Canon 3 Recommended Practices and Training

1) Encourage leadership within the organizational hierarchy (e.g., federal, state, and local education agencies, including board members) to know and effectively communicate current statutes, regulations, guidelines, accepted practices, and appropriate behavior regarding data access and disclosure to all employees.

2) Give educators access, in some reasonable format, to professional publications, instructional guides, trade journals, and other development materials necessary to stay abreast of relevant statutes, regulations, guidelines, accepted practices, and ethical standards.

3) Engage in professional development and staff training on relevant statutes, regulations, guidelines, accepted practices, and ethical standards concerning privacy and confidentiality. This training should be customized to meet the needs of different job responsibilities within the organization. Under most circumstances, this includes staff education about best practices for maintaining the privacy of individual student and staff information, including provisions of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and similar state and local statutes (see the *Forum Guide to the Privacy of Student Information: A Resource for Schools,* at *http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2006805.asp;* and the *Forum Guide to Protecting the Privacy of Student Information: State and Local Education Agencies,* at *http://nces.ed.gov/forum/pub_2004330.asp).*

4) Schedule periodic reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of communications and training efforts, as well as staff compliance with applicable statutes, regulations, guidelines, accepted practices, and ethical standards. Ensure that staff responsible for supervising the employees who perform data collection and reporting are, themselves, cognizant of state-of-the-art education data practices.

5) Train all data users in a routine and ongoing manner about data management, use, privacy, and exchange to ensure that they are aware of changing expectations and standards. Customize training efforts by job type as appropriate for communicating concepts and translating instruction into practice. One approach is to discuss the organization's rules about data disclosure and ask training participants to give examples of how each rule applies to their work. Develop several scenarios involving data confidentiality and ask the participants to talk about how they would handle them. For example, situations might include someone identifying himself as a prospective employer, who telephones and asks for information from a student's academic record; an in-service training session in which the presenter's visuals include names and other information about real students; talking with a volunteer who you have been informed divulged information about a student's health condition; or talking with a non-custodial parent who wants a copy of his or her child's grades. In order to encourage open discussion, do not ask training participants to report on instances in which they themselves have broken confidentiality regulations.