

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
JUDITH CAROL ROOK (STEWART)
MARCH 12, 2020**

PLSB CASE NO. 20-008

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on March 12, 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 Judith Carol Rook (Stewart) (Educator Rook). Based upon Educator Rook'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 Rook a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2018, valid until December 31, 2022.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Rook 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 July 1, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Rook violated 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 and Standard 8: an educator, while on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students, refrains from: A) using, possession and/or

being under the influence of alcohol or unauthorized drugs/substances and/or possessing items prohibited by law, B) possessing or using tobacco or tobacco-related products, e-cigarettes, e-liquid, or vapor products or C) abusing/misusing prescription medications or other authorized substances as evidenced by impairment.

- d. Educator Rook was notified on July 1, 2019, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on December 9, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violations of Standards 2 and 8 in that Educator Rook:
- Exhibited an inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
 - Failed to follow district, and/or state policies, procedures, or regulations.
 - Possessed alcohol while at school.
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
1. One year suspension of license;
 2. Assess a \$300 fine (due 30 days prior to the end of the suspension);
 3. Recommended Trainings/Course Work
 - (i) ERC19048: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): The Code of Ethics Training Video (2018) Credit Hours: 1
 - (ii) Title: Mastering the Addicted Brain: Building a Sane and Meaningful Life to Stay Clean (160p); Author: Walter Ling, MD; ISBN 10: 1608685004; ISBN 13: 978-1608685004

(iii) Title: The 85% Solution: How Personal Accountability Guarantees Success -- No Nonsense, No Excuses (256p); Author: Linda Galindo; ISBN 13: 9780470500163

4. A letter from a licensed counselor specializing in alcoholic treatment stating the Educator is fit to return to the classroom.
 5. Written Reflection indicating how these books and trainings will affect the Educator's return to the classroom.
 6. All costs to be paid by the Educator.
- g. On December 9, 2019, Educator Rook was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail.
- h. Educator Rook did not respond to the recommendation of the Ethics Subcommittee letter sent on December 9, 2019. The first class mail was not returned to the PLSB and therefore deemed accepted.
- 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 Judith Carol Rook for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Rook is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$300 may result in the suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.

- c. Educator Rook is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within thirty 30 days of the completion of the suspension may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Rook's 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