

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Susan Pringels Horton
Certificate 290952

CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on October 1, 2024. On July 14, 2023, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent a notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, to Susan Pringels Horton regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate 290952. Ms. Horton received the notice and timely request a hearing. Prior to the hearing, she contacted the SCDE to discuss an alternative resolution. She has agreed to waive her right to a hearing and enter into this Consent Order of Suspension of educator certificate 290952 for a period of one year.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Ms. Horton's educator certificate for a period of one year, retroactively commencing on March 12, 2024, and ending March 11, 2025.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Horton holds a suspended South Carolina educator certificate. She has over six years of educator experience. At the time of the incident, Ms. Horton was employed by Lexington County School District One (District) as a teacher at River Bluff High School (School).

The State Board summarily suspended Ms. Horton's educator certification on January 17, 2023, after her arrest for carrying a weapon on school property. The criminal charges were not prosecuted and have been resolved. Ms. Horton did have a gun on school grounds. Although Ms. Horton does have a concealed weapons permit, she

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s/SHP
Initial
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unintentionally brought a gun in her purse that was located in the front passenger floorboard of her vehicle on school grounds.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Ms. Horton's educator certificate 290952 for a period of one year, retroactively commencing on March 12, 2024, and ending March 11, 2025.

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 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Horton engaged in unprofessional conduct by unintentionally bringing a gun in her purse that was located in the front passenger floorboard of her vehicle on school grounds. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Ms. Horton's educator certificate for a period of one year, retroactively commencing on March 12, 2024, and ending March 11, 2025.

If Ms. Horton wishes to have the 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. Horton 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 Ms. Horton's educator certificate 290952 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

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Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Susan Pringels Horton, certificate 290952, is suspended for a period of one year, retroactively commencing on March 12, 2024, and ending March 11, 2025.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina Board of Education

s/David C. O'Shields

Dr. David C. O'Shields, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
October 1, 2024

I, Susan Pringels Horton, SC Educator Certificate 290952, 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 Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack, or judicial review. I agree to the terms of this Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State board for approval on October 1, 2024. 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/Susan Pringels Horton
Susan Pringels Horton

10/2/24
Date