

**THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
CHRISTOPHER NEIL WILKS  
AUGUST 9, 2018**

**PLSB CASE NO. 18-103**

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

At its regular meeting on August 9, 2018, 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 Neil Wilks (Educator Wilks). Based upon Educator Wilks's 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. The Arkansas Department of Education issued Christopher Neil Wilks a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2017, valid until December 31, 2021.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Wilks 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 February 5, 2018, the Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Wilks violated Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom; 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 8: An educator refrains from using, possessing and/or being under the influence of alcohol or unauthorized drugs/substances and/or possessing items prohibited by law, or possessing or using tobacco or tobacco-related products while on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students.

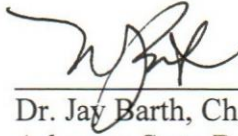
- d. Educator Wilks was notified on February 7, 2018, of the subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on June 1, 2018, the subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate violations of Standards 1, 2, and 8 in that:
  - Educator reported to work under the influence of alcohol in the presence of student(s); and
  - Educator admitted that he was under the influence of alcohol.
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
  - Suspend Educator Wilks's license for two (2) years;
  - Assess a \$100 fine (Due within ninety (90) days following the Board's Final Order);
  - Require him to attend an alcohol treatment program;
  - Require him to provide a letter from a licensed professional that the educator is fit to return to the classroom;
  - Provide quarterly reports on treatment progress for the duration of the two (2) year suspension;
  - Require him to write a reflection statement explaining how he will cope with life stressors without using alcohol; (The written reflection must be submitted to the PLSB office within thirty (30) days of the suspension end date); and
  - Require that all associated costs be paid by Educator.

- g. On June 4, 2018, Educator Wilks was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail. Educator Wilks did not 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 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 Wilks for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Wilks 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 Wilks 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 Wilks's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



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Dr. Jay Barth, Chair  
Arkansas State Board of Education