Protecting Students from Sexual Predators with a Professional Boundaries Policy

New Mexico School Boards Association
2017 Annual Convention
Agenda for the Session

• Why do we need a Professional Boundaries Policy?
  • Sexual Violence Against Children
  • What Works in Prevention

• Approved by the NMPSIA Board in November

• The Approved Professional Boundaries Policy

• NM CARES and a Call to Action

• Questions, Resources and Contact Information
Why do we need a Professional Boundaries Policy?
Can you identify the sexual predators?
Therein lies the problem.
Sexual Predators

• Look and act involved and engaging.
• Move from state to state and district to district to avoid consequences.
• Are good at what they do and spend lots of time grooming their victims.
Sexual Predators

• Are predominantly male, married and religious.

• Number over 1,000,000 convicted in the US.
How large is the problem of sexual violence against children in the US?

1 in 5 Girls

1 in 8 Boys

Will be sexually assaulted before age 18 - by someone they know and trust.
It is believed that the statistic for boys is lower than 1 in 8, but fewer boys report being victimized because their offender is usually male.
ONE out of TEN k-12 students is a victim of sexual misconduct by an educator.
And in New Mexico
10.1% of high school girls and 4.1% of high school boys in New Mexico reported having been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to.

Source: 2015 NM Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey
In New Mexico

• Approximately 3,200 Registered Sex Offenders in NM (10/17) another 250 incarcerated. 46 not compliant with registration.
• 939 Registered Sex Offenders in ABQ
• 202 Registered Sex Offenders in Las Cruces
• 99 Registered Sex Offenders in Santa Fe
How do sexual predators get into schools?

• Background checks not performed.
• Districts and charters are sometimes leery of disclosing information about a sexual predator in the absence of a conviction.
• They change districts or states before an investigation is complete.
Child Predators are masters at building relationships.

Any child can be groomed by any reasonably nice adult with interpersonal skills.
Grooming Behaviors

Before children are sexually abused, they are often groomed by abusers. Do you know the signs?

- Special attention or gifts
- Isolating the child from others
- Filling needs and roles within the family
- Treating the child as if he or she is older
- Gradually crossing physical boundaries, even in public
So how do we prevent this from happening to our students?
WHAT WORKS IN PREVENTION

STOP SV

- Promote Social Norms that Protect Against Violence
- Teach Skills to Prevent Sexual Violence
- Support Victims/Survivors to Lessen Harms
- Create Protective Environments
- Provide Opportunities to Empower and Support Girls and Women


New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority
A Professional Boundaries Policy addresses two of the five areas known to be successful at preventing sexual violence.
WHAT WORKS IN PREVENTION

Promote Social Norms that Protect Against Violence

Teach Skills to Prevent Sexual Violence

Support Victims/Survivors to Lessen Harm

Create Protective Environments

Provide Opportunities to Empower and Support Girls and Women

In addition ...

We need to work together to implement a multifaceted approach to eliminating sexual predators in schools.
NMPSIA Board
Professional Boundaries Policy Development

• Researched Professional Boundaries Policies from other states.
• Had the first draft reviewed by legal counsel.
• Made changes based on the input and the working draft was reviewed again by a variety of legal counsel.
• Professional Boundaries Policy brought to the NMSPIA Board.
On October 5, 2017 the NMPSIA Board ...

• Voted unanimously to approve the Discussion Draft of the Professional Boundaries Policy in principle.
• Directed Poms and Associates to obtain stakeholder input.
• Placed the Professional Boundaries Policy on their November 2, 2017 Agenda and approved it unanimously.
The NMPSIA Board

• Is providing leadership for this work.
• Will determine if a Professional Boundaries Policy will be mandated for member districts and charters.
The Approved Professional Boundaries Policy
The Professional Boundaries Policy Does 4 Things

- Clearly identifies the District’s expectations for staff/student relationships.
- Identifies acceptable and unacceptable staff behavior.
• Integrates into existing district policies – harassment, human resources/employment, Title IX.

• Establishes reporting pathways for staff, students and parents.
Professional Boundaries Policy

• Policy
• Work
  Rules/Regulations
• Reporting Form
NM CARES and a Call to Action
This is a serious issue in our state and needs a serious response. The response is NM CARES.
NM CARES

Clear

Appropriate

Respectful

Environment in Schools
NM CARES

1. Work with the NM Attorney General to strengthen statutes and rules protecting students and administrators giving truthful references.
2. Join a National Registry.
3. Design and implement training for district/charter personnel.
4. Pilot the Stop!t program in selected districts.
5. Design and implement training for students.
Call to Action

• What do you like about the policy?
• What concerns you about the policy?
• What can we do to support you in passing this policy in your district?
Questions
Resources

- [https://www.nsopw.gov/en](https://www.nsopw.gov/en) (includes Tribal jurisdictions)

- [http://nasdtec.site-ym.com/](http://nasdtec.site-ym.com/) The Clearinghouse is a searchable database that provides information regarding individuals who have had their professional educator certificates/licenses annulled, denied, suspended, revoked, or otherwise invalidated.
Contact Information

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Thank you for your time and service.