

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**March 9, 2017**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER**  
**IN RE COURTNEY BETH WILKINS; PLSB CASES 17-003 and 17-017 COMBINED**

At its regular meeting on March 9, 2017, 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 Courtney Beth Wilkins (“Educator Wilkins”). Based upon Educator Wilkins’ 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 Wilkins a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2013, valid until December 31, 2017.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Wilkins violated the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators (“Code of Ethics”) promulgated pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-422 and 6-17-428.
- c. The Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Wilkins violated Standards 1, 2, and 4. 1. An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom. 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. 4: An educator entrusted with public funds and property, including school sponsored activity funds, honors that trust with honest, responsible stewardship.

- d. Educator Wilkins was notified on July 21, and July 22, 2016, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization on July 11, 2016, to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on January 17, 2017, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate a violation of Standards 1, 2, and 4 when she:

- Allowed dipping, use of tobacco, electronic cigarettes or other tobacco-related products in class;
- Inappropriately discussed personal relationships, tattoos, drugs, sex, and/or alcohol when communicating with one or more students.
- Played one or more games (Never Have I Ever) in class with students.
- Allowed students to talk about sex in class.
- Multiple students said educator did not provide instruction during class time.
- Used inappropriate language repeatedly.
- Allowed students to use inappropriate language without writing them up.
- Used Snapchat to communicate with students.
- Left class unattended.
- Created a high level of negative impact on students because of loss of instructional time.
- Told student to jump off a bridge.
- Made purchases for a student during class.
- Multiple students said she did not provide instruction and used inappropriate language repeatedly.
- Told a student to jump off a bridge.
- Allowed one or more students to misuse a classroom desk.
- Intentionally littered a classroom floor with flowers from a glass vase which Educator Wilkins shattered on the floor.

The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the Board take the following action:

- Suspend the license of Educator Wilkins for one (1) year.
- Assess a \$100 fine.

- Recommend training, coursework or rehab treatment, with monitored progress; to include reading Stop Workplace Drama by Marlene Chism and Building Trusting Relationships for School Improvement by Cori Brewster.
  - Educator Wilkins is also to take training through the ArkansasIDEAS online portal, Course IAD14492 Classroom Management: Building Effective Relationships 2nd edition;
  - Educator Wilkins is to submit separate written reflections on each reading and the class to the PLSB within sixty (60) days of the State Board's Order.
  - All costs paid by educator.
- f. Educator Wilkins was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation on January 20, 2017, by certified and regular mail.
- g. On January 23, 2017, Educator Wilkins accepted the Ethic Subcommittee's recommendation thereby waiving her right to any further notice or hearing or any other rights she might 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.

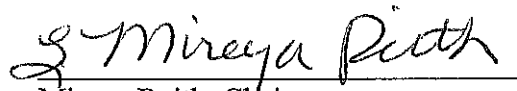
## II. Conclusions of Law:

- a. Upon consideration of the evidence presented at the meeting and pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-17-401, 6-17-422, 6-17-428 and 25-15-201 et seq., and the Code of Ethics, the Board adopts the recommendations of the Ethics Subcommittee.
- b. Accordingly, the Board admonishes Educator Wilkins for her violation of the Code of Ethics, orders suspension of her license for one (1) year; assesses a \$100.00 fine; requires her to complete training as outlined above, and provide written reflections

on each reading and class addressing how each will impact instruction and student interaction in her classroom. All training and written reflections are to be completed within sixty (60) days of the Board order. All costs to be paid by the educator.

- c. Educator Wilkins is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within ninety (90) days may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Wilkins' professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

  
Mireya Reith, Chair  
Arkansas State Board of Education