

Policy and Curriculum Recommendations  
for Student Cell Phone Use

by

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## ABSTRACT

The phenomenon that prompted this study was the increasing number of teens with cell phones and the issues, both legal and nonlegal, that permeate to schools. The trend among teens called teen sexting is receiving national and local attention. Sexting typically involves teens using texts to send cellular messages that may include naked photographs or shared videos containing sexual content. This study reviewed 4 main issues (a) the policies for student use of cell phones on campus to regulate teen sexting issues, (b) whether teen sexting awareness and prevention curriculum is being implemented, (c) the extent to which teen sexting is perceived as a problem by school leaders on campus, and (d) the degree to which there is a need for curriculum about teen sexting awareness and prevention. School district policies for student cell phone regulation were accessed online and their content analyzed. The search for curriculum was done through telephone calls to school district curriculum and instruction department leaders. Questionnaires were administered to principals, assistant principals, school counselors, and school security leaders. Their responses provided data for the study of leadership perceptions on the sexting issue. The purpose of this study was to present the research findings and provide recommendations for cell phone policy and suggest the development of effective curriculum about cell phone safety.

The findings of this research showed that school district policy considers teen sexting as a student offence of a sexual nature using electronic devices for

bullying, intimidation, threats, harassment, and defamation. Currently, there is limited curriculum for teen sexting awareness programs in Arizona schools. Few incidents of teen sexting get reported to school leaders; however, when they do, the consequences for teen sexters are both legal and nonlegal. The results of this study provide insight for schools leaders and school policy makers regarding issues and response options for student cell phone use, specifically teen sexting issues, and suggest the direction school administrators should take in creating effective teen sexting awareness curriculum for students.

With love to my adorable little girls,

Pay and Itty,

Skinamarinkydo!

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Today’s student, nearly everywhere in the world, lives in a technological era in which the Internet and Google and text messaging never *didn’t* exist” according to Jacobs (2010). Technology is a fundamental part of our society. Especially in the present day’s world, the Internet has opened up what was once a world closed only to those with the most money. Now, any student can be exposed to places or communicate with people they never dreamed of through the Internet. Technology allows people to do certain things that are not possible in any other way (Knezevich & Eye, 1970) and can help to free individuals from the constraints of a physical location; for example, take an online class at an academic institution in another city, state or country. Society has moved from an industrially-driven era to a digital information-driven era.

With the rise of new digital interactive technologies come inadvertent problems. Schools are on the frontline facing issues such as filtering the Internet while upholding free speech, protecting privacy of educational records, promoting academic integrity with use of electronic communication devices, honoring copyright, monitoring website development and publishing, and creating acceptable policies for use of technology (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 2000). In response to such issues, schools create student use policies regarding technology, apply disciplinary actions for student violations of the policies, and implement curriculum programs to help manage technological abuses. “Our educational system has not been able to keep pace with the rapid advances of technology and information access” according to Barron & Orwig

(1993, n. p.). United States (U.S.) government legislation has attempted to provide guidelines for schools regarding minors and technology use through law cases that have challenged school policy and decisions.

In addition to government involvement, schools play a substantial role in the issues of minors utilizing technology. While on campus, it is necessary for school leaders and students to have access to Internet and cell phones for educational purposes and safety communication (Esposito, 2009), but it is equally necessary to have policies for student safety regarding use of the Internet and electronic communication devices. This is when curriculum designed to teach student awareness of technology dangers may be applied to assist in combating student safety issues that are difficult to regulate. For young people today, technology serves as a popular medium for socialization. Cellular phone communication and social networking websites allow for identity expression, friendship, dating, and problem solving. With the lack of a face to face encounter, “there is justifiable concern over what risks social networks may pose” according to Jacobs (2010, p. 87).

Cyber bullying is one example of a trendy social danger for teens that quickly stemmed from technology. Childnet International is an organization that works toward making the internet safe and defined cyber bullying as the sending or posting of harmful or cruel text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices (2004). Bullying is not a new problem for teens or schools (Olweus, 1993); however, technology has given children and youth a new means for bullying one another and a new confidence level due to potential

anonymity. Cyber bullying can occur at any hour of any day, and can be done from anywhere Internet service or phone service is available. Though cyber bullying may occur off campus, these technological exchanges can carry over to problems on campus.

School leaders, school policy makers, and educators struggle to balance student safety in the physical world and cyberspace with guidelines from state and federal legislation. As a solution, cyber bullying awareness education has been instituted in a widespread effort to assist with combating cyberbullying occurrences (Harcey, 2007). Strategies for stopping cyber bullying include curriculum programs in schools, web-site resources, public service announcements, parent awareness classes, and student conduct policies as it pertains to the use of these devices. In addition, consequences for infractions of the technology policy have been established. A variety of research has been conducted about cyber bullying in attempt to manage the issue and can be found on the Cyberbullying Research Center's website.

#### Portable Electronic Devices in Education

An article on the Mabledia website claims that, "The number of children using cell phones has nearly doubled since 2005, an increase driven by more kid-friendly phones..." (2010). As the complex features of cellular phone technology capabilities advance, teen's activities with this technology expand. With the increasing prevalence of cell phones since 2000, the frequency of student use problems on campus are also increasing and evolving, and access to these devices is available to younger and younger students. An article on Mabledia states



“[Mediamark] research firm said 20 percent of children, aged six to eleven years old, now own handsets” (2010). In the 1990s, it may have been difficult to find school discipline policies and social issue discussion involving a cell phone or a PDA (Portable Digital Assistant) on campus. It is now common for cell phone issues warranting student disciplinary action to occur on high school, junior high school, and elementary school campuses. The problem is further complicated because cell phones not only make and receive phone calls, but also allow students to text message, take pictures and videos, and access the Internet. Classroom disruptions occur when phones ring and students then attempt to communicate to the alert. Cell phone use in the classroom has resulted in cheating on tests and assignments, cyber bullying, taking, sending, and posting photo and video images of students and teachers (Rapp, 2009). Sexually charged photo and video exchanged through cellular devices is now referred to as sexting (a portmanteau of sex and texting).

As a natural evolution of a popular device into all realms of society, the cell phone has created a series of problems for schools, especially secondary schools. School leaders have taken action to battle student cell phone disturbances. An ongoing struggle to control the student use of cell phones has lead some school districts to ban cell phone use at school (Esposito, 2009). Other school districts have developed guidelines to regulate times and locations at which a student may use a cell phone on campus (Rapp, 2009).

Cell phone features such as instant messaging (IM), text messaging or short messaging service (SMS), multimedia messaging service (MMS), and

cameras accompany most cell phones. These commonly used features allow for instant communication, which can result in serious negative consequences for teens based on the behaviors and intentions of the messages. With teen sexting, the content sent between teens usually includes nude or seminude photos or videos of the recipient, the sender, or of a third party (all of whom are teens). According to Bland (2009), "young people have been taking sexually provocative pictures since the Polaroid. What's different now is that the images can be transmitted at lightening speed via cell phones and e-mail, leaving youngsters vulnerable to humiliation on a huge scale." Sometimes the naked photo sharing is intended and wanted by both the sender and the recipient, but trouble occurs when trust between sender and recipient is broken and the photos or videos are shared publicly.

### Teen Sexting

Teen sexting is the sending of sexually charged photos and videos, and can be considered a form of cyber bullying and peer sexual harassment if the intent of the sender is to cause unwanted attention of a sexual nature. Teens who send the photos may encounter consequences similar to cyber bullying or sexual harassment. Teen perpetrators are able to be disciplined because in many cases incidents of sending and receiving photos are regulated by legislation and school policy. Such legislation and policies promote child-safety on the Internet by discouraging child pornography, cyber bullying, and peer sexual harassment. The cyber bullying and sexual harassment can include providing personal sexual information about the sender or recipient and examples include name calling of a

sexual nature, sexual jokes, sexual rumors about others, and asking for nude pictures or videos. Teen sexting includes nude or seminude photos or videos of the recipient, the sender, or of a third party. Oftentimes, the photos and videos are originally intended and wanted by both the sender and the recipient. One party is typically under the assumption that the textual/picture exchange is a private one. When the other party distributes the private message, picture, or video, it is a violation of implied trust.

Teen sexting can have a devastating impact on the abused young person's self-worth. Teens must consider the risk of sharing photos or videos that may reach recipients who were not intended to receive the media. It is common for the photos to be forwarded to other teens via a cell phone, posted on the Internet via a social networking site, or sent in an e-mail. Some of the non-legal consequences for teens when this happens include being made fun of, becoming the subject of rumors, embarrassment, depression, being socially excluded, and can even result in suicide (Kranz, 2009). As victims of sexual harassment, targets may become truant and less academically successful (Schwartz, 2000).

Regardless of the intention behind sharing naked photos and videos, teens can still face legal consequences for production and distribution of child pornography if the nude photos or videos are of minors (Bland, 2009). This is clearly not the same as an adult taking pictures of children involved in sex acts, which child pornography laws intend to prohibit; however, child pornography laws provide the only legal recourse for teen sexting cases. The misfit of legal consequences for teen sexting has become an issue that is receiving national

attention. The attention has been increased by recent headlines that have included reports that at least 10 states are attempting to arrest and charge teens for teen sexting photos based on child pornography laws. In an effort to remedy the problem, federal and state legislation is being shaped to specifically address teen sexting photo and video incidents (Walker & Moak, 2010). In 2010, the Arizona State Senate decided on a bill that would change the punishment for teens younger than 18 who send a nude photo via phone or computer to a misdemeanor charge. Teens found guilty of teen sexting would be punished in juvenile court rather than being treated as adult child pornography offenders (Fischer, 2010).

An added concern brought about by the teen sexting phenomenon involves where the photos and videos end up. More specifically, there is cause for extreme concern when the teen's naked photo falls into the hands of a pedophile. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has dialogued with victims of online pornography finding that 25% of the victims sent the initial image themselves (Bland, 2009). A market research study by Harris Interactive in April 2009, found 11% of the 655 teens surveyed sent nude photos to people they were not aware the image had reached an unintended audience.

A social outcry to raise awareness and concern has ensued. Parents and lawmakers have flooded television shows sharing their unfortunate stories of naked photo sharing incidences that have destroyed young lives. "Risky Teen Behavior" was the title of Dr. Phil McGraw's talk show that aired on November 11, 2008, and featured teen sexting (Zatcoff, 2010). Public service commercials warning communities about the consequences of teen sexting can now be seen on

television. Despite the trendiness of the issues in the media, awareness and resources are limited and meanwhile there is a growing social argument over the harshness of the punishment for teen offenders.

Naked teen photo and video sharing is a product of technology that puts teens at risk. The problem of teen sexting is the consequences teens may face. This inevitably affects the school community on some level. It is important for school leaders to examine how the influence of this risk on students, to determine what extent the problem exists, and to adapt school policy to effectively manage the issue. Are the symptoms of teen sexting so prevalent on campus that school leaders should make policy and curriculum for students regarding the issues?

#### Statement of the Problem

Technology such as Internet and portable communication devices poses challenges for the school community on campus. Some school districts have begun to establish policies for student conduct as it pertains to the use of these devices as a response to the disruptions they cause in the educational setting. These student-use policies in schools should reflect current case law and free speech rights. As headlines in the media highlight devastating legal and nonlegal consequences of teen naked photo sharing, educational leaders have begun to inspect the impact it is having on campus and whether or not school policies include teen sexting regulations.

One school district in Arizona, which is called Hometown School District for the purposes of this study, has acknowledged the growing teen sexting phenomenon as it has been highly publicized in the media. The school board of

this district passed policy for curriculum to be implemented and for instruction of technology and cell phone safety. The curriculum includes teen sexting awareness and prevention and aims to educate their students about the possible consequences of teen sexting. The researcher of this study saw a need to review current school district policies for student cell phone use on campus and to find what, if any, curriculum is available about teen sexting awareness and prevention. The study further attempted to see the extent to which school leaders perceived teen sexting to be a concern on campus. The purpose of this study was to review cell phone policies and curriculum awareness in several public schools and to collect data about school leader's perceptions of teen sexting in Hometown School District, and to address and make recommendations about policy and curriculum on teen sexting awareness and prevention.

#### Significance of the Study

According to Oakes, Hunter-Quartz, Ryan, and Lipton (2000) in *Becoming Good American Schools*, “the quest for civic virtue is the key to good schools” (p. xii). School administrators have a diverse and challenging job in regard to technology integration. Not only do they oversee that policy and curriculum stay in alignment with student safety and the law, but they also manage student behavior with digital technologies. School leaders must marry themselves to the idea of their influence upon the educational goals. Schools can be the frontline in addressing technology with high student danger risks; this, in turn, benefits the entire school community.

The data collected in this research provide evidence of developed policy for student use of cell phones on campus that help combat the issue of teen sexting and leadership perceptions of the issues on campus. The conclusion provides recommendations for cell phone policy and curriculum. The significance of this study is that it begins to fill a gap between understanding the problem of cell phones and leadership's perceptions of the problems on campuses. Hometown School District will be provided with research-based data that was valuable specifically to their district after the study. The results and conclusions of this study may have benefits for other school districts that intend to respond similarly to student cell phone issues.

Questions that were addressed in the study included the following:

1. What are policies for student use of cell phones on campus to regulate teen sexting issues of school districts near Hometown School District?
2. What teen sexting awareness and prevention curriculum is being implemented in school districts near Hometown School District?
3. To what extent is teen sexting perceived to be a problem by school leaders on campus in Hometown School District?
4. To what degree is there a need for curriculum about teen sexting awareness and prevention in Hometown School District?

It is the responsibility of educators to address all aspects of students' ability to learn. This is the primary goal of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). We have evolved to becoming masters of accommodating to meet the needs of each student. Now students need to be protected from a new kind of playground

bullying; they need to be protected and aware of the hurt and bullying technology and teen sexting can cause. Kathleen Fitzpatrick (2007, p. 177), as Project Director and Executive Director for the National Study of School Evaluation, wrote in *School Improvement: Focusing on Student Performance*: “School improvement is hard work. But if schools are not constantly improving and growing in their capacity to meet the needs of today’s students, then they are losing ground and failing in their mission of service to young people.”

#### Definition of Terms

*Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)* – A policy that a student user must agree to follow in order to gain access to the computer network at school (Janes, 2008)

*Behavior* – The manner of conducting oneself in an environment (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2008)

*Blog* – A web log (shortened to the word blog) is a set of personal commentaries on issues the author thinks are important. Blog content can consist of text, images, and links to other blogs, video, and web pages. Blogs promote open dialogue and encourage the exchange of opinions, ideas, and beliefs (Solomon & Schrum, 2007)

*Bullying* – Repeated negative, ill-intentioned behavior by one or more individuals directed against another individual. Most bullying occurs without any apparent provocation on the part of the student who is exposed (Olweus, 1993)

*Chat Room* – Site on the computer network where online conversations are held in real-time by a number of users to discuss a variety of topics or to share



information via text with a group of other users (American Heritage Dictionary, 2008)

*Cell Phone* – Also called cellular telephone or mobile phone; a portable, digital electronic device for use in a cellular system that allows the user to send and receive phone calls (Wiktionary, 2010); can also have text, voice, photo and video capabilities as well as access to the Internet

*Cyberspace* – The digital space that is produced by the Internet and information communication technology (Stop Bullying Now, 2008; WiredSafety.org, 2008)

*Cyber Bullying* – Sending or posting harmful or crude text or images using the Internet or other digital communication devices (Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use, 2009)

*Digital Interactive Devices* – Cell phones and smart phones such as blackberry, iPod, personal digital assistants, and mp3 players (Heng, 2000).

*E-Mail* – Electronic Message referred to as mail that is transmitted via the Internet. E-mail can contain text but also carry with it files (videos or photos) of any type as attachments (Wagner, 1996, p. 390)

*Freedom of Expression and Speech* – “The right to express one’s thoughts and opinions without government restrictions, as guaranteed by the First Amendment” (Garner, 2004, p. 689)

*Instant Messages (IMs)* – A form of real-time direct text-based communication between two or more people connected by a shared network such as the internet (Wikipedia, 2010). The primary format is typed text, though it is extending into images, audio, and video transmissions (Solomon & Schrum, 2007)

*Internet* – A decentralized, self-maintaining series of redundant links among computers capable of rapidly transmitting communications and rerouting them automatically (Cate, 1998, p.7)

*Internet Access Devices* – Technologies that allow for direct interface with the Internet, which includes computers, personal digital assistant, cell phones, and gaming devices (Time, 2005; Willard, 2007, p. 310)

*Internet Service Provider (ISP)* – A service that provides a portal through which users can access the Internet (Cothran, 2002, p. 202)

*Policy* – a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body (Merriam-Webster, 2010)

*Portable Digital Assistant (PDA)* – A handheld palmtop computer. They include features of a mobile phone web browser or portable media player (Kowalski, Limber, & Agatson, 2008, p. 140)

*School Board of Education* – "The governing body of a school district; the school board shall direct, through policy, the superintendence, his or her charge of the administration of the school district, including without limitation considering the recommendations of the superintendent concerning the budget, building plans, the locations of sites, the selection, retention and dismissal of employees, and the selection of text books, instructional material, and course of study" (Public Act 94-881, 2006)

*Sexting* – The act of sending sexually suggestive messages, primarily nude or sexually suggestive photos and videos electronically, primarily between mobile phones or other devices (Encyclopedia of Risks and Threats, 2009). The intent of

the original sender may have been a flirtations act, but the picture or video a was forwarded onto others or posted on the Internet (Mahalo.com, 2007)

*Sexually Suggestive Pictures and Videos* – Seminuade or nude personal pictures and videos taken of oneself and not received from a stranger (Sex and Tech, 2009)

*Social Networking* – Web spaces are where individuals can post information about themselves, usually creating a profile or website where they can be connected to others in the same network (Lenhardt, Madden, Macgill, & Smith, 2007). Examples of social networking sites include MySpace and Facebook

*Text Message (text)* – Communication of brief messages generally via cell phones or other PDAs (Willard, 2007, p. 307). The act of sending a text is known as texting, and refers to the exchange of brief written messages between cell phones. Texting has been extended to include messages containing image, video, and sound content (Wikipedia, 2010)

*Web 2.0 Applications* – The second wave of the World Wide Web (www) introducing user-generated content of blogs, wikis, and social networking sites (TechWeb, 2008)

*Web Page* – A document displayed on the World Wide Web that is viewable by anyone connected to the Internet who has a web browser such as Internet Explorer (American Heritage Dictionary, 2006)

*Wiki* – A webpage that allows readers to collaborate with others in writing, adding, editing, and changing the content of the web page at any time. It is an effective collaborative authoring tool (Solomon and Schrum, 2007)

## Limitations of the Study

While there are several technological social trends that affect school systems, this study is limited to student cell phone conduct and more specifically teen sexting. The content analysis of cell phone and electronic device policies was limited to collection of student handbooks from many of the ten largest school districts in Arizona and several neighboring school districts to Hometown School District. Due to the evolving nature of teen sexting, state and federal legislation for teen sexting offenders was being revised during the process of this study; therefore, upon completion of this study, laws and regulations may have been updated and are not reflected in this paper.

Although incidents of teen sexting can be found in public schools, private schools, and charter schools across the United States, the survey/questionnaire was distributed in only one public school district in Arizona. The same study may have resulted differently based on location of school district, socio-economic demographics, and state or district guidelines. This survey/questionnaire was designed using a descriptive research method to identify the perceptions of select school personnel. Responses are restricted to voluntary participation of junior high school leaders: principals, assistant principals, counselors, and on-campus security leaders' responses may reflect personal values on the subject that cannot be discerned.

The data analysis is narrowed to description and quantification of feedback and a brief content description will be presented. While follow-up interviews with school leader respondents would have been advantageous to this

study, the researcher was not given permission from Hometown School District to engage with subjects in an interview setting. The results are specific to Hometown School District; however, the recommendations can be applicable to others school districts and will provide substantial research and conclusions to be added to the continuum of educational research.

### Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 presented an overview of technology challenges in schools and the current issues of teen sexting with portable communication devices and cell phones. The statement of the problem, significance of the study, definitions of terms, limitations of the study and a chapter overview were included. A review of the literature is found in Chapter 2, which provides an outline of the history of the legislation on Internet regulation efforts for minors, examples of case law relating to student rights, review of technology and cell phone harassment issues for students, synopsis of teen sexting incidents, and a summative review of recent research studies related to teen sexting. Chapter 3 restates the problem, describes the population and sample, identifies the sources of data, explains the data collection instruments, and outlines the data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the content data of school district policy and curriculum and provides quantified data in the forms of tables and graphs. The chapter also includes a brief description of evidence that explains the leadership perceptions of teen sexting issues. Finally, Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of the data, offers insight for Hometown School District about the nature of teen sexting on their campuses, provides recommendations for cell phone policy and curriculum, and suggests further

research that will continue to add to the subject of student use of cell phones in schools.

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Introduction

The world is in a creative state when it comes to policy that is associated with technology innovation. The need for law and regulation to preserve and protect the core values upon which the Internet was created include intellectual property, free speech, and privacy (Lessig, 1999). Internet protection regulations for minors are the basis for regulations of handheld communication devices for minors. This study about student cell phone policy and the impact of teen sexting in schools would not be complete without highlighting key regulation efforts implemented by the U.S. government's provision of guidelines for student use of technology in school. The review of the literature will first include a concise outline of the history of the legislation surrounding Internet regulation efforts for minors. Secondly, the review provides several, but certainly not all, examples of case law relating to censorship and student free speech including: off-campus speech; privacy, search and seizure, and due process for students; harassment, sexual harassment, and cyber bullying; child pornography; and teen sexting. A look at how technology and cell phones have changed policy, discipline, and safety for students is presented in this chapter. Many stories of teen sexting incidents that have been covered by the media are highlighted. Finally, the chapter provides a summative review of recent research studies related to teen sexting.

