
CHARGES OF DISMISSAL
Rachel Jones and Clay Turpin

As the Director of Schools for the Anderson County Board of Education (“Board”), and pursuant to Board Policy No. 5.200 and 5.201, as well as Tenn. Code Ann. 49-5-501, *et seq.* and 49-2-301, I hereby move to:

- Dismiss tenured employee Rachel Jones (“Jones”) for unprofessional conduct, insubordination, and neglect of duty, any one of which would demand her dismissal; and
- Dismiss non-tenured employee Clay Turpin (“Turpin”) for unprofessional conduct, insubordination, and neglect of duty, any one of which would demand his dismissal.

As grounds for my above-referenced decisions, I would show:

I. Legal Basis:

- 1) “The causes for which a [tenured] teacher may be dismissed or suspended are: incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct, and insubordination, as defined in § 49-5-501.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-511(a)(2).
- 2) Similarly, a “director may dismiss any nontenured, licensed employee under the director's jurisdiction for incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination, improper conduct or neglect of duty.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-2-301(b)(1)(EE).
- 3) Title 49 of the Tennessee Code defines improper, unprofessional, and “conduct unbecoming to a member of the teaching profession” to “consist of, but not be limited to, one (1) or more of the following:
 - Dishonesty, unreliability, continued willful failure or refusal to pay one's just and honest debts; or
 - Disregard of the teacher code of ethics in part 10 of this chapter, in such manner as to make one obnoxious as a member of the profession.”

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-501(3).

- 4) Under the Tennessee Teacher Code of Ethics, “an educator shall strive to help each student realize the student's potential as a worthy and effective member of society. An educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and

understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1003(a).

5) Under the same statute within the Teacher Code of Ethics, the Legislature also mandates that, in fulfilling obligations to students, a licensed “educator shall:

- (1) Abide by all applicable federal and state laws;
- (2) Not unreasonably restrain the student from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
- (3) Provide the student with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
- (6) Not deliberately suppress or distort subject matter relevant to the student's progress;
- (7) Make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety;
- (13) Not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students or colleagues;
- (19) Maintain a professional approach with the student at all times.”

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1003(b).

6) Licensed educators in Tennessee must also “conduct themselves in a manner that preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1004. This is because “the education profession is vested by the public with a trust and responsibility requiring the highest ideals of professional service. In the belief that the quality of the services of the education profession directly influences the nation and its citizens, the educator shall exert every effort to raise professional standards, to promote a climate that encourages the exercise of professional judgment, to achieve conditions which attract persons worthy of the trust to careers in education, and to assist in preventing the practice of the profession by unqualified persons.” *Id.*

7) The Legislature takes ethics so seriously, in fact, it also mandates that:

- “(a) An educator who has personal knowledge of a breach by another educator of the teacher code of ethics prescribed in §§ 49-5-1003 and 49-5-1004 shall report the breach to the educator's immediate supervisor, director of schools, or local board of education within thirty (30) days of discovering the breach.

- (b) Failure to report a breach of the teacher code of ethics, or to file a report of any criminal activity or other misconduct that is required by federal or state law, is a breach of the teacher code of ethics.”

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-1006.

- 8) While trying to expound upon the moral and ethical expectations of educators, the Tennessee Court of Appeals put it best within a prior opinion involving this very school system: “**Teachers are vitally important in the lives of children. A teacher should serve as a positive role model for her or his students...**” *Ripley v. Anderson County Bd. of Educ.*, 293 S.W.3d 154, 161 (emphasis added).
- 9) Title 49 of the Tennessee Code also defines that “insubordination” may consist of... “refusal or continued failure to obey the school laws of this state, to comply with the rules and regulations of the board or to carry out specific assignments made by the board, the director of schools or the principal, each acting within its own jurisdiction, when the rules, regulations and assignments are reasonable and not discriminatory.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-501(7).
- 10) The Legislature places so much importance on maintaining the accuracy and credibility of student records that it mandates possible criminal penalties for those who improperly alter the same:
 - “(a)(1) A student transcript shall not be altered by any employee of an LEA, charter school, or virtual school unless the LEA, charter school, or virtual school has a written policy governing student transcript alterations. All transcript alterations shall be made in accordance with the LEA, charter school, or virtual school policy governing student transcript alterations.
 - (a)(2) An LEA, charter school, or virtual school policy governing student transcript alterations must require any student transcript alteration to be supported by documentation providing an explanation of the reason for the transcript alteration and evidence that the student has earned the grade reflected in the altered transcript.
 - (c) Any person who intentionally violates this section may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, revocation of a professional educator license or certification issued by the department of education, and may be subject to prosecution for falsification of educational or academic records under § 39-14-136.”

Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-50-1101.

11) The Tennessee State Board of Education also mandates serious and strict rules for when/how school systems and their educators may allow students to access credit recovery programming:

- (1) Credit recovery is a course-specific, standards-based extended learning opportunity for students who have previously been unsuccessful in mastering the standards required to receive course credit or earn promotion. Credit recovery programs, in general, have a primary focus of helping students stay in school and graduate on time.
- (2) Local boards of education shall develop credit recovery program rules, regulations, and processes (referred to as "credit recovery policies" throughout). These policies shall be formally adopted by the local board of education, posted to the district's website, and provided in writing to any participating students, parents, or legal guardians. At a minimum, credit recovery policies must address the following standards for admission and removal, instruction, content and curriculum, and grades.
- (3) Admission and Removal.
 - (a) No LEA shall admit or otherwise enroll students in credit recovery courses unless all of the following are true:
 1. The student's parent or legal guardian gives written consent for the student to enroll in the proposed credit recovery course. Parents/guardians should be informed that not all postsecondary institutions will accept credit recovery courses for credit and that the NCAA Clearinghouse will not accept credit recovery courses for credit.
 2. The student has previously taken an initial, non-credit recovery section of the proposed course. Credit recovery is designed to be a remediation option for students, and a credit recovery course shall not be the first time a student is exposed to the course content.
 3. The student mastered at least fifty percent (50%) of the course standards as evidenced by the course grade in a non-credit recovery section of the course or a diagnostic assessment. Students who mastered below fifty percent (50%) of the course standards as evidenced by the course grade in a non-credit recovery section of the course or a diagnostic assessment, must re-take the course.

12) The Board also expands upon the above-credit recovery rules within goals and guidelines of its own at Board Policy No. 4.210:

<p style="text-align: center;">Anderson County Board of Education</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Meeting</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Description Title</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Description Code</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Issued Date</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Board: Annually, in November</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Credit Recovery</td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.210</td> <td style="text-align: center;">09/09/22</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Revision</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">4.210</td> <td style="text-align: center;">09/11/22</td> </tr> </table> <p><i>General:</i></p> <p>The Director of Schools shall ensure that credit recovery facilitators receive training regarding course organization, online instruction management, and related technology.</p> <p>Credit recovery teachers shall comply with all State Board of Education certification requirements.¹</p> <p>ADMISSION AND REMOVAL</p> <p>No student shall be admitted to or otherwise enrolled in credit recovery courses unless:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student's parent/guardian gives written consent for the student to enroll in the proposed credit recovery course. Parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be informed that not all postsecondary institutions will accept credit recovery courses for credit and that the NCAA Clearinghouse will not accept credit recovery courses for credit; and 2. The student has previously taken an initial, non-credit recovery section of the proposed course and received a grade of at least fifty percent (50%). Students who receive a grade of below fifty percent (50%) in the non-credit recovery section of the course must re-take the course. <p><i>If a student is seeking to recover credit for the first semester of a two-semester course, the student may not receive the full credit for the course until he/she has enrolled in and passed the second semester of the course and taken any applicable End of Course examinations.</i></p> <p>The Board shall track students enrolled in credit recovery courses as directed by the Tennessee Department of Education.</p>	Meeting	Description Title	Description Code	Issued Date	Board: Annually, in November	Credit Recovery	4.210	09/09/22	Revision		4.210	09/11/22	<p>20 INSTRUCTION AND CONTENT:</p> <p>21 Credit recovery teachers shall work closely with credit recovery facilitators to coordinate class content and instruction.</p> <p>22</p> <p>23 The Director of Schools shall ensure that all credit recovery courses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 24 1. Align with Tennessee's current academic standards for the relevant course content area, as approved by the State Board of Education; and 25 26 27 2. Differentiate instruction to address individual student growth needs based on diagnostic assessment or End of Course data. 28 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">Version Date: September 12, 2022</p> <hr/> <p>Credit Recovery</p> <p>1 Students in credit recovery programs shall:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 1. Complete a course skill-specific diagnostic to determine skill-specific goals; 3 4 2. Meet individual skill-specific goals in a flexible time frame as established by identified student need; and 5 6 7 3. Master all individualized skill-specific goals as established by the diagnostic process in order to earn credit. 8 <p>9 GRADE:</p> <p>10 Students passing credit recovery shall receive a grade of sixty percent (60%) under the state uniform</p> <p>11 grading system. If the district utilizes a locally-adopted grading scale that differs from the uniform</p> <p>12 grading scale, a student passing credit recovery shall receive a D.</p>
Meeting	Description Title	Description Code	Issued Date										
Board: Annually, in November	Credit Recovery	4.210	09/09/22										
Revision		4.210	09/11/22										

