AASB 2021 School Board Conference Experienced Board Member Academy

Professional Boundaries

November 4, 2021

Facilitators
Lori Grassgreen, Director of Alaska ICE
Lisa Worl, AASB STEPS



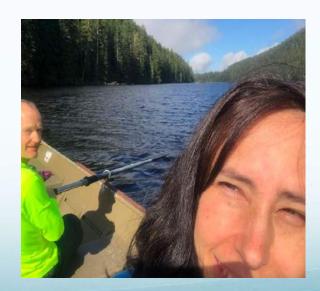


We're glad to be here with you

Lisa Worl, STEPS Partnership Coordinator



Lori Grassgreen, Director of Community Engagement







A Special Thanks to

Statewide Professional Boundaries Workgroup

And our presenters today

STAR- Staff are here in the room

Suki Miller
 Restorative Space- Rebecca
 Cook Inlet Room



Superintendent, Dr. Bobby Bolen

Superintendent, Kimberly Hankins, Lower Kuskokwim

Carleen Mitchell, Alaska Public Entity Insurance

Kami Moore, Department of Education and Early Development

Melody Mann, PTPC Department of Education and Early Development

Clint Campion, Sedor Wendlandt, Evans, & Filippi



Our Purpose:

- Keeping students safe by learning about professional boundaries
- Deepen our understanding of professional boundaries
- Share examples and stories from districts
- Offer policy, standards and strategies for implementation

Agenda

- Opening and Welcome
- Keeping Students Safe
- District Stories
- The What and Why of Professional Boundaries
- Professional Boundaries Policy
- Statutes Safe Children's Act

Lunch on own

- PTPC: Professional Standards
- School Board Actions to Prevent
- Professional Boundaries investigations
- Implementing Policy and Practice
- Next Steps
- Closing





"OUR WAY OF LIFE"

- Discipline and Obedience to the Traditions of our Ancestors
- Respect for Self, Elders and Others
- Respect for Nature and Property
- Patience
- Pride in Family, Clan and Traditions is found in Love, Loyalty and Generosity
- Be Strong in Mind, Body and Spirit
- Humor
- Hold Each Other Up
- Listen Well and with Respect
- Speak with Care
- We are Stewards of the Air, Land and Sea
- Reverence for Our Creator
- Live in Peace and Harmony
- Be Strong and Have Courage

- Be Strong in Body, Mind, and Spirit Bring your whole self, in every chair is a leader
- Listen Well and with Respect; Speak with Care
- Our Value of Humor Helps Us
- Have Courage Challenges to Solutions
- Hold Each Other Up Take Care of Yourself and Each Other

If we were together in person, we would be seeing each other. Please keep your camera on, when possible, so we can hold each other up!



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

- STAR IS HERE TO HELP



How do we keep students safe?

While boards have a legal requirement to keep students safe, most boards go above and beyond the legal requirements and put policies and practices in place to keep student's safe.

What are some of the things your district does to focus on student safety?

 Include anything that you are doing as a district on professional boundaries if you are currently work on this.



Keeping Students Safe

Stop abuse before it starts!

The most effective way to protect students and prevent abuse is to:

Recognize that boundary invasions may put children at risk

Report observed boundary invasions

Follow up by administration on reports of boundary invasions



Whether it is a student or their adults...

Perpetrators-----

Build trust

Gain access

Identify the vulnerable



District Stories Bering Strait School District Lower Kuskokwim School District

Dr. Bobby Bolen & Kimberly Hankins







Implementing Professional Boundaries Policy Through Audits



Experienced Board Member Academy

November 4, 2021 Anchorage, AK

IT'S UP TO US

Importance of Collective Action

- Child Sex Abuse in Alaska: 6x the national average
- Western Alaska, accounts for just 10 percent of the state population, but 40% of educators sanctioned for sexual misconduct with students over the past decade.
- Offenders are often popular and recognized for excellence.

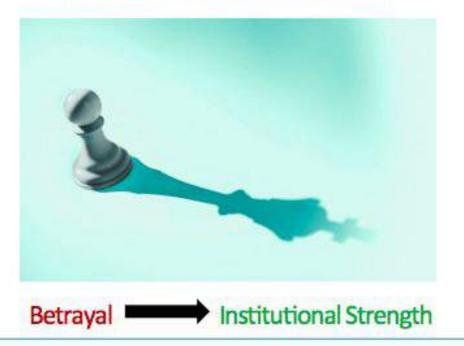


Lower Kuskokwim School Distrier

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LKSD'S STORY



Lower Koskokwim School District

ALASKA school boards

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BETRAYAL

Personal

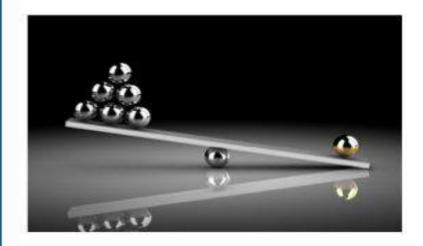
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Professional

Compartmentalization

Lower Kuskokwim School District





INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTH

SYSTEM OF BEST PRACTICES

- ✓ Policies & Procedures
- ✓ Personnel Management
- ✓ Prevention & Training
- ✓ Reporting
- ✓ Investigation & Response
- ✓ Accountability

Lower Kuskokwim School District



THE PATH FORWARD

Cultural Change - Top Down & Bottom Up



Lower Kuskokwim School District





The What and Why of Professional Boundaries?



Understanding Boundary Invasions



Boundary Invasion: "An act or omission by a school employee that has the potential to violate the duty of care that school personnel have for students."

- Some invasions of students' personal boundaries may be required for health, safety, or educational reasons
- Other invasions are inappropriate, because they have no legitimate health, safety, or educational reason, but are not necessarily abusive
- Some inappropriate boundary invasions, however, are the result of a perpetrator intentionally grooming a child for future abuse

How awareness of professional boundaries protects students



Stop abuse before it starts!

According to Certified Sexual Offender Treatment Providers, the most effective way to protect students and prevent abuse is to:

- Recognize that boundary invasions may put children at risk
- Report observed boundary invasions
- Follow up by administration on reports of boundary invasions

Understanding Boundary Invasions



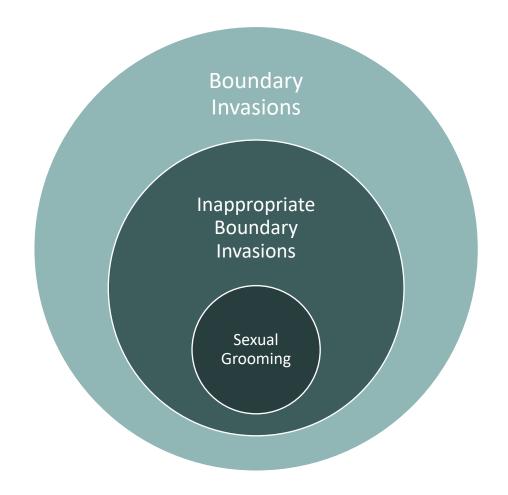
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- Some inappropriate boundary invasions, however, are the result of a perpetrator intentionally grooming a child for future abuse



Understanding Boundary Invasions

Not all boundary invasions are inappropriate and not all inappropriate boundary invasions involve sexual grooming, but preventing boundary invasions can prevent grooming and thus abuse.