### Overview of Legislation

In the mid 1990s, legislators at the federal and state levels began to respond to pressure from groups pushing for regulatory measure to protect minors

due to the rise of Internet websites featuring pornography, propaganda, hate speech and other antisocial material (Dunn, 2002; Conn, 2002). In 1997, the Supreme Court ruled that the Internet was an unique medium entitled to protection under the First Amendment (Communications Decency Act (CDA), 1996). While Congressional findings noted that the educational potential of the Internet was irrefutable, the concern involved placing restrictions on Internet content to help control the information available to young people. Online services and online service providers were persuaded to screen materials (Shilling, 1998). Computer industry software designers began creating filtering software, which allowed the option to block potentially harmful information on the Internet from being accessed by minors. This software continues to be refined in order to remain lawful and not violate constitutionally protected speech laws (Ragoowansi & Clement, 1999).

Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation Act, 1977.

The Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation Act of 1977, made it a crime for any person to induce a minor to engage in “sexually explicit conduct” in order to produce a visual depiction of such conduct. The distribution for commercial gain of any obscene depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct is a crime.

Child Protection Restoration and Penalties Enhancement, 1990.

Law makers were concerned with the collection and possession of child pornography. Congress amended federal law to prohibit the possession of visual



depictions of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct with the Child Protection Restoration and Penalties Enhancement, 1990.

Child Pornography Prevention Act (CPPA), 1996.

With evolving computer technology, Congress became concerned that persons could create visual depictions of children engaged in sexual activity that might not involve the participation of any actual child. This would still pose serious danger for children. Therefore virtual depictions that appear to be of children engaged in sexual activity are criminal as outlined in the Child Pornography Prevention Act of 1996 (CPPA).

Communications Decency Act, 1996 (CDA).

Passed by U.S. Congress in 1996, the CDA attempted to regulate indecent or pornographic material on the Internet by making it a crime to transmit obscene communications to recipients under the age of 18 years, essentially banning the material. The law applied to all computer-assisted communications. Lawsuits immediately followed. The U.S. Supreme Court decided that indecent and obscene communities could be regulated to protect minors but not banned (*ACLU v. Reno*, 1997) and it was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court -- June 26, 1997.

The Children's Online Protection Act, 1998 (COPA).

The Children's Online Protection Act of 1998 was written to impose criminal and civil penalties on people who had Websites that showed harmful, sexual acts or nudity, and knowingly gave access to minors (Daniel & Pauken,

2002). It restricted access of minors to the sexual information. It was immediately overturned when federal courts ruled that the law violated free speech.

The Child Online Privacy Protection Act, 2000 (COPPA).

The intention of COPPA is to regulate the online collection and release of personal information of a child (age 13 and under) collected on a website. With COPPA, the release of a child's information cannot be shared to the public for any reasons if the ISP have actual knowledge the user is under age 13. However, it does have a loophole in that the ISP can claim they "didn't know" that a client was a child (Conn, 2002, p.29).

The Children's Internet Protection Act, 2000 (CIPA).

Schools and libraries that are covered by CIPA, are receiving E-Rate, meaning they receive federal funding or discounts. In this case, the agency must install and use technology protection measures (filters) to block objectionable (obscene, pornographic, and harmful) Internet content (Daniel and Pauken, 2002, pp. 20-23). Minors are defined as children that are 17 years old and younger.

Deleting Online Predators Act, 2006 (DOPA).

Schools and libraries receiving E-Rate are required to protect minors from online predators (Roskamp, 2009).

#### Overview of Case Law

The First Amendment of the Constitution regulates speech in the physical world and the virtual world of cyberspace. Since the 1960s, several court cases can be highlighted that provide foundations for school authorities and ensure order in schools while protecting student speech under the First Amendment

(Zirkel, 2001, p. 9) and Fourteenth Amendment due process. Because student speech and behavior related to the Internet is occurring off campus, there have been several cases challenging school policy about free speech for students off campus when it impacts the school.

Sexual content and free speech legislation are only half the battle.

Bullying and harassment are not new issues to society and education agencies; however, technology has provided a new instrument for bullying and harassing that is readily accessible to minors. These issues are now also conducted through cyber means and have created law cases that begin to define the regulation of the issue called cyber bullying. Another technological problem combines teens sharing naked photos and videos and the rise of communications devices. Teen sexting has become a large issue so abruptly that courts are finding themselves with cases that do not have legislation that correctly encompasses the charges, and this makes it difficult to give appropriate rulings.

School censorship and student free speech.

The 1996 *Tinker v. Des Moines* case is a landmark case on free speech in schools because it determined schools could not censor or suppress student expression unless it disrupted the learning process. In the *Tinker* case, students wearing armbands in protest of the Vietnam War was considered symbolic speech and fell under the protection of the First Amendment. This standard for on-campus expression can also be applied to off-campus expression (via the Internet) that has effects within a school (Kaiser, 2000; Conn, 2002, Zirkel, 2001/2002, p. 9).

In the 1986 *Bethel School District 403 v. Fraser* case, Fraser had delivered a speech at school that contained inappropriate language, sexual comments, and political innuendos. In this case, courts determined schools could regulate speech that undermined the basic educational mission. This now applies to school Internet and student speech rights.

In 1998, the *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* case determined school officials had the right to impose reasonable restrictions on student speech in the school paper in order to ensure that educational objectives are met (Conn, 2002). Kuhlmeier was denied permission to publish articles in the school newspaper about teen pregnancy and divorce when the students involved in the stories were identifiable. This case law directs Internet and student speech, Off-Campus Internet Speech, and School Discipline Policy.

The *Kim v. Bellevue School District-Newport High School* (SPLC, 1995, Fall, *Internet Prank...*) case reinforced the rights of students to engage in free speech on the Internet while off campus. Kim created an unofficial school homepage website with links to sexually explicit websites while at his home.

In the *Donovan v. Ritchie* case there was no challenge to a student's First Amendment rights. Instead, the case challenged a student's due process rights (Heaverin, 2005). Due process rights would include being apprised of the charges and evidence and being allowed to have a fair trial and appeals. Students met at a home and created a document insulting other students at their school and then it was distributed at school. The school took disciplinary action against the students without providing them with due process.

In the case of *Boucher v. School Board of School District of Greenfield* in 1998, Boucher wrote an off-campus, underground newspaper article that gave instructions for hacking into the school's computer system. Boucher placed it on his website and distributed it at school. The court sided with the school that the article undermined school rules and because it was distributed on campus, it was not considered an off-campus activity (Daniel & Pauken, 2002, p. 33).

The 1979 *Thomas v. Board of Education, Granville Central School* Second circuit court case originally sided with a school that disciplined students for creating an off-campus newspaper that was viewed by school leaders as "obscene and morally offensive" (Heaverin, 2005, p. 38.). The decision was overruled because the paper was not distributed on campus, nor did it lead to disruption on campus; therefore, the ruling violated the students' First Amendment rights.

Search and seizure.

Standards for searches and seizures in school settings were set in the landmark case *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* A student's purse was searched after she was caught breaking the school rules by smoking on campus. The school authorities found paraphernalia that suggested drug use and drug sales in her purse. The court determined the school did not have to follow search and seizure procedures because they are not police officers. In a school environment, search of a student by a school official is "justified at its inception" if it is suspected the student has broken a law or school rule and evidence might be found (Heaverin, 2005, p. 36).

Threats, sexual harassment and cyber bullying.

A distinction between First Amendment speech and a threat was established in 1969 with the findings of the *Watts v. United States*. Threats are protected under free speech if there is no reasonable belief to take them seriously. If it is considered a “true threat” it is not constitutionally protected (Harpaz, 2000; Daniel and Paukin, 2002).

The *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education* case involved a student who sexually harassed another student on campus, thus creating a hostile environment where the victim was deprived of school opportunities and activities because of the trauma of the victimization, and the school did not act. The Supreme Court ruled for the victim under Title IX of the Educational Amendment Acts of 1972. Because Title IX expects school authorities to have control over the harasser on school grounds during school hours (Kosse, 2001). Title IX applies when schools have knowledge that face-to-face harassment or cyber bullying exists and if the harassment continues to occur at school (Conn & Zirkel, 2000, pp. 23-27; Kosse, 2001).

In the 2000 case of *Valley View School District v. Redman* in Arkansas, the student created a mirrored website of the school’s official website, except Redman’s website contained sexually explicit photographs and text naming students, teachers and school leaders (Freedom Forum, 2000; Heaverin, 2005). The school considered this a violation of school policy because of abusive, vulgar, obscene and sexually explicit material that lead to disruption in school. The school also considered the website to be indicative of future violent behavior. The

court found the site lacked a threat of violence and the First Amendment protected the student's off-campus speech (Freedom Forum, 2000, p. 1).

The March 2001 case *Dubois v. Cumberland School District* in Rhode Island, is a case where the student, Dubois, used his home computer to write a sexually explicit song about his teacher (Freedom Forum, 2001). The student then posted the song the Internet using a file-sharing device. Students downloaded the song and it was eventually brought to the teacher's and the school's attention. The school then disciplined student for violation of school and district policy against sexual harassment (Heaverin, 2005). Because the school's sexual harassment policy included a harassment definition of "any unwelcome conduct or communication of a sexual nature...any sexual behavior or communication that adversely affects a person's employment relationship, ability to do one's work or working environment", the court ruled in favor of the school district (Freedom Forum, 2001, p. 2).

In the 2003 case of *Muss-Jacobs v. Beaverton School District*, Muss, a student, created a website with sexual and racial comments about students and teachers at his school. It was brought to the school's attention and resulted in disciplinary actions for Muss based on violation of school policy for lewdness and harassment (Heaverin, 2005). This case challenges First Amendment rights of the student, what constitutes "true threats," the criteria of an act causing a disruption to the school or learning, and the concept of off-campus Internet activity. The school district agreed to settle with a financial award to the student.

Child pornography.

The *New York v. Ferber* (1982) case ruled that the First Amendment could forbid states from banning the sale of material containing child pornography. It further clarified the matters of obscenity were irrelevant. The goal of the law is to prevent the sexual exploitation of children.

The court decision in the 1990 *Osborne v. Ohio* case determined that possession of child pornography is prohibited. This included any visual depictions of actual children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. So, while it was unconstitutional for a state to ban the sale of materials with child pornography, it was constitutional to ban the possession of child pornography.

The *Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union* (1997) case decided that indecent and obscene communities could be regulated to protect minors, but the communities could not be banned. This case overturned the CDA (1996) which attempted to ban communities, now ruling it unconstitutional. The rejection of the CDA prompted a new law called Children's Online Protection Act (COPA), which was ultimately also found to be in violation of constitutional rights.

Teen sexting.

The 2009 case *State of Florida v. Philip Alpert (Juvenile Justice E-Newsletter, June 2009 (No.3))* dealt directly with the matter of teen sexting. Phillips, then 17, posted two explicit images of his then-16-year-old ex-girlfriend to his MySpace page after she started dating another teenager. Even after being contacted by a police officer, Phillips chose to keep the photos up on his page. He was subsequently charged with child pornography, sexual exploitation of a child, and defamation. Later, when Phillip Alpert was 18, he e-mailed nude photos of



his then 16-year old ex-girlfriend to over 70 people, including her parents, grandparents, and teachers. Three days later, he was charged with transmitting child pornography. Alpert was above the age of majority, had sent nude photos he received in confidence to over 70 people, and did it to seek revenge on an ex-girlfriend. Alpert was convicted of transmission of child pornography. He is now a registered Florida Sex Offender.

In the case of *A.H. v. The State of Florida* (2007), two teenagers were prosecuted and convicted under child pornography laws. In this case, A.H. who was 16, and J.G.W., who was 17, photographed themselves engaged in sexual acts. A.H. then went on to e-mail these pictures to J.G.W.'s private e-mail. By doing this, the courts charged each with one count of producing, directing or promoting a photograph, or representation that they knew to include the sexual conduct of a child.

*State of Iowa v. Jorge Canal, Jr.* (2009) appeal case found that evidence was sufficient for conviction of Canal for knowingly disseminating obscene material to a minor. In, 2005, Canal, 18-years-old, sent a 14-year-old girl two photographs of his genitals with the text "I Love You."

In the *Miller, et al. v. Skumanick* (2009) case, the American Civil Liberties Union of Pennsylvania filed a lawsuit against the Wyoming County District Attorney for threatening three high school girls with child pornography charges over two digital photos in which the girls are topless or in their underwear. School officials had found the images on student cell phones. The photos do not depict any sexual activity or reveal anything below the waist. The District Attorney says

the girls were accomplices to the production of child pornography because they allowed themselves to be photographed. On March 17, 2010, the Third Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the prosecutor could not charge the girls on the fact that they appeared in their own photos.

In an attempt to maneuver teen sexting into the structure of the law, Humbach stated “given the reality of changing social practices, mores and technology utilization, today’s pornography laws are a trap for unwary teens . . .” (2009, p. 37). From his analysis of the cases of *New York v. Ferber* and *Osborne v. Ohio*, teen sexting is sometimes regarded as unprotected speech by courts and prosecutors. However, he goes on to explain that teen sexting could be constitutionally protected if the teen sexting occurred on a teen’s own initiative. There is precedent for this in the case of *Ashcroft v. Free Speech Coalition* (2002) because the intentions of child pornography laws are to protect children and minors from child exploitation and child abuse. The problem with applying child pornography laws to teen sexting issues is that in most teen sexting situations teens are willing participants.

#### Technology, Cell Phone, and Sexual Harassment Policy Research

A study called *Legal Issues Involving Students and Internet Use: Implications for Policy Setting* by Deborah Disalvo Heaverin investigated judicial cases and prominent law issues that involved student Internet use and schools (2005). Her analyses of several court cases indicated that school jurisdiction over speech and behavior is limited outside of school walls. Further examination of the study revealed:

schools that have specifically stated policies that delineate what is allowed and not allowed, define the boundaries of the policy's application within the school walls, and include a specific plan of action for dealing with "off-campus" behavior that disrupts the school environment will most likely be within the bonds of protecting students' rights. (Heaverin, 2005, p. iv).

The article "Cell Phones In American High Schools: A National Survey," by S. John Obringer and Kent Coffey, reported a survey of 200 high schools. They found that majority of the 200 schools involved in the survey had cell phone policies in place and that parents supported school policy on cell phone use. The research concluded that disciplinary action for misuse varied. Though their study was highly foundational, it is necessary to update and review cell phone policy to match advances in technology.

In "Are you Listening to Me? Space, Context and Perspective in the Regulation of mp3 Players and Cell Phones in Secondary School" (2008) authors Julie Domitrek and Rebecca Raby studied how students and teachers view rules on the use of electronic devices. Three observations that lead to policy making emerged from their examination of focus groups of student and school leadership stakeholders. The observations included: (a) rules for electronic devices are better received by students if there are clear rationales, (b) differentiating between rules for cell phones and rules for mp3 players is advantageous because these devices serve different purposes and function differently, and (c) there is a need for education about appropriate usage of personal electronic devices and technology.

In a study called *Modernizing School Communication Systems: Using Text Messaging to Improve Student Academic Performance* (Crisp, 2009), the research provided statistical evidence to prove the emergence of mobile messaging, especially by teenagers. His research revealed a 45% cell phone ownership rate among American teens. Crisp cites the Pew Internet and American Life Project (2006), which produced similar findings in an October-November 2004 study. Crisp went on to state that 64% of American teens who own a cell phone report they have sent a text message (Lenhart, Madden, & Hitlin, 2005).

Tami Roskamp (2009), studied incidents of cyber bullying with a focus on digital interactive devices such as cell phones and web 2.0 applications during the 2007-2008 school year. Her study identified the different forms of cyber bullying, including name calling, spreading rumors, humiliating the victim, threatening someone, sending hate messages, practicing exclusion, posting humiliating pictures or videos, posting sexually suggestive-explicit pictures or videos, and telling a secret as a form of embarrassment. She concludes that the most frequent digital interactive device used in cyber bullying incidents were cell phones.

In an article called *Preventing Student Sexual Harassment*, Wendy Schwartz reviewed effective antiharassment strategies used in schools (2000). She recommended that school initiatives on sexual harassment should include student education, antiharassment policy, pre-established responses to harassment, professional development, and family involvement. Schwartz (2000) perceived a need for schools and families to deliver a strong and effective antiharassment message to youth.

In “Texting, Sexting and Social Networking Among Australian Youth and the Need for Cyber Safety Education” Catherine McLoughlin and Jill Burgess recommended schools to develop knowledge of e-safety strategies (2009). The authors recognized cases of cyber bullying in Australia, US, Canada and the UK as a significant problem. They recommended strategies for youth education regarding media literacy skills and e-safety in order to curb the incidence and effects of cyber bullying (McLoughlin & Burgess, 2009). The authors conclude that students need skills to protect themselves from risky behaviors and predatory communication.

#### Synopsis of Teen Sexting Incidents

Teen sexting is a prime example of how “developments in technology have outpaced laws and regulations” (Parry, 2005, n. p.). Hundreds of articles have been written discussing reports of teenagers across the US being charged with child pornography counts for naked photo sharing. Some teen sexting incidents may or may not ever be prosecuted. The media has been instrumental in garnering rapid, national attention and argument over the teen texting trend, specifically drawing attention to the issues of mismatched laws and disproportionately severe consequences, both legal and nonlegal.

The research indicated many more boys are charged than girls in teen sexting crimes. For example, three Pennsylvania boys ages 16 and 17 are charged with possession of child pornography on their cell phones (Calvert, 2009). In Virginia, a 15-year-old and an 18-year-old boy propositioned three teens to send nude photos of themselves on their cell phone and the boys who requested the

photos were charged with solicitation and child pornography with intent to distribute (Walker & Moak, 2010). In yet another case, an 18-year-old Florida boy was thrown out of college and had to register as a sex offender for 25 years because he sent nude pictures of his ex-girlfriend to other teens (Lewin, 2010). Another 18-year-old Florida boy was charged with transmitting child pornography after sending a nude photo of ex-girlfriend to a friend (Prieto, 2009). In New York, a 16-year-old boy, as of 2009, is facing a possible seven years in prison for forwarding a nude photo of his girlfriend to friends (Stone, 2009). A 17-year-old was charged with possession of child pornography in Alabama after he posted naked pictures of his 16-year-old girl friend online (Stone, 2009). Another 18-year-old was placed on the sex offender list in Florida for sending a naked picture of himself at the request of a 14-year-old female friend (Lewin, 2010). A 13-year-old Texas boy was arrested for child pornography because of a nude photo of a peer on his cell phone (Ahmed, 2009). In Alabama, 4 middle school students were arrested for sharing nude photos of themselves (Stone, 2009).

Though the majority of cases are overwhelmingly instances of boys charged for teen sexting violations, the research did reveal two examples where girls were charged for teen sexting. In one case, three teen Pennsylvania girls, ages 14 and 15, faced child pornography charges for taking seminude photos of themselves with their cell phones and sending them to male students (Brunker, 2009). In another case, a 14-year-old New Jersey girl was charged for taking naked photos of herself and posting them online (Calvert, 2009).

Unfortunately, nonlegal consequences for teen sexting have also been reported. An 18-year-old high school student from Ohio killed herself after her ex-boyfriend sent nude pictures of her to other girls in her school (Kranz, 2009). Another teen, this time from Florida, killed herself when nude pictures that were only intended for her boyfriend spread through her school (Walker, & Moak, 2010).

#### Review of Recent Insight on Teen Sexting Issues

This next section is a collection of research studies that have investigated issues related to teen sexting. Each summary gives further insight to the growing phenomenon and attempts to portray the struggle between teen sexting as a legal issue and as a social issue. Parents and schools can be participatory in educating teens so that hopefully the consequences of teen sexting are not the only precedents that are establishing a learning curve.

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy and *CosmoGirl.com* commissioned a survey by TRU (a division of TNS Custom Research, Inc.) to quantify the proportion of teens that send or post sexually suggestive text and images. The research took place in 2008 and surveyed 653 teen respondents ages 13-19. The results found that 20% of the teens said they had sent or posted nude or seminude photos or videos of themselves (Sex and Tech, 2009).

*When Sex and Cell Phones Collide: Inside the Prosecution of a Teen Sexting Case*, by Robert D. Richards & Clay Calvert (2009), is an article based on exclusive, in-person interviews conducted by the authors with a teen sexter and

his attorney. The sexter, Phillip Alpert, and his current attorney, Lawrence Walters, met with Richards and Calvert in Altamonte Springs, Florida, on May 8, 2009, at Walters' office. At age 18, Alpert sent nude pictures of his ex-girlfriend who was 16-years-old. His official charge was sending child pornography, and he is now a registered sex offender in the state of Florida. Richards and Calvert argue that traditional child pornography and teenagers engaged in teen sexting are not harming the minors in the same way. When teen sexting is held to statutes focusing on preventing pedophiles and sexual abusers from satisfying their sexual appetite, the teenager's life becomes decimated. Further, when sexting teens are required to register as a sex offender, the registry may lose its impact by diluting its importance. Attorney Lawrence Walters suggests sexting is a social issue rather than a criminal issue.

The ACJS (Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences) produced an article called "Child's Play or Child Pornography: The Need for Better Laws Regarding Sexting." In the article, Walker and Moak (2010) addressed two primary arguments in regards to teen sexting. The first argument examined if teens are exercising their constitutional rights of freedom of expression or committing acts of child pornography. The second reviewed whether the laws of child pornography used to charge teens for sexting are the same laws created intending to protect them from child pornography. The authors use an example of Utah legislators' attempts to address Utah's child pornography state statute in 2009. The addendum lessens punishment for persons 17 and under who are facing child pornography charges (Walker & Moak, 2010).



Vermont legislature has passed a bill to legalize sexting between teens (Huffington Post, 2009). Additionally, Jaishanker (2009) strongly argued in favor as addressed in the editorial “Sexting: A new form of Victimless Crime.” The bill would legalize the consensual exchange of sexually explicit materials between teens age 13-18, but not allow images to be legally passed on to others. Furthermore, Jaishanker went on to say responsible usage of cell phones by teenagers and responsible parenting are the solutions to the teen sexting problem.

