

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Voluntary)
Surrender of the Educator)
Certificate of LaTonya Felice Parker)
Certificate 188552)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
VOLUNTARY SURRENDER**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on February 13, 2018. On June 29, 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice to LaTonya Felice Parker, via regular mail and certified mail, restricted delivery, regarding possible disciplinary action to be taken against her educator certificate, 188552. Ms. Parker received the notice and requested a private hearing by letter, dated July 3, 2017, in this matter. Prior to the hearing, Ms. Parker notified the SCDE that she had retained an attorney. Ms. Parker's attorney informed the SCDE that Ms. Parker desired to waive her right to a hearing and enter into a Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender of her educator certificate 188552, effective February 13, 2018. After considering the evidence provided, the State Board has agreed to accept the Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender of LaTonya Felice Parker, effective February 13, 2018. Ms. Parker may choose to reapply for certification after three years, subject to a character and fitness review.

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FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Parker holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has over twenty years of educator experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Ms. Parker has been employed by the Williamsburg County School District (District) since 1998 as a speech language therapist. On January 25, 2017, the District placed Ms. Parker on administrative leave after learning the Ms. Parker's South Carolina speech pathology license had been revoked on December 21, 2016. Ms. Parker failed to notify the District of the revocation of her speech pathology license.

On December 21, 2016, the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (LLR) issued a ruling that revoked Ms. Parker's speech pathology license, SLP.2835. In the ruling, the Speech, Language Pathology Board (Board) referenced

findings of fact that were stipulated and agreed to by Ms. Parker. The stipulation included Ms. Parker's criminal conviction on January 5, 2016, for providing false documentation to the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for Medicaid reimbursements. During a 2013 audit, DHHS found that approximately 18 of the 30 selected files had no provider signature on documentation forms. That conviction resulted in Ms. Parker's exclusion from participation in the South Carolina Medicaid Program for 3 years, commencing on January 26, 2016. The LLR Board order noted Ms. Parker's indication that she had been overwhelmed by the documentation requirements. However, the Board found that unpersuasive since Ms. Parker admitted to having no documentation to provide for her audit. The LLR concluded that Ms. Parker had defrauded DHHS for almost \$50,000 dollars. In the criminal proceeding, she was ordered to repay the \$50,000, was assessed \$400.00 reimbursement for the State's investigation, and received three years of probation as part of her criminal sentence. In October 2017, Ms. Parker made complete restitution to DHHS. Although Ms. Parker was no longer allowed to participate in the Medicaid program, she continued to issue referrals and provide services for District students who were recipients of Medicaid services from February 2016 to November 2016.

Ms. Parker agrees to the surrender of her South Carolina educator certificate 188552 subject to the following conditions: (1) her educator certificate will become invalid immediately upon the approval by the State Board of the Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender; (2) she has waived her right to notice and a hearing and understands that the terms set forth are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review; (3) Ms. Parker agrees to complete SCDE approved courses in professional ethics and Medicaid billing prior to reapplying for certification; (4) Mr. Parker understands she may reapply for certification after three years, subject to a character and fitness review pursuant to State Board Rule BBCDB. Ms. Parker shall be required to provide the State Board with employment information during the period of certificate surrender; community service records; letters of support from a current or prospective school district employer, if applicable; letters of support from community leaders; SLED and FBI

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background checks; and documentation of successful completion of the SCDE approved courses she has agreed to complete; and (5) she understands that the voluntary surrender of her educator certificate will be reported to all school districts in South Carolina and the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

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 (2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (Supp. 2016). Just cause includes “unprofessional conduct” and “dishonesty.” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (Supp. 2016); 2 S.C. Code Regs 43-58 (2011). The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE demonstrates Ms. Parker engaged in unprofessional conduct and dishonesty as a result of her providing false documentation to the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for Medicaid reimbursements. The State Board also finds the evidence shows Ms. Parker failed to notify the District of her criminal conviction, her exclusion from the Medicaid program, and the revocation of her speech pathology license. The evidence presented supports the State Board’s decision to accept the Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender of educator certificate 188552, issued under the name of LaTonya Felice Parker, effective February 13, 2018. Ms. Parker may choose to reapply for certification after three years, subject to a character and fitness review before the State Board, pursuant to State Board Rule BBCDB.

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Now, therefore, it is ordered that the Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender is accepted and the educator certificate of LaTonya Felice Parker, certificate 188552, is hereby declared invalid. The voluntary surrender of the educator certificate of LaTonya Felice Parker, certificate 188552 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.

(Signature Page attached)

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South Carolina State Board of Education

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

Columbia, South Carolina
February 13, 2018

I, LaTonya Felice Parker, S.C. Educator Certificate 188552, 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 that the terms set forth in this Consent Agreement of Voluntary Surrender are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review; and I hereby freely, knowingly and voluntarily surrender my educator certificate to the South Carolina State Board of Education. I hereby acknowledge that this voluntary surrender shall have the same effect as a revocation of my educator certificate. I knowingly forfeit and relinquish all right, title and privilege of holding myself out as and being able to practice as an educator in the public schools in the State of South Carolina. I agree to the proposed Consent Order of Voluntary Surrender, consisting of four pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the South Carolina State Board of Education on February 13, 2018.

LaTonya Felice Parker
LaTonya Felice Parker

01/20/18
Date