

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Victoria Farish Weiss
Certificate 290984

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 13, 2023. On March 1, 2023, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice via regular and certified mail, to Victoria Farish Weiss concerning the pending action against educator certificate 290984. After Ms. Weiss received the notice, she contacted the SCDE to discuss an alternative resolution before agreeing to allow the SCDE to move forward with the matter as a default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Order of Suspension of Ms. Weiss' educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on June 13, 2023, and ending on June 12, 2024.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Weiss holds a suspended South Carolina professional educator certificate. She has over three years of educator experience. At the time of the incident, Ms. Weiss was a second grade teacher at Rocky Creek Elementary School (School) with Lexington County School District One (District).

On or about September 23, 2021, a student arrived at an afterschool day care program and asked an adult to help him open a candy package. The adult observed the package was made to appear the same as a commercial candy named Sour Patch Kids. However, this package was actually a THC infused edible that was named Stoney Patch Kids. The staff member spoke to the student and learned he had retrieved the item from Ms. Wiess' prize box in her classroom. He further stated that this was the second candy he had chosen from the box, because Ms. Wiess told him his first choice was "no good." The student's first choice was a bag of gummy worms known as Chuckles, which is a cannabis infused edible.

The daycare staff notified the District about the incident. When questioned, Ms. Weiss denied knowledge of the edibles and theorized that they had been accidentally mixed in at the factory level since she always bought a mixed bag of candy for the prize box. The District placed Ms. Weiss on administrative leave during an investigation of the incident. She resigned from the District on October 13, 2021.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Order of Suspension of Ms. Weiss' educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on June 13, 2023, and ending on June 12, 2024.

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 (Rev. 2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Victoria Farish Weiss engaged in unprofessional conduct by endangering students and allowing student access to a controlled substance. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Ms. Weiss' educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on June 13, 2023, and ending on June 12, 2024.

If Ms. Weiss wishes to have her certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the period of suspension, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services. Ms. Weiss shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement and for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Mrs. Weiss' educator certificate shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse, and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Victoria Farish Weiss, certificate 290984, is suspended for a period of one year, commencing on June 13, 2023, and ending on June 12, 2024.

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

s/Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D.

Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
June 13, 2023