

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH BROWN
MAY 9, 2019**

PLSB CASE NO. 19-023

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on May 9, 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 Christopher Joseph Brown (Educator Brown). Based upon Educator Brown's acceptance of the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and the evidence presented, in accordance with the Administrative Procedures 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 Brown a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2018, valid until December 31, 2022.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Brown 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 Brown violated Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of 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 Brown 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 February 1, 2019, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violations of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Brown:
 - Engaged in inappropriate communication with a student(s);
 - Engaged in an unprofessional relationship with a student(s); and
 - Engaged in inappropriate interactions with a student(s).
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Probation of license for 1 year;
 2. Assess a \$200 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
 3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
 - ERC18064: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): The Code of Ethics Training Video (2017)
 - TCC14435: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): Social Media Guidelines
 - Title: The 85% Solution: How Personal Accountability Guarantees Success -- No Nonsense, No Excuses (256p); Author: Linda Galindo; ISBN 13: 9780470500163
 - Title: The Ethical Teacher (192p); Author: Elizabeth Campbell; ISBN 10: 0335212182; ISBN 13: 978-0335212187
 - Title: Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students (192p); Author: Zaretta Hammond; ISBN-10: 9781483308012; ISBN-13: 978-1483308012

4. Written reflections on how these will impact his teaching and his interactions with students both inside and outside the classroom (due within 90 days of the State Board Order); and
 5. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g. On February 5, 2019, Educator Brown, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified mail. Educator Brown accepted 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 Christopher Joseph Brown for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Brown is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$200 may result in the suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Brown 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 Brown's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Dr. Jay Barth, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education