BEFORE THE OHIO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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In the Matter of: :
: Case No. 2021OPC16885
Kevin J. Lowry :

- - -

PROCEEDINGS

before Lisa Finnegan, Hearing Examiner, taken before me, Kimberly Riddel, a Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio held via videoconference, at 10:00 a.m., on Tuesday, September 30, 2025.

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Tuesday Morning Session,
September 30, 2025.
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HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Good morning. We are here today in the matter of Kevin J. Lowry. I am Lisa Finnegan, the Hearing Officer. Would those present, please, identify themselves for the record?

MR. LUSHER: Assistant Attorney General, Ralph Lusher on behalf of the State Board of Education.

MR. SHUNKWILER: And Matthew Shunkwiler, I'm the representative of the State Board of Education.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Thank you. Mr. Lusher, are there any preliminary matters prior to an opening statement?

MR. LUSHER: There are no preliminary matters, thank you.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Thank you. Do you have an opening statement today?

MR. LUSHER: Yes. Can I proceed?

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Yes, you may.

MR. LUSHER: Good morning. We are here in the matter of Respondent Kevin Lowry, who held with the State Board of Education a one year

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educational aide permit that expired in June of 2022. The evidence to be presented today including testimony and certified records will prove the allegations of conduct unbecoming by a preponderance of the evidence.

Count 1 of the Notice of Opportunity for Hearing alleges on or about the summer or 2021, you engaged in conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession when you had sexual contact with Student 1. The evidence will show that during the 2021 school year, Respondent acted and behaved in an inappropriate manner as he failed to maintain a professional relationship with Student 1.

Respondent had a sexual encounter with Student 1 due to the two meeting on an app named Grinder. Respondent saw Student 1 at the beginning of the 2021 school year and they agreed not to discuss the sexual encounter. However, months later when Student 1 was discussing [redacted] with a different counselor, it was suggested to speak to Mr. Lowry. And that is when it was reveled to administration that they had a sexual encounter.

Further, Respondent began working at Hocking College a year later where he again began to

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pray upon young adults. An initial complaint led to an investigation, which in turn led to Respondent resigning again before discipline could be taken.

It's the Board's position the Respondent's actions as set forth in Count 1 constitute conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3319.31(B1), and Ohio Administrative Code 3302-73-21, subsections(A2) and (A8). Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Thank you. Does the State have a witness today?

MR. LUSHER: Yes. We would like to call Gabe Tudor.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Could the court reporter, please -- sorry, Mr. Tudor, you've been called here today to testify in the matter of Kevin Lowry. Is that your understanding?

MR. TUDOR: Yes.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: We have a court reporter who is going to swear you in.

- - -

GABRIEL TUDOR,

being first duly sworn, as prescribed by law, was examined and testified as follows:

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: You may

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proceed.

MR. LUSHER: Thank you.

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DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. LUSHER:

Q. Good morning, Mr. Tudor. I'm Ralph Lusher, an Assistant Attorney General. And I represent the State Board of Education. We have spoken previously; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. I'm going to be asking you some questions today. If you don't understand one because I poorly phrased it or there's a technical issue just ask and I will happily rephrase any questions.

The court reporter has to take down everything that is said so it's important that we speak one at a time. And it's also important that you answer everything verbally because the court reporter can't take down gestures. Is all of that all right with you?

A. Yes.

Q. Would you please, state your name and spell your last name for the record.

A. Yes. It's Gabe or Gabriel Tudor. And my last name is spelled, T-U-D-O-R.

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Q. And can you tell us about your educational background, where you went to college and what degrees you hold?

A. Yes. My undergrad is from Indiana Wesleyan University in Social Studies education. Then my Master's Degree is from the University of Akron in Principalship Educational Leadership. My Superintendent's license is through Ashland University. I was a Social Studies teacher for six years and Assistant Principal, those were at Wadsworth High School.

Then I was a Buckeye High School Principal for three years, Assistant Superintendent at Wadsworth again for three years. And then, since the summer of 2021, I've been a Superintendent at Wooster City Schools.

Q. And you had stated you have a superintendent's license with the State Board of Education, do you have any other licenses or certificates with the State Board of Education?

A. Yes, I kept my principal's license and Social Studies teaching license as well.

Q. And you were giving some years on how long you've been in the field of education. How long do you have in the field of education total?

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A. 21.

Q. And then, you had also stated that you were Superintendent of Wooster Schools at the beginning of the school year of 2021 to 2022; is that correct?

