type D, or OMB Type O. Cases were amalgamated by state, school year, and where available, school district. I entered all data into two Excel spreadsheets. One spreadsheet included data by state. The second included data by school district. Both spreadsheets were imported into Stata. I conducted zero-inflated negative binomial regression on state data. To determine statistically significant differences between school districts by state, I used a Kruskal-Wallis H test.
Theoretical Lens

I considered the implications of two theoretical lenses as I interpreted findings. Role strain theory suggests that individuals are more likely to fail to meet expectations if they have competing obligations (Goode, 1960). Scholarly literature suggests that legislated codes of ethics may create such competing role expectations for teachers (Forster, 2012; Page 2013; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Shortt et al, 2012; Terhart 1998) in addition to existing role strain that exists within the teaching field (Colnerud, 1997). As such, role strain theory was an appropriate lens for this study.

Rational choice theory states that individuals use rational decision-making processes prior to choosing to deviate from social norms (Clarke & Cornish, 1985). When the risks are less than the rewards, individuals may choose to deviate (Clarke & Cornish, 1985; Werbel & Balkin, 2010). Legislated codes of ethics provide an enforcement mechanism for teacher misconduct, thereby increasing risk. However, reward systems may also impact this decision-making process. Both risk and reward structures were included in statistical testing models for this reason.

Ethical Considerations

Data used in this study was public record. While the names of teachers who had been sanctioned were public record, I used amalgamated data by district and state and did not include teachers’ names in my data tables or this study.

As a K12 teacher in a state with high union strength and coverage, I had a potential bias about the effect of some independent variables such as average teacher salary, right to work status, and union coverage. As an abuse survivor, I was emotionally
invested in finding evidence that could explain why teachers engage in abusive behaviors. I remained alert to my personal biases as I interpreted data. I ran multiple tests to prove or disprove hypotheses. I reported all findings, both positive and negative. As I considered the implications of findings, I considered many different reasons for those findings from the perspective not only of teachers, but also of policymakers, administrative personnel, and the general public.

**Summary**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between codes of ethics used in various states and sanctions against teaching credentials. In this study, I sought to answer the research question: Do legislated codes of ethics have a relationship with teacher misconduct? To answer this question, I utilized a quantitative design. Specifically, I conducted a zero-inflated negative binomial regression analysis of state data and Kruskal-Wallis H tests to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between school districts.

In this section, I described the independent, dependent, and confounding variables. Data was collected from public sources through a combination of governmental websites and public records information requests. Data included sanctions against teaching credentials in 12 states over the period of 2004-2014. In the next chapter, I will describe the specific statistical tests that I conducted using Stata, as well as my findings.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Introduction

The research question that guided this study was: do legislated codes of ethics have a relationship with sanctions against teaching certifications? In this section, I present the procedures used to organize, clean, and analyze data from 12 states. I then present findings related to the nature of codes of ethics, the legislated status of codes of ethics, and other systemic variables that may contribute to sanctions related to teacher misconduct. I discuss differences between school districts. Finally, I present some possible explanations for and implications of findings that legislated codes of ethics and other systemic factors do have a relationship with sanctions against teaching certificates.

Presentation of the Findings

Data related to teacher misconduct is not collected, recorded, or managed consistently across the United States. I was able to use data about sanctions related to teacher misconduct from 12 states, but only five of those states recorded sanction data by school district.

Data Organization Procedures

First, I assigned a unique code to every school district in the five states where narrative cases of misconduct were available. These included Maryland, Virginia, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico. I entered each school district into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet by school year for the ten-year period of data. Each state determines their school district boundaries. As such, some states have a larger number of school districts than others. The number of school districts by state appear in Table 3.
Table 3

*Number of School Districts by State*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I then reviewed the narrative cases of misconduct and removed cases applying to administrators, counselors, coaches, and paraprofessionals. Finally, I categorized remaining cases as OMB Type-S, OMB Type-D, OMB Type-O, or Counterproductive Work Behavior. Behaviors coded as OMB Type-S included falsification of documentation, theft or sale of school property, embezzlement, receiving favors from students, fraud, and abandoning a contract. Behaviors coded as OMB Type-D included sexual harassment or assault of students or coworkers, physical abuse of students or coworkers, vandalism of school property, and similar behaviors that occurred on school grounds, at school functions, or involved members of the school community. OMB Type-O behaviors included activities that occurred off school grounds and that did not clearly involve members of the school community, but which were illegal such as driving while under the influence, possession of child pornography, domestic violence, and physical or sexual assault. CWB included behaviors that were not harmful to individuals and might be expected to occur in other workplaces such as misuse of computers for personal use, browsing pornography on work computers when students were not present, misuse of sick or personal leave, or excessive tardiness. A list of sample behaviors included in this
study and their categorizations can be found in Appendix B. After coding, I gave each case a unique record number and recorded the appropriate code in the spreadsheet. I also recorded the sanction type. Where school districts had no recorded cases of misconduct and sanctions, I entered 0s.

I reviewed each state’s code of ethics, coded them as absent, aspirational, or behavior-guiding, and entered them as a dependent variable column. In another column, I coded the codes as absent, applying to all public employees, or legislated only for teachers. The last dependent variable in this spreadsheet was average annual salary by school district which was available for Maryland, Virginia, Oregon, and Pennsylvania.

In a second Excel spreadsheet, I entered amalgamated numbers by state and school year, including total misconduct and sanction numbers for Texas, New Hampshire, Indiana, Nebraska, North Carolina, and Washington for which narrative descriptions were not available but total sanctions were. As dependent variables, I entered codes for codes of ethics as absent, aspirational, or behavior-guiding, as well as absent, applying to all public employees, or legislated for teachers only. Additional dependent variables included the right to work status of each state, the political affiliation of the governor of each state by year, average teacher salary by state, and the percentage of public employees who were members of a union by state and year.

After both spreadsheets were populated with data, I imported each into Stata for statistical analysis. I completed descriptive analysis of mean sanctions by state, mean misconduct by state, mean sanctions by state, mean sanctions by school year, and mean misconduct by school year.
A count model using maximum likelihood estimation was the most appropriate form of analysis for this data set. Count models assume non-normal distribution and predict the estimated increase in a dependent variable based on a single unit increase in the independent variable (Institute for Digital Research and Education, 2017a). In this study, I was testing whether incidents of sanctions related to misconduct would increase as the strictness of codes of ethics for teachers increased. This calculation required the probability of both the odds that a sanction would occur and the odds that a sanction would not occur. In count models, these odds are divided to determine the odds that an independent variable would increase occurrences of the dependent variable (Institute for Digital Research and Education, 2017a). While choosing a statistical model, I also considered the number of zeroes within my dataset. Zero-inflated models account for inflated zeroes in their maximum likelihood estimations (Institute for Digital Research and Education, 2017b).

I completed Poisson regression, zero-inflated Poisson regression, negative binomial regression, and zero-inflated negative binomial regression on both total misconduct (N = 93) and total sanctions (N = 111) by state. To determine which model was the best fit. I conducted Akaike information criterion (AIC). When comparing several maximum likelihood estimation models, AIC analysis provides information about the fit of those models (Mazerolle). A lower AIC score indicates that the model accounts for more lost information than models with higher AIC scores (Mazerolle). Based on the results of AIC, which appear in Table 4, I selected the zero-inflated negative binomial statistical model for analysis of sanctions and misconduct data at the state level. Although the AIC score for this model was very close to negative binomial regression, the presence
of many zeroes indicated that a zero-inflated model was needed (Institute for Digital Research and Education, 2017c).

