

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

In the Matter of the)
Educator License of)
KEITH EDWARD MEEUWSEN)

On March 19, 2014, the Commission received a report from the St. Helens School District indicating that Keith Edward Meeuwsen (Meeuwsen) had violated professional standards and local policy when his teaching methods created an emotionally unsafe environment.

After review of the matters alleged, Meeuwssen and the Commission agree that their respective interests, together with the public interest, are best served by a stipulation to certain facts and the imposition of a public reprimand and a period of probation.

By signing below, Meeuwsen acknowledges, understands, stipulates, and agrees to the following: (i) he has been fully advised of his rights to notice and a hearing to contest the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and order set forth below, and fully and finally waives all such rights and any rights to appeal or otherwise challenge this Stipulation of Facts and Final Order of Reprimand and Probation (Stipulation and Final Order); (ii) this Stipulation and Final Order is a public document and disclosed to the public upon request by the Commission; (iii) this Stipulation and Final Order is contingent upon and subject to approval and adoption by the Commission. If the Commission does not approve and adopt this Stipulation and Final Order, then neither Meeuwsen nor the Commission are bound by the terms herein; (iv) he has fully read this Stipulation and Final Order, and understands it completely; (v) he voluntarily, without any force or duress, enters into this Stipulation and Final Order and consents to issuance and entry of the Stipulated Final Order below; (vi) he states that no promise or representation has been made to induce him to sign this Stipulation and Final Order; and (vii) he has consulted with an attorney regarding this Stipulation and Final Order and has been fully advised with regard to his rights thereto, or waives any and all rights to consult with an attorney prior to entering into this Stipulation and Final Order and issuance and entry of the Stipulated Final Order below.

STIPULATION OF FACTS

1. Keith Edward Meeuwsen has been licensed by the Commission since June 17, 1986.

Meeuwsen's Standard Teaching License, with an endorsement in Standard Social Studies

1 (020), is valid from August 28, 2013, through August 27, 2018. During all relevant times,
2 Meeuwsen was employed by the St. Helens School District.

- 3 2. On March 19, 2014, the Commission received information from the St. Helens School
4 District indicating Meeuwsen may have committed acts which constitute gross neglect of
5 duty. Commission and District investigations determined the following conduct:

- 6 a. On or about January 26, 2014, while beginning a new semester of Meeuwsen's
7 citizenship course, Meeuwsen openly questioned a Latina student (ML) about her
8 immigration status. Meeuwsen explained the goal of the lesson was to help
9 students empathize and understand the challenges immigrants face to gain
10 citizenship. Meeuwsen's questioning of ML included asking her if she was
11 "legal", if she had a "green card", if she had a "visa", and what she was doing to
12 become a citizen. This dialog took place in front of the entire classroom and
13 caused significant discomfort and embarrassment for ML.
- 14 b. During the course of the 2014 investigation, another Hispanic student, PG,
15 complained that she felt set apart in class by how Meeuwsen discussed pay
16 disparity and how female Hispanics were statistically the poorest of all the
17 minority / gender combinations. Meeuwsen explained that he was trying to teach
18 a lesson on inequality and the need for equity, and was leading to a discussion of
19 affirmative action. Students reported Meeuwsen stated something like "so you
20 don't want to be a Hispanic in America", looked over at PG and said "Sorry P". PG
21 stated that Meeuwsen's conduct made her feel embarrassed and uncomfortable in
22 Meeuwsen's classroom.
- 23 c. School officials reported overhearing Meeuwsen, during the 2012-2013 school
24 year, make a comment in the classroom that Caucasian students need to make
25 more babies in the future because the Asian and Hispanic populations are rapidly
26 growing while the Caucasian population is shrinking. School officials met with
27 Meeuwsen after this and provided counsel.

- 28 3. Meeuwsen has sought out learning opportunities to help him improve his methods of
29 teaching and discussing sensitive but important topics without causing discomfort or
30 embarrassment to any students. Information indicates Meeuwsen took steps to repair
31 any damage his conduct may have caused in his teaching relationship with involved
32 students.

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2
3 IT IS SO STIPULATED:

4 Keith Edward Meeuwsen
5
6 Keith Edward Meeuwsen

2/1/16
Date

7 Victoria Chamberlain
8
9 Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director
10 Teacher Standards and Practices Commission

2-11-16
Date

11 **CONCLUSION OF LAW**

12 Keith Edward Meeuwsen's conduct described above constitutes gross neglect of
13 duty in violation ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR
14 584-020-0010(1) (*Recognize the worth and dignity of all persons and respect for each*
15 *individual*), OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgment*), OAR 584-020-
16 0025(1) (*The competent educator is a person who understands students and is able to*
17 *relate to them in constructive and culturally competent ways. The competent educator*
18 *establishes and maintains good rapport*), OAR 584-020-0025(2)(e) (*Using district*
19 *lawful and reasonable rules and regulations*), and OAR 584-020-0030(2)(b) (*Skill in*
20 *communicating with administrators, students, staff, parents, and other patrons*).

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

23 **ORDER**

24 The Commission adopts and incorporates herein the above findings of fact and
25 conclusions of law, and based thereon, imposes a Public Reprimand on Keith Edward
26 Meeuwsen's Teaching License.

27 Furthermore, the Commission imposes a period of one (1) year of probation upon
28 Meeuwsen to commence from the date this order is signed by the Commission and
29 subject to the following conditions:

1. Meeuwsen is directed to successfully complete a Commission approved training course in the area of "Cultural Competency" within ninety days of issuance of this order.
2. Meeuwsen is required to submit a letter to the Commission both requesting termination of probation and describing what was learned from the sanction and the required training and how it will change future behavior.
3. Meeuwsen shall comply with the Standards for Competent and Ethical Performance of Oregon Educators under Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 584, Division 020.

Issued and dated this 11th day of April, 20 16.

**TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION
STATE OF OREGON**

By 
Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director