

# THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:  
MICHELE LEA BLAKELY  
MARCH 14, 2024

PLSB CASE NO. #24-088

## FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on March 14, 2024, 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 Michele Lea Blakely (“Educator Blakely”). Based upon Educator Blakely’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 Blakely a standard five-year teaching license on April 20, 2022, valid until December 31, 2026.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Blakely 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 November 13, 2023, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Blakely 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;*  
*Standard 3: an educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with*  
*professional practices.*

- d. Educator Blakely was notified on November 13, 2023, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on February 2, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standard 2 in that Educator Blakely:
  - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
  1. Probation of License for 2 years.
  2. Assess a \$250.00 fine (due within 90 days of the 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. Code of Ethics Training Provided by the PLSB (1.5 Hours)
    - c. Title: The 85% Solution: How Personal Accountability Guarantees Success -- No Nonsense, No Excuses (256p) Author: Linda Galindo  
ISBN 10: ISBN 13: 9780470500163.
    - d. Title: Flipping the Switch: Unleash the Power of Personal  
Accountability Using the QBQ! (144 p) Author: John G. Miller ISBN  
10: 0399152334 ISBN 13: 978-0399152337.

- e. Title: You've Gotta Connect: Building Relationships that Lead to Engaged Students, Productive Classrooms, and Higher Achievement (280 Pages) Author: James Alan Sturtevant ISBN-10: 1629500046 ISBN-13: 978-1629500046.
  - 4. Educator to provide written reflections on each training/book on how it will impact the educator's future interactions with colleagues and students.  
(due within 90 days of the state board order);
  - 5. Quarterly reports from the educator's supervisor on her interactions with colleagues and students; and
  - 6. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g. On February 2, 2024, Educator Blakely, was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by secure server. Educator Blakely accepted the Ethics 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.
- 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 Educator Michele Lea Blakely for her violation of the Code of Ethics.

- b. Educator Blakely is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$250.00 may result in the suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Blakely 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 Blakely'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