

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Kimberly Poole Kneece
Certificate 153839

CONSENT ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on December 12, 2023. On November 8, 2023, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Kimberly Poole Kneece a notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate 153839. After Ms. Kneece received the notice, she contacted the SCDE to discuss an alternative resolution. Ms. Kneece has agreed to waive her right to a hearing and enter into this Consent Order of Public Reprimand of educator certificate 153839.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand of Ms. Kneece's educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Kneece holds a South Carolina educator certificate. She has over twenty-nine years of educator experience and has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Ms. Kneece was employed by Lexington County School District One (District) as a teacher at Pelion Elementary School (School).

On or about March 27, 2023, the SCDE received a report that Ms. Kneece retired from the District after allegations related to her inappropriate verbal and physical responses to preschool students. On January 5, 2023, a student was in the incorrect pick-up line after school. Ms. Kneece instructed the student to move, and when they did not, witnesses state that Ms. Kneece physically redirected the student by the arm and moved them to the correct line. The student began crying and stated that Ms. Kneece had hurt them. Ms. Kneece apologized to the student and told them that next time someone asked

Kimberly Poole Kneece

153839

s/KPK

Initial

11/20/23

Date

them to do something, they should do it the first time. While Ms. Kneece alleges that her retirement was unrelated to the allegations of misconduct, and denies misconduct towards the student, she wishes to resolve this matter by entering into this Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Public Reprimand of Ms. Kneece's educator certificate.

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 (2020); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020). Just cause includes "incompetence; willful neglect of duty; willful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education; unprofessional conduct; drunkenness; cruelty; crime against the law of this State or the United States; immorality; any conduct involving moral turpitude; dishonesty; evident unfitness for position for which employed; or sale or possession of narcotics." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020); S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2021). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Kneece engaged in unprofessional conduct, immorality, any conduct involving moral turpitude, and crime against the law of this State or the United States due to inappropriate verbal and physical responses to preschool students. The State Board further finds that just cause exists to publicly reprimand Ms. Kneece's educator certificate.

The public reprimand of Ms. Kneece's educator certificate 153839 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days of the date of this order.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Kimberly Poole Kneece, certificate 153839, is publicly reprimanded.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

Kimberly Poole Kneece
153839
s/KPK
Initial
11/20/23
Date

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South Carolina Board of Education
s/Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D.
Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
December 12, 2023

I, Kimberly Poole Kneece, SC Educator Certificate 153839, 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 the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Public Reprimand are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack, or judicial review. I agree to the terms of this Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State board for approval on December 12, 2023. I understand this 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 have the SCDE permission to use my electronic signature in the style of "s/name" for required website publication.

s/Kimberly Poole Kneece
Kimberly Poole Kneece

11/20/23
Date

Kimberly Poole Kneece
153839
s/KPK
Initial
11/20/23
Date