

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Johnny Jonathan Williams
Certificate 277347

ORDER OF REVOCATION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 9, 2022. On April 29, 2020, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent a notice letter to Johnny Jonathan Williams regarding the possible suspension or revocation of his South Carolina educator certificate. Mr. Williams timely requested a hearing, which was held on April 6, 2022. This matter is properly before the State Board pursuant to S.C. Code. Ann. §59-25-150 (2017), and referred to a hearing officer pursuant to S.C. Code. Ann. §59-5-70 (2004). After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to revoke Mr. Williams' educator certificate 277347, effective August 9, 2022.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This is a disciplinary matter involving unprofessional conduct. Mr. Williams holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over eight years of educator experience. At the time of the hearing, Mr. Williams was teaching with the Palmetto Unified School District.

On August 10, 2015, Mr. Williams applied for a South Carolina educator certificate based on reciprocity with his valid educator certification in Georgia. At the time of the application, Mr. Williams was aware of a pending unprofessional conduct case against his Georgia certification. He did not disclose this information on his application for certification in South Carolina.

On November 3, 2017, Mr. Williams' Georgia educator certificate was revoked. Thereafter, in the fall of 2019, the SCDE's Office of Educator Services (OES) learned of the Georgia revocation. In 2018, Mr. Williams called OES to inquire about the possibility of adding a certification area in his South Carolina certification based on his Georgia certification. At that time, Mr. Williams claimed his Georgia certification had expired and did not reveal the revocation of his Georgia certificate.

The Hearing Officer found Mr. Williams benefitted by his deception and was able to work as an educator in South Carolina after the revocation of his Georgia certification. Further, he

exhibited the same trait of dishonesty that contributed to the revocation of his Georgia certification. The Hearing Officer noted that integrity, trust, and honesty are fundamental tenets of the teaching profession. After considering all of the evidence presented by the SCDE and Mr. Williams, the Hearing Officer recommended that Mr. Williams' South Carolina educator certification be revoked.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to revoke Mr. Williams' educator certificate 277347, effective August 9, 2022.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2016). Just cause includes "unprofessional conduct, crime against the law of this State or the United States, evident unfitness for position for which employed, and sale or possession of narcotics." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2016). Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to revoke the educator certificate of Johnny Jonathan Williams, educator certificate 277347, effective August 9, 2022.

Mr. Williams has the right to apply for certification after three years. Mr. Williams shall, pursuant to State Board Rule BBCDB, be subject to a character and fitness review before 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; and SLED and FBI background checks. Mr. Williams shall also pay all applicable fees for certification, if any. The revocation of Mr. Williams' educator certificate 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

s/Alan Walters
Alan Walters, Chair