

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Leon A. Brunson
Certificate 219983

Order of Summary Suspension

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 16, 2022. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), § 59-5-10 (2017), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend the educator certificate of Leon A. Brunson, educator certificate 219983, as a result of his arrest on the felony charge of unlawful conduct toward a child, in violation of S.C. Code Ann. §63-5-70.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. Brunson may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students, who may be under his instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Brunson's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Brunson of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Brunson holds a South Carolina educator certificate and has over seventeen years of educator experience. At the time of the alleged incident, Mr. Brunson was an assistant principal at Brookland-Cayce High School (School) for Lexington County School District Two (District).

On May 25, 2022, District administration received notice from law enforcement of an incident at the School. Law enforcement stated they had received reports of Mr. Brunson getting into a physical altercation with a student. The alleged incident led to Mr. Brunson's

arrest on charges of assault and battery, 3rd degree, and unlawful conduct towards a child on May 27, 2022. The District placed Mr. Brunson on administrative leave on May 25, 2022, to investigate the situation. He was reinstated by the District on May 31, 2022.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of this allegation of misconduct, Mr. Brunson may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students who may be under his instruction, and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Brunson's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Brunson of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

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, crime against the law of this State, and evident unfitness for position for which employed. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2017). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), "If the agency finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action." Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-10 (2017) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Mr. Brunson's unprofessional conduct, crime against the law of this State or the United States, and evident unfitness for the position for which employed, there is reason to believe Mr. Brunson may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students and emergency action is required.

Accordingly, the educator certificate of Leon A. Brunson, certificate number 219983, is summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Mr. Brunson of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina Board of Education

BY: s/Alan Walters
Alan Walters, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
June 16, 2022