

IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

In the matter of the certificates of:

Case No. 21907

Eric T. Lords,

STIPULATION

Respondent

BACKGROUND

The Professional Standards Commission received an allegation of unethical conduct concerning Eric T. Lords. Following an investigation, the Executive Committee of the Professional Standards Commission reviewed the information before it and determined that probable cause exists for initiating an administrative action against Eric T. Lords's certificates. The Executive Committee has recommended the following Stipulation.

STIPULATION

1. This is an agreement (Stipulation) between Eric T. Lords (Mr. Lords) and the Executive Committee (the Executive Committee) of the Professional Standards Commission (the Commission).
2. If Mr. Lords wishes to agree to this Stipulation, he must sign and return this Stipulation and any attachments to the Commission by 5:00 p.m. (Mountain Time) on or before **April 26, 2019**, unless he has been granted an extension.
3. After Mr. Lords and the Executive Committee agree to and sign this Stipulation, the Stipulation must be approved by the Commission, and the Commission must enter the attached consent order, before this Stipulation resolves the matter.

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4. A signed copy of this Stipulation may be submitted via mail or fax to:

Professional Standards Commission
650 West State Street, 2nd Floor
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0027
Fax: (208) 334-2228 (Attn: Professional Standards Commission)

A. STIPULATED FACTS AND LAW

5. The Commission regulates teacher certification in Idaho.
6. Mr. Lords holds the following certificates and endorsements issued under the authority of the Idaho State Board of Education:
 - a. Administrator Certificate with School Principal (Pre-K-12) endorsement, effective September 1, 2018, through August 31, 2023;
 - b. Standard Instructional certificate with Physical Education (PE) (6-12) and Health (6-12) endorsements, both effective September 1, 2018, through August 31, 2023.
 - c. Interim Administrator Certificate with School Principal (Pre-K-12) endorsement, effective October 21, 2015, through August 31, 2018;
 - d. Interim Standard Instructional certificate with Physical Education (PE) (6-12) and Health (6-12) endorsements, both effective October 21, 2015, through August 31, 2018.
7. Mr. Lords was employed by Shelley Joint School District #60 (“District”) for the 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019 school years as the principal at Shelley High School.
8. As a result of an audit, the District discovered several irregularities in accounting procedures for an account at Shelley High School.
9. Further investigation showed several questionable purchases had been made using the Shelley High School credit and debit cards.
10. Further investigation showed that these purchases were made by Mr. Lords at various time during the school years and during the summer using these cards.

11. These purchase included a fifty (50) gallon water heater (\$361.81), a family ski pass to Grand Targhee Ski Resort (\$2,049.00), powder coating services (\$319.77), lawn care services (\$289), and a set of chrome pipes for an ATV (\$698.99).

12. The District Superintendent and business manager met with Mr. Lords who provided less than forthright responses to their questions, until he later admitted to charging the items to the school with the intent to reimburse the school.

13. Mr. Lords subsequently paid the District restitution in the amount of \$3,720.00.

14. The Executive Committee determined that probable cause exists for initiating an administrative action against Mr. Lords for violating the following laws and rule governing teacher certification:

- a. Mr. Lords's conduct or course of conduct willfully violated a principle of the code of ethics that was adopted by the Idaho State Board of Education. Idaho Code § 33-1208(1)(j) ("Willful violation of any professional code or standard of ethics or conduct, adopted by the state board of education"). Specifically, Mr. Lords violated Code of Ethics Principle IV (Idaho Admin. Code r. 08.02.02.076.05) ("A professional educator exemplifies honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.").
- b. Mr. Lords's conduct or course of conduct willfully violated a principle of the code of ethics that was adopted by the Idaho State Board of Education. Idaho Code § 33-1208(1)(j) ("Willful violation of any professional code or standard of ethics or conduct, adopted by the state board of education"). Specifically, Mr. Lords violated Code of Ethics Principle V (Idaho Admin. Code r. 08.02.02.076.06) ("A professional educator entrusted with public funds and property honors that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.").

15. Mr. Lords admits that he violated the laws and rules cited in paragraph 14 and acknowledges that there is sufficient evidence to support a finding of a violation of the laws and rule cited in paragraph 14.

B. STIPULATED DISCIPLINE

16. If this Stipulation is approved by the Commission, the following discipline will be imposed by the Commission on Mr. Lords's administrator certificate:

- a. The Commission will suspend Mr. Lords's Administrator certificate for two years from the date the full PSC approves this stipulation and issues a consent order, and that Mr. Lords complete a three credits ethics course, which cannot be used for renewal purposes. The relief sought by the Chief Certification Officer is only in relation to Mr. Lords's Administrator Certificate and does **NOT** affect, touch upon or relate to Mr. Lords's teaching certificate.

