



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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

RE: Heather Stipulkosky
OSPI Case Number: D15-02-010
Document: Final Order of 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

HEATHER STIPULKOSKY
Certificate No. 390066R

OPP No. D15-02-010

FINAL ORDER
OF SUSPENSION

UNDER THE AUTHORITY granted by the laws of the state of Washington, and after receiving the file; conducting the “informal meeting” provided for in WAC 181-86-145; considering the evidence, the written submissions, and oral arguments of the parties; and considering the discussion and input provided by the Admissions and Professional Conduct Advisory Committee, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, through his designated Review Officer, Walt Bigby, enters this Order of Suspension based on the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On August 2, 2001, the Educator was issued Teacher Certificate No. 390066R. The Educator’s certificate will expire on June 30, 2019.
2. The Educator was employed with the School District from 2002 through the 2015–2016 school year as an elementary school teacher.
3. The Educator has had no previous disciplinary action through the Office of Professional Practices (“OPP”).

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4. On or about January 16, 2015, OPP, which is within the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (“OSPI”), received a complaint letter from Rebecca L. Miner, the Superintendent of the School District, alleging the Educator may have engaged in acts of unprofessional conduct that demonstrated flagrant disregard and clear abandonment of generally recognized professional standards as it pertains to the treatment and supervision of students “when she left and did not return to work on October 30, 2014 without informing anyone or arranging for the appropriate instruction and supervision of her classroom students.” The complaint letter alleged that, “[i]n so doing [the Educator] disrupted the educational process and potentially jeopardized the safety and well-being of the students under her responsibility.”

5. From approximately 2011 through 2014, several instances of erratic behavior, such as slurred speech, incoherent emails, and a pattern of absences and tardiness were reported in the Educator’s employment file.

6. During the 2014–2015 school year, the Educator was an elementary school teacher at Ridgecrest Elementary School with the School District.

7. On or about October 30, 2014, the Educator failed to pick up her students after their P.E. class. A search was conducted on school property, but the Educator could not be found. The school attempted to contact the Educator via her cell phone, but the Educator did not answer. Her cell phone was found later on the floor under papers in her class room. School administration called law enforcement and they were dispatched to the Educator’s home.

8. A substitute teacher had to be called in to cover the Educator’s class for the remainder of the day due to the Educator’s leaving of her class unattended.

9. Shoreline Police Department finally contacted the Educator at approximately 4:00 PM on October 30, 2014, at her residence. Law enforcement officials reported that the Educator was incoherent, but the Educator told them that no assistance was necessary.

10. On or about October 31, 2014, the Superintendent of the School District, sent the Educator a letter notifying her that she was being placed on paid administrative leave.
11. On or about July 16 through September 2, 2015, the Educator underwent an evaluation by a neurologist, Jean M. Millican, M.D. Dr. Millican stated the Educator is not fit for duty as a classroom teacher at that time.
12. On August 21, September 2, and September 25, 2015, the Educator underwent an evaluation by a Psychiatrist, Cheryl G. Hajek, M.D. Dr. Hajek stated that, on a more-probable-than-not basis, the Educator was not fit for a primary teaching role.
13. On or about February 3, 2016, the Educator and the School District entered into a settlement agreement. The Educator agreed to resign effective June 24, 2016.

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.410.090, RCW 28A.410.010, and WAC 181-86 and WAC 181-87 further implement OPSI's authority.
2. OSPI has jurisdiction over the Educator and the subject matter of this action.
3. The Educator committed acts of unprofessional conduct pursuant to WAC 181-87-060(1) when she left school for the day without informing administration or arranging for a substitute to take over her classroom.

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4. The Educator is not personally fit to serve as an Educator pursuant to WAC 181-86-013(3) due to a behavioral problem that endangers the educational welfare students, teachers, and other colleagues within the educational setting.

5. There is clear and convincing evidence that the Educator committed acts of unprofessional conduct pursuant to WAC 181-86-170.

6. 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.

7. 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 181-86-013(3), and WAC 181-87-060(1), the Educator's education certificate should be suspended for unprofessional conduct.

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III. ORDER

THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered that the Washington Education Certificate, No. 390066R of HEATHER STIPULKOSKY is **SUSPENDED**. The Educator may not reapply for her education certificate for at least one (1) month from the effective date of this ORDER.

REINSTATEMENT of Heather Stipulkosky's education certificate shall require:

- (1) The Educator must undergo an evaluation by a mutually agreed upon neurologist and must be deemed fit to return to work in the educational setting as a teacher;
- (2) The Educator must undergo an evaluation by a mutually agreed upon psychiatrist (M.D. level) and must be deemed fit to return to work in the educational setting as a teacher;
- (3) The Educator must submit a new application, including a Character and Fitness Supplement, provided by OPP;
- (4) The Educator must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check through both the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Washington State Patrol;
- (5) 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
- (6) The Educator shall assume all costs of complying with the requirements of this Order.

This order becomes final thirty (30) days after the postmarked date of mailing unless OSPI receives the certificate holder's written appeal within the thirty (30) day period. Appeals should be addressed to:

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Administrative Resources Services
PO Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504

DATED This 15th day of May, 2018.

CHRIS REYKDAL
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Washington

Signed: Dr. Walt Bigby
Review Officer

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FINAL ORDER OF SUSPENSION