A. Yes, my official first day was July 1, 2021.

Q. And then, and you don't have to go into extreme detail on this, but can you state what your job duties and responsibilities are as Superintendent?

A. Overall, you know, planning and implementation within the district, not limited to but, you know, curriculum, facilities, human resources, safety and security, Board relations.

Q. Got it. And so we're here today to discuss Kevin Lowry. You stated that you became Superintendent on July 1, 2021. Did you know Kevin Lowry during that school year?

A. Yes. He was, I think, had been working for a third party, Anazao, therapeutic counseling, prior to my arrival. And was -- we had a contract with Anazao and he was going to be an employee for that school year, did not know him before then, but as the year started, you know, I did meet him a few

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times.

Q. Can you explain what Anazao Community Partners is?

A. Yeah. So they are a non-profit that provides primarily therapeutic counseling. During Covid this district engaged in a pretty significant contract with them for therapeutic and case management services. The year after, when I came in, we kept that contract as well.

And really what it was is to provide for things that a guidance counselor can't. A guidance counselor can only provide so much, you know, counseling until it starts to become more like therapy, and that's not really their licensure or appropriate. And so, a guidance counselor might meet and identify a student has anxiety or other things. And then, we would funnel that student, with proper record release with parents, to allow them to basically be receiving therapy while at school.

And then, there were case managers that kind of help bridge that gap. They also work for Anazao. So Anazao's case managers and therapeutic counselors, those case managers would do a lot of the correspondence with parents, make sure that, you know, the needs are being met for the student. And

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then, making sure that they were getting those therapy sessions. If I remember correctly, Mr. Lowry would have been more in the case management. He was not a licensed therapeutic clinical counselor.

Q. And how many Anazao employees would be in your school district at a time?

A. At that time, I think, we had 12. It could have been 13, but, I believe, it was 12, within the district. They were more heavily at the middle, high school, but we have them throughout. Over time, probably not as important to this conversation, but we have reduced those services, you know, as we moved out of the pandemic. But at that time, 12 or 13.

Q. So you had stated Mr. Lowry was on the case management side. Can you go back to that, I think, you had said they bridged the gap, but can you explain again exactly what the case management did?

A. Yeah. So they would meet with students and provide guidance and some level of counseling. However, depending on the need of the student or as that counseling became more extensive, a clinical counselor would need to kind of move into that realm.

So they did a lot of initial contact with the students, developing relationships with students, developing relationships with staff, the

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guidance counselors and parents, kind of to break down the barriers so we could get, you know, the service, therapeutic needs to the students.

Q. And regarding Mr. Lowry, so he was working there before you became Superintendent as well?

A. Yes. I think, he worked in some capacity with Anazao but within our school district because Anazao serves a variety of school districts in Wayne County the year prior.

Q. Okay. And how were you informed of the inappropriate conduct that Mr. Lowry was having with -- actually, can I pause my question one second? I am going to actually share my screen briefly, because we don't say any students' names. Give me one second to pull up my exhibit. This is Exhibit 2B. And Mr. Tudor, can you see the document I have?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes.

Q. So we refer to this student as Student 1. And just -- do you recognize that student name?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. I just wanted to make sure. I'm going to stop sharing. Let me go back to my question. So when were you made aware that Mr. Lowry had a sexual

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encounter with Student 1?

A. I was notified, officially, on November 16, 2021, through the principal. But the notification came from the school guidance counselor.

Q. And did the guidance counselor explain the situation to you?

A. Yes.

Q. And what did the guidance counselor explain to you?

[redacted]

So what we were notified was that, [redacted], and they were talking through that. And in the conversation that they had,

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[redacted]. I'm not sure with more than just Mr. Lowry or if it was just Mr. Lowry, but through the app called Grinder, he met Mr. Lowry.

They met and had consensual sex. The student did not know Mr. Lowry, did not recognize him at the time. That was, I think, in July of some time. School starts in August. The student recognizes Mr. Lowry, contacts him, I believe, through the app, but I'm not certain on that. And indicates that, hey, don't talk to me again, you know, basically, I think, realized at this point, okay, we're at the same educational setting.

At that point from our understanding, at least in the notes that I have, I don't believe that Mr. Lowry continued to contact the student during the fall. But I could also very much indicate that Mr. Lowry did not let us know of the situation in any way. It was not until on November 16th that the student notified us, and we were made aware of the situation.

