



# Before the Education Practices Commission of the State of Florida

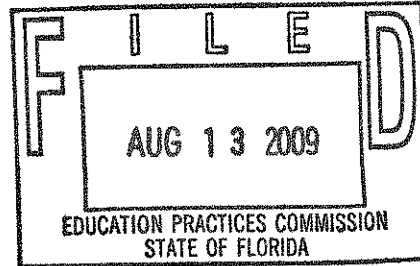
DR. ERIC J. SMITH as the  
Commissioner of Education,

Petitioner,

vs.

VIRGINIA KURZAWA,

Respondent.



CASE N<sup>o</sup>: 09-0250-RT  
EPC Index N<sup>o</sup> 09-449-AS  
PPS N<sup>o</sup> 078-3312-S

---

## Final Order

Respondent, Virginia Kurzawa, holds Florida educator's certificate no. 623858. Petitioner has filed an Administrative Complaint seeking suspension, revocation, permanent revocation or other disciplinary action against the certificate.

Petitioner and Respondent have entered into a Settlement Agreement for resolution of this cause. The Settlement Agreement and the Administrative Complaint are attached to and made a part of this Final Order.

A Teacher Panel of the Education Practices Commission met on August 6, 2009 in Tallahassee, Florida. The Commission accepts the Settlement Agreement as the appropriate resolution of this cause.


It is therefore ORDERED that the Settlement Agreement is hereby ACCEPTED and Respondent shall comply with its terms and conditions.

---

---

This Order becomes effective upon filing.

DONE AND ORDERED, this 6 day of August, 2009.

  
DENNIS J. GRIFFIN, Presiding Officer

COPIES FURNISHED TO:

Bureau of Professional Practices

Bureau of Teacher Certification

*Florida Administrative Law Reports*

Superintendent  
Brevard County Schools  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, FL 32940-6699

Assistant Superintendent  
Human Resources  
Brevard County Schools  
2700 Judge Fran Jamieson Way  
Viera, FL 32940-6699

Probation Office

DOE counsel for PPS

Daniel Biggins  
Assistant Attorney General

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW**

UNLESS WAIVED, A PARTY WHO IS ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THIS FINAL ORDER IS ENTITLED TO JUDICIAL REVIEW PURSUANT TO SECTION 120.68, FLORIDA STATUTES. REVIEW PROCEEDINGS ARE GOVERNED BY THE FLORIDA RULES OF APPELLATE PROCEDURE. SUCH PROCEEDINGS ARE COMMENCED BY FILING ONE COPY OF A NOTICE OF APPEAL WITH THE EDUCATION PRACTICES COMMISSION AND A SECOND COPY, ACCOMPANIED BY FILING FEES PRESCRIBED BY LAW, WITH THE DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL, FIRST DISTRICT, OR WITH THE DISTRICT COURT OF APPEAL IN THE APPELLATE DISTRICT WHERE THE PARTY RESIDES. THE NOTICE OF APPEAL MUST BE FILED WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS OF RENDITION OF THIS ORDER.

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a copy of the foregoing Order was mailed to Virginia Kurzawa, 483 Homestead Avenue Northeast, Palm Bay, Florida 32907 and Carol R. Buxton, FEA, 1516 East Hillcrest Street, Suite 109, Orlando, Florida 32803 this 13 day of August, 2009 by Certified U.S. Mail.



DON SHIELDS  
Education Practices Commission

STATE OF FLORIDA  
EDUCATION PRACTICES COMMISSION

DR. ERIC J. SMITH, as  
Commissioner of Education

Petitioner,

vs.

CASE NO. 078-3312

VIRGINIA S. KURZAWA,

Respondent.

SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

RECEIVED

APR 20 2009

Petitioner and Respondent hereby stipulate and agree as follows:

1. **Certification.** Respondent holds Florida Educator's Certificate Number 623858 issued by the Department of Education covering the area of Art which is valid through June 30, 2011.
2. **Employment.** At all times pertinent hereto, Respondent was employed as an Art Teacher at Lockmar Elementary School in the Brevard County School District.
3. **Allegations.** Respondent neither admits nor denies, but elects not to contest the allegations set forth in Petitioner's Administrative Complaint, which are incorporated herein by reference.
4. **Letter of Reprimand.** Respondent agrees to accept a letter of reprimand, a copy of which shall be placed in her certification file with the Department of Education and a copy of which shall be placed in her personnel file with the employing school district.
5. **Probation.** Respondent agrees that she shall be placed on probation for a period of two (2) employment years. If Respondent is currently employed in a position requiring a Florida educator's certificate, probation shall begin upon the issuance of the Final Order by the Education Practices Commission (EPC) provided the EPC has accepted this Settlement Agreement. If Respondent is not currently employed in a position requiring a Florida educator's certificate, probation shall begin upon her re-employment in such a position. In the event Respondent's employment is interrupted for any reason prior to the expiration of probation, the probation shall be tolled until Respondent resumes employment in a position requiring a Florida educator's certificate. As conditions of probation, Respondent:

a. shall immediately contact the Department of Education upon employment in Florida in a position requiring a Florida educator's certificate or upon termination from such a position. If currently employed in such a position, Respondent shall contact the Department of Education within ten (10) days of the issuance of the Final Order accepting this Settlement Agreement and Respondent shall provide the Department of Education with the name and address of her work site as well as the name, address and telephone number of her immediate supervisor.

