
Gayla Gray Grise
Suspension, Concurrent with Probation and Professional Development

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: Ms. Grise was reported by Stewart County Schools for allegations of altering the grades of students during the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 school years. Ms. Grise was terminated by Stewart County Schools on October 29, 2020.

On June 24, 2022, in the criminal court for Stewart County, Ms. Grise pled guilty to T.C.A. § 39-14-136, a class A misdemeanor, for falsifying educational and academic records. Ms. Grise was sentenced to 11 months 29 days supervised probation.

Applicable Law

/Rule: T.C.A. § 49-1-302(a)(5)(A)(iv) provides that the Board has the power to adopt rules and policies governing the discipline of licensed personnel for misconduct by formal reprimand or by the suspension and revocation of licenses and certificates.

T.C.A. § 39-14-136(a) provides that “A person commits the offense of falsifying educational and academic documents who buys, sells, creates, duplicates, alters, gives or obtains a diploma, academic record, certificate of enrollment or other instrument which purports to signify merit or achievement conferred by an institution of education with the intent to use fraudulently that document or to allow the fraudulent use of the document.”

T.C.A. § 39-14-136(b) provides that “A violation of this section is a Class A misdemeanor.”

T.C.A. § § 49-50-1101(a) provides:

- (1) A student transcript shall not be altered by any employee of an LEA, charter school, or virtual school unless the LEA, charter school, or virtual school has a written policy governing student transcript alterations. All transcript alterations shall be made in accordance with the LEA, charter school, or virtual school policy governing student transcript alterations.
- (2) An LEA, charter school, or virtual school policy governing student transcript alterations must require any student transcript alteration to be supported by documentation providing an explanation of the reason for the transcript alteration and

evidence that the student has earned the grade reflected in the altered transcript.

T.C.A. § § 49-50-1101(b) provides that “An LEA, charter school, charter school authorizer, or virtual school shall not retaliate against an employee who brings unauthorized transcript alterations to the attention of school officials.”

T.C.A. § § 49-50-1101(c) provides that “Any person who intentionally violates this section may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, revocation of a professional educator license or certification issued by the department of education, and may be subject to prosecution for falsification of educational or academic records under § 39-14-136.”

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(1) provides that educators shall abide by all applicable federal and state laws.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1003(b)(12) provides that an educator shall not disclose information about the student obtained in the course of the educator's professional service, unless disclosure of the information is permitted, serves a compelling professional purpose, or is required by law.

T.C.A. § 49-5-1004(c)(2) provides that educators shall conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession.

0520-02-03-.09(1)(k) defines good cause as conduct that calls into question the fitness of an educator to hold a license including, but not limited to, violation of any provision in the Teacher Code of Ethics as contained in T.C.A. §§ 49- 5-1001, et seq.

0520-02-03-.09(3)(i) provides that the State Board of Education may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator’s license for Other good cause as defined in subparagraph (1)(k) of this rule.

0520-02-03-.09(3)(j) provides that the State Board of Education may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator’s license for any offense contained in paragraphs (4) and/or (5) of this rule.

0520-02-03-.09(5)(a)(8) provides that an individual holding an educator’s license who is found to have violated the teacher code of ethics contained in T.C.A. Title 49, Chapter 5, Part 10 shall be subject to a disciplinary action within the range of a formal reprimand up to and including revocation.

Status:

Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board’s intent to suspend Respondent’s educator license based upon these findings concurrent with Respondent’s probation, beginning retroactively from the date of June 24, 2022; and require professional development in the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) “Prevention and Correction: Overview Course, or a similar ethics course. Respondent received said notice.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

February 2022 — The Board approved the suspension of an educator’s license concurrent with probation after a plea of guilty to T.C.A § 39-14-136 for falsifying educational and academic records.

The Recommendation:

The Board staff recommends that the Board approve the signed Consent Order submitted by Respondent for the suspension of Respondent’s license concurrent with probation and with proof of completion of professional development based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.