



## People Targeted for Anti-Obama Speech

Several public school teachers are facing [investigations](#) for posting items on social networking sites that opposed President Obama and his agenda. Parents raised concerns regarding the teachers' posts, prompting the school districts to launch investigations. Similarly, teens who posted anti-Obama messages on social networking sites are being targeted by a website called Jezebel, which not only reveals the identities of the students who made the posts, but reported the students to their schools.



In Rock Hill, South Carolina, a middle-school teacher was placed on leave after posting a message on her personal Facebook page about Obama and food stamps. "Congrats Obama," she allegedly wrote. "As one of my students sang down the hallway, 'We get to keep our food stamps' ... which I pay for because they can't budget their money ... and really, neither can you."

According to a school spokesperson, several parents had called the school complaining about the teacher's post. The teacher was forced to apologize.

"People outside the school system ... saw her posting and some of them said they were offended by it," spokesperson Elaine Baker said. "She used poor judgment according to our social media policy. Teachers are kept to higher standards." Baker continued, "Sometimes you just can't speak out publicly about what you'd personally like to say, about anything." She told television station WSOC that teachers in general should "watch what they post on Facebook."

Similarly, a high school teacher in Columbus, Ohio, is under investigation for posting an anti-Obama message on his personal Facebook page.

"Congrats to those dependent on government, homosexuals, potheads, JAY-Z fans, non-Christians, non-taxpayers, illegals, communists, Muslims, planned murder clinics, enemies of America, Satan You WON," the unidentified teacher wrote.

The Linden McKinley High School teacher is being investigated, though he has been permitted to remain in the classroom during the process.

Hazel Davis was one of the parents who complained about the teacher's post.

"I didn't think it was right," she told the *Columbus Dispatch*. "He's talking about a majority of the people that go to the school." According to Fox News, 95 percent of the students attending Linden McKinley High School receive free or reduced lunch. "I don't think he should be teaching anybody," Davis said.

But teachers are not the only ones being targeted for their anti-Obama messages. Fox News [reported](#):

A nationally-known website has targeted teenagers who posted racially-charged, anti-Obama messages on social networking sites after the presidential election. The website Jezebel not only identified the underage students — but also contacted their schools to report their offensive online



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postings.

Tracie Egan Morrissey justifies the website by stating, “Several of the teens use imagery of their high schools’ sports teams on their Twitter accounts and Facebook pages. If nothing else, it’s reasonable to alert administrators to the behavior of the students who are publicly representing their schools.”

And according to the website, the schools are taking the tweets posted by some of its students “very seriously.” The students are being targeted for posts that are said to be full of racist language and hate speech, including use of the “n” word.

One of the teens attends West Islip High School in New York. The principal of the high school told the *New York Daily News* that he was “very offended” by the student’s remarks and that he would be “taking the necessary steps to address [them].”

Morrissey believes that school administrators are well within their rights to do so. “It leads one to wonder whether their interventions in the matter will help these teenagers to become more understanding of racial sensitivities — or if they will just become angry, and if that anger will become displaced and only serve to intensify their hate,” Morrissey wrote. “Whatever the case, they surely will have learned about how their conversations on social media are not private and that their words do, indeed, have an impact.”

But not everyone is on board with a website that targets the free speech of students.

Paul Kengor of the Center for Vision and Values at Grove City College states, “I’m not surprised. Any conservative can tell you about the huge number of emails and tweets and whatever else bashing Mitt Romney, Paul Ryan, Sarah Palin, George Bush and numerous other Republicans in the most vile and obscene ways.”

“But only when it happens to Obama do groups like this give it their attention, and then the liberal media magnifies them in kind,” he continued. “It quickly becomes a national scandal.”

According to Fox News, there are a variety of documented examples of students being targeted by liberal teachers:

In October a Philadelphia teacher ridiculed a young girl for wearing a Mitt Romney t-shirt to class. The teacher compared her shirt to a KKK robe. The teacher eventually apologized but the student transferred to another school.

And last year another teacher was captured on video telling her students that criticizing President Obama was a crime punishable by jail.

But regardless of liberal angst over anti-Obama sentiments, schools technically do not have a right to punish students for posting messages perceived to be offensive outside of school. Still, that does not mean that they won’t.

“Historically, the courts have said that free speech outside the classroom can’t be punished by the school,” said Ken Paulson, president of the First Amendment Center. “But increasingly we are seeing some decisions to punish young people — arguing that what they post on their Twitter account can be potentially disruptive to a classroom.”

Paulson said the “Twitter dynamic has sort of set everything on its ear.”

In 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court [ruled](#) in the Westboro Baptist Church case that free speech should be protected, regardless of how offensive it may be. The high court held that the First Amendment



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protected the members of the church, and that freedom of speech cannot be restricted simply because it “is upsetting or arouses contempt.”

That ruling should be applicable in the case of the teen posters, as well as the teachers being investigated.

Meanwhile, Paulson suggests that a conservative website be created to document instances of liberal hate. “There’s certainly enough material,” he said.



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