



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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

IN THE MATTER OF THE EDUCATION)
CERTIFICATE OF)

JEFFREY PIETZ)
Certificate No. 359643D)

OPP No. D20-09-048

AGREED ORDER)
OF SUSPENSION)

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), under the authority granted by the laws of the state of Washington, having reviewed the file of the above-referenced case, and having considered the entire evidence contained therein, stipulates by and between the OSPI Office of Professional Practices (OPP) and Jeffrey Pietz, that the Washington Education Certificate No. 359643D of Jeffrey Pietz shall be suspended for twelve (12) months with conditions enumerated below, based on the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law set forth below:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Jeffrey Pietz was issued a Washington Education Certificate, No. 359643D on March 18, 1998. That certificate currently remains valid.
2. Mr. Pietz began coaching at Seattle Preparatory School ("the School" or "Seattle Prep") in 1992, when he was a 19-year-old sophomore at the University of Washington. When Mr. Pietz was hired the athletic director talked with him about the importance of maintaining clear boundaries with students, especially females, because he was so close in age with the students.

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JEFFREY PIETZ
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3. In his first year at the School, school year (SY) 1992-93, Mr. Pietz coached freshman football, freshman girls' basketball, and was the co-head coach for the varsity softball team.

4. Mr. Pietz eventually accepted a position as a math teacher at the School, and later as the School's athletic director. He continued to coach softball and girls' basketball, including the varsity softball team.

5. Mr. Pietz worked at the School for 14 years before resigning in June of 2006. He subsequently took a position with the Nine Mile Falls School District as a teacher and coach at Lakeside High School (Lakeside).

6. Mr. Pietz became Lakeside's athletic director in 2010.

7. Student A attended Seattle Prep from 1999-2003 and was a student athlete who Mr. Pietz taught and coached. Student A reported that Mr. Pietz spoke with her about personal matters, called and texted her after school hours, shared inside jokes and nicknames with her, went shopping to look at prom dresses with her and a few teammates on a team trip, and paid her special attention.

8. Mr. Pietz acknowledges that he had a stronger relationship and emotional connection with Student A when she was a student because they interacted all the time and that he had a sexual relationship with Student A beginning within a day of graduation and continuing during the summer after she graduated, when she was 18 years old.

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9. Student B attended Seattle Prep from 1998-2002 and was a student athlete who Mr. Pietz coached. Student B recalled that Mr. Pietz had certain students, including Student B, who he favored. She recalled that he engaged in a manner that was construed as flirting with these students, payed more attention to them, and had inside jokes with them. She recalled that Mr. Pietz took Student B and her friend, another student at the school, shopping. Student B alleges that Mr. Pietz attempted to kiss her in 2002, shortly after she had graduated. Mr. Pietz admits that he tried to kiss Student B, but states that this occurred in 2006, four years after Student B graduated.

10. Student C attended Seattle Prep from 2003-2007 and was a student athlete who Mr. Pietz coached. In an interview with OPP, Student C stated that Mr. Pietz communicated with Student C about personal matters during the school day and after the school day ended, took her and another student to the mall to go shopping for her boyfriend, and took her and other students out to eat outside of school hours.

11. Student D attended Seattle Prep between 2001 and 2005 and was a student athlete who Mr. Pietz taught and coached. In an interview with OPP, Student D stated that Mr. Pietz frequently held one-on-one meetings with her, spoke with her about personal matters, and spent time with her family outside of school hours. Mr. Pietz's interactions with Student D were the subject of an investigation in 2006. The investigation did not result in any disciplinary action against Mr. Pietz.

12. Under generally recognized standards of professional conduct, the conduct reported by these students falls outside the scope of professional conduct and crossed the boundaries that coaches and teachers are expected to maintain with students.

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13. After receiving communications from Student A and Student B describing Mr. Pietz's conduct, Kent Hickey, then President of Seattle Prep, forwarded the information to OSPI and OPP initiated an investigation.

14. Mr. Pietz admits that he fostered friendships with students, had nicknames for many students and that students had nicknames for him, shared inside jokes with students and they shared inside jokes with him, went to a student's house for a videogame tournament at the student's invitation, golfed with students, went to the mall, movies, and prom dress shopping with students at their invitation, and attended other events and activities outside of school at students' invitation while at Seattle Prep.

