

What Educators Must Know

Ethical Issues for Teachers

New Developments

Proper Use of Technology

Social Networking

What teachers say and do on a social networking site can be grounds for job action.

Younger teachers may view social networking as a right, no big deal, and their personal business—they may be wrong

- Students as friends
- “My Bad Day” blog
- My weekend of drunkenness and debauchery—photos for sharing
- Google me

Text Messages

R U ready for the
test

U promised A b/c
I'm so phat

U R phat but must
study

- Text messaging may be the subject of new district policies
- Texting often used to break down boundaries
- Inappropriate texts –anything but “no” means maybe

Email Confidentiality

Remember with word and other word processing formats—a savvy recipient can find any changes and make additional changes

- Pdf format vs. docs that can be altered and mined for info
- Protecting student info in emails
- When can you provide student data to third parties

The Rules

Background checks and Educator Standards Rules

Background Checks

DUIs

Retail Theft

Domestic Violence

- Every new license, every renewal
- Job action and licensing action possible
- Mandatory outcomes?
- R277-516

Educator Standards

Rules will be the subject of an online test required for renewal.

Top violations:
Boundary issues

- Civic and societal responsibility—obey the law, follow district policies, State Board rules
- Learning environment—teach the core, respect students
- Follow financial protocols, state gift laws and rules
- Integrity and honesty in your actions
- R277-515

Boundaries

Boundary issues—
new teachers need
to understand
boundaries, and who
to talk to if they are
concerned about
another educator

- Cruelty to children
- Illegal sexual conduct—permanent revocation
- Pornography at school or using school equipment
- Convictions or pleas in abeyance to criminal charges
- Under the influence at school
- Soliciting an inappropriate relationship with a student

Boundary Violations

- Kissing students
- Sending sexually suggestive emails to students
- Engaging in a sexual relationship with a student
- Taking nude/suggestive photographs of students
- Soliciting prostitutes
- Storing pornography at school
- Being under the influence while supervising a school dance
- Stealing students' medications
- Peeping Tom conviction

Test your Knowledge

Test your knowledge, test your mentee:

What's wrong with this scenario?

- Mrs. A is very concerned about Missy. Missy's parents are getting divorced and Missy has been unwittingly pulled into the center of the battle. Missy is withdrawn in class and has trouble focusing on her work. Mrs. A decides to befriend Missy and see if she can help her through these tough times.
- Mrs. A approaches Missy and tells her about her own parents divorce and how horrible she felt. Missy breaks down and begins to tell Mrs. A all about the situation with her parents.
- Missy spends the next several days talking to Mrs. A before and after school and during some lunch periods. Missy begins to tell Mrs. A about not only her parents and their fights, but also the pressure she is under from her boyfriend to have sex. Mrs. A offers sympathy and advice, and encourages the student to tell all. She also brings gifts to the student to make her feel better and tells her how much she cares about her.

I Digress: State FERPA

Mentees need to know when they can talk to students and when they need parental permission

- Politics: “Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself.” Mark Twain
- Religion: “You know, Jenny, I think your parents would prefer that you attend seminary instead of driver’s ed.”
- Mental Issues: “If you don’t stop squirming in that chair I am going to have you tested for ADHD.”
- Sex: “So, you think you might be gay? Fascinating, tell me all about it.”

More Test Questions

What's wrong with this scenario?

- Mr. B is a well-liked teacher who often receives emails from current and former students. One former student sends Mr. B jokes, videos and photos he thinks Mr. B will enjoy.
- Many of these emails from the former student include crude humor and photos. Mr. B is careful not to open the emails while his students are in the room, but he also does not regularly remember to delete the emails and he may forward some on to other teachers, friends, or to his personal email address.

Maintaining the Learning Environment

Professional educators maintain a positive, safe learning environment and work toward meeting educational standards required by law.

- Do not distort subject matter
- Resolve disciplinary problems according to law, policies
- Follow proper testing protocols
- Supervise students appropriately
- Do not discriminate against students
- Take action to protect students from known conditions detrimental to student health, safety or learning

Violations of the Standard

- Telling students to rethink their answers to specific questions on required standardized state tests
- Telling students bi-racial couples should be sterilized
- Using sexual innuendos in class
- Slapping a student
- Failing to stop students from referring to another using a derogatory term
- Threatening students
- Discussing personal religious beliefs with students without prior written parental consent
- Refusing to administer state tests within the testing window or encouraging students to fill in answer sheets randomly

Another Test

What's wrong with this scenario?

- Mrs. E. has a first grade student on an IEP who struggles to maintain his focus. The team has agreed on particular behavior intervention strategies. District policy allows for seclusion in keeping with LRBI guidelines.
- During class, the student refused to remain in his seat and was drawing on his arms with a highlighter. In frustration, the teacher placed the student in the time out cubicle. The student took several minutes to calm down and ended up in the time out cubicle for 45 minutes. During that time the teacher mentioned to the class, and for the student to hear, that the student was missing his favorite activity because of his bad behavior.

Financial Integrity

Professional educators adhere to state law, State and local board rules and school and administrative policies and procedures regarding financial matters

- Do not accept bonuses, incentives, or gifts that are inappropriate or create an appearance of impropriety
- Do not use school resources/property for personal use
- Do not promote personal business interests in school or using school resources

Financial Violations

- Depositing checks for student projects sold at school fundraiser in teacher's personal account, writing a check to the school and claiming a charitable tax deduction on personal income tax
- Failing to properly log driver education hours
- Creating a student fine account without authorization
- Submitting false requests for reimbursement to school
- Accepting a lingerie gift from student
- Using the school gym for church league team
- Using the school email to send parents information about personal music lesson business
- Telling parents athletes are required to attend a summer clinic hosted by third party for whom educator works
- Using school facilities for consensual sexual activity
- Using information from student's records to pursue a romantic relationship with parent

Finance Quiz

What's wrong with this scenario?

- Mr. F is an English teacher. During summer break and after school hours, he also tutors students who need additional assistance. He want to let students know about the tutoring opportunity.
- Mr. F uses his class list to generate an email to interested students and parents. He sends the emails from his school computer with a note to call him at home to schedule tutoring.

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Integrity and Honesty

Professional educators exhibit integrity and honesty in their relationships with school and district administrators and personnel.

- Communicate professionally and with civility.
- Express opinions responsibly in the community and do not promote personal issues as part of the instructional process.
- Comply with school and district policies and supervisor's directives.
- Perform all services required by the educator's contract, with professionalism.

Violations of the Standard

- Refusing to comply with supervisor's request to follow the district dress code
- Refusing to come to summer team workouts
- Refusing to give students state tests
- Publishing an inflammatory advertisement regarding a personal battle with a principal
- Promoting a personal religious belief as part of a class discussion

Test your Knowledge

What's wrong with this scenario?

- Ms. G has not had time to complete all of the required special education paperwork but has conducted all required IEP meetings.
- Knowing the parents have verbally agreed to IEP terms, Ms. G. signs the IEP documents on behalf of the parents.

Reminders

The number one reason students don't report inappropriate teacher conduct—fear they won't be believed.

- Students don't need to know your religious background.
- Students don't need to know your sexual proclivities.
- Students don't need to know what you think of other students or educators.

Excuses We've Heard Before

If an educator is facing UPPAC, please do not say:

- I was framed/entrapped/it's the student's fault
- I'm cured! Honest. My spouse/bishop/priest/parent/astrologer said so.
- I was doing research for the good of the school.
- I was just trying to help



THE END