In Michigan, the Owosso Public School Board made an addendum to the Health and Reproductive Curriculum on Teen Sexuality on June 22, 2009. The curriculum, written and researched by Dr. Don E. Galardi, now includes education about teen sexting awareness and prevention. The curriculum provides a definition of teen sexting and offers examples of the possible consequences for teens (Galardi, 2009).

#### Summary of Chapter

The history of legislation and case law presented in the literature review is an attempt to assist in understanding the current guiding principles to the consequences of a very new technology trend with teens: sexting. “What makes sexting so ripe for legal discussion is that it represents a social and technological phenomenon that has outstripped the law” (Richards & Calvert, 2009, p. 3). Teens charged with child pornography violations for sexting face severe consequences and media attention. While lawmakers grapple to remove teen sexting behavior from the label of child pornography, a more systematic approach should be

considered (Richards & Calvert, 2009). From an educational system's point of view, a plausible and practical solution may be education.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Introduction

With the increase of student cell phone use and the national attention given to extreme consequences of teen sexting, it is not surprising educational leaders are concerned. Student issues with cell phones are infiltrating school campuses and causing new social and discipline issues that often result in both legal and nonlegal consequences for teenagers that are severe. School leaders have begun to recognize and respond to the subject. This study uncovers what many school districts in Arizona include in their cell phone policy for student use and what junior school leaders' perceptions are on the issues of teen sexting in their schools. The research will provide Hometown School District with data about cell phone policy and teen sexting to assist in making decisions regarding policy and curriculum. It is possible that this research is useful for other school districts looking to respond similarly.

### Statement of the Problem

Because students and cell phones have become an increasing point of concern, Hometown School District thought it was necessary to update policy and create curriculum to make junior high students aware of laws and dangers surrounding sharing photos and videos with nudity and sexual content. The researcher wanted to examine current cell phone policies for students and determine the significance of leadership perceptions of teen sexting on campus in order to make recommendations. Questions that will be addressed in the study include the following:

1. What are policies for student use of cell phones on campus to regulate teen sexting issues of school districts near Hometown School District?
2. What teen sexting awareness/prevention curriculum is being implemented in school districts near Hometown School District?
3. To what extent is teen sexting perceived to be a problem by school leaders on campus in Hometown School District?
4. To what degree is there a need for curriculum about teen sexting awareness/prevention in Hometown School District?

### Population and Sample

The student cell phone policy content for analysis came from 13 school districts in Arizona, including Hometown School District. Junior high school administrators were chosen because Hometown School District was interested in determining if junior high schools are the appropriate grades for implementing a teen sexting awareness program. Ten of the thirteen school districts' policies that were collected included those from the ten largest school districts in Arizona. The sample policies were found in district or school student handbooks.

Hometown School District, as it was called in this study, is in a city located near Phoenix. The school district represents a middle class population in an urban and suburban setting with a small rural farming area in the northernmost section of the district. Students from the Native American communities also attend the school district. The median household income is \$50,993 and 29 % or more of the adults are college graduates (Bureau of Labor Statistics provided to Hometown School District). The percentage of students living in households that

do not have two parents is approximately 20.4%. The percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunches is 60.2%.

Hometown School District is a public school district with classes from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The district includes elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, focus schools, and a number of programs addressing students with special needs such as Career and Technical Education, Special Education, Gifted/Extended Learning, and English as a Second Language. There is a variety of focus programs offered throughout the district, such as Back to Basic schools, an arts based school, and a vocational high school.

The ethnic majority in this school district is Anglo-white, which constitutes 50.6% of the school population. Students with Spanish surnames constitute 37.7% of the student population, making that group the major ethnic. The second largest minority group is Native American or Alaskan Native, constituting 4.4% of the student population. African American students compose approximately 4.8% of the school population and Pacific Islander/Asian students approximately 2.5%.

The junior high principals, assistant principals, counselors, and security leaders in Hometown School District are the sample population. Each of these positions in the school are considered to be leadership positions. For the purpose of this study, a brief description of the respondent's job title is included. The principal is the primary leader of the school and responsible for overseeing all activity on his or her campus. He or she takes directive from the leadership of the school district. The assistant principal takes directive from the principal and his or

her primary responsibility is the management of student discipline. The school counselor provides advice and support for students regarding social, behavioral, and academic issues. The security leader's role on campus is to enforce school and district rules and to bring student behavioral issues to the attention of the principal, assistant principal, and counselor when actions warrant consequences.

### Sources of Data

The research methodology for this dissertation was designed using a descriptive mixed-method approach. The descriptive method aided in providing current and research-based recommendations for policy and curriculum development. The design of the research included gathering data in three parts: (a) by online search of Arizona school districts' pre-existing policy about student cell phone use and for teen sexting curriculum; (b) when online data was not available a central office administrator was interviewed by telephone; and (c) through a survey/questionnaire created by the researcher about teen sexting perceptions held by the junior high school leaders in Hometown School District. The school district whose content was collected and analyzed was not specifically identified in this study. The survey/questionnaire instrument for data collection was specifically created and intended for responses from Hometown School District's junior high school principals, assistant principals, counselors and security leaders. The personal identification of each participant was not collected or used. Participation was voluntary and respondents could refuse to participate. No recruitment activity took place.

### Data Collection

The data collection began with the researcher conducting an online investigation to find cell phone use policies in district and school student handbooks. The search began with school districts adjacent to Hometown School District including the ten largest school districts in Arizona. Ultimately, the data sample size totaled 13. The data included cell phone use policy from Hometown School District. Though policy was available online, the researcher was not able to gather data about teen sexting curriculum online because it was not available or did not exist. Therefore, the researcher followed up with the 13 school districts by calling their curriculum departments to determine if the school district had implemented or was planning to implement a teen sexting curriculum. An example of the informal phone inquiry questions is provided in Appendix A.

A pilot of the survey/questionnaire study was first distributed to five school leaders outside of the Hometown School District. This provided the researcher with an example of the content and data that would be returned. From this pilot study, the researcher could make adjustments to the survey/questionnaire for optimal data collection before distributing the official survey/questionnaire to Hometown School District leaders.

The next component in the data collection was the distribution of the survey/questionnaire to Hometown School District's junior high school principals, assistant principals, counselors, and security leaders at each of the 13 junior high schools. The survey was delivered by hand by the researcher to each school site and returned by district mail to the researcher anonymously in a sealed

envelope. The researcher gave each respondent 7 days to complete and return the survey. In total, 52 school leaders were asked to partake in the survey.

Hometown School District's Research Priority Board approved the request to conduct research in Hometown School District. The survey/questionnaire included a cover letter with a brief description of the purpose of the research and gave the participant directions for completing and submitting the survey (see Appendix B). A complete sample of the survey/questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

A quantitative method called the Likert scale, named after its inventor, psychologist Rensis Likert, was chosen by the researcher as a design model for the survey/questionnaire (Likert, 1932). When responding to a Likert questionnaire item, respondents specify their level of agreement to a statement. This research was designed to look for junior high school leaders' perceptions of teen sexting; therefore, Likert scaling was appropriate for this research because Likert scaling is a bipolar scaling method that measures positive or negative responses to a statement or question (Dawes, 2008). A Likert scale is a psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires, and is the most widely used scale in survey research.

The survey/questionnaire was comprised of a total of 12 components. The survey included 10 perception questions. Each of the 10 questions had five answer choices. The respondent was asked to select only one answer. After each question, the respondent was asked to write an explanation of his or her answer selection that would elucidate the respondent's conclusion. Respondents were



asked not to reveal any student names in responses. Questions 10 and 11 sought answers regarding demographic data, and asked for the respondent's job title and gender. Component 12 gave the respondent an opportunity to further discuss the subject and provide examples if necessary. The survey focused specifically on perspectives and experience relevant to school leaders regarding the issue of sexting.

### Data Analysis

When analyzing the content of the 13 district and school student conduct policies, the researcher looked at guidelines for students with cell phones and portable electronic devices and considered what the policies said about sexual harassment and bullying. Each document's content was analyzed for themes regarding the regulation of student use of cell phones. More specifically, the policies were examined for policy that established inappropriate cell phone use to include instances of teen sexting. The researcher used inductive reasoning to determine what was meaningful and relative within a phenomenon (Krathwohl, 1998). The intention in reading the guidelines was to determine what policies are in place to regulate teen sexting with cell phones.

Because the online search did not result in finding available teen sexting curriculum, the researcher further investigated by calling each of the 13 school district's curriculum and instruction departments to inquire if a teen sexting curriculum was being implemented. The researcher called and left messages over a 4-week period in attempts to contact all 13 school districts for information. Calls were returned by 7 of the 13 school districts and the researcher was able to collect

data. Upon the determination that a school district did not have a teen sexting curriculum, the researcher asked if they were planning to incorporate one. The researcher then inquired about any other information relevant to a teen sexting curriculum. If the researcher determined that the school had a teen sexting curriculum, the researcher asked for a description of the curriculum being implemented, about the students receiving instruction, and about the time spent on the teen sexting curriculum.

The data analysis of the surveys/questionnaires was conducted when the surveys/questionnaires were completed and returned. The researcher distributed 52 surveys/questionnaires to Hometown School District's junior high principals, assistant principals, counselors, and security leaders. The researcher hoped to have a participation rate of 75%. Participation was considered to include both the completion and return of the survey/questionnaire forms. Each of the 11-item responses were sorted and analyzed. A graph was created from the data for each question as a visual summary. The data collected established the leaders' perceptions and demographic statistics. Questions 1 through 9 of the questionnaire provided information regarding perceptions while questions 10 and 11 established demographic statistics. This information was then cross correlated and analyzed. The information resulted in the creation of more graphs which provided opportunity for further analysis, and conclusions to be drawn. Item 12 invited respondents to further elaborate on the issues of teen sexting at their school.

A brief content description of the responses was organized for the data analysis of the written component of the survey/questionnaire (explanations for Questions 1-9 and 12). Again, the researcher used inductive reasoning to determine what was meaningful and relative within a phenomenon (Krathwohl, 1998). The researcher is aware that questionnaires cannot probe deeply into respondents' attitudes, beliefs, or inner experiences; the researcher was simply looking for insight to broaden the understanding of the data collected from the 9 survey questions.

#### Summary of Chapter

The researcher designed this descriptive study to incorporate data from school policy, school curriculum, and school leadership. The online data collection of policy was successful; whereas, the original plan to conduct online collection of curriculum about teen sexting did not yield results. The researcher modified the methodology for curriculum data collection to include informal phone interviews with school districts. The phone interviews produced little data. The surveys provided a great deal of quantitative data because of the substantial 90% participation rate.

In review, online search was utilized, informal follow-up phone calls were conducted, and a survey/questionnaire for junior high school leaders was distributed and collected. The data from each method is reported in the next chapter with written descriptors and supporting quantitative statistics.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

### Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected using the methodology for research outlined in Chapter 3. The goal of the research was to collect data that would provide recommendations for school leaders to consider in policy making and curriculum implementation for student use of cell phones that would safeguard against teen sexting. This was done by collecting school district policies and curricula for cell phones, and by surveying school leader's personal perceptions about teen sexting on campus. The data is presented by stating each question addressed, followed by the data collected.

### Data Results of Cell Phone Policy Collection

School district student policies from 13 schools were analyzed. District policies were collected online where they existed in the form of a student handbook, family handbook, or district policy guide for student conduct. Upon sorting and grouping the different policies by each district, one composite list was created. Items in the list include the number of school districts found to contain a specific item and a brief narrative for each approach presented by the school districts. The insight may present problems that will be discussed in Chapter 5. The data is organized below in Tables 1 through 5 to portray common themes in order to answer the question: *What are the policies for student use of cell phones on campus to regulate teen sexting issues of school districts near Hometown School District?*

Table 1

*Collection of School Policies for Electronic Devices List*

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Electronic Devices: This list includes all devices found in policies collected by the researcher. Not all of the 13 school districts' policies included a specific list of electronic devices regulated on campus. The number following each item below represents the number of school districts who included the device specifically at some point in their policy.

- Audio video recorders/players 6
- CD/DVD players 2
- Cell Phones 13
- Computers 13
- Digital Cameras 4
- Email 3
- Gameboys (electronic hand held games) 4
- Internet 10
- iPods 4
- MP3 Players 5
- Pagers/beepers 5
- PDA's 3
- Radios (music players of any kind) 3

The aforementioned list is limited to the electronic items found to be represented in the 13 school districts policies used for this study. Other electronic

and digital devices not listed here should still be considered when creating policy for electronic devices. As technology continues to develop, so should the list of electronic devices in school policies. The researcher did not find smartphones mentioned in any of the policies collected. With the capabilities of computer Internet access with smartphones, teen sexting photos quickly reach the Internet, specifically social networking sites. From this data, the researcher found electronic devices most noted in school policies to be cell phones, computers, and Internet. These three items will require specific regulation as to student use because of their multifaceted capabilities.

#### Table 2

##### *Collection of School Policies for Student Guidelines for Electronic Devices*

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Guidelines for Electronic Devices: This composite list includes the different policies used by the 13 school districts collected for this study. The data show the many different approaches for student use of these electronic devices. School districts vary in the guidelines for student cell phone use on campus. Specific guidelines were reserved to two categories: cell phones and computers/Internet. The number following each statement represents the number of school districts who used similar policies.

- 1) Cell Phones: Because this study is specific to cell phones, the researcher intentionally recorded all policies that mentioned cell phones. School districts regulate student guidelines for electronic devices differently as described below.

- Students may carry and use cell phones and other electronic devices. (1)
- Cell phones must be turned off and in backpacks at all times on school campus and bus. (2)
- Cell phones can be used before and after school for communication and safety purposes. (1)
- Cell phones may not be used in a classroom or elsewhere in a manner that violates the privacy of others or disrupts the school's objective of providing a safe and orderly learning environment for all students. (3)
- A cell phone disturbance is any use of a cellular phone during the school day where incoming or outgoing calls, text messaging, taking photos, etc., disturbs the learning community.(1)
- Cell phones should be turned off and in backpacks during class and instructional time including areas such as hallways, restrooms, and common areas. (3)
- Administrators and teachers can confiscate student cell phones, at which point, a parent must recover items from the school administrator. (7)
- Students are solely responsible for the proper use and security of any personally owned electronic device that they bring onto campus. (12)

- Students should not share or loan electronic devices. If they do, they may be held responsible for any misuse of that device by another just as though it had remained in their possession. (2)
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices include any inappropriate photographs, text messaging, audio or video recording. (2)

2) Computers/Internet: Because many cell phones have computer-like capabilities, the researcher included policies found in the 13 school districts' policies for computers/Internet that may be applicable to cell phones and teen sexting regulations as described below:

- Improper computer usage may include threatening or abusing any student or another person, through electronic messages. (3)
- Prohibited use of school computers include accessing, submitting, transmitting, posting, publishing, forwarding, downloading scanning or displaying materials that are defamatory abusive, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, sexually suggestive, threatening, discriminatory, harassing and/or illegal. (8)
- The District shall provide for technology protection measures that protect against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or with respect to use of the computers by students, harmful to students. The protective measures shall also include monitoring the online activities of students. (2)



As described above, some school district policies are presented with specific detail and others more vaguely. School policy makers should avoid the use of discretionary words used to describe student behavior, such as “appropriate” or “inappropriate” unless specifically able to define such terms and provide examples. The words “communication” and “safety” were not found to be defined nor was an example provided in the items above, which may be too vague. This may lead to issues with enforcement because the terms are discretionary without specific instruction. In items above, “inappropriate photographs” may not be specific enough. It may be beneficial for words such as “nude”, “seminude”, or “pornographic” to be used to define the “inappropriate photographs.” The examples of policies for computer guidelines listed above are specific when describing the protection measures taken. Each provides examples of the “improper” behavior. These examples could be applied when cell phone policies and other electronic devices policies are being created. For the purposes of preventing teen sexting, the language used in these policies would encompass that undesired behavior.

Table 3

*Collection of School Policies for Student Guidelines for Sexual Offenses*

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Guidelines for Sexual Offense: Teen sexting falls under school guidelines

described as Sexual Offences because of the sexually explicit nature of the photos being shared are not permitted on school campus. The following policies were collected by the researcher from 13 school districts’ policy guidelines. The

number that follows is the number of policies found to have the same or similar language.

- 1) Sexual Harassment: In some teen sexting cases, the photos are used as sexual harassment instruments and would fall under sexual harassment violations. For example, if one student asks another student for a teen sexting photo, this would count as a request for a sexual favor.
  - Misconduct involving physical and/or verbal assault, intimidation, sexual harassment or other harassment will not be tolerated. The unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors and any other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature made by a student to another student. (5)
  - Communication of a sexual nature when it has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. May include verbal, written or graphic. (3)
  - A student shall not use language, gestures, or materials that are offensive to accepted standards of decency; debase the dignity of another person: and are without serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value at school-sponsored activities. (2)
- 2) Public Sexual Indecency: The teen sexting photo, if taken on campus during school hours may constitute public sexual indecency. When the teen sexting interferes with the educational environment, it violates school

guidelines.

- Sexual conduct on school property or during school-related activities that is immoral by community standards is not tolerated. (1)
- This violation includes indecent exposure; sexual intercourse; lewd phone calls, text messages, or e-mail messages; and possession of sexually explicit materials. (3)
- When on campus or a school event, a student shall not engage in sexual conduct which a school community or the general public would likely find offensive, indecent, or grossly inappropriate. Such conduct includes acts such as inappropriate exposure of a private body part. A private body part in this context is defined as an area of the body which is generally associated with sex and normally covered by clothing when in public. (1)
- Sexual assault/misconduct will be reported to law enforcement authorities. (2)

3) Pornography: Teen sexting photos are considered pornography.

- Pornography infractions include the use or possession of pictures or distribution of pornographic materials, devices or electronic images that offends or disturbs the educational environment. (1)
- Prohibited endangerment of the safety, morals, health or welfare of others by (a) Using abusive or obscene language or gestures (b)

Selling, using or possessing obscene materials. (2)

- Suggestive or obscene letters notes, invitations, derogatory comments, slurs, jokes, epithets, leering, gestures or display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons or images. (2)

The three items discussed in data collection of school guidelines for sexual offenses include policies that can be used in conjunction with another to apply appropriate guidelines to teen sexting. It would be favorable for the policy to specifically include the words “by electronic devices.” The policies mentioned above are complete with examples in their respective handbooks; however, the words “immoral by community standards” could be eliminated making the policy less discretionary. Sexual offences made with electronic devices are an element to not be overlooked. Pornography on the Internet via computer or cell phone is readily available, especially with photo taking and sharing technology that accompanies most cell phones today. In the event of writing guidelines for teen sexting, the examples provided above are very detailed in the regulations of sexual offences. Sexual harassment, public sexual indecency and pornography guidelines could thoroughly cover teen sexting offenses on school campuses if included in policy manuals for students.

Table 4

*Collection of School Policies for Student Guidelines for Bullying, Intimidation, Threats, Harassment and Defamation*

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Guidelines for Bullying, Intimidation, Threats, Harassment, and Defamation:

These five behaviors with specific student guidelines were found in the policy search by the researcher. Not all student handbooks revealed policy for all five behaviors. Some school policies only included guidelines for one or two out of the five found, as presented by the number following each item below.

1) Bullying: All 13 school policies collected in this research were found to include guidelines for bullying. Teen sexting photos can be used as bullying ammunition against a student when the photos are intentionally sent around school to students. The following three examples for bullying encompass teen sexting.

- Bullying a student or another person will not be tolerated. Bullying is a form of aggressive behavior that (a) is intended to harm or cause distress, (b) occurs repeatedly over time, and (c) is an imbalance of power or strength among the parties, this imbalance of power may be physical or psychological (hitting, shoving, name-calling, threats, shunning, manipulating friendships). (6)
- Bullying may include but is not limited to: (a) intentionally, repeatedly, or over time, in a way inflicting or threatening to inflict physical or emotional injury or discomfort on another's body, feelings, or possessions; (b) physical harm to another student's body or property or intimidating through physical proximity with the intent of instilling fear due to the victim's lack of strength or a handicap; (c) emotional harm to another student's sense of self; (d)

social harm to another student's group acceptance; (e) demeaning another student through taunting, writing, or artwork, or being habitually cruel with the express purpose of embarrassing, humiliating, or demeaning the victim in front of his or her peers or affecting the victim's self-perception in a negative way; and (f) behavior or innuendoes in spoken, written, or graphic related to gender, race, color, religion, national origin, or disability, which may include implied or overt threats, intimidation, demeaning jokes, taunting, slurs, derogatory remarks, or nicknames. (4)

- Bullying can occur in multiple forms and will not be tolerated in the school environment. Forms of bullying include physical (hitting, kicking); verbal (making threats, taunting, malicious teasing, name calling); psychological (social exclusion, extortion, intimidation, spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships); and misuse of technology. (3)

2) Intimidation: Only 9 school district policies included guidelines for intimidation. Teen sexting can be used as a tool for intimidation by students. Oftentimes, teens will take the pictures because of intimidation by other peers to do so.

- Intimidation will not be tolerated. Use of language or conduct to attempt to or to frighten or coerce another person into submission or obedience. (6)

- Intimidation of any type, whether it is based on gender or race, or in the form of hazing will not be tolerated. (3)
- 3) Threats: Teen sexting photos can be used to threaten the person in the photo, such as to expose the person in the photo. The following statements were found by the researcher in 7 of the policies collected.
- Use of language or conduct to make or attempt to make another person fearful of physical injury is a threat. (4)
  - Misconduct includes a person indicating with words the intent to cause physical injury or serious damage to a person or their property. (3)
- 4) Harassment: Because teen sexting photos can be saved forever, they can be used repeatedly with different electronic devices. Of the policies collected and gathered by the researcher, 7 did include electronic harassment, such the use of cell phone, as being an offense.
- Unacceptable harassment includes harassment that is oral, verbal, written, graphic, mechanical, electronic, telephonic, or physical in nature. (4)
  - Harassment (the continual or repeated annoyance or humiliation of another person) is prohibited. Types include: anonymous letters or spreading rumors that are designed to upset and intimidating or threatening e-mail or text messages. (5)
- 5) Defamation: Teen sexting is often considered defamation because of the

serious social and legal consequences that occur. It is hard to change or reverse the damage caused by teen sexting when defamation has occurred, such as when the photos reveal a person's sexual orientation. The following 5 policies were found by the researcher for defamation offenses.

