



SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

DR. TERRY BERGESON OLD CAPITOL BUILDING • PO BOX 47200 • OLYMPIA WA 98504-7200 • <http://www.k12.wa.us>

IN THE MATTER OF THE EDUCATION)	
CERTIFICATE OF)	OPP No. D03-05-051
)	
)	AGREED ORDER
Gary D. Peterson)	OF SUSPENSION
Certificate No. 250200C)	
)	

COMES NOW the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, under the authority granted by the laws of the state of Washington, having reviewed the file of the above-referenced case, and having considered the entire evidence contained therein, does hereby stipulate by and between the Office of Professional Practices (OPP), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and Gary D. Peterson, that the Washington Education Certificate, No. 250200C, of Gary D. Peterson, shall be suspended, based on the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law set forth below:

FINDING OF FACTS

1. Gary D. Peterson was issued a Washington Education Certificate, No. 250200C, on March 19, 1982. That certificate currently remains valid.
2. Gary D. Peterson was employed by the Tacoma Public Schools.
3. On April 23, 2003, the Office of Professional Practices, within OSPI, received a complaint letter from the Superintendent of the Tacoma Public Schools alleging a lack of good

GARY D. PETERSON
 AGREED ORDER OF SUSPENSION

moral character or personal fitness, or a violation of the Code of Professional Conduct, Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 180-87, by Gary D. Peterson.

4. On June 9, 1998, Mr. Peterson signed an agreement with the Tacoma Public Schools. The agreement, which was entered into in lieu of suspension without pay, dictated terms by which Mr. Peterson to abide by in his treatment of students.

5. During the 2002-2003 school year, Mr. Peterson: provided meals to female students, during regular school hours; gave gifts of clothing and money to female students; made disparaging and inappropriate remarks to female students; on numerous occasions, went to a female student's workplace, after school hours had concluded, and assisted the student with her proscribed work duties; loaned his personal vehicle to students; and left school grounds, during regular school hours, without following Tacoma Public Schools policy and procedures for leaving school grounds.

6. During the 2002-2003 school year, Mr. Peterson established a jogging route, in the early morning hours, in the neighborhood of one of his students. The route was approximately 25 miles from Mr. Peterson's residence.

7. On February 24, 2003, Mr. Peterson was placed on administrative leave.

8. On April 10, 2003, Tacoma Public Schools issued a letter of probable cause for termination to Mr. Peterson.

9. On June 25, 2003, as part of a settlement agreement, Mr. Peterson resigned from the Tacoma Public Schools. The resignation was effective August 31, 2003.

10. In a sworn statement, dated December 3, 2003, Mr. Peterson states that he did sign the 1998 agreement with the Tacoma Public Schools. In the 2002-2003 school year, he felt a need to help "students in need". Mr. Peterson says that he did help a couple of students too much. Mr. Peterson says that, due to trauma suffered in his personal life, he felt a need to help students who were neglected and rejected by their own families. Mr. Peterson says that he left school grounds, during school hours, to obtain food in an attempt to self-medicate a medical problem. Mr. Peterson says that his attempts to help his students were attempts to show "my 'love' for my students was solely the love of a surrogate parent". Mr. Peterson says that he "tried to provide parental guidance where parental support was not available.

11. Good moral character and personal fitness is a continuing requirement to maintain a Washington Education Certificate.

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CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. OSPI has jurisdiction over Gary D. Peterson and over the subject matter of this action.

2. OSPI has shown by clear and convincing evidence that Washington Education Certificate, No. 250200C, of Gary D. Peterson, should be suspended as provided for in WAC 180-86-070.

3. Gary D. Peterson has violated WAC 180-87-060, RCW 28A.410.090, WAC 180-86-013, and WAC 180-86-014.

ORDER

THEREFORE, it is hereby ordered and agreed that the Washington Education Certificate, No. 250200C, of Gary D. Peterson, be suspended for sixty (60) days from the date of entry of this Order.

Reinstatement will require successful completion of:

(1) successful completion of a psychological evaluation which validates Gary Peterson's ability to have unsupervised access to children, by an evaluator mutually agreed upon by the Office of Professional Practices (OPP) and Gary Peterson; (2) that Gary Peterson follows and complete any and all treatment recommended in the evaluation; (3) that Gary Peterson provides a release authorizing OPP to have access to records of any and all evaluation and any and all subsequent

treatment undertaken; (4) and that the cost of conformance to all reinstatement requirements will be the responsibility of Gary Peterson.

DATED This 13th day of December, 2004.

DR. TERRY BERGESON
Superintendent of Public Instruction
State of Washington

Stipulated to and approved
For entry; notice of presentation
waived:

By: Marcia L. Riggers
Marcia L. Riggers
Assistant Superintendent
Student Support and Operations

Gary D. Peterson
Gary D. Peterson, Respondent

I am not agreeing that I am guilty of any misconduct in this matter. The school district investigation ignored proof that I provided assistance for all students, male and female.