13) Within Policy No. 4.100, the Board also sets forth broad-based instructional goals:

Anderson County Board of Education			
Meeting: Review: Annually, In November	Descriptor Term: Instructional Goals	Descriptor Code: 4.100	Revised Date: 10/08/09
		Revised: 4.101	Revised:

1 The Board approves the following broad-based instructional goals for students:

2 • To acquire the knowledge and attitude necessary to achieve and maintain good physical and

3 mental health;

4 • To develop the skills necessary to function as a self-directed person;

5 • To develop the capacity to cope with change through an understanding of the arts, humanities and

6 scientific processes.

7 • To know the principles involved in making moral and ethical choices.

8 • To develop the basic skills of reading, writing, computation, spelling, speaking and problem

9 solving;

10 • To develop a positive attitude toward learning as a lifelong endeavor.

11 • To learn to identify personal talents and interests, make appropriate career choices, and develop

12 career skills;

13 • To acquire knowledge and to develop skills in the management of personal and public resources

14 necessary for meeting obligations to self, family and society,

15 • To learn to act in a responsible manner,

16 • To learn of the rights and responsibilities of citizens of the community, state, nation and world,

17 • To learn to understand, respect and interact with people of different cultures, generations and

18 races

14) Finally, Title 49 of the Tennessee Code defines “neglect of duty” to mean “gross or repeated failure to perform duties and responsibilities that reasonably can be expected of one in such capacity or continued unexcused or unnecessary absence from duty.” Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-5-501(8).

II. **Factual Background:**

15) In 2011, Anderson County schools hired Jones.

16) In 2011, Jones began worked as a teacher at Clinton High Schools (“CHS”).

17) Later, in 2021, Anderson County Schools hired Turpin to also work at CHS.

18) Both Jones and Turpin remained under the supervision of then CHS Principal Dan Jenkins (“Jenkins”).

19) Jenkins, like all principals, was ultimately judged based on the stability and performance of his school. And the State of Tennessee previously recognized CHS as a “Reward School” for the 2022-2023 school year:¹

¹ <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/stateboardofeducation/documents/2024-sbe-meetings/february-16%2C-2024/2-16-24%20VI%20M%20State%20Identified%202022-23%20Reward%20School%20Designations%20Attachment.pdf>

2022-23 Reward Schools

In Tennessee, schools are recognized as a Reward school when they demonstrate high levels of performance and/or improvement in performance. In 2022-23, schools earn Reward status based on their performance on the federal accountability system. A school is recognized as a Reward school when it (1) has an overall school score of 3.1 or higher per federal accountability calculation; and (2) is not identified as a Comprehensive Improvement School, Targeted Support and Improvement School, or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement School.

400 schools are identified as Reward schools for the 2022-23 school year.

District	School
Alcoa City Schools	Alcoa High School
Alcoa City Schools	Alcoa Intermediate School
Anderson County Schools	Andersonville Elementary
Anderson County Schools	Claxton Elementary
Anderson County Schools	Clinton High School
Anderson County Schools	Grand Oaks Elementary

20) As the 2023-2024 school year progressed, however, it became more and more clear to me as the Director of Schools, and to other central office administrators, that something was amiss at CHS.

