

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Joshua DeWayne Strickland
Certificate 251515

CONSENT ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 11, 2020. On June 18, 2020, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, to Joshua DeWayne Strickland concerning the pending action against educator certificate 251515. After receiving the notice letter, Mr. Strickland contacted the SCDE and advised that he desired to waive his right to a hearing and wished to pursue an alternative resolution in this matter. Mr. Strickland has agreed to this Consent Order of Public Reprimand. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand. Mr. Strickland will complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course within sixty days of the date of this order.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Strickland holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate, has over eight years of educator experience, and has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Mr. Strickland was employed by Spartanburg School District Two (District) as a math teacher at Boiling Springs High School (School).

Mr. Strickland was placed on administrative leave on August 26, 2019, following allegations he exchanged inappropriate messages with a female student on social media. The District investigation revealed a number of messages exchanged between Mr. Strickland and the student. In a statement to the District, Mr. Strickland lamented

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becoming too close to the student, but stated he only intended a friendship with the student and did not mean for his actions to be inappropriate.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand, subject to the following terms: (1) a Public Reprimand shall be issued by the State Board, (2) the Public Reprimand shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order, and (3) the Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE's website and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE's Office of General Counsel. Further, Mr. Strickland will complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course within sixty days of the date of this order. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand with the terms set forth above.

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 (2017); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2017). The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the District would not support a conclusion that just cause exists to suspend or revoke the educator certificate of Joshua DeWayne Strickland; however, the evidence that would be presented would support a conclusion that Mr. Strickland engaged in unprofessional conduct as result of engaging in inappropriate communications with a student. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Joshua DeWayne Strickland. Mr. Strickland will complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course within sixty days of the date of this order.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Joshua DeWayne Strickland, certificate 251515. The Public Reprimand

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shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order with the grounds listed as “unprofessional conduct.” This Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE’s web site and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE’s Office of General Counsel.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

s/Michael Brennan

Michael Brennan, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
August 11, 2020

I, Joshua DeWayne Strickland, S.C. Educator Certificate 251515, 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 to successfully complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course within sixty days of the date of this order. I understand that the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Public Reprimand are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I have read the Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of three pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I understand that this Order will be presented to the South Carolina State Board of Education for approval on Tuesday, August 11, 2020. I understand this Consent 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. If approved by the State Board, I give the SCDE permission to use my electronic signature in the style of “/s/ name” for required website publication.

Joshua DeWayne Strickland
Joshua DeWayne Strickland

07/27/2020
Date