

**Rebecca Gilliam  
Denial**

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**The Background:**

*Prior History:* N/A

*Facts:* Ms. Gilliam held an academic permit that expired on June 30, 2025. Ms. Gilliam was reported in February 2025 for sending sexually explicit videos of herself to an 18-year-old student. No charges were brought against Ms. Gilliam due to the student being 18 at the time.

*Applicable Law*

*/Rule:* 0520-02-03-.09(1)(d) defines Inappropriate Communication (Explicit) as, “Any communication between an educator and a student that describes, represents, or alludes to sexual activity or any other illegal activity. This includes, but is not limited to, communication defined as sexual misconduct under T.C.A. § 49-5-417, communication defined as sexually related behavior under T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(15), and communication that would encourage illegal activity such as encouraging the use or purchase of illegal substances. This shall not be construed to prevent an educator from communication regarding sexual or illegal activities for educational purposes such as in teaching family-life curriculum pursuant to T.C.A. §§ 49-6-1307 et seq. or drug abuse resistance education pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-1-402 or to prevent an educator from upholding the educator's obligation as a mandatory reporter of child abuse, neglect, or child sexual abuse.”

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, “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)(ii) provides, “An individual holding an educator’s license who is found to have engaged in inappropriate communication of an explicit nature with a student shall be subject to permanent 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.”

0520-02-03-.09(6)(a)(4) provides, "If an individual teaching on a permit issued by the Commissioner is reported by a Director . . . and the misconduct, if substantiated, would warrant disciplinary action under this Rule if the individual had a license, the State Board may direct the Commissioner not to issue a subsequent permit upon expiration of the individual's current permit pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-5-106(a)."

T.C.A § 49-5-1003(b)(7) provides that educators 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)(19) provides that educators shall, "Maintain a professional approach with the student at all times."

*Status:* Respondent was sent notice via certified mail and electronic mail of the Board's intent to **deny** issuance of a subsequent permit. The certified mail was unclaimed, and Respondent failed to respond to electronic communication.

**Board Action Consistency Considerations:**

May 2024 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license after the educator had an inappropriate relationship with a student.

February 2024 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license after the educator had an inappropriate relationship with a student.

October 2021 – Board approved the voluntary surrender of an educator's license after the educator became emotionally involved with a student.

May 2021 – Board approved the voluntary permanent surrender of an educator's license after the educator had an inappropriate relationship with a student.

**The Recommendation:**

Board counsel recommends the Board approve the denial of any subsequent permits being issued to Respondent based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.