

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of	)	
	)	ORDER OF SUSPENSION
Stephanie Channel Wilson	)	
	)	(BREACH OF CONTRACT)
Educator Certificate #291258	)	
_____	)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on December 11, 2018. On October 26, 2018, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) notified Stephanie Channel Wilson, via regular and certified mail, of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate regarding her alleged breach of contract with Richland County School District One (District). Ms. Wilson received the certified mail on or before November 2, 2018, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt. Ms. Wilson has not contacted the SCDE and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Wilson's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on December 11, 2018, and ending on December 10, 2019.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint by the District, seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Stephanie Channel Wilson for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2017) and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2017).

On April 27, 2018, Ms. Wilson signed a contract with the District for the 2018-2019 school year, agreeing to serve as a physical education teacher at Pine Grove Elementary School (School). On August 28, 2018, the District sent a letter to Ms. Wilson regarding her contractual obligations after receiving notification from her supervisor that she did not show up for work on August 16, 2018. The District instructed Ms. Wilson to return to work immediately, but no later than September 4, 2018. On August 30, 2018, Ms. Wilson submitted her letter of resignation, retroactive to the last day she reported to work.

On October 1, 2018, Ms. Wilson was informed the District would recommend a breach of contract matter be approved to report to the SCDE for possible disciplinary action against her

educator certificate. The District indicated the referral was based on Ms. Wilson's failure to report to work without leave and her failure to communicate with the District after submitting her resignation letter. On October 23, 2018, the District Board voted to recommend disciplinary action on Ms. Wilson's educator certificate. On October 25, 2018, the District reported the breach of contract to the SCDE.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Wilson's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing December 11, 2018, and ending on December 10, 2019.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct" and "willful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (3) and (4) (2017). Pursuant to 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2) and (14) (Supp. 2017), the State Board of Education has the legal authority, *inter alia*, to suspend a certificate for "willful neglect of duty" and "failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board."

With respect to breach of contract, "any teacher who fails to comply with the provisions of his [of her] contract without written consent of the school board shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2017). "Upon the formal complaint of the school board, substantiated by conclusive evidence, the state board shall suspend or revoke the teacher's certificate, for a period not to exceed one calendar year." *Id.*

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Wilson breached her contract and engaged in unprofessional conduct, and failed to comply with the provisions of her contract. The evidence presented further supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Stephanie Channel Wilson, certificate 291258, for a period of one year, commencing December 11, 2018, and ending on December 10, 2019. If Ms. Wilson 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. Wilson shall also pay all applicable reinstatement fees.

The suspension of Ms. Wilson's educator certificate 291258 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within 30 days from the date of this order, with the reason stated as "unprofessional conduct, breach of contract, willful neglect of duty, and failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board."

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: Sharon Wall
Sharon Wall, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
December 11, 2018