

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
JODY VEIT EDRINGTON
JUNE 10, 2021**

PLSB CASE NO. 20-064

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on June 10, 2021, the Arkansas State Board of Education (Board) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee (Ethics Subcommittee) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Jody Veit Edrington (Educator Edrington). Based upon Educator Edrington acceptance of the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and the evidence presented, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, Ark. Code Ann. 25-15-101 et seq., the Board hereby states as follows:

I. Findings of Fact

- a. The Arkansas Department of Education issued Educator Edrington a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2019, valid until December 31, 2023.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Edrington violated the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators promulgated pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. § § 6-17-422 and 6-17-428.
- c. On November 4, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Edrington violated *Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom;*
Standard 2: an educator maintains competence regarding his or her professional

practice, inclusive of professional and ethical behavior, skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position.

- d. Educator Edrington was notified on November 5, 2019, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on February 5, 2021, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standard 1 and 2 of the Code of Ethics. Educator Edrington rejected the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and requested an evidentiary hearing.
- f. On April 28, 2021, Educator Edrington appeared for her evidentiary hearing before the Hearing Subcommittee. After consideration of the testimony, evidence, and arguments presented at the evidentiary hearing, the Hearing Subcommittee found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Edrington:
 - Engaged in physical contact with a student.
 - Engaged in inappropriate interactions with a student.
 - Exhibited an inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
- g. The Hearing Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Probation of license for 2 years;
 2. Assess a \$250 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
- h. On April 28, 2021, Educator Edrington, was notified of the Hearing Subcommittee's final determination and recommendation by secure server and email. Educator Edrington accepted the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation thereby waiving


her right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she may have under the Administrative Procedure Act, including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.

- i. At today's meeting, the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and supporting documentation were presented to the Board as part of its consent agenda.

II. Conclusions of Law

- a. Upon consideration of the evidence presented at the meeting, Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-17-401, 6-17-422, 6-17-428 and 25-15-201 et seq., and the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, the Board adopts the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendations, and enacts the sanctions accordingly. The Board admonishes Educator Jody Veit Edrington for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Edrington is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$250 will result in the continued suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Edrington is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within ninety (90) days from the date of this order may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Edrington's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.


Charisse Dean, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education