

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
CHARLENE ROSEANN COOPER  
JANUARY 11, 2024

PLSB CASE NO. 23-092

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on January 11, 2024, the Arkansas State Board of Education (“Board”) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Hearing Subcommittee (“Ethics Hearing Subcommittee”) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Charlene Roseann Cooper (“Educator Cooper”). Based upon Educator Cooper’s failure to respond 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 Cooper a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2019, valid until December 31, 2023.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Cooper 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 Cooper violated *Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom; and 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.*

Subsequently, on June 2, 2023, after an initial investigation, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into a potential violation of *Standard 7: an educator maintains the confidentiality of information about students and colleagues obtained in the course of the educator's professional services that is protected under state law or regulations, federal law or regulations or the written policies of the educator's school district, unless disclosure serves a professional purpose as allowed or required by law or regulations.*

- d. Educator Cooper was notified on March 6, 2023, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate the initial allegations and again on June 5, 2023 to notify the educator of the authorization to investigate the potential violation of Standard 7.
- 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, 2, and 7 of the Code of Ethics. Educator Cooper rejected the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and requested an evidentiary hearing.
- f. On November 15, 2023, Educator Cooper appeared for her 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, 2, and 7 in that Educator Cooper:

- Inappropriate communication with student(s).
- Inappropriate interactions with student(s).
- Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
- Violated district, state or federal policies or law.
- Disclosed student information with no educational purpose.

- g. The Hearing Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
1. Suspension of License for 1 year followed by a Probation of License for 2 years;
  2. Assess a \$400 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
  3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
    - a. Title: The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence (208p) Author: Dacher Keltner ISBN 10: 0143110292 ISBN 13: 978-0143110293.
    - b. Title: THE Classroom Management Book (320p) Author: Harry K. Wong, Rosemary T. Wong, Sarah F. Jondahl, Oretha F. Ferguson ISBN-13: 978-0976423393 ISBN-10: 0976423391
    - c. SPC17011 Introduction to Behavior: Supporting Effective Behavior (1 Credit Hour)
    - d. SPC17009 Foundations in Special Education: Legal and Ethical Issues (1 Credit Hour)
  4. Written Reflection on each training/book regarding how the educator will improve her interactions with students in the future. Due to the PLSB for approval 30 days prior to the end of suspension for suspension removal.
  5. Quarterly reports during probation from supervisor indicating improvement in the educator's classroom management and classroom pedagogy.

6. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- h. On November 16, 2023, Educator Cooper's attorney, was notified of the Hearing Subcommittee's final determination and recommendation by secure email. Educator Cooper did not respond to the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation thereby waiving her right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she may have under the Administrative Procedure Act, including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.
- i. 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 Charlene Cooper for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Cooper is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$400 will result in the continued suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Cooper 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 her license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Cooper's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sarah Moore". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair  
Arkansas State Board of Education