

**IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION**

In the matter of the certificate of:

Theresa L. Cotner,

Respondent

Case No. 22422

**FINAL ORDER**

The Chief Certification Officer for the State of Idaho filed an Administrative Complaint against the educator certificate issued to Theresa Cotner, seeking for the Professional Standards Commission to impose discipline on Ms. Cotner’s certificate. *See* Idaho Code § 33-1209. Because Ms. Cotner did not request a hearing within 30 days, and because Ms. Cotner was determined to be in default by a hearing/presiding officer, the allegations in the Administrative Complaint are treated as admitted, Idaho Code § 33-1209(3), and are incorporated by reference as findings of fact.

Based on these findings, the Professional Standards Commission makes the following findings and conclusions:

1. Ms. Cotner’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) (“Willful violation of any professional code or standard of ethics or conduct, adopted by the state board of education.”). Specifically, Ms. Cotner violated Code of Ethics Principle II Idaho Admin Code r. 08.02.02.076.03 (“A professional educator maintains a professional relationship with all students, both inside and outside the physical and virtual classroom.”).

Under Idaho Code § 33-1208, the Professional Standards Commission orders that the following discipline (as marked) be imposed on Ms. Cotner’s certificate:

*As requested in the Administrative Complaint*

  X   The discipline requested by the Chief Certification Officer in her Request for Relief in the Administrative Complaint, which is suspension of her certifications until completion of the following courses: an approved behavior management course, an approved functional behavior assessment course, and an approved behavior intervention plan course, which may not be used for renewal purposes, prior to the renewal of her certificate.

*Other discipline*

       Ms. Cotner’s certificates are revoked.

       Ms. Cotner’s certificates are permanently revoked under Idaho Code § 33-1208(2).

       Ms. Cotner’s certificates are suspended for        years        months.

       Ms. Cotner’s certificates are suspended indefinitely pending completion of the following conditions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

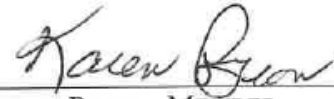
       Ms. Cotner’s certificates have the following conditions placed upon it.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

       A letter of reprimand will be placed in Ms. Cotner’s permanent certification file.

This Order is effective on the day it is signed. This Order and the Administrative Complaint, which will be attached to this Order, are public records, and may be made available on the State Department of Education or the Commission’s website.

DATED this   5   day of March, 2025.



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KAREN PYRON, MEMBER  
Idaho Professional Standards Commission

## **RECONSIDERATION AND JUDICIAL REVIEW**

This is a final order of the Professional Standards Commission. Any party may file a motion for reconsideration of this order within 14 days of the service date of this order. The agency will dispose of the petition for reconsideration within 21 days of its receipt; if not, the petition will be denied as a matter of law. See Idaho Code § 67-5246. Petitions for reconsideration may be filed by mail addressed to the Professional Standards Commission, State Department of Education, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0027, or hand delivered to the Commission at 650 West State Street, Second Floor, Boise, ID 83720.

Any party aggrieved by this final order or orders previously issued in this case may seek judicial review of the orders in this case in district court. A party may do this by filing a petition for judicial review in the district court as provided in Idaho Code §§ 67-5270 and 67-5272. The petition must be filed within 28 days of the service date of this final order; or, if a motion for reconsideration is filed, within 28 days of the service of a decision on the motion for reconsideration or denial of the motion as a matter of law. Idaho Code § 67-5273. The filing of a petition for judicial review does not itself stay the effectiveness or enforcement of the agency action. Idaho Code § 67-5274.

## CERTIFICATES OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on this 5 day of March, 2025, I caused to be served a true and correct copy of the foregoing by the following method to:

Theresa L. Cotner, Respondent

[REDACTED]

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

Kyle Grigsby  
Deputy Attorney General  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0010  
(208) 334-2400

- U.S. Mail
- Hand Delivery
- Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested
- Facsimile:
- Email: [kyle.grigsby@ag.idaho.gov](mailto:kyle.grigsby@ag.idaho.gov)



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Annette Schwab  
Coordinator  
Idaho State Department of Education

**IDAHO PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS COMMISSION**

In the matter of the certificate of:

Theresa L. Cotner,

Respondent

Case No. 22422

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINT**

Cina Lackey, Chief Certification Officer for the State of Idaho, alleges the following against Theresa L. Cotner.

**GENERAL AVERMENTS**

The following general averments are adopted in each count below.

1. The Professional Standards Commission (Commission) regulates teacher certification in Idaho.

2. The Chief Certification Officer is empowered to file an administrative complaint against the certificate of a teacher or other individual certified under the authority of the Idaho State Board of Education. Idaho Code § 33-1209.

