

MINUTES

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

Two Peachtree Street

Atlanta, Georgia

February 9, 2011

The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) met on Wednesday, February 9, 2011, at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present

Julia Bernath

Alice Clements

Penny Elkins

Dr. Adrian Epps

Bill Haskin

David Johnson

Stephanie Leggett

Andre Mountain

Rose Powell

Bettina Polite Tate

Jeannie Tucker

Dr. Lawrence Walters

Pam Walker

Dr. Debbie Wilkes

Valerie Williams

Members Absent

Marci Cawthon

Dan Weber

Meredith Hodges

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Wilkes called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. flag and a moment of silence.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Chair Wilkes called for approval of the agenda. Tanis Miller requested that we amend the agenda to include extending cases.

MOTION: (Powell / Epps) To approve the agenda as amended.

PSC ACTION: Approved

III. INDUCTION OF COMMISSIONERS

Chair Wilkes and Kelly Henson welcomed Bettina Polite Tate and Dr. Lawrence Walters to the Commission and swore them in. Kelly Henson read the following:

Bettina Polite Tate is the marketing and IB business and management instructor at Sol C. Johnson High School. She was selected as the 2011 Savannah Chatham County Public School System's district Teacher of the Year. She serves as co-chair of the Career Tech Department, the *High Schools That Work*'s site coordinator, primary DECA advisor and the Student Leadership Program teacher advisor. She is the founder of Youth of Elite Community Organization and Fully Armored Teen Camp, and is the co-chair of the Education Division of the Coastal Empire 2010 United Way Campaign Cabinet. Bettina earned a bachelor's degree and a master's degree from Savannah State University. She and her husband, Avon, have three children.

Lawrence Walters is the superintendent of the Lee County School System in southwest Georgia. He serves on the board of directors of the Georgia School Superintendents Association and the Lee County Board of Health.

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He previously served as a board member of the American Red Cross. He participated as a member of the committee to establish a "Vision for Public Education" in Georgia. Larry earned a doctorate from Ohio State University. He and his wife, Linda, have four children and six grandchildren.

IV. VISITORS

Chair Wilkes welcomed the visitors.

- Margaret Elliott, Professional Association of Georgia Educators
- Kristy Simpson, Law Office of B.A. Thomas
- Borquaye Thomas, Attorney
- Linda Fortson, Warren Fortson Law Office
- Bradford Wilson, Jr.

V. REVIEW HEARING

1. Kristy Dawn Simpson - Educator Case # 08-6-1516
Joan Roach - Hearing Officer
Rebecca Mick - PSC Attorney
Thomas Norquaye -Educator Attorney

MOTION: (Bernath / Leggett) To go into Executive Session and allow PSC staff (Gary Walker, Kevin Shumake, Kim Anderson, Nancy Teele and Tanis Miller) to remain.

ACTION: Approved

MOTION: (Epps / Williams) To come out of Executive Session and reconvene the Regular Session.

ACTION: Approved

MOTION: (Powell / Leggett) To adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law reached by the Administrative Law Judge. The decision of the Administrative Law Judge as indicated in the Initial Decision was hereby adopted and incorporated by reference herein and made the Final Decision of the Commission with the following specification. The Decision of the Administrative Law Judge as indicated in the Initial Decision was hereby adopted and incorporated by reference herein and made the Final Decision of the Commission with the following specification. The Commission hereby ordered that the certificate held by Kristy Dawn Simpson be Suspended for 90 contract days effective February 21, 2011 ending September 1, 2011.

ACTION: Approved

1. Marcus Bruno Morris - Educator Case # 07-8-108
Joan Roach - Hearing Officer
Rebecca Mick - PSC Attorney
Bradford Wilson, Jr. -Educator Attorney

MOTION: (Epps / ELkins) To go into Executive Session and allow PSC staff (Gary Walker, Kevin Shumake, Kim Anderson, Nancy Teele and Tanis Miller) to remain.

ACTION: Approved

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MOTION: (Tucker / Johnson) To come out of Executive Session and reconvene the Regular Session.

ACTION: Approved

MOTION: (Epps / Bernath) To adopt Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, of the Findings of Fact as indicated in the Initial Decision and to reject the remaining Findings of Fact. To adopt Conclusions of Law reached by the Administrative Law Judge. Having reviewed the entire record, after hearing argument from both sides, and giving due regard to the recommendation of the Administrative Law Judge, the Commission hereby rejected the Initial Decision entered in this matter. The Commission concluded that a greater sanction was appropriate in this particular case because the five day suspension recommended by the Administrative Law Judge did not reflect the seriousness with which the Commission viewed the Educator's violation of the rules applicable to educators. The Respondent admitted submitting plagiarized work and failing to attend the seminars as required. In doing so, the Respondent misused public funds and property because the program was funded by the School System. The Commission hereby ordered that the Georgia educator certificate held by Marcus Bruno Morris shall be suspended for a period of twenty consecutive contract days to begin on February 21, 2011, ending March 18, 2011.

ACTION: Approved

Abstention: Andre Mountain

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wilkes called for the meeting to be adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

PSC ACTION: Approved