

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the	)	
	)	
Educator Certificate of	)	CONSENT ORDER OF
	)	SUSPENSION
Angela M. Torgesen	)	
	)	
<u>Educator Certificate 210153</u>	)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on December 11, 2018. On April 25, 2018, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, to Angela M. Torgesen, concerning the pending action against her educator certificate 210153. After Ms. Torgesen received the notice, she contacted the SCDE to request a hearing. Prior to the scheduling of a hearing in this matter, Ms. Torgesen's legal counsel informed the SCDE that she agreed to waive her right to a hearing and enter into this Consent Order of Suspension (Consent Order) of her educator certificate 210153 for a period of one year. Ms. Torgesen has also agreed to attend two courses chosen by the SCDE and offered through the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Ms. Torgesen's educator certificate for a period of one year commencing on November 13, 2018, and ending on November 12, 2019.

Angela M. Torgesen 210153

Initial
11-28-18
Date

FINDINGS OF FACT

Angela M. Torgesen holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate. Ms. Torgesen has over sixteen years of educator experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board.

Ms. Torgesen was employed by the Edgefield County School District (District) as a psychologist for the District. In the fall of 2016, a supervisor at the District began counseling Ms. Torgesen on her work performance. After a performance review in the summer of 2017, Ms. Torgesen was placed on administrative leave after several concerns were raised in regards to her student evaluations and documentation, specifically her psychoeducational assessment testing data. Ms. Torgesen was allowed to return to work on

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August 11, 2017, with the understanding she would be on an improvement plan that included audits by two psychologists from outside of the District. During the audits, it was discovered Ms. Torgesen's documentation continued to be noncompliant with required standards. Several students in the District received inappropriate educational plans as a result of the testing errors.

Ms. Torgesen was placed on administrative leave on December 13, 2017, and resigned from the District, effective January 2, 2018. On January 5, 2018, the District reported Ms. Torgesen's unprofessional conduct to the SCDE.

In response to the allegations, Ms. Torgesen alleges the District was understaffed. Ms. Torgesen was hired by the District in 2007. She states that her previous employer staffed 15 school psychologists that met once a week to review evaluations and eligibility. In contrast, Ms. Torgesen states that she was the only school psychologist in the District. In this position, she served 7 schools when her previous position never required her to manage more than 3 schools. Though the District did hire a part-time school psychologist to assist Ms. Torgesen, Ms. Torgesen alleges they did not provide her with proper support for the position. She was also experiencing hardships in her personal life during the times in question.

Ms. Torgesen has agreed to waive her right to a hearing and to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into this Consent Order as an alternate resolution to this matter. Ms. Torgesen agrees that her educator's certificate will be suspended for a period of one year. She has also agreed to attend two courses chosen by the SCDE and offered by NASP. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension educator certificate 210153 for a period of one year. Ms. Torgesen has also agreed to attend two courses chosen by the SCDE and offered through the NASP. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Ms. Torgesen's educator certificate for a period of one year commencing on November 13, 2018, and ending on November 12, 2019.

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

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Ann. § 59-25-160 (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 demonstrates that Ms. Torgesen engaged in unprofessional conduct by misrepresenting psychoeducational assessment data. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Ms. Torgesen's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on November 13, 2018, and ending on November 12, 2019.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Angela M. Torgesen, certificate 210153, is suspended for a period of one year commencing on November 13, 2018, and ending on November 12, 2019. Ms. Torgesen shall attend two professional development courses as prescribed by the SCDE.

If Ms. Torgesen wishes to have her certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the period of suspension, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and shall provide a certificate of completion of the two courses chosen by the SCDE. Ms. Torgesen shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement and for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Ms. Torgesen's educator certificate shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

Angela
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210153

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

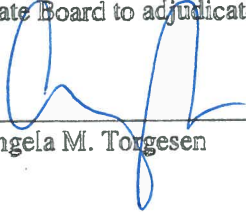
South Carolina State Board of Education

By: Sharon Wall
Sharon Wall, EdD, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
December 11, 2018

(Signature page attached.)

I, Angela M. Torgesen, SC Educator Certificate 210153, 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 Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I agree to the terms of this Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board for approval on December 11, 2018. I understand this Order will not become effective until approved by the State Board and, if not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest in this proceeding or prejudice the right of the State Board to adjudicate this matter.



Angela M. Torgesen

11-28-18
Date