

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: AUGUST 2, 2024
TO: DISTRIBUTION
FROM: CAPTAIN ROBERT OSTERLAND ^{RO}
Professional Standards Bureau
SUBJECT: AI-24-002 SHERIFF'S FINDING

On August 2, 2024, at 1751 hours, Deputy Charles Matthews, #55791, was terminated per Sheriff Gualtieri as a result of AI-24-002.

DISTRIBUTION:

Sheriff Bob Gualtieri
Chief Deputy Paul Halle
Assistant Chief Deputy Dave Danzig
Assistant Chief Deputy Dennis Komar
Colonel Paul Carey
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Director Michelle Posewitz
Shannon Lockheart, General Counsel
Payroll
Purchasing-Uniform Supply

RO/blb

**PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

DATE: AUGUST 2, 2024

TO: DEPUTY CHARLES MATTHEWS, #55791

FROM: SHERIFF BOB GUALTIERI

SUBJECT: CHARGES RE: AI-24-002

An investigation has been conducted by the Administrative Investigation Division, Professional Standards Bureau, of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office. As a result of this investigation, the Administrative Review Board has determined you committed the following violations:

On, but not limited to, February 19, 2024, while on duty in Pinellas County, Florida, you violated the Pinellas County Sheriff's Civil Service Act Laws of Florida, 89-404 as amended by Laws of Florida 08-285, Section 6, Subsection 4, by violating the provisions of law or the rules, regulations, and operating procedures of the Office of the Sheriff.

1. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rules and Regulations 5.2, Loyalty.
2. You violated Pinellas County Sheriff's Office General Order 3-1.1, Rules and Regulations 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

Synopsis: During the 2022-2024 school years, you were assigned as a School Resource Deputy at Seminole High School. Throughout this assignment, you consistently failed to perform your duties and responsibilities as a School Resource Deputy. These responsibilities include but aren't limited to: acting as a resource for delinquency prevention; providing guidance to students on ethical issues; providing individual counseling to students, and explaining law enforcement's role in society.

Additionally, through your deliberate actions and inactions, you undermined school officials' authority and fostered an anti-academic environment that allowed students to skip classes, and engage in unhealthy, unethical, and potentially unlawful activities.

Specifically,

- You developed an inappropriate relationship with several female high school students, which led to your exchange of telephone numbers and regular communication with them via phone calls and text messaging; this occurred while you were at work and off duty, including during the summer break. You referred to this group of female students as "your favorites."

- These female students would send you photographs, including selfies that were taken at a variety of locations. One of these selfies was of three teenage girls in bikinis at the beach. You kept these photographs on your agency cellphone and forwarded some of them to your personally owned cellphone.
- In conversations with the female students, you made disparaging comments about other female students. Specifically, you called one student a “slut” because she allegedly had multiple sexual partners. On a separate occasion, you called a different student “disgusting” because her current boyfriend had recently been arrested and charged for a sexually related offense.
- While assigned to work the beaches during the summer break, you sent these female students text messages that contained your work hours and location in the hopes they would come to meet you.
- You failed to take any action when, in your presence, these female students appeared to be impaired or under the influence of an intoxicating substance or were in possession of unlawful substances.
- Without any legitimate or authorized reason, you accessed law enforcement and school board websites and databases, including ACISS, Who’s in Jail, FOCUS, VIPAR, and the Active Calls app. You then shared protected information you obtained from these resources with several female students.
- Using various law enforcement databases, you researched the criminal and arrest histories of several of these female students’ parents and families and then shared this information with them.
- You provided one of these female students with real-time information you obtained from the “Active Calls” app about law enforcement’s response to a house party she and others were attending.
- Without any legitimate law enforcement purpose, in your office you engaged in conversations with or were present for conversations between these female students about their personal, dating, and sex lives.
- You allowed these female students to enter and remain in your office while you were elsewhere on campus. In turn, these students opened the door and allowed other students inside.
- At times when you were away from your office, you would ask a school employee working in an office adjacent to yours to unlock your office door to let these female students inside while you were away. These requests created an undue burden on the school employee, which affected their daily duties. In addition, the students’ behavior while inside the office was often loud and disruptive.
- You showed one of these students how to access and use the school’s video surveillance system located inside your office. On at least one occasion, after being away from your office, you returned and found her accessing the video system. Instead of stopping her and correcting her behavior, you chose to have her open a particular camera view for you. Additionally, on other occasions when the female students were

present in your office, you would access and play surveillance videos that they requested.

