Ethical and Legal Issues Facing Teachers Today

There are many ethical and legal issues facing teachers today. These issues take place in and out of the classroom. They can involve students’ parents and even other faculty members. With the advancement of technology there has been a whole new form of ethical issues with the use of social media these issues have developed, student teacher communication, and the use of social network, and student confidentiality.

Student teacher communication has changed greatly with the advancement of technology. There are many other means to communicate outside of a phone call or even a written letter home. There is outlets such as e-mail and text messaging that students and or teachers can communicate with their students. These outlets can be a good or bad thing depending on how you look at it. Keeping these communications legal and ethical is key to being successful. Communication with your students is important to develop relationships for the students to be open to learning and more receiving of information. But it is important to do it in a proper manor. If a teacher use the school provided e-mail to communicate with teachers and parents this source is traceable and a great to track false accusations of inappropriate conversations with students outside of school, since this system is monitored by the school and these e-mails can be traced. This form of communication becomes unethical when the teacher uses a personal e-mail as well.
as the student uses a personal e-mail. This source of communication isn’t as traceable to cover your back as a teacher and leads to inappropriate communication. Such as the sharing of personal information that isn’t appropriate for students to have with teachers. As well as texting a student about personal information and or coordinating meetings outside of school. In order to keep this communication ethical and legal you need to use school provided sources of communication i.e. school e-mail for both teacher and student. The legal parameters that this inappropriate form of communication causes can be very detrimental to a teacher’s career. Unethical communications that take place between a student and teacher can lead to false accusations on the teachers or even could lead to inappropriate relationships between the two parties. When these kinds of things take place it is brought out into the media most of the time and the teacher tends to lose their job and develop a very bad reputation.

Social media has become a very popular source of media today. Such as Facebook, twitter and snap chat. These things a very popular among a very wide range of ages of people. From adults to young children. The only problem with these social media outlets is that it could land a teacher in trouble. The reason for this is that a teacher may not be friends with their students on one of the media websites but their pages a very open to the public. Students can get access and even parents can gain access. If a teacher is posting inappropriate things or even
things that they do outside of school such as happy hour with co-workers, can land a teacher in ethical trouble. Also along the legal lines these media websites can land in trouble in case that if a teacher is talking about other children that they may teach violating students privacy laws will land a teacher in a lot of trouble. As well as posting inappropriate pictures of themselves such as pictures of them drinking or not wearing proper clothing. These things are ethically and legally inappropriate and school districts do not tolerate such behaviors from teachers.

Student confidentiality is very important in a school and if it is violated it can be a major issue for a teacher. It is a teacher’s ethical and legal role to keep all students that a teacher works with and what they work with them on confidential. Any person that works with a student in a school on an educational basis has a right know what a student’s needs are. Whether it be their accommodations or grades and discipline records. All of these things are confidential information and should be kept that way if a teacher is working with a student. For example if a teacher shares with another teacher at lunch time the name of a student and things that they are specifically working on with that student or specific needs that this student has it is breaking student confidentiality laws if the other teacher does not teach that student, because the teacher has no educational need to know these things about this student. It is important to maintain this confidentiality because it is in a teacher’s code of ethics and it is the law. It is also important to keep
confidential paper work out of the hands of people that do not need to see them. Such as students other teachers and even parents that might be in your room. Keep this things locked away so that you only have access to them is the best practice to keep from a student’s confidentiality being broken.

Ethical and legal issues in an education setting are very prevalent and you have to be mindful of the things that you are doing. It is easy to find yourself in trouble if you aren’t mindful. These issues are such a big deal because you could lose your job or even spend time in jail. There is a fine line that you need to follow and be mindful of and the best way to stay out of trouble is educate yourself on the things that could be looked at as ethically and legally wrong in an education setting. There have been many teachers that have been in trouble for ethical issues such as inappropriate things on social media websites, breaking confidentiality and even having sex with students. Make yourself aware of these issues so that you don’t land yourself in trouble.
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(Simpson, Cyberspeak No Evil)

Bibliography


