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BEFORE THE TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF OREGON

In the Matter of the)
Educator License of)
MICHELE L. PATON)

STIPULATION OF FACTS AND
FINAL ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND

On January 19, 2021, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) received a misconduct report from the Salem-Keizer School District (District), indicating possible professional misconduct on the part of licensed educator, Michele L. Paton (Paton).

After review of the matters alleged, Paton and the Commission agree that their respective interests, together with the public interest, are best served by a stipulation to certain facts and the imposition of a Public Reprimand.

This Order sets forth the facts upon which the parties have agreed and the sanction to be imposed. In entering into this stipulation, Paton waives the right to a hearing to contest the findings of fact, conclusions of law and order set forth below.

By signing below, Paton acknowledges, understands, stipulates, and agrees to the following: (i) she has been fully advised of her rights to notice and a hearing to contest the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and order set forth below, and fully and finally waives all such rights and any rights to appeal or otherwise challenge this Stipulation of Facts and Final Order of Public Reprimand (Stipulation and Final Order); (ii) this Stipulation and Final Order is a public document and disclosed to the public upon request by the Commission; (iii) this Stipulation and Final Order is contingent upon and subject to approval and adoption by the Commission. If the Commission does not approve and adopt this Stipulation and Final Order, then neither Paton nor the Commission are bound by the terms herein; (iv) she has fully read this Stipulation and Final Order, and understands it completely; (v) she voluntarily, without any force or duress, enters into this Stipulation and Final Order and consents to issuance and entry of the Stipulated Final Order below; (vi) she states that no promise or representation has been made to induce her to sign this Stipulation and Final Order; and (vii) she has consulted with an attorney regarding this Stipulation and Final Order and has been fully advised with regard to her rights thereto, or waives any and all rights to consult with an attorney prior to entering into this Stipulation and Final Order and issuance and entry of the Stipulated Final Order below.

1 **STIPULATION OF FACTS**

- 2 1. The Commission has licensed Paton since March 31, 1998. Paton holds a
3 Professional Teaching License, with endorsements in Elementary-Multiple
4 Subjects (PK-12); English Language Arts (PK-12); Reading Intervention (PK-12)
5 and Specialization: Early Childhood Education, valid from March 15, 2018,
6 through April 30, 2023. During all relevant times, Paton was employed by the
7 Salem-Keizer School District (SKSD).
- 8 2. On January 19, 2021, the Commission received a report from the SKSD indicating
9 Paton had engaged in conduct that may be considered gross neglect of duty
10 and/or gross unfitness. Specifically, the district reported Paton worked for the
11 Oregon Department of Education (ODE) as a paid interim director while on paid
12 Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) leave with the SKSD in 2020.
- 13 3. Investigation determined that Paton was employed by SKSD as a teacher for the
14 online Enhanced Digital and Guided Education program. Paton had a signed
15 probationary contract with the SKSD, valid from June 2019, through August
16 2021. Paton's assigned work hours were from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday
17 through Friday. In 2020, Paton sought employment with ODE. During the hiring
18 process, Paton informed ODE that she was currently employed with the SKSD.
19 On July 1, 2020 Paton began her employment with ODE. Paton informed two
20 administrators she was employed with ODE, but failed to inform the SKSD.
- 21 4. From September 1, 2020, through November 30, 2020, Paton utilized the FFCRA
22 for paid leave with the SKSD. During this leave period, Paton continued working
23 for ODE on a full-time basis, averaging 8 hours a day for 40 hours a week. The
24 majority of the work hours with ODE would have corresponded to her scheduled
25 work hours with the SKSD. Paton's last paid workday with ODE was October 8,
26 2020. Upon learning of Paton's employment with ODE, the SKSD began an
27 inquiry into the matter. In an unsigned letter, dated December 18, 2020, Paton
28 wrote that she admitted to working for ODE and that her two job schedules only
29 overlapped for a few hours in the month of September 2020. On January 7, 2021,
30 Paton signed a separation agreement with the district effective June 17, 2021. As
31 part of the agreement, Paton paid the district her salary from September 1, 2020,
32 through October 2, 2020.

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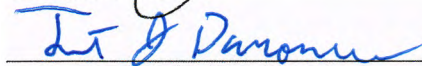
1 IT IS SO STIPULATED:

2 

3 Michele L. Paton

7/22/22

Date

4 

5 Trent Danowski, Deputy Director

7/29/2022

Date

6 Teacher Standards and Practices Commission

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9

CONCLUSION OF LAW

10 The conduct described sections three (3) through six (6) above constitutes gross
11 neglect of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it
12 incorporates, OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgement*), OAR 584-020-
13 0025(2)(e) (*Using district lawful and reasonable rules and regulations*); and OAR 584-
14 020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(2)(a) (*Apply for, accept, offer, or*
15 *assign a position of responsibility only on the basis of professional qualifications, and*
16 *will adhere to the conditions of a contract or the terms of the appointment*).

17 The Commission's authority to impose discipline in this matter is based upon
18 ORS 342.175.

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ORDER

21 The Commission adopts and incorporates herein the above findings of fact and
22 conclusions of law, and based thereon, imposes a Public Reprimand on Michele L.
23 Paton's Oregon educator license.

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25 Issued and dated this 14 day of October, 2022.

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TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

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STATE OF OREGON

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By 

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Dr. Anthony Rosilez, Executive Director