



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Chris Reykdal Old Capitol Building · PO BOX 47200 · Olympia, WA 98504-7200 · <http://www.k12.wa.us>

RE: Tiffany Buissink
OSPI Case Number: D14-12-099
Document: Suspension

Regarding your request for information about the above-named educator; attached is a true and correct copy of the document on file with the State of Washington, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Office of Professional Practices. These records are considered certified by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Certain information may have been redacted pursuant to Washington state laws. While those laws require that most records be disclosed on request, they also state that certain information should not be disclosed.

The following information has been withheld: **None**

If you have any questions or need additional information regarding the information that was redacted, if any, please contact:

OSPI Public Records Office
P.O. Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200
Phone: (360) 725-6372
Email: PublicRecordsRequest@k12.wa.us

You may appeal the decision to withhold or redact any information by writing to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, OSPI P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200.



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IN THE MATTER OF THE EDUCATION)	
CERTIFICATE OF)	OPP No. D14-12-099
)	
TIFFANY BUISSINK)	AGREED ORDER
Certificate No. 483105C)	OF SUSPENSION
_____)	

I. INTRODUCTION

After receiving and investigating a complaint from Walla Walla Public Schools (WWPS) regarding the above referenced educator, and based upon information available as of the date of this Agreed Order, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, through his undersigned designee, does hereby stipulate, by and between the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Office of Professional Practices, and Tiffany Buissink, that the Washington Education Certificate No. 483105C shall be suspended for not less than four (4) months with conditions enumerated below, based on the following Finding of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

II. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On August 9, 2011, Tiffany Buissink, hereafter referred to as Ms. Buissink, was issued Washington Education Certificate, No. 483105C. That certificate expired June 30, 2014, and has not been renewed. The events listed in the following Findings of Fact occurred while Washington Education Certificate No. 483105C was valid.

Walla Walla Public Schools

2. During the 2011-12 school year, Ms. Buissink, a provisional high school English teacher, engaged in cell phone texting and personal communications with Walla Walla High School (WWHS) students that was deemed not appropriate under school policy.

3. During the 2011-12 school year, Ms. Buissink was involved in an inappropriate, peer-like, non-sexual relationship with A.D., a female WWHS student.
 - a. From about the midpoint of first semester until early March 2012, Ms. Buissink engaged in conversations with A.D., including, but not limited to, A.D.'s sexuality, A.D.'s relationships with other students, details about Ms. Buissink's personal history and trauma, and Ms. Buissink's sexual orientation.
4. On March 6, 2012, Pete Peterson, WWHS Principal, was contacted by a student's mother about Ms. Buissink sending text messages to A.D.
 - a. On March 7, 2012, Mr. Peterson met with Ms. Buissink about the complaint of sending a student text messages. Mr. Peterson told Ms. Buissink not to engage in further conversations with A.D.
 - b. Following the meeting with Mr. Peterson, Ms. Buissink sent text messages to A.D. saying that she (Ms. Buissink) could lose her job.
5. On March 12, 2012, Ms. Buissink was placed on administrative leave.
6. On April 16, 2012, Ms. Buissink resigned her position as a provisional teacher with WWPS.

Pasco School District

7. During the 2012-13 school year, Ms. Buissink was regularly employed as a substitute teacher at Pasco High School (PHS).
8. Ms. Buissink was hired as a full-time provisional teacher for the 2013-14 school year.
9. On August 21, 2013, Ms. Buissink participated in PSD training on boundaries with students, including PSD Policy No. 5260, Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students.

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10. Ms. Buissink was investigated by PSD for giving a student a ride in her personal vehicle to an off-site health center and texting a female senior, A.B., about personal matters.

11. PSD also investigated Ms. Buissink's meeting A.B. at a public, off-campus restaurant; Ms. Buissink paid for the meal.

12. Ms. Buissink asked A.B. to create a tattoo as part of an art project.

13. Ms. Buissink and A.B. texted each other about non-sexual personal matters on a number of occasions. Ms. Buissink invited A.B. and A.B.'s adult cousin to Ms. Buissink's apartment to watch television shows on several occasions. A.B. and her cousin attended Ms. Buissink's residence on two occasions. A.B. also visited Ms. Buissink's residence by herself on two occasions.