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Total Sanctions $N = 111$ AIC</th>
<th>Total Misconduct $N = 93$ AIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poisson</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4850.7</td>
<td>2961.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-inflated Poisson</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4854.7</td>
<td>2965.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative binomial</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1026.7</td>
<td>838.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-inflated negative binomial</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1030.7</td>
<td>842.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I repeated these tests with district level data for total misconduct and again completed Akaike Information Criterion tests. Based on the results of the AIC, which appear in Table 5, and the presence of many zeroes in district level data, I again selected the zero-inflated negative binomial regression model.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Total Misconduct $N = 4803$ AIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poisson</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7583.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-inflated Poisson</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6451.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative binomial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5720.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero-inflated negative binomial</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5721.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I conducted zero-inflated negative binomial regression by misconduct type on state level data to determine the effect of the nature and legislated status of codes of
ethics for teachers on different categories of teacher misconduct. I tested margins of both type and legislated status of codes of ethics. I conducted zero-inflated Poisson regression by misconduct type on district level data.

To determine whether there was variance among total misconduct cases or total sanctions among districts within individual states, I conducted a Kruskal-Wallis test.

**Descriptive Statistics**

Three states—New Hampshire, Indiana, and North Carolina—had no code of ethics for teachers. Maryland had an aspirational code of ethics. Virginia had no code of ethics for teachers during the 2004-2008 school years and then adopted an aspirational code of ethics. During 2004-2008, Virginia had a code of ethics that applied to all public employees. The remaining seven states had behavior-guiding codes of ethics.

Seven states—Texas, Maryland, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Nebraska, Washington, and New Mexico—had codes of ethics that were legislated specifically for teachers through the entire ten-year study period. When Virginia moved from a public employee code to a code of ethics for teachers, the new code was legislated. Texas, Virginia, Iowa, Nebraska, and North Carolina were categorized as right to work states. The number of cases of misconduct type and sanctions by code type, legislated code status, and right to work status appears in Table 6.

The number of cases of misconduct type for each of these variables was adequate for statistical analysis. Comparisons may have been more robust if there had been more observations of sanctions related to teacher misconduct in states with aspirational codes of ethics as well as codes of ethics written for public employees.
Table 6

*Misconduct Types and Total Sanctions by Code of Ethics Type, Legislated Status of Code of Ethics, and Right to Work State Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Type</th>
<th>Type S</th>
<th>Type D</th>
<th>Type O</th>
<th>CWB</th>
<th>Total Sanctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Code</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspirational</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>637</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior-Guiding</td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>1275</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>1194</td>
<td>4746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislated Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Code</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Employee Code</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislated Code</td>
<td>1447</td>
<td>1342</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>1571</td>
<td>5193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work Status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>1187</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>1036</td>
<td>3672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>651</td>
<td>2201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Narrative information for misconduct by state was not available in Texas for 2004-2008 or for Washington or New Mexico for any year.*

Mean misconduct by state appears in Table 7. These means demonstrate significant differences between states in reported cases of misconduct and issued sanctions. Texas is a clear outlier. Means may be affected by the number of teachers in each state, which I did not control for due to lack of available data. Means may demonstrate that some states are more concerned about particular types of teacher behavior than other states. For example, Maryland may emphasize counterproductive work behavior while Oregon emphasizes Type S misconduct and North Carolina emphasizes Type O misconduct.
**Table 7**

*Mean Misconduct Type and Sanctions by State*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Type S Misconduct</th>
<th>Type D Misconduct</th>
<th>Type O Misconduct</th>
<th>CWB</th>
<th>Total Sanctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>51.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>179.2</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>474.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Narrative information for misconduct by state was not available in Texas for 2004-2008 or for Washington or New Mexico for any year.*

Mean misconduct by school year appears in Table 8. These means demonstrate a consistent upward pattern in the number of sanctions by school year over time.

Importantly, sanctions are not always issued in the same year in which the misconduct occurred and the length of time it takes to investigate any individual case may vary depending on available resources of the credentialing agency, the severity of the misconduct, and the level of threat to students. Additionally, the 2004-2005 school year marked the beginning of the Highly Qualified Educator requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. This law may have increased attention to teacher misconduct and contributed to the pattern of increasing sanctions.
Table 8

*Mean Misconduct and Sanctions by School Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Type S Misconduct</th>
<th>Type D Misconduct</th>
<th>Type O Misconduct</th>
<th>CWB</th>
<th>Total Sanctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04-05</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-06</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06-07</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07-08</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08-09</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09-10</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>72.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>76.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-13</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>89.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Mean misconduct types in years 2004-2008 do not include Texas, Washington, or New Mexico as narrative data was not available for these years. School years 2008-2014 do not include Washington or New Mexico for the same reason. This explains the much higher means for total sanctions as all states were included in that calculation.*

Data at the school district level included only five of the 12 states: Virginia, Maryland, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico. Misconduct and sanction data is not collected at the school district level for six of the seven states not included here.

Washington data is collected at the school district level, but narrative descriptions are not consistently public. There are 24 school districts in Maryland, 131 in Virginia, 198 in Oregon, 500 in Pennsylvania, and 88 in New Mexico.

**The Impact of the Nature of Codes of Ethics on Sanctions**

Codes of ethics were categorized as absent, aspirational, or behavior-guiding. I tested for the effect of codes of ethics in general as well as for each code type. The nature of codes of ethics for teachers was found to have a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$)
effect on the number of total sanctions related to misconduct with a coefficient of 2.422.

These findings show that as codes of ethics move from absent to aspirational and then to behavior-guiding, the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct increases by 1027%. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the nature of codes of ethics and sanctions related to teacher misconduct.

Aspirational codes of ethics had a small, statistically significant effect ($p < 0.05$) on Type S misconduct. As codes of ethics move from absent to aspirational, we could expect to see a 93% decrease in Type S misconduct. Aspirational codes of ethics did not have a statistically significant effect on any other type of misconduct, disproving $H_1$ which states that states with aspirational codes of ethics would have higher incidents of CWB and OMB than states without legislated codes of ethics or states with behavior-guiding codes.

Behavior-guiding codes of ethics had a statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) effect on all types of misconduct except Type O. In each case, behavior-guiding codes of ethics increased the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. As shown in Table 9, behavior-guiding codes of ethics increased the occurrence of sanctions related to Type S, Type D, and CWB misconduct. This finding contradicts $H_2$ states with behavior-guiding codes of ethics will have fewer sanctions related to CWB and OMB than states without legislated codes of ethics or states with aspirational codes.