21) During the Spring Semester of 2024, a select group of central office administrators and I started conducting an investigation into CHS students access to and performance within credit recovery and/or virtual programming.²

22) On March 25, 2024, after completing some initial parts of that investigation, my office, in working with counsel, self-reported the following concerning issues to the Tennessee Department of Education (“TDOE”):

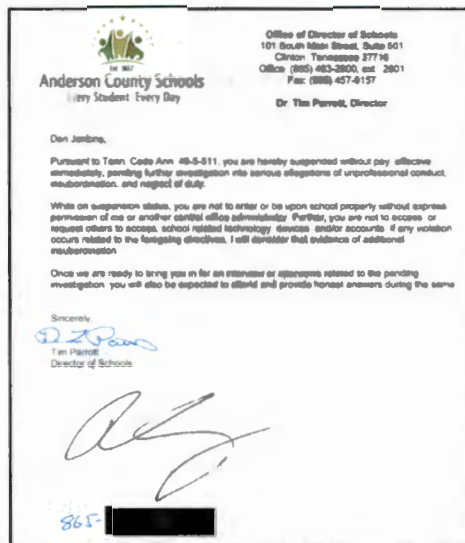
- “Students coded for credit recovery through Edgenuity show up as CHS G25H10 and G25H17;
- Those codes do not flag/pull students for end of course (EOC) testing;
- As of today, **REDACTED**³ Clinton High School students who have never taken an EOC class are showing up under those credit recovery codes;

² For a number of years, Anderson County Schools partnered with Odysseyware to provide students with access to credit recovery and other virtual programming. In 2019, “Weld North Education... acquired Glynlyon, Inc., a digital curriculum company serving more than one million students, combining the company’s two leading brands — Edgenuity and Odysseyware...” <https://chamberbusinessnews.com/2019/04/22/arizona-based-k-12-services-company-edgenuity-acquires-blended-learning-provider-odysseyware/>. Odysseyware programming was still made available to users like Anderson County Schools through the 2022-2023 school year, yet all such programming fell under Edgenuity during the 2023-2024 school year.

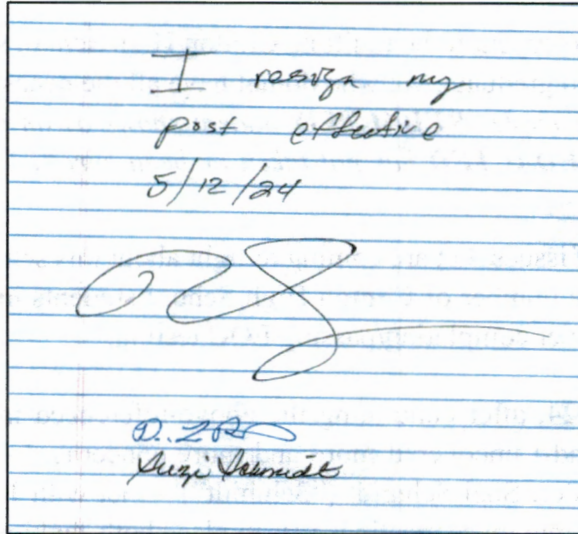
³ Throughout this document, I will redact certain specific information when I believe failing to redact could point to the identities – and the confidential educational records of – former or current CHS students. Their identities and records must remain confidential pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

- There also appear to be multiple Clinton High School students who are showing as on track to graduate, yet who do not have all the necessary coursework;
 - *Example: REDACTED student shows as on track to graduate; however, REDACTED has not taken or been enrolled in a math class this school year.*
- On top of issues that are coming to light about this school year, administration also believes a number of Clinton High School students may have graduated last year without ever completing/passing EOC testing.”

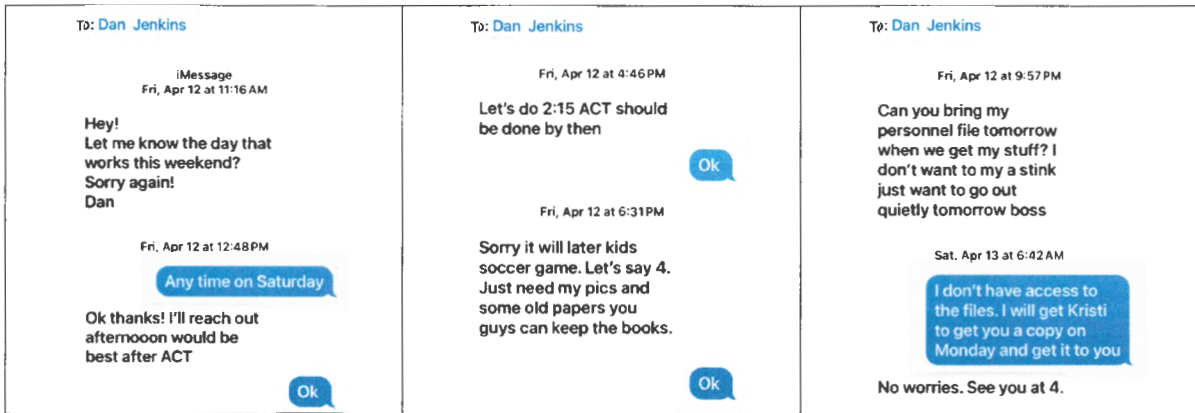
23) On April 12, 2024, after continuing the above-referenced investigation, and after other administrators and I uncovered more and more concerns, I – along with another central office administrator, Suzi Schmidt (“Schmidt”) – met with Jenkins and Jones separately. My goal moving into those meetings was to place both Jenkins and Jones – as the educator primarily assigned to CHS credit recovery students through December 2023 – on suspension status pending further investigation into the concerning issues at CHS. In fact, I provided both Jenkins and Jones with a similar letter (*below showing a copy of the letter presented to and then signed by Jenkins that day*):



