

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
JENNIFER JACKSON
MAY 14, 2020**

PLSB CASE NO. 20-079

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on May 14, 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 Jackson (Educator Jackson). Based upon Educator Jackson's 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 Jackson a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2019, valid until December 31, 2023.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Jackson 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 December 5, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Jackson violated Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom and 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 Jackson was notified on December 5, 2019, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on March 6, 2020, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violations of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Jackson:
 - Exhibited inappropriate interactions with a student.
 - Exhibited inappropriate communication with a student in person or via electronic communications.
 - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.

The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:

1. Six months probation of license;
2. Assess a \$150 fine (due within 90 days of State Board order);
3. Recommend training, coursework or rehab treatment, with monitored progress:

- (i) ERC19048: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): The Code of Ethics Training Video (2018); Credit Hours: 1
- (ii) TCC14435: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): Social Media Guidelines; Credit Hours: 3
- (iii) SPB14008 Behavior is Communication; Credit Hours: 1.5
- (iv) LAG17029 Success Favors Well-Prepared Adults: Unpacking Your Personality Package; Credit Hours: 1
- (v) A written reflection on how these trainings will impact her communication and boundaries with students in the future.
- (vi) To be completed by: Within 90 days of the State Board Final Order.

- (vii) All costs paid by Educator.
- a. On March 6, 2020, Educator Jackson was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by first class and certified mail. Educator Jackson did not respond to the recommendation of the Ethics Subcommittee letter sent via first class and certified mail.
- b. Per Rule 12.03 of Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, if an educator fails to respond to notification of the initial recommendation of the Ethics Subcommittee within thirty calendar days, the initial recommendation will become a final recommendation without an evidentiary hearing and will be forwarded to the State Board for a final decision.
- c. 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 Jackson for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Jackson is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$500 may result in the suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Jackson is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.

- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Jackson professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Diane Zook, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education