Purpose

The session will focus on interactions between educators and students, with a special emphasis on the utilization of social/electronic media, teachers as role models and actions outside the classroom.
Stimulating Thinking

How does social media influence my work with students?

How do interactions with students influence laws and policies?
Participants will

- articulate effective uses of social media to enhance student learning;
- gain an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate social media interactions;
- identify social media grooming actions used to initiate inappropriate teacher-student relationships; and
- make connections between social media utilization guidelines, recommendations, and educator misconduct consequences.
Participants will

- Gain an understanding of teachers as role models.
- Understand that their activity outside of the classroom impacts their profession.
- ***This combined module 4 with 2
Teacher Busted for Drugs Suspended by District

Teacher Resigns After Twerking Video

Teacher Fired for Stripping While on Leave

HS Principal Lied About Hypnotizing Students

Texas on Record-Setting Pace for Inappropriate Teacher-Student Relationships
GOOD NEWS

TODAY
A Thank You to the Teacher Who Saw What No One Else Did

Eleven Education Leaders Had Their Lives Changed by Amazing Teachers

Assistant Principal Organizes Fundraisers for Students
Life Under a Microscope
Our Private Lives Aren’t So Private Anymore…

Why?
The Impact of a Personal Online Post

Taylor  I HATE MY BOSS
Like · Comment · 5 hours ago near Lucia · 🎈

Lizzy  Dido
5 hours ago via mobile · Like · 👍 1

Jeremy  You do realize we're friends on fbook right?
about an hour ago via mobile · Unlike · 👎 1

Photo Reposted by lamebook.com
Consequences of Actions

- The professional relationship with his principal became strained.
- The principal lost respect and trust for the teacher.
Picture Courtesy of the Daily Dot News and Photos via @crunk_bear/Twitter
Consequences of Actions

★ Loss of respect and credibility from colleagues, administrators, students, parents, board members, and community.

★ Loss of employment.

★ Loss of future employment/certification.
Ramifications

Really?

Freedom of speech

57 of ICT Act
Educators as Role Models
A role model is a person whose behavior is imitated by others.
Community Expectations for Educator Actions Outside of the School Day
The community expects educators to

☑ be keenly aware that their actions reflect on the profession and the schools they represent;

☑ demonstrate the highest level of professional judgment inside and outside of the school day; and

Connecticut’s Teacher Education and Mentoring Project (2012)
The community expects educators to

- understand that their presence within the community should be reflective of a law-abiding, trustworthy, and respectful citizen.
Discuss the challenges of being a role model for students outside of school.
CONSEQUENCES

- Reprimand
- Suspension
- Termination
- Loss of Certification
- Incarceration
Positive Impact of Social Media
Enhancing Learning Outcomes
How can the utilization of social media by educators cross serious teacher-student boundaries?
Social Media Boundary Crossings

What begins with an innocent string of social media communications (intentional or not) can soon lead to a strong emotional connection with a student.
An Inappropriate Relationship Begins

Voluntary statement given to law enforcement:

“I began playing Words With Friends with several students before the end of the school year, including Gabriella. I often chatted with students about the game. My conversations began innocently, but after school let out in June my conversations with Gabriella became more intense.”

(Name has been changed.)
An Inappropriate Relationship Ends

Voluntary statement given to law enforcement:

“I told my wife that I had an emotional relationship with Gabriella and it moved beyond an appropriate boundary between a teacher and student. My wife was angry and demanded that I terminate contact with Gabriella entirely. I then emailed Gabriella and asked her to not try and contact me or my wife and I apologized for any emotional harm I had caused her.”

(Name has been changed.)
Outcome of This Case

The teacher voluntarily surrendered his teaching certificate.
Sentenced to 60 Years in Prison

15 times EVERY week in this country
Is Social Media to Blame for Inappropriate Student-Teacher Relationships?
The Impact of Social Media

In Alabama, social media and text messaging continue to be the driving factors in the number of sexual misconduct cases investigated.
Technology Tools and Platforms

Today's Tools

...and more!
Social media leaves a digital footprint.
Video Scenario

I want to see you, let's meet up later. Close call last time. Don't get caught :)

I want to see you, let's meet up later. Close call last time. Don't get caught :)
Video Scenario Debrief
Sobering Statistics
IRWSM Investigations Opened

<table>
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<td>179</td>
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<td>2014–15</td>
<td>188</td>
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Treading on Dangerous Ground
• Four out of five educators use social media for personal communication. However . . .

• More than 62% of educators surveyed have had minimal or no training in the area of interacting with students and parents through social media.

(University of Phoenix College of Education, 2015)
GROOMING

STUDENTS

Social Media

Awareness
Appropriate vs. Inappropriate
Hi Mike. Be a sweetie and send me your late assignment. I'm waiting...
Hi Mike. Be a sweetie and send me your late assignment. I'm waiting...

I've been busy. Can we make a deal?
Hi Mike. Be a sweetie and send me your late assignment. I'm waiting...

I've been busy. Can we make a deal?

 Depends on how good the deal is......
Hi Mike. Be a sweetie and send me your late assignment. I'm waiting...

I've been busy. Can we make a deal?

Depends on how good the deal is......

I'll Snapchat you with a great deal.
Hello Mike. A quick reminder to send me your assignment. It was due yesterday.
Hello Mike. A quick reminder to send me your assignment. It was due yesterday.

Thank you, Ms. C. I will send today. Sorry it's late.
Hello Mike. A quick reminder to send me your assignment. It was due yesterday.

Thank you, Ms. C. I will send today. Sorry it's late.

Your graded paper will be posted to your school Dropbox account.
SHARE
Inappropriate

Social Media

Communications
What was the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication?
Was the communication made openly, or did the educator attempt to conceal it?
Could the communication be interpreted as soliciting contact or a romantic relationship?
Was the communication sexually explicit?

Did it involve discussion of a sexual nature regarding either the educator or the student?
The Law and the Consequences

- Loss of Career
- Loss of Freedom
- Register as Sex Offender
Utilization Guidelines
Social Media Utilization Guidelines

• Be aware of what you post online. You represent not only yourself, but also your school district.

• Follow your district’s policy for electronic and online communication.

• Be transparent by maintaining openness, visibility, and accountability.

(O’Donovan, 2012)
Social Media Utilization Guidelines

• Consider all electronic communication to be accessible and a matter of record.

• Choose appropriate subject matter and words that are courteous, grammatically correct, and professional.

(O’Donovan, 2012)
Would your online account pass muster?
OUTCOMES
Strategies to Decrease Incidents

• Provide educator ethics training that focuses on appropriate use of social media.

• Strengthen and communicate district social media utilization policies and guidelines.
Strategies to Decrease Incidents

• Report suspected incidents consistently and in a timely manner.

• Expand accountability for withholding information.

• Acknowledge that schools will enforce a zero-tolerance policy.
Any Questions?
References


References


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References


If you have any questions about this presentation, please contact Susan Crowther with the Alabama State Department of Education
(334) 694-4699