

1                   BEFORE THE TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION  
2   OF THE STATE OF OREGON  
3

4 In the Matter of the Educator                    )        DEFAULT ORDER OF  
5 License of    )        REVOCATION OF  
6 JAMES MICHAEL WRIGHT                         )        RIGHT TO APPLY  
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9           On April 17, 2014, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission)  
10 issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to James Michael Wright (Wright) in which the  
11 Commission charged him with Gross Neglect of Duty. The Notice was sent via U.S. First  
12 Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail Receipt 7010 2780 0000 2187 2951 to the address on file  
13 with the Commission. The Notice designated the Commission file as the record for purposes  
14 of proving a prima facie case. The Certified Mail receipt was returned to the Commission  
15 “signed” on April 22, 2014. The first class mail was not returned to the Commission. The  
16 Notice of Opportunity of Hearing, dated April 17, 2014, and signed by Victoria Chamberlain,  
17 Executive Director, stated:

18                   “IF A REQUEST FOR HEARING IS NOT RECEIVED WITHIN THIS 21-DAY  
19 PERIOD, YOUR RIGHT TO A HEARING SHALL BE CONSIDERED WAIVED  
20 UNLESS YOUR FAILURE TO REQUEST A HEARING WAS BEYOND YOUR  
21 REASONABLE CONTROL. IF YOU DO NOT REQUEST A HEARING OR IF YOU  
22 FAIL TO APPEAR AT A HEARING, THE COMMISSION WILL ADOPT AN ORDER  
23 OF DEFAULT WHICH MAY INCLUDE THE REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF  
24 YOUR LICENSE OR OTHER DISCIPLINE.”  
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26 On May 1, 2014, Wright requested a hearing. The hearing was scheduled for April 20-21,  
27 2015. On April 16, 2015 Wright notified the Commission he would not appear for the  
28 hearing as scheduled. The Commission, therefore, finds Wright to be in default and enters  
29 the following findings of fact, conclusions of law, and final order, based on the files and  
30 records of the Commission concerning this matter.  
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32   **FINDINGS OF FACT**

- 33 1. The Commission has licensed Wright since April 23, 2010. Wright previously held  
34 an Initial I Teaching License valid from April 23, 2010, through June 6, 2013, with  
35 endorsements in Biology (HS) and Social Studies (HS). Wright has not made  
36 application for renewal of his licensure. During all relevant times, Wright was  
37 employed by the McMinnville School District as a substitute teacher.

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2. On February 21, 2013, the Commission received a report from the McMinnville School District indicating Wright may have committed acts which constitute gross neglect of duty. A subsequent investigation determined that during the 2011- 2012 school year, Wright created a fictitious Facebook profile depicting himself as a local high school student under the name "Trashcannius Maximus". Wright explained to investigators that he created this account to "snoop" on students, to get the real story on drug dealing, bullying, and gang activity. Wright chose the trashcan theme of his fake identity because other student profiles had used similar themes, and Wright believed it would help him infiltrate the student community better. Using Wright's fictitious profile, Wright participated in the following inappropriate conduct:

- a) Wright "friended" multiple students, including a minor aged, female student (ZH), while posing as a student himself. Wright claims he did this to monitor students for inappropriate and illegal activities, but Wright is unable to support this with any significant action or reporting on his part. Wright admitted that he kept his "Trashcannius" profile a secret from everyone, including school officials because Wright felt it was inappropriate for a teacher to be snooping on students.
- b) Wright posted comments and information on Facebook, purporting to be a student himself to gain student trust. According to involved students, this included Wright posting information or responding to other's posts in a manner that would constitute bullying.
- c) Wright took a special interest in student ZH, who was a student in a class Wright's wife (Audrey Wright) taught full time, and Wright knew from substitute teaching in his wife's classroom. Wright engaged ZH in personal conversations via the Facebook instant messaging system. These messages included inappropriate conversations about ZH's personal life and Wright telling her he thought she was "Cute" on occasion.
- d) On multiple occasions, ZH requested that Wright reveal his identity, and Wright refused. Once, Wright requested that ZH meet him at a coffee shop where Wright would reveal his true identity. ZH refused to meet with Wright because she was afraid and did not think it was safe to meet someone in that manner. Wright eventually told ZH who he was. ZH reported she felt betrayed, uncomfortable

1 and “weird” because of Wright’s behavior. Because of Wright’s conduct, ZH  
2 blocked conversations with Wright on Facebook. Wright contacted ZH from  
3 other Facebook accounts that he controlled, but ZH refused to accept Wright’s  
4 friend requests and told her mother about Wright’s conduct.

5 e) ZH and her mother reported Wright’s conduct to Wright’s wife, Audrey Wright.  
6 ZH and her mother requested that Wright not have any contact with ZH in the  
7 future. Wright’s wife did not report Wright’s behavior to school officials or other  
8 authorities. Wright did not stop substituting in ZH’s classroom. When Wright  
9 did substitute in ZH’s classroom, ZH either did not show up for class or did her  
10 studies in another classroom in order to avoid contact with Wright because she  
11 felt so uncomfortable.

12 f) During interviews, Wright admitted he was “obviously” not emotionally well  
13 equipped to handle teaching, he was not well equipped to teach, and Wright “was  
14 late to the maturity party”. Wright stated he never intended to harm ZH, and the  
15 situation had snowballed and “got beyond him”.

## 17 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

18 James Michael Wright engaged in unprofessional conduct as described in section two  
19 (2) above. Wright’s conduct detailed above, constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation of  
20 ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use*  
21 *professional judgment*); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as is incorporates OAR 584-020-  
22 0035(1)(b) (*Refrain from exploiting relationships with any student for personal gain, or in*  
23 *support of persons or issues*), OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(A) (*Not demonstrating or*  
24 *expressing professionally inappropriate interest in a student's personal life*), OAR 584-020-  
25 0035(1)(c)(B) (*Not accepting or giving or exchanging romantic or overly personal gifts or*  
26 *notes with a student*), and OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult*  
27 *boundaries with students in conduct and conversation at all times*).

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29 The Commission’s authority to impose discipline in this matter is based upon ORS  
30 342.175.

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**FINAL ORDER**

The Commission hereby revokes James Michael Wright's right to apply for an Educator licensure.

IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION



By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director

**NOTICE OF APPEAL OR RIGHTS**

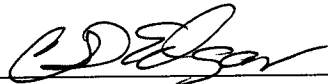
YOU ARE ENTITLED TO JUDICIAL REVIEW OF THIS ORDER. JUDICIAL REVIEW MAY BE OBTAINED BY FILING A PETITION FOR REVIEW WITHIN 60 DAYS FROM THE SERVICE OF THIS ORDER. JUDICIAL REVIEW IS PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ORS 183.482 TO THE OREGON COURT OF APPEALS.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that I served the foregoing notice of final order, certified by me as such, by mailing U.S. First Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail—Return Receipt Requested, addressed to:

James Michael Wright  
350 Bridge Street  
Sheridan OR 97378

Dated this 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.

By:   
Cristina Edgar  
Investigator