

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
CARY JASON COSSEY
FEBRUARY 13, 2025

PLSB CASE NO. 24-276

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 Subcommittee (“Ethics Subcommittee”) for disciplinary action against the teaching license of Cary Jason Cossey (“Educator Cossey”). Based upon Educator Cossey’s 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 Cossey a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2022, valid until December 31, 2026.
- b. The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Cossey 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 Cossey violated *Standard 1: an educator maintains a professional relationship with each student, both in and outside the classroom; and 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.

- d. Educator Cossey 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 December 6, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee unanimously found that a preponderance of evidence existed to substantiate violation of Standards 1 and 2 in that Educator Cossey:
 - Failure to properly supervise student(s).
 - Inappropriate communication with student(s).
 - Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
 - Violated district, state or federal policies or law.
- f. The Ethics 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 the State Board Order);
 - (3) Require Educator to complete the following coursework/readings:
 - (a) Title: The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence
(208p) Author: Dacher Keltner ISBN 10: 0143110292
 - (b) Title: The 85% Solution: How Personal Accountability Guarantees Success -- No Nonsense, No Excuses (256p) Author: Linda Galindo
ISBN 13: 9780470500163
 - (c) ERC23007: Code of Ethics Part Four: Professional Responsibilities
(1 Credit Hour)


- (4) Educator to provide written reflections on each training/book indicating how they will affect their future interactions/communication with students. Due to the PLSB for approval within 90 days of the State Board Order;
 - (5) Quarterly reports from the educator's current supervisor indicating how the educator's interactions/communication with students and professionalism have improved; and
 - (6) Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g. On December 7, 2024, Educator Cossey's attorney was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by secure email. Educator Cossey accepted the Ethics Subcommittee's recommendation, thereby waiving his right to any further notice, hearing, or any other rights he 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 Cary Cossey for his violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b. Educator Cossey is cautioned that his non-payment of the assessed fine of \$250.00 may result in the suspension of his license until the fine is paid in full.

- c. Educator Cossey 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 his license.
- d. This order shall remain permanently in Educator Cossey'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