

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Leslie Lovett
Certificate 302539

**ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 14, 2023. On August 7, 2023, and again on October 4, 2023, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Leslie Lovett notice letters by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against his educator certificate. Mr. Lovett received the notice on October 10, 2023, as evidenced by signed postal receipt. He 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 Mr. Lovett and approved this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Lovett holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over three years of experience. At the time of the incident, Mr. Lovett was employed by Richland County School District One (District) as a substitute teacher at Southeast Middle School (School).

On March 21, 2022, Mr. Lovett pushed a male student while in the School's hallway. Between classes, a student that was not familiar to Mr. Lovett began making comments about Mr. Lovett's wardrobe. Comments included the student alleging that Mr. Lovett's belt was a 'fake.' Mr. Lovett did not respond but did approach the student, who began waving his hand in front of Mr. Lovett's face. Mr. Lovett purposefully shoved the student. The school resource officer and other witnesses were present.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Mr. Lovett and approved 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 (2020); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2021). 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 Mr. Lovett; however, the evidence would support a conclusion that Mr. Lovett engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of his shoving a student. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Mr. Lovett by the State Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Leslie Lovett, certificate 302539. 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/Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D.

Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
November 14, 2023