24) While Jones accepted her suspension, and even expressed remorse for what she knew was improper conduct, Jenkins instead decided to resign as Anderson County Schools employee:

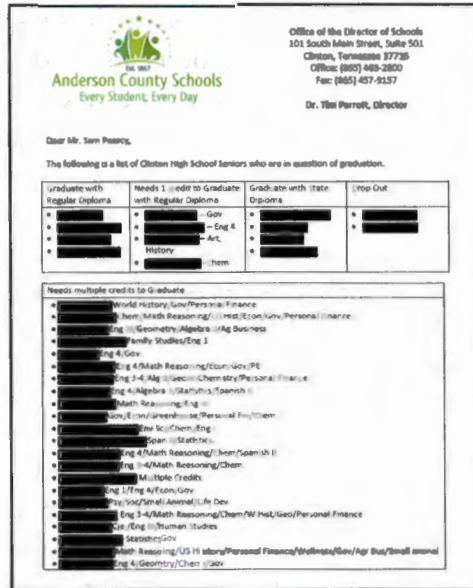


25) While Jenkins’ resignation stated “effective 5/12/2024” (a Sunday), it was clear to me that he meant the day of our meeting, 4/12/2024, especially since Jenkins later coordinated with my via text message to find a time to clean out his office at CHS:



26) Since that March 25th report to TDOE, select central office administrators and I have worked to not only further identify and understand concerning issues stemming from CHS, but also to try and identify, work with TDOE, and meet with CHS seniors and families who appeared not on track to graduate.

27) On April 25th, in fact, my office, again working with counsel, forwarded the following to document to TDOE:



- 28) Upon discovering during our investigation that the concerning issues stemming from CHS involved coding issues, rule violations, EOC problems, *and* course and grade modification, I also met with and reported these matters to District Attorney Dave Clark in case this situation also called for a criminal investigation. Since that time, my office has worked with and supplied records and data to investigators assigned by the Anderson County Sheriff's Department.
- 29) Not wanting to in any way interfere with an ongoing law enforcement investigation, my team and I held off on scheduling and conducting staff member interviews until provided clearance to move forward by law enforcement.
- 30) Recently, however, law enforcement provided a green light to proceed with certain staff member interviews following their interviews of the same personnel. And Assistant Director of Schools Greg Deal ("Deal") and Schmidt were then able to schedule and conduct interviews of Jones, Turpin, and others.
- 31) During her interview on May 2, 2024, Jones – to her credit – remained both remorseful and forthcoming, including, but not limited to, the following statements and/or admissions:

- In January 2023, a CHS school counselor asked Jones to enroll a student in virtual courses. The student at issue was facing serious accusations at the time, and Jones was told: "We need him done like yesterday." Jones then texted Jenkins about the student, as well as talked via phone. Jenkins confirmed to Jones that the student should move to virtual programming and stated: "Get him out, like, now." During her interview, Deal and Schmidt confronted Jones with virtual data confirming that the student at issue had *somehow* completed all five of his remaining courses over an eight-day period. Additionally, they confronted Jones with virtual data

confirming 485 score changes recorded in Odysseyware under Jones' account, many of which were skipped questions until a desired grade student was achieved. Jones admitted during her interview to changing the student's scores so he could completed any remaining courses quickly. According to Jones, she changed the student's grades because: "Dan wanted him to be done." In fact, Jones confirmed Jenkins instructed her to bump the student's grade, skip questions, skip assignments, and do whatever she had to do to: "get him out of there." Jones stated Jenkins often gave such directives by the phone; however, Jones also noting possessing similar text messages with Jenkins, of which she had already supplied to law enforcement.