- Defamation includes wrongfully injuring another person's reputation through a written, spoken, or electronic communication that is not otherwise privileged under the law. (2)
- Students shall not engage in improper behavior, conduct or speech that violates commonly accepted standards of the District and that under the circumstances has no redeeming social value. (2)
- Students shall not engage in any conduct constituting a breach of any federal, state, or city law or duly adopted policy of the Board. (1)

With the ongoing battle against cyber bullying, school policies should include electronic devices in the guidelines for policy. This would also include teen sexting. The guidelines for intimidation mentioned above applied to teen sexting. Specifically mentioning the use of electronic devices as the medium for the intimidation could strengthen the policy. A policy for threats should include electronic devices. The policy collected by the researcher did not find any language for threats that included electronic devices. Not all policies included threats. The data collected for harassment is specific and provides examples of threats that encompass many teen sexting incidents. The researcher did not find



any mention of cell phones or any other electronic devices in policy for defamation. It would be noteworthy for school districts to include defamation by electronic devices in their policy.

The five policies above for bullying, intimidation, threats, harassment and defamation regulate many of the aspects of teen sexting. Although not all 13 policies collected for this study included all of the above, a complete school policy to safeguard against teen sexting would include items in the above guidelines and make specific note to include electronic devices as means for violation.

Table 5

*Collection of School Policies for Student Guidelines for Searches and Due Process*

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Guidelines for Searches and Right to Due Process: The researcher revealed many school districts had policy for student rights that included Fourth Amendment rights and due process. The following information had the policies found for this research in this study.

1) Searches of Property: The researcher found guidelines for searches of property in 8 of the 13 school district policies collected. The following is a composite list of the variety of such guidelines.

- School officials have the right to search and seize property when there is reason to believe that some material or matter exists and is detrimental to the health, safety, and welfare of the student. Before initiating the search of a student the school official shall have

reasonable grounds based upon personal knowledge, observation, or specific reports for suspecting that the search will turn up evidence that the student has violated a law or school rule. (5)

- Students are entitled to maintain privacy of personal possessions within certain limits and are responsible for those personal possessions. A student may not bring onto school property any substance, object, or material prohibited by law or school board policy. School officials may inspect such items on school district property at any time with or without specific reason to do so. In addition, school officials may search a student's person or personal possessions, such as backpacks, purses, and cars parked on campus, if school officials have a reasonable suspicion that the search will reveal the presence of prohibited or illegal materials. (5)

- Any search will be reasonable in scope and not excessively intrusive on the student considering the age, sex of the student, and the nature of the infraction. (2)
- Searches may include a request to empty one's pockets or request to remove outer garments such as jackets or sweaters, but such a search will not include removal of other clothing by school officials. Strip searches are prohibited. (1)
- Searches may include but are not limited to the student's person,

desks, lockers, backpacks, automobiles, purses, cell phones, wallets, etc. (1)

2) Due Process: The researcher only found formal due process guidelines in 4 of the 13 school district student handbooks. The 4 different guidelines found for due process by the researcher are provided below.

- All students have the right to due process in matters of student discipline. The extent of the due process provided depends on the nature of the violation and the proposed disciplinary action to be taken. The student must always be treated with fundamental fairness, has a right to be fully informed about his or her alleged breach of behavior and must be provided with an opportunity to respond to such charges. (1)
- Students involved in any type of disciplinary problem must enter the discipline process at the preliminary investigative point where early guilt or innocence of charges is determined. Dependent upon the seriousness of the offense, the student must be accorded the following basic rights: (a) notice of the charges, nature of the evidence supporting the charges and the consequences if the charges are proven true; (b) notice of a right to a hearing at which time he or she may respond to the charges (c) a fair hearing, including the right to present witnesses and evidence; and (d) a fair and impartial decision. (1)

- In disciplinary cases, each student is entitled to due process. This means students must: (a) be informed of accusations against them; (b) must have the opportunity to accept or deny the accusations; (c) must have explained to them the factual basis for the accusations; and (d) must have a chance to present an alternative factual position if the accusation is denied. (1)
- Any student whose behavior may warrant suspension or expulsion under the *Student Code of Conduct* will be provided due process prior to the implementation of the suspension or expulsion. This is a legal safeguard that protects the rights of students and their parents and is constitutionally guaranteed. Due process steps include: (a) oral or written notice of the charges presented to the student; (b) an opportunity for the student to present the student's side of the story in an informal or formal hearing or meeting, as applicable; (c) the right to be represented by legal counsel or other party at the student's or parent's (s') expense; (d) the allowance, for safety purposes, for a student to be removed from the school prior to an informal hearing, with that hearing to follow as soon as practical; (e) adequate notification of a hearing to the student and parent; (f) an opportunity for a fair hearing; (g) notification to parents about the short-term suspension of the student; (h) more formal due process in long-term suspension and

expulsion proceedings; and (i) right to appeal the decision of a hearing officer regarding long-term suspensions or expulsions to the Governing Board. (1)

The significance of this finding is that five school districts' policy did not include search and seizure policy in their student handbook. School leaders should consider including and/or reviewing search and seizure policies in all student handbooks to be checked for consistent with the law.

In only 4 policies did the researcher find any mention of the right to due process. This does not necessarily mean that other districts did not have this policy; however, it was not mentioned in the student handbooks collected in this study. The other significance is that some of these policies are more specific than others and policy makers should be well versed in the law of due process when writing this policy. The constitutional rights of individuals assure the protection of due process of law. Therefore, a system of constitutional and legally sound procedures should be established and made available to the students.

#### Data Results of Curriculum Search

The researcher called 13 school districts, whose policies were analyzed above, to informally inquire with the curriculum and instruction department leaders about teen sexting awareness curricula. The researcher was able to gather information from the curriculum and instruction departments of 7 of the 13 school districts (53.8%); however, only 4 districts yielded curriculum insight for this study. Three of the seven school districts that the researcher was able to contact

reported having no type of teen sexting awareness curriculum, but agreed it would be valuable to include this curriculum for students. A variety of materials and instructional strategies are being implemented as curriculum to educate students about the risks of teen sexting in these 4 school districts. Upon reviewing these curriculum materials, several reoccurring objectives emerged. The data is organized below in Table 6. The data is intended to answer: *What teen sexting curriculum is being implemented in school districts near Hometown School District?*

Table 6

*Data Collection of Teen Sexting Curriculum*

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Materials: While phone interviewing the curriculum and instruction specialists from the 4 districts who had available curriculum, the researcher was able to collect the curriculum items used. The researcher collected three different types of instructional materials being used including computer generated lessons, videos, and instructional lessons. The researcher will describe each of these artifacts below.

i-SAFE curriculum: One school district subscribes to i-SAFE curriculum, a computer generated set of lessons for students to learn technology safety. This curriculum is used for kindergarten through eighth grade during instructional time for computers. The regular classroom teacher is in charge of administering the lessons. Each lesson is age appropriate and grade appropriate and builds upon previous lessons. Teen sexting is

introduced in lessons as early as sixth grade. Students complete the self-guided modules at their own pace. The researcher was able to view some of the i-SAFE curriculum lessons.

*The Dangers of Teen Sexting by Human Media Relations*: This is a 20 minute video appropriate for seventh through twelfth grade students. One school district is considering adding it to their curriculum on building healthy relationships. The instructors would act as program specialists for sexual awareness. At this time the school district teaches a sexual awareness program that includes mature relationships and teen sexting awareness. If the School Board approved, this video would be a tool to enhance student knowledge for teen sexting awareness. The researcher was able to view this video.

District created lesson for teen sexting awareness: Two school districts reported having a lesson on teen sexting awareness incorporated into their human growth and development curriculum. These two school districts developed their own lessons to be implemented when teaching concepts of understanding healthy relationships. One school district teaches this curriculum once each year in sixth, seventh and eighth grade classes. The other school district presents its lessons once each year to seventh grade students and ninth grades students, once each school year. Program specialists for sexual awareness are the teachers. This instruction is presented by certified teachers in a lecture presentation. Teen sexting is

one of many objectives in the curriculum that teaches the development of healthy relationships. Instructional time devoted to the teen sexting objective is approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The researcher was provided a copy of the lessons being used by these two school districts.

Other Resources: The search for curriculum through interviews resulted in recommendations to visit the following three websites as a resource for teen sexting awareness curriculum. The researcher visited these three websites to search for teen sexting awareness insight.

wiredsafety.org: This website has resources for educators, parents, children and teens about internet safety in general. The researcher could not find anything specific about teen sexting awareness.

netismartz.org: In reviewing this website, the researcher determined that this resource provides educators and administrators with netismartz.org interactive materials that can be used in their classrooms to accumulate more information about Internet safety and technology. The researcher reviewed this website and found it to be a good resource for building knowledge and creating lesson goals and objectives for educators about teen sexting awareness. The researcher printed this data and compiled it with the curriculum artifacts collected from other school districts.

getnetwise.org: The search of this website revealed no lessons for educators; however it was a good site for parents and children to learn about internet safety. When the researcher did a search of the site, it did



not reveal anything about sexting.

Lesson Objectives: The researcher made a composite list of reoccurring themes in teen sexting awareness lessons based on artifacts such as the i-SAFE curriculum, *The Dangers of Sexting* video, the two lesson plans from school districts, and the netsmartz.org website. The following list includes the lesson objectives and examples found in the curriculum that inform students about teen sexting dangers.

1) Define teen sexting

- a. Sexting is the act of sending sexually suggestive messages, [primarily] nude or sexually suggestive photos/videos electronically, primarily between mobile phones/devices.
- b. Sexting refers to youth sending sexually explicit messages or photos to their peers.
- c. Sexting is sending sexually suggestive messages, photos, or videos between cell phones or via the Internet.
- d. Sexting is taking and sending sexually explicit photos electronically (via cell phones, computers, e-mail, Facebook or Myspace). Sexually explicit means nude or part nude pictures of genitalia of your or someone else's, or pictures or videos of sex acts.

2) Explain simplicity of photo sharing with phones and computers

- a. Picture message is forwarding photos sent from one person on

to many people by means of a cell phone.

- b. Posting photos that may have originally been taken and sent by cell phone on social websites such as Facebook and MySpace.
- c. With the capabilities of smart phones, pictures messages can be immediately uploaded to the Internet and used in emails and on social networking sites.

3) Identify legal consequences for child pornography, cyber bullying, sexual harassment, intimidation, defamation for teens who take, send, or post teen sexting photos

- a. Minors involved in a sexting incident can be charged with possession of child pornography. Depending on the images, a minor could face arrest, probation, or jail time. Offenders can also be required to enter a national database of sex offenders for the rest of their lives.
- b. Federal and state law make it illegal to create, possess, or distribute sexually explicit photographs of minors. This is true even when minors are distributing pictures of themselves.
- c. Sometimes called "textual harassment," sending unwanted text or chat messages from your phone can be illegal, depending upon where you live and what your message says.
- d. If identified, anyone involved in taking, sending, saving, posting, or posing in the photos can be charged criminally. In

some states minors may be charged with a misdemeanor and adults with a felony if the sexting involves a minor.

4) Identify nonlegal (social and emotional) consequences for teens in the naked sexting photos

- a. What might seem like a harmless message might cause serious harm to someone else. When it comes to gossip and rumors caused by a teen sexting photo, there is no such thing as harmless.
- b. Teens could do serious harm to their reputation and friendships by sending a message that is not appropriate. Racy photos and language should have no place on a phone.
- c. Anything sent through cyberspace could potentially come back to haunt you. It is not uncommon for someone to intercept a message and share it with others. Imagining your message "going global" is a good way to make sure it is respectful and appropriate.
- d. When you share an intimate photo or video of yourself with a friend, they may later stop being a friend and share the photos or post the photos so everyone you know will be able to see or access them forever. Teens become very embarrassed and ashamed when these intimate photos are revealed.
- e. Victims of teen sexting photos can find themselves targets for

sexual harassment, threats or intimidation, and defamation.

The researcher found that teen sexting curriculum is being implemented as both technology safety and human growth and development curriculum. From the information collected, it seems that the curriculum is implemented primarily in the intermediate grades and is revisited in consecutive years. The range of time spent on the teen sexting curriculum ranges from approximately 10 minutes to 20 minutes. After visiting and investigating the three recommended websites for teen sexting resources, the researcher only found teen sexting relevant material at netsmartz.org. The lesson artifacts collected were used when compiling a composite list of teen sexting curriculum objectives and facts. This list will guide the researcher in creating a sample lesson plan explained in Chapter 5 and can be found as Appendix D.

### Data Results of Survey/Questionnaire

#### Summary of Survey/Questionnaire Participant Demographics

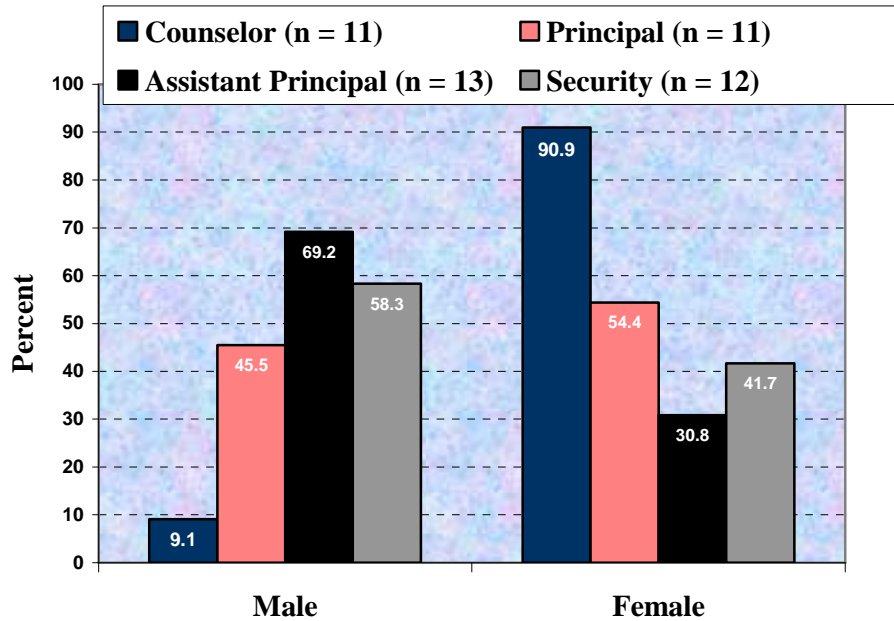
The survey/questionnaire was designed to collect the perceptions of junior high leaders regarding teen sexting issues on school campuses. A survey/questionnaire was used as the instrument to collect data. The survey was hand delivered by the researcher to each school site. Participants who were given the survey/questionnaire were educators actively working in a public school. Of the 52 participants that were invited to participate, 47 (90%) returned the survey/questionnaire. This was considered a high rate of completion. Males and females were approximately equally represented in the sample. Participants were

also approximately equally distributed across four job titles: counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security personnel. Table 7 shows the number and percent of participants by gender and job title. There was a significant relationship between gender and job title. Counselors were more likely to be female and assistant principals were more likely to be male. Table 7 is a summary of the participant demographics. Figure 1 is a bar graph that represents the participant demographics in a visual form. The results of the survey/questionnaire, organized by tables and figures in this section, contain the data that was used to answer two research questions: *To what extent is the problem of teen sexting perceived to be by school leaders on campus in Hometown School District?* And, *To what degree is there a need for curriculum about teen sexting in Hometown School District?*

Table 7

*Number and Percent of Participants by Gender and Job Title*

Gender	Job Title				Total
	Counselor	Principal	Assistant Principal	Security	
Male	1 (9.1%)	5 (45.5%)	9 (69.2%)	7 (58.3%)	22 (46.8)
Female	10 (90.9%)	6 (54.4%)	4 (30.8%)	5 (41.7%)	25 (53.2%)
Total	11 (100%)	11 (100%)	13 (100%)	12 (100%)	47 (100%)



**Figure 1. Job Title by Gender: Total Sample.**  
**Males (n = 22) and Females (n = 25).**

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 1: *Teen sexting is a problem on my campus*. Table 8 and Figure 2 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings prove over half of the participants *Agree* teen sexting is an issue on campus and another 10.6% *Strongly Agree*. The results show that 8.5% *Do Not Know* enough about the question to answer. About 25% of the respondents *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* to the question. This data from school leaders provide evidence from school leadership that teen sexting is affecting some students at school and may be an interference in the educational learning environment.

Table 9 and Figure 3 report the data of Survey Item 1 and they are organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response

categories of *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Significantly, more females responded that they *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* that teen sexting is an issue on campus. Over half of all male leaders also *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* that teen sexting is an issue on campus. The evidence shows that a school leader's gender may not affect whether or not they are aware of teen sexting issues on campus. It is possible to conclude from this data that female leaders perceive the issue of teen sexting to be more significant than male leaders.

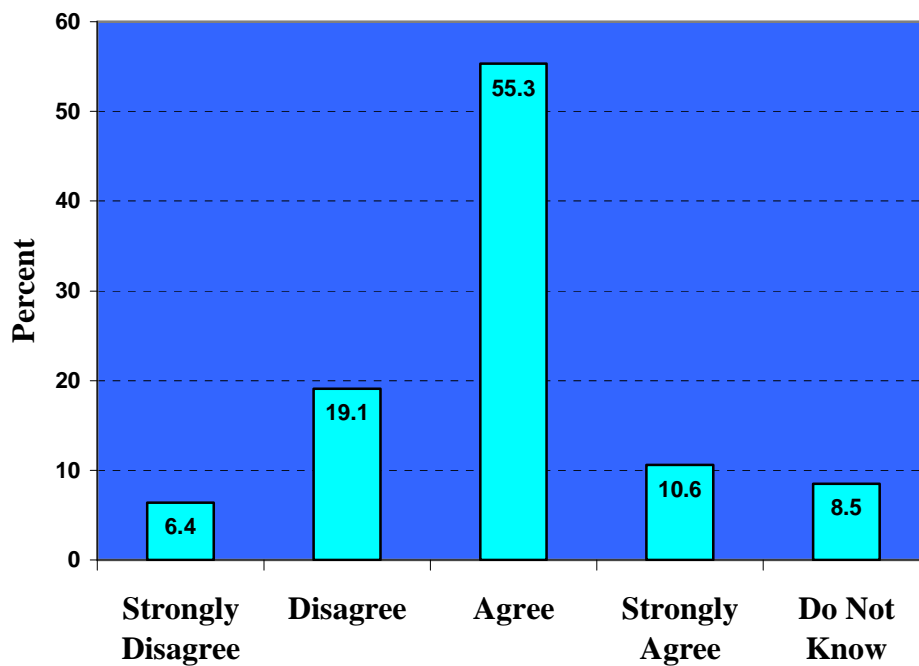
Table 10 and Figure 4 report the data of Survey Item 1 organized by the job title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Counselors reported to *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* more than the other respondents with different jobs. Over half of all school leaders chose to *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* when asked to evaluate if teen sexting is a problem on campus. It is possible from this evidence to conclude that counselors are dealing with the issues of teen sexting more than other leaders on campus.

Table 11 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 1 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and job title of participants. A noteworthy point is that respondents indicate the number of reported issues is low; however, they indicate it is happening much more than they are aware. The researcher discovered from these findings that teen sexting is occurring much more frequently than it comes to the attention of school leaders because leadership only gets involved when students or parents report an issue.

