

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
JENNIFER CONNER
SEPTEMBER 10, 2020

PLSB CASE NO. 20-126

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on September 10, 2020, 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 Jennifer Conner (Educator Conner). Based upon Educator Conner's failure to respond to 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 Conner a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2016, valid until December 31, 2020.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Conner 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 March 6, 2020, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Conner violated Standards 1 and 2; 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 Conner was notified on March 10, 2020, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on July 8, 2020, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Conner:
 - Inappropriate interactions with students
 - Inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior
 - Failed to follow school district/state/federal policies
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. One Year Probation;
 2. Fine of \$200 (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
 3. Recommended training, coursework or rehab treatment, with monitored progress:
 - a. Title: The Ethical Teacher (192p) Author: Elizabeth Campbell ISBN 10: 0335212182 ISBN 13: 978-0335212187
 - b. Title: QBQ! The Question Behind the Question: Practicing Personal Accountability at Work and in Life (160p) Author: John G. Miller ISBN 10: 0399152334 ISBN 13: 978-039952337
 - c. Title: Flipping the Switch: Unleash the Power of Personal Accountability Using the QBQ! (144 p) Author: John G. Miller ISBN 10: 0399152334 ISBN 13: 978-0399152337

d. Educator to provide written reflections on how she will utilize the trainings to interact with students and hold herself accountable in her interactions with students and the district.

e. To be completed within 90 days of the State Board Order (All costs paid by Educator).

g. On July 13, 2020, Educator Conner, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by regular mail and secure server. Educator Conner failed to respond to the Ethics 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.

h. 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 Conner for her violation of the Code of Ethics.

b. Educator Conner is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$200 may result in the suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.

- c. Educator Conner 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 Conner 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