Similarly, behavior-guiding codes of ethics increased the occurrence of sanctions related to Type S and CWB misconduct by 4661% and 4840% respectively as calculated by $\exp(\text{coefficient})$. Behavior-guiding codes of ethics also increased the occurrence of sanctions related to Type D misconduct, but to a lesser extent of 574%.
### Table 9

*Effect of Nature of Codes of Ethics for Teachers on Misconduct (ZINB Logit Model)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Type</th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>z-value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type S</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asp</td>
<td>6.502</td>
<td>5.141</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh</td>
<td>-2.639</td>
<td>1.113</td>
<td>-2.31</td>
<td>0.019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type D</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asp</td>
<td>2.533</td>
<td>0.540</td>
<td>4.69</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh</td>
<td>-0.624</td>
<td>0.485</td>
<td>-1.29</td>
<td>0.198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type O</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asp</td>
<td>4.878</td>
<td>2.297</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>0.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh</td>
<td>1.908</td>
<td>0.823</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CWB</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asp</td>
<td>2.776</td>
<td>1.367</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>0.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh</td>
<td>1.124</td>
<td>1.145</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Misconduct</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asp</td>
<td>3.175</td>
<td>0.567</td>
<td>5.60</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beh</td>
<td>3.221</td>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 116

As shown in Figure 1, the effect of absent or aspirational codes of ethics, where statistically significant, are small. The effect of behavior-guiding codes of ethics, however, are much broader and stronger. This effect is due in part to smaller sample sizes for absent (n = 36) and aspirational (n = 14) than behavior-guiding (n = 66) codes. Code type also showed a statistically significant (p < 0.05) effect on total misconduct (N = 111), increasing total misconduct by 2405%. This finding also contradicts $H_2$. 
The Impact of Legislating Codes of Ethics for Teachers

Legislated codes of ethics are codified in a state’s laws and are enforceable by the state’s credentialing agency. To determine the effect of legislated status, I included three categories: absent ($n = 36$), legislated for all public employees ($n = 6$), or legislated specifically for teachers ($n = 80$). There is a statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) effect of legislated codes of ethics written specifically for teachers and total cases of misconduct. When codes of ethics are legislated specifically for teachers, total misconduct is reduced by 69%. Legislated codes of ethics could be expected to reduce total sanctions related to misconduct by 63%.

When determining the effect of legislated codes of ethics for teachers on individual types of misconduct, only CWB was not statistically significant. Legislated codes of ethics for teachers reduced Type S misconduct ($p < 0.05$) by 88%, Type D
misconduct \((p < 0.05)\) by 59%, and Type O misconduct \((p < 0.01)\) by 86%. Codes of ethics legislated only for public employees did not have a statistically significant effect on any type of misconduct or on total misconduct or total sanctions.

**Other Systemic Variables**

Table 10 shows the effect of other systemic variables on sanctions related to total teacher misconduct and specific types of teacher misconduct. The right to work status of each state showed a statistically significant effect on sanctions related to Type S, Type O, and CWB misconduct, but not Type D misconduct, with right to work states having a greater impact than non-right to work states as shown in Figure 2. Union coverage showed a statistically significant reduction in sanctions related to teacher misconduct across all types.

![Figure 2 Predictive Margins of Right to Work Status on Total Misconduct with 95% CIs](image)
Average salary of teachers showed a statistically significant \( p < 0.05 \), less than 1% increase in sanctions related to teacher misconduct across all types. I also conducted zero-inflated negative binomial regression using average teacher salary as an independent variable on the district-level data. Average salary showed a similarly small, but statistically significant \( p < 0.01 \) increase in sanctions related to teacher misconduct \( (N = 4803) \) overall. Convergence was not achieved when conducting zero-inflated negative binomial regression by misconduct type at the district level. I used zero-inflated Poisson regression to test the effect of average salary on sanctions related to Type S, Type D, Type O, and CWB misconduct. Each unit increase in average salary showed a less than 1%, but statistically significant \( p < 0.05 \) increase in sanctions related to Type D misconduct and CWB. There was not a statistically significant relationship between average salary and sanctions related to Type S or Type O misconduct.

H₃ stated that districts with higher average annual salaries would have fewer incidents of CWB and OMB Type S behaviors. H₄ stated that districts with lower average annual salaries would have more incidents of sanctions related to OMB Type D and OMB Type O behaviors. Based on these findings, I rejected both H₃ and H₄.

The average annual salary data used in this study was district or state-level average annual salary of all teachers within that system. For this reason, it is difficult to determine what may be at work in findings related to average annual salary. Collegial loyalty may be leading to underreporting in other districts or a sense of safety in districts where sanctions occur. Teachers may feel overqualified for their positions at the higher end of the pay scale. Districts with lower average annual salaries may have fewer financial and time resources to address teacher misconduct through official channels.
Teachers with lower annual salaries may be committing teacher misconduct in school districts or states where higher average annual salaries are common. Finally, salary schedules designed to reward years of experience and education, and policies designed as gatekeepers for teachers with even minor criminal histories, may encourage some teachers to falsify documents which is classified as Type S misconduct.

Table 10

*Effect of Selected Systemic Variables on Sanctions Related to Teacher Misconduct Using a ZINB Model*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type S</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work</td>
<td>-1.847</td>
<td>0.763</td>
<td>-2.42</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Coverage</td>
<td>-0.131</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>-4.69</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.453</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.00004</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type D</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work</td>
<td>-0.229</td>
<td>0.473</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>0.628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Coverage</td>
<td>-0.084</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>-3.78</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>0.404</td>
<td>0.378</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.00003</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>0.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Type O</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work</td>
<td>-1.44</td>
<td>0.322</td>
<td>-4.48</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Coverage</td>
<td>-0.099</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>-3.00</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>-0.622</td>
<td>0.374</td>
<td>-1.66</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CWB</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work</td>
<td>-2.166</td>
<td>1.054</td>
<td>-2.05</td>
<td>0.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Coverage</td>
<td>-0.131</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>-4.01</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.468</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Misconduct</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to Work</td>
<td>-1.506</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>-2.73</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Coverage</td>
<td>-0.109</td>
<td>0.018</td>
<td>-6.13</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Affiliation</td>
<td>0.079</td>
<td>0.345</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Salary</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
<td>0.00003</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N = 111*
Differences between School Districts

I conducted Kruskal-Wallis H tests for each state in the data by district to determine whether there was a difference between school districts in sanctions related to teacher misconduct. As shown in Table 11, there was a statistically significant difference between school districts in Virginia ($n = 131$), Oregon ($n = 198$), and Pennsylvania ($n = 500$), but there was not a statistically significant difference between school districts in Maryland ($n = 24$) or New Mexico ($n = 88$).

Table 11

*Kruskal-Wallis H-test for Differences in Total Misconduct and Total Sanctions between School Districts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Misconduct</th>
<th>Total Sanctions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$X^2$</td>
<td>$p$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>239.00</td>
<td>0.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>852.00</td>
<td>0.494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1221.64</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>1748.56</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>1094.47</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis and Synthesis of Findings

These findings demonstrate that legislated codes of ethics affect sanctions. I hypothesized that behavior-guiding codes of ethics would decrease sanctions related to teacher misconduct because they provided guidance to teachers about which behaviors were not acceptable. This study shows that behavior-guiding codes of ethics contribute to an increase in the number of sanctions related to every type of misconduct except Type O. Behavior-guiding codes of ethics may provide an enforcement mechanism which increases reporting of some behaviors. Additionally, they may provide guidance for
administrative personnel in schools about which negative behaviors to look for. It is unclear how much training teachers receive about the codes of ethics in their states. Because schools and school districts operate in siloes, it is likely that teachers receive different levels of exposure to these codes. Type O behaviors are largely comprised of illegal activities, such as distribution of drugs, assault, and child abuse; therefore, they are likely reported consistently and used as grounds for license suspension or revocation regardless of the presence of a code of ethics.

