

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

IN THE MATTER OF CHARGES OF UNPROFESSIONAL  
CONDUCT AGAINST RODERICK LYNN BEAZER

The hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Alberta Teachers' Association reports that charges of unprofessional conduct laid against Roderick Lynn Beazer of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were duly investigated in accordance with the *Teaching Profession Act*. The hearing was held online via video conference on Friday, December 9, 2022, commencing at 9:00 AM and continuing on Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at 9:00 AM.

On December 9, 2022, the hearing was adjourned at the request of the acting presenting officer. Having heard from both the acting presenting officer and the investigated member, the hearing committee accepted the request for an adjournment. Reasons for this decision were provided to the parties.

The hearing was rescheduled to December 20, 2022, at 9:00 AM.

The participants were

1. Professional Conduct Committee members appointed as the hearing committee, [REDACTED] (chair), [REDACTED] and [REDACTED];
2. independent counsel to the hearing committee, [REDACTED];
3. secretary to the hearing committee, [REDACTED];
4. administrative secretary to the hearing committee, [REDACTED] on December 9, 2022, and [REDACTED] on December 20, 2022;
5. acting presenting officer, [REDACTED] on December 9, 2022, and presenting officer, [REDACTED] on December 20, 2022; and
6. investigated member Roderick Lynn Beazer who was present and was not represented by counsel.

COMPOSITION/JURISDICTION

There was no objection to the composition or the jurisdiction of the committee to hear the case.

The investigated member was aware of his right to legal counsel and indicated he was prepared to proceed with the hearing without legal counsel.

CHARGES AND PLEA

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

1. Roderick Lynn Beazer is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that Beazer, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, on or about March 29, 2021, read a statement to students in his care about his disagreement with his employer and posted it in his classroom, thereby failing to consider the circumstances of his students as he protested his assigned duties to his employer.
2. Roderick Lynn Beazer is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that Beazer, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, on or about June 9, 2021, discussed with his students his disagreement with his employer and potential for termination of his contract of employment thereby failing to consider the circumstances of his students.
3. Roderick Lynn Beazer is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that Beazer, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, in professional debate with his administrators in the spring of 2021, failed to accept the authority of the school and division administrators.

The investigated member entered a plea of guilty to the charges by written submission.

#### WITNESSES

There were no witnesses called.

#### EXHIBITS FILED

- Exhibit 1—Notice of hearing and Canada Post confirmation of delivery on October 7, 2022  
Exhibit 2—Declaration of rights, dated December 16, 2022  
Exhibit 3—Submission on plea, dated December 16, 2022  
Exhibit 4—Agreed statement of facts with appendices, signed by Beazer and [REDACTED] on December 16, 2022 and December 15, 2022, respectively  
Exhibit 5—Joint submission on penalty, signed by Beazer and [REDACTED] on December 16, 2022 and December 15, 2022, respectively

#### EVIDENCE ADDUCED AND EXHIBITS FILED INDICATED

1. Beazer was born [REDACTED]
2. Beazer has been a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association from September 1, 1983, to present. He has taught with the [REDACTED] the entire time and has taught at [REDACTED] since September 1, 1997. As a result of this matter, Beazer was suspended with pay by the [REDACTED] from June 10, 2021, to June 30, 2022.

3. A letter of complaint about Beazer was sent by [REDACTED], board chair of the [REDACTED] to the executive secretary on June 21, 2021. The complaint arose from a larger investigation initiated by [REDACTED], superintendent of schools at the [REDACTED]
4. During the 2020/21 school year, the [REDACTED] issued a directive requiring all teachers to participate in approximately 40 hours of collaborative planning professional development in addition to the scheduled days of professional development. The new hours were assigned as out-of-school time.
5. Beazer has, throughout his career, provided extra time for student assistance before, during and after school hours. He has been available for his students from 6:00 AM onward.
6. Beazer took exception to the assignment of the additional collaboration time requirement without consultation or consideration for existing extra hours of activity. He withdrew his extensive voluntary provision of extra assistance to students outside of regular school hours.

#### **Charge 1**

7. On July 6, 2021, Beazer felt obliged to explain to his students why he was withdrawing voluntary support time and read to his students a statement about his protest to his employer.
8. Beazer then posted the statement beside his classroom doorway where it was visible to all who entered the room.
9. Beazer's statement was provided to the hearing committee (Appendix 2) and it addressed Beazer's frustration with the additional collaboration requirement, the time teachers already spend freely and willingly on extracurriculars, teaching improvements and assisting students with their academics. Beazer found the directive to be unreasonable, insulting and an expression of a lack of appreciation for what teachers do. Beazer indicated that in order to express his feelings, he felt he had to withdraw the time he already gave to the school and students outside of the additional collaboration requirement.

#### **Charge 2**

10. On or about June 9, 2021, Beazer confided to students that his disagreement could result in termination of his contract of employment.
11. When students offered support, he requested they not get involved. At no time did Beazer try to rally students against his employer.

**Charge 3**

12. The principal met with Beazer on or about June 2, 2021, and the deputy superintendent met with Beazer on or about June 9, 2021, both to discuss administrative expectations. Beazer refused to comply with their stated expectations to provide rewrites of assignments or retakes of exams outside of regular school hours, nor was he willing to comply with the [REDACTED] Student Assessment Plan: May/June 2021 as requested.
13. Beazer responded with a statement that the directives were outside his personal educational philosophy and that he would not comply. His e-mail to the deputy superintendent included the statement, "You can begin whatever the process is. And I probably should be removed from the class beginning tomorrow. There is no way a teacher that is guilty of such serious misbehavior should be allowed in front of students."

DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE

- Charge 1—Guilty  
Charge 2—Guilty  
Charge 3—Guilty

REASONS FOR DECISION

Charge 1

1. Based on his own admission and evidence adduced, the committee found Beazer guilty of the factual allegations in Charge 1 and that the proven conduct constituted unprofessional conduct because Beazer failed to consider the circumstances of his students as he protested his assigned duties to his employer.

Charge 2

2. Based on his own admission and evidence adduced, the committee found Beazer guilty of the factual allegations in Charge 2 and that the proven conduct constituted unprofessional conduct because Beazer failed to consider the circumstances of his students when he discussed with students his disagreement with his employer and potential for termination of his employment.

Charge 1 and Charge 2

3. In relation to both Charges 1 and 2, Beazer should have known that it was inappropriate to involve his students in a disagreement he had over a policy put forward by the [REDACTED]. Although the proven conduct could have been more serious if Beazer asked his students to get involved or support his protest, it was still inappropriate.

Charge 3

4. By his own admission and evidence adduced, the committee found Beazer guilty of unprofessional conduct for failing to accept the authority of the division and school administrators.

SUBMISSION ON PENALTY

Beazer and [REDACTED] submitted their joint submission on penalty (Exhibit 5) that recommended to the hearing committee the following penalty:

- Letter of Reprimand
- A fine of \$200

The fine to be paid within three months of the date of the hearing. Nonpayment within that period would result in a suspension of membership in the Association until the fine is paid.

The joint submission on penalty provided the hearing committee with a table of the factors to consider when assessing penalty as applied to the facts of this case, including:

1. The nature and gravity of the charges. The seriousness of the charges in this case are in the less serious range of unprofessional conduct.
2. The age and experience of the teacher. Beazer is an experienced teacher with approximately 38 years of teaching.
3. The presence or absence of previous convictions of unprofessional conduct. Beazer has not been previously disciplined by the Association.
4. The age and condition of the individuals affected by the conduct. Beazer's conduct had minimal negative impact on his students (Grades 9-12).
5. The impact on the individuals affected by the unprofessional conduct. The [REDACTED] received several complaints about Beazer's decision not to assist students before, during or after school hours. His conduct caused stress and concern for parents and students and did not benefit the school, its climate or the school division.
6. Whether the member has already suffered other consequences. Beazer was suspended with pay for over a year.
7. The presence or absence of mitigating circumstances, Beazer recognized he handled the matter poorly and is aware of his professional responsibility to meet with his students and his employer.

8. The need to promote deterrence. The penalty should deter Beazer and other teachers from engaging in similar conduct, ie, from engaging in similar protests outside of normal channels, especially when such protests have the potential to negatively impact students and teaching received within the classroom.
9. The need to maintain confidence in the profession. Teachers serve as role models for students and the public and thus the penalty should ensure that the public maintains its trust in teachers. Beazer's conduct resulted in negative attention from parents and the protest was not done within appropriate channels.
10. The penalty ordered in similar cases. The cases of [REDACTED] were submitted to show the range of conduct in similar cases where teachers were critical about school principals and colleagues outside of appropriate channels.

#### PENALTY

The hearing committee ordered the following penalty:

1. A letter of reprimand and
2. A fine of \$200.

The fine is to be paid within three months from the date of the hearing (December 20, 2022). Nonpayment of the fine within this period will result in a suspension of membership in the Association until the fine is paid.

#### REASONS FOR PENALTY

1. The teaching profession requires that teachers engage in conduct that is professional. Teachers must uphold the requirements of the *Teaching Profession Act* and the Code of Professional Conduct in relation to the best interests of students. A penalty is required to deter Beazer and other members of the teaching profession from engaging in similar protests outside of normal channels, especially when there is the potential to negatively impact students and teaching within the classroom.
2. Beazer did not limit his dispute regarding the [REDACTED] to conversations with school and division administration. Beazer discussed his protest with his students and posted his stance about refusing to help students outside of class time on his classroom door. He also discussed his pending discipline and the potential for termination of his employment with his students during instructional hours.
3. Teachers serve as role models for students and the public. A penalty must be appropriate to ensure that the public trust of teachers is maintained, knowing that the profession has

the highest standards for conduct of its members. By not using the proper channels, Beazer failed to uphold the standards of the profession.

4. [REDACTED] noted that Beazer was cooperative throughout the investigation and had acknowledged the mistakes he made. In his exceptionally long and distinguished career, Beazer has not been previously subject to professional discipline by the Association. By all accounts, he is loved and respected by his students.
5. The hearing committee was also mindful that the proposed penalty was submitted as part of a joint submission on sanction and that teachers who admit their conduct in connection with a joint submission on penalty should have some degree of certainty over the penalty that will be ordered. Thus, the hearing committee understood that the joint submission on penalty should not be disturbed unless it brought the administration of justice into disrepute. It did not in this case.
6. The hearing committee concluded that a reprimand and a fine in the amount of \$200 were within the range of appropriate penalties to deter Beazer from similar behaviour in the future and maintain the public trust in the profession. The hearing committee also considered that Beazer had been suspended, albeit with pay, for over a year, which is in and of itself a penalty for a teacher; the suspension was a mitigating factor in this case.

Dated at the City of Edmonton in the Province of Alberta, January 16, 2023.

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

