

THE ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE
OF THE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT COMMITTEE

IN THE MATTER OF CHARGES OF UNPROFESSIONAL
CONDUCT AGAINST ROLAND (WADE) HANSMA

The hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Alberta Teachers' Association reports that charges of unprofessional conduct laid against Roland (Wade) Hansma of [REDACTED] were duly investigated in accordance with the *Teaching Profession Act*. The hearing commenced at Barnett House, 11010 142 Street NW, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at 0900.

The participants were

1. Professional Conduct Committee members appointed as the hearing committee, [REDACTED] (chair), [REDACTED];
2. counsel to the hearing committee, [REDACTED];
3. secretary to the hearing committee, [REDACTED];
4. administrative secretary to the hearing committee, [REDACTED];
5. presenting officer, [REDACTED]; and
6. investigated member Roland (Wade) Hansma, was not present and was not represented by counsel.

COMPOSITION/JURISDICTION

There were no objections to either the composition or jurisdiction of the hearing committee.

CHARGES AND PLEA

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

1. Roland (Wade) Hansma is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that Hansma, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, on or about January 8, 2021, viewed inappropriate content on his personal computing device that was viewable to a student in Hansma's class thus failing to uphold the dignity and honour of the profession, contrary to article 18 of the Code of Professional Conduct.
2. Roland (Wade) Hansma is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that Hansma, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, on or about February 2021, lied to [REDACTED], agent of Hansma's employer, about travelling overseas in November 2019, while on medical leave, contrary to article 18 of the Code of Professional Conduct.

The investigated member entered a plea of guilty to the two charges via a written submission on plea.

WITNESSES

There were no witnesses called.

EXHIBITS FILED

- Exhibit 1—Notice of hearing and Canada Post confirmation of delivery, on January 28, 2023
- Exhibit 2—Declaration of awareness of rights, signed by Hansma, dated February 23, 2023,
- Exhibit 3—Submission on plea, signed by Hansma, dated February 23, 2023
- Exhibit 4—Proof of Hansma's membership in the Association from October 1, 2001 to November 30, 2021
- Exhibit 5—Agreed statement of facts signed, by Hansma and [REDACTED], dated February 23, 2023, and February 27, 2023, respectively.
- Exhibit 6—Joint submission on penalty, signed by Hansma and [REDACTED], dated February 23, 2023, and February 27, 2023, respectively.

EVIDENCE ADDUCED AND EXHIBITS FILED INDICATED

1. Roland (Wade) Hansma began teaching in 2001.
2. Hansma was employed by the [REDACTED]
3. Hansma taught at [REDACTED] as a [REDACTED] teacher.
4. Hansma was a [REDACTED] prior to starting his career as a [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

Charge 1

5. On or about January 8, 2021, Student A, a Grade [REDACTED] student at [REDACTED] was taking [REDACTED] Hansma was the teacher for that course.
6. Student A left the [REDACTED] with two other students to go to an outside shed as instructed by Hansma.
7. Student A and the other students became locked out of the [REDACTED] because the door locked behind them.

8. Student A entered the school through the [REDACTED]
9. An office space connects the [REDACTED]
10. The office space has windows that provide a line of sight into each lab.
11. Student A walked through the [REDACTED] into the office, to enter the [REDACTED]
12. Student A observed Hansma through the window, sitting in a chair in the [REDACTED]
13. Student A observed Hansma with his back to the window.
14. Student A observed Hansma using his iPad.
15. Student A saw the image of [REDACTED] on Hansma's iPad.
16. Student A confronted Hansma about the image that he saw on Hansma's iPad.
17. Hansma acknowledged to the investigating officer that there could have been material on the iPad that was questionable.
18. Hansma acknowledged he was using Twitter to look up content for a [REDACTED] class.
19. Hansma stated he was not actively looking for inappropriate content.
20. Hansma acknowledged there was a picture of a female in a bikini on the iPad.
21. Hansma's Twitter account included accounts that he was following or that were following him that included content not appropriate for a school setting.

Charge 2

22. On October 22, 2019, [REDACTED] principal, [REDACTED] wrote an e-mail to senior school division leadership, on behalf of Hansma, requesting that Hansma be able to access bereavement leave. The text of the e-mail stated,

Morning everyone,

This is not for me! I spoke with Wade Hansma this morning; his [REDACTED] lives in [REDACTED] and is [REDACTED]. He would like to use his bereavement leave in order to go see his [REDACTED] before [REDACTED] passes. He hasn't seen his [REDACTED] in 19 years and wants to be able to say goodbye. He was going to call you [REDACTED], but he is very upset so I offered to make the request on his behalf. Thanks for your consideration.

23. [REDACTED], Deputy Superintendent, [REDACTED], replied to that e-mail and wrote,

Wade would have his personal leave days (5 minus one that he used already plus 2.85 that he carried over from last year = 6.85) as well as his Family Needs Leave Day for a total of 7.85 days. Upon the death of his [REDACTED], he would have another 5 days, but this is under section 14.2 - Death and Funeral Leave.