Sexual Grooming Defined



Actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and *establishing an emotional connection* with a child, in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.



Adults are Groomed, too

Often the teacher becomes known as someone:

- Who *deeply cares* about students so that focusing on a student seems not unusual.
- Who makes extra-special efforts to help kids so that being with a student at odd hours seems less odd.
- Who would *never be suspected* of misconduct so that access to students is freely given.
- Who is *just a "touchy," "hugging" kind of person* so that rumors of touching may be discounted.



Stages of Grooming

Build trust

Perpetrators build an image over a lifetime which causes people to dismiss odd or inappropriate behavior.

Gain access

The perpetrator works in environments in which there is a "well populated hunting ground". The school environment brings a new class of children each year.

Identify the vulnerable

The perpetrator identifies vulnerable or at-risk children with voids in their life that the perpetrator can "fill".



Stages of Grooming (cont.)

Isolate the child

Perpetrator will seek opportunities to be with a child away from others, such as after school activities, one-on-one tutoring, lunches in the classroom, rides, and sleep overs.

Desensitize the child to touch

This is done slowly over time, starting with small touches that seem innocent and may be seen by others early on, such as piggy-back rides, hugs, light touching, and increased gradually.

Each of these first five steps may be observed by outsiders and creates an opportunity for others to recognize danger and to intercede.



Stages of Grooming (cont.)

Introduce intimacy

Intimacy is introduced as the perpetrator begins to move the conversation from professional to personal and from general to sexual.

- Create complicity
 - Complicity is created by making the child believe the abuse is their fault.
 - The perpetrator accomplishes this by having the child join them in breaking rules that are increasingly severe. If abuse occurs during the rule breaking, the child couldn't report the abuse without also disclosing their own wrongdoing.



Stages of Grooming (cont.)

Test ability to keep secrets

This is done to ensure the child will keep secrets before the perpetrator actually "crosses the line" into abuse. The perpetrator will break rules and cross boundaries that are initially insignificant and gradually increase.

Maintain silence

The perpetrator may appeal to the child's emotions by saying, "If you tell I'll get in trouble." But often threats are issued, such as the potential to harm someone else the child cares about or through violence against the child.

These last four steps will not be as visible to others but may occur privately between the perpetrator and the child

Stages of Grooming





Break See you in 10 minutes!



School Board Policies and Statues





5141.42 PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES OF STAFF WITH STUDENTS

The District is committed to protecting children from inappropriate conduct by adults, including school staff and volunteers. The purpose of this policy is to provide all staff, students, volunteers and community members with information about their role in protecting children. This policy applies to all district staff and volunteers. For purposes of this policy and its administrative regulation, the terms "district staff," "staff member(s)," and "staff" also includes volunteers.



Example policy content 1 of 5 sections

include, but are not limited to, the following:

Taking an undue interest in a Particular Student:

- 1. Having a "special friend or a "special relationship" with a particular student.
- 2. Favoring certain students by giving them special privileges.
- 3. Favoring certain students, inviting them to come to the classroom at non-class times.
- 4. Getting a particular student out of class to visit the teacher during the teacher's prep period.
- 5. Engaging in peer-like behavior with students including rough-housing.



Questions and Discussion

In our communities the line between professional and personal can be less clear.

What are a few examples or questions that you have come up for you this morning?



Safe Children's Act

Kami Moore, Alaska Dept. of Education & Early Development



Alaska Safe Children's Act Grades 7-12

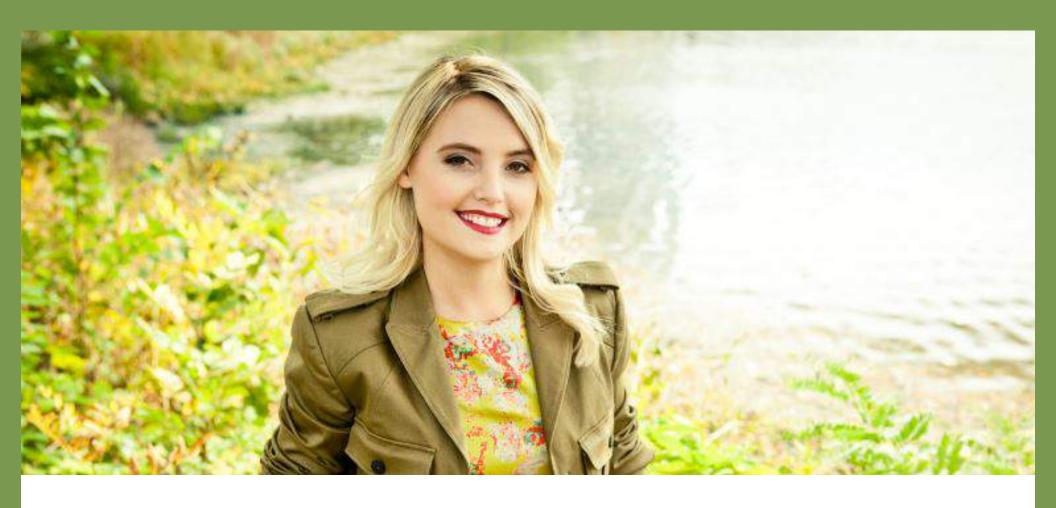
Kami Moore, MPH

Alaska Department of Education & Early Development

The Alaska Safe Children's Act

- AS 14.30.355 (Erin's Law)
- AS 14.30.356 (Bree's Law)





Sexual abuse & sexual assault awareness & prevention

AS 14.30.355 (Erin's Law) Grades K-12

AS 14.30.355 (Erin's Law)

The governing body of each school district shall adopt and implement a policy, establish a training program for employees and students, and provide parent notices relating to sexual abuse and sexual assault awareness and prevention for students enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12.

AS 14.30.355 (Erin's Law)

The policy, training, and notices adopted under this section must include:

- Age-appropriate information
- Warning signs of sexual abuse of a child
- Referral and resources information
- Methods for increasing teacher, student and parent awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children
- Actions that a child may take to prevent and report sexual assault



Teen dating violence & abuse awareness & prevention program; training and notices

AS 14.30.356 (Bree's Law) Grades 7-12

AS 14.30.356 (Bree's Law)

The department, in consultation with school districts, shall develop and approve a program relating to teen dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention for grades seven through 12.