- When by Deal and Schmidt during her interview whether she also changed grades for other students, Jones stated: "Probably not to that scale but yeah." Jones explained that Jenkins would ask her to put courses in pre-test mode, "skip all the assignments," or "take out" assignments. Jones stated that this started with a couple of students "here or there," and then she was asked to do it more. Jones expressed a belief Jenkins' primary motive was to improve the CHS graduation rate. When asked how long Jones "did this," she responded, "Pretty much the whole time that Dan was principal."
- Deal later asked Jones during her interview what other students she did the same thing for, to which she stated: "It felt like a lot last year. Last year was probably the worst year—the worst year—for all that." Jones clarified she was referring to the 2022-23 school year. Jones noted that she did not do nearly as much during the 2023-24 school year, as she told Jenkins that she would not do it anymore: "That's when he got Clay Turpin to come in and take over credit recovery."
- Later during her interview with Deal and Schmidt, Jones recalled Jenkins texting her and Turpin around December 2023, noting Jenkins had been "chewed out" by me, and instructing Jones and Turpin to take students out of courses if they had zeroes in those courses. Jones suggested to Jenkins at the time that they change due dates instead of deleting courses entirely, to which Jenkins agreed. Similarly, Jones recalled Jenkins calling her just before she was scheduled for surgery, and instructing her to: "Call all your kids that have flexible attendance and tell them they can't do this anymore."
- During her interview with Deal and Schmidt, Jones also admitted to placing students using Odysseyware programming in test-mode only. This allowed those students to skip through – and often never receive – instructional lessons, materials, or assignments. Yet Jones claimed she would never place kids in test-mode only unless instructed to do so. Jenkins specifically, for instance, instructed Jones to

return students to Odysseyware programming, after Jones previously tried moving students to Edgenuity so they would not take the easy way out. Jones admitted students using Odysseyware in test mode only were “100 percent” cheating by simply looking up answers on their phones.

- Later during her interview with Deal and Schmidt, Jones also recalled in detail a prior situation involving another student, Jenkins, and Coach Darrell Keith (“Keith”). Specifically, at some point in approximately August 2022, Keith came into Jones’ room and showed her a transcript with marks by certain grades. According to Jones, Keith said she needed to “replace the grades” by placing the student into Odysseyware classes. At the time, Jones said she could not help Keith. Yet, later, Keith returned with the same marked transcript, this time bearing Jenkins’ signature. Keith stated: “Dan said put him in those classes.” Jones called Jenkins to confirm, and he said: “Yes, put him in the classes.” (Image below of the marked transcript that Jones kept, having now provided a copy to law enforcement and school administration):

CLINTON HIGH SCHOOL
 425 Dragon Dr.
 Clinton, TN 37716
 Phone: 865-457-2611; FAX: 865-457-8805

08/18/2022

Accreditation: SACS, State of Tennessee

Student Name: [REDACTED] Rank/Letter GPA: 1.94 Rank: 0 / 70
 Grade: 11 Weighted GPA: 2.00 Earned Credits: 18.000
 Birthdate: [REDACTED] Graduation Date: _____
 Diploma Type: _____

Year	Course	FIN	Cr	Grading Scale	Test Scores
2021	09 Physical Science	F	0.000	A = 85 - 100	F = Below 70
	09 World History/Geography	D	1.000	B = 85 - 92	P = Pass
	09 Trans CTE	B	1.000	C = 75 - 84	WV = Waiver
	09 English I	70	1.000	D = 70 - 74	
	09 Algebra I	C	1.000		
	09 PE	F	1.000		
	09 Wellness	D	1.000		
	09 Advisory	L	1.000		
2022	10 Computer Science Foundations	D	1.000		
	10 Intro to Business & Mgmt SOC	C	1.000		
	10 English II	D	1.000		
	10 Geometry	C	1.000		
	10 Physical Science	70	1.000		
	10 Biology I	C	1.000		
	10 Team Spts Football	A	1.000		
	10 Weight Training Flex	A	0.500		
	10 Spanish I	F	0.000		
	10 ARK	A	0.500		
2023	11 Intro to Business & Marketing		0.000		
	11 Modern Math		0.000		
	11 English III		0.000		
	11 Algebra II		0.000		
	11 Chemistry I		0.000		
	11 SOC US History		0.000		
	11 Visual Art I		0.000		
	11 Football		0.000		
11 ACT Prep Flex		0.000			
			15.000		