Table 8

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 1*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
1. Teen sexting is a problem on my campus	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Strongly Disagree	3	6.4
Disagree	9	19.1
Agree	26	55.3
Strongly Agree	5	10.6
Do Not Know	4	8.5



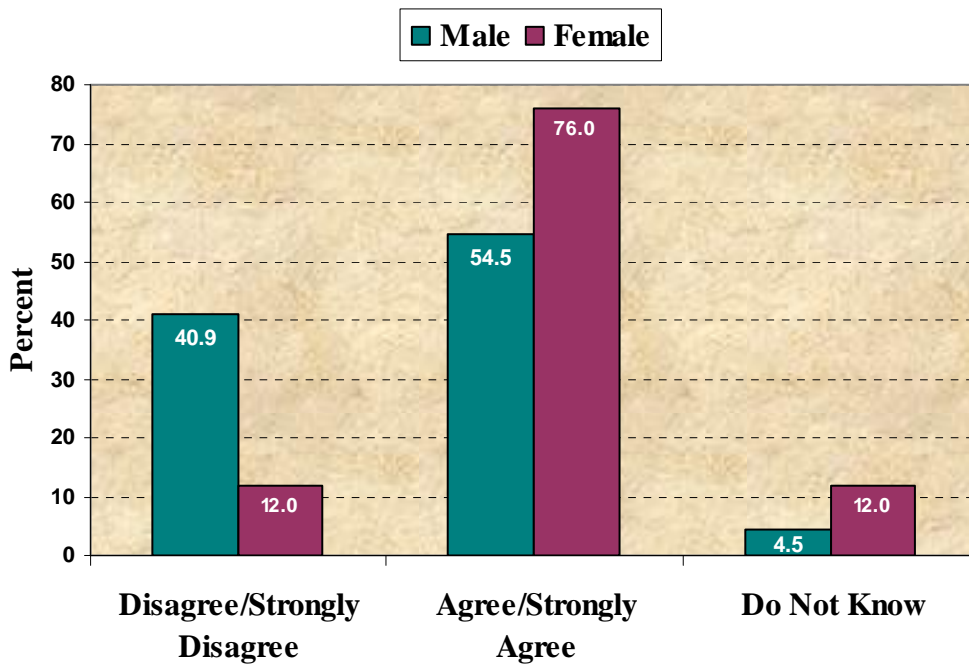
**Figure 2. Survey Item 1: Total Sample. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that Teen Sexting is a Problem on Campus. (n = 47)**



Table 9

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 1*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
1. Teen sexting is a problem on my campus	<i>n</i> (Male)	% (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	% (Female)
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	9	40.9	3	12.0
Agree/Strongly Agree	12	54.5	19	76.0
Do Not Know	1	4.5	3	12.0

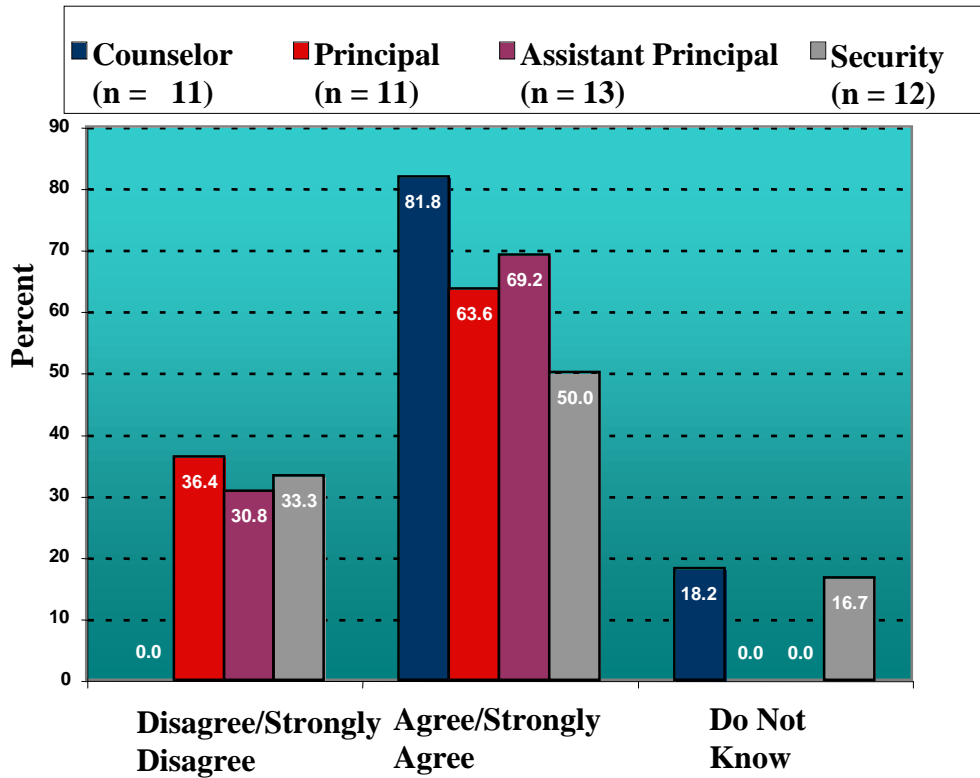


**Figure 3. Survey Item 1: By Gender. Percent of Who Agree or Disagree that Teen Sexting is a Problem on Campus. Males ( n = 22) and Females ( n = 25)**

Table 10

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 1*

Survey Item	<i>n=Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses</i>			
	<i>n (%) (Counselor)</i>	<i>n (%) (Principal)</i>	<i>n (%) (Assistant Principal)</i>	<i>n (%) (Security)</i>
1. Teen sexting is a problem on my campus				
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	0 (0.0)	4 (36.4)	4 (30.8)	4 (33.3)
Agree/Strongly Agree	9 (81.8)	7 (63.6)	9 (69.2)	6 (50.0)
Do Not Know	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)



**Figure 4. Survey Item 1: By Job Title. Percent of Who Agree or Disagree that Teen Sexting is a Problem on Campus.**

Table 11

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 1*

---

Survey Item 1: Teen sexting is a problem on my campus:

Male Counselor Responses:

No Responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

We have not had many incidents, but students tell me it is common.

Hasn't been a major concern, but is has occurred.

Several problems with students.

Just because it is not brought to my attention, I'm sure it occurs amongst our population of students.

Male Principal Responses:

No known incidents in 2009-2010.

It is an increasing problem at my school.

It is not a large, multiple student problem.

A few incidents have come to our attention.

We are not aware how widespread the issue might be.

Maybe once a month.

We haven't had very many issues.

Female Principal Responses:

No occurrences this school year 2009-10.

I have become aware of some sexting on campus.

No data available to me.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

We have had a small number of incidents on campus; however, one is too many.

Not a major concern on our campus.

It has happened a few times.

A few cases in the past few years.

We have not had any documented sexting issues on our campus this school year.

We have not dealt with a sexting issue.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

We have had very few incidents.

It is rarely brought to my attention.

Male Security Leader Responses:

I have heard of only one incident this year.

Five incidents in 4 years.

Very few incidents.

One incident in two years.

Female Security Leader Responses:

Not a daily problem.

One incident is too many.

I have not personally seen it.

I have not seen any sexting.

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 2: *Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on my campus*. Table 12 and Figure 5 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings prove that almost as many respondents *Disagree* as *Agree* that students have conflicts due to teen sexting. The results show that 17% *Do Not Know* enough about the question to answer. From this data, the researcher can speculate that school leaders are treating the symptoms caused by teen sexting when conflicts occur on campus, but not necessarily the issue of the teen sexting because it probably happened off campus at a former time.

Table 13 and Figure 6 report the data of Survey Item 2 and are organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* in order to show a greater comparison. Interestingly, almost equal amounts of males *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree* as females *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* that students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on campus. Female leaders reported *Do Not Know* more than male leaders. Based on this data, the researcher cannot make conclusions about gender roles of school leaders or whether the gender of a school leader matters in forming perspectives on the subject of teen sexting.

Table 14 and Figure 7 report the data of Survey Item 2 organized by the job title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater

comparison. Counselors reported to *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* more than the other respondents with different jobs. Assistant principals reported to *Disagree* and *Strongly Disagree* more than the other respondents with different jobs. Counselors reported *Do Not Know* most often when determining if students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on campus. The researcher cannot conclude from this data about leadership roles of school leaders, if the role of school leader matters in the perspectives of school leaders on the subject of teen sexting.

Table 15 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 2 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and job title of participants. The responses indicate that respondents only know if teen sexting causes student conflict on campus if they have first-hand involvement in the actual conflict. It is possible that certain leadership positions encounter more discipline issues involving teen sexting while other leadership positions deal more with the emotional conflicts surrounding teen sexting. Those leaders who have had the conflict brought to their attention report hurt feelings, embarrassment, and sometimes violence as retaliation. As reported in this data, many of the teen sexting incidents have occurred between boyfriends and girlfriends who have ended the relationship. Respondents also reported that teen sexting incidents often turn into issues of harassment and rumors, especially between girls.

Table 12

Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 2

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percent of Responses
2. Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on my campus	<i>n</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	2	4.3
Disagree	16	34.0
Agree	18	38.3
Strongly Agree	3	6.4
Do Not Know	8	17.0

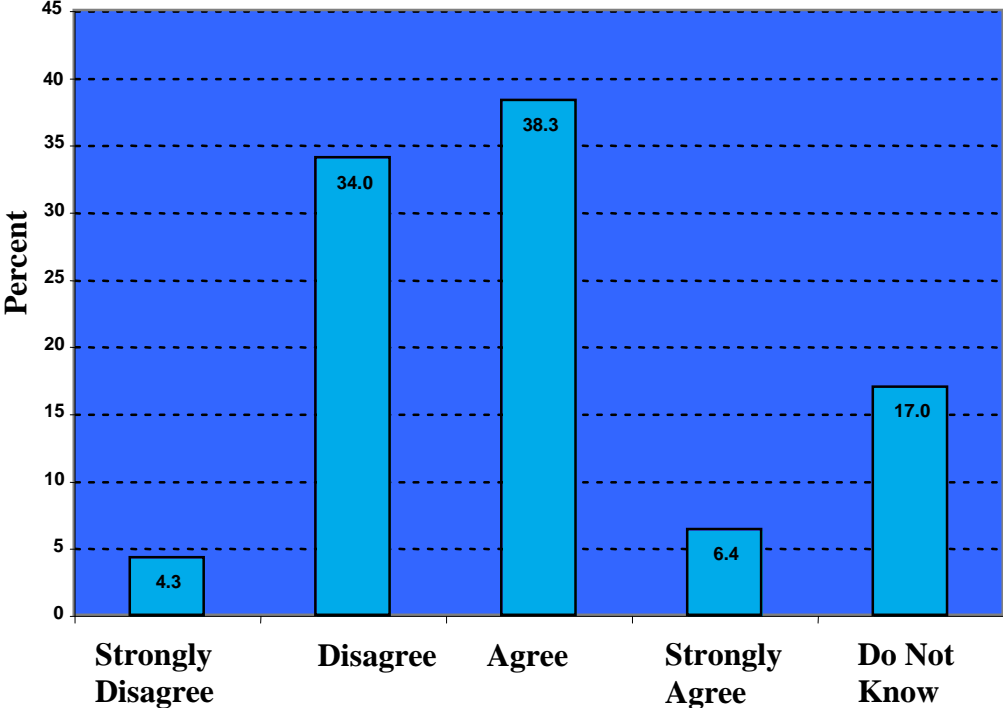
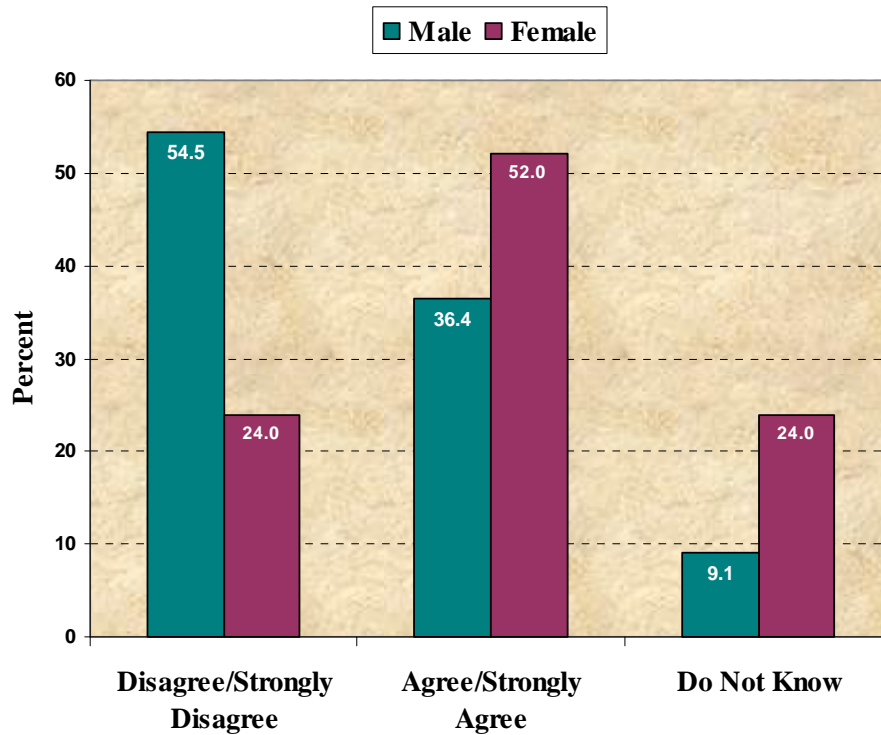


Figure 5. Survey Item 2: Total Sample. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that Student have Conflicts with Others due to Teen Sexting on Campus. (n = 47)

Table 13

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 2*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
2. Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on my campus	<i>n</i> (Male)	% (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	% (Female)
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	12	54.5	6	24.0
Agree/Strongly Agree	8	36.4	13	52.0
Do Not Know	2	9.1	6	24.0



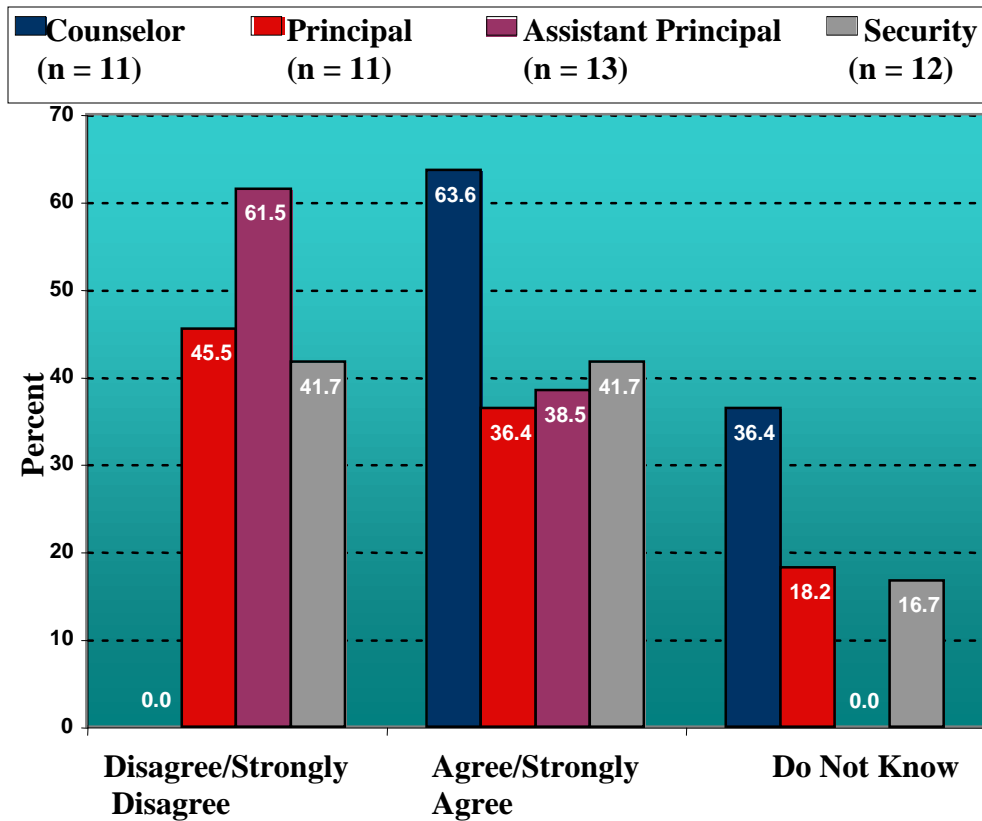
**Figure 6. Survey Item 2: By Gender. Percent who Agree or Disagree that Student have Conflicts with Others due to Teen Sexting on Campus. Males ( n = 22 ) and Females ( n = 25 )**



Table 14

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 2*

Survey Item	<i>n=Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses</i>			
	<i>n (%)</i> (Counselor)	<i>n (%)</i> (Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Assistant Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Security)
2. Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on my campus				
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	0 (0.0)	5 (45.5)	8 (61.5)	5 (41.7)
Agree/Strongly Agree	7 (63.6)	4 (36.4)	5 (38.5)	5 (41.7)
Do Not Know	4 (36.4)	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)



**Figure 7. Survey Item 2: By Job Title. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that Students have Conflicts with Others due to Teen Sexting on Campus.**

Table 15

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 2*

---

Survey Item 2: Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on may campus:

Male Counselor Responses:

No responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

Often students and parents are upset when these are received. Embarrassed students at times will lash out violently.

This has caused conflicts and hurt feelings. Students feel threatened.

Students seem to be shocked and surprised when they send a “confidential message” and it is “shared” with others.

Students send information regarding others students as harassment.

It is used for harassment purposes especially by girls who are jealous. They make up things about the girls.

Male Principal Responses:

I am aware of one situation where it caused conflict.

Sometimes conflict on campus occurs.

Female Principal Responses:

No evidence of such.

Students don't see it as a problem.

No data available to me.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Not really. Just embarrassment.

Student conflict is usually the reason teen sexting comes to our attention.

Rarely has it spawned conflicts.

Usually the subject of the picture is quite upset that others have seen the pictures.

Sexting issues are usually boyfriend-girlfriend.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

When this issue arises, there seems to be someone upset or affected in one way or another.

Male Security Leader Responses:

I have had student fights because people find out.

Female Security Leader Responses:

I have dealt with no conflict due to sexting.

We have had issues with ex-boyfriends sharing old photos (nude) of ex-girl friends.

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 3: *Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting awareness curriculum*. Table 16 and Figure 8 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. An overwhelmingly positive response: 44.7% of all school leaders responded to *Strongly Agree* and 38.3% responded to *Agree* when asked if teen sexting awareness curriculum would benefit students. This response leads

the researcher to wonder why so many leaders agreed to teen sexting curriculum when many leaders do not report conflict on campus due to teen sexting, as noted in Survey Item 2. It is possible that school leaders are aware that teens are sexting more than official incidents are reported and more often than the school becomes involved when it has escalated to a serious issue.

Table 17 and Figure 9 report the data of Survey Item 2 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Fascinatingly, almost all female participants reported to *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* when asked if students would benefit from teen sexting curriculum on campus. A large amount of male leaders responded to *Agree* or *Strongly Agree*. This data favorably represents that a substantial amount of female and male school leaders believe teen sexting curriculum would be beneficial in Hometown School District. This is relevant data in favor of teen sexting awareness curriculum for the school board, policy makers, and curriculum specialists of Hometown School District.

Table 18 and Figure 10 report the data of Survey Item 3 as organized by the Job Title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. All counselors and principals provided an equal percentage (90.9%) of responses for *Agree* and *Strongly Agree* while no counselors or principals reported to *Disagree* or *Strongly Disagree*. Assistant principals and security leaders were also more likely to report *Agree/Strongly Agree* to the students

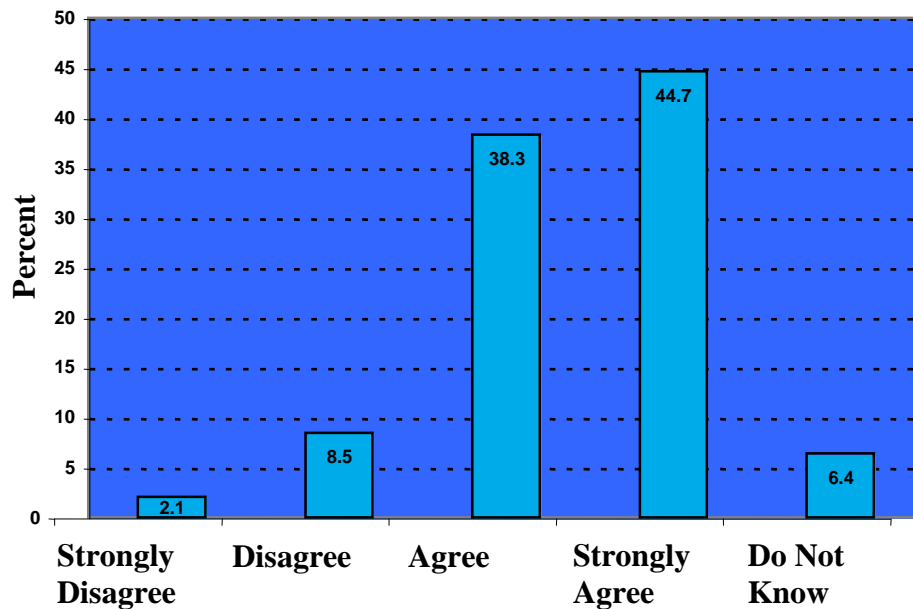
benefiting from a teen sexting curriculum. Again, this is relevant data in favor of teen sexting awareness curriculum for the school board, policy makers, and curriculum specialists of Hometown School District.

Table 19 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 3 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. An outstanding number of respondents elaborated that students are not aware of the legal and nonlegal consequences of teen sexting. Most of the comments supported the data that the respondents *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* to the benefits a teen sexting curriculum may bring. At least three of the respondents feel that teen sexting would get worse if curriculum was presented. One respondent felt teen sexting is a parenting issue. This data would influence lesson writing indicating that objectives for teen sexting awareness and prevention should include both legal and nonlegal consequences of teen sexting for students.