The program must:

- 1) include training for employees and students;
- 2) provide parent notices; and
- 3) be reviewed periodically by a qualified individual or committee for consistency with generally accepted standards for a teen dating violence and abuse awareness and prevention program.

AS 14.30.356 (Bree's Law)

The training, notices, and instructions adopted under this section must include:

- Age-appropriate information
- Warning signs of dating violence and abusive behavior
- Characteristics of healthy relationships
- Measures to prevent and stop dating violence and abuse
- Community resources available to victims of dating violence and abuse

State Developed Curriculum

Stakeholder Input

A state developed curriculum must:

- Meet the requirements of the Alaska Safe Children's Act in its entirety (Erin's Law & Bree's Law)
- Be delivered in a way that creates consistency in content and messaging
- Help assist teachers who have less comfort in addressing the topics discussed,
- Fit within a 30 minute block

State Developed Curriculum

Erin's Law

- Age-appropriate information
- Warning signs of sexual abuse of a child
- Referral and resources information
- Methods for increasing teacher, student and parent awareness of issues regarding sexual abuse of children
- Actions that a child may take to prevent and report sexual assault

Bree's Law

- Age-appropriate information
- Warning signs of dating violence and abusive behavior
- Characteristics of healthy relationships
- Measures to prevent and stop dating violence and abuse
- Community resources available to victims of dating violence and abuse

CONSENT, BOUNDARIES, COMMUNICATION

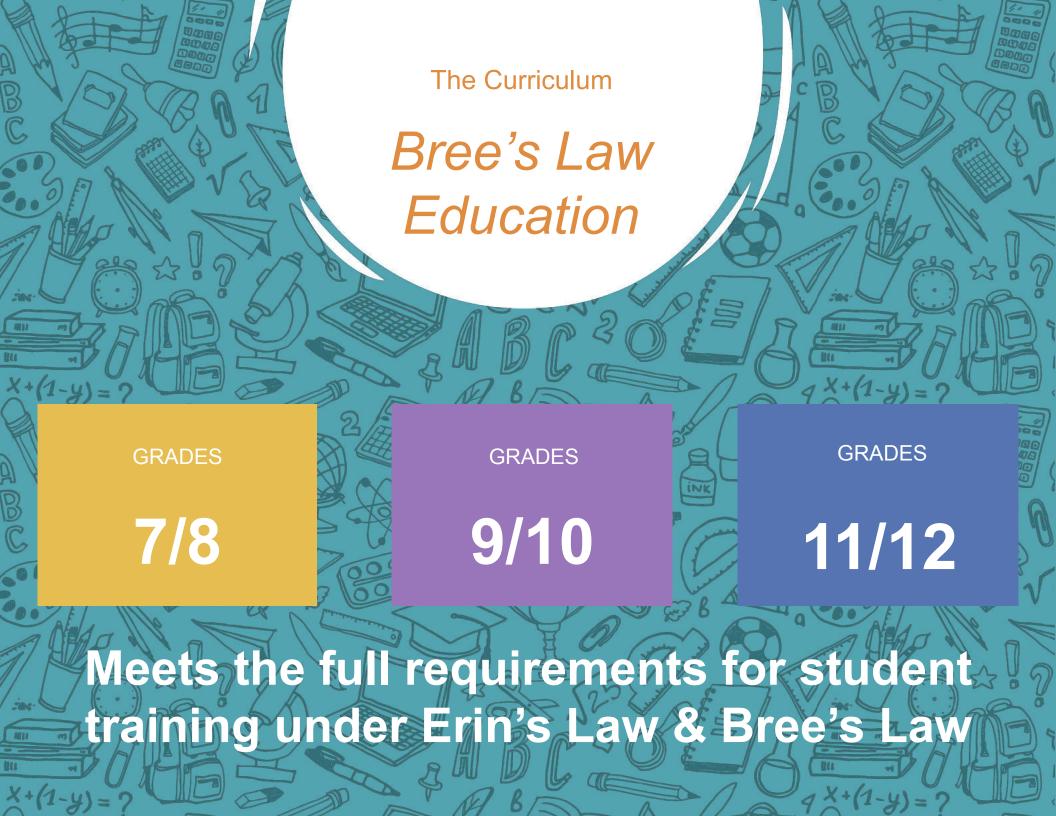
State Developed Curriculum

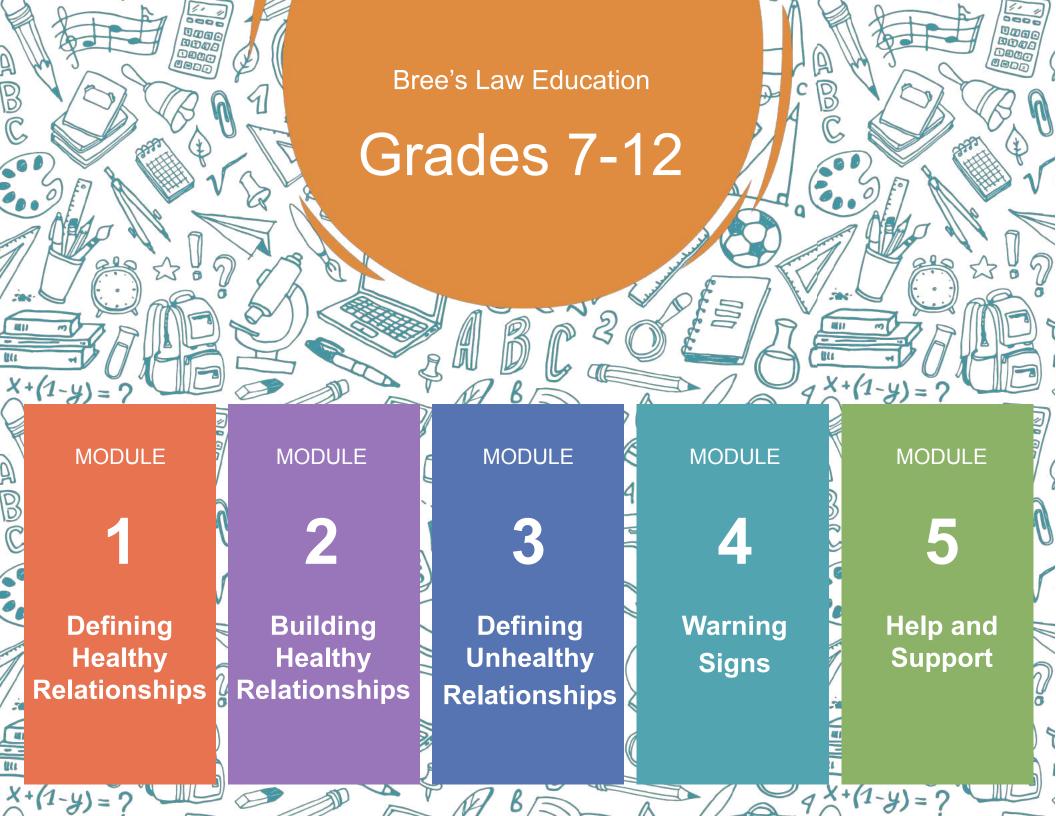
WEBSITE:

https://education.alaska.gov/schoolhealth/AlaskaSafeChildrensAct-StateDevelopedCurriculum

A special Thanks to the Curriculum Committee:

- Bridgette Reynolds, Sitka School District
- Emily Vanderpool, Kuspuk School District
- Heather Johnson, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District
- Kristy Germain, Juneau School District
- Meghan Crow, Lower Kuskokwim School District
- Melanie Sutton, Anchorage School District
- Michelle Daml, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District





Accessing the Curriculum

eClassroom

Educator facilitated eLearning courses for use with **students** in Alaska.

