

**IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

|                         |   |                              |
|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>ALYSSA WRIGHT,</b>   | : |                              |
| <b>Appellant,</b>       | : |                              |
|                         | : |                              |
| v.                      | : | <b>Teacher Tenure Appeal</b> |
|                         | : | <b>No. 05-25</b>             |
| <b>CENTRAL BUCKS</b>    | : |                              |
| <b>SCHOOL DISTRICT,</b> | : |                              |
| <b>Appellee.</b>        | : |                              |

**OPINION AND ORDER**

Alyssa Wright (“Wright” and/or “Appellant”) appeals to the Secretary of Education (“Secretary”) from the action of the Board of School Directors (“Board”) of the Central Bucks School District (“District” and/or “Appellee”), terminating her employment.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

1. Wright has been employed as the Director of Pupil Services for the District for approximately four years. (Sworn Declaration of Wright at 1); (SR<sup>1</sup>551).
2. Wright’s responsibilities included oversight of all special education services, all gifted education programs, and all students served under Chapter 15 of Pennsylvania Code Title 22, 22 Pa. Code § 15.1 *et. seq.* (Appellant’s Brief at 1); (SR551).
3. Kathleen Veisz (“Veisz”), a District Supervisor of Special Education worked under the supervision of Wright. (SR017 at 1).
4. On October 11, 2024, Veisz informed Wright that a student in a special education classroom located in Jamison Elementary School (Jamison classroom) was naked during

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<sup>1</sup>In lieu of a hearing before the Board, Wright and the District agreed to establish a record, consisting of written submissions only, for the Board’s consideration of the District’s recommendation to terminate Wright’s employment. That record is referred throughout this Opinion as the Stipulated Record or “SR”.

instructional time while the Classroom Teacher and an Education Assistant (“EA”) were present. (Sworn Declaration of Wright at 1); (SR002).

5. Upon learning about the incident involving the naked student, Wright instructed Veisz to investigate and communicate with the Jamison classroom staff about the incident. *Id.*

6. On November 14, 2024, Deneen Dry (“Dry”), Staff Nurse, called Wright to convey concerns about the treatment of students in the Jamison classroom. Specifically, Dry stated that: 1.) students were made to sit on the toilet until a red ring appeared on their skin; 2.) students’ bodily movements were restricted to their workstations; 3.) a student was left masturbating in the bathroom, while the Personal Care Assistant (“PCA”) watched; and 4.) a student regularly hit other students. (Statement of Charges at 5, ¶ 21); (SR058).

7. Following a November 14, 2024, report to Wright about possible neglect and abuse in the Jamison classroom, Wright requested that Veisz observe the Jamison classroom on November 15, 2024, but did not make a report to ChildLine. (Statement of Charges at 6, ¶ 26); (SR002).

8. The allegations relating to the Jamison classroom involved the Classroom Teacher and an EA engaging in the mistreatment of students including: 1.) allowing a student to remain naked and publicly masturbate in the classroom; 2.) mocking students; 3.) depriving students of access to water; 4.) tampering with a non-verbal student’s communication device; 5.) failing to facilitate the use of a communication device to allow a non-verbal student to communicate; and 6.) physically restraining multiple students in their workspace. (Joint Exhibit I); (SR058-SR059).

9. On November 15, 2024, Rob Freiling (“Freiling”), the Director of Human Resources, and Christine Trawinski (“Trawinski”), Human Resources Manager, met with Alyssa Kline, a PCA, and Dry about alleged abuse and neglect in the Jamison classroom. (Statement of Charges at 6, ¶ 29); (SR058).

10. On November 15, 2024, Veisz and District Assistant Superintendent, Nadine Garvin (“Garvin”), met with Wright to discuss the specific allegations of abuse and neglect occurring in the Jamison classroom. (Statement of Charges at 6, ¶ 34); (SR549).

11. Wright did not file a report with ChildLine after meeting with Veisz and Garvin on November 15, 2024, or thereafter, regarding specific allegations of abuse and neglect that occurred in the Jamison classroom. (Joint Exhibit A at 13); (SR013).

12. On November 19, 2024, Wright conducted an observation of the Jamison classroom but did not observe any improper behavior on that specific day. (Joint Exhibit A at 4); (SR005).

13. A December 12, 2024, memorandum from Freiling to members of the District’s Administration, including Wright, entitled, “Jamison Fact Finding Summary & Recommended Action” validated multiple concerns related to the treatment of students in the Jamison classroom. Those concerns included: 1.) multiple reports that one student undressed and engaged in self-stimulatory behavior in the classroom as part of a “wait-it-out” strategy; 2.) reports that a student was denied access to water as a method of managing the student’s urination; and 3.) multiple reports that the EA was observed restraining students by placing students in their workstations and maneuvering tables and other stations in a manner to limit the students’ movement. The EA was also observed sitting on top of the table or placing their feet upon the legs of the table to restrict student movement. (Statement of Charges, Exhibit C); (SR062).