15. Interviews confirm Mr. Pietz favored some students and shared inside jokes with select students, to the exclusion of others.

16. OPP and APCAC found by clear and convincing evidence that Mr. Pietz demonstrated a lack of good moral character and personal fitness and engaged in unprofessional conduct.

17. Mr. Pietz understands that the conduct described by these students falls outside the bounds of generally recognized standards of professional conduct and voluntarily accepts a suspension and reinstatement conditions in order to resolve his case.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. Chapter 28A.410 RCW 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 statues and regulations and has the authority to issue, reprimand, suspend, and revoke education certificates. RCW 28A.410.010; RCW 28A.410.090. Chapters 181-86 and 181-87 of the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) further implement OSPI's authority.

2. OSPI has jurisdiction over Mr. Pietz and the subject matter of this action.
3. Mr. Pietz committed acts of unprofessional conduct pursuant to WAC 181-87-060 that constitute a flagrant disregard or clear abandonment of generally recognized professional standards in the course of assessment, treatment, instruction, or supervision of students; the behavior described by the students constitutes a pattern of behavior that demonstrates a lack of good moral character and/or personal fitness, as defined in WAC 181-86-013(4), -014.
4. Pursuant to WAC 181-86-070(1), Mr. Pietz "has admitted the commission of an act of unprofessional conduct or lack of good moral character or personal fitness and has presented to the superintendent of public instruction an agreed order to not serve as an education practitioner for a stated period of time and the superintendent of public instruction has agreed that the interest of the state in protecting the health, safety, and general welfare of students, colleagues, and other affected persons is adequately served by a suspension" and completion of certain specified conditions before requesting reinstatement of the suspended certificate.
5. Based on the foregoing facts, law, and stipulation, the Washington Education Certificate No. 359643D of Jeffrey Pietz should be suspended for having engaged in acts of unprofessional conduct and demonstrating a lack of good moral character or personal fitness.

ORDER

THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that the Washington Education Certificate, No. 359643D, of JEFFREY PIETZ be suspended for TWELVE (12) months from the effective date of this ORDER.

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JEFFREY PIETZ
AGREED ORDER OF SUSPENSION

REINSTATEMENT of Jeffrey Pietz's education certificate shall require:

- (1) The Educator must successfully complete a Psychological Evaluation which validates his ability to have unsupervised access to students in a school environment by a licensed psychologist/psychiatrist preapproved by OSPI;
- (2) The Educator shall provide written consent to the provider for purposes of completing the evaluation;
- (3) The Educator, if treatment is recommended as a result of the evaluation, shall complete any and all recommended treatment and provide evidence of successful completion or, if continuing treatment is recommended, provide proof of continued compliance in the program to OPP;
- (4) The Educator shall sign a consent allowing the examining psychologist/psychiatrist to provide OPP a summary of the Educator's treatment and the results of his/her evaluation;
- (5) The Educator must complete a professional staff-student boundaries class that is preapproved by OSPI;
- (6) The Educator must submit a new application, including Character and Fitness Supplement, provided by OPP;
- (7) The Educator must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check through both the Federal Bureau of Investigations and the Washington State Patrol;
- (8) The Educator's fingerprint background check must return 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 felony convictions;
AND
- (9) The Educator shall assume all costs of complying with the requirements of this Order.

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WAIVER OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

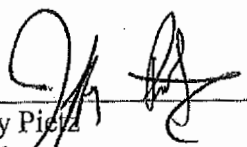
The Educator is aware that RCW 28A.410.090(3) and WAC 181-86-140 afford him/her the right to appeal a denial or discipline order issued by OSPI. Acknowledging this, the Educator knowingly and voluntarily waives his/her right to appeal by entering into this Agreed Order of Suspension and will take all actions and steps necessary to withdraw any pending appeal(s).

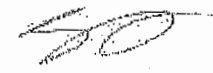
This order becomes final upon signature by all parties.

DATED this 5th day of September, 2023.

CHRIS REYKDAL
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Washington


Matt Schultz
Chief Legal and Civil Rights Officer


Jeffrey Pietz
Appellant


Elicia Johnson
WSBA # 50969
Attorney for Appellant