Welcome to the eClassroom!

The eClassroom provides educators with grade appropriate lessons to use with students. All courses are accompanied by teacher guides and to be accessed by educators only. Presented by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development.



https://akclassroom.inquisiqlms.com/Default.aspx

Support for Schools

Local and Statewide Agencies

- Develop or enhance existing relationships.
- Can provide training to school staff
- Support classroom implementation

Questions?

Email:

eed.alaskasafechildrensact@alaska.gov



PTPC: Professional Standards and the Code of Ethics

Melody Mann, Professional Teaching Practices
Commission, DEED



STATE OF ALASKA



PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES COMMISSION

Melody Mann

Executive Director

What is the PTPC?

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PTPC is a nine-member commission established by the Alaska legislature in 1966 and empowered to impose punitive sanctions against those educators who engage in illegal, immoral or unethical conduct. (AS 14.20.370-510)



Who Serves On the Commission?

- **5 Teachers**
- 1 Superintendent
- 1 Principal
- 1 Representative of Higher Ed
- 1 Representative of the Department of Education and Early Development

Commission Members

Adam Reid (vice chair)	Teacher	Anchorage SD
Diane Kardash	Higher Ed	UAF
Danette Peterson	Teacher	Fairbanks North Star BSD
Jamie Burgess (secretary)	Superintendent	Nome Public Schools
Jennifer Stafford	Teacher	Mat-Su BSD
Tammy van Wyhe	DEED	
Lem Wheeles (chair)	Teacher	Anchorage SD
Kimberly Bergey	Assistant Principal	Yukon Koyukuk SD Raven Program
Janine Todd	Teacher	Delta/Greeley Schools

How Does Someone Get Named to the Commission?

✓ Commissioners are appointed <u>by the</u>
<u>Governor</u> from a list of nominees
submitted by constituent groups. (For example, AASSP and AAESP nominate the candidates for the principal's position).

Appointments are subject to <u>legislative approval</u>.

PTPC Mission:

The Commission helps educators understand what is expected of them.

The Commission holds educators to an <u>ethical</u> standard that is demanded of a profession entrusted with the care and teaching of children.

Who Can The Commission Sanction?

- Certificate holders teachers, counselors, and administrators; student teachers
- Instructors in higher education;
 (Can only be warned or reprimanded unless a certificate holder)
- Commission is the final authority regarding the discipline of a teacher;
- Before an <u>administrator</u> can be disciplined the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development must concur.

DISCIPLINING EDUCATORS

Building level
District level
*Certificate level
Criminal level

SANCTIONS

Warning (not publicized)

Reprimand

Suspension

Revocation

Surrender

Denial



PUBLICIZING SANCTIONS

PTPC Website

AK Teacher Certification Website

Annual PTPC Newsletter

National Database (limited access)

Last 10 Years

 Number of PTPC Suspension or Revocations (includes surrenders)

Туре	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21
(A) Teache r	9	9	11	8	5	14	7	7	8	11	3
(B) Admini -strator		2	1		1					1	
(C) Special Service s		2			1		1	1			

Superintendent Discipline

Superintendent Sanctions (all time)

Sanction	Number	Date
Revocation	2	1998, 1990
Suspension	3	1999, 1990, 1986
Reprimand	7	2015 (2), 2013, 1989, 1983, 1981, 1980
Warning	1	2021

Superintendent Discipline

Number of PTPC Complaints filed against Supts. or Asst. Supts.

| FY |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| _ | | | _ | | _ | _ | | | | |
| 6 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 15 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 3 |
| | | | | | | | | | | |

Complaints against principals

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Complaints	6	9	7	22	9
Sanctions	2	1	0	1	0

COMPLAINT PROCESS

- Request for Investigation (Complaint form)
 - Must be signed
 - "Anyone" can file a complaint
- Intake Process
 - Screening Guidelines
 - Letters to Complainant and Respondent
- Investigation
 - Timeline can vary
- Decision
 - Dismissal can be appealed to full Commission
 - Stipulation-a settlement
 - Accusation Hearing before full Commission with ALJ

Limitations

20 AAC 10.210 (b):

Unless the alleged act would be grounds for discipline under AS14.20.030, the staff may not investigate school district personnel actions, including hiring, evaluation, transfer, reassignment, or dismissal of staff, or curriculum actions.

The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

- Developed and revised by the PTPC.
- Articulated requirement to abide by the COE is written into employment contracts.
- Members of the teaching profession are obligated to abide by the Code of Ethics (AS 14.20.480).

Code of Ethics Document

Download:

http://education.alaska.gov/ptpc/pdf/coe.pdf

Format:

- a) ...governance
- b) ...obligations to students
- c) ...obligations to public
- d) ...obligations to profession
 - ...moral turpitude
 - ...definitions

EXAMPLES

A Certificated Educator...

- 1. "coaches" students on test questions/answers during PEAKS testing
- 2. doesn't return to work after Thanksgiving
- 3. posts comments about students on personal social networking site
- 4. arrives late for school and consistently falls asleep during class

MORE EXAMPLES

- 5. misuses sick leave
- 6. shows R-rated movie after school to students
- 7. downloads adult pornography on district computer
- 8. has sexual relations with an 18-year-old student
- falsification, misrepresentation, or omissions on employment application or certification applications

What violations <u>must</u> be reported to the Commission?

The Code of Ethics requires that knowledge of physical abuse of a student or sexual conduct with a student by an educator must be reported to the Commission.

20 ACC 10.020 (b)(4)(A)(B)

Failure to report is a violation of CoE

20 AAC 10.900. DEFINITIONS.

- (1) "sexual conduct" includes
- □ (A) explicit sexual jokes and stories;
- □ (B) flirtatious or sexually related comments;
- (C) sexual kidding or teasing;
- (D) sexual innuendos or comments with double entendre;
- (E) inappropriate physical touching;
- □ (F) soliciting, encouraging, participating in, or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, or electronic communication of a sexual nature with a student;
- □ (G) a physical or romantic relationship with a student, whether consensual or nonconsensual;
- (H) discussion of the educator's sexual feelings or activities;
- (I) discussion, outside of a professional teaching or counseling context, of a student's sexual feelings or activities; and
- □ (J) "sexual penetration" and "sexual contact" as those terms are defined in AS 11.81.900(j);

Section 8546 of ESSA

- SEC. 8546. [20 U.S.C. 7926] PROHIBITION ON AIDING AND ABETTING SEXUAL ABUSE.
- If school personnel know, or have probable cause to believe, that a person engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or other minor, they can't help them get a job. There must be rules in place to prohibit this.
- There are several AK statutes that support this section.
- In laymen's terms it is referred to as "Prohibiting the passing of trash."
- Reporting to PTPC helps end this viscous cycle.

