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**Jeffrey Paulson**  
**Suspension, Two (2) Years with Proof of Treatment**

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**The Background:**

*Prior History:* N/A

*Facts:* On March 28, 2025, Mr. Paulson was in possession of alcohol, consumed alcohol, and was suspected of being under the influence of alcohol on school premises while students were present. Multiple containers of alcohol were discovered in Mr. Paulson's office, and he submitted to testing for alcohol which returned positive results. Mr. Paulson was suspended pending an investigation into his conduct but subsequently resigned his position.

*Applicable Law*

*/Rule:* 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) provides, "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. Reinstatement shall be subject to the completion of any terms and conditions contained in the order of suspension. With regard to employment action taken by a public or non-public school or school district, suspension means the temporary removal of an educator from his or her regular duties with or without pay. Suspension also includes the placement of an educator on administrative leave pending investigation into allegations of misconduct."

0520-02-03-.09(3)(c) provides, "The State Board of Education may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator's license for . . . being on school premises, school property, at a school-related activity involving students, or on official school business, while possessing, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs."

0520-02-03-.09(3)(i) provides, "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(3)(j) provides, "The State Board of Education 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)(3)(i) provides, "An individual holding an educator's license who is found to be in possession of, consuming, or under the influence of alcohol, or illegal substances while on school premises or property when children are present shall be subject to a disciplinary action within the range of suspension for not less than one (1) year up to and including revocation."

0520-02-03-.09(5)(a)(9)(i) provides, "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)(18) provides that an educator shall, "Refrain from the use of alcohol while on school or LEA premises or during a school activity at which students are present."

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

#### **Board Action Consistency Considerations:**

May 2025 - Board approved a two-year suspension of an educator's license, with proof of treatment, for being under the influence of alcohol on school property.

February 2024 – Board approved a two-year suspension of an educator's license, with proof of treatment, for being under the influence of alcohol on school property.

November 2023 – Board approved a two-year suspension of an educator's license, with proof of treatment, for being under the influence of alcohol on school property.

February 2023 – Board approved a two-year suspension of an educator's license, with proof of treatment, for being under the influence of alcohol on school property.

#### **The Recommendation:**

Board counsel recommends the Board approve the signed Consent Order submitted by the Respondent for the two (2) year suspension of Respondent's license with proof of treatment based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above, with reinstatement of Respondent's license contingent upon providing proof of treatment.