

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
APRIL 14, 2016**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER
IN RE LUKE SANDLIN HAMMOND, PLSB CASE NO. 16-038**

At its regular meeting on April 14, 2016, 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 Luke Sandlin Hammond (“Educator Hammond”). Based upon Educator Hammond’s failure to respond to 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 Hammond a standard five-year license on January 1, 2014, valid until December 31, 2018.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Hammond 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 November 4, 2015, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Hammond violated Standards 1 and 2: 1. An educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom. 2. An educator maintains competence regarding his or her professional practice inclusive of skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position.

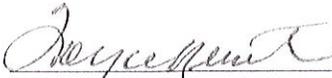
- d. On November 6, 2015, Educator Hammond was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate the allegations.
- e. On February 5, 2016, after considering the investigator's report and evidence, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found reasonable belief that Educator Hammond violated Standard 2 when he:
- Inappropriately searched or communicated on a phone app during instructional or school hours.
- The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the Board issue Educator Hammond a written warning.
- f. On February 10, 2016, Educator Hammond was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail.
- g. Educator Hammond did not respond to the recommendation within the required thirty (30) day period, thereby waiving his right to any further notice, 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 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 Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation.
- b. Accordingly, the Board admonishes Educator Hammond for his violation of the Code of Ethics and issues a written warning.

- c. Educator Hammond is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics may result in more severe discipline, including permanent revocation of his license.
 - d. This order shall remain for two (2) years in Educator Hammond's professional licensure file, but shall remain permanently in the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.
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IT IS SO ORDERED.



Toyce Newton, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education