

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

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER
IN RE BOAZ ROBERT COTTON, PLSB CASE NO. 14-132**

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 Boaz Robert Cotton. Based upon Mr. Cotton's failure to respond 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:

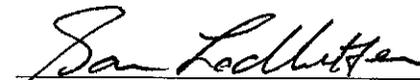
- a. The Arkansas Department of Education issued Boaz Robert Cotton a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2012, valid until December 31, 2016.
- b. The Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Mr. Cotton violated the Arkansas Department of Education 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 Mr. Cotton violated Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom.
- d. Mr. Cotton was notified on April 9, 2014, of the subcommittee's authorization on April 7, 2014, to investigate this allegation.

- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on October 3, 2014, the subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate a violation of Standard 1 in that Boaz Robert Cotton:
- A. Used profanity in the classroom, to include, but not limited to, words such as "bitch", "hell", "shit" and "f**k";
 - B. Touched the face of a student who was cursing loudly;
 - C. Guided that student into a restroom after the encounter and offered the student to "put his hands on" the educator's face;
 - D. Showed an inappropriate video entitled, "Child Birth or Getting Kicked in the Balls" to his class; and
 - E. Displayed favoritism by allowing select students to each lunch in his classroom, notwithstanding that it was in violation of school policy.
- f. The subcommittee recommended that the State Board place Mr. Cotton's license on probation for two (2) years and assess a fine of \$75.
- g. Mr. Cotton was notified of the subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation on October 6, 2014, by certified and regular mail. Mr. Cotton did not respond to the recommendation and he did not request a hearing thereby waiving his right to any further notice or hearing or any other rights he might 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 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 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 that Boaz Robert Cotton's license be placed on probation for two (2) years and assesses a fine of \$75.
- c. Mr. Cotton 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 his license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Mr. Cotton's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Samuel Ledbetter, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education