

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Alexandra Cannon Steele
Certificate 258084

**ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 14, 2022. On April 26, 2022, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Alexandra Cannon Steele a notice letter by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against her educator certificate. Ms. Steele received the notice on April 29, 2022, as evidenced by signed postal receipt. On May 17, 2022, the SCDE notified Ms. Steele that this matter would be presented to the State Board on June 14, 2022. She has not contacted the SCDE to request a hearing and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Ms. Steele and approved this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Steele holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over eight years of experience. She has no prior disciplinary history with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Ms. Steele was employed by Lexington County School District One (District) as a teacher at Rocky Creek Elementary School (School).

On June 3, 2021, School staff reported seeing a bottle of vodka in an open bag beside Ms. Steele's desk. After finding the alcohol, Ms. Steele was sent for testing and was found to have a blood alcohol content of .055%. Ms. Steele was allowed to resign from the District. Ms. Steele informed the SCDE she has sought appropriate treatment since the incident.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to publicly reprimand Ms. Steele and approve this Order of Public Reprimand.

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 Ms. Steele; however, the evidence would support a conclusion that Ms. Steele engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of possessing a bottle of alcohol on school grounds. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Ms. Steele by the State Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Alexandra Cannon Steele, certificate 258084. 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 with the grounds listed as “unprofessional conduct.” This 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/Alan Walters
Alan Walters, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
June 14, 2022