



BRITISH COLUMBIA
COMMISSIONER FOR
TEACHER REGULATION

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

AND

IN THE MATTER CONCERNING

ARTHUR OWEN SANDERSON

[REDACTED]

CONSENT RESOLUTION AGREEMENT

BETWEEN:

THE COMMISSIONER, APPOINTED UNDER THE *TEACHERS ACT*

(the “Commissioner”)

AND:

ARTHUR OWEN SANDERSON

(“Sanderson”)

BACKGROUND and FACTS

1. Sanderson holds a valid Professional Certificate of Qualification, No. [REDACTED]. It was issued by the B.C. College of Teachers under the *Teaching Profession Act* on October 20, 1998, is valid from September 1, 1998, and was continued under the *Teachers Act* as of January 9, 2012.
2. At all material times, Sanderson was employed as a middle school teacher by School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) (the “District”) at a District school (the “School”).
3. On January 5, 2022, the District made a report to the Commissioner regarding Sanderson, under section 16 of the *School Act*.
4. The following events occurred on October 29, 2021:
 - a. In celebration of Halloween, Sanderson came to the School dressed in a post-apocalyptic costume. As part of his costume, Sanderson brought a three-foot long

ball python to the School, which he kept in a pouch around his waist. Sanderson did not seek permission from School administrators to bring a live snake to the School, nor were parents informed that he would be doing so.

- b. One student reported being afraid of snakes and cried upon seeing Sanderson with the ball python.
 - c. One student volunteered to wear the snake around their neck, thinking it was a prop, only to grow alarmed when it began to slither around.
 - d. Sanderson went to at least five different classes before 1:30PM to show people the snake, and also brought the snake to the staff room during lunch time. Sanderson did not provide verbal instruction to students on how to handle the snake. Rather, he attempted to model how the snake should be handled.
 - e. At approximately 12:15 PM, Sanderson was in the School office. He unzipped the pouch and motioned to a colleague (Colleague A) that she should put her hand into it. Sanderson proceeded to guide Colleague A's hand into the pouch without telling her that there was a snake inside. Colleague A was unsure what she was touching and removed her hand. Sanderson then removed the snake which took out its tongue. Colleague A ran away.
- 5. On January 5, 2022, the District issued Sanderson a letter of discipline and suspended him for two days without pay. Sanderson served the suspension on January 6 and January 7, 2022, inclusive.
 - 6. On March 2, 2022, the Commissioner considered this matter and determined to propose a consent resolution agreement to Sanderson, in accordance with section 53(1)(a) of the *Teachers Act*.

CONSEQUENCES

- 7. This Agreement is made under section 53 of the *Teachers Act*.
- 8. Sanderson 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").
- 9. Sanderson admits that the facts set out in paragraphs 1 to 5 of this Agreement are true.
- 10. Sanderson 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.

11. Sanderson 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.
12. In determining that a reprimand is an appropriate consequence, the Commissioner considered the following factors:
 - a. Sanderson failed to model respectful behaviour expected of an educator; and
 - b. Sanderson's conduct undermined the learning environment.
13. Sanderson 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

14. The Director of Certification will record the terms of this Agreement on the Ministry of Education's online registry under section 79(d) of the *Teachers Act*.
15. Sanderson 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: www.teacherregulation.gov.bc.ca.
16. Notification of this Agreement will be made in accordance with section 55 of the *Teachers Act*.
17. Sanderson acknowledges and understands that if the Commissioner has reason to believe that he has breached any term of this Agreement:
 - a. the Commissioner may initiate an investigation under section 47(1)(b) of the *Teachers Act* into his conduct; and
 - b. the conduct and matters described in the "Background and Facts" to this Agreement are admissible in that inquiry as proof that Sanderson has admitted to the conduct and matters set out in this Agreement.
18. Sanderson acknowledges that he has voluntarily entered into this Agreement with the benefit of independent legal advice, and that he fully understands the terms and conditions set out in this Agreement.

Signed in Coguitlan, B.C.
this 30 day of June, 2022.



Arthur Owen Sanderson

Signed in Victoria, B.C.
this 6th day of July, 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Howard L. Kushner".

Howard L. Kushner, Commissioner