

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**January 8, 2015**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER**  
**IN RE LEANNA KELPINE (COOK), PLSB CASE NO. 14-060**

At its regular meeting on January 8, 2015, the Arkansas State Board of Education (Board) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee for disciplinary action against the teaching license of LeAnna Kelpine (Cook). Based upon Ms. Kelpine (Cook)'s consent to the 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 LeAnna Kelpine (Cook) a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2009 valid until December 31, 2013.
- b. The Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Ms. Kelpine (Cook) 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. The subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Ms. Kelpine (Cook) violated Standard 7: An educator refrains from using, possessing and/or being under the influence of alcohol, tobacco, or unauthorized drugs or substances while on school premises or at school-sponsored activities involving students.
- d. Ms. Kelpine (Cook) was notified on November 15, 2013, of the subcommittee's authorization on November 8, 2013, to investigate this allegation.

- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on March 7, 2014, the subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate a violation of Standard 7 in that LeAnna Kelpine (Cook):

Was under the influence of alcohol while conducting classes, were behaving erratically in class and a subsequent test administered by the police for blood alcohol level, revealed a blood alcohol level of 27.

The subcommittee recommended that the State Board revoke Ms. Kelpine (Cook)'s license.

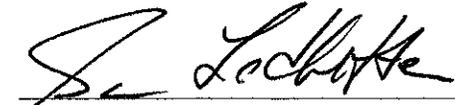
- f. Ms. Kelpine (Cook) was notified of the subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation on March 17, 2014, by certified and regular mail.
- g. Ms. Kelpine (Cook) rejected the subcommittee's recommendation on April 2, 2014, and requested an Evidentiary Hearing under the Administrative Procedure Act including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.
- h. The Evidentiary Hearing was held on September 5, 2014, and the Ethics Subcommittee found that there is reasonable belief that LeAnna Kelpine (Cook) violated Standard 7 of the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, but modified its previous recommendation and recommends that the State Board of Education suspend Ms. Kelpine (Cook)'s license for five (5) years with continued counseling with a licensed counselor, random drug testing, and at the end of the five-year suspension with a letter from a licensed counselor that Ms. Kelpine (Cook) is fit to return to the classroom.
- i. Ms. Kelpine (Cook) requested a State Board of Education Review; however, today she rescinds that request.

- j. At today's meeting, the subcommittee's recommendation and supporting documentation was 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 Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators, the Board adopts the recommendations of the subcommittee.
- b. Accordingly, the Board orders suspension of LeAnna Kelpine (Cook)'s license for five (5) years with continued counseling with a licensed counselor, random drug testing, and at the end of the five-year suspension with a letter from a licensed counselor that Ms. Kelpine (Cook) is fit to return to the classroom.
- c. Ms. Kelpine (Cook) is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within thirty (30) 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 Ms. Kelpine (Cook)'s professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

  
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Samuel Ledbetter, Chair  
Arkansas State Board of Education