

Wendy Pillow
Voluntary Surrender

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: Ms. Pillow admitted to exchanging an excessive volume of text messages and phone calls with a male student enrolled at a school other than the one Ms. Pillow was employed at, during the 2022-2023 school year. The inappropriate content of the messages falls outside the scope of her professional duties as an educator. Ms. Pillow resigned from Wilson County Schools.

*Applicable Law
/Rule:*

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. Examples of such non-explicit inappropriate communication include, but are not limited to, those communications that discuss the educator’s or student’s past or current romantic relationships; those that include the use of profanities or obscene language; those that are harassing, intimidating, or bullying; those that attempt to establish an inappropriate personal relationship with a student; and those that are related to personal or confidential information regarding another school staff member or student.

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(3)(i) provides that the State Board of Education 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(5)(a)(6)(i) provides 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)(9) 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.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(14) provides an educator shall ensure interactions with the student take place in transparent and appropriate settings.

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

Status: Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board's intent to **revoke** Respondent's educator license based upon these findings. Respondent received said notice and agreed to the voluntary surrender of Respondent's license.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

May 2021 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license for inappropriate communication with a student via electronic means

Nov 2020 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license for inappropriate communication with a student via electronic means

February 2019 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license for inappropriate communication with a student via text messages

The Recommendation:

Board counsel recommends the Board approve the signed Consent Order submitted by the Respondent for the voluntary surrender of Respondent's license based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.