

# Advice for the Summer

*By Sean DeVetter, PAGE Staff Attorney, May 2013*

While it may come as a surprise to some, the PAGE legal department continues to receive calls throughout the summer months. In anticipation of the end of school, here are a few areas all educators should be cautious of:

## **Improper Remunerative Conduct**

Educators cannot take money for grades. Many educators are employed in other endeavors over the summer. To avoid the appearance of impropriety always notify your administrator if your summer employment results in your acceptance of money from any student or their parents. In most cases, your administration will not have any issues with your summer employment. Avoid taking money from anyone that may be a student of yours in the upcoming school year.

## **Arrests**

It's important that all educators know their county's arrest reporting requirements. In some cases a school system's requirements are stricter than the Professional Standards Commission's requirements. The Professional Standards Commission requires that you report convictions involving controlled substance and marijuana, misdemeanor crimes of moral turpitude, and felonies. Some school systems require that you report arrests. Many teachers ended up in trouble with their county because they were arrested, not convicted, and did not report anything to their system. Make sure to know your school system's reporting policies.

## **Mandated reporting**

As an educator you remain a mandated reporter of child abuse. Should you witness or be told of anything you suspect is child abuse you are required, by law and the PSC, to report within 24 hours. Keep in mind that you are not an investigator. You are a reporter. If you suspect abuse you need to report it; do not rely on someone else to make the report.

## **The Internet**

Be mindful of the pictures you take and the pictures that are taken of you. Use common sense when deciding what information to post online. If you are not comfortable with your administrator, your students, or the parents of your students seeing these pictures, they should not be posted online.

As always, if you have any questions relating to the above information please call the PAGE legal department.