3. Ms. Cotner holds the following certificate and endorsements issued under the authority of the Idaho State Board of Education:

a. Standard Instructional Certificate with All Subjects (K-8), Exceptional Child Education (K-12), and Mathematics-Middle Level (5-9) endorsements, effective September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2024.

4. Ms. Cotner was employed by Boise School District during the 2023-2024 school year.

5. On information and belief, the following occurred during Ms. Cotner's employment.

6. Ms. Cotner used physical force with a student that was inappropriate, excessive, or inconsistent with appropriate standards of professional conduct.

7. Ms. Cotner did not properly deescalate an emotional or potentially dangerous situation with at least one student.

8. Ms. Cotner received a written warning in 2022 regarding her use of physical force on a student.

9. The Professional Standards Commission may learn additional facts related to Ms. Cotner's actions as it investigates circumstances related to this Administrative Complaint.

### **COUNT I**

10. Ms. Cotner's conduct or course of conduct described in paragraphs 6-8 willfully violated a principle of the code of ethics that was adopted by the Idaho State Board of Education. Idaho Code § 33-1208(1) ("Willful violation of any professional code or standard of ethics or conduct, adopted by the state board of education."). Specifically, Ms. Cotner violated Code of Ethics Principle II Idaho Admin Code r. 08.02.02.076.03 ("A professional educator maintains a professional relationship with all students both inside and outside the physical and virtual classroom.").

### **REQUEST FOR RELIEF**

The Chief Certification Officer requests that the Commission grant the following relief, as permitted under Idaho Code §§ 33-1208 and 33-1209.

1. That Ms. Cotner's certifications be suspended until she completes the following courses, which may not be used for renewal purposes, prior to the renewal of her certificate:
  - i. An approved behavior management course;

- ii. An approved functional behavior assessment course; and
  - iii. An approved behavior intervention plan course.
2. That if Ms. Cotner requests a hearing, a hearing be conducted before a hearing panel, where the Chief Certification Officer and Ms. Cotner may present evidence concerning the allegations in this Administrative Complaint, to aid the hearing panel in determining whether Ms. Cotner's certificate should be disciplined and, if so, what discipline should be imposed.
3. Any other relief that would be just under the circumstances.

DATED this 21 day of October, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cina Lackey  
Chief Certification Officer

*Attorney for the  
Chief Certification Officer*  
Kyle D. Grigsby  
Deputy Attorney General  
PO Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0010  
(208) 334-4127  
[kyle.grigsby@ag.idaho.gov](mailto:kyle.grigsby@ag.idaho.gov)



## NOTIFICATION OF PROCEDURAL RIGHTS

The Professional Standards Commission wishes to notify you of the following rights.

**An administrative action has been initiated against your certificate(s).** Under Idaho Code § 33-1209, if you wish to contest the allegations set forth in the administrative complaint, you must request a hearing. This request must be (1) made not more than 30 days after the date of service (mailing) of the administrative complaint, (2) in writing, and (3) addressed to the state superintendent of public instruction. **If you do not request a hearing or do not comply with the requirements for requesting a hearing, the allegations in this administrative complaint will be treated as admitted under Idaho Code § 33-1209(3).**

In response to this administrative complaint, you may file an answer to this administrative complaint, but you must file the answer at least 30 days prior to the day of the hearing.

You have the right to be represented by legal counsel, at your own expense, during this administrative proceeding. In addition, you are entitled to the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses and the production of books, documents, and other things relevant to the proceedings.

This administrative proceeding is governed by provisions of the Idaho Code, including the Idaho Administrative Procedure Act, and by provisions of the Idaho Administrative Code, including the Idaho Rules of Administrative Procedure of the Attorney General that have been adopted by the Board of Education. You may access these laws and rules online or via the Idaho State Law Library.

To request a hearing, you must deliver your request to the following address or fax number:

Debbie Critchfield  
Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Re: Professional Standards Commission Hearing  
650 West State Street, Room 200  
P.O. Box 83720  
Boise, ID 83720-0027  
Telephone: (208) 332-6800  
Facsimile: (208) 334-2228

The State Department of Education receives mailed or hand-delivered documents between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (mountain time) except Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. The State Department of Education permits the filing of facsimile copies of documents that do not exceed ten pages, provided that the facsimile transmission is legible and is received before 5:00 p.m. on its due date. It shall be the responsibility of the filing party to verify with the staff of the State Department of Education that any facsimile transmission is successfully received and legible in its entirety.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of October, 2024, I caused to be served a true and correct copy of the foregoing by the following method to:

Theresa Cotner



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

*Attorney for the  
Chief Certification Officer*  
Kyle D. Grigsby  
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: kyle.grigsby@ag.idaho.gov  
laura.kauffmann@ag.idaho.gov

Annette Schwab  
Coordinator  
Idaho State Department of Education