32) During his interviews on April 26th and 29th, 2024, Turpin was less initially forthcoming, yet eventually made a number of revealing statements and/or admissions, including, but not limited to:

- After he was unable to obtain a desired coaching position at Rockwood High School, Turpin attempted to take the in-school suspension (“ISS”) position at CHS. However, Jenkins suggested Turpin teach credit recovery, so Turpin could receive teacher pay. At the beginning of 2023-2024 school year, Turpin was handling ISS and credit recovery functions, but transitioned to primarily credit recovery later in 2023.
- According to Turpin during his interview with Deal and Schmidt, he received no training on the credit recovery position/functions. There were initial communications with Jenkins about related training, but, at some point, Turpin

recalled Jenkins asking if Turpin had “the hang of it,” to which Turpin responded that he “guessed” so.

- Turpin stated he was under an initial impression that every student on Edgenuity had first taken a course in a normal classroom setting and failed. Yet Turpin learned later there were multiple students in credit recovery that had been behind on credits as seniors, and were taking all their required credits via credit recovery through Edgenuity. Turpin also learned later that he had students who were seen as “trouble-makers,” and were placed in credit recovery simply to achieve enough credits to graduate (and soon exit CHS). Turpin admitted his role through credit recovery was to “get them done as soon as possible and get them out of the school”. Turpin continued: “What I was told was that all they had to do was get above a 60 percent in the class to get their credit.”
- At one point during his first interview, Deal confronted Turpin with a document entitled “Clay Turpin Grade Changes.” Deal explained the document cited to data showing Turpin’s account through Edgenuity changed 1,009 student grades (with no explanation) from January 5, 2024, through April 15, 2024. Turpin initially claimed such grade changes were a result of short answer quizzes he had to grade or give students a retake to ensure their overall grades ended up above 60. Turpin again noted that Jenkins and multiple school counselors⁴ instructed Turpin to keep his students’ grades above 60, noting he even had at least one in-person meeting with Jenkins “about this.”
- During the follow-up interview with Deal and Schmidt, Deal again confronted Turpin about the 1,009 grade changes associated with his account from January through April. Soon, Turpin admitted he changed student grades because he knew others were doing it and aware of it, and “if this is wrong, somebody would tell... us to stop doing it.” When confronted further as to why he changed grades, Turpin eventually stated: “I would say I was told to make sure that kids have a grade above a 60, so I did go in and change their score to make sure it was above a 60.” Turpin confirmed that was not his idea: “I will say that the counselors did tell me to go through classes and change—and change— scores for students.” While claimed he was never directly instructed Carrier or Dan Jenkins to change student scores, Turpin did again recall Dan Jenkins making it clear that he wanted credit recovery students’ grades to be above a 60 so they could get out of courses/school. As Turpin noted though: “People knew what was going on.” When Deal specifically asked

⁴ At the time these Charges of Dismissal are being issued and submitted in relation to Jones and Turpin, the investigation into the situation at CHS – including overall scope and staff members involved – remains ongoing. With their own admissions and other data to rely on, however, I felt the need to move quickly to dismiss both Jones and Turpin. And, had he not already resigned on April 12th, I would have also moved quickly to terminate Jenkins.

Turpin, however, if anyone from central office ever told Turpin how to run his credit recovery class, he denied the same, again noting: “It was all from Mr. Jenkins and the counselors.” Later on during his interview, in fact, Turpin again confirmed that no one beyond Jenkins and school counselors ever encouraged Turpin or had conversations with him about changing grades.