Table 16

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 3*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
3. Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting awareness curriculum	<i>n</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.1
Disagree	4	8.5
Agree	18	38.3
Strongly Agree	21	44.7
Do Not Know	3	6.4

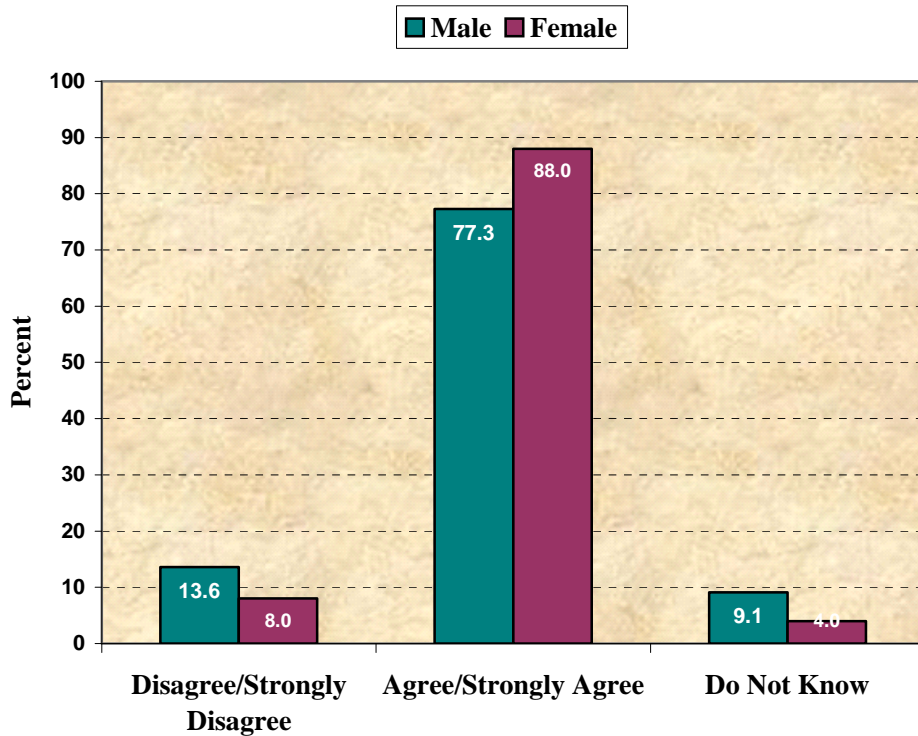


**Figure 8. Survey Item 3: Total Sample. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that Students at Their School Would Benefit from a Teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum. (n = 47)**

Table 17

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 3*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
3. Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting awareness curriculum	<i>n</i> (Male)	% (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	% (Female)
Disagree /Strongly Disagree	3	13.6	2	8.0
Agree/Strongly Agree	17	77.3	22	88.0
Do Not Know	2	9.1	1	4.0

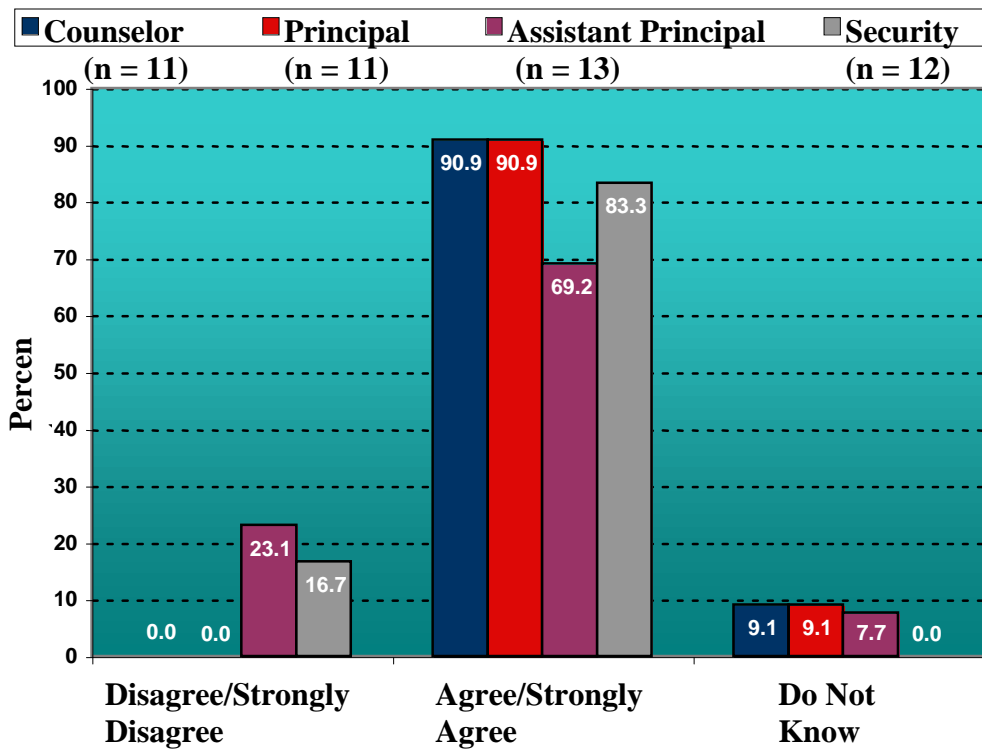


**Figure 9. Survey Item 3: By Gender. Percent who Agree or Disagree that Students at their School Would Benefit from a Teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum. Males (n = 22) and Females (n = 25)**

Table 18

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 3*

Survey Item	<i>n</i> =Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses			
	<i>n</i> (%) (Counselor)	<i>n</i> (%) (Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Assistant Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Security)
3. Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting awareness curriculum				
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (23.1)	2 (16.7)
Agree/Strongly Agree	10 (90.9)	10 (90.9)	9 (69.2)	10 (83.3)
Do Not Know	1 (9.1)	1 (9.1)	1 (7.7)	0 (0.0)



**Figure 10. Survey Item 3: By Job Title. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that Students at Their School Would benefit from a teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum.**



Table 19

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 3*

---

Survey Item 3: Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting

awareness curriculum:

Male Counselor Responses:

No Responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

I believe that many students do not understand why it is wrong or a problem to participate in these activities.

Students have received texts and forwarded them thinking it is not breaking the law.

We need to educate students about their choices.

Students would benefit from information regarding laws and consequences.

Students don't realize forwarding these messages to other students is illegal.

I do not believe that our students are aware of harm it can cause.

Students do not understand legal implications of forwarding such texts. Students think pictures will go away.

Since this is new technology, students are not aware of long term consequences.

Male Principal Responses:

I believe students should be informed of the consequences both District and civil.

Each case is a serious problem legally and socially for the students involved.

Female Principal Responses:

This is really a parenting issue.

Definitely from a legal standpoint.

The legal issue is what concerns me.

Students don't realize what they think is innocent text is not.

With the use of cell phone cameras the laws are generally unknown to students.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

The more education they can get on this matter the better.

The students don't see it as a "big deal."

Awareness of consequences is important.

Anything more than 20 minutes of curriculum would be a waste of instructional time. Most students ignore the risks, but they are aware of them.

Students said they thought sexting was allowed since they were all minors and not over 18.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

I am concerned that the problem would get worse because students would be more aware of the issue.

Drawing attention to it would only give others the idea to try it.

Male Security Leader Responses:

Letting the students know of the consequences of sexting would help students avoid sexting.

Students would benefit a lot from this awareness.

I feel this would just create more problems.

Being proactive in any area that ensures children safety is beneficial.

Female Security Leader Responses:

A proactive approach is better than providing students with no information.

They are not aware of the consequences involved in the future.

Students need to be made aware of possible consequences.

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 4: *The District should develop and implement a teen sexting awareness curriculum*. Table 20 and Figure 11 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show an overwhelmingly positive response with 46.8% of all school leaders responding *Agree* and 29.8% reporting to *Strongly Agree* that the District should develop and implement a teen sexting awareness curriculum. This response leads the researcher to recommend that Hometown School District that school leaders would support a teen sexting awareness curriculum at their schools.

Table 21 and Figure 12 report the data of Survey Item 4 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Both males and females were likely to respond with *Agree* or *Strongly Agree* to District development and implementation of teen sexting awareness curriculum. The data shows the gender of the leader did not affect whether or not the educational leader supported a teen sexting awareness and prevention curriculum.

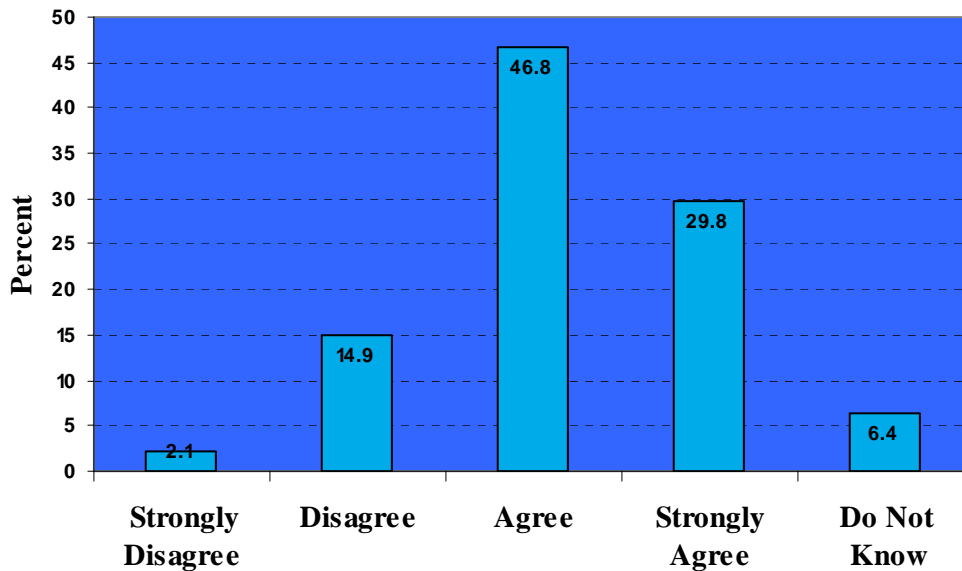
Table 22 and Figure 13 report the data of Survey Item 4 and are organized by the job title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Counselors reported the most to *Agree* and *Strongly Agree*. Principals, assistant principals, and security leaders were most likely to report *Agree* and *Strongly Agree*. The results show Hometown School District leaders on junior high campuses share the opinion that they should adopt a teen sexting awareness and prevention curriculum if the District were to create it.

Table 23 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 4 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. Overall, the written responses were over all in support of a District curriculum for teen sexting awareness and prevention. Several respondents expressed support, urgency and advice to aide in the development and implementation of teen sexting curricula. Two responses included suggestion for implementation in the human sexuality and development program. Others were more skeptical to the effectiveness of such programs based on instructional time, money, or student participation.

Table 20

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 4*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
4. The District should develop and implement a teen sexting awareness curriculum	<i>n</i>	%
Strongly Disagree	1	2.1
Disagree	7	14.9
Agree	22	46.8
Strongly Agree	14	29.8
Do Not Know	3	6.4

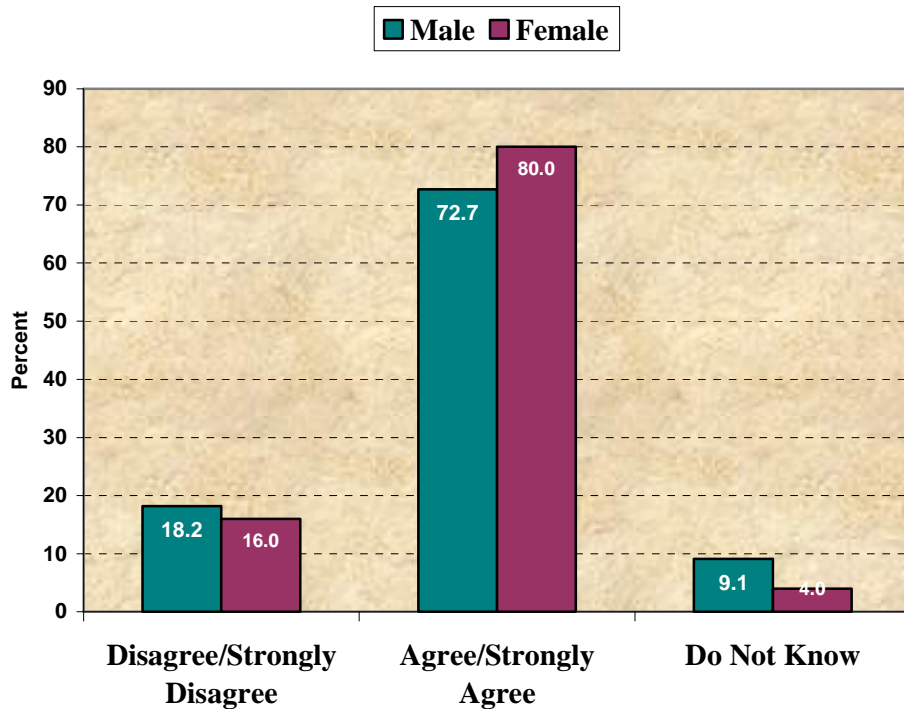


**Figure 11. Survey Item 4: Total Sample. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that the District Should Develop and Implement a Teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum. (n = 47)**

Table 21

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 4*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
4. The District should develop and implement a teen sexting awareness curriculum	<i>n</i> (Male)	% (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	% (Female)
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	4	18.2	4	16.0
Agree/Strongly Agree	16	72.7	20	80.0
Do Not Know	2	9.1	1	4.0



**Figure 12. Survey Item 4: By Gender. Percent who Agree or Disagree that the District Should Develop and Implement a Teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum. Males (n = 22) and Females (n = 25)**

Table 22

Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 4

Survey Item	<i>n</i> =Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses			
	<i>n</i> (%) (Counselor)	<i>n</i> (%) (Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Assistant Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Security)
4. The District should develop and implement a teen sexting awareness curriculum				
Disagree/Strongly Disagree	1 (9.1)	1 (9.1)	3 (23.1)	3 (25.0)
Agree/Strongly Agree	10 (90.9)	8 (72.7)	9 (69.2)	9 (75.0)
Do Not Know	0 (0.0)	2 (18.2)	1 (33.3)	0 (0.0)

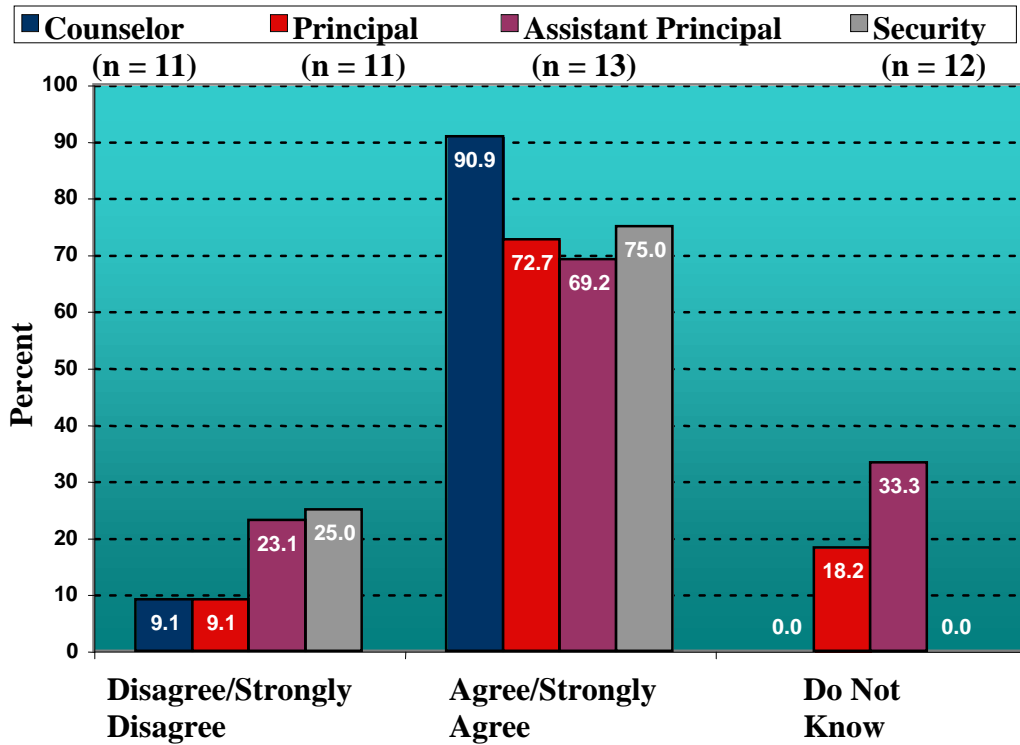


Figure 13. Survey Item 4: By Job Title. Percent of Respondents Who Agree or Disagree that The District Should Develop and Implement a Teen Sexting Awareness Curriculum.

Table 23

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 4*

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Survey Item 4: The school district should develop and implement sexting

awareness curriculum:

Male Counselor Responses:

I am well aware of the national statistics regarding its advent amongst teens, and feel an awareness program would be very advantageous.

Female Counselor Responses:

Technology has created many new issues that we should urgently address.

I am skeptical of the effectiveness.

It would be helpful.

It could be included in the sex education program.

Education is great but I am not certain that our students will put preventative measures to bear.

I think it needs to be addressed.

Male Principal Responses:

Some education is necessary.

Female Principal Responses:

Only if it is a small part of the curriculum.

From a legal standpoint.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Education needed on this matter.



Students may not know what sexting is. They may not know the ramifications of sexting.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

I think it depends on the school and their individual issues.

Male Security Leader Responses:

The school district should include a teen sexting awareness curriculum.

This would just cost more money.

We need all instructional time devoted to the state mandated standards.

Female Security Leader Responses:

I strongly think it should be part of the sex education program.

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 5: *In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, school/district disciplinary action follows.* Table 24 and Figure 14 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show that less than half of the participants (42%) responded *Every Time*. A fairly large number of respondents (21.3%) reported that they *Do Not Know* if school or district disciplinary action follows a teen sexting incident. This information shows that leadership perspectives of school or district discipline greatly vary when it comes to issues of teen sexting. This would lead the researcher to encourage Hometown School District to review school policy guidelines for teen sexting incidents and make adjustments if inconsistencies or holes are present.

Table 25 and Figure 15 report the data of Survey Item 5 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Male responses of *Every Time* greatly outweighed female responses of *Every Time* for the survey question that asked to evaluate the frequency with which disciplinary action followed a teen sexting incident. An equal number of females reported *Every Time* (28%) as *Do Not Know* (28%). The gender of the school leader does indicate there is a difference in perspective of discipline action when teen sexting occurs. The researcher would recommend that all leaders in Hometown School District be familiar with the procedures for discipline.

Table 26 and Figure 16 report the data of Survey Item 5 organized by job title of the participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Counselors reported equal responses (36.4%) to *Most of the Time* and *Do Not Know*. Principals and assistant principals, were most likely to report *Every Time*. Security leaders reported equal responses of (33.3%) to *Every Time* and to *Do Not Know*. The researcher finds this data about perception of school or district disciplinary action varies significantly among different school leaders and within school leader groups. Again, the researcher would suggest to Hometown School District that discipline procedures be reviewed and that school leaders to be informed of the procedures to follow for teen sexting issues. School leaders

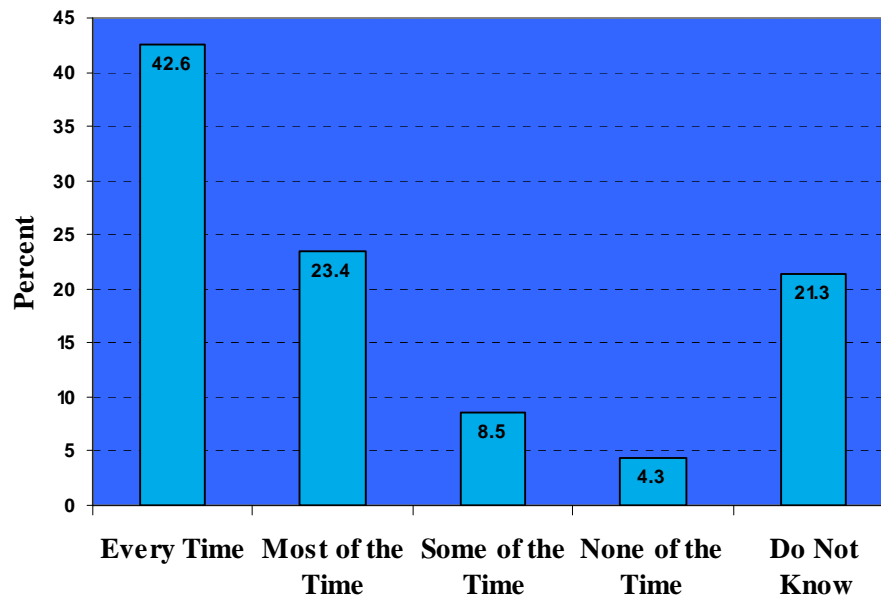
should be aware of their roles in the process of handling students in teen sexting conflict situations.

Table 27 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 5 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. The written responses were mixed as to knowing and understanding discipline when teen sexting occurs on campus. The respondents have mixed comments as to who should handle the discipline (example: parents, student resource officer SRO, counselors, school leaders or police). The respondents reported that the incidents are time consuming and handled on a case-by-case situation. The discipline depends on the severity of the sexting and is based on circumstance and details. In order to follow disciplinary procedures in teen sexting issues, there must be evidence to investigate. The written responses may indicate that the different school leaders have different roles in the discipline process.