Bering Strait SD to pay \$12.6 M in student sex abuse case



By Sandra Medearis for the Nome Nugget |

Posted: Fri 5:13 PM, Feb 15, 2019 | Updated: Mon 1:57 PM, Feb 18, 2019

Most common complaint:

- The most filed complaint is the Breach of Contract.
- Authority: <u>4AAC 18.010. Teachers' and administrators'</u> <u>contracts</u>
- of both parties upon 30 days' written notice by either party and the written assent of the other party; a teacher failing to give the written notice, or who leaves a position following the notice without having the written assent of the employing board, may be liable to revocation of certificate for breach of contract.

The GOOD NEWS . . .

Approximately 0.1% of educators in Alaska have been sanctioned by the Commission.

Only 15 Alaska educators were sanctioned last year (2020-2021).



The BAD NEWS . . .

□ Approximately 0.1% of educators in Alaska have been sanctioned by the Commission.

■ 15 Alaska educators were sanctioned last year (2020-2021).



CYBERETHICS

- **□Social Media**
- Texting
- **Emails**
- Blogs
- ■Websites
- Smartphones



Possible Boundary Violations (Slippery Slopes)

- Disclosing too much personal information
- Driving students in personal vehicle
- Forwarding a political agenda
- Disclosing confidential information
- Engaging in private correspondence with students
- Hiring a student to work for you or other dual relationships

Professional Conduct Violations

- Boundary Violations with Students
- Disparagement of Students
- Physical Abuse/Sexual Misconduct/Moral Turpitude (criminal conduct)
- Unfair Treatment/Unprofessional Behavior
- Breach of Contract
- Test Security/Procedures
- Failure to Divulge/Falsification
- Cyber Ethics (texting, Facebook, etc.)

THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR. . .

- DEMONSTRATES RESPONSIBILITY TO ONESELF AS AN ETHICAL PROFESSIONAL BY:
 - Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community.
 - Avoiding the use of one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety.

QUESTIONS?

- Q. When should a complaint be filed with the PTPC?
- A. If in doubt, call me to discuss the situation.

Other questions?

Contact information:

Professional Teaching Practices Commission 550 W. 7th Ave., Suite1240 Anchorage, AK 99501

(907) 269-6579 (907) 269-5070 Fax Melody Mann, Executive Director melody.mann@alaska.gov



Contact me to present to your school district!

Lunch on own See you at 1:30pm



School Board Actions to Prevent Abuse

Carleen Mitchell, APEI





Administrator's Guide to Professional Boundaries

Carleen Mitchell, Deputy Director Alaska Public Entity Insurance



Abuse and the Impact on Schools

- While the number of sex offenders in the overall number of educators and staff is low, a single incident can have a devastating impact on a school district
- At least 7 out of 54 Alaskan school districts have been impacted by child abuse allegations in the past few years.
- The Aided in Agency standard states that an employer may be considered responsible for an employee's actions if the person's job placed him or her in a position of authority over others, even if there was no negligence on the employer's part
- Insurance limits today may cover these claims, but in later years that coverage may not be available



Who are the perpetrators?

Teachers 18%

Coaches 15%

Substitute Teachers 13%

Bus Drivers 12%

Aides 11%

Other 10%

Security Guards 10%

Principals 6%

Counselors 5%



Dual Relationships

Definition: Relationships where one person has a professional relationship with another person in which one has the upper hand, while also having a second, significantly different relationship where the two people seem to be peers.

- Ethical rules have been established in the teaching profession recognizing that students could be vulnerable to being taken advantage of
- Students are less likely to be aware of the risks of a dual relationship
- Responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries lies with the professional
- Transparency is the antidote to the risk with dual relationships



A Recap of *Professional Boundaries*

- **Grooming:** Actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child, in order to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.
- Not all boundary invasions are inappropriate and not all inappropriate boundary invasions involve sexual grooming but preventing boundary invasions can prevent grooming and thus abuse.
- All actions by an educator must have a bona fide health, safety, or educational reason.
- All members of a school community have a responsibility to children to adhere to professional boundaries and report to administrators when boundaries are being violated.
- Transparency is key.



Guidance Provided to Staff

Guidance we have provided to staff when they have observed a professional boundary violation includes:

- Err on the side of caution. When in doubt, report it out!
- Better to over-report than under-report
- Document
- Escalate if necessary
- Maintain confidentiality
- Follow the rules of mandatory reporting of child abuse and/or sexual abuse to OCS and law enforcement



Goals of this Training

- Help administrators develop an environment in schools in which the importance of adhering to professional boundaries and reporting violations is understood
- Provide guidance for developing a plan to educate employees, students, and community members about professional boundaries and how to report a professional boundary violation
- Help administrators understand how to respond when a report of a professional boundary violation is made
- Prevent situations where an administrator has to say "I didn't see it coming" after abuse is discovered.

To have Professional Boundaries recognized and understood by all staff, schools must:

- Adopt Board Policies addressing professional boundaries
- Provide training to all staff
- Share professional boundaries information with families and students
- Respond promptly and effectively to reports of professional boundary violations



Adopt Professional Boundaries Policies and Administrative Regulations

- AASB Model Board Policy 5141.42 provides general standards for maintaining professional boundaries
- AASB Model Administrative Regulation 5141.42 provides specific examples for boundary invasions, reporting requirements, and follow up requirements for administrators.
- Only amend the policy or administrative regulation with the advice of outside counsel and in consultation with AASB

Educate staff on policies and best practices

- Develop a training plan
 - All staff should receive training each year
 - When will training be delivered
 - How will training be delivered
- Reinforce policies regularly with additional education and reminders during teacher and staff training throughout the school year
- We will discuss developing a training plan in this presentation

Share information with students and families

- Let families know your school district has adopted a professional boundaries policy and why
- Let students and families know:
 - What the expectations are for staff to adhere to professional boundaries
 - How a student or family member can make a report
 - How concerns will be heard and investigated
 - How families will be notified of outcomes

Respond to and address reported boundary violations

- If a boundary violation is observed, administrators need to take immediate steps to address the concern in a timely manner and appropriately. This requires knowledge of:
 - Your organization's professional boundaries policies
 - How to respond when an employee reports a boundary violation
 - How to document a reported boundary violation
 - How to address the concern with the employee
- We will discuss these steps in this presentation



Develop a Training Plan

Develop a Professional Boundaries Training Plan for Staff

- Frequency
 - It is recommended that professional boundaries training be provided to staff upon hire
 - Annual training will help ensure staff remain aware of organizational policies and any new recommendations
 - Continuing discussion during in service and other staff training
- Identify training resources
 - Live virtual or in person training
 - Online recorded training
 - Qualified staff member to train other staff



Develop a Training Plan

Professional Boundaries training should include:

- The definition of "grooming" and the steps of grooming
- The definition of "boundary invasion" and examples of boundary invasions
- Clear guidance on how to make a report of a suspected boundary invasion
 - Who are reports made to?
 - Is there a form to be completed?
 - How are reports generally handled?



