



## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF COMPLIANCE

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Not every school has the luxury of a full-time compliance professional on-site providing guidance on issues and answers to every question that comes up. That said, *ignorantia juris non excusat*, which is Latin for "ignorance of the law does not excuse." Where does this leave smaller schools or chains where the owner wears many hats, including compliance?

Our firm works with many different types of organizations, including publicly traded school companies, privately owned chains, single campuses and family-owned businesses. All school types have one thing in common: they are obligated to know and understand the laws and regulations that govern our sector and comply with them, regardless of size. The laws and regulations come from state regulations and individual board requirements, institutional and prog

regulations and when in doubt – ASK! Employees in smaller schools should go to supervisors or owners for answers regardless of how large or small an issue. Owners and directors should engage their employees by developing a strong culture of compliance and lead by example.

### Educational Advisors' Ten Commandments

While the following is *not* a complete list of do's and don'ts, it is something you can use to post on a bulletin board in the staff lounge or e-mail to employees. It is a great way to stimulate dialogue on the important topic of building a compliance-culture at your school.

- ONE:** You shall base business practices on the most stringent requirements you are governed by.
- TWO:** You shall embrace the industry through continuing education.
- THREE:** You shall not recruit students already enrolled in another institution.
- FOUR:** Remember your integrity is based on behavior, not words.
- FIVE:** Honor and promote the success of your employees and students.
- SIX:** You shall not jump to conclusions. Gather all facts prior to making decisions.
- SEVEN:** You shall not make up data to meet requirements.
- EIGHT:** You shall not distribute copyrighted materials without written consent from the author/publisher.
- NINE:** You shall not use white-out to hide incorrect information.
- TEN:** Student files shall communicate a student's entire enrollment experience without having to ask an employee for an explanation.

Whatever your plan, follow the ten commandments at a *minimum* to get started in developing your compliance culture.

to hire a full-time compliance director.

#### If I have a smaller school, what should I do?

First, meet with all of your employees and demonstrate your commitment to compliance by telling them that it is a priority for YOU and that it needs to be considered "mission critical" to everyone. Tell them everyone needs to do their best to learn the rules and

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