

BRITISH COLUMBIA COMMISSIONER FOR TEACHER REGULATION

## IN THE MATTER OF THE TEACHERS ACT, SBC 2011 c. 19

#### AND

## IN THE MATTER CONCERNING

## LYDIA MARIA FITTERER

## **CONSENT RESOLUTION AGREEMENT**

#### BETWEEN:

THE COMMISSIONER, APPOINTED UNDER THE TEACHERS ACT

(the "Commissioner")

AND:

LYDIA MARIA FITTERER

("Fitterer")

# **BACKGROUND** and FACTS

- Fitterer holds a valid Professional Certificate of Qualification, No. Longeneous. It was issued by the B.C. College of Teachers under the *Teaching Profession Act* on May 16, 2007, is valid from May 1, 2007, and was continued under the *Teachers Act* as of January 9, 2012.
- 2. At all material times, Fitterer was employed as an elementary teacher by School District No. 63 (Saanich) (the "District") at a school in the District (the "School").
- 3. On December 11, 2023, the District made a report to the Commissioner regarding Fitterer, under section 16 of the *School Act*.
- The following events occurred while Fitterer was assigned to a class at the School (the "Class"):

- a. Fitterer exchanged emails with a Class parent ("Parent"), in which she shared private information about a student ("Student A") who was not the Parent's child ("Emails"), including identifying Student A by name, referring to personal aspects of Student A's education, and disclosing details of conversations with Student A's parent about Student A.
- b. Fitterer used unprofessional language concerning Student A in the Emails.
- 5. On December 7, 2023, the District issued Fitterer a letter of discipline and suspended her for one day, to be served on January 18, 2024.
- 6. The District had previously issued Fitterer a letter of discipline on May 15, 2023, relating to concerns related to classroom conduct by publicly reprimanding students in front of the class and reports alleging inappropriate language and comments (the "May Letter"). That letter directed Fitterer to immediately improve her efforts in various areas, including to attend training related to Social-Emotional Learning, seek "support and guidance" when unsure how to respond to concerns, "refrain from language or conversation that can be interpreted as demeaning", and "show consistent support for students by using language and remarks that support their individual growth and self-esteem."
- 7. On February 14, 2024, the Commissioner considered this matter and determined to propose a consent resolution agreement to Fitterer, in accordance with section 53(1)(a) of the *Teachers Act*.

# CONSEQUENCES

- 8. This Agreement is made under section 53 of the Teachers Act.
- 9. Fitterer understands and acknowledges that this Agreement is not effective until executed by the Commissioner, and that the date of execution by the Commissioner will be the effective date of this Agreement (the "Effective Date").
- 10. Fitterer admits that the facts set out in paragraphs 1 to 6 of this Agreement are true.
- 11. Fitterer admits that the conduct described in paragraph 4 of this Agreement constitutes professional misconduct and is contrary to Standard #1 of the *Professional Standards for BC Educators*, June 2019.
- 12. Fitterer agrees to a reprimand under sections 53 and 64(a) of the *Teachers Act*, which will take effect on the first business day following the Effective Date.
- 13. Fitterer also agrees under section 64(f) and (h) to complete the course *Reinforcing Respectful Professional Boundaries* through the Justice Institute (the "Course") and

provide satisfactory proof of completion to the Commissioner. Fitterer completed the Course on July 17, 2024.

- 14. In determining that a reprimand and the Course are appropriate consequences, the Commissioner considered the following factors:
  - a. Fitterer failed to protect student privacy and uphold confidentiality.
  - b. Fitterer used language that failed to model respect for students and did not foster inclusion.
  - c. Fitterer was previously directed to refrain from language or conversation that could be interpreted as demeaning.
- 15. Fitterer agrees not to make any statement orally or in writing which contradicts, disputes or calls into question the terms of this Agreement or the admissions made in it.

#### EFFECT OF THE AGREEMENT

- 16. The Director will record the terms of this Agreement on the online registry of the Ministry of Education and Child Care, under section 79(d) of the *Teachers Act*.
- 17. Fitterer acknowledges that this Agreement will be published in accordance with section 54 of the *Teachers Act*, which includes posting the Agreement, in full, on the following website: <u>https://teacherregulation.gov.bc.ca</u>
- 18. A breach by Fitterer of any term in this Agreement may constitute professional misconduct which may be the subject of separate discipline proceedings.
- 19. Fitterer acknowledges and understands that if the Commissioner has reason to believe that she has breached any term of this Agreement:
  - a. the Commissioner may initiate an investigation under section 47(1)(b) of the *Teachers Act* into her conduct; and
  - b. the conduct and matters described in the "Background and Facts" to this Agreement are admissible in that inquiry as proof that Fitterer has admitted to the conduct and matters set out in this Agreement.

20. Fitterer acknowledges that she has voluntarily entered into this Agreement with the benefit of independent legal advice, and that she fully understands the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement.

Signed in Victoria, B.C. this 27 day of February, 2025.

Lydia Maria Fitterer

Signed in <u>New Westminster</u>, B.C. this <u>2nd</u> day of <u>April</u>, 2025.

Donnaree Nygard, Acting Commissioner