Responding to a Report of a Boundary Violation

Take every report or observation seriously

- It's easy to dismiss something as an insignificant or to rationalize why it shouldn't be addressed (It was a little mistake. I don't think they meant anything by it. I don't want to embarrass them.)
- As we saw in the *Professional Boundaries for Alaskan School Staff* training, small boundary invasions can be a signal of a larger issue lurking underneath the surface.



Responding to a Report of a Boundary Violation

Do not delay in responding to a report

- The sooner the concern is addressed, the better chance there is of preventing harm to children.
- If an individual makes an initial report at a time when you cannot immediately address it, notify the reporter of a specific date and time that you will contact them in order to get clarification and additional information.
- Act on the report as soon as possible.



Provide reassurance to the reporter and ask clarifying questions

- Reassure the reporter that they have acted responsibly in bringing the concern forward.
- Ask clarifying questions
 - When did this occur?
 - Who was present (other witnesses both adults and children)
 - Is this the first time this behavior has been observed by you?
 - Did you make any comment to the individual in question about your observations?
 - Have you remarked on your observation to anyone else?
 - Is there anyone else I should speak to about this?
 - Is there anything else I should be aware of?



Review the school district policy for investigating and addressing boundary violation reports with the reporter

- Remind the reporter of the need for confidentiality and to report if they experience any type of retaliation for making a report
- Inform the reporter what information regarding the investigation and outcome that may be shared with them
- When possible, inform the reporter of anticipated timelines for responding to the concern



Document the report as soon as possible

- If the report was made in writing, contact the reporter to ask any clarifying questions.
- If you are the one who observed the boundary violation, document what you observed, asking yourself the same clarifying questions.
- Record the details provided. Be sure to include:
 - Who made the report
 - The date the report was received



Documenting the report

- Information should be documented objectively based on what was observed and directly reported
- Documentation should be done at the same time as the report is made or as soon as possible after the report is made to avoid important details being forgotten
- Have the reporter review the notes you have made for accuracy



Previous reports of boundary violations or similar concerns

- Review the personnel file of the individual about whom the report was made as well as Title IX records for any previous boundary violation reports involving the individual
 - When were any previous reports made
 - How were they addressed
 - Is this the same or a similar issue



Notify other administrators of the report, according to your policy

- Review your organizational policy regarding reporting boundary violations
- The severity of the boundary violation and whether or not there were any prior incidents may guide the next steps.
 - If it is a first-time violation and it is minor, it may be that the concern will be addressed by the administrator and documented.
 - A more serious violation or record of previous boundary violations may warrant an escalated response.



Develop a plan for an investigation

- Refer to your organizational policy as it's possible that an investigation may be coordinated among several people (administrator, superintendent, legal counsel, etc).
- Documentation of the investigation will include:
 - Who
 - What
 - When
 - Where
 - Why ONLY the employee's explanation!



Addressing the boundary violation with the employee

- Provide the employee with due process
 - Loudermill Hearing
 - Weingarten Rights
- Determine the appropriate action to be taken
- Document the action being taken and provide a copy to the employee



Others that may need to be informed

- OCS and Law Enforcement per mandated reporting guidelines
- Professional Teaching Practices Commission
- If the discipline results in termination but not legal action, the school district needs to consider how they will respond if they are contacted by a potential future employer for a reference.



Other Best Practices

- Complete background checks
- Complete all reference checks and pay attention to red flags
- Social media
- National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) Educator Identification Clearinghouse: https://www.nasdtec.net/page/ASSOC_CH_REG



In Summary

- Policies need be adopted
- Staff need to be trained
- Information about professional boundaries needs to be provided to students and families
- Appropriate follow-up must happen



Resources

- Alaska Public Entity Insurance Training: https://akpei.com/professional-boundaries-for-educators/
- Stop Educator Sexual Abuse, Misconduct, and Exploitation (SESAME): https://www.sesamenet.org/training
- Alaska Professional Teaching Practices Commission: https://education.alaska.gov/ptpc

Break See you in 10 minutes!



Professional Boundaries Investigations

Lon Garrision, AASB and Clint Campion





PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES INVESTIGATIONS



DISCLAIMER:

This presentation is educational only and does not constitute legal advice. If related legal advice is wanted, you would need to contact me through appropriate District procedures with the specifics of the request.



Professional Boundaries Policy

AASB Model Board Policy 5141.42

 Prohibits staff from intruding on student physical and/or emotional boundaries



The prohibited conduct is likely not criminal conduct

Professional Boundaries Administrative Regulation

AASB Model AR 5141.42

 Boundary Invasions could include: giving gifts to students, rough-housing, texting with students, inviting students to staff member's home

Emphasizes mandatory reporting requirements of AS 47.17.020

Administrative Response Checklist

- E 5141.42-2
- After notification to Superintendent, insurer, and legal counsel, & mandatory reporting, plan investigation



Planning Professional Boundaries Investigations

- Who will investigate?
- Who should be interviewed?
- What records need to be reviewed?
- Place employee on administrative leave?



Who Should Investigate?

