

**BEFORE THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
FEBRUARY 11, 2016**

**FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER
IN RE HEATHER LEIGH PETERS, PLSB CASE NO. 16-001**

At its regular meeting on February 11, 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 Heather Leigh Peters (“Educator Peters”). Based upon Educator Peters’ consent 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 Peters a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2015, valid until December 31, 2019.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Peters 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 August 7, 2015, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into the allegation that Educator Peters 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 August 17, 2015, Educator Peters was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. On December 4, 2015, after considering the investigator's report and evidence, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found reasonable belief that Educator Peters violated Standards 1 and 2 when she:
 - Allowed or otherwise caused an inappropriate picture of herself to be posted on a school associated social media site where students could see the picture; and
 - Allowed or otherwise caused an inappropriate picture of herself to be posted on a school associated social media site where parents and/or students could see the picture.

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

- f. On December 14, 2015, Educator Peters was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's reasonable belief determination and recommendation by certified and regular mail.
- g. On December 15, 2015, Educator Peters accepted the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation, thereby waiving her right to any further notice, 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 Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation.

- b. Accordingly, the Board admonishes Educator Peters for her violation of the Code of Ethics and issues a written warning.
- c. Educator Peters 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 Educator Peters' 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