Aspirational codes of ethics decreased sanctions related to Type S or self-interested behaviors by 93% over states with no code of ethics as determined by \( \exp(-2.693) \) which is used to convert coefficients in a zero-inflated negative binomial model (Institute of Digital Research and Education, 2017c). Aspirational codes of ethics define shared values (Johnson, 2012). While qualitative reviews of codes of ethics have suggested that aspirational codes of ethics create unrealistic expectations for teachers (Forster, 2012; Shortt et al, 2012; Terhart, 1998), findings in this study suggest that they may be useful, perhaps by helping teachers focus on service over self-interest. If an aspirational code of ethics for teachers was implemented in a state such as Pennsylvania, that state might expect sanctions related to Type S misconduct to drop from 10 per year to one per year.

The legislated status and target audience for codes of ethics was also found to be important. Only legislated codes of ethics written specifically for teachers had a statistically significant effect on sanctions related to teacher misconduct. A state moving from no code of ethics or a code of ethics that applies only to all public employees to a legislated code of ethics written specifically for teachers, it could expect to see a 100%
decrease in sanctions related to Type S or Type O misconduct, a 95% decrease in sanctions related to Type D misconduct, and a 94% decrease in total sanctions related to misconduct. For example, a state like North Carolina could potentially reduce sanctions related to Type O misconduct from 29 per year to two per year. The strength of this effect is likely influenced by other factors such as teacher awareness of the code of ethics, teacher understanding of the code of ethics, and professional development related to ethical decision making.

CWB was not impacted by legislated codes of ethics for teachers. One possible reason for this is that counterproductive work behaviors are not illegal or extreme and may be handled within school districts more often than they are reported to credentialing agencies. CWB may also be more heavily influenced by factors such as job satisfaction.

States with right to work legislation appear to have fewer sanctions related to teacher misconduct than states without right to work legislation. This finding supports a rational choice theory approach to teacher misconduct; with less protection that might be afforded by union membership, the risk of misconduct is greater than the potential reward. Right to work status was one of only two variables to effect sanctions related to counterproductive work behavior with a decrease of 89%. This decrease suggests that sanctions in right to work states may be utilized more or that some behaviors that are not sanctioned in other states are sanctioned in right to work states. Right to work status did not have a statistically significant relationship with sanctions related to Type D misconduct, which includes harm to students or coworkers.

As union coverage increases, sanctions related to all types of teacher misconduct decrease by a small percentage. Union coverage may provide teachers with legal.
protection, thereby reducing the number of reports that result in sanctions. Collective bargaining agreements may outline some behaviors for which teachers cannot be sanctioned. Finally, unions may provide education to teachers about behavioral expectations, rights, and responsibilities.

Average teacher salary showed a less than 1% increase in the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct of all types. While the effect is small, it is important to determine what is happening as much of national policy discussion concerns teacher salary and benefits. Teachers with higher average salaries would be expected to be older and have more education and experience than teachers with lower average salaries. Older and more experienced employees in other settings have been shown to be less likely to engage in misconduct (Andreoli & Lefkowitz, 2009; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Huiras, Uggen, & McMorris, 2000). One possible explanation for this deviation from other research is that older, more experienced teachers have tenure and thereby the risk of engaging in misconduct is lower than it is for younger, less experienced teachers. This explanation would be consistent with a rational choice model.

Teachers’ wages are often determined by a combination of years of experience and education. Another possibility is that teachers with higher average salaries are close to the end of the pay scale. As a result, they may feel overqualified, which has been shown to increase the occurrence of misconduct (Luksyte, Maynard, & Spitzmueller, 2011). While overqualification may contribute to a sense of less risk, long-term career goals may increase the perception of risk. Huiras, Uggen, and McMorris (2000) suggest that teachers who plan to stay in the field may be less likely to engage in misconduct.
Teachers at the higher end of the pay scale may be close to retirement or may have begun looking for advancement opportunities, increasing their willingness to risk misconduct.

Three of five states included in district-level data showed statistically significant differences of sanctions related to teacher misconduct between school districts. Some school districts may report teacher misconduct to credentialing agencies more often, suggesting that some school districts do not report things that could impact student safety. Another explanation may be that ethical climates and education about expectations differ between school districts. Ethical climates are largely established by leadership (Johnson, 2012; Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2011). Strong ethical climates contribute to less employee misconduct (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Mayer, Kuenzi & Greenbaum, 2011; Vardi, 2001). Importantly, sanctions can only be issued if misconduct is reported and investigated. Collegial loyalty may prevent some teachers or administrators from reporting misconduct (Campbell, 1996) suggesting that some school districts may be experiencing misconduct without consequences for that misconduct.

One important finding of this study is that teacher misconduct is managed differently across states and quality, consistent data is largely unavailable or incomplete. I requested data from 17 states in addition to eight states where teacher misconduct data was readily available online. Of those 17 states, seven sent data. Four of these sets were complete enough for use in this study. Two states issued statements that teacher misconduct data was protected by law and not accessible to the public. Two states responded that data was available, but it was cost prohibitive to receive and I retracted my request. Two states responded that they did not record data related to teacher misconduct or did not record it in detail.
Implications of Findings

Behavior-guiding codes of ethics may contribute to increase attention to and reporting of specific types of misconduct. States with behavior-guiding codes of ethics may provide more guidance about the kinds of behaviors that are acceptable or unacceptable for teachers in that state, but this may increase the appearance of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. This finding does not clearly demonstrate an increase or decrease in these behaviors. When codes of ethics are legislated for teachers, however, this study does show a decrease in sanctions related to teacher misconduct. The combination of specific behavioral guidance and an enforcement mechanism is an effective way to manage teacher misconduct. Aspirational codes of ethics decreased sanctions related to Type S misconduct. A combination of behavior-guiding and aspirational codes of ethics may have a greater impact on sanctions than legislated behavior-guiding codes of ethics alone.

Both right to work status and union coverage showed a decrease in sanctions related to misconduct. Additional research may be helpful to determine which elements of right to work status and union coverage have the greatest impact, especially on CWB which is not affected by legislated codes of ethics. Similarly, more research is needed to understand why average annual salary appears to increase the risk of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. This study did not incorporate the salary of individual teachers whose teaching credential was sanctioned which may have been above or below average.

Summary

In this section, I reviewed data collection, cleaning, organization, and analysis procedures. I demonstrated that legislated codes of ethics do have a relationship with
sanctions related to teacher misconduct and that the nature of the code of ethics, as well as the intended audience for the code of ethics, affect sanctions differently. I also reviewed systemic variables that impact sanctions related to teacher misconduct, including the right to work status of a state, union coverage of public employees, and average teacher salary. I presented several possible explanations for my findings. In the next section, I will discuss the implications of these findings and present recommendations for policymakers and local administrators to address teacher misconduct. Finally, I will discuss recommendations for future research in this area.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

In this section, I propose a three-pronged approach, herein called the E-CED approach, to addressing the problem of teacher misconduct. This approach informs state and local levels of the public school system and includes recommendations for ethical guidance and enforcement, education, and data management. The E-CED approach also includes a recommendation for the U.S. Department of Education. After explaining the E-CED approach, I provide an explanation of my recommendations with evidence from this study and previous scholarly literature. I discuss barriers and advice for implementation of these recommendations. Finally, I explain the implications of this study for future research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore the relationship between codes of ethics used in various states and sanctions against teaching credentials.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study was to develop evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, state teacher credentialing agencies, and district or school-level administrators attempting to reduce teacher misconduct.

