

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

IN THE MATTER OF CHARGES OF UNPROFESSIONAL  
CONDUCT AGAINST DOUGLAS B LANG

The hearing committee of the Professional Conduct Committee of the Alberta Teachers' Association reports that charges of unprofessional conduct laid against Douglas Lang of [REDACTED] were duly investigated in accordance with the *Teaching Profession Act*. The hearing was held online, via video conference, on Monday, June 14, 2021 at 0900.

The participants were:

1. Professional Conduct Committee members appointed as the hearing committee [REDACTED];
2. [REDACTED] as counsel to the hearing committee;
3. [REDACTED];
4. [REDACTED] as recorder; and
5. [REDACTED] as presenting officer assisted by [REDACTED].

The investigated member, Douglas Lang, was not present and was not represented by counsel.

COMPOSITION/JURISDICTION

There were no objections to the composition of the hearing committee or its jurisdiction to hear the case.

CHARGES AND PLEA

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

1. Douglas Ben Lang is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that he, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, during the time period of or about October 16, 2018 to February 23, 2019, communicated using text messages with Student A about drug use and/or Lang's sexual activity and/or Student A's sexual activity and/or shared images and/or videos with Student A that were of a sexually graphic nature, thus failing to treat Student A with dignity and respect and failing to be considerate of Student A's circumstances contrary to article 4 of the Code of Professional Conduct.
2. Douglas Ben Lang is charged with unprofessional conduct pursuant to the *Teaching Profession Act* in that he, while a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association, during the time period of or about February 2, 2019 to February 11, 2019, communicated using text messages with Student B about Lang's sexual activity and/or Student B's sexual activity and/or shared images and/or

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videos with Student B that were of a sexually graphic nature, thus failing to treat Student B with dignity and respect and failing to be considerate of Student B's circumstances contrary to article 4 of the Code of Professional Conduct.

The investigated member entered a plea of guilty to each of the two charges, by written submission. (Exhibit 3)

### WITNESSES

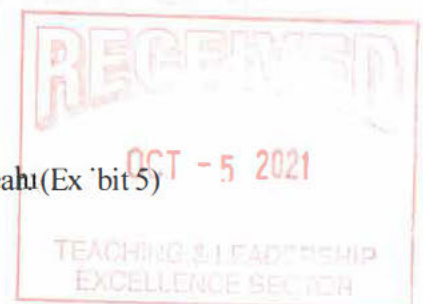
There were no witnesses called.

### EXHIBITS FILED

- Exhibit 1 Declaration of awareness of rights, signed by Lang, dated May 21, 2021
- Exhibit 2 Notice of hearing and Canada Post confirmation of delivery on May 11, 2021
- Exhibit 3 Submission on plea, signed by Lang, dated May 21, 2021
- Exhibit 4 Proof of Lang's membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association from September 1, 2017 to March 31, 2019
- Exhibit 5 Agreed statement of facts and appendices, signed by Lang and [REDACTED], dated May 21, 2021 and May 26, 2021 respectively
- Exhibit 5 Joint submission on penalty, signed by Lang and [REDACTED], dated May 21, 2021 and May 26, 2021 respectively

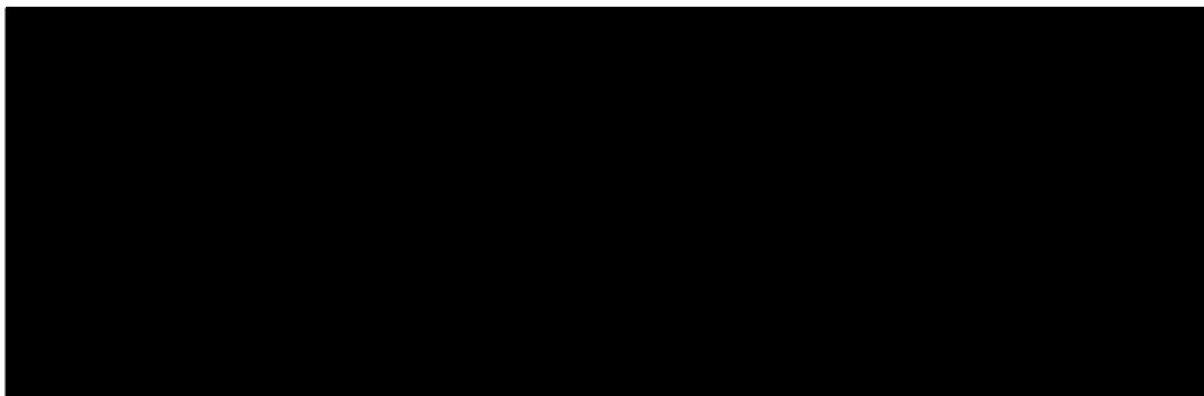
### EVIDENCE ADDUCED AND EXHIBITS FILED INDICATED

1. Lang was confirmed to be a member of the Alberta Teachers' Association during the period of September 1, 2017 and March 31, 2019. (Exhibit 4)
2. Lang taught fulltime in the [School Division Redacted] during the 2017/18 and 2018/19 school years at [School Redacted]. (Exhibit 5)
3. Lang met Student A during the [Date redacted] school year when he taught [Gender Redacted] [Subject Redacted]. (Exhibit 5)
4. Lang also knew the family of Student A, specifically [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (Exhibit 5)
5. Lang acted as a mentor for Student A. (Exhibit 5)
6. Lang did not teach Student A during the [Date Redacted] school year (Ex 'bit 5)









