

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
EDUCATOR RICKY MORROW
OCTOBER 14, 2021**

PLSB CASE NO. 21-073

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on October 14, 2021, 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 Ricky Morrow (Educator Morrow). Based upon Educator Morrow's acceptance of the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and the evidence presented, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure 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 Morrow a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2020, valid until December 31, 2024.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Morrow 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 March 5, 2021, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Morrow violated *Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom;* *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 Morrow was notified on March 5, 2021, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on May 7, 2021, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 of the Code of Ethics. Educator Morrow accepted the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation.
- f. The State Board of Education at the July 8, 2021 meeting rejected the Educators acceptance and the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation. Therefore, sending the educator back to the Professional Licensure and Standards Board for an evidentiary hearing.
- g. On September 15, 2021, Educator Morrow did not appear for his evidentiary hearing before the Hearing Subcommittee. After consideration of the testimony, evidence, and arguments presented at the evidentiary hearing, the Hearing Subcommittee found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Morrow:
 - Engaged in inappropriate communication with a student via electronic media (sexual)
 - Exhibited an inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
- h. The Hearing Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Permanent Revocation of License;
 2. And require Educator to pay all associated costs.

- i. On September 15, 2021, Educator Morrow, was notified of the Hearing Subcommittee's final determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail. Educator Morrow accepted the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation thereby waiving his right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she/he may have under the Administrative Procedure Act, including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.
- j. 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 Morrow for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Morrow's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Chairperson
Arkansas State Board of Education