

# THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
STEVEN BLAKE TEW  
JANUARY 9, 2020**

**PLSB CASE NO. 18-144**

## **FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER**

At its regular meeting on January 9, 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 Steven Blake Tew (Educator Tew). Based upon Educator Tew'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 Tew a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2018, valid until December 31, 2022.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Tew 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 May 4, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Tew 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 skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position.

- d. Educator Tew was notified on May 8, 2018, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on November 2, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violations of Standard 1 and 2 in that Educator Tew:
  - Allowed the following to include, but not limited to: bullying, hazing, and/or assault on student-athletes
  - Knowingly allowed student-athletes to wrestle
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
  1. One (1) Year Probation;
  2. Assess a \$250 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
  3. Recommended Trainings/Course Work;
    - (i) ERC18064: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): The Code of Ethics Training Video (2017);
    - (ii) Bullying, Mental Health, and Student Safety: Understanding Links, Legal Requirements, and Best Practices (Webinar);
    - (iii) PIA14006 Guiding Children Successfully, Episode 1: Effective Motivation for Children;
    - (iv) SPC17011 Introduction to Behavior: Supporting Effective Behavior; and
  4. Written Reflection on how these trainings will impact educator's role as an educator and coach; and

5. All costs to be paid by the Educator.
- g. On November 6, 2018, Educator Tew, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by certified mail. Educator Tew rejected the recommendation of the Ethics Subcommittee and requested an evidentiary hearing on December 10, 2018. The hearing was set for February 19, 2019, and then continued by agreement of both parties until January 15, 2020. Based upon a review and the timeliness of the case, both parties agreed it would be in the best interest of the parties to settle the case. The Educator agreed to the recommendation of the Ethics Subcommittee on November 20, 2019, thereby waiving his right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights he 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 Steven Blake Tew for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Tew is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$250 may result in the suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.

- c. Educator Tew 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 his license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Tew's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

  
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Diane Zook, Chair  
Arkansas State Board of Education