Teacher Professionalism on Social Media: A Technology Tool for Embedding Digital Responsibility

Description (50 words)

This session focuses on an innovative resource that describes the do's and don'ts of teacher professionalism in the realm of social media. This online, research-based, interactive, 20-minute asynchronous learning experience provides a vision of how to instill ISTE Standards for Teachers into educational programs with fidelity and at scale.

ISTE Standards (406 words)

This session addresses ISTE Teacher Standard Strands *Model Digital Age Work and Learning, Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility,* and *Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership.* ISTE Teacher Strand 3: *Model Digital Age Work and Learning* standard notes that teachers who demonstrate this successfully can only do so by exhibiting a knowledge and skill with new technologies/situations and use this to collaborate with students, peers, parents and community members. This presentation addresses this strand by sharing a resource with participants that directly impacts the ability of teachers to do just that. The snapshot of this resource covers how teachers can professionally engage in social media both as an individual and a professional, thus increasing knowledge and skill with new technologies and increasing skill with new technology situations and using it to collaborate with others. Further, the tool teaches users to increase their knowledge of an innovative technology itself.

This session also address ISTE Teacher Strand 4: *Promote and Model Digital Citizenship*, which primarily encompasses teachers' professional expectation to engage in and model for students examples of legal and ethical online behavior. Throughout the duration of the session, this topic will be the central focus. Through interaction with the highlight tool, presenters provide teachers with sound best practices in how to demonstrate legal and ethical behavior in the digital realm of social media. Furthermore, engaging this technology tool empowers them to then successfully model that behavior for their students. Finally, this session addresses *Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership,* which focuses on the expectation that teachers continually improve their practice through the use of technology. The idea that teachers should continuously improve their professional practice, and model lifelong learning, is central to the design of the resource highlighted in this snapshot. By attending this session, participants gain the expertise to deliver this technology-rich resource to teachers in their setting.

Additional details

bit.ly/ondemandmodule

Attendee resource

Sanfordinspireprogram.org

Purpose & Objective (5,000 words)
The Challenge

Teachers are individuals with first amendment rights. However, they occupy a unique position in our communities as professionals who are role models that shape tomorrow's leaders. In the technological age of social media that we currently live in, navigating the complexities of having a private life/voice while maintaining an appropriate professional reputation can be difficult. This is especially true when the stakes for a misstep are set so high, particularly with the fear of being fired looming large over the heads of current and future teachers. Time and again, this high stakes environment has been upheld by courts using *Pickering V. Board of Education* as precedence to justify dismissing teachers for 'friending' students on private Facebook pages, ranting about administrators or students on private blogs, and sharing inappropriate photos of themselves on private pages. The consequences of this policy are severe. Student teachers have been removed from teaching placements and denied their teaching certificates, practicing teachers fired from their positions, and long-term subs banned from districts for actions similar to those mentioned previously (Simpson, n.d.; Grisham, 2014). Additionally, administrators have begun to proactively learn more about teachers' online presence, even as potential new hires (Simpson, n.d.). Most notably, an article in *The Washington Post* told the story of a Missouri superintendent who, as part of the interview process, asked applicants to access their social media pages and allow him to examine them while in the interview.

This issue was clear in the results of a 2014 survey of over 1,000 K-12 teachers currently working in the US as well. In it, 80 percent of K-12 teachers reported using a social media platform either professionally or personally. The same number also reported that they "worry about conflicts that may arise with their students or their parents as a result" (Bolkan, 2014). It also found that just under half (47%) of teachers believed social media can enhance students' education experience, but only 18 percent had integrated it into the classroom. This may be because 7 out of every 10 teachers believed parents sometimes use social media to monitor their work and/or personal lives. Most troubling of all was that only 29 percent of teachers reported receiving adequate training on how to interact with students and parents on social media.

