

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Shane Allen Watson)
)
Certificate 256541)
_____)

**ORDER OF PERMANENT
REVOCATION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 13, 2013. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2005), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board summarily suspended the educator certificate of Shane Allen Watson, certificate 256541, on November 16, 2012, following his arrest on October 23, 2012, and being charged with Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-17-0490 (Supp. 2011) and Communicating Obscene Messages to another Person pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-0250 (2004).

On November 17, 2012, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent a notice letter to Mr. Watson informing him of the summary suspension and that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible suspension or revocation of his South Carolina Educator Certificate. The letter also informed Mr. Watson of his right to a hearing in this matter. The SCDE sent a second notice letter on January 30, 2013, to Mr. Watson. On January 31, 2013, the SCDE sent a copy of the notice letter to Mr. Watson's attorney. On February 2, 2013, Mr. Watson received the notice as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing his signature.

On October 15, 2013, Mr. Watson plead guilty to of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, Third degree pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-15-0410 (C) (Supp. 2012) and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-17-0490 (Supp. 2012). The Court sentenced Mr. Watson to ten years in prison and ordered that Mr. Watson register as a sex offender.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Watson's educator certificate 256541, effective November 13, 2013.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004).

Mr. Watson holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has one year of teaching experience. During the 2011-2012 school year, Mr. Watson was employed by the Horry County School District (District) as a ninth grade social studies teacher at the Academy of Arts, Science and Technology (School). The District placed Mr. Watson on administrative leave immediately upon learning of his arrest in Horry County, South Carolina, on October 23, 2012. Mr. Watson was charged with Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-17-0490 (Supp. 2011) and Communicating Obscene Messages to another Person pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-0250 (2004). Mr. Watson resigned from his position with the District, effective December 11, 2012.

On November 16, 2012, in accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2005), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board summarily suspended the educator certificate of Shane Allen Watson, certificate 256541, following his arrest on October 23, 2012, on the above-referenced criminal charges. It was alleged that Mr. Watson sent text messages using sexually suggestive language to a thirteen year old victim who was enrolled at the School.

On November 17, 2012, the SCDE sent a notice letter to Mr. Watson informing him of the summary suspension and that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible suspension or revocation of his South Carolina Educator Certificate. The letter also informed Mr. Watson of his right to a hearing in this matter. The SCDE sent a second notice letter on January 30, 2013, to Mr. Watson. On January 31, 2013, the SCDE sent a copy of the notice letter to Mr. Watson's attorney. On February 2, 2013, Mr. Watson received the notice as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing his signature. On August 6, 2013, additional criminal charges were filed against Mr. Watson.

On October 15, 2013, Mr. Watson plead guilty to Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, Third degree pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-15-0410 (C) (Supp. 2012) and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-17-0490 (Supp. 2012). The Court sentenced Mr. Watson to ten years in prison and ordered that Mr. Watson register as a sex offender.

On October 16, 2013, the SCDE sent a letter to Mr. Watson's attorney informing him that the State Board would meet on November 13, 2013, to make a determination regarding the possible permanent revocation of Mr. Watson's educator certificate 256541 based on the statutory grounds of unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, crime against the law of this state and evident unfitness for position for which employed.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Watson's educator certificate 256541, effective November 13, 2013.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, crime against the law of this state and evident unfitness for position for which employed." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2011). The State Board finds that Mr. Watson engaged in unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, committed a crime against the law of this state and demonstrated evident unfitness for position for which employed, as a result of his guilty plea to Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, Third degree pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-15-0410 (C) (Supp. 2012) and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-17-0490 (Supp. 2012).

The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE supports its decision that just cause exists to permanently revoke the educator certificate of Shane Allen Watson, certificate 256541. The permanent revocation of Mr. Watson's educator certificate 256541 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 

David W. Blackmon, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

November 13, 2013