

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Traci Carol Morrison
Certificate 233388

CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 12, 2022. On August 16, 2021, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Traci Carol Morrison a notice via regular and certified mail of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate based on her breach of contract. Ms. Morrison received the notice and requested a hearing. Prior to the hearing, Ms. Morrison contacted the SCDE to discuss an alternate resolution. She has 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. Morrison's educator certificate 233388 for a period of one year, commencing March 8, 2022, and ending March 7, 2023.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint from Spartanburg County School District One (District) seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Ms. Morrison for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2018) and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2018).

On April 13, 2021, Ms. Morrison signed a contractual agreement with the District to serve as a librarian for the 2021-22 school year. Ms. Morrison submitted her letter of resignation to the District on July 15, 2021. Ms. Morrison accepted a position outside of education. The District informed Ms. Morrison she was not released from her contract and the possible consequences of breaching her contract. On August 9, 2021, the District Board of Trustees voted to report Ms. Morrison's resignation to the SCDE as a breach of

Traci Carol Morrison
s/TM
Initial
3/3/2022
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contract. Ms. Morrison has agreed to the suspension of her educator certificate for a period of one year.

After considering the evidence, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Morrison breached her contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Morrison's certificate 233388 for a period of one year, commencing on March 8, 2022, and ending on March 7, 2023.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The South Carolina 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) (2018). Pursuant to 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (3) and (14) (2018), the State Board of Education had the legal authority to suspend a certificate for "failure to comply with the provision 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 [or her] contract without written consent of the school board shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct." S. C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2018). "Upon 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."

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Morrison breached her contract without the consent and/or approval of the District. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Traci Carol Morrison for a period of one year, commencing on March 8, 2022, and ending on March 7, 2023. If Ms. Morrison 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

Traci Carol Morrison
s/TM
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all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement. Ms. Morrison shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee.

The suspension of Ms. Morrison's educator certificate 233388 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order, with the reason stated as unprofessional conduct, breach of contract, 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

s/Alan Walters

Alan Walters, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 12, 2022

I, Traci Carol Morrison, S.C. Educator Certificate 233388, 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 Order of Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I have read the Consent Order of Suspension, 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, March 8, 2022. 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.

s/ Traci Carol Morrison
Traci Carol Morrison

3/3/2022
Date

Traci Carol Morrison
s/TM
Initial
3/3/2022
Date

