

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
GREGORY KEITH JONES
OCTOBER 10, 2019**

PLSB CASE NO. 19-031

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on October 10, 2019, the Arkansas State Board of Education (Board) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Hearing Subcommittee (Hearing Subcommittee) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Gregory Keith Jones (Educator Jones). Based upon Educator Jones' acceptance of the Hearing 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 Jones a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2015, valid until December 31, 2019.
- b. The Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee (Ethics Subcommittee) received an allegation that Educator Jones 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 August 3, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Jones violated 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; and

Standard 3: an educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with professional practices.

- d. Educator Jones was notified on August 6, 2018, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on January 4, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 2 and 3 of the Code of Ethics. Educator Jones rejected the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and requested an evidentiary hearing.
- f. On July 26, 2019, Educator Jones appeared for his 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 2 and 3 in that Educator Edwards:
 - Failed to call the Child Abuse Hotline.
- g. The Hearing Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Written Reprimand;
 2. Assess a \$100 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
 3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
 - HWB17118: Act 1236 of 2011: Child Maltreatment; Credit Hours: 2
 4. Require Educator to prepare written reflection on the training.
 5. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.

- h. On July 12, 2019, Educator Jones was notified of the Hearing Subcommittee's final determination and recommendation by certified mail. Educator Jones accepted the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation 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.
- i. At today's meeting, the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation and supporting documentation were presented to the Board as part of its Action 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 Hearing Subcommittee's recommendations, and enacts the sanctions accordingly. The Board admonishes Educator Gregory Keith Jones for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Jones is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$100 may result in the suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Jones is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine before the end of the first year of probation may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of his license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Jones' 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