

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation or)
Suspension of the Educator Certificate of)
Travis B. Howard,)
Educator Certificate 229331)
_____)

**ORDER OF
SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 1, 2017. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2016), § 59-5-10 (2016), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend the educator certificate of Travis B. Howard, educator certificate 229331, as a result of the pending criminal charges against him. Mr. Howard has been charged with two counts of Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, 3rd degree S.C. Code Ann. §16-3-655(C) (2016). Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, 3rd degree is classified as a felony and also as a violent crime pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-1-60 (2016). The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. Howard may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students, who may be under his instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Howard's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Howard of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Howard holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has over eleven years of teaching experience. Mr. Howard has been employed by the Spartanburg County School District Seven (District) since 2016 as a teacher at Cleveland Academy of Leadership

(School). Mr. Howard was placed on administrative leave from the District, after allegations arose that he had engaged in inappropriate conduct with a minor female student. After being arrested on September 21, 2017, Mr. Howard resigned from the District on September 27, 2017.

The Spartanburg Police Department has charged Mr. Howard with two counts of Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, 3rd degree pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §16-03-655(C) (2016). It is alleged that Mr. Howard forced a minor female student to touch his genitals over his clothing at the School. The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of this allegation of misconduct, Mr. Howard may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students who may be under his instruction, and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Howard's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Howard of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

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). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct, immorality, any 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 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2016). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2016), "If the agency finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action." Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann § 59-5-10 (2016) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Mr. Howard's unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, evident unfitness for position for which employed, and two felony charges of Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, 3rd degree, there is reason to believe Mr. Howard may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students and emergency action is required. Accordingly, the educator certificate of Travis B. Howard, educator certificate 229331, is summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or

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this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Howard of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

(Signature page attached)

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 
Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

November 1, 2017