

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Jared M. Smith
Certificate 262434

ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on May 26, 2023. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2020), § 59-5-10 (2020), 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 Jared M. Smith, educator certificate 262434, as a result of his arrest for felony count S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-410(A), sexual exploitation of a minor, third degree.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. Smith 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. Smith'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. Smith of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Smith holds a South Carolina educator certificate and has over nine years of educator experience. At the time of the incident, Mr. Smith was a teacher for the Beaufort County School District (District). He has been dismissed from his employment with the District.

On or about May 24, 2023, Mr. Smith was arrested for the felony count S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-410(A), sexual exploitation of a minor, third degree. A search warrant was issued at Mr. Smith's residence. After receiving his Miranda rights, Mr. Smith stated he used his cell phone to

download and possess numerous videos of juvenile females in states of sexually explicit nudity. A video fitting this depiction was found on Mr. Smith's phone.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of this allegation of misconduct, Mr. Smith 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. Smith'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. Smith 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. Smith's unprofessional conduct, crime against the law of this State or the United States, and evident unfitness for the position for which employed, due to his arrest for third degree sexual exploitation of a minor, there is reason to believe Mr. Smith may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students and emergency action is required.

Accordingly, the educator certificate of Jared M. Smith, certificate number 262434, 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. Smith 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

s/Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D.
Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
May 26, 2023