

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation or)
Suspension of the Educator Certificate of)
Paul M. LaRue Jr.,)
Certificate 254127)
_____)

**ORDER OF
SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on December 21, 2018. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), § 59-5-10 (2017), 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 Paul M. LaRue Jr., certificate 254127, as a result of his being arrested on or about November 26, 2018, by law enforcement for the felony charges of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree, SC Code Ann. § 16-15-405 (2017) and Sexual Exploitation of a Minor 3rd degree, SC Code Ann. § 16-15-410 (2017). The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. LaRue may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that 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. LaRue'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. LaRue of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. LaRue holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has over twelve years of teaching experience. Mr. LaRue was hired by the Berkeley County School District (District) as a GED Math Preparation teacher at the Fishburne Education Center (School) for the 2018-19 school year. On November 26, 2018, the District terminated Mr. LaRue as a result of his arrest on or about November 26, 2018, for one felony count of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree and nine felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 3rd degree. The arrest was the result of a police investigation of Mr. LaRue's personal computer which revealed photographs of sexually explicit pictures of minor children.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. LaRue may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that 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. LaRue'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. LaRue of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

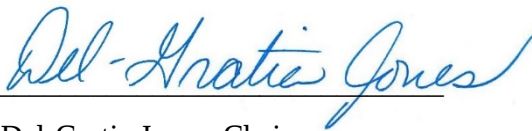
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"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 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2017). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), "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 (2017) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Mr. LaRue's unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, evident unfitness for position for which employed and his arrest on the felony charge of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree, there is reason to believe that Mr. LaRue may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students and that emergency action is required. Accordingly, the educator certificate of Paul M. LaRue Jr., certificate 254127, is 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. LaRue of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 
Del-Gratia Jones, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
December 21, 2018