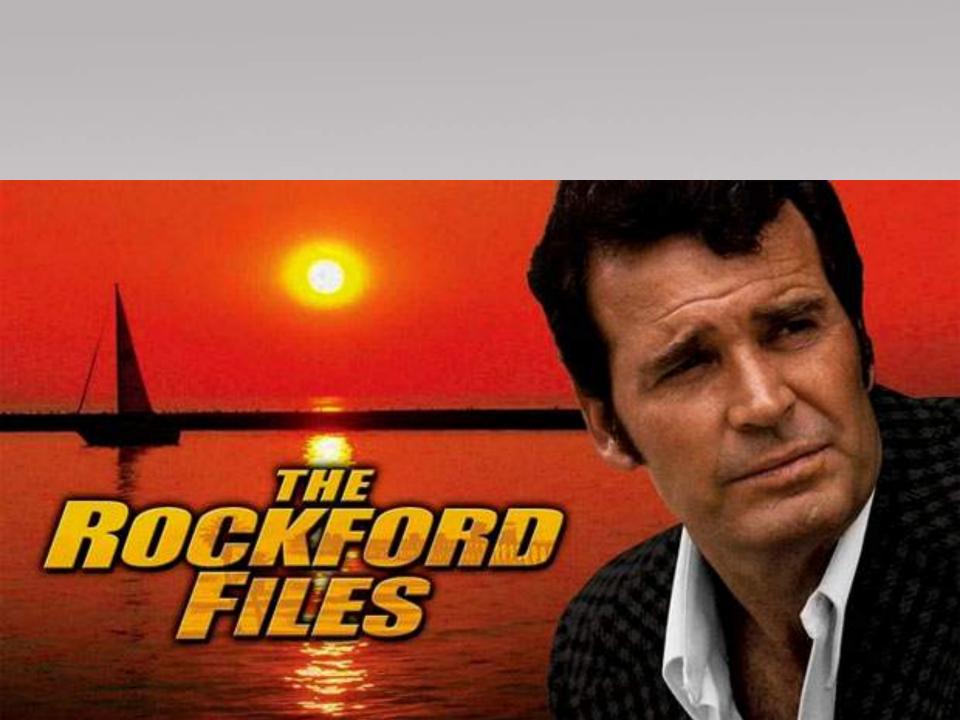
- Administrator?
- Legal Counsel?
- Private Investigator?





Why Hire a P.I.?

- Administrators are not trained to conduct forensic interviews with children or to conduct investigations.
- Administrators are busy, already.
- Administrator relationships with parents,
 staff, board, and community.



Who to Interview?

- Students.
- Parents.
- Staff.
- Friends and confidants of students.
- Other witnesses identified during nvestigation.



Witness Interviews?

- Location?
- Recorded? Notes?
- Prover?
- List of Questions or Outline?
- Multiple Interviews?

Prior Notification to witnesses?

Prior Notice to Respondent?





Records?

- Board policies and procedures.
- Training records.
- Disciplinary file.
- Site administrator's notes from initial report.



Relevant emails, text messages, social media posts.





Outcomes of Investigation

- Report of Investigation
- Disciplinary action?
- Assessment of Effectiveness of Training?
- Board communications executive and / or work sessions



Public relations



What does the future of Professional Boundaries Investigations look like?

- Adoption of Investigation Guidelines AR or Exhibit?
- Anonymous, Third-Party Reporting System?
- Train and develop investigators?

Community Outreach?

Comments or Questions?



Implementing Professional Boundaries Policy through Audits

Lower Kuskokwim School District From Policy to Practice





Implementing Professional Boundaries Policy Through Audits



Experienced Board Member Academy

IT'S UP TO US

Importance of Collective Action

- ➤ Child Sex Abuse in Alaska: 6x the national average
- Western Alaska, accounts for just 10 percent of the state population, but 40% of educators sanctioned for sexual misconduct with students over the past decade.
- > Offenders are often popular and recognized for excellence.



LKSD'S STORY



Betrayal Institutional Strength

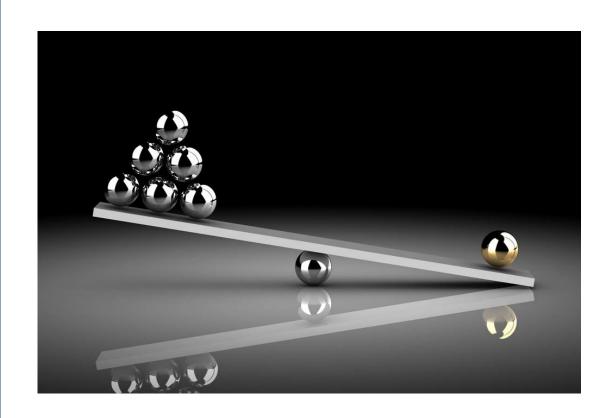


BETRAYAL

V.

Professional

Compartmentalization



INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTH

SYSTEM OF BEST PRACTICES

- ✓ Policies & Procedures
- ✓ Personnel Management
- ✓ Prevention & Training
- ✓ Reporting
- ✓ Investigation & Response
- ✓ Accountability

THE PATH FORWARD

Cultural Change – Top Down & Bottom Up



"BEST PRACTICES" AUDIT

Sexual Misconduct & Abuse Prevention

- District-initiated
- > Voluntary
- Based on best known practice
- ➤ A leadership innovation in Alaska perhaps in the country
- Independently conducted
- Designed to strengthen existing student protections while respecting local culture



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR

Dr. Janet Barry

- ➤ 40-year career from teacher to superintendent in four school districts and two states
- ➤ 10 years Washington State University faculty, Superintendent Preparation Program
- > 10 years Standard of care expert in school district administration
- National Superintendent of the Year, 1997
- Provided expert opinions in 35 lawsuits alleging sexual abuse of students
- Experienced with Washington's prototype of Alaska's new BP/AR 5141.42



"BEST PRACTICES" AUDIT

Goal Areas

- 1 Policies and regulations
- 2 Hiring, training and supervision
- K-12 curriculum
- Parent / student communications, including ASB link to local resources
- Administrative response to situations
- Fidelity of process ensured by Superintendent leadership, Board sponsorship



I. POLICIES & REGULATION

Adoption of Key Policies & Regulation – BP 5141.42

- ➤ Brand new from the Alaska Association of School Boards and to the State of Alaska
- Developed with guidance from Certified Sex Offender Treatment Providers, and experts to identify grooming behaviors & boundary invasions
- Fundamentally different proactive
- Proven effective in the states that have adopted this policy
- Provide <u>all</u> staff, students, volunteers, and community members with information about their role in protecting children
- Initially introduced in 2019 and officially adopted in July 2020
- List of 25 Prohibited Staff behaviors with children
- Center pole of our Best Practices system



PROTECTING STUDENTS

The Most Effective Method

According to sex offender treatment providers, the most effective way of protecting students from sexual abuse in the schools is:

- (1) being able to identify "risk behaviors,"
- (2) reporting such "risk behaviors" to administration, and
- (3) follow-up by administration.



PROTECTING STAFF

Behavior Awareness

- Stop abuse before it starts: Recognize prohibited behaviors; stop them before they escalate into sexual abuse
- Awareness: Make individuals aware of unacceptable behavior and require correction
- Corrective Action: Administrators can guide employees without having to determine sexual motivation



THE SHIFT

Strengthening Boundary Training

REACTIVE

(Foundational)

- Focused on People
- Individual
- Crisis Response
- Mandatory Reporting



PROACTIVE

(Forward Looking)

- Focused on Behaviors
- Systemic
- Prevention
- Intervention
- Elimination

PROTECTING STUDENTS

Importance of Awareness of Boundary Invasions & Sexual Grooming



• Sexual grooming is accomplished through increasingly invasive **boundary invasions**.



