

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
LEANNA M. MORRIS
APRIL 11, 2019**

PLSB CASE NO. 18-165

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on April 11, 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 Leanna M. Morris (Educator Morris). Based upon Educator Morris' failure to respond to 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. Educator Morris does not hold a standard Arkansas teaching license. At the time of the alleged violation, Educator Morris was a pre-service teacher and teaching on a waiver.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Morris 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 June 1, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Morris 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 professional and ethical behavior, skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position.
- d. Educator Morris was notified on June 5, 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 violations of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Morris:
- Sent inappropriate pictures to a student resulting in the pictures being viewed by multiple students (sexual)
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
1. Non-Issuance of license, with a Level 4 Public Notification of Ethics Violation; and
 2. Assess a \$500 fine (due within 90 days of the State Board Final Order).
- g. On January 8, 2019, Educator Morris, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail. Educator Morris failed to respond to the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation thereby waiving her right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she 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 Morris for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Morris' 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