Table 24

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 5*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
5. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, school/district disciplinary action follows	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Every Time	20	42.6
Most of the Time	11	23.4
Some of the Time	4	8.5
None of the Time	2	4.3
Do Not Know	10	21.3

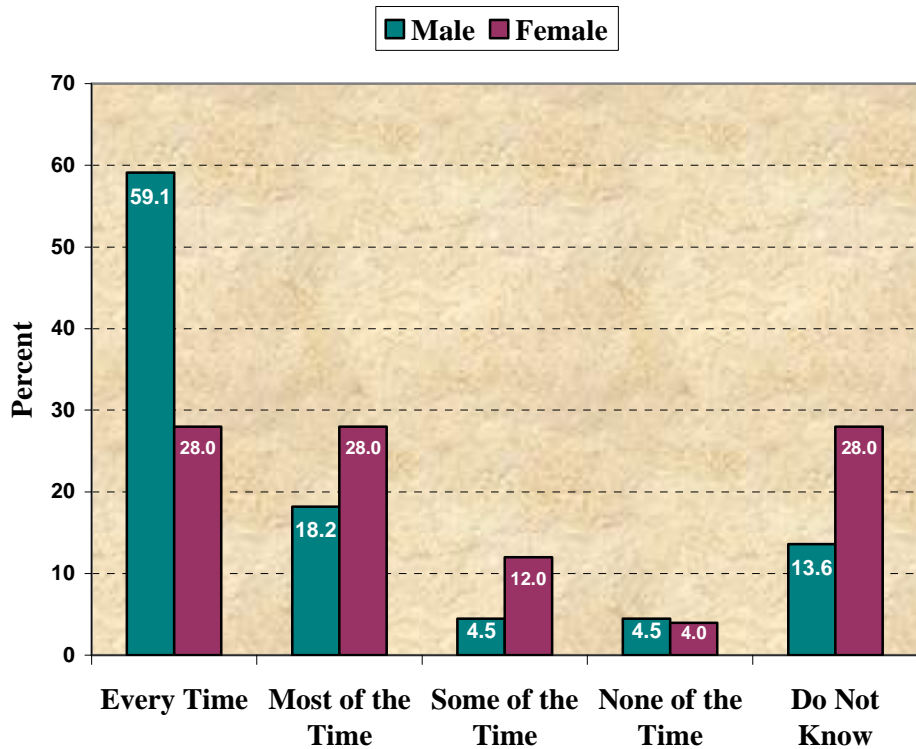


**Figure 14 Survey Item 5: Total Sample. Percent of Time School/District Disciplinary Action Follows a Teen Sexting Incident on Campus. (n = 47)**

Table 25

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 5*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
5. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, school/district disciplinary action follows	<i>n</i> (Male)	<i>%</i> (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	<i>%</i> (Female)
Every Time	13	59.1	7	28.0
Most of the Time	4	18.2	7	28.0
Some of the Time	1	4.5	3	12.0
None of the Time	1	4.5	1	4.0
Do Not Know	3	13.6	7	28.0



**Figure 15. Survey Item 5: By Gender. Percent who Perceive that School/District Disciplinary Action Follows a Student Sexting Incident on Campus. Males (n = 22) and Females (n = 25)**

Table 26

Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 5

Survey Item	<i>n</i> =Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses				
	Survey Item				
5. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, school/district disciplinary action follows	<i>n</i> (%) (Counselor)	<i>n</i> (%) (Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Assistant Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Security)	
	Every Time	1 (9.1)	7 (63.6)	8 (61.5)	4 (33.3)
	Most of the Time	4 (36.4)	4 (36.4)	3 (23.1)	0 (0.0)
	Some of the Time	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)
	None of the Time	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)
	Do Not Know	4 (36.4)	0 (0.0)	2 (15.4)	4 (33.3)

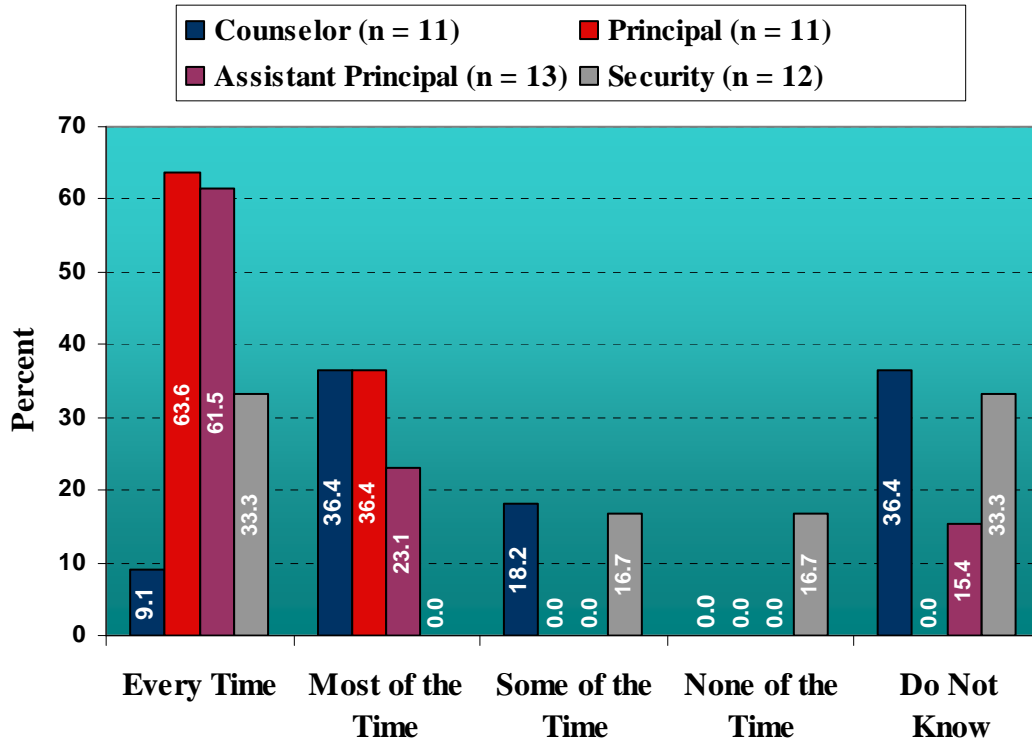


Figure 16. Survey Item 5: By Job Title. Percent of Respondents Who Perceive that School/District Disciplinary Action Follows a Teen Sexting Incident on Campus.

Table 27

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 5*

---

Survey Item 5: When a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, school/district disciplinary action follows:

Male Counselor Responses:

No Responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

It is often quite confusing how these issues should be handled because the incidents create strong emotions and embarrassment.

Situations are passed on to the SRO and not always a discipline action by the school.

We address concerns that occur on campus, but because cell phones are personal and parent responsibility we advise parents to follow up with police if it continues.

Not sure if this is taken seriously.

We have to determine if it is a home problem or a community problem.

The incidents take a lot of time by security and administration.

Male Principal Responses:

Administration will take away student cell phone and parent must pick it up.

We work on all situations that come to our attention.

School disciplines for harassment, disruption and illegal.

Disciplinary consequences should be consistent.

Female Principal Responses:

Only when an incident is brought to our attention.

If the incident is caught.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Consequences depend on the severity of the sexting.

Depends on circumstance and details.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

Depends on the individual incident and overall involvement.

The situation is usually turned over to the counselors who meet with the students involved and call parents.

Male Security Leader Responses:

Depends on the situation, who, what, when and why.

Only if we have proof and it was done on school grounds.

Female Security Leader Responses:

Only if we know about it.

If there is proof.

Below are tables and figures designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 6: *In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, legal disciplinary action follows.* Table 28 and Figure 17 report the data for the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show that the most common responses were *Some of the Time* and *Do Not Know*. School leaders and students should be aware of the legal action procedures that take place for



teen sexting incidents. Hometown School District can inform leaders of these consequences.

Table 29 and Figure 18 report the data of Survey Item 6 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Female response answers (48%) of *Do Not Know* greatly out weighed male response answers (13%). Male response answers (45.5%) for *Some of the Time* greatly out weighed female response answers (24%). Again, the researcher finds this data to indicate that knowledge of legal discipline for teen sexting is mixed amongst school leaders.

Table 30 and Figure 19 report the data of Survey Item 6 organized by the Job Title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Counselors were the group to most often report *Do Not Know*. Principals and assistant principals were most likely to report *Some of the Time*. The researcher finds this data indicates there is a significantly varied perception of legal disciplinary action among different school leaders and within school leader groups.

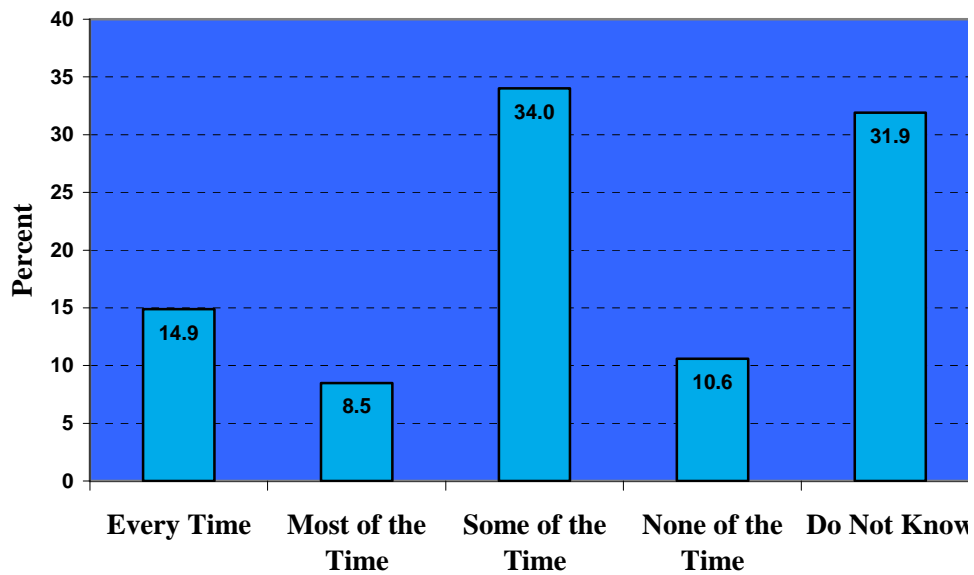
Table 31 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 6 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. The written responses were mixed regarding the knowledge and understanding of discipline when teen sexting occurs on campus. The respondents have mixed comments as to who should handle the discipline (examples: SRO, school leaders

or police). School leaders do not report to know exactly what happens for legal disciplinary action to be necessary in a teen sexting situation. Based on the results of these expressed comments from school leaders, it is recommended that Hometown School District create procedures to handle teen sexting issues according to school policy and law.

Table 28

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 6*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
6. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, legal disciplinary action follows	<i>n</i>	%
Every Time	7	14.9
Most of the Time	4	8.5
Some of the Time	16	34.0
None of the Time	5	10.6
Do Not Know	15	31.9

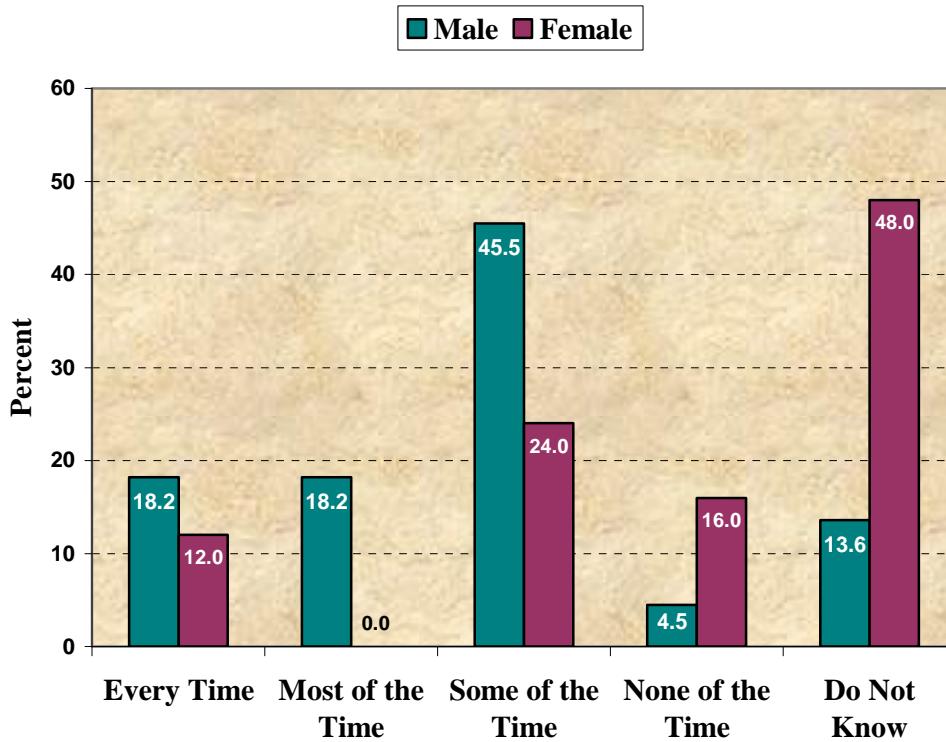


**Figure 17. Survey Item 6: Total Sample. Percent of Time Legal Disciplinary Action Follows a Teen Sexting Incident on Campus. (n = 47)**

Table 29

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 6*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
6. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, legal disciplinary action follows	<i>n</i> (Male)	<i>%</i> (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	<i>%</i> (Female)
Every Time	4	18.2	3	12.0
Most of the Time	4	18.2	0	0.0
Some of the Time	10	45.5	6	24.0
None of the Time	1	4.5	4	16.0
Do Not Know	3	13.6	12	48.0

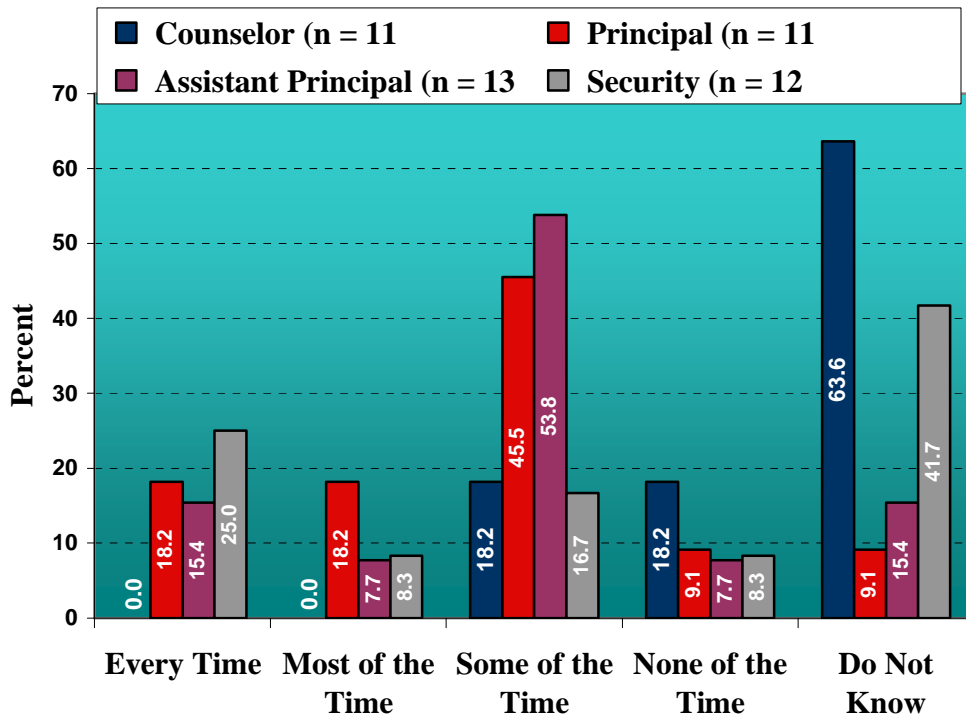


**Figure 18. Survey Item 6: By Gender. Percent who Perceive that Legal/ Disciplinary Action Follows a Teen Sexting Incident on Campus. Males (n = 22) and Females (n = 25)**

Table 30

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 6*

Survey Item	<i>n</i> =Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses			
	<i>n</i> (%) (Counselor)	<i>n</i> (%) (Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Assistant Principal)	<i>n</i> (%) (Security)
6. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, legal disciplinary action follows				
Every Time	0 (0.0)	2 (18.2)	2 (15.4)	3 (25.0)
Most of the Time	0 (0.0)	2 (18.2)	1 (7.7)	1 (8.3)
Some of the Time	2 (18.2)	5 (45.5)	7 (53.8)	2 (16.7)
None of the Time	2 (18.2)	1 (9.1)	1 (7.7)	1 (8.3)
Do Not Know	7 (63.6)	1 (9.1)	2 (15.4)	5 (41.7)



**Figure 19. Survey Item 6: By Job Title. Percent of Respondents Who Perceive that Legal Disciplinary Action Follows a Teen Sexting Incident on Campus.**

Table 31

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 6*

---

Survey Item 6: When a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, legal disciplinary action follows:

Male Counselor Responses:

No responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

We usually handle incidents internally.

After handing the case to the SRO, we are not aware of the follow up actions taken.

None I am aware of.

Male Principal Responses:

If evidence of sexting is available, the SRO for campus will be contacted.

It depends on the situation and if laws were violated.

Situation is turned over to the SRO.

Female Principal Responses:

It is a crime, police involvement but seldom comes anything of substance.

According to the law.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Depends on circumstances.

Depends on who it was sent to.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

Depends on the individual incident and overall involvement.

Male Security Leader Responses:

We notify the police department, and then it is up to them.

We report all incidents to the SRO.

We have had one case where the local police department investigated.

Female Security Leader Responses:

If there is proof.

Below are tables and a figure designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 7: *In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves*. Table 32 and Figure 20 report the data for the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show that the most common teen sexting is a *Combination* of text, photo, and video.

Table 33 reports the data of Survey Item 7 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Females and males overwhelmingly agree teen sexting is a *Combination* of text, photo, and video. A small percentage (22.7%) of males felt it is *Photo Only*. A small percent of females (16%) and males (13.6%) felt they *Do Not Know* the primary type of teen sexting material sent.

Table 34 reports the data of Survey Item 7 organized by the job title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison.

A fairly even distribution of answers from all school leaders indicated a *Combination* of teen sexting items such as text, photo, and video occur. School leaders need to be in accordance with the law when evidence of teen sexting occurs whether the sexting is photos or videos.

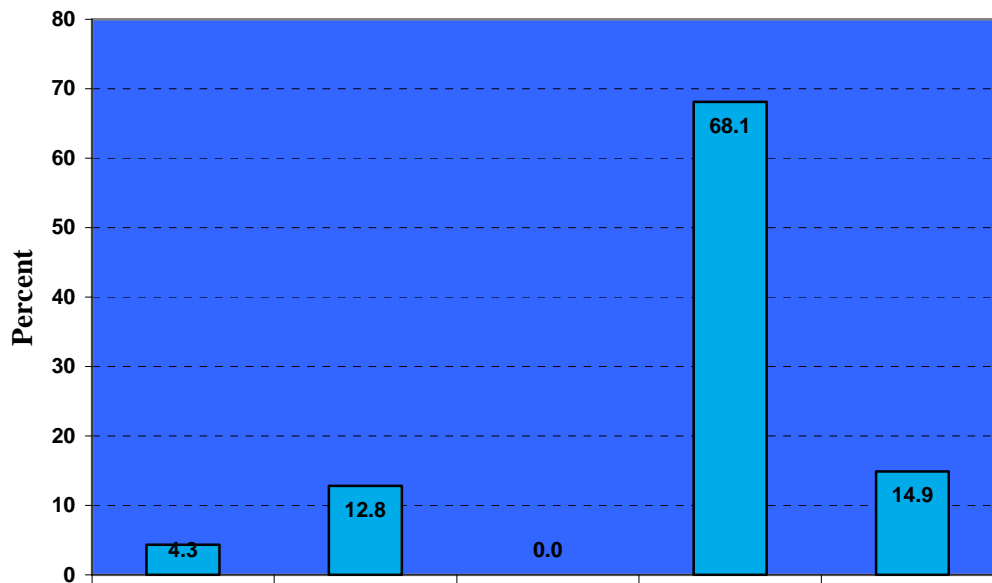
Table 35 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 7 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. The written responses support the data that leaders reported that a *Combination* of types of teen sexting occurs including texts, pictures and/or videos. One of the respondents elaborated that some of the images have been of girls and another respondent explained that the content of teen sexting had been of boys. This data is valuable to know for Hometown school district for the purpose of creating curriculum and instruction.



Table 32

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 7*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
7. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves	<i>n</i>	%
Text Only	2	4.3
Photo Only	6	12.8
Video Only	0	0.0
Combination of the Above	32	68.1
Do Not Know	7	14.9



**Text Only   Photo Only   Video Only   Combination   Do Not Know**  
**Figure 20. Survey Item 7: Total Sample. The Percent of Media Primarily Used When Teen Sexting Incidents Occur on Campus. (n = 47)**

Table 33

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 7*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
7. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves	<i>n</i> (Male)	<i>%</i> (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	<i>%</i> (Female)
Text Only	0	0.0	2	8.0
Photo Only	5	22.7	1	4.0
Video Only	0	0.0	0	0.0
Combination of the Above	14	63.6	18	72.0
Do Not Know	3	13.6	4	16.0

Table 34

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 7*

Survey Item	<i>n=Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses</i>			
7. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves	<i>n (%)</i> (Counselor)	<i>n (%)</i> (Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Assistant Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Security)
Text Only	1 (9.1)	0 (0.0)	1 (7.7)	0 (0.0)
Photo Only	0 (0.0)	1 (9.1)	3 (23.1)	2 (16.7)
Video Only	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Combination of the Above	7 (63.6)	8 (72.7)	9 (69.2)	8 (66.7)
Do Not Know	3 (27.3)	2 (18.2)	0 (0.0)	2 (16.7)

Table 35

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 7*

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Survey Item 7: When teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves:

Male Counselor Responses:

No Responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

Mostly nude photos.

Male Principal Responses:

Texts and photos.

Photos and texts together.

Female Principal Responses:

Very little data available to me

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Text and photo, no video.

In a recent discussion with a colleague, most of the issues have been males taking pictures of themselves and sending them. In my experience, it has mostly been females taking pictures of themselves and sending them.

I have dealt with students taking naked pictures of themselves and sending them to one another.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

No responses.

Male Security Leader Responses:

Photo and text.

Girls sending pictures of themselves in underwear.

Female Security Leader Responses:

All three have occurred.

Students know how to use all of this technology.

Below are tables and a figure designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 8: *In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occurs on campus, the student involved are mostly*. Table 36 and Figure 21 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show that the most common response was a *Combination* of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students are involved in the teen sexting incidents. About 25% of the respondents *Do Not Know* the grades of the students that are involved with teen sexting on campus. This data is helpful for policymakers and curriculum writers when making decisions about teen sexting for Hometown School District.

Table 37 reports the data of Survey Item 8 organized by the gender of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. Female and males overwhelmingly agree that teen sexting is a *Combination* of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students on campus. A small percentage (27.3%) of males and females (4%) felt that *Eighth Grade Students* are involved in the incidents on campus. A small percentage of females (24%) and males (27.3%) felt

they *Do Not Know* the primary grades of students involved in teen sexting incidents on their campus. The researcher did not find that the gender of a school leader has any significance to his or her perspectives on teen sexting from this data.

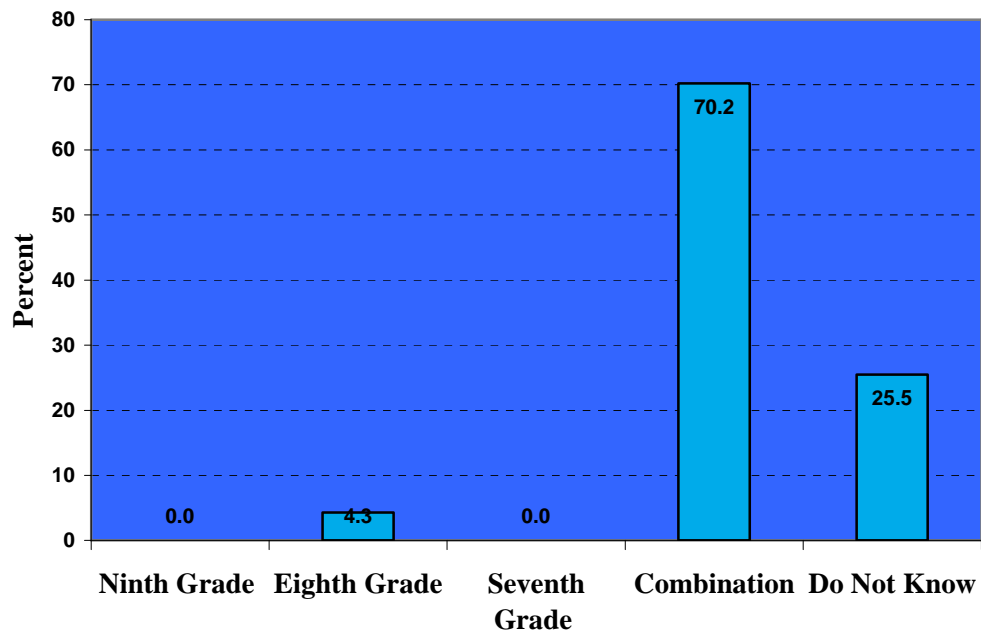
Table 38 reports the data of Survey Item 8 organized by the job title of participants. The researcher combined the response categories of *Disagree* with *Strongly Disagree* and *Agree* with *Strongly Agree* to show a greater comparison. A fairly even distribution of answers from all school leaders indicated a *Combination* of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students are involved in incidents of teen sexting on campus. The experiences of school leaders dealing with different grade levels of students may have to do with job assignments.

