Unit – Ethics in CS

Essential Questions:
How should ethics play a role in our decisions when using computers?
What is an individual's responsibility to act ethically?
What is the government's responsibility to define ethical behavior?

Lesson #8 – Online Conduct

Objectives - SWBAT outline appropriate online behavior.
Supporting EQ: Should employers be allowed to discipline employees for social media posts?

Standards (Rhode Island Computer Science Standards)
3-RC-CU-1 Evaluate the ways computing impacts personal, ethical, social, economic, and cultural practices.
3-RC-SLE-2 Evaluate the social and economic implications of privacy and free speech in the context of safety, law, or ethics.

Overview
Do Now: Do you know anybody who has gotten in trouble for something they posted on social media? Details optional.
Activity: Students will read an article outlining the laws regarding private employers can and can't fire somebody for when posting on social media. Students will play another Scruples game where they are given several social media posts with controversial or inflammatory statements, and will take the role of the person's boss. For each situation, they would post on the Jamboard of what an appropriate consequence, if any, would be for the post in question.

The posts:
"I teach at the most ghetto school in Charlotte."
Just simply: "I HATE MY BOSS!"
A spokesperson for a company: "Marriage is between a man and a woman."
(a picture of a Taco Bell employee licking Tacos)
(a picture of an employee with prominently featured drug paraphernalia)

These are actually all examples of somebody getting fired, whether it was legal to fire them or not. Many more can be found online.

Students will then discuss whether the action they would like to take is legal based on the article read at the beginning of class, or if they might be sued for wrongful termination.

Notes
Students will likely have preconceived notions of what should and shouldn't be allowed online and have maybe heard stories about people being denied scholarships or fired in the past for what they've done on social media, but are unlikely to be aware that there are laws governing how an employer can react to posts made on social media outside of work hours. In this lesson, they will learn specifically what is protected, and will then apply that knowledge to a few situations by taking the role of a boss finding out what their employees are posting on social media.

Handouts
Article and jamboard.
In-Person Learning Alternative:
Posters with each situation, students can put post-its on the poster.

Resources
https://fileunemployment.org/uncategorized/can-get-fired-facebook-post/

Assignment/Assessments
Jamboard with each social media post and student's opinions on how they should be disciplined, if at all.