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BEFORE THE  
TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION  
STATE OF OREGON

In the Matter of the Teaching License of

BELLE K. HIRSCH

STIPULATION AND ORDER OF SUSPENSION

Case No. 108158

The Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing on March 11, 2003, to Belle K. Hirsch, proposing to impose discipline under ORS 342.177. On April 23, 2003, the Commission issued an Amended Notice of Hearing. Ms. Hirsch has requested a hearing. After a review of the matters alleged, Ms. Hirsch and the Commission have agreed that their respective interests, together with the public interest, are best served by a stipulation to certain facts and the suspension of Ms. Hirsch's license, followed by a period of probation.

In entering into this stipulation, Ms. Hirsch waives her right to a hearing and understands that the Commission will suspend her teaching license for a period of nearly one year. This stipulation and order are contingent upon approval by the full Commission. If the Commission does not approve this stipulation and proposed order, it is understood that any waiver of rights by Ms. Hirsch is therefore revoked. It is further understood that the statements contained in this stipulation may not be used by either the Commission or Ms. Hirsch for any reason if the Commission fails to approve this stipulation and proposed order.

STIPULATED FACTS

Ms. Hirsch and the Commission stipulate as follows:

1           1.       Ms. Hirsch holds a Basic Teaching License and has been licensed in Oregon since  
2 October 1979.

3           2.       Ms. Hirsch has been employed as an elementary school teacher with the Eagle  
4 Point School District for 19 years. She resigned her position with the district, effective June 12,  
5 2002.

6           3.       During the 2001-2002 school year, Ms. Hirsch taught a combined fourth, fifth and  
7 sixth grade classroom at the Glen D. Hale Elementary School. In April, she administered the  
8 Oregon Statewide Knowledge and Skills Assessment to the students in her classroom. The  
9 protocols for administration of the test required that the persons administering the test be neutral  
10 and not provide any assistance to a student that could give away the correct answer.

11          4.       While administering the mathematics portion of the test, Ms. Hirsch reviewed the  
12 answers of her students and circled certain questions that she selected from the test booklets. For  
13 these questions, Ms. Hirsch urged the students to think harder about their answers.

14          5.       Many of the students changed their answers following the prompting by Ms.  
15 Hirsch.

17 Belle K. Hirsch  
Belle K. Hirsch

7/8/03  
Date

19 Victoria Chamberlain  
Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director

7-17-03  
Date

21 CONCLUSION OF LAW

22 Belle K. Hirsch failed to remain neutral and violated the testing protocol for the Oregon  
23 Statewide Assessment by circling questions in the test booklets and suggesting to students that

1 they reconsider their answers. This conduct constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of  
2 OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(2)(b) and 584-020-0035(3)(a).

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#### DISCUSSION

5 Teachers have an important obligation to maintain the integrity of the Oregon Statewide  
6 Knowledge and Skills Assessment. While Ms. Hirsch's actions may have been well intended,  
7 they had the effect of compromising the integrity and the accurateness of her student's scores.  
8 This could undermine an important purpose of the statewide assessment. For this reason, a  
9 suspension of Ms. Hirsch's teaching license is warranted.

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#### ORDER

11 The Oregon Teaching License of Belle K. Hirsch is suspended for a period beginning  
12 with the date of this order and continuing through July 31, 2004. Upon expiration of the period  
13 of suspension and timely application for reinstatement under OAR 584-050-0015, Ms. Hirsch's  
14 teaching license shall be reinstated, and she shall be placed on probation for a period of two  
15 years, subject to the following conditions:

- 16 1. Ms. Hirsch shall comply with all Standards for Competent and Ethical  
17 Performance under OAR 584 Division 20.
- 18 2. Ms. Hirsch shall strictly comply with all test protocols and requirements of any  
19 statewide assessment she administers.
- 20 3. Ms. Hirsch shall promptly inform the Commission in writing if she is placed on  
21 leave for disciplinary reasons from any teaching job or if she is terminated from any teaching  
22 job.

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Violation of any condition of probation may constitute an independent basis for the Commission to impose discipline, up to and including revocation of Ms. Hirsch's Oregon Teaching License, subject to her right to a hearing on the issue of whether she violated probation.

IT IS SO ORDERED this 8<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2003.

TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

By Victoria Chamberlain  
Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director