Table 39 includes the written response data results for Survey Item 8 from the survey/questionnaire organized by the gender and the job title of participants. The written responses support the data that a *Combination* of students including seventh, eighth, and ninth graders are involved. One of the respondents elaborated that his experience has been with eight and ninth graders. Again, school leaders are oftentimes assigned the responsibility of working with students from only one grade level. This may account for certain responses from leaders.

Table 36

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 8*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
8. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the students involved are mostly	<i>n</i>	%
Ninth Grade Students	0	0.0
Eighth Grade Students	2	4.3
Seventh Grade Students	0	0.0
Combination of the Above	33	70.2
Do Not Know	12	25.5



**Figure 21. Survey Item 8: Total Sample. Percent of Students Involved in Teen Sexting Incidents on Campus in Grades 7 to 9. (n = 47)**

Table 37

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Gender: Item 8*

Survey Item	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Percentage of Responses</i>
8. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the students involved are mostly	<i>n</i> (Male)	<i>%</i> (Male)	<i>n</i> (Female)	<i>%</i> (Female)
9th Grade Students	0	0.0	0	0.0
8th Grade Students	1	4.5	1	4.0
7th Grade Students	0	0.0	0	0.0
Combination of the Above	15	68.2	18	72.0
Do Not Know	6	27.3	6	24.0

Table 38

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire by Job Title: Item 8*

Survey Item	<i>n=Number of Responses (%)Percentage of Responses</i>			
8. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the students involved are mostly	<i>n (%)</i> (Counselor)	<i>n (%)</i> (Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Assistant Principal)	<i>n (%)</i> (Security)
9th Grade Students	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
8th Grade Students	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (7.7)	1 (8.3)
7th Grade Students	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Combination of Above	7 (63.6%)	9 (81.8)	9 (69.2)	8 (66.7)
Do Not Know	4 (36.4)	2 (18.2)	3 (23.1)	3 (25.0)

Table 39

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 8*

---

Survey Item 8: When teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the students involved are mostly:

Male Counselor Responses:

No responses.

Female Counselor Responses:

All grades are involved.

Male Principal Responses:

Mostly eighth and ninth grades

All grades

Female Principal Responses:

No responses.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Rarely seventh grade.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

No responses.

Male Security Leader Responses:

Increasing in seventh grade as more are getting phones.

Female Security Leader Responses:

No Responses.

Below are a table and a figure designed to represent the data collected in the survey/questionnaire for Survey Item 9: *In my experience, the frequency of*

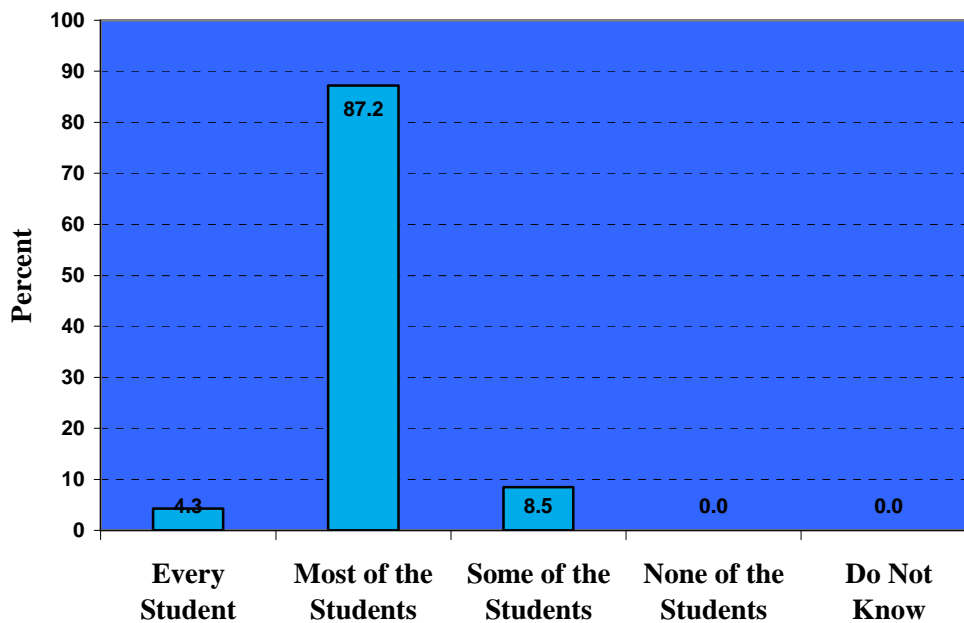


*students who have a cell phone on my campus.* Table 40 and Figure 22 report the data of the total sample of participants including counselors, principals, assistant principals, and security leaders. The findings show that the most common response was that *Most of the Students* have a cell phone at school. This data mirrors statistics that show an increasing number of students who have cell phones; and meanwhile, younger children are in possession of cell phones.

Table 40

*Results of Survey/Questionnaire: Total Sample: Item 9*

Survey Item	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
9. In my experience, the frequency of students who have a cell phone on my campus is	<i>n</i>	%
Every Student	2	4.3
Most of the Students	41	87.2
Some of the Students	4	8.5
None of the Students	0	0.0
Do Not Know	0	0.0



**Figure 22. Survey Item 9: Total Sample. Percent of Students Who Have a Cell Phone on Campus. (n = 47)**

Table 41 reports the data from the written response from the survey/questionnaire to Survey Item 12, organized by the gender and the job title of participants. The respondents were asked *What else can you tell me (the researcher) about the issue of teen sexting at your school?* The responses are varied. One theme was that cell phone violations for making threats, bullying, or intimidating on the school campus were more prevalent than violations for teen sexting. This is an important note for policy and curriculum planning. Another reoccurring theme is that school leaders, parents, and students waver on the discipline issue of teen sexting because it usually occurs off campus, and schools usually just deal with the symptoms of the issue. Survey item 12 indicates that school policy and procedures about the consequences of teen sexting must be clear for leaders, parents, and students in Hometown School District.

Table 41

*Written Response of Survey/Questionnaire: Item 12*

---

Survey Item 12: What else can you tell me about the issue of teen sexting at your school?

Male Counselor Responses:

I have personally dealt more with threats through texting than the issue of sexting.

Female Counselor Responses:

I have spoken with several students who have been senders/receivers of such messages on their phones.

Parents are unaware of policies nor do they think their student would be involved.

I have involved parents this year with students inappropriate cell phone use.

Male Principal Responses:

Students using cell phones to threaten, bully, and intimidate is a much greater issue.

Female Principal Responses:

No Responses.

Male Assistant Principal Responses:

Our school rules prohibit cell phones to be utilized or visible on school campus during normal school hours.

Most students feel it is their right to engage in this behavior. Some parents even support the students' rights in these situations.

Cell phones and bullying are major problems with video tapes of conflicts occurring.

Female Assistant Principal Responses:

Students will push boundaries.

Since we limited cell phones on campus, the problem decreased dramatically.

Male Security Leader Responses:

As long as the world becomes more sexually active, it will not stop.

The majority of inappropriate sexual messages occur on Facebook and MySpace.

### Female Security Leader Responses:

Cell phone use is a problem on campus. Phones are taken if student refuses to put it away or if it goes off in class.

We do not go thru student cell phones unless we have a reason to and it is usually do to drugs or fights.

### Summary of Chapter

In descriptive detail, Chapter 4 described the data collected by the researcher. Tables and figures displayed the data. The contents of the data were organized to present the finding that correlated with each research question in the design of this study. Three types of data were researched: pre-existing school policies for cell phone conduct, teen sexting curriculum search, and a survey/questionnaire of leadership perceptions of the issues surrounding teen sexting. The cell phone policy collection led to specific, written policy, effective in many school districts. The analysis of cell phone policy also resulted in a composite list of policies surrounding issues of teen sexting. The teen sexting curriculum search revealed a small variety of materials and resources that were reviewed to assess items of significance for creating curriculum. The survey/questionnaire provided insight into school leaders' perceptions of the issues teen sexting creates on campus. The knowledge of teen sexting circumstances on junior high campuses can guide school policymakers in Hometown School District in their creation of curriculum awareness and prevention programs. The researcher will use the data to make assumptions, draw

conclusions, and provide curriculum and policy recommendations for school leaders that will be presented in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Summary

In only a few short years people have embraced new communication technology such as email, text messages, chat rooms, and social networking sites as a normal and necessary part of life. Teenagers have particularly embraced such technological communications. This has presented many challenges and concerns in our society, one of which is teen sexting. For teens involved in sexting situations, the legal, social, and emotional ramifications can be devastating.

In recent months, teen sexting controversies have become front page news and continue to be a hot topic in many media outlets. As the controversy escalates, schools are finding it necessary to react to teen sexting issues. As a result, educational leaders are beginning to make proactive steps towards preventative measures. This research study was designed to aide educational leaders in their attempts to create school policy and raise awareness about teen sexting for their student populations. The review of the literature in Chapter 2 included an outline of the history of the legislation surrounding Internet regulation efforts for minors, and provided several examples of case law related to censorship and student free speech. The case law included issues regarding off campus speech, privacy, search and seizure, due process for students, harassment, sexual harassment, cyber bullying, child pornography, and teen sexting. It is critical for school policymakers to have a clear understanding of the laws as they

pertain to students when it comes to making school policy for technology and cell phone use guidelines and in the creating of student curriculum for teen sexting awareness and prevention.

As outlined in Chapter 3, which reviewed the methodology, this study was designed with three research parts. First, the researcher examined school policies for student guidelines for cell phone use on campus; second, the researcher collected teen sexting awareness curriculum; and third, the researcher examined leadership perceptions of on-campus issues related to teen sexting. Chapter 4 reported the collected data and the findings based on the data. The data was organized through quantitative and descriptive statistical analysis and presented in composite lists, tables, and figures.

In this chapter, the researcher will report conclusions drawn based on the findings, offer recommendations for further study of teen sexting, and discuss the implications of the research useful for school leaders and school policymakers. But first, this chapter will review the study's research questions.

### Research Questions

The research questions were designed to: (a) identify necessary policies for student use of cell phones with an emphasis on sexting, (b) find curriculum for teen sexting awareness, and (c) to determine school leadership perceptions of teen sexting incidents on campus in Hometown School District. The instruments used for data collection included a search of school policies and curriculum and a survey/questionnaire taken by school leaders. Based on the results,



recommendations for policy and curriculum concerning teen sexting will be made. The research questions used in this study were as follows:

1. What are policies for student use of cell phones on campus to regulate teen sexting issues of school districts near Hometown School District?
2. What teen sexting curriculum is being implemented in school districts near Hometown School District?
3. To what extent is teen sexting perceived to be a problem by school leaders on campus in Hometown School District?
4. To what degree is there a perceived need for curriculum about teen sexting in Hometown School District?

### Conclusions

School policies for student conduct with electronic devices must be clear and concise for three reasons: (a) to reduce the number of teen sexting issues on school campus, (b) to provide a clear understanding of violations and possible consequences when instances of teen sexting occur on campus, and (c) to embody guidelines established by state and federal laws for student rights. The analysis of the data collected for cell phone policy produced specific written policy effective in many school districts. The goal was to collect data that would provide a basis for recommendations for school leaders to consider while making policy regarding teen sexting. Amendments or updates to policy regarding student use of cell phones would safeguard against teen sexting. A review of the cell phone policies collected revealed that teen sexting violations fall under three guidelines: electronic device offences; sexual offences; and bullying, intimidation, threats,

harassment, or defamation offences. Teen sexting instances on a school campus may violate one or more of the above offenses. The language for cell phone use policy should be concise. It is recommended that school leaders and policymakers in Hometown School District review current student conduct policies and make amendments and additions as needed. This will allow schools to fully address all aspects of teen sexting in a comprehensive and thorough manner. The data presented in Chapter 4, Table 1 acts as a resource for the language to use to provide complete and specific student guidelines for electronic devices and teen sexting regulations.

The goal of making school curriculum for teen sexting is not to down play the value of cell phones or the Internet, but to recognize that they can be helpful and convenient tools when used with common sense. Without common sense, these tools become weapons that may cause severe emotional and legal repercussions. To date, teen sexting curriculum is limited at best. The search for teen sexting curriculum revealed a small variety of materials and resources available to empower young people with knowledge designed to help them avoid risky teen sexting behavior. The analysis of the collected data for teen sexting curriculum revealed computer activities, teaching lessons, and videos as instructional instruments for teen sexting awareness. The data from this study provides clear lesson objectives for policymakers and curriculum specialists in Hometown School District, as they go forward as frontrunners in teen sexting education for their students. As the number of students who have cell phones increases and the age students begin to use cell phones becomes younger, a

sexting awareness and prevention curriculum becomes more important. Students need to learn the dangers of teen sexting, as well as the social and legal implications of their actions. Curriculum appropriate to the grade level of students in elementary, junior high, and high school should be developed and implemented to raise student awareness. The curriculum data collected in this research provides resources for further information about teen sexting awareness websites that would aid in curriculum development, and be useful for teens and parents as well. A school district may consider implementing teen sexting awareness lessons during computer lab, health, or sexual awareness classes. Appendix D is a lesson plan created by the researcher for Hometown School District to review and consider for curriculum. The researcher used the findings from this study to make the lesson objectives for teen sexting awareness. This item can be used as a building block when writing curriculum regarding teen sexting awareness for Hometown School District and others who wish to do the same.

In this study, school leaders provided insight as to how teen sexting issues affect school campuses. When school leaders were asked to support their claims, the actual amount of teen sexting incidents school leaders encountered was low. The number of instances and conflicts reported to school leaders is not occurring on a daily basis, but the consequences are severe for students when it does get brought to the attention of adults. The survey revealed that students are most likely met by disciplinary action when instances of conflict occur on campus due to teen sexting. Each instance is unique and may fall under one or more school policy violations or result in police involvement.

Many school leaders elaborated on the devastating consequences they have seen teens facing due to teen sexting, which included emotional or legal punishments and short-term and long-term damage. Though the consistency and frequency of sexting violations are vague, when teen sexting violations are made, Hometown School District follows up with a variety of disciplinary actions both on campus and with law enforcement. It is recommended that Hometown School District provide leaders, including teachers, with training on policy, guidelines, and protocol. The training would educate school leaders about proper actions to take on campus for these situations. For the most part, school leaders agreed that most students carry cell phones and students would benefit from some education about the dangers of teen sexting. The data proves that most school leaders in Hometown School District agree to support a teen sexting curriculum provided by the school district to aid in teen sexting prevention and awareness.

#### Implications

Technology and cell phones have changed policy, discipline, and safety for today's students, and will continue to do so as technology advances at its current, extreme pace. School policymakers need to be aware of key regulations implemented by the federal and state governments when providing guidelines for student use of technology in schools. School policies should be constantly reviewed and updated to remain current. School leaders and students must be made aware of these policies and address teen sexting issues on campus accordingly.

Too often in our society, laws and policies are implemented to punish before education and awareness can occur (Simpson & Gains, 2010). The legal, school, and nonlegal consequences for teen sexting are harsh and difficult. As curriculum for teen sexting awareness is created and implemented by school districts such as Hometown School District, prevention can be the first line of defense. The findings in this research will provide school policymakers with a clearer understanding of the issues surrounding teen sexting, such as issues in the law, in school policy, for curriculum, of school leaders' perceptions, and on school campuses. Schools can help to reduce the instances of teen sexting by taking action through policymaking, leadership training, curriculum writing, and student awareness.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

This dissertation studied elements surrounding teen sexting, such as school policies, awareness curricula, and school leaders' perceptions. Based on the data presented in these findings, recommendations for further study of teen sexting issues affecting education are as follows:

1. Interview students and parents on perceptions of the issue of teen sexting.
2. Determine legal and nonlegal consequences for students involved in sexting issues that are specific, immediate, and long-term.
3. Investigate how school leaders are dealing with the discipline of teen sexting issues.

4. Investigate training provided to school leaders and teachers about handling teen sexting issues.
5. Research specific sexting cases and determine how sexting affects school policies and laws in that state.
6. Determine how different school leaders play different roles in dealing with student issues of teen sexting.
7. Study students' perception of teen sexting before and after a lesson on teen sexting has been taught.
8. Study the frequency and nature of teen sexting discipline issues at a school before and after teen sexting curriculum has been implemented.

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APPENDIX A  
INFORMAL PHONE INQUIRY

1. Does your school district currently have teen sexting awareness curriculum being taught to students?

(If not) Is your school district in the process of creating, implementing, or looking to do so in the near future? Explain.

(If yes) What is or does the curriculum include? (Examples: lecture, video, lessons)

Can I (the researcher) have access to these materials?

2. In what subject is it taught? (Examples: technology safety, sexual harassment awareness, bullying prevention, sex education)

3. Who is delivering instruction to students? (Examples: classroom teachers, administrators, program specialists, outside agency)

4. Which students are receiving the instruction? (Example: grades being taught)

APPENDIX B  
COVER LETTER

March 22, 2010

Dear Respondent,

I am inviting you to participate in a research project that will assist in developing curriculum. Along with this letter is a short survey/questionnaire that asks a variety of questions about your experience dealing with students in regards to cell phone conduct and more specifically “teen sexting.” I am asking you to look over the survey/questionnaire and, if you choose to do so, complete it and send it back (pre-addressed envelope included). It should take you about 4 minutes to complete.

The results of this project will provide recommendations for curriculum development of cell phone policy, as well as, completion of a doctoral dissertation. Through your participation I hope to better understand the extent you encounter student “sexting” issues. I hope that the results of the survey will be useful for Hometown School District and I plan to share my results by writing curriculum recommendations for “sexting” awareness and include my findings in a dissertation.

I do not know of any risks to you if you decide to participate in this survey and I guarantee that your responses will not be identified with you personally. I promise not to share any information that identifies you with anyone outside my research group which consists of a three member dissertation committee at Arizona State University and me.

Questions are multiple choice and short answer. You can skip questions if you choose. When responding to a written question, please **do not to use the names of any individuals when describing incidents.**

I hope you will take the time to complete this survey/questionnaire and **return it by Friday, March 26, 2010.** Your participation is voluntary.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about being in this study, you may contact me at XXX-XXX-XXXX. The Hometown School District Research Priority Board and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Arizona State University has approved this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the ASU Office of Research Integrity and Assurance, at (480) 965-6788.

Sincerely,  
Cindy Maguire  
Graduate Student, Arizona State University

APPENDIX C  
SURVEY/QUESTIONNAIRE

**Sexting:** sending sexually charged messages, photos and/or videos via cell phone

Please **circle one answer** to each item. You can skip questions if you do choose. Please provide written explanation for answer. **Do not to use the names of any individuals when describing incidents.**

1. Teen sexting is a problem on my campus
  - a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly Agree
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

2. Students have conflicts with others due to teen sexting on my campus
  - a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly Agree
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

3. Students at my school would benefit from a teen sexting awareness curriculum
- a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly Agree
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

4. This school district should develop and implement sexting awareness curriculum
- a. Strongly Disagree
  - b. Disagree
  - c. Agree
  - d. Strongly Agree
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

5. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, **school/district** disciplinary action follows
- a. Every time
  - b. Most of the Time
  - c. Some of the Time
  - d. None of the Time
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

6. In my experience, when a teen sexting incident occurs on campus, **legal** disciplinary action follows
- a. Every Time
  - b. Most of the Time
  - c. Some of the Time
  - d. None of the Time

Explanation:

7. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the sexting primarily involves
- a. Text Only
  - b. Photo Only
  - c. Video Only
  - d. Combination of the Above
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

8. In my experience, when teen sexting incidents occur on campus, the students involved are mostly
- a. Ninth Grade Students
  - b. Eighth Grade Students
  - c. Seventh Grade Students
  - d. Combination of the Above
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:



9. In my experience, the frequency of students who have a cell phone on my campus is
- a. Every Student
  - b. Most of the Students
  - c. Some of the Students
  - d. None of the Students
  - e. Do Not Know

Explanation:

10. Are you a male or female?

- a. Male
- b. Female

11. What is your job title?

- a. Counselor
- b. Principal
- c. Assistant Principal
- d. Security

12. What else can you tell me about the issue of teen sexting at your school?

Explanation:

APPENDIX D  
LESSON PLAN

Subject: Sexual Awareness Education

Students: Seventh and Ninth Grade Boys and Girls

Lesson: Teen Sexting Awareness and Prevention

Instructors: Hometown School District's Sexual Awareness Specialists

Materials: Power point presentation

Time: Approximately 15-20 minutes

Purpose: To provide students with knowledge about the dangers of teen sexting

Objectives:

- 1) Define teen sexting for students
- 2) Explain teen sexting behaviors and risks
- 3) Provide students with school guidelines that prohibit teen sexting on campus
- 4) Identify state and federal laws/charges that regulate teen sexting
- 5) Discuss examples of social and emotional consequences for teen sexting
- 6) Offer tips to avoid teen sexting situations

APPENDIX E  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

**To:** Nicholas Appleton  
ED

**From:** Mark Rassa, Chair  
Soc Beh IRB

**Date:** 03/18/2010

**Committee Action:** Exemption Granted

**IRB Action Date:** 03/18/2010

**IRB Protocol #:** 1003004862

**Study Title:** Developing Curriculum about cell phone policy

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(2).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that, if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.