# COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,

Petitioner,

:

v. : PSPC DOCKET NO. DI-21-127

:

DAVID E. HOLMES,

Respondent.

## ORDER APPROVING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This matter is before the Professional Standards and Practices Commission ("Commission") on the Department of Education's ("Department") Motion for Entry of Order filed on December 20, 2021. The Motion requests that the Commission issue an order approving the parties' Settlement Agreement and directing the Department to issue a public supplemental sanction to David E. Holmes ("Respondent") in settlement of an educator misconduct complaint filed against him.

#### BACKGROUND

Respondent holds an Instructional II certificate in the areas of Mathematics 7-12 and Health and Physical Education PK-12. Respondent was employed by the Mahanoy Area School District until his retirement on July 1, 2016. On July 1, 2015, an educator misconduct complaint was filed with the Department alleging that Respondent exhibited improper behavior during an after-school program.

### SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

A teaching certificate is a constitutionally protected property right entitled to due process protection. <u>Bowalick v. Dep't of Educ.</u>, 840 A.2d 519, 522 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2003).

Generally, an accused educator is entitled to a full evidentiary hearing conducted in accordance with the Educator Discipline Act ("Act") and the Administrative Agency Law. 24 P.S. §§ 2070.13 (relating to hearing) and 2070.18(a) (relating to commission proceedings and procedures). In place of a hearing, a charge of misconduct can be resolved in a written settlement agreement. 24 P.S. § 2070.12 (relating to department action after investigation). When approved by the Commission, a settlement agreement has the same effect as an order issued following an administrative adjudication. See Kenney v. Bureau of Prof'l & Occupational Affairs, 203 A.2d 421 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2019).

The parties have entered into a written Settlement Agreement, whereby they agree to resolve all matters contained in the complaint with the imposition of a public supplemental sanction consisting of Respondent's completion, at his own expense, of the NASDTEC Academy course titled "Prevention and Correction: Overview" offered by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification ("NASDTEC"). The Settlement Agreement was presented to the Commission for approval at its regularly scheduled meeting on January 10, 2022. After careful consideration, the Commission finds that the agreement is fair, reasonable, and in the best interests of the parties and the public and enters the following:

#### ORDER

AND NOW, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2022, upon consideration of the Motion for Entry of Order filed by the Department of Education requesting approval of the parties' Settlement Agreement in lieu of further disciplinary proceedings, it is hereby Ordered:

- The Motion for Entry of Order is Granted, and the Settlement Agreement is approved.
- The Commission incorporates the terms of the Settlement Agreement into this Order.
- Consistent with the terms of the Settlement Agreement, the Department is directed to impose a public supplemental sanction against Respondent effective on the date of this Order.
- 4. The educator misconduct complaint filed against Respondent is resolved.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

By:

Myron Yoder

Chairperson Pro Tempore

Attest:

Shane F. Crosby

**Executive Director** 

Date Mailed: January 28, 2022