A Three-Pronged Approach to Teacher Misconduct

I propose a three-pronged approach to teacher misconduct and sanctions of teaching credentials, herein called the E-CED approach. The first prong is Ethical Codes for guidance and enforcement. The second prong is Ethics Education. The third prong is Ethics Data Management.
Ethical Codes

Ethical Codes refers to the way codes of ethics are created and implemented. The purpose of legislated codes of ethics is to provide guidance and an enforcement mechanism to address teacher misconduct (Pennsylvania Professional Standards and Practices Commission, 2018; Texas Education Agency, 2017). Some states currently have a legislated code of ethics for teachers while other states have a code of ethics for public employees only or have no code of ethics for teachers. States without a legislated code of ethics for teachers may be inadvertently allowing teacher misconduct to occur.

States should legislate a behavior-guiding code of ethics written specifically with and for teachers. Codes of ethics written with the individuals who are expected to follow it are more likely to be effective because they align values and norms (Johnson, 2012; Schwartz, 2001) and provide information about the context in which ethical decision making occurs (Johnson, 2012). Involving a variety of teachers in the development process could also help address issues of subgroup norms within the larger field of education. Subgroup norms can create organizational difficulty and reduce ethical climate (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Ostrom, 2005).

Ethical decisions are a normal part of the professional lives of teachers (Barrett et al, 2012; Clark, 1990; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2010; Shortt et al, 2012; Thomas, 1990). The current study shows that legislating a code of ethics specifically for teachers has a positive impact on sanctions related to nearly all kinds of teacher misconduct. Focusing on specific behaviors rather than creating an aspirational code of ethics at the state level could create buy-in by demonstrating that the state is not intending to create teachers with specific ideologies (Moses Hines, 2007) and would
reduce the ambiguity that has been problematic in other countries (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Shortt et al, 2012; Spendlove et al, 2012).

The code of ethics developed at the state level should include clear explanation of the consequences of violating the code of ethics and should be applied consistently. Scholarly literature shows that individuals are more likely to follow a code of ethics if there are consequences for non-compliance (Schwartz, 2001). Legislation should also require school districts to report violations of this code to the state credentialing agency to avoid “passing off” unethical teachers to other schools (Nixon, Dam, & Packard, 2012; Griffin & Lake, 2012). Mandatory reporting of unethical teaching is important because collegial loyalty is a significant component to teachers’ norms and values (Barrett et al, 2012; Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). The current study demonstrated statistically significant differences between school districts within states operating under the same code of ethics. This finding suggests that some school districts may not be reporting violations to the credentialing board. Mandatory reporting could address this problem.

At the local level, school districts should work with teachers and other school employees to create an aspirational code of ethics. These codes of ethics should focus on the factors that draw teachers into the profession and create shared norms and values. All levels of school district employees should participate in the creation of this code of ethics and include representation from each grade level because school districts, like state public education systems, are likely to have subgroup norms that need to be aligned with the larger system (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Ostrom, 2005). This study showed that aspirational codes of ethics had a positive impact on sanctions related to self-interested
behaviors. While state codes of ethics provide behavior guidance, localized codes of ethics may serve to improve ethical climate and encourage ethical behavior (Schwartz, 2001; Sockett, 1990; Sockett, 2016). Incorporating teachers into the development of this code of ethics may also utilize collegial loyalty in a positive way.

Scholars have shown that individuals are more likely to comply with ethical codes if they have loyalty to their organization (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Schwartz, 2001). The current study shows a trend that higher average annual salaries may increase the risk of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. This finding suggests that states, school districts, and unions should closely review their salary schedules to ensure that they encourage ethical behavior. Importantly, districts with higher average annual salaries may be employing teachers who have been with the district for many years thereby increasing collegial loyalty. Districts should review incentive and reward policies in order to utilize collegial loyalty in positive ways and support the development of stronger ethical climates. Strong ethical climates in schools could reduce other misconduct (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Johnson, 2012; Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; Vardi, 2001).

Ethics Education

The second prong of the E-CED approach is ethics education. Teachers work in an environment of competing norms (Barrett et al, 2012; Colnerud, 1997; Feinberg, 1990; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Shortt et al, 2012; Spendlove et al, 2012), but receive little guidance about how to make ethical decisions (Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Sockett, 1990; Strike, 1990b). Codes of ethics alone are unlikely to improve ethical decision
Education about the state code of ethics should begin in teacher preparation programs and be an integral part of the certification process. Teachers should be taught strategies to manage common ethical dilemmas in the teaching field (Barrett et al., 2012; Colnerud, 1997; Feinberg, 1990; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011; Shortt et al., 2012; Spendlove et al., 2012) and should have multiple opportunities to practice moral sensitivity and awareness in low stakes environments (Johnson, 2012). Ethics education should review both expected behaviors and consequences for violating the state code of ethics. This process would reduce ambiguity associated with codes of ethics (Forster, 2012; Johnson, 2010; Shortt et al., 2012; Spendlove et al., 2012) and increase perception of risk (Schwartz, 2001). The current study shows that some districts have more reported sanctions related to misconduct than others even when operating under the same ethical code. Knowledge differences about the ethical codes and consequences could contribute to these findings. A comprehensive ethics education component in teacher preparation programs could therefore reduce sanctions related to teacher misconduct by giving all teachers with a traditional teaching certification the same level of starting knowledge.

At the local level, unions should prioritize education of their members of both state and local codes of ethics. Unions may behave like teacher leaders increasing perceptions of the collegial loyalty already prevalent in the education system (Barret et al., 2012; Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011). In right to work states, teacher leaders should be trained to provide this education for the same reason. This study demonstrated that both unions and right to work status decreased sanctions
related to teacher misconduct. The ethics education component could make use of an existing mechanism to manage teacher misconduct with minimal financial burden.

School districts should review ethical expectations consistently through formal professional development that is differentiated for new teachers and experienced teachers whose contexts and decision making may differ (Schussler & Knarr, 2013). Review of ethical codes is an important component for compliance (Johnson, 2012).

**Ethics Data Management**

This study found that data about teacher misconduct is highly differentiated between states in both quantity and quality. States need a way to gather and store data related to teacher misconduct to inform ethics education, evaluate codes of ethics, and understand other ways that institutional practices support or detract from positive ethical decision making. Standardized software could address this problem.

Ethics data management software should record information about the teacher such as age, years teaching, education level, grade level taught, certification type, subject(s) taught, and annual salary. It should also record a narrative description of the alleged misconduct and the type of sanction the teacher received. Finally, it should record both the date of the complaint and the date of the sanction.

Ideally, the Federal government would take the role of investing in the development of this software as this would reduce costs for each state. States could then opt in to use of the software. A Federal initiative like the Common Core or Race to the Top initiatives could incentivize states to develop more formalized methods for managing teacher misconduct such as codes of ethics and ethics education. In the absence of involvement from the U.S. Department of Education, states could independently contract
software development for this purpose or utilize existing software such as spreadsheet or database development software. This approach would require specific staffing expertise, but would likely reduce overall budgetary requirements as software development and maintenance is costly.

**Reasons to Implement the E-CED Approach to Teacher Misconduct**

The E-CED approach addresses ethical decision making from multiple angles and addresses several gaps in the current system of managing teacher misconduct. Figure 3 shows the relationship between the three prongs of this approach. Ethical codes and ethics data management strongly support ethics education. Ethics data management can be used to evaluate ethical codes and ethics education. Ethical codes provide an enforcement mechanism by which data management can occur.