17. Any costs associated with Mr. Lords's compliance with the terms of this Stipulation are his responsibility.

C. PRESENTATION OF THIS STIPULATION

18. Once Mr. Lords signs this Stipulation and timely returns it to the Commission, and the Executive Committee signs this Stipulation, the Deputy Attorney General assigned to the Commission will present this Stipulation to the Commission at the Commission's next business meeting.

19. The Commission may accept, reject, or modify the Stipulation.

20. If the Commission modifies this Stipulation, it must receive Mr. Lords's approval on any modification before the Stipulation is effective.

D. WAIVER OF RIGHTS

21. If this Stipulation is approved by the Commission, Mr. Lords knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily waives the following rights:

- a. the right to a hearing;
- b. the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses;
- c. the right to present evidence or to call witnesses, or to testify at a hearing;
- d. the right to reconsideration of the Commission's orders;
- e. the right to judicial review of the Commission's orders; and

- f. other rights accorded by the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act, and the law and rules governing teacher certification in the State of Idaho.

22. If this Stipulation is approved by the Commission, the Commission may impose discipline upon Mr. Lords's certificate without further process.

23. By signing this Stipulation, Mr. Lords agrees to waive any requirement for a hearing under Idaho Code § 33-1209(3) to be conducted within 90 days of a request for a hearing. This waiver applies to any hearing request made before the Commission ultimately rejects this Stipulation (if it does) or before Mr. Lords ultimately rejects a modified stipulation (if Mr. Lords does). If the Commission ultimately rejects this Stipulation or if Mr. Lords ultimately rejects a modified stipulation, and Mr. Lords has requested a hearing, the 90-day hearing timeframe will begin from the ultimate rejection.

F. GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

24. This Stipulation contains the entire agreement between the parties, and Mr. Lords is not relying on any other agreement or representation, whether verbal or written.

25. This Stipulation, if approved by the Commission, or modified and approved, resolves a contested case. If approved, the Stipulation, consent order, and any attachment are public records. And if approved, the Commission may make available through its or the State Department of Education's website a copy of the Stipulation, consent order, and any attachment, and may report any discipline to the national clearinghouse for teacher certification.

26. Mr. Lords agrees that he has read this Stipulation, has had the opportunity to discuss it with legal counsel, if he so chose, and understands that by signing below, he will be agreeing to the terms of this Stipulation.

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SIGNATURES

Respondent

The respondent, Eric T. Lords, agrees to this Stipulation.

DATED this 19th day of April, 2019.

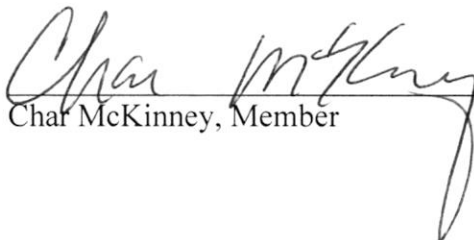

Eric T. Lords
Respondent

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee recommends that the Commission enter an Order based upon this Stipulation.

DATED this 21 day of June, 2019.

IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE


Char McKinney, Member

IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

In the matter of the certificate of:

Eric T. Lords


Respondent

Case No. 21907

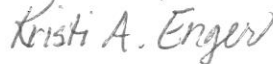
CONSENT ORDER

The Professional Standards Commission orders that the Stipulation, entered between Eric T. Lords and the Executive Committee, is adopted as the informal disposition of this case, as permitted under Idaho Code § 67-5241. It will be effective on the 21 day of June, 2019. The discipline listed in the Stipulation is imposed on Eric T. Lords's certificate under Idaho Code §§ 33-1208 and 33-1209. This is a final agency order, and Eric T. Lords has waived the right of judicial review.

IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION




Elisa Saffle, Member



CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE


I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 20th day of June, 2019, I caused to be served a true and correct copy of the foregoing by the following method to:

Eric T. Lords


- U.S. Mail
- Hand Delivery
- Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
- Overnight Mail
- Facsimile:
- Email:

Attorney for the
Chief Certification Officer
Robert A. Berry
Deputy Attorney General
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0010

- U.S. Mail
- Hand Delivery
- Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
- Overnight Mail
- Facsimile: (208) 854-8073
- Email: robert.berry@ag.idaho.gov
leslie.gottsch@ag.idaho.gov


Annette Schwab
Program Specialist
Idaho State Department of Education