While many administrators and parents cite the protection/safety of students and upholding of ethical standards as the driving force, this high stakes issue can be taken to the opposite extreme. Unfortunately, because the stakes are so high for teachers online, many "do students a tremendous disservice by demonizing Facebook, which can enhance a student's online presence and real-world prospects," (Cutler, 2015). These include standing out from the crowd to college admission representatives and potential employers. Rather than discouraging students from participating in social media, educators should feel empowered to not only utilize social media in the classroom but also model appropriate behavior online for their students. This may be accomplished by providing adequate training to teachers, empowering them to embed the lessons learned into their personal lives and into their use of social media in the classroom.

The Intervention

In order to remedy the disconnect between teachers' freedom of speech and ethical expectations, a few organizations have created resources for training teachers on digital citizenship and how to teach it to their students. Organizations such as the Arizona State University and University of Texas at Austin have created trainings for teacher candidates in their program on digital citizenry, and organizations such as Childnet International,

BeCyberwise, Family Online Safety Institute, and Common Sense Media have produced introductions for students and/or parents on the topic. However, none is interactive in nature and very few target training teachers on the subject. Lastly, none of those trainings frame this concept within the larger sphere of teacher professionalism.

It is from this gap in resources currently available to teachers that our resource, what we call an On-Demand Module, was created. This On-Demand Module is an online, research-based, interactive, 20 minute asynchronous learning experience that guides teachers through the content, gives them the opportunity to apply it, and then asks them to demonstrate mastery of the content before receiving a certificate. Each of our On-Demand Modules is its own experience, available for flexible use based on teachers' time, pace, and location. Modules can be completed individually, honing in on a specific focus area, or compiled together as a suite around an overarching topic. This particular Express On-Demand Module focuses on teachers ethically, professionally, and successfully navigating the moors of the social media landscape. By completing this On-Demand Module, teachers learn about topics directly related to ISTE Standards for Teachers such as how to use social media to professionally interact with students and families (Strand 3) and how to model that for their students (Strand 4). By utilizing the On-Demand Module, teachers are also demonstrating a desire to grow professionally and modeling lifelong learning via technology for their students (Strand 5). In addition, should many teachers complete this resource, a common language is created around professionalism of teachers on social media and digital citizenry. Given the flexibility of On-Demand Modules, this sort of scale can be seamlessly achieved across an entire school or district. In this way, we have leveraged technology to bring a solution to this issue in a way that assures fidelity and rigor of training without the issue of cost or scale since it is delivered asynchronously and online.

Outline
Content to be Presented

The snapshot presentation will be informative, with the first part covering the issue that teachers face when attempting to navigate social media in a professional and ethical manner. Then, participants will be introduced to our resource proposed as a technological solution to embed the ISTE standards and enhance leadership in their setting. We will discuss briefly how the resource was developed and provide visual examples of the resource. It is essential for participants to have a basic understanding of the components of the resource and see examples of the extensive research that goes into its creation before moving forward. Once a basic understanding of the resource is established, participants will hear a few examples of how our partners are successfully implementing the resource in their setting, highlighting the flexibility the resource has due to its tech-based design. After this, participants will be prompted to consider and share how they might use resource to embed the ISTE standards in their setting. Finally, we will wrap up the session with a Poll Anywhere poll so we can follow-up with participants who would like additional information.

Engagement Strategies

Participants who bring a device will have the ability to access the resource if they would like during the session. However, throughout, presenters will have a presentation that includes images from the resource as we walk them through it. All of these presentation materials will be readily accessible online as well. This presentation will encourage active participation at the conclusion via an opportunity to share how they might use the resource in their setting and a Poll Anywhere poll to further interact with presenters outside the 30 minute snapshot experience.

The structure of the session and time spent on each piece are included below.