![Figure 3: Relationship of the three components of the E-CED approach](image)

This study demonstrated that behavior-guiding codes of ethics increase the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. While this may seem negative at first glance, it likely demonstrates that an enforcement mechanism increases attention to behaviors that could have a lasting, negative impact on students, schools, and the teaching profession. Behavior-guiding codes of ethics may assist administrators in prioritizing attention to harmful behaviors. With proper education of teachers around
these codes of ethics, they could also provide clear guidance to teachers about ethical
decision making that occurs specifically in the context of teaching.

This study also shows that legislating a code of ethics for teachers reduces overall
misconduct, especially OMB Type D misconduct which includes behaviors that harm
members of the school community, including other teachers and students. Utilizing a
legislated code of ethics that clearly describes consequences for specific behaviors
supports ethical decision making in a rational choice model (Werbel & Balkin, 2010).

Statistically significant differences in sanctions between school districts could be
addressed by requiring school districts to report violations of this code of ethics to the
teacher credentialing agency. This practice would also reduce occurrences of “passing
on” unethical teachers to other schools through the use of settlements (Nixon, Dam &
Packard, 2012) or underreporting (Shakeshaft, 2004). It would also provide more reliable
data that could help us better understand teacher misconduct.

The primary purpose of aspirational codes of ethics is to develop shared norms
and values (Johnson, 2012). This study showed that aspirational codes of ethics
contributed to a reduction in OMB Type S behaviors which include self-interested
behaviors that have a negative effect on the school, other staff members, students, and the
teaching profession. Locally developed codes of ethics may also assist school districts in
dealing with counterproductive work behavior by developing shared norms. School
districts contexts are different and these contexts affect the work of teachers, including
inner city or rural environments, affluent or high poverty students, homogenous or highly
diverse demographics, and the absence or presence of community tragedies or support
systems. The contexts in which institutions conduct their work have an important effect
on that work (Ostrom, 2005). Including teachers and other members of school staff in the development of aspirational codes of ethics ensures that local contexts are accounted for and that staff members have buy-in for shared values and norms. Similarly, including local teachers in educational efforts around district codes of ethics utilizes collegial loyalty in a constructive way and may also reduce “us vs. them” feelings that could increase underreporting (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011).

Teacher preparation programs should educate teachers about ethical expectations and provide opportunities for teacher candidates to develop moral awareness and moral sensitivity, two key factors in complex ethical decision making (Johnson, 2012). Such education would also support the development of important dispositions in teaching (Sockett, 1993; Sockett, 2016). Because collegial loyalty is so important to the work of teachers (Campbell, 1996; Campbell, 2003; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011), and because teachers may have informal professional norms already in place (Barrett et al, 2012), any approach to teacher misconduct must include other teachers. States should train teacher leaders to educate teachers about state and local codes of ethics. Unions should prioritize education of teachers about ethical decision making. In this study, both right to work status and union coverage decreased the number of sanctions related to teacher misconduct. An educational approach utilizing teacher leaders may allow all states to benefit from the combined influence of state policy and union coverage.

While the effect of average annual salary on teacher misconduct was small in this study, it is important to address any factor that may increase teachers’ willingness or temptation to engage in misconduct. Perceptions of overqualification contribute to increased misconduct (Luksyte, Maynard, & Spitzmueller, 2011), and salary schedules
may contribute to these perceptions in education. Additionally, when advancement opportunities are limited to education and years of experience, teachers may be more likely to lie to move up the salary schedule.

Obtaining data around teacher misconduct from most states was difficult or impossible. In some states, teacher misconduct data is protected by law. Additionally, the level of detail available from state to state was different. Some data was so incomplete that it could not be used in this study. This situation not only renders research into teacher misconduct in the United States difficult, it also undermines governmental transparency and may contribute to negative perceptions about the teaching profession. This practice may also increase occurrences of teachers with a history of unethical behavior being hired at other school districts (Nixon, Dam & Packard, 2012), thereby increasing the potential for harm to schools and students. The Federal government is in the best position to address this problem. The U.S. Department of Education has an ethical obligation to protect students.

**Stakeholders Related to the E-CED Approach to Teacher Misconduct**

Primary stakeholders include state governments, local school districts, teachers, other school staff members, parents, and students. Secondary stakeholders include the U.S. Department of Education, law enforcement agencies, and taxpayers. The United States Department of Education could be a driving force for this work if it developed an incentive program for states to develop comprehensive ethics programs to deal with teacher misconduct. Education committees of state legislative bodies would be important resources to develop legislated, behavior-guiding codes of ethics at the state level. At the local level, school boards and administrative professionals should support teachers and
other school staff members to develop aspirational codes of ethics and teacher leaders. State-approved teacher preparation programs will be a vital component of the education prong of this approach, as will teacher unions, and local teacher leaders.

Leaders in state departments of education can and should work with legislators to address teacher misconduct. This work will require dedicated funding and staff member time to implement effectively. Leaders at the local level include principals and superintendents, but teachers should play a large role in the development of local codes of ethics and working together to better manage ethical dilemmas common to local contexts. Because ethical climate plays such an important role in ethical decision making (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Johnson, 2010; Mayer, Kuenzi, & Greenbaum, 2010; Schwartz, 2001; Valentine & Barrett, 2003; Vardi, 2001), superintendents and principals must be very conscious of the messages their behavior and policies send to employees. School boards should evaluate administrative staff not only for policies and programs, but also for ethical decision making and role modeling.

Teacher leaders with an understanding of and interest in the ethical context of their work can play an important role in encouraging action at the local level. They could testify at school board meetings or at legislative education committee hearings. They could send written testimony as well. The most important task for teacher leaders is to model good ethical decision making in collaboration with their peers. Teachers working with teachers to address the problem of misconduct could increase perceptions of professionalism in the field, as well as decrease us vs. them feelings created by in-group/out-group scenarios (Haslam, Reichert, & Platow, 2011).
Policies influencing the E-CED approach to teacher misconduct

Data related to teacher misconduct is inconsistent across states in quality and quantity making it difficult for legislators, teacher credentialing boards, and the public to understand teacher misconduct. Additionally, this study found statistically significant differences between school districts operating in the same state. In some states, sanctions related to teacher misconduct are confidential. Such policies create barriers for research about teacher misconduct as well as public perception of governmental transparency. Given the lack of a consistently-used, national reporting system regarding teacher misconduct, policies that keep teacher misconduct confidential may also contribute to teachers with a history of unethical behavior obtaining new teaching credentials in another state, placing students in harm’s way.

School boards without existing policies about codes of ethics would need to pass policies about both the development of codes of ethics and the review process of these codes. State policies determine requirements for teacher certification, including requirements related to pre-service education and continuing education. These policies would need to incorporate ethics education in the E-CED approach. Unions would also need to incorporate policies relating to ethics education. State legislation and internal policies in credentialing agencies would be required for the ethics data management component of this approach.

Potential barriers to the E-CED approach to teacher misconduct

The E-CED approach requires coordination between multiple levels of government, university, and public school systems. Development and implementation will require dedication of financial and time resources which are already stretched thin in
the education system. Legislators may not be willing to prioritize this issue and may require education and discussion to add an approach to teacher misconduct to the public agenda. Teacher engagement in the process is a vital component to its success (Barrett et al., 2012; Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011), but recruiting teachers could prove difficult due to current responsibilities. In some states or school districts, an antagonistic relationship with local teachers’ unions may also impede progress for the development of codes of ethics, enforcement, education, and data management. Substantial discussion with unions about the benefits of this system to the teaching profession and students will likely be required. The current salary schedule model is deeply entrenched in the public education system. Changes to the model will be slow and perhaps contentious.