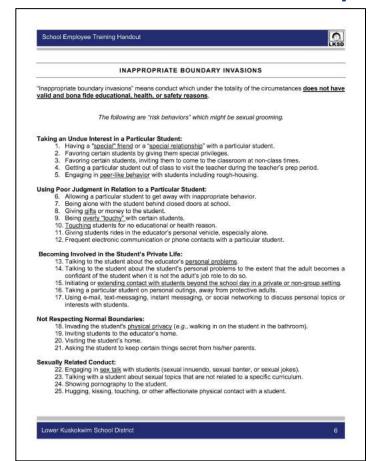
• Inappropriate boundary invasions create the risk of sexual grooming taking place.

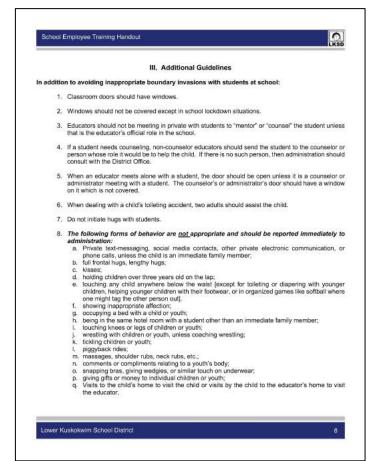


• Therefore, if we **stop boundary invasions**, we can prevent most molestations by educators.

TOOLKIT

Boundary Invasion Quicklist – 25 Behaviors







★ STRATEGIES ★

Lessons from the Village

> "Can we visit?"

- Don't put yourself in a situation that is questionable
- If students, ask to visit, be clear about your expectations (e.g. visits allowed/not allowed, parental permission, specific hours)
- If you allow students to visit: 1) always contact parents and ask permission / make them aware if visit was unexpected; 2) meet in open areas (i.e. living room) and with windows open / not covered.
- **2-Deep** Never be alone with students in your home & Never allow one student to visit alone
- Direct student to appropriate resource if necessary (i.e. safety / health concern
 report to parent, Site Administrator and/or OCS, social worker / counselor,
 VPO or health service, public safety officer)
- If children visit the educator's home on more than an occasional basis, the educator should inform the Site Administrator and explain the circumstances



★ STRATEGIES ★

2-Deep (Avoid Being Alone with a Student)

Always ask another adult / person to accompany or join:

- After hours and off-site activities (school-sponsored activities)
- **→** Home Visits
- School Rides / Field trips
- > Toileting Emergencies
- > Health Emergencies
- > Other potential 1:1 situations









GOAL

Consistency – Professionalism is the Best Protection

- Clear and separate boundaries between personal and professional duties
- Avoid engaging in "risk behaviors"
- Protect yourself from appearance of impropriety or favoritism
- > Transparency
- Effective and clear expectations of students, parents and colleagues
- ➤ Bridge students to the resource and expertise they need (i.e. counselor, social worker, Site Administrator, OCS)
- Report any suspicious behaviors, boundary invasions, child abuse / sexual abuse to proper authorities
- Consult with Site Administrator and/or District Office to assist or support when necessary



II. HUMAN RESOURCES

Hiring, Training & Supervision

- > Hiring
 - Screening practices red flags in screening protocols & reference checklists that increase ability to identify applicants who pose a risk to student safety, and boundary training for recruiters
 - Security Checks additional screening with National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education (NASDTEC)
- Staff Training
 - Child / sexual abuse (BP 5141.41)
 - **Professional Boundaries** (AR 5141.42) all staff and community
- > Staff Supervision Professional Boundaries
 - **At School** pre-service and routine school-year checklists for Site Administrators
 - In Off-site Activity Supervision training & supervision of bus drivers, coaches, volunteers
 - Informal Problem Solving supportive plans to manage challenging circumstances

III. STUDENT CURRICULUM

K-12 Sexual Abuse Awareness & Prevention

- General Education
 - **Diverse Resources** making use of engaging, coordinated, appropriately supplemented curriculum materials at each grade level
 - Teacher implementation supported by both instructional specialists and social workers
- Special Education
 - Administrators & Staff ensuring content protects selfcontained students, teach self-protection and obtain help if needed
- > Sexual harassment per BP 5145.7
 - Teach self protection and how to get help



IV. COMMUNICATIONS

Ensuring Access to Parents & Students

- Complaint Procedures reporting form & logs, clear language in print and online
 - Against School Personnel per BP/AR 1312.1
 - **Sexual Harassment** Title IX
 - Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB)
- Local Resources
 - ASB's as Community Liaisons for BP 5141.42 linking community members to local resources
 - Community Resources providing guidance and resources for child abuse prevention and social workers as go-to-assets



V. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE

Respond Effectively to Reports of Boundary Invasions & Abuse

- Written Guidance for Administrators
 - **General** checklist and reference tools with guidance from legal counsel
 - Investigations reporting form, checklist with investigative steps and newly developed 3-person investigative team (Superintendent, HR Director and Safety Coordinator) and use of social workers to assist



VI. FIDELITY OF PROCESS

School Board Sponsorship & Accountability

- Superintendent Oversight
 - Evidence of Key Work
 - Leadership team re: hiring, training and professional boundary reporting and log (maintained by HR Director & Site Administrators), Title IX, HIB, and work with ASB's and community
 - Site Administrator Checklist: details supervisory duties and required for year-end checkout



- **Periodic Updates & Training** Superintendent maintaining informal communications and formal progress reports with School Board re: BP/AR 5141.42. All Board members are trained on new board policy
- End-of-Cycle Report final report with updates for School Board review annually and progress tracking and recommendations.



IMPACT

The Best Practices System is Working

- Screening / Hiring declined to hire some candidates who, on paper, appeared to be very well qualified
- ➤ Boundary Violations terminated employees whose behaviors constituted boundary invasions
- > Transparency provided standards to define behaviors expected between staff and students
- ➤ Process Improvement continuous learning of best practices, tracking results, and sharing with other school districts



QUESTIONS



Implementing Professional Boundaries Policy Through Audits



Experienced Board Member Academy

November 4, 2021 Anchorage, AK

Tying it All Together - Next Steps

What?

So What?

Now What?



A Special Thanks to

Statewide Professional Boundaries Workgroup

And our presenters today

Suki and Rebecca

All of you as board members that are doing the work to think about how to keep your students safe



Gunalchéesh Please take a moment to fill out evaluation



Lori Grassgreen,

lgrassgreen@aasb.org

Lisa Worl

lworl@aasb.org



Close & Evaluations

Evaluations link:



"If we carry intergenerational trauma (and we do), then we also carry intergenerational wisdom. It's in our genes and in our DNA." - Kazu Haga

What do resilience and self-care look like in your community?

Going to the water * being with children, family * being on the land is healing * going to particular places is restorative * stillness * being out in nature impacts our brain * enjoy the beauty * harvesting * stories * visiting elders * spend time feeling gratitude