DECISION OF THE HEARING COMMITTEE

Charge 1—Guilty

Charge 2—Guilty

REASONS FOR DECISION

Charge 1

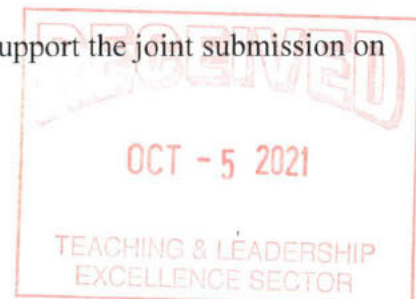
1. Lang, by his own admission stated that he had communicated using text messages with Student A about drug use and/or Lang's sexual activity and/or Student A's sexual activity and/or shared images and/or videos with Student A that were of a sexually graphic nature, thus failing to treat Student A with dignity and respect and failing to be considerate of Student A's circumstances contrary to article 4 of the Code of Professional Conduct.
2. Evidence from Facebook Messenger confirmed that Lang engaged in multiple inappropriate graphic conversations with Student A.
3. Evidence from Facebook Messenger showed that Lang sent and received multiple sexually explicit images with Student A.
4. Evidence from Facebook Messenger showed that Lang sent and received multiple sexually explicit videos with Student A.
5. Evidence from Facebook Messenger showed that Lang sent and received multiple messages regarding drug use with Student A.
6. Any conduct of a member that, in the opinion of the hearing committee, is detrimental to the dignity of a student is unprofessional. The committee determined that Lang's behaviour was unprofessional.

Charge 2

1. Lang, by his own admission stated that he had communicated using text messages with Student B and/or Lang's sexual activity and/or Student B's sexual activity and/or shared images and/or videos with Student B that were of a sexually graphic nature, thus failing to treat Student B with dignity and respect and failing to be considerate of Student B's circumstances contrary to article 4 of the Code of Professional Conduct.
2. Evidence from Facebook Messenger confirmed that Lang engaged in multiple inappropriate graphic conversations with Student B.
3. Evidence from Facebook Messenger showed that Lang sent and received multiple sexually explicit images with Student B.
4. Evidence from Facebook Messenger showed that Lang sent and received multiple sexually explicit videos with Student B.
7. Any conduct of a member that, in the opinion of the hearing committee, is detrimental to the dignity of a student is unprofessional. The committee determined that Lang's behaviour was unprofessional.

SUBMISSION ON PENALTY

1. The hearing committee received a written joint submission on penalty from [REDACTED] and Lang recommending the following penalty:
  - a) A letter of severe reprimand
  - b) A fine of \$2,000.00 to be paid within 12 months of receipt of the written decision. Failure to pay the fine will result in the member being declared ineligible to apply for re-instatement
  - c) A declaration that Lang is permanently ineligible for membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association and
  - d) A recommendation to the minister of education to cancel Lang's teaching certificate.
2. In presenting the submission, [REDACTED] noted that Lang had participated in the development of the submission to the committee and had plead guilty to the charges.
3. [REDACTED] submitted that the penalty was appropriate given the circumstances.
4. [REDACTED] referred to three precedent cases with similar facts to support the joint submission on penalty.



### PENALTY

The hearing committee imposed the following penalties:

1. A letter of severe reprimand
2. A declaration that Lang is permanently ineligible for membership in the Alberta Teachers' Association,
3. A fine of \$2,000.00 to be paid within 365 days of receipt of the written decision. and until the fine is paid, the member will be declared ineligible to apply for re-instatement. This declaration is made in contemplation of the provisions of section 93 (1) and 95 (3) subsection (e) and (g) of the governing bylaws of the Alberta Teachers' Association in place on June 14, 2021 and
4. A recommendation to the minister of education to cancel Lang's teaching certificate.

### REASONS FOR PENALTY

1. The hearing committee considered the joint submission on penalty. It recognized the requirement to provide a high level of deference to the joint submission and should only vary the recommendation if it is unreasonable, unfit or contrary to the public interest or if the recommendation brings the administration of justice into disrepute. The committee accepted the recommendation contained within the joint submission because, given the circumstances and relevant factors, it was reasonable, fit and within the public interest.
2. The hearing committee considered the following to be factors in its decision:
  - a. The nature and gravity of the charges were of a severe nature.
  - b. Lang was [Age Redacted] at the time of the incidents. Lang had 34 years of teaching experience at the time of the incidents.
  - c. Lang has no previous convictions of unprofessional conduct.
  - d. Both students that Lang interacted with leading to the professional conduct charges were [Age Redacted] old at the time of the incidents.
  - e. Lang was suspended from his employment with the school division.
  - f. Lang resigned his position from the school division soon after allegations were brought forward.
  - g. Lang has acknowledged his behaviour and actions and is currently seeking counselling. Lang was cooperative with the investigating/presenting officer.
3. The public and the profession expect that teachers will behave in a manner that treats students with dignity and respect. The penalty reflects the profession's condemnation of Lang's reprehensible and unprofessional conduct.
4. The committee believes that Lang's actions could well have a long-term impact on the students and may have a negative effect on their future relationships. Significant harm must result in a significant penalty.

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5. Society has the right to expect teachers will act in a manner that treats students with dignity and respect and will be considerate of their circumstances.
6. The public must be assured that teachers who do not uphold the values outlined in the Code of Professional Conduct will not go unpunished.
7. Lang's behaviour demonstrates that he is unfit to teach and should never again be part of the teaching profession.

Dated at the City of Edmonton in the Province of Alberta, Thursday, August 5, 2021.

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

