

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Lisa King Browning
Certificate 277766

**ORDER OF SUSPENSION
(BREACH OF CONTRACT)**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 14, 2022. On May 3, 2022, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Lisa King Browning a notice via regular and certified mail of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate. On May 18, 2022, Ms. Browning contacted the SCDE to confirm she had received the notice and would not be requesting a hearing. She is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Browning's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on June 14, 2022, and ending on June 13, 2023.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint of the Cherokee County School District (District) seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Ms. Browning 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 27, 2021, Lisa King Browning signed a contractual agreement with the District to serve as an educator for 2021-22 school year. On March 24, 2022, Ms. Browning submitted her resignation to the District, effective immediately. In her resignation, Ms. Browning cited a disagreement with her principal as the reason for her resignation. On April 11, 2022, the District informed Ms. Browning she would not be released from her contract until a suitable replacement was found. The District Board voted to report Ms. Browning's breach of contract to the SCDE on April 18, 2022. The District reported the matter to the SCDE on April 26, 2022.

After considering the evidence, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Browning breached her contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Browning's certificate 277766 for a period of one year, commencing on June 14, 2022, and ending on June 13, 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 (2) 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." *Id.*

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Browning 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 Lisa King Browning for a period of one year, commencing on June 14, 2022, and ending on June 13, 2023.

If Ms. Browning 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 all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement. Ms. Browning shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee. The suspension of Ms. Browning's educator certificate 277766 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the

Lisa King Browning, 277766

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

June 14, 2022

Page 3 of 3

date of this order, with the reason stated as “unprofessional conduct, breach of contract, willful neglect of duty, 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

June 14, 2022