14. On March 12, 2014, Ms. Buissink was placed on administrative leave.

15. Ms. Buissink received a 10-day suspension from the PSD Superintendent for the foregoing conduct on June 17, 2014.

16. On May 27, 2015, Ms. Buissink resigned her position as a provisional teacher with PSD due to issues regarding reissuance of her certificate.

17. On April 21, 2016, Ms. Buissink participated in an interview with an OPP investigator, and submitted her signed statement on June 20, 2016.

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III. CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. RCW 28A.410 gives the Professional Educator Standards Board the authority to develop regulations determining eligibility for and certification of personnel employed in the common schools of the state of Washington. OSPI acts as the administrator of those statutes and regulations and has the authority to issue, reprimand, suspend, and revoke education certificates. RCW 28A.410.010, RCW 28A.410.090, WAC 181-86, and WAC 181-87 further implement OPSI's authority.

2. OSPI has jurisdiction over Ms. Buissink and the subject matter discussed herein.

3. Ms. Buissink committed acts of unprofessional conduct, pursuant to WAC 181-87-060(1).

4. There is clear and convincing evidence that Ms. Buissink committed unprofessional conduct. WAC 181-86-170 (Burden and standard of Proof).

5. Pursuant to WAC 181-86-080, 11 factors, at a minimum, are to be considered to determine the appropriate level and range of educator discipline:

1. The seriousness of the act(s) and the actual or potential harm to persons or property;
2. The person's criminal history including the seriousness and amount of activity;
3. The age and maturity level of participant(s) at the time of the activity;
4. The proximity or remoteness of time in which the acts occurred;
5. Any activity that demonstrates a disregard for health, safety or welfare;
6. Any activity that demonstrates a behavioral problem;
7. Any activity that demonstrates a lack of fitness;
8. Any information submitted regarding discipline imposed by any governmental or private entity as a result of acts or omissions;
9. Any information submitted that demonstrates aggravating or mitigating circumstances;
10. Any information submitted to support character and fitness; and
11. Any other relevant information submitted.

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6. Based on the foregoing facts and considering them in light of the 11 factors enumerated in WAC 181-86-080, and in light of WAC 181-86-070 (Grounds for Issuance of an order of suspension), and WAC 181-87-060(1), Ms. Buissink’s education certificate should be suspended for unprofessional conduct.

7. As a matter of compromise, the parties have reached this Agreed Order of Suspension in lieu of proceeding to hearing and litigating the related facts and issues before an Administrative Law Judge, as authorized by RCW 28A.300.120.

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IV. ORDER

THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that the Washington Education Certificate, No. 483105C, of Tiffany Buissink, be suspended for four (4) months, and that **REINSTATEMENT** of Ms. Buissink’s education certificate shall require the following: (1) successful completion of a recognized course on appropriate/inappropriate interactions between educators and students, mutually agreed upon by the Office of Professional Practices and Ms. Buissink; (2) Ms. Buissink will provide proof of completion of the training specified in 1; (3) submission of a new application, including Character and Fitness Supplement, provided by OPP and having Ms. Buissink’s fingerprints be checked by both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Washington State Patrol; and (4) Ms. Buissink will show that she meets all academic requirements for renewal/reinstatement of her education certificate. Reinstatement shall also be contingent upon Ms. Buissink’s fingerprint background check returning with no criminal convictions, occurring after the date of issuance of the Agreed Order of Suspension, that are listed in WAC 181-86-013, RCW 28A.410.090, or any other felony convictions. The cost of conformance to all reinstatement requirements will be the responsibility of Ms. Buissink.

DATED This 27th day of June 2017.

CHRIS REYKDAL
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Washington

Stipulated to and approved
For entry:

Signed: Dierk Meierbachtol
Chief Legal Officer
Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Signed: Tiffany Buissink, Respondent

Signed: James A. Gasper, Attorney for Respondent
WSBA #20722

TIFFANY BUISSINK
AGREED ORDER OF SUSPENSION