

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)
Or Suspension of the)
Educator Certificate of)
Jessica A. Broach)
Certificate #226356)

ORDER OF REVOCATION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on October 10, 2012. On January 26, 2012, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice to Jessica A. Broach of the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail return receipt requested. On January 28, 2012, Ms. Broach received the notice as evidenced by the signed postal receipt bearing her signature. On February 1, 2012, Ms. Broach sent a letter to the SCDE requesting a hearing in this matter. On March 13, 2012, a hearing was held before the State Board hearing officer Geraldine H. Urbanic, Esquire, in Moncks Corner, South Carolina. Appearing at the hearing were the SCDE represented by Wendy B. Cartledge, Esq. and the teacher, Jessica A. Broach, *pro se*.

On October 10, 2012, Ms. Urbanic presented her findings and recommendations to the State Board. The State Board, after careful deliberation of the recommendations and the evidence on the whole record, voted to revoke Jessica A. Broach's educator certificate # 226356 with the right to reapply after three years.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Jessica A. Broach was employed as a first grade teacher at Sangaree Elementary School in Berkeley County and been employed in that position for five years. It is both a violation of state law and Berkeley County School District policy to use illegal drugs or possess drug paraphernalia. Ms. Broach was aware of both the law and the policy concerning substance abuse. On September 2, 2011, she was stopped for a traffic violation by a Berkeley County Officer and was found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia. Ms. Broach admitted to using illegal drugs. On November 8, 2011, she pled guilty to the charge.

The SCDE has shown that Jessica A. Broach engaged in unprofessional conduct and demonstrated an evident unfitness for teaching when she was found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia and admitted to the use of illegal drugs. The State Board further finds that “just cause” exists for the revocation of Ms. Broach’s educator certificate #226356 with the right to reapply after three years.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HEARING OFFICER

Having found from the evidence presented that Ms. Broach’s conduct was unprofessional and demonstrated evident unfitness for teaching; Ms. Urbanic recommended that the State Board revoke Ms. Broach’s educator certificate with the right to reapply after three years.

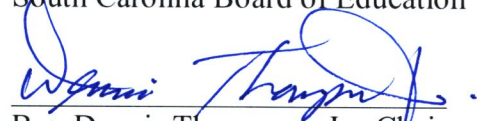
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board has jurisdiction of the matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). “The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person.” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-510 (2004), S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004), 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (Supp. 2011). “Just cause” includes unprofessional conduct and any conduct which evidences unfitness for teaching. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Jessica A. Broach engaged in unprofessional conduct and demonstrated an evident unfitness for teaching when she was found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia and admitted to using illegal drugs. The State Board further finds that the evidence presented supports its determination that “just cause” exists for the revocation of Ms. Broach’s educator certificate #226356, effective October 10, 2012, with the right to reapply after three years.

Now therefore, it is hereby ordered that the State Board revoke the educator certificate of Jessica A. Broach, #226356, effective October 10, 2012, with the right to reapply after three years. The revocation of Ms. Broach’s educator certificate #226356 shall be reported to the NASTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina School Districts within thirty days from the date of this order with the reasons stated as “unprofessional conduct and evident unfitness for the position for which employed.”

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina Board of Education



By: Dennis Thompson, Jr., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
October 10, 2012