

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

In the Matter of the	)	STIPULATION OF FACTS AND
Educator License of	)	FINAL ORDER OF
WILLIAM E. WORTMAN	)	PUBLIC REPRIMAND AND
	)	PROBATION

On September 22, 2021, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) received an internal misconduct report stemming from a news media article. The article indicated that a news reporter from The Malheur Enterprise Newspaper had observed students at Adrian High School (AHS) not wearing masks during the Governor’s Mask Mandate period, while conducting an interview with AHS Principal William E. Wortman. (Wortman.) The article stated that per interviews with AHS students, Wortman had addressed the students at the school and discouraged them from reporting on other students who weren’t wearing masks. The article states that when asked about this, Wortman responded by stating “we don’t want to discriminate against anybody here, and if I hear about discrimination against anybody [not wearing a mask] it gets dealt with swiftly.” The conduct documented above constitutes possible professional misconduct on the part of licensed educator, Wortman.

After review of the matters alleged, Wortman 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. Wortman stipulates that there are sufficient facts contained in the Commission’s files and records to support the findings of fact and conclusions of law set forth below. In entering into this stipulation, Wortman waives the right to a Notice of Hearing notification and to a hearing to contest the findings of fact, conclusions of law and order set forth below.

By signing below, Wortman acknowledges, understands, stipulates, and agrees to the following: (i) he has been fully advised of his 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 Wortman nor the Commission are bound by the terms herein; (iv) he has fully read this Stipulation and Final Order, and understands it completely; (v) he 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) he states that no promise or representation has been made to induce him to sign this Stipulation and Final Order; and (vii) he has consulted with an attorney regarding this Stipulation and Final Order and has been fully advised with regard to his 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.

### **STIPULATION OF FACTS**

1. The Commission has licensed you since January 21, 2014. Wortman held a Preliminary Teaching License, (valid from February 15, 2018 to January 3, 2021) and a Restricted Administrator License, (valid from December 7, 2020 to June 30, 2021) with endorsements in Elementary – Multiple Subjects (PK-12), English to Speakers of Other Languages (PK-12), Physical Education (PK-12), and Administrator (PK-12). Additionally, Wortman has a pending Administrator Licensure Application on file with TSPC which was submitted on June 8, 2021 pending the outcome of this investigation. During all relevant times, Wortman was employed by the Adrian School District (ASD).
2. On September 22, 2021, TSPC received an internal misconduct report alleging misconduct. According to the report the Malheur Enterprise newspaper had run an article about enforcement of the Governor’s Mask Mandate in local schools. The article indicated that students reported that Wortman, Principal of AHS had encouraged students not to report concerns when other students were seen not wearing their masks at school. The article indicated that Wortman had addressed students in the gymnasium on at least two occasions about wearing masks, and reportedly stated that enforcing masking “invoked a framework of discrimination.” Additionally, a student who was interviewed for the article stated that Wortman had told them that “we were told not to discriminate or bring it up as much [students not wearing masks.] When asked about this by the

reporter who wrote the article, Wortman stated “we don’t want to discriminate against anybody here, and if I hear about discrimination against anybody [not wearing a mask] it gets dealt with swiftly.” Another student interviewed for the article stated “that the only authority figure who had insisted on mask compliance in his experience was his bus driver.”

On September 22, 2021, TSPC learned that the Oregon Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) had opened an investigation into this matter as well. The OSHA investigation concluded that multiple violations were found during their inspection. The violations are as follows:

- *“At the time of the inspection, monthly safety committee meetings were not conducted. The school district conducted business onsite from January 2021 through the end of May 2021” without these meetings. “Type of violation: Serious, under OAR 437-001-0765(5)”.*
- *“At the time of the inspection the employer did not ensure that an exposure risk assessment was conducted or documented in writing. A risk assessment plan was not provided; it was determined during document review and interviews that the employer and employees were not aware of such a plan and thus were not able to participate and provide feedback for the plan. Type of violation: Serious under OAR 437-001-0744(g)(A)”.*
- *“At the time of the inspection, the employer did not ensure that all staff, students, and visitors indoor the school wore masks or face coverings. As evidenced by visual confirmation and employee interviews. Masks were visibly available in the school but their use was not enforced. Type of violation: willful under OAR 437-001-0744(3)(m)”.*
- *“At the time of the inspection, the employer did not keep an OSHA 300 and an OSHA 300A log. No logs were provided. Schools with a NAICS of 6111 were*

removed from the record keeping exemption as of January 1, 2018. Type of violation: Other than Serious under OAR 437-001-0700(14)(a)".

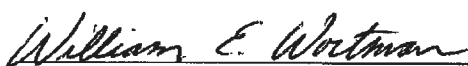
For the OSHA violations, the ASD was fined approximately \$11, 440.00.

3. According to district documents and investigation, Wortman was issued a verbal reprimand/redirection with regards to adherence to the mask mandate. In response to TSPC's subpoena for records, the ASD provided a copy of an email Wortman sent to separate staff members that stated the following:

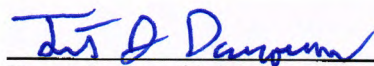
*"When OSHA was here, I was completely honest with them and shared the goal from the board that I was operating on. When I was out of the building, I understand many students ran to grab a mask. This was not at my direction, and throughout this whole ordeal, I have been adamant that any repercussions from non-mask enforcement and non-discipline will fall on me. I stand by this and have relayed this message to Linda [Patterson] from OSHA...As for staff, I have not noticed one staff member that is non-compliant with the mask mandate, besides myself. Which is something I also relayed to Linda from OSHA. I have expressed that the flip-flopping guidelines have been confusing and I support our community survey. I expressed that in the end, I do not agree with the mandate and that I wished for local control".*

4. On December 13, 2021, Wortman interviewed with TSPC investigative staff via telephone. During the interview, Wortman was asked if he had ever directly held a student or staff member accountable for not wearing a mask on campus and he responded by saying "no." Wortman reported that he eventually began writing letters home to the parents of students who had disobeyed the masking requirement. He reported that the letter encouraged compliance with the masking mandate. TSPC staff asked Wortman if he was ever formally disciplined for failing to enforce the mask mandate at AHS, and he responded "no."


IT IS SO STIPULATED:



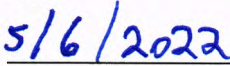
William E. Wortman



Trent Danowski, Deputy Director



Date



Date

Teacher Standards and Practices Commission

**CONCLUSION OF LAW**

The conduct described above constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgment*), OAR 584-020-0025(2)(e) (*Using district lawful and reasonable rules and regulations*); and OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(1)(b) (*Refrain from exploiting professional relationships with any student for personal gain, or in support of persons or issues*).

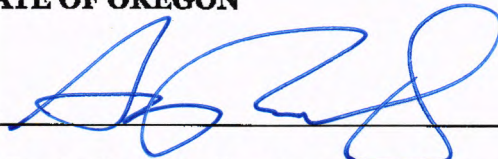
The Commission's authority to impose discipline in this matter is based upon ORS 342.175.

**ORDER**

The Commission adopts and incorporates herein the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, and based thereon, imposes a Public Reprimand and 18 months of Probation.

Issued and dated this 22 day of June 2022.

**TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION  
STATE OF OREGON**

By  \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Anthony Rosilez, Executive Director