

THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION  
REPORT OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE  
OF THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF CHARGES OF UNPROFESSIONAL  
CONDUCT AGAINST BONNY ANN AMBROSE

The hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee of The Alberta Teachers' Association reports that charges of unprofessional conduct laid against Bonny Ann Ambrose of [Location Redacted] were duly investigated in accordance with the *Teaching Profession Act*. The hearing was held in Barnett House, 110 10 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada on Wednesday, March 21, 2001 at 0900 and Thursday, March 22, 2001 at 0905 and ending at 1115.

Professional Conduct Committee members present as the hearing committee were [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] presented the case against the investigated member. The investigated member was present and was represented by [REDACTED] was assisted by [REDACTED] student-at-law.

CONSTITUTION/JURISDICTION

There was no objection to the constitution of the hearing committee or its jurisdiction to hear the case.

PLEA

The following charges were read by the secretary to the hearing committee:

1. Bonny Ann Ambrose is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that she, while a member of The Alberta Teachers' Association, on or about June 17, 1998, was convicted of an indictable offence under section 140(1)(c) of the Criminal Code of Canada to wit: on or about the 13th day of September, 1996, at or near [Location Redacted], did with intent to mislead, unlawfully cause a peace officer to enter on or continue an investigation by reporting that an offence had been committed when it had not been committed, thereby committing public mischief contrary to section 140(1)(c) of the Criminal Code of Canada.

2. Bonny Ann Ambrose is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that she, while a member of The Alberta Teachers' Association, during the period beginning on or about September 13, 1996 through the effective date of the termination of her employment contract May 31, 2000, acted in a manner which failed to maintain the honor and dignity of the profession, given the indictable conviction and given the extensive media coverage and public attention surrounding her arrest and trial, her conviction and her appeals to the courts.

The investigated member entered a plea of "guilty" to Charge 1 and "not guilty" to Charge 2.

### **GUILT OR INNOCENCE HEARING PHASE**

#### **WITNESSES**

There were no witnesses called during this phase of the hearing.

#### **EVIDENCE ADDUCED AND EXHIBITS FILED INDICATED THAT:**

1. B Ambrose was a member of The Alberta Teachers' Association from 1993 09 01 to 2000 05 31. (Exhibit 3)
2. B Ambrose was employed as a teacher with [School Division Redacted] from 1985 to 2000 05 31. (Exhibit 4)
3. B Ambrose was convicted of an indictable offence under section 140(1)(c) of the Criminal Code of Canada, to wit: on or about the 13th day of September, 1996, at or near [Location Redacted], did with intent to mislead, unlawfully cause a peace officer to enter on or continue an investigation by reporting that an offence had been committed when it had not been committed, thereby committing public mischief contrary to section 140(1)(c) of the Criminal Code of Canada. More specifically, B Ambrose falsely accused a police officer of sexually assaulting her while she was in custody. (Exhibit 5)
4. [REDACTED] presented newspaper articles which provided evidence of extensive publicity surrounding the criminal cases and the appeals. (Exhibit 5)



5. [REDACTED] presented an affidavit from B Ambrose which indicated that she did not encourage or facilitate, nor did she have any effective control over, the media coverage or the way in which it was presented. (Exhibit 6)

#### DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE

Since the investigated member pled guilty to Charge 1, the hearing committee ruled only on Charge 2. The hearing committee found the investigated member "not guilty" of Charge 2.

#### REASONS FOR DECISION

1. The hearing committee did not find sufficient evidence to support the charge that B Ambrose had encouraged the extensive media coverage and public attention surrounding her arrest and trials.
2. The hearing committee found that B Ambrose did not control the content, the length nor the flavor of the news articles.
3. The hearing committee was cognizant of the lawful entitlement of B Ambrose to have the charge proven by trial and to appeal therefrom and accordingly, the hearing committee could not find any professional misconduct arising from the fact of those proceedings.

#### PENALTY PHASE

#### WITNESSES

[REDACTED] presented five witnesses: [Names Redacted].

#### EVIDENCE ADDUCED AND EXHIBITS FILED INDICATED THAT:

1. B Ambrose was an excellent teacher and recipient of an excellence in teaching award. (Exhibits 6 and 7)
2. From the evidence presented, it appears that B Ambrose is not a risk to students.

3. Evidence presented showed that B Ambrose's actions giving rise to her conviction of this indictable offence, and her conviction and sentencing, generated extensive publicity which identified her as a teacher.

#### PENALTY

The hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee imposes the following penalty on B Ambrose:

1. That B Ambrose's membership in The Alberta Teachers Association be suspended for a period of one year
2. That a recommendation be made to the minister of learning to suspend B Ambrose's teaching certificate for one year

#### REASONS FOR PENALTY

1. B Ambrose was convicted of an indictable offence and is guilty of unprofessional conduct pursuant to section 22(2) of the *Teaching Profession Act*.
2. Teachers convicted of indictable offences bring dishonor and disrepute to the profession.
3. Proceedings associated with B Ambrose's convictions resulted in significant negative publicity for the profession.
4. Society expects that teachers will conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and maintain the honor and dignity of the profession.
5. There is no evidence to suggest that students in B Ambrose's care would be in jeopardy.
6. B Ambrose's offence was not related to her role as a teacher and the offences occurred outside the school environment.
7. There is substantial evidence that B Ambrose was a successful and competent teacher.

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Dated at the City of Edmonton in the Province of Alberta, Thursday, March 22, 2001.

HEARING COMMITTEE OF THE  
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE  
OF THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