**Budget issues related to the E-CED approach to teacher misconduct**

There are three major budgetary issues related to the E-CED approach. First, the development of software to record teacher misconduct will require dedicated financial resources. Implementation of this software at the state level will also require financial resources for purchase of the software, staff training to utilize the software, and potentially employee pay to manage the software in states with many complaints each year.

The development of curriculum for teacher preparation programs and professional development will also require financial resources. Teacher leaders should be compensated for their time. State governments may also want to incentivize local school districts to participate in the development of local codes of ethics. School districts would
also need to budget professional development funding for local teacher leader training or to bring ethics experts to their location.

Finally, any change to teacher salary schedules would require change to local budgeting processes. These budgeting processes are, in turn, affected by state and Federal funding levels over which local school districts have little control.

**Implementation of the E-CED Approach**

Because the E-CED approach is multi-leveled and may require significant shifts in existing policies, implementation should not be attempted too quickly. It will be important to provide each stakeholder group with adequate information about the approach. This information should emphasize the long-term benefits to the public education system, the teaching profession, and most importantly, the students.

**Factors and Stakeholders Related to Implementation**

This approach may take several years to implement. Ideally, implementation would begin at the Federal level with the development of a database to record teacher misconduct. The U.S. Department of Education could create an initiative that incentivizes states to develop comprehensive systems to address teach misconduct, and states would have the opportunity to opt in to these initiatives. Figure 4 shows the implementation process including Federal involvement.

In the absence of Federal incentive, state committees on education should begin the work of developing and legislating a behavior-guiding code of ethics with teacher support. Teacher leaders should be identified and recruited to assist in the process of developing the state code of ethics. These teacher leaders could then assist their districts with the development of an aspirational code of ethics to establish local norms.
Once a code of ethics is codified in a state, credentialing agencies should develop robust data management systems by either contracting with a software development company or by utilizing existing software. Staff members responsible for managing this data should be trained to ensure consistency of data entry.

Implementation work must include a review of teacher preparation programs and the development of curriculum. Curriculum should be developed specifically for different stages of teachers’ careers (Schussler & Knarr, 2013), should be evaluated frequently, and should be informed by both the state’s legislated code of ethics and data collected about teacher misconduct which could inform leaders of issues the code of ethics and education components are not adequately addressing. The state credentialing agency could work with teachers’ unions or local teacher leaders to create a template for localized professional development around ethics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Federal Level</th>
<th>State Level</th>
<th>Local Level</th>
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| • Develop database  
• Develop incentive program for states | • Recruit teacher leaders  
• Develop behavior-guiding code of ethics  
• Legislate code  
• Integrate ethics education into teacher preparation programs  
• Provide guidance and support for local school districts | • Recruit teacher leaders or utilize those involved in the state level process  
• Develop local aspirational code  
• Coordinate with state department of education and/or credentialing agency to develop professional development |

Figure 4: Stages of E-CED implementation with Federal involvement
Leader’s role in implementing the E-CED approach

At the Federal level, the U.S. Department of Education is in the best position to lead this work. Leaders in this agency will need to be cognizant of social identity theory and be careful not to alienate primary stakeholders through the unintentional development of “us vs. them” mentalities (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). Leaders will be responsible for agenda setting (Kraft & Furlong, 2013) and dedicating financial and time resources to the development of the software and educating state departments of education. These leaders may also be responsible for development of educational materials for state congressional committees on education.

At the state level, leaders will include a combination of legislators and department of education personnel. Legislators will be responsible for educating the public and receiving public commentary about teacher misconduct in the creation of a behavior-guiding code of ethics. Department of Education personnel will need to provide guidance about appropriate enforcement strategies. This department will also be integral to the recruitment of teachers in the development process and the training of teacher leaders after the code of ethics has been legislated. Teacher credentialing agency personnel will be needed to inform legislators about issues and needs related to enforcement, as well as accreditation processes for teacher preparation programs.

At the local level, school board members, union leaders, administrators, and teachers should all hold leadership roles in the development of a localized aspirational code of ethics. School board members and administrators will be responsible for ensuring that financial and time resources are available throughout the process. Union leaders will be responsible for recruiting teacher leaders and for ensuring that codes of ethics are fair
for teachers. Local teachers should provide information about specific contexts that will impact the local code of ethics and that may impact teacher decision-making.

**Building support for the E-CED approach**

Some states do keep data about teacher misconduct. This data could provide information for states that do not have legislated codes of ethics. As software is developed, early adopters of the E-CED approach will have an opportunity to gather more information and develop success measures that make it easier for other states and school districts to engage in the process (Rogers, 2003). Software will create a mechanism by which states can measure success and add to current knowledge about teacher misconduct.

Public support for the process will also be important, thus, leaders should be transparent about their work and issue regular press releases to inform stakeholders about progress (Richardson & Hinton, 2015). Inclusion of teacher leaders throughout the process will be vital to building local support for ethics education and management of teacher misconduct due to the importance of teachers to one another’s professional practice (Barrett et al, 2012; Campbell, 1996; Colnerud, 1997; Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011).

Emphasis on long-term benefits to the public education system, the teaching profession, and students will each appeal to different audiences. Wherever possible, leaders should emphasize shared values and norms (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013; Johnson, 2012) that are addressed by ethics codes and ethics education. Figure 5 demonstrates how the E-CED approach deals with each OMB type based on the findings in this study.
Figure 5: Types of Misconduct Addressed by the E-CED Approach

Global/external implications for public education

Each time the media covers a case of egregious teacher misconduct, perceptions about public education and K12 teachers suffer. These perceptions may be skewed because the media is unlikely to cover cases of misconduct that do not involve student harm even though such cases are more common. In addition, teacher professionalism has been a subject of considerable literature (Forster, 2012; Kliebard, 2004; Sackett, 1993; Soder, 1990; Terhart, 1998). Accountability is a primary component of any professional practice, yet the current mode of teacher accountability is inconsistently applied throughout the United States. An accountability system which includes teachers within the development of that system could improve perceptions of professionalism for both teachers and the public. Such a system could also increase trust in the public education system while providing a method by which to gain more information about the antecedents of teacher misconduct. Finally, this approach could improve public education
by providing a means by which unethical educators leave the field and ethical educators are rewarded for ethical behavior.

**Evaluation and timeline for implementation and assessment**

Change in any large system is slow. The E-CED approach requires change at multiple levels, involving a variety of stakeholders. Development of the database is likely to occur in one to two years. Change theory tells us that there will be a few early adopters followed by other states (Rogers, 2003). Earliest evaluation should occur approximately three years from the beginning of implementation. Pre- and post-assessment of teacher understanding of ethical expectations should be utilized for early evaluation. Reduction of cases of teacher misconduct should be used as success criteria several years post-implementation. This timeline will provide an opportunity for education efforts to work.