- Introduction to the presenters and the problem teachers face when present on social media using it both professionally and privately – 5 minutes
- Discuss the components of the resource, its research base, and how it was created – 10 minutes
- Discuss examples of the resource being used successfully – 5 minutes
- Brainstorm how participants could use the resource to embed ISTE Standards into their setting – 5 minutes
- Wrap up the session with action steps, including a Poll Anywhere poll to assess interest and follow-up steps – 5 minutes

Supporting Research

Bolkan, J. (2014, January 15). Report: Most Teachers Use Social Media, Worry It Will Cause Conflict -- THE Journal. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from https://thejournal.com/articles/2014/01/15/report-most-teachers-use-social-media-worry-it-will-cause-conflict.aspx

Borovoy, A. E. (2014, October 14). 5-Minute Film Festival: Teaching Digital Citizenship. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from http://www.edutopia.org/blog/film-festival-digital-citizenship

Building Blocks for Digital Citizenship. (n.d.). Retrieved September 29, 2016, from http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/53885

Cutler, D. (2015, October 22). Modeling Constructive Online Behavior. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from http://www.edutopia.org/blog/modeling-constructive-online-behavior-david-cutler

CyberWise1. (2011, June 26). What is Digital Citizenship? Retrieved September 29, 2016, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCkTmZ0bF5Q

FOSI. (2011, November 07). Go Figure 2 (Online Safety Version). Retrieved September 29, 2016, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8J06gVIR8o

Grisham, L. (2014, April 09). Teachers, students and social media: Where is the line? Retrieved September 28, 2016, from http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2014/04/09/facebook-teachers-twitter-students-schools/7472051/

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NEA. (n.d.). Code of Ethics. Retrieved September 29, 2016, from http://www.nea.org/home/30442.htm

Simpson, M. (n.d.). Social Networking Nightmares. Retrieved September 28, 2016, from http://www.nea.org/home/38324.htm

Social Media Professionalism for Teachers. (n.d.). Retrieved September 28, 2016, from https://community.edb.utexas.edu/socialmedia/ideassm_training_content/menu-training/2

Social Networking: A Guide for Trainee Teachers and NQTs. (n.d.). Retrieved September 28, 2016.

Presenter Background

Valerie Simmons is the Management Research Analyst who leads program evaluation efforts for the Sanford Inspire Program. She has extensive experience conducting qualitative,

quantitative, and mixed-methods studies both at Arizona State University and University of Illinois. Her recent projects include studies of game-infused learning for teachers, strategies for recruiting high school students into the teaching profession, preparing teachers to implement co-teaching, and measuring the impact of On-Demand Modules. Valerie earned her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Illinois College. She also completed her Master of Arts degree in Human Services at the University of Illinois. Valerie has presented over 20 papers surrounding On-Demand Modules at numerous education conferences including: SITE, ISTE, AACTE, ATE, TED CEC, and NAME, all of which she is an active member.

Lessita Villa researches and designs content for On-Demand Modules as a Teaching and Learning Specialist with the Sanford Inspire Program in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University. Previously at ASU, Lessita has been a Curriculum Coordinator and Clinical Instructor. After joining Teach For America in 2005, Lessita spent five years teaching in the Laveen Elementary School District and one year as the Director of Curriculum and Instruction at Phoenix Collegiate Academy. Lessita earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish from Westmont College and a Master's degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Arizona State University. She is currently a doctoral student studying Leadership and Innovation at Arizona State University.

Brian Nethero is the Executive Director of the Sanford Inspire Program. Brian combines his business background with his passion for education to lead this innovative program. In his tenure with the program, Brian has worked on innovating student recruitment practices and marketing Sanford Inspire Program resources to the education community. Previously, Brian taught 4th grade in the Roosevelt School District. He has facilitated new teacher professional development workshops and led a school team through an intensive summer school experience. Brian earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration-Marketing from the University of Missouri. He also completed two Masters' degrees, in Elementary Education and Educational Leadership, with Arizona State University. Brian has presented On-Demand Module trainings with numerous partners including: National University, City University of Seattle, NOVA Southwest, COMEXUS, InStep, and the iTeachAZ Conference at ASU in addition to previous presentations at educational conferences such as SITE.