

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
LADONNA JOY OATES
NOVEMBER 7, 2024

PLSB CASE NO. 24-265

FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW, AND ORDER

At its regular meeting on November 7, 2024, 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 LaDonna Joy Oates (“Educator Oates”). Based upon Educator Oates’ acceptance of 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 Oates a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2022, valid until December 31, 2026.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Oates 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 June 7, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Oates violated *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 3: an educator honestly fulfills reporting obligations associated with professional practices.

- d. Educator Oates was notified on June 10, 2024, of the Ethics Subcommittee's authorization to investigate this allegation.
- e. After considering the investigator's report and evidence on September 6, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 2 and 3 in that Educator Oates:
 - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
 - Violated district, state or federal policies or law.
 - Falsification of documents.
- f. The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
 1. Permanent Revocation of License;
 2. Assess a \$500.00 fine (due within 90 days of the State Board Order);
- g. On September 10, 2024, Educator Oates was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by secure server. Educator Oates rejected the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation and requested an evidentiary hearing. On October 11, 2024, educator Oates withdrew her request for the evidentiary hearing and accepted the Ethics 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.
- 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, 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 Subcommittee's recommendations and enacts the sanctions accordingly. The Board admonishes Educator LaDonna Oates for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Oates professional licensure file and the confidential files of the Professional Licensure Standards Board.

IT IS SO ORDERED.



Dr. Sarah Moore, Chair
Arkansas State Board of Education