**Implications**

This study reviewed sanctions related to teacher misconduct in 12 states over a ten-year period immediately following the implementation of the Highly Qualified Teacher clause of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. Cases of misconduct were reviewed and categorized using the organizational misbehavior structure developed by Vardi & Wiener (1996). Zero-inflated negative binomial regression analysis demonstrated that the nature of codes of ethics, the legislated status of codes of ethics, the right to work status of a state, union coverage of public employees, and average annual salary of teachers each had a statistically significant effect on two or more types of organizational misbehavior. However, negative binomial regression showed that these variables explained only about 12% of sanctions related to teacher misconduct.
Practical Implications

This study provides baseline information about a few variables that influence sanctions related to teacher misconduct. While most research about teacher misconduct has centered on characteristics of the teachers engaging in misconduct (Birmingham, 2009; Campbell, 2003; Carr, 2006; Daniel, Blount, & Ferrell, 1991; Ferrell & Daniel, 1995; Johnson, 2010; Knoll, 2010; Osguthorpe, 2013; Schussler & Knarr, 2013; Shakeshaft, 2004; Sockett, 1993; Strike, 2003; Surface Stader, & Armenta, 2014), this study demonstrates that systemic variables are also important.

Ethical guidance and enforcement and data management are two practical implications, as discussed in the proposed solution discussed above. The connection between average teacher salary and sanctions related to teacher misconduct is an additional practical implication that suggests states, school boards, and unions carefully consider how salary schedules encourage or discourage ethical behavior by teachers.

Finally, the statistically significant difference between school districts suggests that some school districts may be ignoring behaviors that pose harm to schools and students. Mechanisms to ensure that teacher misconduct is reported and investigated appropriately is a matter of public safety. In some cases, healthy ethical climates may contribute to fewer cases of teacher misconduct. Identifying the qualities of those ethical climates could assist other schools or districts in addressing problem behaviors.

Implications for Future Research

This study demonstrated the need for a more comprehensive understanding of teacher misconduct, especially regarding institutional factors that may hinder or help teachers navigate the “moral universe” (Sockett, 2016) in which they work. Lack of
appropriate data was a significant barrier for this study. As data becomes more available, researchers should consider other systemic factors that may contribute to sanctions related to teacher misconduct. Longitudinal quantitative studies should test the effectiveness of ethical education programs to determine whether effective education already exists and could be replicated. From a social justice standpoint, research should consider whether teacher misconduct occurs more frequently in low-income schools.

However, data is available that could be used to further our understanding of teacher misconduct. Some factors that could be readily tested for a relationship with teacher misconduct include whether sanctions are public record or confidential, the robustness of the sanction system in a state, the strictness of teacher certification systems, merit pay systems, and the effect of high stakes testing. Additionally, it would be useful to test behaviors in more specific terms. For example, a researcher could separate behaviors into more detailed categories like theft, abuse of a student, crossing professional boundaries, lying on certification paperwork, or off-campus activities. This research would be especially useful in the development of ethics education.

Researchers may be able to determine which elements of right to work status and union coverage have the most positive effects on teacher misconduct. Similarly, research needs to address the effect of average annual salary on teacher misconduct both at the systemic level and the individual teacher level. Benefits such as personal leave, sick leave, and health insurance should be tested as components of job satisfaction that could impact teacher misconduct. The availability of personal leave may also address issues of role strain inherent in the field (Goode, 1960).
Research focused at the school district level may be able to capture elements of ethical climate that could not be considered in this study. Research should also test the effect of ethics education conducted by teacher leaders compared to ethics education conducted by outside experts.

**Summary of the Study**

In this study, I conducted zero-inflated negative binomial regression using sanctions related to teacher misconduct as the dependent variable and the nature of codes of ethics, the legislated status of code of ethics, political affiliation of the governor, union coverage percentage of public employees, right to work status of the state, and average annual salary of teachers as independent variables. I determined there was a statistically significant effect of all independent variables except political affiliation of the governor, but that effect differed for different kinds of organizational misbehavior. Legislated status of codes of ethics, union coverage, and the right to work status of the state predicted a reduction in sanctions related to teacher misconduct while behavior-guiding codes of ethics and average annual salary predicted an increase. Aspirational codes of ethics predicted a decrease in OMB Type S, or self-interested, misconduct only.

I proposed a three-pronged approach called the E-CED approach to address the problem of sanctions related to teacher misconduct: ethical codes, ethics education, and ethics data management. I recommended that the U.S. Department of Education dedicate financial and time resources to the development of a national database to track sanctions related to teacher misconduct by year of sanction, year of complaint, school district, type of misconduct, education and experience level of the teacher, and grade level and subject.
taught. Sanctions should be a matter of public record to support governmental transparency and reduce cases of “passing on” unethical teachers to other schools.

State legislative committees on education should work with teachers to develop and legislate a behavior-guiding code of ethics. State departments of education and teacher unions should work together to identify and train teacher leaders to provide ethics education to working teachers. State credentialing agencies should work with approved teacher certification programs to ensure that pre-service teachers receive ethics education, including opportunities to develop moral sensitivity and awareness.

At the local level, school boards and district administrators should work with local teachers to develop aspirational codes of ethics to create shared norms. Teacher leaders should provide local education around these norms and behavioral expectations on a regular basis. Salary schedules should be reviewed to ensure that they encourage ethical behavior.

This study has broad implications for the public education system and the teaching profession, particularly as it relates to systems that contribute to ethical or unethical decision making. Accountability systems developed with this information could enhance teacher professionalism and public perceptions of teaching. Additional research should focus on other systemic variables such as teacher certification programs, ethics education programs, and elements of ethical climate.

Finally, this study demonstrates that leadership theory in a large system is complex and requires the cooperation of multiple stakeholder groups. It underscores the importance of considering how systems are developed and unanticipated impacts those systems may have. With future research, we may have an even better understanding of
whether leadership theory applies in the same way to multi-leveled systems like the public education system as it does in organizations.
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Appendix A

Creighton University Institutional Review Board Approval

Please note that Creighton University IRB-02 Social Behavioral has taken the following action on IRBNet:

Project Title: [994094-1] Legislating Morality: Codes of Ethics and Sanctioned Teacher Misconduct
Principal Investigator: Larina Warnock

Submission Type: New Project
Date Submitted: January 3, 2017

Action: APPROVED
Effective Date: March 6, 2017
Review Type: Exempt Review

Should you have any questions you may contact Brooke Fitzpatrick at bfitzpatrick@creighton.edu.

Thank you,
The IRBNet Support Team
Appendix B

Sampling of Categorization of Teacher Misconduct Behaviors

**OMB Type S Behaviors**

- Falsifying application or other certification documents
- Selling or stealing school property
- Teaching without a license
- Failure to disclose conviction of a crime
- Romantic relationship with student post-graduation
- Accepting favors from students or parents
- Using school computers or equipment for personal use
- Accepting bribes
- Selling to students for personal profit
- Fraud
- Burglary
- Forgery

**OMB Type O Behaviors**

- Disrespectful, harassing, or intimidating students or other staff members
- Physical or sexual contact with a student
- Sexual harassment of students or other staff members
- Helping students cheat on exams
- Child abuse
- Distribution of drugs to students
- Contributing to the delinquency of a minor student
• Inappropriate student discipline
• Purchasing alcohol for a minor student
• Purchasing drugs from students
• Display of content inappropriate for minor students
• Child pornography at school

**OMB Type D Behaviors**

• Removal of Federal property from public land
• Domestic violence, including abuse of one’s own child
• Felonies not involving students
• Failure to pay child support
• Sexual misconduct off school grounds
• Murder
• Driving while under the influence
• Violent crimes off school grounds

**Counterproductive Work Behavior**

• Substance abuse on or off school grounds
• Failure to use professional judgment
• Accessing pornography at school or on school computer, no students present
• Mishandling of student files or other paperwork
• Abandoning teaching contract
• Violation of testing procedures or protocols
• Failure to report child abuse
• Inappropriate or unprofessional comments to students, not harmful