Q. Then as an administrator did you also contact Anazao Community Partners as well?

A. I did, yes. They immediately removed him from the school. And did their own investigation

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that, it looks like it took about less than two weeks. And then, he was removed from their employment. Again, the reason that I reported it to the State, specifically, is, Mr. Lowry also did hold an educational aide permit. And I felt since that was the case that would violate the Code of conduct. So that's why I reported it.

Q. Did you also contact the police as well?

A. Yes, we did. We did on the same day. And the police did do an investigation.

Q. And did the police press any charges on Mr. Lowry?

A. They did not. And my understanding was that was the wishes of the student and the family, decided not to. I can say that I confirmed that the student would have been 18 at the time of the sexual encounter. [redacted]

Q. And after the situation, how was Student 1 for the rest of the school year? Was he able to maintain a healthy relationship with the rest of the students during that school year?

A. Yes. He did. I think, it definitely -- if my perception is correct, it significantly impacted him. But he's a pretty impressive young man, and was able to continue throughout the year and

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on to college.

Q. That's good. And then, regarding Mr. Lowry, did you -- were you ever able to speak with him yourself?

A. I did not talk to the student about this. I talked with the student but I did not talk to the student about this, kind of out of more -- more out of compassion and respect for his privacy.

Q. I'm sorry, I meant to ask did you speak to Mr. Lowry once you were made aware of this situation?

A. Oh, I'm sorry. No, I did not. Obviously, we handled this a little bit different then if it was our employee, you know, from a due process standpoint. We just immediately let Mark Woods, who was the person in charge of Anazoa, know of the situation. And he immediately removed him. And, of course, we didn't permit him back in the building and cut off his internet access, you know, all the things that he had for us.

Q. Did Student 1 ever speak to Mr. Lowry? Did he try to make contact with him ever again?

A. Not to my recollection. I don't -- I know there was some police investigation, but they didn't give me a ton of details after that because

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they chose not to press charges, so I don't know I want to say with absolute certainty that they never had contact again. But I believe, he pretty much did respect the student's wishes.

Q. As an administrator, what was your opinion regarding Mr. Lowry's conduct?

A. I find it pretty troubling. And the biggest reason that I find it troubling -- well, there's a few different reasons. I think, the first is, I think, as a -- as someone that would be working in the schools using an app to then engage with people that -- I don't have any idea if he knew the age or knew anything about the student. I find this pretty risky behavior.

So that would be kind of the first thing. I do find it pretty risky and troubling. I think, the follow up that I would have is the way that Mr. Lowry handled it once it came to light, that this student was indeed a student, you know, in my opinion he had almost three months that he could have indicated to us or his employer, Anazao, that he had a consensual encounter with someone that he believed to be an adult, and technically it was, and that it would be inappropriate for him to be in the school setting or, you know, anything like that.

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He did none of that. And I would perceive as we did, you know, hindsight is always interesting to review, I can't say for sure how he treated that student throughout the year, but I would perceive that there was -- he did a lot of focused his work with students that were transgender or homosexual.

And I would perceive that there may have been some additional grooming going on, that if this wouldn't have came to light -- again, this is just a perception, but I wonder if not, additional things would have occurred with other students.

Q. And since you are Superintendent would you ever hire Mr. Lowry into your district?

A. Absolutely not, no.

Q. And can you explain why?

A. Can you say that again? You cut out.

Q. Sure. Can you explain why you wouldn't want to have him in your district again?

A. Yeah, I think, kind of for the reasons that one, the risky behavior, but more than that, I kind of, in my opinion, I think, sometimes a mistake is made but how you respond to the mistake says a lot about your intentions.

And if he thought the person was not a

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student and an adult male having a consensual relationship, that's one thing. But then the way he handled it once the school year started with that student and kind of hid away that he was working with other students would make me believe that his intentions were not pure. And so, I would have no interest in rehiring him.

Q. And also Mr. Lowry was roughly about 40 years old as well; is that correct?

A. Yes.

Q. And I don't believe I have any other questions for you at this time. Did you have anything else that you would like to say about the matter?

A. No. I don't think so at this time.

MR. LUSHER: I don't have any further questions for you but Ms. Finnegan might have some questions to help clarify.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Yes. I have a few questions.

- - -

EXAMINATION

BY HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN:

Q. I'm not sure if you know this or if it's in the records because of the employment situation

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because he really wasn't an employee of the schools, but I gather that this happened during the 2021-2022 school year?

