

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

3  
4    In the Matter of the                                    )  
5    Teaching License of                                    )        DEFAULT ORDER OF  
6    STEVEN VIRGIL MORTON                                )        LICENSE REVOCATION  
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8                    On August 28, 2006, the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (Commission)  
9    issued a Notice of Opportunity for Hearing to Steven Virgil Morton (Morton) in which the  
10   Commission charged him with misconduct under ORS 342.175. The Notice was sent via U.S.  
11   First Class Mail and U.S. Certified Mail Receipt 7005 1160 0001 0494 2604 to the address  
12   obtained by the Commission, together with a copy to Elizabeth McKanna, Attorney at Law. The  
13   certified mail receipt and U.S. First Class Mail addressed to Steven Morton were returned to the  
14   Commission on September 1, 2006. The Notice of Opportunity of Hearing, dated August 28,  
15   2006, and signed by Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director, stated:

16                    "You, Steven Virgil Morton, are entitled to a hearing on the proposed action of the  
17                    Commission. If you want a hearing, you must file a written request for a hearing  
18                    with the Commission within 21 days of the date of this notice. Attached to this  
19                    notice is a copy of the procedures, right of representation and other rights of  
20                    parties relating to the conduct of a hearing as required under ORS 183.413(2)."  
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22                    On September 18, 2006, the Commission received correspondence from  
23    Mr. Morton declining his opportunity for a hearing. The Commission, therefore, finds  
24    Mr. Morton to be in default and enters the following findings of fact, conclusions of law  
25    and order, based on the files and records of the Commission concerning this matter.

26                                    **FINDINGS OF FACT**

27                    1. Mr. Morton has been licensed by the Commission since June 9, 2000. The  
28    Commission issued an Initial Teaching License to Mr. Morton on July 10, 2003, valid until  
29    March 10, 2007, with a Social Studies Endorsement with a HS authorization.

30                    2. Mr. Morton was employed by Three Rivers School District from August 28, 2000, until  
31    resignation, in lieu of termination, effective January 23, 2006.

1 3. During the 2004-2005 school year Mr. Morton failed to maintain an appropriate  
2 professional student-teacher relationship with ED, a female student attending Illinois Valley High  
3 School. Mr. Morton's conduct included telephoning her home and emailing her regarding a  
4 professionally inappropriate personal relationship; visiting ED at her home; transporting ED  
5 alone in his personal vehicle on more than one occasion; and taking ED to dinner alone twice in  
6 March of 2005.

7 4. In March, 2005, Morton was issued a written directive by the principal of the Illinois  
8 Valley High School to never be alone w/ ED or any student. During the summer of 2005, while  
9 serving as girls' basketball coach, Mr. Morton violated that directive by failing to maintain an  
10 appropriate professional student-teacher relationship with ED, a female student attending Illinois  
11 Valley High School and participating in girls' basketball. On several occasions while traveling  
12 for basketball tournaments, Mr. Morton encouraged and allowed ED to visit him alone in his  
13 motel room late at night; and took ED out to dinner alone.

14 5. During the 2005-2006 school year Mr. Morton failed to maintain an appropriate  
15 professional student-teacher relationship with ED, a female student attending Illinois Valley High  
16 School. Mr. Morton's conduct included buying ED personal gifts, and sending ED personal  
17 emails. The emails Mr. Morton sent to ED discussed his personal feelings for ED. In August of  
18 2005, Mr. Morton sent an email to ED in which he wrote, "I have played on emotions that I  
19 should not have. My love for you has gone places it should not have gone."

#### 20 **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

21 Steven Virgil Morton's conduct with ED is in violation of OAR 584-020-0040(4)(f) and  
22 OAR 584-020-0040(4)(o), as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(1)(c). Mr. Morton's failure to  
23 abide by the principal's written directive of March of 2005 is in violation of OAR 584-020-  
24 0040(4)(o) as it incorporates OAR 584-020-0035(2)(a). This misconduct constitutes Gross  
25 Neglect of Duty. The Commission has the authority to impose discipline in this matter under  
26 ORS 342.120 through 342.430 and OAR Chapter 584.

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**DEFAULT ORDER**

The Commission adopts and incorporates herein the above findings of facts and conclusions of law, and based thereon, hereby revokes the Initial Teaching License issued to Steven Virgil Morton.

Issued and dated this 3 day of November, 2006.

**TEACHER STANDARDS AND PRACTICES COMMISSION  
STATE OF OREGON**

By:   
Victoria Chamberlain, Executive Director

**NOTICE OF APPEAL OR RIGHTS**

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

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that I served the foregoing order by mailing a true copy thereof certified by me as such by U.S. First Class Mail to the Attorney of record for Steven Virgil Morton:

Elizabeth McKanna  
Attorney at Law  
McKanna Bishop Joffe & Sullivan  
1635 NW Johnson Street  
Portland OR 97209

Dated this 8<sup>th</sup> day of December 2006.

By: Melody Hanson  
Melody Hanson, Executive Assistant