

Photo potentially altered to hurt STHS teacher

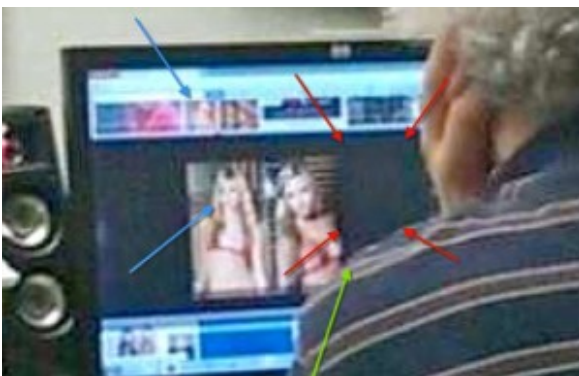
By Kathryn Reed

A photo showing a South Tahoe High School teacher looking at half naked women on a computer in his classroom has been circulating around the district and beyond.

“The teacher is on administrative leave pending an investigation. Since this is a personnel matter, we have no further comment,” Lake Tahoe Unified School District Superintendent Jim Tarwater told *Lake Tahoe News*.

It is easy to look at the history of websites that have been viewed on a computer. It is not known if the district has done so and what was found.

Lake Tahoe News had an independent photo attorney analyze the picture to help determine if it is real.



According to attorney Carolyn Wright, “The square indicated by the red arrows indicates someone blocked out what was there. The green shows the shoulder is not a clean line, indicating poor cloning. The blue

arrows show the women's faces are clearer but the photos on the top and bottom of the screen are extremely blurry."



This is the original photograph sent to Lake Tahoe News.

"There are several indications that this photo has been altered," attorney and professional photographer Carolyn Wright told *Lake Tahoe News*.

The photo shows teacher Paul Kushner looking at a questionable website. It's a picture of the back of his head with him focused on a computer that has images of women in bras.

But the pixilation is not the same throughout the photo.

Plus, the whiteboard in the background and his clothing are in focus, while images on the computer are blurry. Cameras can't make the middle part of photo blurry. They can make the foreground or background sharp or fuzzy – not the middle, as

is the case with the photo in question. And cell phone cameras don't have the capability to do anything but keep everything in focus.

Kushner has been teaching in Lake Tahoe Unified School District for decades and is the founder of the district's choral program. He has a master's degree in computer education.

He was not available for comment. Jodi Dayberry, head of the local teacher's union, did not respond to an inquiry.

However, this is not the district's first foray down this path. In 2006, Meyers Elementary School teacher Karsten Gronwald was arrested on child pornography charges. In 2008, he was sentenced to eight years in prison.

If it turns out someone was out to slander Kushner, they could face criminal charges.