- Though Jenkins never offered Turpin a clear explanation as to why Jenkins wanted credit recovery students “to finish their courses as quickly as possible,” Turpin offered that it was his impression Jenkins wanted to get “bad kids” out of CHS.
- Later during his initial interview, Turpin recalled a meeting with Carrie and Dan Jenkins in late December 2023 about Edgenuity. Turpin recalled Dan Jenkins noting a conversation with me in which I told Dan I was “upset about all the zeros in Edgenuity.” Therefore, Jenkins instructed Turpin to simply remove those courses that were showing up as zeroes. When he came back to CHS following Christmas break, however, Turpin recalled that the relevant courses for Jones’ former students were still assigned and some of the same relevant courses had been added back for Turpin’s students as well.
- When discussing during his interview with Deal and Schmidt how so many students allegedly completed their courses so quickly under Turpin, he admitted student could complete a course in two days while in test mode only. Turpin suspected most students simply Googled their answers to quizzes and tests, as they had received no instruction. Deal brought up one student in particular who was listed as having English 4 and Geometry with Turpin, with both marked as completed by Carrie Jenkins. The relevant data showed this student *somehow* completed Geometry in: 1 hour 46 minutes and 40 seconds. Turpin claimed he did not “touch anything” for the student to complete – from beginning to end – an entire course in less than two hours.

III. **Dismissal Charges:**

33) Based upon her own statements and omissions, as well as other information and data uncovered during the CHS investigation thus far, and pursuant to Board Policy No. 5.200 and Tenn. Code Ann. 49-5-501, *et seq.*, I believe Jones should be dismissed based upon:

a) **Unprofessional Conduct:**

- i. Dishonesty;
- ii. Unreliability;
- iii. Disregard of the Tennessee Teacher Code of Ethics by:

- Failing to abide by all applicable federal and state laws;

- Unreasonably restraining students from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
- Failing to provide students with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
- Deliberately suppressing and distorting subject matters relevant to the student progress;
- Failing to make reasonable effort to protect students from conditions harmful to learning;
- Knowingly making false statements about students;
- Failing to maintain a professional approach with students at all times;
- Failing to report other breaches of the Teacher Code of Ethics by Jenkins, Turpin, and others.

b) **Insubordination:** Refusal and continued failure to obey the school laws of this state, and to comply with the rules and regulations of the Board and to carry out specific assignments made by the Board, specifically failing to obey, follow, and adhere to:

- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-50-1101;
- State Board of Education rules on credit recovery;
- Board Policy 4.100;
- Board Policy No. 4.210.

c) **Neglect of Duty:** Gross and repeated failure to perform duties and responsibilities that reasonably can be expected of one in such capacity, specifically:

- i. Failing to actually teach/instruct credit recovery students;
- ii. Failing to ensure credit recovery students earned their grades;
- iii. Failing to ensure credit recovery students did not cheat during quizzes or exams.

34) Based upon his own statements and omissions, as well as other information and data uncovered during the CHS investigation thus far, and pursuant to Board Policy No. 5.201 and Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-2-301(b)(1)(EE), I believe Turpin should also be dismissed based upon:

d) **Unprofessional Conduct:**

- iv. Dishonesty;
- v. Unreliability;
- vi. Disregard of the Tennessee Teacher Code of Ethics by:

- Failing to abide by all applicable federal and state laws;
 - Unreasonably restraining students from independent action in the pursuit of learning;
 - Failing to provide students with professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practices known to the educator;
 - Deliberately suppressing and distorting subject matters relevant to the student progress;
 - Failing to make reasonable effort to protect students from conditions harmful to learning;
 - Knowingly making false statements about students;
 - Failing to maintain a professional approach with students at all times;
 - Failing to report other breaches of the Teacher Code of Ethics by Jenkins, Jones, and others.
- e) **Insubordination:** Refusal and continued failure to obey the school laws of this state, and to comply with the rules and regulations of the Board and to carry out specific assignments made by the Board, specifically failing to obey, follow, and adhere to:
- Tenn. Code Ann. § 49-50-1101;
 - State Board of Education rules on credit recovery;
 - Board Policy 4.100;
 - Board Policy No. 4.210.
- f) **Neglect of Duty:** Gross and repeated failure to perform duties and responsibilities that reasonably can be expected of one in such capacity, specifically:
- iv. Failing to actually teach/instruct credit recovery students;
 - v. Failing to ensure credit recovery students earned their grades;
 - vi. Failing to ensure credit recovery students did not cheat during quizzes or exams.

WHEREFORE, based upon the foregoing, I – as the Director of Schools – wish to proceed with these Charges of Dismissal before the Anderson County Board of Education, and pursuant to both local policy and Tennessee law.

Respectfully submitted by:



Dr. Tim Parrott, Director of Schools

5 / 8 / 2024

Date of Submission