

# STATE OF ALASKA



## PROFESSIONAL TEACHING PRACTICES COMMISSION

Melody Mann  
Executive Director

# What is the PTPC?



**PTPC is a nine-member commission established by the Alaska legislature in 1966 and empowered to impose punitive sanctions against those educators who engage in illegal, immoral or unethical conduct. (AS 14.20.370-510)**



# Who Serves On the Commission?

**5 Teachers**

**1 Superintendent**

**1 Principal**

**1 Representative of Higher Ed**

**1 Representative of the Department of Education  
and Early Development**



# Commission Members

<b>Adam Reid (vice chair)</b>	Teacher	Anchorage SD
<b>Diane Kardash</b>	Higher Ed	UAF
<b>Danette Peterson</b>	Teacher	Fairbanks North Star BSD
<b>Jamie Burgess (secretary)</b>	Superintendent	Nome Public Schools
<b>Jennifer Stafford</b>	Teacher	Mat-Su BSD
<b>Tammy van Wyhe</b>	DEED	
<b>Lem Wheelles (chair)</b>	Teacher	Anchorage SD
<b>Kimberly Bergey</b>	Assistant Principal	Yukon Koyukuk SD Raven Program
<b>Janine Todd</b>	Teacher	Delta/Greeley Schools

# How Does Someone Get Named to the Commission?

- ✓ **Commissioners are appointed by the Governor from a list of nominees submitted by constituent groups. (For example, AASSP and AAESP nominate the candidates for the principal's position).**
- ✓ **Appointments are subject to legislative approval.**

# PTPC Mission:

- ❖ **The Commission helps educators understand what is expected of them.**
- ❖ **The Commission holds educators to an ethical standard that is demanded of a profession entrusted with the care and teaching of children.**

# Who Can The Commission Sanction?

- ❖ **Certificate holders – teachers, counselors, and administrators; student teachers**
- ❖ **Instructors in higher education;  
(Can only be warned or reprimanded unless a certificate holder)**
- ❖ **Commission is the final authority regarding the discipline of a teacher;**
- ❖ **Before an administrator can be disciplined the Commissioner of the Department of Education and Early Development must concur.**

# DISCIPLINING EDUCATORS



**Building level**

**District level**

**\*Certificate level**

**Criminal level**



# SANCTIONS

**Warning (not publicized)**

**Reprimand**

**Suspension**

**Revocation**

**Surrender**

**Denial**



# PUBLICIZING SANCTIONS



**PTPC Website**

**AK Teacher Certification Website**

**Annual PTPC Newsletter**

**National Database (limited access)**

# Last 10 Years

- Number of PTPC Suspension or Revocations (includes surrenders)

Type	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21
(A) Teacher	9	9	11	8	5	14	7	7	8	11	3
(B) Administrator		2	1		1					1	
(C) Special Services		2			1		1	1			

# Superintendent Discipline

## □ Superintendent Sanctions (all time)

Sanction	Number	Date
Revocation	2	1998, 1990
Suspension	3	1999, 1990, 1986
Reprimand	7	2015 (2), 2013, 1989, 1983, 1981, 1980
Warning	1	2021

# Superintendent Discipline

- Number of PTPC Complaints filed against Supts. or Asst. Supts.

FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21
6	3	2	7	15	5	5	4	6	3	3

# Complaints against principals

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Complaints	6	9	7	22	9
Sanctions	2	1	0	1	0

# COMPLAINT PROCESS

- Request for Investigation (Complaint form)
  - ▣ Must be signed
  - ▣ “Anyone” can file a complaint
- Intake Process
  - ▣ Screening Guidelines
  - ▣ Letters to Complainant and Respondent
- Investigation
  - ▣ Timeline can vary
- Decision
  - ▣ Dismissal – can be appealed to full Commission
  - ▣ Stipulation-a settlement
  - ▣ Accusation – Hearing before full Commission with ALJ

# Limitations



20 AAC 10.210 (b):

Unless the alleged act would be grounds for discipline under AS 14.20.030, the staff may not investigate school district personnel actions, including hiring, evaluation, transfer, reassignment, or dismissal of staff, or curriculum actions.