14. On December 12, 2024, Wright received findings from the District’s Human Resources investigation into allegations of abuse in the Jamison classroom. The report validated findings that a student was allowed to remain undressed and masturbate in the classroom and in the bathroom, a student was denied access to water, and that students were restrained in their workstations. *Id.*; (SR062).

15. Wright did not report the abuse of students in the Jamison classroom to ChildLine, and the abuse was not reported until November 20, 2024, when the District's Superintendent contacted ChildLine. (SR 556).

16. The listed "essential duties" in the job description for Wright's position as the Director of Pupil Services included the maintenance of records and preparation of reports for the Intermediate Unit and Pennsylvania Department of Education as well as ensuring compliance with state and federal standards and regulations relating to the District's special services programs. (Stipulation by the Parties to Record for Final Determination of Alyssa Wright's Employment on a Written Record at Exhibit B).

17. The Stipulated Record demonstrates that Wright never reported the restraint of students in the Jamison classroom. (Statement of Charges at 8.); (SR513).

18. On June 18, 2025, the Board issued a Statement of Charges to Wright charging her with violations of the Code of Professional Conduct for Educators, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA"), the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), and the Child Protective Services Law ("CPSL"). Appellant was also charged with incompetency, persistent negligence in the performance of duties, willful neglect of duties, and persistent and willful violation of or failure to comply with the school laws of this Commonwealth, including established policy of the Board. (Statement of Charges).

19. Wright and the District Administration mutually agreed to allow the Board to render a decision on the Statement of Charges based on documentary evidence in lieu of a hearing. (Stipulation by the Parties to the Appellate Record from Determination of Alyssa Wright's Employment Before the Secretary of Education).

20. On August 21, 2025, the Board issued an order terminating Wright’s employment with the District. *Id.* at 1.

21. On September 9, 2025, the Secretary received the Petition for Appeal filed on behalf of Wright in this matter. (Petition for Appeal).

22. On October 8, 2025, at approximately 1:00 p.m., a hearing was held before appointed Hearing Examiner, Sean A. Fields, Esq., at which counsel for both parties presented arguments in the matter before this Secretary. (Hearing Transcript).

### **DISCUSSION**

As a “school employee,” Wright is a mandated reporter under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 23 Pa.C.S. § 6311(a)(4). Wright’s legal responsibilities as a mandated reporter require her to immediately report any allegations of child abuse to ChildLine. 23 Pa.C.S. § 6313. Appellant’s employment with the District was terminated for a variety of reasons including “willful neglect of duties” under Section 1122 of the School Code. 24. P.S. § 11-1122. A willful neglect of duties by a professional employee may be defined as an intentional disregard of duties by that employee. *Flickinger v. Leb. Sch. Dist.*, 898 A.2d 62, 67 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2006). Unlike the charge of persistent and willful violation of school laws, there is no requirement of a continuous course of conduct to sustain a charge of willful neglect of duties. *Id.* The issue before this Secretary is whether there is sufficient evidence to show that Wright disregarded her duties as the District’s Director of Pupil Services.

Because both parties agreed not to present hearing testimony or evidence beyond the Stipulated Record in this case at both the district level and for this appeal, my decision is based on the facts set forth in the Stipulated Record. For the reasons set forth below, I conclude that the evidence in the Stipulated Record is sufficient to sustain Wright’s termination from employment.

**I. Appellant Violated the Reporting Requirement of the Child Protective Services Law.**

The CPSL requires mandated reporters, such as school employees, to report instances of suspected child abuse to the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. 23 Pa.C.S. § 6311(a)(4). The CPSL provides, in pertinent part, that:

- (1) A mandated reporter shall immediately make an oral report of suspected child abuse to the department via the Statewide toll-free telephone number under section 6332 (relating to establishment of Statewide toll-free telephone number) or a written report using electronic technologies under section 6305 (relating to electronic reporting).
- (2) A mandated reporter making an oral report under paragraph (1) of suspected child abuse shall also make a written report, which may be submitted electronically, within 48 hours to the department or county agency assigned to the case in a manner and format prescribed by the department.

