

TET Task 2: Privacy

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The topic of this paper is maintaining confidentiality and privacy in an instructional setting.

### **Instructional Setting**

The instruction for this will be completed online due to the distance and availability of the learners. The content area of focus is building a virtual classroom community. Learners will access the coursework through the internet using their computer. They will interact with each other through online discussions and be able to interact with the instructor through the board, reflections or by email.

### **Learners in the Instructional Setting**

The learners are public school teachers in the United States who want to improve their virtual classroom community. The learners teach a variety of subjects but the common theme between them is that they are all teaching virtually currently. They all have previous experience teaching; ranging from 2 years to 30 years. The learners were identified from a Virtual Teaching Facebook group and expressed interest in the training after completing a needs identification survey.

### **Ethical reasons for maintaining confidentiality**

Teachers are used to safeguarding and maintaining the confidentiality of their students information. In this current digital climate, teachers have to be just a careful with maintaining their own confidentiality when they participate in online trainings. In a traditional in-personal training session, teachers are able to verbal share personal information with less fear of it being shared outside the group. Due to the online aspect of our training my learners and I must be diligent in ensuring we maintain the confidentiality of the learners and their students. If

information was shared and misinterpreted it could lead to damaging relationships between my learners and myself, my learners and their coworkers, as well as, my learners and their students/families.

Maintaining confidentiality is also important to ensure learners are comfortable enough to be open and honest about their current struggles in the classroom. The learners are voluntarily completing the training because they self-identified as someone who knew their classroom community needed work. As with any student, I have to create an environment where they are comfortable sharing their failures. They need to know that they will not be judged for their questions or situations by the other learners or me. Providing them a space where they can freely discuss their concerns without fear of backlash is of the utmost importance.

#### **Legal reasons for maintaining confidentiality**

In today's current digital and political climate, it is of utmost important that my learners' confidentiality is maintained. Many school districts have implemented standards or codes that all of their employees must follow. In Virginia for example, Prince William County Public Schools have Standards of Professional Conduct for all Employees. It states that,

Conduct or actions of school employees occurring outside school which undermine the employee's position as a role model, reflect negatively on the reputation of the School Division, jeopardize the trust of the School Board and community in the employee's integrity, or have a negative impact on school operations and student education, can serve as a basis for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal (Prince William County Public Schools, 2018).

Due to the nature of the topic, building a classroom community, it is inevitable that prior experience will be discussed in during our training. My learners must remember to follow the

1974 Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), when discussing their students. The purpose of FERPA is to protect student educational records by limiting third party access, such as my training, and keep students' identities confidential (Clark, 2001). This means that throughout the training, student names and other identifying factors should not be shared with the instructor or other learners to avoid legal conflict.

### **Interview**

For the interview, I chose to interview one of the instructional coaches in my county. Her role is to assist two middle schools by working with the assistant principals to determine what teachers or teams of teachers are in need of coaching. From there she works with those teachers to analysis classroom data to discuss instructional strategies they could be using in their classroom. Within their data collection they analysis testing data, formative and summative, as well as anecdotal evidence of students' behaviors and work habits. It is the procedure to only share this data during coaching sessions or team meetings. The data is either shared in person or projected during the meeting. The procedure is not to share the documentation electronically to protect the confidentiality of the students and teachers (K. Moxley, personal communication, October 19, 2020).

### References

Clark, S. G. (2001). Confidentiality and Disclosure: A Lesson in Sharing. *Principal Leadership: Middle Level Edition*, 1(8), 40–43.

Prince William County Public Schools.(2018) *Regulation 503.02-1 Standards of Professional Conduct for all Employees*. Retrieved from [https://ashlandes.pwcs.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_340140/File/Migration/Policies%20&%20Regulations/Regulations/R503.02-1.pdf](https://ashlandes.pwcs.edu/UserFiles/Servers/Server_340140/File/Migration/Policies%20&%20Regulations/Regulations/R503.02-1.pdf)