

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

In the Matter of the)	DEFAULT ORDER OF
Educator License of)	REVOCATION AND REVOKE
APRIL L. NEAL)	RIGHT TO APPLY

On April 30, 2025, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to April L. Neal (Neal) in which the Commission charged her with Gross Neglect of Duty. The Notice was sent via U.S. First Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail Receipt 9589 0710 5270 2307 8985 54 to Neal’s address on file with the Commission. The Notice designated the Commission file as the record for purposes of proving a prima facie case. The Notice was confirmed delivered by a signed USPS certified mail receipt on May 12, 2025. The Notice of Opportunity of Hearing, dated April 30, 2025, and signed by Melissa Goff, Interim 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, OR 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.”

As of the writing of this Default Order, the Commission has yet to hear from Neal. The Commission, therefore, finds Neal 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.

FINDING OF FACT

1. The Commission has licensed Neal since November 23, 2022. Neal currently holds a Restricted Teaching License with endorsements for Integrated Science (PK-12) and Biology (PK-12) which was issued on June 24, 2024 and expires on August 31, 2025. During all relevant times, Neal was employed by the Ontario School District (OSD).

2. On December 19, 2024, TSPC received a School District Misconduct Report from Erick Norton (Norton) the Director of Personnel with the OSD. The report alleged that on or about November 12, 2024, the OSD became aware that Neal, a science teacher at Ontario High School (OHS) in the OSD, had been exchanging sexually explicit messages with a former student, 18-year old, Student A, who had graduated from OHS in June of 2024.
3. An investigation into this matter by the Commission and the OSD determined the following:
 - On or about November 12, 2024, Student B and her mother reported to the OSD administration that Student B had found romantic/sexual communication between her boyfriend, Student A, and Neal.
 - Student B found the communication between Student A and Neal on Student A's phone.
 - The communication between Student A and Neal occurred on Instagram messages.
 - Student B provided OSD Administration captured screenshots of the communication between Student A and Neal.
 - The communication between Student A and Neal was sexual in nature.
 - Three photos of Neal dressed in lingerie that Neal had sent to Student A were provided in the screenshots turned over to OSD.
 - A review of the Instagram messages between Student A and Neal reference other photos and videos the two had shared, however the photos/videos had been deleted or sent as an "invisible message" (the sent photo/video auto-deletes after being viewed) on Instagram messages.
 - According to Neal, the deleted messages that were no longer visible in the Instagram chat, were pictures/videos of Student A's penis.
 - During the OSD investigation into this matter, Neal admitted she had engaged in inappropriate sexual communication with Student A and apologized for "disrespecting the school."

- On December 24, 2024, Neal submitted her resignation to the OSD.
 - During Neal's TSPC interview with TSPC investigative staff on March 6, 2025, Neal admitted that the sexual/romantic conversation that she had engaged in with Student A was completely "unethical and wrong."
4. The following information was also noted during the TSPC investigation:
- On or about October 23, 2024, Neal requested a meeting with OHS Principal Ken Martinez (Martinez) and OHS Vice Principal Nathan Sandburg (Sandburg).
 - During the meeting Neal shared that on the previous day, October 22, 2024, she had taken an excessive amount of painkillers while in the bathtub in an attempt to commit suicide.
 - Neal disclosed that she had been found by her father-in-law who had taken her to the hospital.
 - During the meeting Neal told Martinez and Sandburg that she struggles with multiple mental health issues, was currently being treated by a psychiatrist, and takes seventeen (17) different medications to help regulate her mental health.
 - On or about January 7, 2025, ten (10) days after Neal had resigned from the OSD, she sent Norton an email.
 - In the email, Neal talked in detail about her mental health struggles. Neal also reports that her mental health conditions frequently cause her to have "memory issues, be scared, and hear voices."
 - In the email Neal reported that when she engaged in the romantic/sexual communication with Student A on Instagram, she was on a two-week manic high, which caused her to engage in "risky behavior."
 - Neal discloses to Norton in the email that she had engaged in the communication with Student A for "attention" which is what happens during the manic phases of her mental health disorder(s).
 - During Neal's TSPC interview with TSPC investigative staff on March 6, 2025, Neal reported that she doesn't feel like she necessarily has control of her manic episodes but stated that her health care providers are monitoring it better.

5. The following information was also noted during the TSPC investigation:
- On February 26, 2025, TSPC investigative staff interviewed Student B.
 - Student B reported to TSPC staff that in addition to the above, Neal also shared a lot of personal information with students during class.
 - Student B provided the following examples of Neal's disclosures to students:
 - Anytime Neal would talk about her past she would cry.
 - Neal's ex-husband was involved in a gang and Neal was afraid for her life.
 - Neal had attempted suicide on multiple occasions.
 - Neal suffered from mental health conditions.
 - Neal's counselor told her she should not be working due to her mental health, but Neal said she wanted to be there for the kids.
 - Neal said she hated the school and the teachers.
 - Neal said she was mad at the administrators for making her teach about mental health and suicide.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The conduct as described above in section three (3) constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(f) (Any sexual conduct with a student) as defined by OAR 584-020-0005(8) and ORS 339.370(12)(a). The conduct described above also 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(1) (Recognize the worth and dignity of all persons and respect for each individual), OAR 584-020-0010(5) (Use professional judgment), OAR 584-020-0025(2)(e) (Using district lawful and reasonable rules and regulations); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(1)(b) (Refrain from exploiting professional relationships with any student for personal gain, or in support of persons or issues), OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(A) (Not demonstrating or expressing professionally inappropriate interest in a student's personal life), and OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with students in conduct and conversations at all times).

The conduct described above 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). Additionally, the conduct constitutes “gross unfitness” in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(c); OAR 584-020-0040(3)(c) and (d) as defined by OAR 584-020-0040 (5) (Gross unfitness is any conduct which renders an educator unqualified to perform his or her professional responsibilities).

The conduct described above in section five (5) 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 584-020-0010(1) (Recognize the worth and dignity of all persons and respect for each individual), OAR 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 hereby revokes Neal’s Oregon teaching license and revokes her right to apply for a license.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 5 day of August, 2025.

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