23 Pa.C.S. § 6313(a)(1), (2).

The CPSL further provides that “[a] person or official required by this chapter to report a case of suspected child abuse. . . to the appropriate authorities commits an offense if the person willfully fails to do so.” 23 Pa.C.S. § 6319. Therefore, school employees, such as Wright, are mandated reporters who must immediately report suspected child abuse. 23 Pa.C.S. § 6311(a)(4). The mandatory obligation to report suspected child abuse applies to any school employee regardless of position or rank. Additionally, the current case involves a serious failure to file a ChildLine report because Appellant’s position involved supervision over students with disabilities; a population vulnerable to abuse and neglect.

Wright’s defense in part is that many challenging behaviors take place in a special education classroom and Appellant cannot be expected to file a report every time she learns about such incidents. Assuming *arguendo* that Wright was unaware of the full extent of the disturbing incidents that took place regarding the treatment of students in the Jamison classroom before

November 2024, the Stipulated Record demonstrates that Wright had full knowledge of abuse allegations no later than November 14, 2024, and further confirmation on November 15, 2024. Despite those notifications, Appellant never reported those allegations to ChildLine although she had a legal duty to do so. Because every school employee has an independent obligation to report suspected abuse, Wright's failure to report suspected child abuse constituted a violation of the CPSL despite the later report by the District's Superintendent on November 20, 2024.

Previously, the Secretary found that failure to report abuse under the CPSL was grounds for termination under Section 1122 of the Public School Code, 24 P.S. § 11-1122. *Kostoff v. Delaware Cnty. Intermediate Unit*, TTA-02-22. More recently, the Secretary upheld the termination of a high school principal for failing to report suspected abuse, rejecting the principal's assertion that it was reasonable for him to believe that a teacher would report the abuse since he directed the teacher to do so. *McCall v. McKeesport Area School District*, TTA-03-25. Because McCall's obligation to report was immediate, the Secretary rejected that argument as irrelevant. *Id.*

As the Director of Pupil Services, Appellant had a high level of professional responsibility for students receiving services under IDEA and Section 504. In the performance of those duties, Wright was first made aware of a student being naked in the Jamison classroom on October 11, 2024. Subsequently, Wright was specifically informed that abuse had occurred in the Jamison classroom no later than November 14, 2024. Moreover, beyond the specific duties Wright had as Director of Pupil Services, she had a legal duty to report under the CPSL. Therefore, I conclude the District properly dismissed Appellant for willful neglect of duties under Section 1122 of the Public School Code.

## **II. Appellant Failed to Take Appropriate Measures to Ensure the Use of Student Restraints Was Reported in Accordance with The Law.**

“Restraint” as defined under Chapter 14 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code is, “The application of physical force, with or without the use of any device, for the purpose of restraining the free movement of a student’s or eligible young child’s body.” 22 Pa. Code § 14.133(b)(i). Restraints to control acute or episodic aggressive or self-injurious behavior may be used only when the student is acting in a manner as to be a clear and present danger to himself, to other students or to employees, and only when less restrictive measures and techniques have proven to be or are less effective. 22 Pa. Code § 14.133(c). Additionally, school entities shall maintain and report data on the use of restraints as prescribed by the Secretary. 22 Pa. Code § 14.133(c)(5).

Wright’s essential duties as the District’s Director of Pupil Services included making reports to PDE and ensuring compliance related to the District’s special services program. On December 12, 2024, Appellant received a written report by Freiling that set forth findings of fact and recommendations. The report validated previous allegations including, that a student was denied access to water by the Classroom Teacher and EA in the Jamison classroom, and the EA was restraining students in their workstations and using furniture and her body weight to restrict the movement of students. (Statement of Charges at 7, ¶ 43); (SR059). Despite this knowledge, Appellant never reported the use of restraints to PDE or notified parents of students with IEPs in accordance with IDEA requirements. (Statement of Charges, Exhibit B at 6.) Based on the evidence of record, I conclude that Appellant willfully neglected her essential duties as the Director of Pupil Services by failing to report the use of restraints in the Jamison classroom.

**CONCLUSION**

For the foregoing reasons, I conclude that the District has satisfied the legal standards to support the termination of Appellant under Section 1122 of the Public School Code, 24 P.S. § 11-1122.

Accordingly, the following Order is entered:

IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

ALYSSA WRIGHT, :  
Appellant, :  
 :  
v. : **Teacher Tenure Appeal**  
 : **No. 05-25**  
CENTRAL BUCKS :  
SCHOOL DISTRICT, :  
Appellee. :

**ORDER**

AND NOW, this 30th day of March, 2026, the Secretary upholds the Central Bucks School District's decision to dismiss Alyssa Wright, a tenured professional employee, in accordance with the foregoing Opinion.

**BY ORDER:**



Carrie Rowe, Ed.D.  
Secretary of Education

Date mailed: March 30, 2026