

Marcus Matthews
Formal Reprimand

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: Mr. Matthews, a middle school teacher, was reported by Shelby County Schools for inappropriate communication as defined under Board rule. Shelby County Schools suspended Mr. Matthews for two days as a result. Mr. Matthews showed his class a video clip of his appearance on the Maury Povich show discussing his book "I'm Not the Father" after students inquired about his television appearance. During the video, Mr. Matthews references circumstances surrounding his experience with false paternity.

Applicable Rule: 0520-02-03-.09(1)(b) defines Formal Reprimand as a less harsh licensing action than the suspension, revocation or denial of a license, which admonishes an educator for certain conduct under this rule. An educator who has been reprimanded by the Board will receive a letter from the State Board of Education, which will become part of the educator's state and local board, indicating that the inappropriate conduct is discouraged and shall be subject to further disciplinary action if repeated.

0520-02-03-.09(1)(d) defines inappropriate communication (non-explicit) as any communication between an educator and a student that is beyond the scope of the educator's professional responsibilities. Examples of such non-explicit inappropriate communications include...those communications that discuss the teaching staff member's or student's past or current romantic relationships.

0520-02-03-.09(3)(h) provides that the Board may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator's license for any offense contained in paragraph (5) of this rule.

0520-02-03-.09(5)(a)(5)(i) provides that an individual holding an educator's license who is found to have engaged in non-explicit inappropriate communication with a student shall be subject to a disciplinary action within the range of a suspension for no less than three (3) months up to and including revocation.

0520-02-03-.09(5)(a)(e) states nothing in this rule shall prohibit the State Board from imposing a disciplinary action outside of the uniform discipline range upon good cause shown in extraordinary circumstances.

Status: Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board's intent to **formally reprimand** his educator license based upon these findings. Respondent received said notice.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

N/A

The Recommendation:

The Board staff recommends that the Board approve the signed Consent Order submitted by the Respondent for the formal reprimand of his license based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.