
Bobby Pruitte
Suspension, 3 Months with Proof of Professional Development

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: Mr. Pruitte was reported to the Board relating to an incident occurring on or about October 29, 2021, wherein Mr. Pruitte showed a 12-minute video on the history of China to his seventh (7th) grade social studies class. The video was not approved by Wilson County Schools and was found to discuss inappropriate material for seventh (7th) grade students. Additionally, Mr. Pruitte was reported to the Board on December 30, 2021, after a parent complained that Mr. Pruitte made inappropriate (non-explicit) comments to a student. Mr. Pruitte admitted to making comments in his class that could possibly be construed as intimidating but denied jeopardizing student safety.

Applicable

Law/Rule: T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(7) provides that an educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(8) provides that an educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the emotional well-being of the student.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(9) provides that an educator shall not intentionally expose the student to embarrassment or disparagement.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(19) provides that an educator shall maintain a professional approach with students at all times.

0520-02-03-.09(1)(k) defines Other Good Cause as conduct that calls into question the fitness of an educator to hold a license including, but not limited to, violation of any provision in the Teacher Code of Ethics as contained in T.C.A. §§ 49- 5-1001, et seq.

0520-02-03-.09(1)(p) defines Suspension, with regard to licensure action by the State Board, suspension means the nullification of an educator's license for a predetermined term, after which the license may be reinstated.

0520-02-03-.09(1)(e) 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.

0520-02-03-.09(3)(i) provides that the Board may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator's license for other good cause as defined in subparagraph (1)(k) of this rule.

0520-02-03-.09(3)(j) provides that the Board may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator's license for any offense contained in paragraphs (4) and/or (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)(8) provides that an individual holding an educator's license who is found to have violated the teacher code of ethics contained in T.C.A. Title 49, Chapter 5, Part 10 shall be subject to a disciplinary action within the range of a formal reprimand up to and including revocation.

Status: Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board's intent to **suspend** his educator license based upon these findings. Respondent received said notice and agreed to the terms of the proposed Consent Order.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

N/A

The Recommendation:

The Board staff recommends that the Board approve the signed Consent Order submitted by Respondent based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.