



# SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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IN THE MATTER OF THE EDUCATION )  
CERTIFICATE OF )

OPP No. D19-07-059

CARRI PRIESTLEY )  
Certificate No. 366695E )

FINAL ORDER  
OF SUSPENSION

After receiving and investigating a complaint from Yakima Public Schools (School District) regarding the above referenced educator, and based upon the facts available as of the date of this Proposed Order, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, through its undersigned designee, institutes this proceeding and finds, as described below, that CARRI PRIESTLEY (Educator) engaged in acts of unprofessional conduct to include WAC 181-87-055, and does hereby SUSPEND the Educator's Washington Education Certificate No. 366695E for not less than TWELVE (12) MONTHS with conditions enumerated below, based on the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law:

## I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On January 7, 1999, the Educator was issued Washington Education Certificate No. 366695E. The Educator's certificate will expire on July 1, 2023.

2. During the 2015–2019 school years, the Educator was employed by the School District at Ridgeview Elementary School as a Special Education teacher.

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3. On June 27, 2019, the Office of Professional Practices (OPP) within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) received a complaint from Dr. Jack Irion, Superintendent of the School District, alleging the Educator committed act(s) of unprofessional conduct pursuant to WAC 181-87 and lacks good moral character and/or personal fitness pursuant to WAC 181-86-013.

4. Between 2016 and 2019, the Educator was admitted and discharged from drug and alcohol treatment facilities and programs multiple times. More than once, the Educator discharged prior to completing treatment for medical and/or personal reasons. During this time, the Educator participated in multiple interviews with the School District regarding her alcohol and/or drug use affecting her job performance.

5. On January 6, 2016, the Educator was issued a Written Reprimand for distributing medication(s) to a student.

6. On May 2, 2016, the Educator was issued a Written Reprimand for use of her cell phone for personal business and engaging in personal conversations pertaining to relationships, sex, and alcohol at work.

7. On September 19, 2016, it was reported the Educator smelled strongly of alcohol at work.

8. On November 9, 2016, the Educator received a Letter of Direction regarding issues addressed during meetings between the Educator, a union representative, and the School District on September 9, 2016, and September 26, 2016, relating to concerns including but not limited to: cell phone use in the classroom, workplace comments about her personal life and alcohol use in presence of other employees, smelling strongly of alcohol on September 19, 2016, and arriving to work late on several occasions. Among other directives, the Educator was reminded of the School District's drug and alcohol policy and provided a copy of the School District's Operational Procedure 5258, Drug and Alcohol-Free Schools, Community and Workplace

9. On November 16, 2016, the Educator was placed on paid Administrative Leave pending a physician's medical clearance.
10. On June 29, 2016, the Educator received a 60-day Agreed Order of Suspension from OPP for failing to report a self-harming behavior disclosed to her by a student.
11. On March 21, 2017, the Educator received a Written Reprimand regarding smelling strongly of alcohol at work on September 19, 2016, as well as issues regarding isolation room use, and engaging in inappropriate conversations at work.
12. On June 9, 2017, the Educator received a written letter from the School District recommending the Educator seek counseling or other appropriate and available assistance for alcohol and/or substance abuse treatment.
13. On December 18, 2018, the Educator was placed on paid Administrative Leave pending an investigation into alleged intoxication on school premises. The Educator was provided with information regarding substance abuse employee assistance.
14. On December 19, 2018, the Educator participated in an interview with the School District.
15. On March 11, 2019, the Educator was placed on Administrative Leave after meeting with the School District to discuss drug and/or alcohol treatment.
16. On March 26, 2019, the Educator completed an evaluation with Barth & Associates. Conclusion, Educator has "Alcohol Use Disorder, F10.20 Severe." They recommended a "Medically Monitored Intensive Inpatient Residential Services Level 3.7" and to follow through with aftercare recommendations.
17. On March 30, 2019, the Educator entered treatment at Lakeside-Milam Recovery Centers.
18. On April 27, 2019, the Educator was discharged from Lakeside-Milam Recover Centers. She was diagnosed as "Alcohol use disorder, Severe." Follow-up treatment and aftercare was recommended.

19. On April 25, 2019, the School District received notice that the Educator was scheduled to complete treatment on April 27, 2019 and could return to work on April 29, 2019.

20. On May 16, 2019, the Educator received a Written Reprimand for the December 18, 2018, incident, was advised her drug and/or alcohol use was affecting her job performance and was provided with a copy of the School District's "Drug and Alcohol-Free Schools, Community, and Workplace Policy 5258.

21. On May 30, 2019, a paraeducator reported to building administration that the Educator seemed "impaired." The Educator consented to a blood alcohol ("BAC") test and received a BAC test result .046. According to building administrators, the Educator was acting erratic and seemed impaired, and smelled strongly of alcohol. According to Principal K.C. Mitchell, the Educator admitted to drinking into the early morning hours. The Educator was placed on Administrative Leave.

22. On May 30, 2019, the Educator was involved in a car accident. No other vehicles were involved. The Washington State Patrol responded and listed the accident due to a "medically induced issue due to pharmacology issue." A field sobriety test was not conducted.

23. On June 13, 2019, the Educator entered into a Resignation Agreement with the School District.

24. The Educator participated in an interview with OPP during its investigation.

25. OPP interviewed K.C. Mitchell (Ridgeview Elementary Principal), Steve McKenna (President of the Yakima Education Association), and Jennifer Tenney (Ridgeview Elementary Assistant Principal).

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## II. 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 statutes 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 the Educator and the subject matter of this action.
3. There is clear and convincing evidence the Educator lacks good moral character and personal fitness pursuant to WAC 181-86-013 and WAC 181-86-170.
4. There is clear and convincing evidence the Educator committed acts of unprofessional conduct pursuant to WAC 181-87-055 and WAC 181-86-170.
5. Pursuant to WAC 181-86-080, eleven 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 eleven factors enumerated in WAC 181-86-080, and in light of WAC 181-86-070, WAC 181-86-170, WAC 181-87-055, and WAC 181-86-013, the Educator's education certificate should be suspended for unprofessional conduct.

### **III. ORDER**

THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that the Washington Education Certificate No. 366695E of CARRI PRIESTLEY is **SUSPENDED**. The Educator may not request reinstatement of their education certificate for at least TWELVE (12) MONTHS from the effective date of this ORDER.

**REINSTATEMENT** of the Educator's education certificate shall require:

- (1) The Educator must successfully complete a SUBSTANCE ABUSE EVALUATION by a licensed substance abuse evaluation/treatment provider preapproved by OSPI;
- (2) The Educator shall provide written consent for OPP to release documents to the provider for purposes of completing the evaluation;
- (3) The Educator shall sign a consent allowing the examining substance abuse evaluation/treatment provider to provide OPP a summary of the Educator's treatment recommendations, if any, and the results of the evaluation;
- (4) 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;
- (5) The Educator must submit a new application, including Character and Fitness Supplement, provided by OPP;

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- (6) The Educator must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check through both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Washington State Patrol;
- (7) The Educator's fingerprint background check must return with no criminal convictions, occurring after the date of issuance of a Final Order of Suspension that are listed in WAC 181-86-013, RCW 28A.410.090, or any felony convictions; AND
- (8) The Educator shall assume all costs of complying with the requirements of this Order.

DATED this 1 day of October, 2021.

CHRIS REYKDAL  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
State of Washington

Signed: Tennille Jeffries-Simmons  
Chief of Staff