

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
AMANDA LEEANN CASSAT
NOVEMBER 8, 2018

PLSB CASE NO. 18-120

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on November 8, 2018, the Arkansas State Board of Education (State Board) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee (Ethics Subcommittee) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Amanda LeeAnn Cassat (Educator Cassat). Based upon Educator Cassat'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 State Board hereby states as follows:

I. Findings of Fact

- a. The Arkansas Department of Education issued Amanda LeeAnn Cassat a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2016, valid until December 31, 2020.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Cassat 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 April 9, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Cassat 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 Cassat was notified on April 9, 2018, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on September 7, 2018, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violations of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Cassat:
 - Engaged in inappropriate physical contact with a student (nonsexual).
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 - Place license on probation for two (2) years;
 - Assess a \$250 fine (due within 90 days following the State Board's final order);
 - Require educator to complete training through the ArkansasIDEAS online portal taking Courses: SPC17012 Introduction to Behavior: General Classroom Management Systems (1 credit hour); IAE14017 The Learning Classroom: Feelings Count (.5 credit hours); SPB14008 Behavior is Communication (1.5 credit hours); ERC18064: Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): Code of Ethics Training Video (2017);
 - Read Book: Taking Charge of Anger, 2nd Edition: Six Steps to Asserting Yourself Without Losing Control (289p), Author: W. Robert Nay, PhD.; ISBN 10: 1462502423, ISBN 13: 978-1462502424;
 - Require educator to provide written reflections on each training to the PLSB office indicating how the training and reading will impact her interactions with students in the classroom (due within 90 days following State Board's final order); and
 - Require all associated costs to be paid by Educator Cassat.
- g. On September 10, 2018, Educator Cassat, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail. Educator Cassat accepted the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation on September 27, 2018, thereby waiving her right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she may

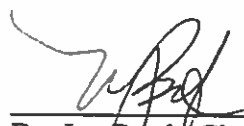
have under the Administrative Procedure Act, including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.

- 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 Cassat for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Cassat 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 her license.
- c. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Cassat'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