

# The Socratic Oath for Educators



*Like the Hippocratic Oath for doctors, an oath for educators espouses all of the aspirations of a dedicated education professional. Rather than Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, this oath should bear the name of the father of western thinking; Socrates. Keeping this in mind, with the help of my Actualization blog readers, I have crafted a proposed oath for professional educators – a Socratic Oath – for your consideration. Thank you to everyone who offered feedback and input in refining this important creed!*

“I swear to fulfill, to the best of my ability and judgment, this covenant:

I will respect the hard-won gains of those educators in whose steps I follow, and gladly share such knowledge with my colleagues. I will not enter into any relationship that creates even the appearance of impropriety in ethically carrying out this creed. My sole professional responsibility is to students, helping them to take charge of their learning, health and happiness.

I will not hurt any student, and I will protect all learners from harm. I will remember that there is art to learning as well as science, and that caring, empathy, social, emotional and physical development are as critical as intellectual achievement. I will apply, for the benefit of each student, all available instructional supports and resources, in the knowledge and conviction that we each learn differently, and that everyone can learn.

In all things, it is my charge to prepare learners to participate as citizens of a global society. I will not be ashamed to say “I do not know” as I model inquiry, risk-taking, collaboration, perseverance and resilience for students and colleagues alike.

I will respect the dignity of my students and their families, for they are entrusted into my care. I will not judge others, and I will tread with care as they work through challenges and frustrations. Everyone deserves many chances to dream, learn and be successful.

I will inspire all learners to be and do their best. I do not work to achieve minimum proficiencies, nor am I charged with teaching to the lowest common denominator. Learning is an iterative process, and I will work to instill that inner discourse within each student.

I will remember that I am a member of humankind, contributing to its future; the future for which I prepare all students. I will foster a learning environment where each learner is healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged, so that they may flourish at their current interest and ability levels and grow to realize their full potential.

In honoring this oath, may I enjoy a robust career, respected while I live and remembered with affection thereafter. May my legacy preserve the finest traditions of my profession, and leave this world a better place than I found it. Most importantly, may I instill in students a healthy curiosity, a thirst for discovery, and the hunger to be life-long learners who contribute to the greater good.”