

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
or Revocation of the)
)
Educator Certificate of)
)
Rodney Marion Thompson, Ph.D.)
)
Certificate 165749)
_____)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 14, 2017. On February 23, 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, to Rodney Marion Thompson concerning the pending action against his educator certificate 165749. Dr. Thompson received the notice and agreed to waive his right to a hearing and enter into this Consent Order of Public Reprimand. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Dr. Rodney Marion Thompson holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate in Social Studies, Secondary Principal, Secondary Supervisor and Superintendent. Dr. Thompson has over twenty-four years of teaching experience. He has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board.

Dr. Thompson had been employed by the Berkeley County School District (District) since July 15, 2002. He initially served as the Assistant Principal at Hanahan High School (School). Dr. Thompson then served as the Principal of the School from 2004-2008. On July 1, 2008, he began serving as the Chief Administrative Officer of the District. On February 14, 2011, Dr. Thompson became the Superintendent of the District. On April 15, 2015, the District placed Dr. Thompson on administrative leave after he was charged with a violation of S.C. Code Ann. §8-13-1346 (Supp. 2016), use of public funds, property, or time to influence election, a Class C Misdemeanor. It was alleged that Dr. Thompson utilized public resources to lead and direct pro-referendum efforts, all of

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which promoted and supported a “yes” vote in a school bond referendum. On August 10, 2015, Dr. Thompson resigned from the District. Dr. Thompson pled guilty to this misdemeanor charge on December 16, 2016.

Dr. Thompson has agreed to waive his right to a hearing and to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into this 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 the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order, and (4) 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 (2016); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (Supp. 2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2016). 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 Dr. Rodney Marion Thompson. The State Board finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Dr. Thompson by the State Board.

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Now, therefore, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Dr. Rodney Marion Thompson, certificate 165749. The Public Reprimand shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order 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.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 
Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
March 14, 2017

I, Rodney Marion Thompson, SC Educator Certificate 165749, 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 the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Public Reprimand are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial reviews. I 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 March 14, 2017.


Dr. Rodney Marion Thompson

2-28-17
Date