

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
JOHN COLEMAN GIBSON
SEPTEMBER 14, 2017**

PLSB CASE NO. 17-150

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on September 14, 2017, the Arkansas State Board of Education (Board) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee for disciplinary action against the teaching license of John Coleman Gibson (Educator Gibson). Based upon Educator Gibson's consent to the 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 John Coleman Gibson a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2017, valid until December 31, 2021.
- b. The Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Gibson 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 6, 2017, the Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Gibson violated Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside of the classroom.

- d. Educator Gibson was notified on February 7, 2017, of the subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on July 10, 2017, the subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate a violation of Standard 1, in that Educator Gibson:
- Inappropriately communicated with a student via text messaging;
 - Provided/purchased an iPhone 6 for a student in order to continue to engage in inappropriate communication with a student;
 - Inappropriately used profanity while texting students; and
 - Inappropriately communicated with a student via Snap Chat stating he would, "hug and kiss" the student, and "tell her everything would be okay".
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
- (i) Suspend Educator Gibson's license for twelve (12) months;
 - (ii) Assess a \$100 fine to be paid ninety (90) days following the State Board final order;
 - (iii) Require him to complete training through the ArkansasIDEAS online portal taking Course ECC 14435: *Professional Licensure Standards Board (PLSB): Social Media Guidelines* (3 hours);
 - (iv) Require him to write a reflection statement to the PLSB stating how this training will impact his interactions with students, and the written reflection must be submitted to the PLSB office within ninety (90) days following the Board's final order; and
 - (v) Require all associated costs to be paid by Educator Gibson.
- g. On July 17, 2017, Educator Gibson was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail.
- On August 8, 2017, Educator Gibson 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 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 Gibson for his violation of the Code of Ethics and adopts the recommendation for actions as outlined by the Ethic's Subcommittee.
- b. Educator Gibson 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 Gibson is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within thirty (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 Gibson'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