

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
November 12, 2015**

RE: SHARON D. DAVIS-WILLIAMS; LICENSE WAIVER REQUEST

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its meeting on November 12, 2015, the Arkansas State Board of Education (“Board”) heard Sharon D. Davis-Williams’ (“Educator Davis-Williams”) request for a waiver of a disqualifying offense for teacher licensing under Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-410. Based upon the testimony and evidence presented, in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act, Ark. Code Ann. § 25-15-101 et seq., the Board hereby states as follows:

1. Findings of Fact:
 - a. On or before July 14, 2015, the Department learned that, in 2015, Educator Davis-Williams was convicted by a jury of violating Georgia’s RICO Act, which, pursuant to the provisions of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-410 et seq., disqualified her from licensure and or employment in a public school.
 - b. On July 14, 2015, via letter sent by certified and regular mail, the Department notified Educator Davis-Williams of her disqualification from licensure and employment in a public school. Additionally, the Department notified Educator Davis-Williams of her option to request a waiver from the Board.
 - c. On August 27, 2015, Educator Davis-Williams, through her attorney, Teresa A. Mann, requested a waiver from the Board.
 - d. On November 12, 2015, Educator Davis-Williams and her attorney, Valerie Bailey, were present at the waiver hearing conducted before the Board.
 - e. At the waiver hearing, the Board considered:
 - i. The educator’s age at the time of the offense;

- ii. The circumstances surrounding the offense;
 - iii. The length of time since the offense;
 - iv. The educator's subsequent work history;
 - v. The educator's employment and character references; and
 - vi. Other evidence demonstrating that the applicant does not pose a threat to the health or safety of school children or school personnel.
- f. A motion was made to suspend Educator Davis-Williams' license pending the outcome of her criminal appeal.
- g. The motion passed by a vote of 7-1.
- h. Upon the final resolution of her criminal appeal, Educator Davis-Williams must come before the Board for a final review of her waiver request.
2. Conclusions of Law:
- a. The State Board of Education may consider certain enumerated offenses as a disqualification for licensing. *See* Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-17-410(c), 6-17-410(d)(A)(5) and 6-17-411. This includes offenses which have been expunged, sealed, and pardoned by the governor.
- b. Upon consideration of the evidence presented at the meeting and pursuant to Ark. Code Ann. §§ 6-11-105, 6-17-410 and 25-15-201 et seq., the Arkansas State Board of Education suspends Educator Davis-Williams' license pending the outcome of her criminal appeal. Upon the final resolution of her criminal appeal, Educator Davis-Williams must appear before the Arkansas State Board of Education for a final review of her waiver request.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Toyce Newton, Chair
State Board of Education