

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND

On or about December 13, 2018, Assistant Principal, TARA J. PASTEUR (hereinafter “T.P.”), struck a fifth (5th) grade student on his back with her walkie-talkie. T.P. was involved in a heated exchange with the student, J.A., after she became aware that J.A. was in attendance at school, despite being placed on external suspension by T.P. earlier that week.

Thereafter, on or about January 8, 2019, T.P. tampered with a witness to the December 13, 2018, incident. Before any statements were taken, Detective Thomas Honan of the Broward District Special Investigative Unit (hereinafter “SIU”) provided T.P. with a Notice of Investigation and recommended that T.P. review the policies accompanying the Notice of Investigation. T.P. then left the meeting and went to her office and called STEPHANIE ZONTA (hereinafter “S.Z.”), a front office clerk, numerous times requesting S.Z. come to T.P.’s office. S.Z. refused because she felt it was inappropriate considering the pending investigation. After her attempts to summon S.Z. to her office failed, T.P. appeared at the front office and approached S.Z.’s desk, and, in a low tone of voice, told S.Z., “you need to be truthful, you saw how he was acting that day”, referring to the incident with J.A. T.P. then left the front office and a few moments later called S.Z. from the media center. S.Z. stated that during that telephone call T.P. told S.Z. “[p]lease don’t get me in trouble, I was only playing with him.”

The Assistant General Counsel prepared the Administrative Complaint and notice was provided to T.P. that a recommendation for her five (5) day suspension without pay will be presented to the School Board on September 4, 2019. The Administrative Complaint was served on T.P. on August 14, 2019, and she timely requested a hearing.

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