

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

**IN RE THE MATTER OF:
BETH ELISE VACCARO
FEBRUARY 13, 2025**

PLSB CASE NO. 24-175

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on February 13, 2025, the Arkansas State Board of Education (“Board”) accepted the recommendation of the Professional Licensure Standards Board Ethics Hearing Subcommittee (“Ethics Hearing Subcommittee”) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Educator Beth Elise Vaccaro (“Educator Vaccaro”). Based upon Educator Vaccaro’s acceptance of the Ethics Hearing 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 Vaccaro a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2020, valid until December 31, 2024.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Vaccaro 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. On March 1, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Vaccaro violated *Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom; Standard 2: an educator maintains competence regarding his or her professional practice, inclusive of professional and ethical behavior, skills, knowledge, dispositions, and responsibilities relating to his or her organizational position; and Standard 7: an educator maintains the confidentiality of information about students*

and colleagues obtained in the course of the educator's professional services that is protected under state law or regulations, federal law or regulations or the written policies of the educator's school district, unless disclosure serves a professional purpose as allowed or required by law or regulations.

- d. Educator Vaccaro was notified on March 4, 2024, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on June 7, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1, 2, and 7 of the Code of Ethics. Educator Vaccaro rejected the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and requested an evidentiary hearing.
- f. On November 13, 2024, Educator Vaccaro and her attorney appeared for her evidentiary hearing before the Hearing Subcommittee. After consideration of the testimony, evidence, and arguments presented at the evidentiary hearing, the Hearing Subcommittee found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1, 2, and 7 in that Educator Vaccaro:
 - Inappropriate communication with student(s).
 - Inappropriate interactions with student(s).
 - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
 - Violated district, state or federal policies or law.
 - Shared confidential student info without an educational purpose.
- g. The Hearing Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Probation of License for 2 years;
 2. Assess a \$250.00 fine (due within 90 days of State Board Order);
 3. Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:

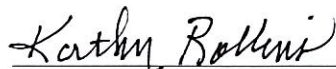
- a. Code of Ethics Training Provided by the PLSB (1.5 Hours)
 - b. Title: I Notice: A Step-by-Step Guide to Transform Student Potential Through Building Intentional Relationships Author: Claire E. Hallinan ISBN-10: 1733035613 ISBN-13: 978-1733035613
 - c. Title: The 85% Solution: How Personal Accountability Guarantees Success -- No Nonsense, No Excuses (256p) Author: Linda Galindo ISBN 10: ISBN 13: 9780470500163
 - d. Title: The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence (208p) Author: Dacher Keltner ISBN 10: 0143110292 ISBN 13: 978-0143110293
 - e. Harvard Implicit Bias Survey
4. Written reflection on each book/training on how they will impact the educator's future interactions with students. Due to the PLSB for approval by May 30, 2025;
 5. Quarterly reports from educator's supervisor while on probation regarding how educator's interactions with students are progressing; and
 6. Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- h. On November 18, 2024, Educator Vaccaro's attorney was notified of the Hearing Subcommittee's final determination and recommendation by secure email. Educator Vaccaro accepted the Hearing Subcommittee's recommendation, thereby waiving her right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights she may have under the Administrative Procedure Act, including those rights set forth in Ark. Code Ann. §§ 25-15-211 and 25-15-212.

- i. At today's meeting, the Ethics Hearing 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, 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 Ethics Hearing Subcommittee's recommendations and enacts the sanctions accordingly. The Board admonishes Educator Beth Vaccaro for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Vaccaro is cautioned that her non-payment of the assessed fine of \$250.00 may result in the suspension of her license until the fine is paid in full.
- c. Educator Vaccaro is cautioned that further violations of the Code of Ethics or failure to pay the fine within ninety (90) days from the date of this order may result in more severe discipline including permanent revocation of her license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Vaccaro's professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Kathy Rollins, Vice-Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education