

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

In the Matter of the Educator	)	DEFAULT ORDER OF
License of	)	PUBLIC REPRIMAND
BENJAMIN E. HUNTER	)	AND PROBATION

On July 15, 2026, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to Benjamin E. Hunter (Hunter) in which the Commission charged him with Gross Neglect of Duty. The Notice was sent via U.S. First-Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail Receipt 9589 0710 5270 3980 5870 56 to the address on file with the Commission. The Notice designated the Commission file as the record for purposes of proving a prima facie case. The signed Certified Mail receipt was returned to the Commission on July 20, 2026. The First-Class Mail was not returned and assumed delivered. The Notice of Opportunity of Hearing, dated July 15, 2026, and signed by Rachel Alpert, Executive Director, stated:

“IF A REQUEST FOR HEARING IS NOT RECEIVED WITHIN THIS 21-DAY PERIOD, YOUR RIGHT TO A HEARING SHALL BE CONSIDERED WAIVED UNLESS YOUR FAILURE TO REQUEST A HEARING WAS BEYOND YOUR REASONABLE CONTROL. IF YOU DO NOT REQUEST A HEARING, WITHDRAW YOUR REQUEST FOR HEARING, IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR AT A HEARING, OR NOTIFY THE COMMISSION THAT YOU WILL NOT APPEAR AT HEARING, THE COMMISSION WILL ADOPT AN ORDER OF DEFAULT WHICH MAY INCLUDE THE REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF YOUR LICENSE OR OTHER DISCIPLINE.”

Hunter did not request a hearing. The Commission, therefore, finds Hunter to be in default and enters the following findings of fact, conclusions of law, and final order, based on the files and records of the Commission concerning this matter.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. The Commission has licensed Hunter since July 14, 2011. Hunter holds a Professional Teaching License with an endorsement in English Language Arts (PK-12), valid from December 18, 2022, through December 17, 2027. During all relevant times, Hunter was employed by the Portland School District, also known as Portland Public Schools (PPS).
2. On October 2, 2023, the Commission received a School District Misconduct Report from PPS alleging that on one occasion Hunter was alone with a female high school

student in Hunter's personal vehicle and touched the student's knee making the student uncomfortable; Hunter drove to a restaurant with the student and purchased a meal for the student; and then Hunter told the student not to tell her parents about her being alone with him in his car or he could lose his job. It was also alleged Hunter made inappropriate comments to this student and other students.

3. Investigation found that in March 2023, while Hunter supervised students from Ida B. Wells High School at a speech and debate tournament in Salem, Oregon, Hunter transported a lone, female student in his personal vehicle with prior school administrative approval. While transporting a student in his personal vehicle, Hunter purchased a meal for the student and told the student not to tell her parents that they were alone in his vehicle, or Hunter could get fired.
4. Investigation found that during the 2021-22 school year, Hunter told his English class that his favorite word was "merkin" and not to look it up because it was inappropriate. During the 2020-21 school year, Hunter made comments to a student about their possible weight loss. During the COVID pandemic, Hunter was instructing students via a Zoom meeting and commented to a student standing on a table that she was exposing too much of herself to him. This made the student uncomfortable and overly body-conscious afterward.
5. Investigation that on March 14, 2024, Hunter resigned from PPS.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Benjamin E. Hunter's conduct as described in section three (3) above constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgment*), OAR 584-020-0025(2)(e) (*Using district lawful and reasonable rules and regulations*).

Hunter's conduct as described in section four (4) above constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgment*), OAR 584-020-0020(2)(d) (*Skill in the supervision of students*), and 584-020-0030(2)(b) (*Skill in communicating with administrators, students, staff, parents, and other patrons*); and OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-

020-0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with students in conduct and conversations at all times*).

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

FINAL ORDER

The Commission adopts and incorporates herein the above findings of fact and conclusions of law, and based thereon, imposes a Public Reprimand upon Benjamin E. Hunter's Oregon educator license.

Furthermore, the Commission imposes a two (2) year period of Probation upon Hunter's license to commence upon adoption of this order and subject to the following conditions:

1. Within six (6) months of probation, Hunter shall successfully complete a Commission-approved training on teacher/student boundaries and shall provide evidence of this to the Commission.
2. Hunter shall comply with the Standards for Competent and Ethical Performance of Oregon Educators under Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 584, Division 020.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 1 day of September, 2026.

TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

By: 
Rachel Alpert, Executive Director

NOTICE OF APPEAL OR RIGHTS

YOU ARE ENTITLED TO JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THIS ORDER. JUDICIAL REVIEW MAY BE OBTAINED BY FILING A PETITION FOR REVIEW WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM THE SERVICE OF THIS ORDER. JUDICIAL REVIEW IS PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ORS 183.482 TO THE OREGON COURT OF APPEALS.