

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

4 In the Matter of the) DEFAULT ORDER OF
5 Teaching License of) REVOCATION OF LICENSE
6 MICHELLE LEE RICHARDS) AND RIGHT TO APPLY
7

8 On April 15, 2011, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission)
9 issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to Michelle Lee Richards (Richards) in which the
10 Commission charged her with Gross Neglect of Duty and Gross Unfitness pursuant to OAR 584-
11 020-0040(4)(n), OAR 584-020-0010(5), OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D), OAR 584-020-
12 0035(1)(c)(A), OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(C), OAR 584-020-0035(3)(a), OAR 584-020-
13 0040(4)(f), OAR 584-050-0006(3)(d), and OAR 584-020-0040(5)(e). The Notice was sent via
14 U.S. First Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail Receipt 7010 0290 0001 6831 3858 to the address
15 on file with the Commission. Richards signed for the Certified Mail on April 18, 2011. The
16 Notice of Opportunity of Hearing, dated April 15, 2011, and signed by Victoria Chamberlain,
17 Executive Director, stated:

18 "IF A REQUEST FOR HEARING IS NOT RECEIVED WITHIN THIS 21-DAY PERIOD,
19 YOUR RIGHT TO A HEARING SHALL BE CONSIDERED WAIVED UNLESS YOUR
20 FAILURE TO REQUEST A HEARING WAS BEYOND YOUR REASONABLE CONTROL.
21 IF YOU DO NOT REQUEST A HEARING OR IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR AT A
22 HEARING, THE COMMISSION WILL ADOPT AN ORDER OF DEFAULT WHICH MAY
23 INCLUDE THE REVOCATION OR SUSPENSION OF YOUR LICENSE OR OTHER
24 DISCIPLINE."
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26 Richards did not request a hearing. The Commission, therefore, finds Richards to be in default
27 and enters the following findings of fact, conclusions of law and order, based on the files and
28 records of the Commission concerning this matter.

29 **FINDINGS OF FACT**

- 30 1. Richards has been licensed as a teacher in Oregon since February 24, 2004. Her current
31 Initial I Teaching License, with endorsements in Language Arts (ML), School Science, and
32 Multiple Subjects, issued on May 1, 2008, is valid until December 1, 2011. During all
33 relevant times, Richards was employed by the Oakridge School District.
- 34 2. On October 18, 2010, the Commission received a report regarding behavior Richards
35 exhibited toward a minor male student in the Oakridge School District which eventually led
36 to the termination of Richards' employment. On September 29, 2010, Richards' Principal,

1 after hearing rumors of sexual contact between her and a male student in the district, asked
2 Richards about these allegations. Richards did not deny having inappropriate contact with
3 the student.

- 4 3. On October 2, 2010, the Oakridge Police Department informed the school district that
5 during their interview with Richards, she admitted to performing oral sex on a minor male
6 student in the district. Richards was subsequently dismissed from employment.
- 7 4. On December 7, 2010, Richards met with a Commission investigator. During that interview
8 Richards explained that she became acquainted with a minor male through his friendship
9 with her own son of similar age and said she was like a “mom” to the student. During the
10 student’s junior year of high school he began to seek advice from Richards regarding his
11 romantic life. These conversations eventually led to Richards discussing sex and similar
12 topics with the student. Richards in turn shared details of her personal life and marriage
13 problems.
- 14 5. Richards’ conversations with the student progressed to sending flirtatious messages with
15 sexual overtones. The student began expressing romantic interest in Richards, eventually
16 leading to him suggesting that he and Richards have sex. Richards did not report the
17 students’ feelings toward her to her supervisors.
- 18 6. After being propositioned by the student repeatedly, Richards performed oral sex on the
19 student, then 17 years of age.

20 CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

21 Amanda Susan Richards’ conduct described in #2 and #3 above constitutes gross neglect
22 of duty in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR
23 584-020-0010(5) (*Use professional judgment*); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates
24 OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with students in*
25 *conduct and conversations at all times*), OAR 584-020-0035(3)(a) (*Maintain the dignity of the*
26 *profession by respecting and obeying the law, exemplifying personal integrity and honesty*);
27 and OAR 584-020-0040(4)(f) (*Any sexual conduct with a student*). This conduct also
28 constitutes gross unfitness in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(c); OAR 584-020-0040(5)(e)
29 (*Admission of or engaging in acts constituting criminal conduct, even in the absence of a*
30 *conviction*).

31 Richards’ conduct as described in #4 above, constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation
32 of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use*
33 *professional judgment*); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-

1 0035(1)(c)(A) (*Not demonstrating or expressing professionally inappropriate interest in a*
2 *student's personal life*), and OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult*
3 *boundaries with students in conduct and conversations at all times*).

4 Richards' conduct as described in #5 above, constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation
5 of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use*
6 *professional judgment*); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-
7 0035(1)(c)(A) (*Not demonstrating or expressing professionally inappropriate interest in a*
8 *student's personal life*), OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(C) (*Reporting to the educator's supervisor if*
9 *the educator has reason to believe a student is or may be becoming romantically attached to*
10 *the educator*), and OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with*
11 *students in conduct and conversations at all times*).

12 Richards' conduct as described in #6 above, constitutes gross neglect of duty in violation
13 of ORS 342.175(1)(b); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(n) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0010(5) (*Use*
14 *professional judgment*); OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-
15 0035(1)(c)(D) (*Honoring appropriate adult boundaries with students in conduct and*
16 *conversations at all times*), OAR 584-020-0035(3)(a) (*Maintain the dignity of the profession*
17 *by respecting and obeying the law, exemplifying personal integrity and honesty*); and OAR
18 584-020-0040(4)(f) (*Any sexual conduct with a student*). This conduct also constitutes gross
19 unfitness in violation of ORS 342.175(1)(c); OAR 584-020-0040(5)(e) (*Admission of or*
20 *engaging in acts constituting criminal conduct, even in the absence of a conviction*).

21 Furthermore, the above described conduct represents evidence that Richards lack fitness
22 to serve as an educator, and is grounds for denial of a license pursuant to OAR 584-050-
23 0006(3)(d).

24 The Commission's authority to impose discipline in this matter is based upon ORS
25 342.175.


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1 **FINAL ORDER**

2 The Commission hereby revokes Michelle Lee Richards' Initial I Teaching license, and
3 revokes her right to apply for a license.

4 IT IS SO ORDERED THIS 16th day of May, 2011.

5 TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION

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7
8 By: 
9 Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director

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14 NOTICE OF APPEAL OR RIGHTS


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

Michelle Lee Richards
1315 6th St.
Tillamook, OR 97141-3603

Dated this 21st day of July, 2011.

By: 

Cristina Edgar
Investigative Assistant