

THE ARKANSAS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

IN RE THE MATTER OF:
CYNTHIA ANNETTE MURPHY
FEBRUARY 13, 2025

PLSB CASE NO. 24-279

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 Cynthia Annette Murphy (“Educator Murphy”). Based upon Educator Murphy’s failure to respond 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:

1) Findings of Fact

- a) The Arkansas Department of Education issued Educator Murphy a standard five-year teaching license on January 1, 2019, valid until December 31, 2023.
- b) The Ethics Subcommittee received an allegation that Educator Murphy 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 10, 2024, the Ethics Subcommittee authorized an investigation into allegations that Educator Murphy 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 Murphy 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 2 and 3 in that Educator Murphy:
- Exhibited inappropriate disposition inclusive of professional and ethical behavior.
 - Violated district, state or federal policies or law.
 - Falsified records.
- f) The Ethics Subcommittee recommended that the State Board take the following actions:
- (1) Probation of License for 1 year;
 - (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) ERC23007: Code of Ethics Part Four: Professional Responsibilities (1 Credit Hour)
 - (b) ERC23012: Code of Ethics Part Nine: Professional Responsibilities II (1 Credit Hour)
 - (c) Title: The Power Paradox: How We Gain and Lose Influence (208p)
Author: Dacher Keltner ISBN 10: 0143110292
 - (4) Educator to provide written reflections on each training/book on how they will impact the educator's professional practices in the future. Due to the PLSB for approval within 90 days of the State Board Order;


- (5) Quarterly reports from the educator's supervisor while on probation regarding the educator's professional practices; and
- (6) Require Educator to pay all associated costs.
- g) On December 6, 2024, Educator Murphy was notified of the Ethics Subcommittee's initial determination and recommendation by secure email. Educator Murphy failed to respond to 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.

2) 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 Cynthia Murphy for her violation of the Code of Ethics.
- b) Educator Murphy 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 Murphy 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 Murphy'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