

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
AUGUST 13, 2015**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND ORDER
IN RE SARAH ASHTON WOODS, PLSB CASE NO. 15-113**

At its regular meeting on August 13, 2015, 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 Sarah Ashton Woods (“Educator Woods”). Based upon Educator Woods’ failure to respond to the Ethics 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 Educator Woods a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2014, valid until December 31, 2018.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Woods violated the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing the Code of Ethics for Arkansas Educators (“Code of Ethics”) promulgated pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-422 and 6-17-428.
- c. On March 24, 2015, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Woods violated Standard 1: An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom.
- d. On April 2, 2015, Educator Woods was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee’s authorization to investigate this allegation.

e. On June 5, 2015, after considering the investigator's report and evidence, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that reasonable belief existed to substantiate a violation of Standards 1 in that Educator Woods:

- Called student members of the high school volleyball team retards and asked them if they needed to reserve the special education classroom for them;
- Asked members of the junior high volleyball team if they needed to go to the special education room because they were practicing as if they belonged in those classes; and
- Suggested to members of the junior high volleyball team (girls ages from 11-14) that they take prenatal vitamins for more energy.

The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the Board issue Educator Woods a written warning.

- f. On June 9, 2015, Educator Woods was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail.
- g. Educator Woods did not respond within the accepted period of time to the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and did not request a hearing before the Board thereby waiving her right to any further notice or hearing or any other rights she 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 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 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 Code of Ethics, the Board adopts the recommendations of the Ethics Subcommittee.
- b. Accordingly, the Board admonishes Educator Woods for her violation of the Code of Ethics and issues a written warning.
- c. Educator Woods is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.
- d. This order shall remain for two (2) years in her professional licensure file, but shall remain permanently in the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Toyce Newton, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education