

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Discipline)
)
of the Educator)
)
Certificate of Morgan Lindsey Driggers)
)
Certificate 258837)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 8, 2016. On June 30, 2016, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Morgan Lindsey Driggers notice that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible disciplinary action against her educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. After receiving the notice, Ms. Driggers' attorney informed the SCDE that she agreed to waive her right to a hearing and accept a public reprimand. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Driggers holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over two years of teaching experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Ms. Driggers was employed by Lexington County School District Three (District) as a teacher at Batesburg-Leesville Elementary School (School) at the time of the incident. Ms. Driggers resigned from the District at the end of the 2015-2016 school year and is presently teaching for the Newberry School District.

During the fall of 2015, Ms. Driggers began experiencing a number of personal problems. The stress from these issues affected her classroom performance, when she became inappropriately emotional during class. In September 2015, Ms. Driggers took a brief leave of absence to deal with her personal matters. She returned to teaching the next month and acknowledges a longer break from teaching may have been needed to properly address some personal issues.

Upon her return in October 2015, Ms. Driggers admits she was not performing in the classroom to the best of her ability. Ms. Driggers also acknowledges she was texting

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and using social media at school, but denies the allegations that this conduct occurred during instructional time. In March 2016, Ms. Driggers told her fifth grade class she "must have been drinking" when she signed her contract for the school year. She has since apologized for this statement, which she admitted was unprofessional. At the end of the school year, Ms. Driggers resigned from the District.

On June 30, 2016, the SCDE sent notice to Ms. Driggers regarding the possibility of disciplinary action against her educator certificate and her right to a hearing by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. After receiving the notice, Ms. Driggers' attorney informed the SCDE that she agreed to waive her right to a hearing and accept a public reprimand. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

Ms. Driggers acknowledges that she has engaged in unprofessional conduct by her inappropriate statements and behavior in the classroom. She waives her right to a hearing and understands that the terms set forth are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. Ms. Driggers consents to the 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 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.

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 (Rev. 2004); The State Board may, for just cause, issue a public reprimand. 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2011). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-2-160 (Rev. 2004). 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 Morgan Lindsey Driggers and that the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Ms. Driggers by the State Board is an appropriate sanction in this matter. The State Board finds that the record outlined

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above demonstrates that Ms. Driggers engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of her inappropriate statements and behavior in the classroom.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the Consent Order of Public Reprimand is accepted and a public reprimand is issued to Morgan Lindsey Driggers, certificate 258837. The public reprimand of Ms. Driggers, certificate 258837 shall be reported to 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

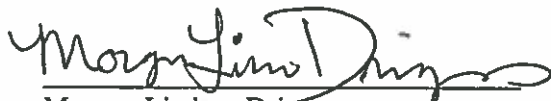


Michael R. Brennan, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

November 8, 2016

I, Morgan Lindsey Driggers, S.C. Educator Certificate 258837, understand there has been an investigation concerning alleged violations of the laws and regulations governing the practice of educator certificate holders and that I have waived my right to a hearing in this matter. I understand that the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Public Reprimand are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I have read the Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of three pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I understand that this Order will be presented as signed to the South Carolina State Board of Education on November 8, 2016.



Morgan Lindsey Driggers

10/17/2016

Date