A. Yes.

Q. Okay. And do you know what grade Student 1 was in during that school year?

A. A [redacted].

Q. Okay. And what school was he attending at that time?

A. Wooster High School.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Okay. That's all I have. Mr. Lusher, do you have anything else for this witness.

MR. LUSHER: Just to make sure it's on the record as well, I believe, you stated that you were informed about this incident on November 16, 2021; is that correct?

THE WITNESS: Yes, that's correct.

MR. LUSHER: Okay. I just wanted to make sure that was on the record as well. I don't have any further questions for you. Thank you for your time, Mr. Tudor. I appreciate it.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Yes, thank you for your testimony.

THE WITNESS: No problem. I'm assuming

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that I can go ahead and leave at this point?

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Yes.

THE WITNESS: Okay. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Mr. Lusher, does the State have another witness?

MR. LUSHER: Yeah, the State would like to call the Office of Professional Conduct Attorney Matthew Shunkwiler.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Okay. Can the court reporter, please, swear in the witness?

- - -

MATTHEW SHUNKWILER,

being first duly sworn, as prescribed by law, was examined and testified as follows:

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: You may proceed.

- - -

DIRECT EXAMINATION

BY MR. LUSHER

Q. Would you please, state your name and spell your last name for the record.

A. Matthew Shunkwiler, last name is S-H-U-N-K-W-I-L-E-R.

Q. And are you presently employed?

A. Yes. I am a Staff Attorney with the

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Office of Professional Conduct for the State Board of Education.

Q. And as Staff Attorney for the Office of Professional Conduct what are your job duties and responsibilities?

A. I investigate cases that are assigned to me. I also negotiate disciplinary actions on those cases. And I act as the Custodian of Record for all cases assigned to me.

Q. And are you Custodian of Record kept by the Office of Professional Conduct relating to Respondent Kevin Lowry?

A. Yes, I am.

Q. And give me one moment to share my screen. Are you able to see that?

A. Yes.

Q. I'm going to turn your attention to Exhibit 1. Do you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. This is the educator's summary for Kevin Lowry that was taken off his CORE account.

Q. And at the top of this document under demographics, is this information provided by the Respondent to the Board?

A. Yes, it is.

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Q. And we're going to move to Exhibit 2, which is on page 3 of the combined exhibits -- I'm so sorry, I just moved right past -- let me move back. Let me go to credentials under the heading credentials, does the Respondent hold any credentials?

A. He does not hold any active credentials. His most recent credential that he held was a one year educational aide permit that expired on June 30, 2022.

Q. And then, under submitted applications, it doesn't appear that there are any new applications; is that correct?

A. That is correct. There are -- he does not have any pending applications with my office. And I will get notified when someone in this situation with an open investigation applies for a new license. And I have not been notified that he applied for a new license.

Q. Thank you. Now I'm going to turn to Exhibit 2. Do you recognize this document?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. This is the Notice of Opportunity for Hearing that was mailed to Mr. Lowry's home address on August 1, 2024.

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Q. And what is the purpose of this document?

A. This document provides the educator with notice of the charges that we will attempt to prove at the hearing and that will be the focus of the hearing. It also describes his right to request a hearing and how to do so.

Q. And was this document delivered to Respondent, Kevin Lowry?

A. Yes, it was.

Q. Actually, let me move down to page 6. This document, I believe, states that he was no longer at the address?

A. Yes, that's correct.

Q. And then, I'm going to move to Exhibit 2A. Do you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. This is the second Notice that was sent to his address, a different address on September 13, 2024. And this is the one that he received.

Q. And you're referencing on page 10, the United States Postal Service shows that it was delivered?

A. Yes. That is correct. You can match the tracking number of that. It's listed at the

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bottom of the second Notice that was sent.

Q. And going back to the top of Exhibit 2A, what's the date that it was sent?

A. September 13, 2024.

Q. And then, this was sent to a different address in [redacted]. How did you obtain that address?

A. My office uses a service called Accurint and it searchs public records and pulls up an individual's, like, recent addresses. It actually pulls up every address they've ever lived at, and their phone number and various other things.

Q. And then, moving down on this as well under administrative procedures, what information is provided in this section?

A. This is the section that I referenced previously that would describe his ability to request a hearing and how to do so, specifically, it says that he would have to request the hearing within 30 days of the date of service of the notice. And that he would have to do so to my office in writing.