b. shall make arrangements for her immediate supervisor to provide the EPC with a true and accurate copy of each written annual performance evaluation or assessment prepared by her supervisor within ten (10) days of its preparation;

c. shall pay to the EPC \$150.00 within the first six (6) months of each probation year to defray the costs of monitoring probation;

d. shall have the scope of her employment restricted to not transporting students in or on any motor vehicle;

e. shall violate no law and fully comply with all district school board regulations, school rules, and State Board of Education Rule 6B-1.006; and

f. shall satisfactorily perform her duties in a competent, professional manner.

6. **Fine.** Respondent agrees to pay a fine in the amount of \$500.00 to the EPC within the first year of the probationary period.

7. **Violation.** In the event Respondent fails to comply with each condition set forth herein, she agrees that the Petitioner shall be authorized to file an Administrative Complaint or a Notice of Violation with the EPC seeking sanctions against her Florida educator's certificate up to and including permanent revocation of her Florida educator's certificate and a permanent bar from re-application for a Florida educator's certificate, based upon the violation of the terms of this Settlement Agreement.

8. **Costs and Fees.** Respondent agrees that any costs associated with the fulfillment of the terms of this Settlement Agreement shall be her sole responsibility. These costs include, but are not limited to, those associated with the Recovery Network Program (RNP) and Probation, if applicable. The probation monitoring fee shall be held in abeyance if Respondent is not employed as an educator pursuant to the terms of the Probation.

9. **Force and Effect.** This Settlement Agreement constitutes an offer of settlement of disputed issues of material fact until accepted and executed by all parties. The Settlement

Agreement is void and has no force or effect unless executed by all parties and accepted by the EPC. If the Settlement Agreement is not accepted and executed by all parties, the terms herein shall be inadmissible in any subsequent formal or informal administrative hearing or in any other legal action between the parties.

10. **Notice of "Three Strikes" Provision.** Respondent is hereby put on notice that Section 1012.795(6)(b), Florida Statutes (2004), provides for permanent revocation of an educator's certificate under certain circumstances when the educator's certificate has been sanctioned by the Education Practices Commission on two (2) previous occasions.

11. **Waiver of Rights.** Respondent understands provisions of this Settlement Agreement, their legal effect, and her rights under Florida law to a formal hearing before a duly designated administrative law judge of the Division of Administrative Hearings (DOAH) or an informal hearing before the EPC. Respondent specifically waives her right to both a formal and an informal hearing, except she may appear before the EPC in order to urge the adoption of this Settlement Agreement. Respondent further acknowledges that she is under no duress, coercion or undue influence to execute this Settlement Agreement and that she has had the opportunity to receive the advice of legal counsel prior to signing this Settlement Agreement.

12. **Approval.** When fully executed, this Settlement Agreement shall be submitted to the EPC with the joint request by the parties that the EPC accept and adopt the terms of this Settlement Agreement as the basis for its Final Order in this proceeding. The parties understand that the EPC has the discretion to reject this Settlement Agreement and order a full evidentiary hearing on the allegations of the Administrative Complaint if, in the exercise of its discretion, it deems such action to be appropriate.

13. **Notice.** Respondent waives all statutory and regulatory provisions concerning notice of hearing and agrees that this Settlement Agreement may be presented to the EPC for consideration at its next available scheduled meeting, provided that Respondent is given reasonable advanced notice of time, place and date of said meeting.

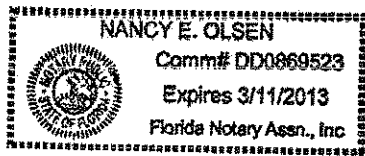
(SIGNATURES AND NOTARIZATION ON FOLLOWING PAGE)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Settlement Agreement on this  
25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2009.

Virginia S. Kurzawa  
VIRGINIA S. KURZAWA

STATE OF FLORIDA  
COUNTY OF Brevard

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 25<sup>th</sup> day of  
March, 2009, by Virginia Kurzawa,  
who is  personally known or produced  
as identification [type of identification produced].



