

Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal



Presented By:

Brian D. Schwartz

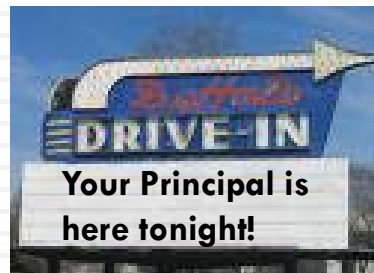
Illinois Principals Association





1

Always Appreciate the Visibility of Your Position



Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal

1

Always
Appreciate
the Visibility
of Your
Position

- A recent survey showed that more people remember the name of their high school principal than know the name of the mayor of their city
- You are a public official and on the job 24/7/365
- Even innocent actions can be misconstrued by the public – be careful out there!



2

Beware of Social Networking Sites



facebook



twitter

Ning

Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal

2

Beware of
Social
Networking
Sites

- ❑ Nothing is private on the Internet!
- ❑ Parents frequently Google their kids' teachers and administrators
- ❑ Once a teacher or administrator's private life impacts their job, discipline can be imposed
- ❑ Teachers and administrators should not "befriend" students on social networking sites



3

Protect Student Privacy



Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal

3

Protect
Student
Privacy

- Student Records are protected by both State and Federal law
- Any document that identifies a student and is maintained by the school is a student record and must be safeguarded
- Inappropriate oral accounts (gossip) of protected information is also a violation of law

Protecting Student Privacy: The Danger Zones

Using email to communicate with parents

1. Password protect your email account
2. Keep your email account closed when it is not being used
3. Do not use a student's full name in the subject line of the email
4. Know your school district's policy with respect to retention of emails

Videotapes

1. Bus and school videotapes are student records
2. Videotapes should not be shared with parents to the extent that other students are visible on the tape
3. School officials should view videotapes and take appropriate measures

4

Be Careful Searching Student Cell Phones



Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal

4

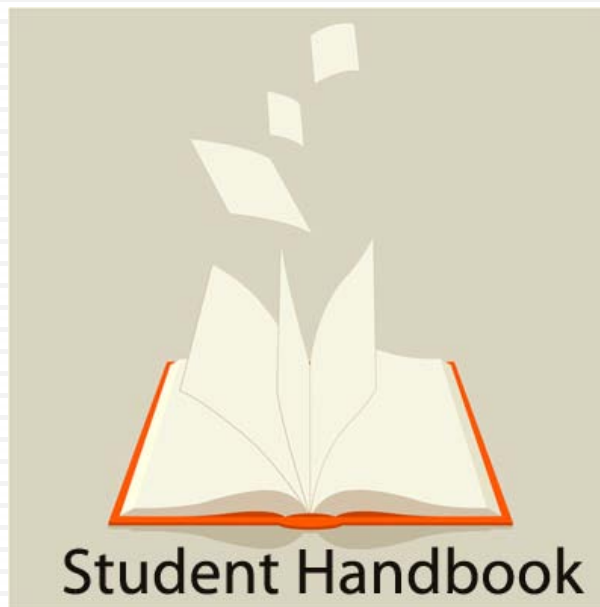
Be Careful
Searching
Student Cell
Phones

- ❑ Student cell phone searches are subject to Fourth Amendment protections
- ❑ Inventory searches of student cell phones are illegal
- ❑ When confiscating a student's cell phone, the phone should be turned off
- ❑ "Sexting" should be handled by local law enforcement



5

Know Thy Student Handbook



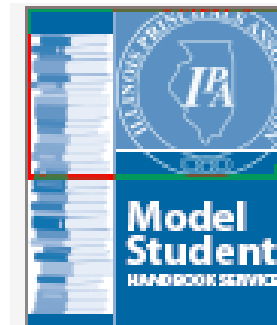
Student Handbook

Top 5 Occupational Hazards of Being a Principal

5

Know Thy
Student
Handbook

- Each year thousands of lawsuits are filed due to the failure of school officials to follow the student handbook
- Update your handbook yearly and train your staff!



For Information on IPA's model Student Handbook contact Lisa @ 217-525-1383

Thank You for Your Participation

Provided by the

**Illinois
Principals
Association**

2940 Baker Drive

Springfield, IL 62703

(217) 525-1383

(217) 525-7264

www.ilprincipals.org



For More information, please contact

Brian D. Schwartz

Associate Director & General Counsel

Illinois Principals Association

brian@ilprincipals.org