

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
or Revocation of the)
)
Educator Certificate of)
)
Michael S. Washington)
)
Certificate 203401)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on September 8, 2011. On August 1, 2011, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Michael S. Washington a notice of his right to a hearing before the State Board concerning the possible suspension or revocation of his South Carolina educator certificate 203401 by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail. Mr. Washington received the notice on August 2, 2011, as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing his signature.

Prior to the scheduling of a hearing, Mr. Washington advised the SCDE that he had agreed to waive his right to a hearing and desired to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into a Consent Order of Public Reprimand, subject to the terms stated herein. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

Accepted

MW

Initial

8/30/11

Date

Michael S.
Washington
203401

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Washington holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over ten years of teaching experience. He has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Mr. Washington was employed by the Berkeley County School District (District) as a Math teacher at Stratford High School from 2002 until he resigned from the District on June 6, 2011, following an investigation into allegations that Mr. Washington had wrote an inappropriate remark in a student's yearbook.

On August 1, 2011, the SCDE sent Mr. Washington a notice of his right to a hearing before the State Board concerning the possible suspension or revocation of his

South Carolina educator certificate 203401 by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail. Mr. Washington received the notice on August 2, 2011, as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing his signature.

Prior to the scheduling a hearing, Mr. Washington advised the SCDE that he had agreed to waive his right to a hearing and to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into a Consent Order of Public Reprimand, subject to the following terms: (1) a Public Reprimand shall be issued by the State Board, (2) the Public Reprimand shall be reported to all school districts in South Carolina with the grounds listed as “unprofessional conduct,” and (3) the Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE’s website and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE’s Office of General Counsel. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand with the terms set forth above.

Accepted
<u>MW</u>
Initial
<u>8-30-11</u>
Date
Michael S. Washington 203401

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

“The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person.” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (Supp. 2010). The State Board finds that the evidence presented supports its conclusion that just cause does not exist to suspend or revoke the educator certificate of Michael S. Washington; however the evidence presented demonstrates that Mr. Washington engaged in unprofessional conduct by writing an inappropriate remark in a student’s yearbook and that just cause does exist for the issuance of a Public Reprimand by the State Board.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Michael S. Washington, certificate 203401. The Public Reprimand shall be reported to all school districts in South Carolina with the grounds listed as “unprofessional conduct.” This Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE’s web site and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE’s Office of General Counsel.

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South Carolina State Board of Education

By: *Gerrita Postlewait*
Gerrita Postlewait, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
September 8, 2011

I, Michael S. Washington, SC Educator Certificate 203401, do hereby agree to the proposed Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board for approval on Thursday, September 8, 2011.

Michael S. Washington
Michael S. Washington

9/30/11
Date