# The Code of Ethics of the Education Profession

- **Developed and revised by the PTPC.**
- **Articulated requirement to abide by the COE is written into employment contracts.**
- **Members of the teaching profession are obligated to abide by the Code of Ethics (AS 14.20.480).**

# Code of Ethics Document

- Download:

<http://education.alaska.gov/ptpc/pdf/coe.pdf>

- **Format:**

- a) ...governance

- b) ...obligations to students

- c) ...obligations to public

- d) ...obligations to profession

- ...moral turpitude

- ...definitions

# EXAMPLES

## A Certificated Educator...

1. “coaches” students on test questions/answers during PEAKS testing
2. doesn't return to work after Thanksgiving
3. posts comments about students on personal social networking site
4. arrives late for school and consistently falls asleep during class

# MORE EXAMPLES

5. misuses sick leave
6. shows R-rated movie after school to students
7. downloads adult pornography on district computer
8. has sexual relations with an 18-year-old student
9. falsification, misrepresentation, or omissions on employment application or certification applications

# What violations must be reported to the Commission?

**The Code of Ethics requires that knowledge of physical abuse of a student or sexual conduct with a student by an educator must be reported to the Commission.**

**20 ACC 10.020 (b)(4)(A)(B)**

Failure to report is a violation of CoE



# 20 AAC 10.900. DEFINITIONS.

(1) “sexual conduct” includes

- (A) explicit sexual jokes and stories;
- (B) flirtatious or sexually related comments;
- (C) sexual kidding or teasing;
- (D) sexual innuendos or comments with double entendre;
- (E) inappropriate physical touching;
- (F) soliciting, encouraging, participating in, or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, or electronic communication of a sexual nature with a student;
- (G) a physical or romantic relationship with a student, whether consensual or nonconsensual;
- (H) discussion of the educator’s sexual feelings or activities;
- (I) discussion, outside of a professional teaching or counseling context, of a student’s sexual feelings or activities; and
- (J) “sexual penetration” and “sexual contact” as those terms are defined in AS 11.81.900(j);

# Section 8546 of ESSA

- **SEC. 8546. [20 U.S.C. 7926] PROHIBITION ON AIDING AND ABETTING SEXUAL ABUSE.**
- If school personnel know, or have probable cause to believe, that a person engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or other minor, they can't help them get a job. There must be rules in place to prohibit this.
- There are several AK statutes that support this section.
- In laymen's terms it is referred to as "Prohibiting the passing of trash."
- Reporting to PTPC helps end this viscous cycle.

# Bering Strait SD to pay \$12.6 M in student sex abuse case



*By Sandra Medearis for the Nome Nugget |*

Posted: Fri 5:13 PM, Feb 15, 2019 |

Updated: Mon 1:57 PM, Feb 18, 2019



# Most common complaint:

- The most filed complaint is the Breach of Contract.
- Authority: 4AAC 18.010. Teachers' and administrators' contracts
- (12) (d) Contracts may be terminated by mutual consent of both parties upon 30 days' written notice by either party and the written assent of the other party; a teacher failing to give the written notice, or who leaves a position following the notice without having the written assent of the employing board, may be liable to revocation of certificate for breach of contract.

# The GOOD NEWS . . .

- **Approximately 0.1% of educators in Alaska have been sanctioned by the Commission.**
- **Only 15 Alaska educators were sanctioned last year (2020-2021).**



# The BAD NEWS . . .

- **Approximately 0.1% of educators in Alaska have been sanctioned by the Commission.**
- **15 Alaska educators were sanctioned last year (2020-2021).**



# CYBERETHICS

- **Social Media**
- **Texting**
- **Emails**
- **Blogs**
- **Websites**
- **Smartphones**



# Possible Boundary Violations (Slippery Slopes)

- ❑ **Disclosing too much personal information**
- ❑ **Driving students in personal vehicle**
- ❑ **Forwarding a political agenda**
- ❑ **Disclosing confidential information**
- ❑ **Engaging in private correspondence with students**
- ❑ **Hiring a student to work for you or other dual relationships**

# Professional Conduct Violations

- **Boundary Violations with Students**
- **Disparagement of Students**
- **Physical Abuse/Sexual Misconduct/Moral Turpitude (criminal conduct)**
- **Unfair Treatment/Unprofessional Behavior**
- **Breach of Contract**
- **Test Security/Procedures**
- **Failure to Divulge/Falsification**
- **Cyber Ethics (texting, Facebook, etc.)**

# THE PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR. . .

- DEMONSTRATES RESPONSIBILITY TO ONESELF AS AN ETHICAL PROFESSIONAL BY:
  - ▣ Refraining from professional or personal activity that may lead to reducing one's effectiveness within the school community.
  - ▣ Avoiding the use of one's position for personal gain and avoiding the appearance of impropriety.

# QUESTIONS?

- Q. When should a complaint be filed with the PTPC?
- A. If in doubt, call me to discuss the situation.
- Other questions?



# Contact information:

**Professional Teaching Practices Commission**

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**Anchorage, AK 99501**

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**I DO PRESENTATIONS  
UPON REQUEST**

Contact me to present to your school district!