COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION,	:	
Petitioner,	:	
	:	
v.	:	**PSPC DOCKET NO. DI-25-081**
	:	
ASHLEY KOLESAR,	:	
A/K/A ASHLEY THURBY-KOLESAR	:	
Respondent.	:	

ORDER APPROVING SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

This matter is before the Professional Standards and Practices Commission ("Commission") on the Department of Education's ("Department") Motion for Entry of Order requesting that the Commission issue an order approving the parties' Settlement Agreement and directing the Department to suspend the certificate[1] and employment eligibility of Ashley Kolesar, a/k/a Ashley Thurby-Kolesar, ("Respondent") in settlement of the educator misconduct complaint filed against her.

Background

Respondent holds an Instructional II certificate in the area of Mathematics 7-12. At all relevant times, Respondent was employed by the Laurel Highlands School District. On February 17, 2023, an educator misconduct complaint was filed with the Department alleging that Respondent pleaded guilty to Intercept Communications, a felony of the third degree, due to recording a conversation with a student, in violation of 18 Pa.C.S. § 5703(1). As required by the Educator Discipline Act ("Act"), the Department provided written notice to Respondent of the legal sufficiency of the complaint and its determination that there was probable cause to believe that grounds for discipline existed. *See* 24 P.S. § 2070.9(e).

[1] As defined in the Educator Discipline Act. 24 P.S. § 2070.1b.

Settlement Agreement

A certificate is a constitutionally protected property right entitled to due process protection. Bowalick v. Dep't of Educ., 840 A.2d 519, 522 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2003) (citing Petron v. Dep't of Educ., 726 A.2d 1091 (Pa. Cmwlth. 1999)). Generally, an accused educator is entitled to a full evidentiary hearing conducted in accordance with the Act and the Administrative Agency Law. 24 P.S. §§ 2070.13 (relating to hearing) and 2070.18(a) (relating to commission proceedings and procedures). In place of a hearing, a charge of misconduct can be resolved in a written settlement agreement. 24 P.S. § 2070.12 (relating to department action after investigation). When approved by the Commission, a settlement agreement has the same effect as an order issued following an administrative adjudication. *See* Kenney v. Bureau of Prof'l & Occupational Affairs, 203 A.3d 421 (Pa. Cmwlth. 2019).

The parties have entered into a written Settlement Agreement, whereby they agree to resolve all matters contained in the complaint with the suspension of Respondent's certificate and employment eligibility. The Settlement Agreement was presented to the Commission for approval at its regularly scheduled meeting on September 15, 2025. After careful consideration, the Commission finds that the agreement is fair, reasonable, and in the best interests of the parties and the public and enters the following:

Order

AND NOW, this 30th day of September 2025, upon consideration of the Department's Motion for Entry of Order, it is hereby Ordered:

1. The Motion for Entry of Order is granted, and the Settlement Agreement is approved.

2. The Commission incorporates the terms of the Settlement Agreement into this Order.
3. Consistent with the terms of the Settlement Agreement, the Department is directed to suspend Respondent's certificate and eligibility to be employed as a charter or cyber charter school staff member or contracted educational provider staff member effective on the date of this Order.
4. To have the suspension lifted, Respondent must apply to the Commission for an order lifting the suspension pursuant to 24 P.S. § 2070.16.
5. Respondent is not eligible to be employed in a school entity in a position requiring certification or as a charter or cyber charter school staff member or contracted educational provider staff member, or eligible for any certificate until her certificate and employment eligibility are reinstated in accordance with the Act.
6. The educator misconduct complaint filed against Respondent is resolved.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND
PRACTICES COMMISSION

By: _____

Myron Yoder
Chairperson Pro Tempore

Attest: _____

Amber Lee Czerniakowski
Executive Director

Date Mailed: September 30, 2025