

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension	)	
	)	
of the Educator Certificate of	)	CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION
	)	
Fannie L. Jones-Griffin,	)	(BREACH OF CONTRACT)
	)	
<u>Certificate 222084</u>	)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on May 8, 2018. On February 9, 2018, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) served Fannie L. Jones-Griffin a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. On February 13, 2018, Ms. Jones-Griffin contacted the SCDE, confirmed that she had received the notice via United States mail, and stated she agreed to waive her right to a hearing and enter into this Consent Order of Suspension.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Jones-Griffin' educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on May 8, 2018, and ending on May 7, 2019.

FINDINGS OF FACT

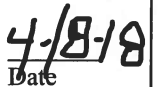
This case concerns a formal complaint by the Fairfield County School District (District) recommending the suspension of the educator certificate of Fannie L. Jones-Griffin for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (Rev. 2004) and S.C. Code Ann § 59-25-530 (Rev. 2004).

Ms. Jones-Griffin holds a South Carolina educator certificate and has over thirteen years of teaching experience. On April 7, 2017, Ms. Jones-Griffin signed a Contractual Agreement with the District to serve as a special education teacher at Fairfield Central High School for the 2017-2018 school year. On August 15, 2017, Ms. Jones-Griffin requested FMLA leave the day before teachers were to report to work. The District approved the FMLA leave. In September 2017, the District received a Prior Employment Verification Form from Ms. Griffin-Jones and learned that Ms. Jones-Griffin was employed with the Columbus City

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Schools in Columbus, Ohio. Her life circumstances required that she move to Columbus, Ohio. Ms. Jones-Griffin has subsequently been working as a part-time substitute at Southwestern City School in Grove City, Ohio. On October 4, 2017, the District informed Ms. Jones-Griffin that she was still employed with the District on approved medical leave and that the information and paperwork received from her contradicted the need for medical leave. The District advised Ms. Jones-Griffin that she would need to provide her immediate resignation from the District and that the resignation had to be approved by the District Board. On October 13, 2017, the District notified Ms. Jones-Griffin that she was not duly released from her contract and that a formal complaint would be filed with the SCDE once approved by the School Board. On November 14, 2017, the District Board of Trustees took official action to approve the reporting of Ms. Jones-Griffin's breach of contract to the State Board of Education. On February 5, 2018, the District reported this matter to the SCDE, requesting that the State Board take disciplinary action on Ms. Jones-Griffin's educator certificate.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Jones-Griffin breached her contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Jones-Griffin's certificate 222084 for a period of one year, commencing on May 8, 2018, and ending on May 7, 2019.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (Rev. 2004). Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct" and "wilful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (3) and (4) (Rev. 2004). Pursuant to 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2) and (14) (2011), the State Board of Education has the legal authority, *inter alia*, to suspend a certificate for "wilful neglect of duty" and "failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board." The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Jones-Griffin breached her contract without the consent and/or approval of the District.

The evidence presented further supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Ms. Jones-Griffin for a period of one year, commencing on May 8, 2018, and ending on May 7, 2019. If Ms. Jones-Griffin wishes to have

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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. Jones-Griffin shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee.

The suspension of Ms. Jones-Griffin's educator certificate 222084 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: Sharon Wall
Sharon Wall, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
May 8, 2018

I, Fannie L. Jones-Griffin, SC Educator Certificate 222084, 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 agree that during the period of suspension, I will not serve as a volunteer in any type of educator role or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher, coach or in any other position in a public school in the State of South Carolina. 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 May 8, 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.

Fannie L. Jones-Griffin
Fannie L. Jones-Griffin

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