1 BEFORE THE TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION 2 OF THE STATE OF OREGON 3 4 In the Matter of the STIPULATION OF FACTS AND **Educator License of**) FINAL ORDER OF SUSPENSION 5 WILLIAM ROBERT JOHNSON) AND PROBATION 6 On or about July 2, 2017, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission) 7 received complaints from a patron alleging that William R. Johnson (Johnson) had violated 8 Professional Standards and Practices. 9 After review of the matters alleged, Johnson and the Commission agree that their respective 10 interests, together with the public interest, are best served by a stipulation to certain facts, the 11 imposition of a thirty (30) day suspension of Johnson's Oregon educator license, and a two (2) year 12 period of probation to commence upon reinstatement of Johnson's Oregon educator license. 13 This document sets forth the facts upon which the parties have agreed and the stipulated 14 sanction to be imposed. Johnson stipulates that there is sufficient evidence in the Commission's files 15 and records to support the findings of fact, conclusions of law, and order set forth below. 16 By signing below, Johnson acknowledges, understands, stipulates, and agrees to the following: 17 (i) he has been fully advised of his rights to notice and a hearing to contest the findings of fact, 18 conclusions of law, and order set forth below, and fully and finally waives all such rights and any rights 19 to appeal or otherwise challenge this Stipulation of Facts and Final Order of Suspension and 20 Probation (Stipulation and Final Order); (ii) this Stipulation and Final Order is a public document and 21 disclosed to the public upon request by the Commission; (iii) this Stipulation and Final Order is 22 contingent upon and subject to approval and adoption by the Commission. If the Commission does 23 not approve and adopt this Stipulation and Final Order, then neither Johnson nor the Commission 24 are bound by the terms herein; (iv) he has fully read this Stipulation and Final Order, and understands 25 it completely; (v) he voluntarily, without any force or duress, enters into this Stipulation and Final 26 Order and consents to issuance and entry of the Stipulated Final Order below; (vi) he states that no 27 promises or representation has been made to induce him to sign this Stipulation and Final Order; and 28 (vii) he has consulted with an attorney regarding this Stipulation and Final Order and has been fully

1 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

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STIPULATION OF FACTS

- Johnson has been licensed as an Educator in Oregon since August 13, 1999. Johnson holds a
 Professional Teaching License, with endorsements in English Language Arts (PK-12) and Drama
 (PK-12), valid from November 20, 2015 through November 19, 2020. Johnson also holds an Initial
 Administrator license, with an endorsement in Administrator (ALL LVL), which is valid from
 September 23, 2015, through November 19, 2018. During all relevant times, Johnson was
 employed by the Hillsboro School District (HSD).
- 11 2) On July 2, 2017, the Commission received multiple reports from a single patron alleging
 12 unprofessional conduct on Johnson's part. Specifically, that Johnson communicated
 13 inappropriately with students via text messaging/social media. Patron also reported Johnson
 14 made multiple inappropriate comments to a classroom of students for 50 minutes while he
 15 lectured them about social media bulling. On July 31, 2017, the Commission received an additional
 16 patron complaint from a former student who also complained Johnson engaged in inappropriate
 17 communications with students.
 - 3) Investigation determined that between March 15 and April 7, 2017, Johnson sent inappropriate text message or instant messages to a group of six students and one other adult. The message group was formed to help organize participants of a school sponsored state drama trip. While several of the group messages addressed trip planning and logistics, many also including joking banter among several of the group members. A review of these messages indicates Johnson participated in the banter with students, sent approximately 26 inappropriate messages, and many more that had no academic or field trip relevance. When interviewed about the messages, Johnson admitted they were inappropriate and inexcusable. HSD found that Johnson's conduct violated school district policies.

4) Investigation determined that on April 11, 2017, Johnson lectured approximately 26 students for nearly 51 minutes about social media bullying. This lecture was in response to a social media bullying incident that had involved several of the students present for the lecture. One student covertly recorded Johnson's lecture and later reported it to school officials. Witnesses reported Johnson had been visibly angry, pounded his fist into the stage, and that Johnson threw his phone. Students reported Johnson made them uncomfortable, scared, surprised and awkward during his "rant". Witnesses stated Johnson repeatedly and frequently used profanity during his lecture. When interviewed about the lecture, Johnson admitted that, although his effort to stop the bullying was well-intentioned, he became overly emotional, and his lecture was unprofessional and an error in judgement. Johnson informed investigators he had been under extreme stress in his personal life due to the passing of his former wife and mother of his young children, with whom he remained very close. Johnson and his medical provider maintain that his high stress and grief caused him to act out of character in the preceding days and weeks. HSD found Johnson's conduct related to the unprofessional lecture violated school district policies.

5) HSD received many letters of support for Johnson from current and former students, parents, and colleagues reflecting Johnson's strengths as a teacher and role model. Several students commented on the significant positive influence he had on their lives.

7/31/18 Date 8/7/18

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illian R. Johnson 22

Trent Danowski, Deputy Director

Teacher Standards and Practices Commission

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1 **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

William R. Johnson's conduct described 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), OAR 584-020-0010(1) (Recognize the worth and dignity of all persons and respect for each individual, OAR 584-020-0025(2)(e) (Using district lawful and reasonable rules and regulations), OAR 584-020-0030(2)(b) (Skill in communicating with administrators, students, staff, parents, and other patrons); and OAR 584-020-0040(4)(0) as it incorporates, OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with students in conduct and conversations at all times).

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

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13 **ORDER**

The Commission hereby adopts and incorporates herein the above stipulation of facts, conclusions of law, and based thereon hereby imposes a thirty (30) day suspension upon Johnson's Oregon educator license as follows:

William R. Johnson's Oregon educator license is hereby suspended for thirty (30) days following the adoption of this order.

Furthermore, the Commission imposes a two (2) year period of probation upon Johnson to commence upon reinstatement of his Oregon educator license and subject to the following terms and conditions of probation:

- 1. Johnson shall comply with the Standards for Competent and Ethical Performance of Oregon Educators under Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 584, Division 020.
- 2. Johnson will successfully complete a Commission approved training related to student - teacher boundaries within the first year of probation.

Violation of any term or condition of probation shall constitute an independent basis for the Commission to revoke Johnson's Oregon educator license or otherwise impose discipline, after first providing Johnson with notice and opportunity for hearing.

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IT IS SO ORDERED this ______ day of August, 2018.

31 TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

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