Q. And did he request a hearing?

A. He did not. And I should add that section also states that if he does not request a hearing, my office can move forward with a hearing

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without his participation.

Q. Thank you. I'm going to page 13 of the combined exhibits. And this is Exhibit 2B. Do you recognize this exhibit?

A. Yes, I do.

Q. What is it?

A. This is the confidential student key. A copy of it would have been sent with both Notices of the Hearing.

Q. Then I'm going to move to page 14, of the combined exhibits. And this is Exhibit 3. Do you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes, I do. This is the journal entry that is scheduling the hearing for today.

Q. Thank you. I'm going to turn your attention to Exhibit 4. And this is on page 16, of the combined exhibits. Do you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. These are the certified records that were sent to my office from Wooster City School District.

Q. And I'm going to move to Exhibit 5, which is on page 22, of the combined exhibits. Do

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you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. These are the certified records that were sent to my office from the Anazao Community Partners group.

Q. And within these exhibits, I'm going to move to page 26. And this is from Anazao Community Partners records, certified records. And this is an e-mail that Mr. Lowry had sent. And this is on November 17th, the day after the school was notified that he had sexual relations with Student 1.

A. Yes.

Q. And can you read the questions that he is asking in this e-mail?

A. Yeah, so the first question -- there's five total. The first one is, if I cannot return to Wooster High School but stay working with Wooster City Schools can I focus on Special Ed and multi-school families, Goodwill kids, i.e. family liaison/service coordination?

The second question is, if I cannot return to Wooster City Schools is that forever or can I be reassigned for a year and return next school year when the student in question has graduated? The third question is, if I cannot return to Wooster City

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Schools can I see Anazao Community Partner's clients outpatient that are enrolled in Wooster City Schools? The fourth question is, if I cannot return to Wooster City Schools can we consider a position that includes education and outreach (special population, suicide prevention, trainings, PD, school based curriculums, community education, parent mental health education?).

And then, the fifth and final question is, if I cannot return to Wooster City Schools could I work with Lindsay as a crossover case manager for adolescents into young adults?

Q. So the day after it was revealed, not by himself but by Student 1, that he had sexual relations with a student, he's essentially asking if he can return to Wooster City Schools, is that pretty accurate?

A. Yes.

Q. And then, still within the Exhibit 5, by the way, moving to page 31. This was dated November 19, 2021. I'm going to ask you to read the middle paragraph that begins with, after reviewing.

A. Okay. After reviewing the external investigation and consulting through an internal management review, I have concluded that Anazao

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Community Partner's integrity and reputation are at risk based on your engagement in an off job relationship. And moreover, in you not reporting the nature or existence of this relationship when this was identified in late August or early September 2021.

Both represent a significant lapse of personal and professional judgement constituting serious misconduct, which is resulting in the termination of your employment with Anazao Community Partners.

Q. And then, on page 33, this is the e-mail from -- can you describe what the e-mail is?

A. Yeah, this is Mr. Lowry's letter of resignation effective November 30, 2021 for the Anazao Community Partners.

Q. Thank you. And then, I'm going to move to Exhibit 6. Do you recognize this exhibit?

(EXHIBIT MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION)

A. Yes. So this is a public records request that was sent to the Hocking College, and the response.

Q. And this is regarding Respondent, Kevin Lowry?

A. Yes.

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Q. And what is within the documents here?

A. So essentially, it shows that Mr. Lowry was investigated due to allegations of sexual misconduct as the Director of Housing for Hocking College.

Q. And what were the alligations within the initial complaint?

A. The allegations were that Respondent had sex with students using his Grinder app -- or he had sex with students. And his Grinder app was set to, essentially, limited to the college student age population.

So he was looking for students to hook up with that were of college age or, I guess, people to hook up with that were of college age. And it was also investigated that he had inappropriate communications with students.

Q. And then, I'm going to go to page 49, instead of going through all of the different statements from different students. And I'm just going to go to the result of the investigation here on page 49.

A. Yes.

Q. Would you please, read the result but you could probably leave out the definitions.

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A. Okay. So the result is -- the result of the investigation, while Kevin Lowry chose to resign, it is still clear that he violated Hocking College policy by his conduct in his communications with students, which is detailed throughout this report.