Nancy E. Olsen  
NOTARY PUBLIC  
My commission expires: 3/11/09

Mari M. Presley  
MARI PRESLEY  
Deputy General Counsel  
Suite 1244, Turlington Building  
325 West Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0400  
Telephone (850) 245-0443  
Facsimile (850) 245-9425

ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONER

Carol Buxton  
CAROL BUXTON, ESQUIRE  
Florida Education Association  
1516 East Hillcrest Street, Suite 109  
Orlando, Florida 32803  
Telephone (407) 893-3373  
Facsimile (407) 422-3658

ATTORNEY FOR RESPONDENT

**STATE OF FLORIDA  
EDUCATION PRACTICES COMMISSION**

**DR. ERIC J. SMITH, as  
Commissioner of Education,**

**Petitioner,**

**vs.**

**CASE NO. 078-3312**

**VIRGINIA KURZAWA,**

**Respondent.**

---

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLAINT**

Petitioner, Dr. Eric J. Smith, as Commissioner of Education, files this Administrative Complaint against VIRGINIA KURZAWA. The Petitioner seeks the appropriate disciplinary sanction of the Respondent's educator's certificate pursuant to Sections 1012.315, 1012.795, and 1012.796, Florida Statutes, and pursuant to Rule 6B-1.006, Florida Administrative Code, Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, said sanctions specifically set forth in Sections 1012.795(1) and 1012.796(7), Florida Statutes.

The Petitioner alleges:

**JURISDICTION**

1. The Respondent holds Florida Educator's Certificate 623858, covering the area of Art, which is valid through June 30, 2011.

2. At all times pertinent hereto, the Respondent was employed as an Art Teacher at Lockmar Elementary School in the Brevard County School District.

**MATERIAL ALLEGATIONS**

3. On or about April 18, 2008, the Respondent drove while under the influence of alcohol and was involved in an automobile accident that caused property damage and injury to another person or persons. The Respondent was arrested and charged with two counts of Driving Under the Influence and Causing Damage or Injury. The Respondent pled nolo contendere to one count of this offense, and was adjudicated guilty.

4. The Respondent is in violation of Section 1012.795(2), Florida Statutes, which provides that the plea of guilty in any court or the decision of guilty by any court is prima facie proof



of grounds for the revocation of the certificate.


The Petitioner charges:

**STATUTE VIOLATIONS**

**COUNT 1:** The Respondent is in violation of Section 1012.795(1)(f), Florida Statutes, in that Respondent has been convicted or found guilty of, or entered a plea of guilty to, regardless of adjudication of guilt, a misdemeanor, felony, or any other criminal charge, other than a minor traffic violation.

**WHEREFORE**, based on the reasons set forth herein and in accordance with the Explanation of Rights and Election of Rights forms attached to and made a part of this Administrative Complaint, Petitioner respectfully recommends that the Education Practices Commission impose an appropriate sanction against the Respondent's educator's certificate pursuant to the authority provided in Sections 1012.795(1) and 1012.796(7), Florida Statutes. The sanctions imposed by the Education Practices Commission may include, but are not limited to, any one or a combination of the following: issuing the Respondent a written reprimand; placing the Respondent on probation for any period of time; restricting the Respondent's authorized scope of practice; assessing the Respondent an administrative fine; directing the Respondent to enroll in the Recovery Network Program; suspending the Respondent's educator's certificate for a period of time not to exceed five years; revoking the Respondent's educator's certificate for a period of time up to 10 years or permanently; determining the Respondent to be ineligible for certification; or barring the Respondent from reapplying for an educator's certificate for a period of time up to 10 years or permanently.

EXECUTED on this 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2009.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
DR. ERIC J. SMITH, as  
Commissioner of Education  
State of Florida



**EDUCATION PRACTICES COMMISSION**  
STATE OF FLORIDA

**KATHLEEN RICHARDS**  
Executive Director

**DANIEL BIGGINS**  
Assistant Attorney General

**DENNIS J. GRIFFIN**  
Chairperson

**BRIAN T. DONOVAN**  
Co-Chairperson

August 6, 2009

Virginia Kurzawa  
483 Homestead Avenue Northeast  
Palm Bay, Florida 32907

Re: Dr. Eric J. Smith vs. Virginia Kurzawa  
EPC No.: 09-0250-RT; DOE No.: 623858

Dear Ms. Kurzawa:

As you know, the teacher panel of the Education Practices Commission reviewed the matter pending against you. Based upon the panel's consideration of this matter and upon the panel's acceptance of your Settlement Agreement, you are hereby reprimanded.

This panel, composed of your peers, believes that, as a teacher, you are required to exercise a measure of leadership beyond reproach. By your actions, you have lessened the reputation of all who practice our profession. The profession cannot condone your actions, nor can the public who employ us.

The Education Practices Commission sincerely hopes it is your intention to never allow this situation to occur again or indeed, to violate any professional obligation in fulfilling your responsibilities as an educator. To violate the standards of the profession will surely result in further action being taken against you.

This letter of reprimand is being placed in your state certification file, and a copy is being sent to the Brevard County School Board for placement in your personnel file.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis J. Griffin".

Dennis J. Griffin  
Presiding Officer