

## THE SCHOOL BOARD OF HERNANDO COUNTY

**In Re:**

**STEVEN EDWARD BLUM**  
(Non-Instructional Personnel)

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### FINAL ORDER OF SCHOOL BOARD

THIS MATTER came to be heard before The School Board of Hernando County, Florida, (the “School Board”) on the 14th day of April 2026, to determine whether former employee Steven Edward Blum is ineligible for employment with the Hernando County School District pursuant to section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, and Rule 6A-10.084, Florida Administrative Code. Based on clear and convincing evidence and material, the School Board determines as follows:

1. Section 1012.315, Florida Statutes, provides in the relevant part:

A person is ineligible for educator certification or employment in any position that requires direct contact with students in a district school system . . . if the person . . . has been convicted or found guilty of, has had adjudication withheld for, or has pled guilty or nolo contendere to:

- (1) Any criminal act committed in another state or under federal law which, if committed in this state, constitutes a disqualifying offense under s. 435.04(2).

2. For the period of April 29, 2025, through August 15, 2025, Steven Edward Blum was employed as a Substitute Bus Driver with the Transportation Department for the Hernando County School District. For the period of August 18, 2025, through November 4,

2025, Steven Edward Blum was employed as a Full-Time Bus Driver with the Transportation Department for the Hernando County School District.

3. On November 2, 2025, Deputy Nicholas Farino with the Hernando County Sheriff's Office arrested Steven Edward Blum pursuant to an active warrant for the felony charge of exploitation of an elderly person or disabled adult as defined under Chapter 825, "Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of Elderly Persons and Disabled Adults," sections 825.101(4) or (5), and 825.103, Florida Statutes.

4. Steven Edward Blum was later charged with Count I - Abuse/Neglect/Exploitation of an Elderly Person or Disabled Adult under section 825.103 Florida Statutes. (See Hernando County Case No.: 2025CF001649CFAXMX).

5. On January 14, 2026, Steven Edward Blum signed a Waiver of Rights and Plea Agreement, agreeing to a plea of Nolo Contendere (no contest) to Count I - Exploitation of the Elderly – Less than \$10,000.00, pursuant to section 825.103, Florida Statutes. The Waiver of Rights and Plea Agreement was ratified by the Court on January 21, 2026.

6. Accordingly, on January 21, 2026, adjudication was withheld as to Count I. On February 9, 2026, the Court ordered Steven Edward Blum to be placed on probation for a period of sixty (60) months under the supervision of the Department of Corrections.

7. Pursuant to Rule 6A-10.084(2)(d), Steven Edward Blum was convicted of one or more crimes listed in sections 1012.315 and 435.04, Florida Statutes. See Rule 6A-10.081(2)(d) ("Conviction' means an adjudication of guilt by a court, after a determination of guilt by verdict or a plea of guilt; as well as where a person is found guilty, plead guilty or plead nolo contendere and adjudication of guilt is withheld [.]").

8. The crimes occurred on or after April 29, 2025, while Steven Edward Blum was employed by the Hernando County School District in a covered position as defined by section 1012.01(6), Florida Statutes.

9. Therefore, Steven Edward Blum is ineligible for employment with the Hernando County School District pursuant to sections 1012.315 and 435.04, Florida Statutes.

10. On November 4, 2025, Steven Edward Blum was released from his position under his probationary contract as non-instructional personnel with the Hernando County School District.

After reviewing the evidence and material outlined, a motion was made and seconded to accept the Superintendent's recommendation that Steven Edward Blum is ineligible for employment with Hernando County School District and Steven Edward Blum will be reported to the State for inclusion on the Disqualification list as required by Rule 6A-10.084, Florida Administrative Code. Thereafter, this motion passed by a [REDACTED] vote, though the Consent agenda approval process. This Final Order represents the final action of the School Board on this matter.

DONE and ENTERED on this 14th day of April 2026.

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KAYCE HAWKINS, BOARD CHAIR

Copies Furnished To:  
Steven Edward Blum  
Attorney for Hernando County School District, Caroline Mockler, Esq.  
Human Resources/Personnel File

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO JUDICIAL REVIEW**

A Party who is adversely affected by this Final Order is entitled to judicial review pursuant to Section 120.68, Florida Statutes. Review proceedings are governed by the Florida Rules of

Appellate Procedure. Such proceedings are commenced by filing the original notice of appeal of an administrative order with the office of The Hernando County School Board within 30 days of rendition of this order, and a copy of the notice, accompanied by any filing fees prescribed by law, with the clerk of the District Court of Appeal in the appellate district where the School Board maintains its headquarters or where a party resides, or as otherwise provided by law.