This violates policy 58.002, workplace harassment and Civility Policy, which states in part profanity and offensive/inappropriate language will not be tolerated. The conversations had by Kevin Lowry with students that included sexual references, as well as, the hugging of students would violate policy 64.002, facility/staff relations with and sexual harassment of students, definitions specifically, and it goes on to define -- and then, at the bottom part --

Q. Yes, please.

A. The behavior noted throughout this investigate would fall under a Class 1 conduct violation and, specifically 7, engaging in other employment misconduct, which is generally deemed to be inexcusable in nature, per the employee code of conduct guidelines.

An employee who engages in any of the following misconduct shall be subject to immediate disciplinary suspension or dismissal from employment.

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Kevin Lowry was given the opportunity to speak on his own behalf with regards to any of the allegations brought forward but chose not to do so. The recommendation for resolution is to accept the resignation of Kevin Lowry and label him as ineligible to rehire at Hocking College.

Q. And just to recap, so he resigned his position and also did not provide a statement regarding the allegations?

A. That is correct.

Q. Do you have anything else to add to the matter?

A. Nope. I don't think so.

Q. I'm going to stop sharing my screen. I don't have any questions for you at this time, but Ms. Finnegan might.

A. Okay.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: I do not have any questions. Thank you.

MR. LUSHER: The State does not have any other witness to call, but would like to ask to enter Exhibits 1 through 6 into evidence, with Exhibit 2B to be sealed. I'd like to respectfully request that?

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Yes. State's Exhibits 1 through 6 are admitted into the record and

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State's Exhibit 2B entered into the record under seal.

(EXHIBITS ADMITTED INTO EVIDENCE)

MR. LUSHER: Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Okay. If you have nothing further we can proceed to closing statements. Do you have a closing statement today?

MR. LUSHER: Yes, I do.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: You may proceed.

MR. LUSHER: Thank you. The Board has proven by a preponderance of the evidence the allegations set forth in the Notice of Opportunity for Hearing. With regard to Count 1, the certified records and testimony proves Respondent engaged in behavior that exceeds the bounds of conduct unbecoming.

Although Respondent could have believed Student 1 was an adult and not a student, when faced with the student and knowing he had a sexual relationship with the student, Respondent did not come to the administration and reveal the issue so it could be appropriately handled. Instead it was agreed that they would not say anything.

It's the Board's position that

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Respondent's conduct outlined in Count 1 constitutes conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession pursuant to Ohio Revised Code 3319.31(B1), as well as Ohio Administrative Code 3302-73-21(A2), which considers conduct unbecoming as a misconduct involving school children. And (A8), which considers conduct unbecoming as a violation of the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct per Ohio educators, specifically, Principle 2, in the Licensure Code of Professional Conduct requires an educator creates, supports and maintains an appropriate learning environment for all students and fulfills the roles of trusted confidant, mentor and advocate for students' rights while maintaining appropriate, professional, emotional and social boundaries.

Here section A, of Principle 2, states conduct unbecoming is engaging in inappropriate sexual conduct with a student or minor. Section C, of Principle 2, states conduct unbecoming is soliciting, encouraging or engaging in an inappropriate relationship with a student or minor. Once it's been determined, as is the case here, that an educator has engaged in conduct unbecoming to the teaching profession, Ohio Administrative Code 3302-73-21(B), sets forth the following relevant,

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aggravating factors that may be considered in determining a final action by the Board.

(B1), allows for the consideration of the nature and seriousness of the misconduct. Here it's extremely serious. Respondent's actions are predatory in nature. And as reflected in the Hocking College records his conduct is not a random incident but instead a pattern of behavior.

(B3), the age of the person when the crime of misconduct was committed. Respondent was roughly 40 years old when this incident took place and the student whom he was having a sexual relationship with was 18. (B9), whether licensure will negatively impact the health, safety or the welfare of the school community and or statewide education community. The impact of Respondent maintaining a license could greatly impact the health and safety of the school community.

Here the targeted student came forward. But if he not had there could have been even more students that fell pray to Respondent. Allowing Respondent back into education puts even more students at risk for grooming treatment and/or sexual abuse.

In light of the foregoing aggravating

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factors, the Board's Office of Professional Conduct respectfully requests a recommendation that Respondent's license be revoked and Respondent be deemed permanently ineligible for reapplication for any license, permit or certificate with the Board. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER FINNEGAN: Thank you. There being nothing further, the record is now closed.

(Thereupon, the hearing was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the proceedings taken by me in this matter on Tuesday, September 30, 2025, and carefully compared with my original stenographic notes.



Kimberly Riddel,
Court Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of Ohio.

My commission expires April 16, 2029.

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