- You allowed these female students, either individually or as a group, to skip classes and hang out in your office. Your office door was routinely locked and the blinds on your window were routinely closed, preventing anyone standing outside your office from determining who was inside.
- At various times, and often when these female students were inside your office, if someone came to the door and knocked, you ignored them because you didn't want to be bothered, or because the female students told you to not answer the door.
- On more than one occasion, you allowed female students to sleep in a recliner that was inside your office.
- In advance of unannounced administrative searches and school drills, you would warn the female students and advise them to not bring any contraband to school.
- To facilitate their skipping classes, you would send text messages to these female students alerting them when school officials were in the parking lot.
- You would allow these female students to enter the school from the parking lot through normally locked gates rather than through the front office. You did this so the students would not be marked tardy when they arrived at school late.
- You allowed these female students to leave the school campus and not report them. On one occasion, you permitted a female student to leave the campus to get ice cream and when she returned, you opened a locked gate to allow her back into the school.
- You sent emails and passes to teachers excusing the female students' absences or tardiness. In response, teachers would send you emails asking about their students' whereabouts and telling you that their absence from class was creating profound academic hardships for them.
- You used your assigned teacher's assistants to escort female students from their classes so they could hang out in your office.
- In conversations and emails, you lied to teachers and administrators about the female students' whereabouts so they wouldn't get in trouble for skipping.
- In text messages and in person, you engaged in a series of mean-spirited gossip with the female students, during which you talked about other students, the school safety monitors, and the school administration. The comments you made about the school safety monitors and the school administration were unprofessional, undermining their authority to manage and secure the school.
- You made allegations of inappropriate behavior by the school safety monitors. These allegations were investigated by the school administration and determined to be false.
- After being given an order to not allow students into your office, you sent text messages to the female students to coordinate meeting them in the hallway, rather than inside your office.

- You maintained a large assortment of snacks and drinks inside your office for the exclusive use of select students. Your monthly personal expense to maintain these items was approximately \$1000.
- You allowed these female students to wear your agency windbreaker.
- Following your reassignment back to Patrol, you texted these female students notifying them of your transfer and your resentment about it.
- In a text message you sent to one of the female students after being reassigned, you stated "...thank your friend for me for ruining my life and career." This message was read and interpreted as threatening by the friend and their parents mentioned in the message.
- After you were placed on notice as the Subject of this administrative investigation, you were given a direct order to not discuss the case with anyone other than your representative without permission. However, you later told several people about the facts and circumstances of the allegation and this investigation, disregarding the order you were given.

During your Administrative Interview, you acknowledged that your relationship with the female students was inappropriate.

You admitted to violating General Order 3-1.1, Rules and Regulations 5.4, Duties and Responsibilities.

During the Administrative Review Board, you stated that you allowed your friendship with the female students to affect your decision-making, adding that you "would allow them to walk all over" you.

After reviewing and discussing the elements of General Order 3-1.1, Rules and Regulations 5.2, Loyalty with the Board, you also admitted to violating this policy.

The Board determined that you committed both violations.

Disciplinary Points and Recommended Discipline Range:

You were found to be in violation of two (2) Level Five Rules and Regulations violations, totaling sixty (60) points. These points, which were affected by no modified points from previous discipline, resulted in sixty (60) progressive discipline points. At this point level, the recommended discipline range is a fifty-six (56) hour suspension to Termination.

Disciplinary action shall be consistent with progressive discipline for cause in accordance with the provisions of the Pinellas County Civil Service Act.


CAPTAIN ROBERT OSTERLAND
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BUREAU
FOR BOB GUALTIERI, SHERIFF

I have received a copy:

Date 8/2/20

Time 1251


SIGNATURE

BG:RO