Of course, we are able to grant Leave with or without pay. My suggestion would be to consider rounding up the 0.85 day to a full 1.0 with pay and offer whatever else he needs as Leave Without Pay.

24. On October 24, 2019, Hansma received a doctor's note stating that he could not work due to medical reasons from October 24, 2019, to November 7, 2019.
25. Hansma travelled to [REDACTED] to visit his [REDACTED] during the period of his medical leave.
26. In February 2021, Hansma was interviewed by [REDACTED] director of Human Resources, and an agent for Hansma's employer, about his medical leave from October 24, 2019, to November 7, 2019.
27. [REDACTED] asked Hansma about previous statements made by Hansma to [REDACTED].
28. [REDACTED] asked, "When asked if you went to [REDACTED] to see your [REDACTED] what was your response to [REDACTED] Hansma replied, "No."
29. Additionally, [REDACTED] asked Hansma, "Can you confirm you were lying at this time?" Hansma responded, "Yes, it was a lie."
30. [REDACTED] asked Hansma, "What was your rationale for not following the provisions set out in the CBA?" Hansma replied, "I was off on medical leave, it is different to teach in a classroom in front of students, washroom was always available on the plane. Yes, I told [REDACTED] that I could not fly due to [REDACTED]."
31. Hansma acknowledges he was dishonest with [REDACTED].

DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE

Charge 1—Guilty

Charge 2—Guilty

REASONS FOR DECISION

Charge 1

1. By his own admission, Hansma admitted he failed to uphold the honour and dignity of the profession when he viewed inappropriate content on his personal iPad during instructional time that became viewable to the student.
2. Hansma, by his own admission, said that his Twitter account included accounts that he was following or that were following him that included content not appropriate for a school setting.
3. The committee agrees this conduct was factually proven based on the evidence before it and that Hansma engaged in unprofessional conduct that failed to uphold the honour and dignity of the profession.

Charge 2

4. By his own admission, Hansma acknowledged that he lied to [REDACTED] and agent for Hansma's employer.
5. The committee again agrees that this is conduct that failed to uphold the honour and dignity of the profession and is unprofessional.

SUBMISSION ON PENALTY

1. The presenting officer advised Hansma that he would be recommending to the hearing committee that the penalty imposed be:
 - A single letter of reprimand to address both charges.
 - Fine of \$200 for charge one.
 - Fine of \$200 for charge two.
 - The total amount of the fine is \$400.
 - Hansma shall pay the fine within 90 days of receipt of the report of the Professional Conduct Committee. Failure to pay the fine will result in Hansma being suspended from the Association until such time as the fine is paid.

Hansma agreed with this penalty.

The presenting officer advised Hansma that the committee is not bound by the recommended penalty and that the committee would make its own determination.

PENALTY

The hearing committee accepted the joint penalty proposed by the parties and ordered:

1. A single letter of reprimand to address both charges.
2. A fine of \$200 for Charge 1.
3. A fine of \$200 for Charge 2.
4. The total amount of the fine is \$400.
5. Hansma shall pay the fine within 90 days of receipt of the written decision of the Professional Conduct Committee. Failure to pay the fine will result in Hansma being suspend from the Association until such time as the fine is paid.

REASONS FOR PENALTY

1. Hansma, by his own admission, failed to uphold the honour and dignity of the profession when he viewed inappropriate content on his iPad and lied to his employer about a separate travel matter.
2. The nature and the gravity of the charges is low within the range of possible unprofessional conduct.
3. Hansma has not previously been convicted of unprofessional conduct.
4. The student who observed the inappropriate content on Hansma's iPad was in Grade ■ at the time of the incident and there was minimal identified impact to ■.
5. Hansma was suspended by his employer and escorted him out of the school which means he has already suffered another penalty in relation to charge one.
6. The teaching profession requires that teachers engage in conduct that is professional and honest. As such, the penalty must be sufficient to dissuade other teachers from engaging in similar behaviour.
7. The public places teachers in high esteem and with that esteem comes high expectations. When teachers engage in behaviour such as the actions of Hansma, the esteem of teachers and the profession of teaching diminishes. Having an appropriately sufficient penalty demonstrates to the public that the behaviour demonstrated by Hansma is not accepted by the profession. The public must be assured that teachers will ensure they are keeping their students safe and protected from inappropriate material. Additionally, the public must be assured that teachers will be honest.
8. The committee, based on the facts of the case, considered a more serious fine for charge one but chose to defer to the joint submission on penalty. The committee considered that it should only change the penalty in a joint submission on penalty if it were to bring the

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administration of justice into disrepute or it did not meet the public interest test. The committee finds the penalty is sufficiently serious to protect the public moving forward.

Dated at the City of Edmonton in the Province of Alberta, Wednesday, May 3, 2023.

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

