

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of Suspension)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Randee L. Dorontich,)
)
Certificate 256447)
_____)

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered the matter on April 10, 2018. On March 1, 2018, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent a notice letter to Ms. Dorontich, informing her that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible disciplinary action of her educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Ms. Dorontich received the certified mail on March 13, 2018, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt. Ms. Dorontich has not requested a hearing in this matter and is in default. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Dorontich's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on April 10, 2018, and ending on April 9, 2019. Ms. Dorontich is also instructed to complete a SCDE approved course in ethics and boundary training prior to the reinstatement of her certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Dorontich holds a valid South Carolina initial educator certificate and has six years of teaching experience. She has no prior history of disciplinary action with the State Board. The Anderson County School District One (District) employed Ms. Dorontich as a Spanish teacher at Wren High School (School) for the 2017-2018 school year.

On December 4, 2017, the District placed Ms. Dorontich on administrative leave during an investigation into allegations of Ms. Dorontich's unprofessional conduct and language in the presence of students in her classroom. The investigation revealed Ms. Dorontich had made inappropriate comments towards students during class and that she had used profanity on a few occasions. Students reported that comments made by Ms. Dorontich during class made them uncomfortable. The District also received information that Ms. Dorontich allowed the students to

listen to unedited versions of songs that included profanity and references to drugs and sex. Ms. Dorontich resigned from her employment with the District, effective December 5, 2017. Ms. Dorontich had previously been reprimanded by her prior employer for her behavior and her comments made towards students.

On December 5, 2017, the District reported Ms. Dorontich's resignation following unprofessional conduct and language to the SCDE. On March 1, 2018, the SCDE sent notice to Ms. Dorontich that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding possible disciplinary action of her educator certificate and her right to a hearing. The letter informed Ms. Dorontich that the State Board would review the allegations of her unprofessional conduct with respect to her use of inappropriate language in the classroom and her inappropriate comments towards students. Ms. Dorontich received the notice on March 13, 2018. She did not request a hearing in this matter and is in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Dorontich's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on April 10, 2018, and ending on April 9, 2019. Ms. Dorontich is also instructed to complete a SCDE approved course in ethics and boundary training prior to the reinstatement of her educator certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2016); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Dorontich engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of her inappropriate language in the classroom and her inappropriate comments towards students during her employment with the District. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Randee L. Dorontich, educator certificate 256447, for a period of one year, commencing on April 10, 2018, and ending on April 9, 2019. Ms. Dorontich is also instructed to complete a SCDE approved course in ethics and boundary training prior to the reinstatement of her certificate.

If Ms. Dorontich wishes to have her educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services

and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement. Ms. Dorontich shall also submit documentation of the completion of a SCDE approved course in ethics and boundary training and be responsible for the payment of the applicable reinstatement fee. The suspension of Ms. Dorontich's Educator Certificate 256447 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: Dr. Sharon Wall 
Sharon Wall, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 10, 2018