

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
CLEVELAND GORDON JR.
AUGUST 10, 2023

PLSB CASE NO. 23-091

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on August 10, 2023, 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 Cleveland Gordon Jr. (“Educator Gordon”). Based upon Educator Gordon’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 Gordon a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2021, valid until December 31, 2025.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Gordon 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 3, 2023, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Gordon 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 Gordon was notified on March 6, 2023, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on July 14, 2023, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Gordon:
- Inappropriate physical contact with a student(s).
 - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
1. Written Reprimand;
 2. Assess a \$100 fine (due within 90 days of the State Board Order);
 3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
 - a. Title: I Notice: A Step-by-Step Guide to Transform Student Potential Through Building Intentional Relationships Author: Claire E. Hallinan ISBN-10: 1733035613 ISBN-13: 978-1733035613
 - b. Anger Management class (as evidenced by completion certificate).
 4. Educator to provide written reflection on each training/book regarding how the educator will improve his interactions with students in the future. (due within 90 days of the state board order); and
 5. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g. On July 14, 2023, Educator Gordon's attorney, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by secure server. Educator Gordon 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 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 Cleveland Gordon Jr. for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Gordon is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$100 may result in the suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Gordon 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 Gordon's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education