

## THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
ROBERT CHARLES COPLIN  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2019**

**PLSB CASE NO. 19-090**

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

At its regular meeting on September 12, 2019, 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 Robert Charles Coplin (Educator Coplin). Based upon Educator Coplin'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 Coplin a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2018, valid until December 31, 2022.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Coplin 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 January 4, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Coplin violated 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; and  
Standard 3: an educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with  
professional practices.

- d. Educator Coplin was notified on January 4, 2019, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on July 1, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standard 1 and 2 in that Educator Coplin:

- Had inappropriate communications with student(s).
- Had inappropriate interactions with student(s).
- Inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.

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

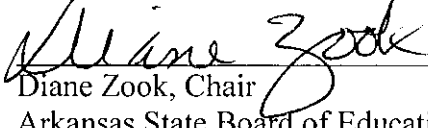
1. Written Reprimand;
2. Assess a \$100 fine (due within 30 days of the suspension end date);
3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
  - ERC19048: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB); The Code of Ethics Training Video (2018): Credit Hours: 1
  - Title: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teaching and Learning- Classroom Practices for Student Success, Grades K-12 (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) (280p); Author: Shell Education, Sharroky Hollie; ISBN 10: 1425817319; ISBN 13: 978-1425817312
  - Title: The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence (208p); Author: Dacher Keltner; ISBN 10: 0143110292; ISBN 13: 978-0143110293
4. Require Educator to prepare written reflection: that explains how trainings and readings will impact his relationships with students both in and outside the classroom (due within 90 days of the State Board Order); and

5. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g. On July 8, 2019, Educator Coplin, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail. Educator Coplin failed to respond to the Ethics 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.
- 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 Robert Charles Coplin for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Coplin is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$100 will result in the continued suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Coplin 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 Coplin'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