

**BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

In the Matter of the Suspension )  
 )  
of the Educator Certificate )  
 )  
of Heather D. Tolbert )  
 )  
Certificate 219169 )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

**ORDER OF SUSPENSION  
(Failure to meet ADEPT Requirements)**

**SUMMARY OF THE CASE**

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 12, 2015. On June 1, 2015, the South Carolina Department of Education’s (SCDE) Office of Educator Evaluation sent Ms. Heather Tolbert notice of her failure to meet the requirements of her ADEPT formal evaluation via certified mail. On June 4, 2015, Ms. Tolbert received the notice as evidenced by a signed, return postal receipt. Pursuant to S.C. Reg. 43-58 (2011), S.C. Reg. 43-205.1 (2011), and the ADEPT System Guidelines (2006), a second unsuccessful ADEPT formal evaluation at the annual-contract level requires that Ms. Tolbert’s South Carolina teaching certificate be automatically suspended for a minimum of two years. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Tolbert’s certificate for a minimum of two years, beginning August 12, 2015, and ending August 11, 2017.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Ms. Tolbert holds a South Carolina educator certificate and has four years of teaching experience. The Greenville County School District’s annual ADEPT report to the Office of Instructional Practices and Evaluation indicated that Ms. Tolbert was unsuccessful in meeting the requirements of her ADEPT formal evaluation for the 2014-2015 school year. This result was Ms. Tolbert’s second unsuccessful ADEPT evaluation at the annual-contract level.

On June 1, 2015, the SCDE’s Office of Educator Services sent Ms. Tolbert notice of her failure to meet the requirements of her ADEPT formal evaluation for the second time via certified mail. On June 4, 2015, Ms. Tolbert received the notice as evidenced by a signed, return postal receipt bearing her signature.

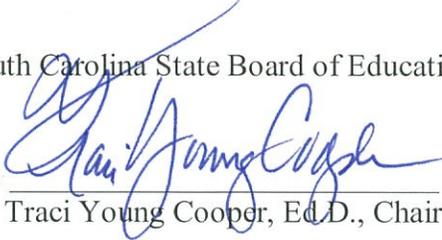
### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board will automatically suspend for a minimum of two years the certificate of an annual-contract teacher who for the second time fails to meet ADEPT formal evaluation criteria. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-60 (2004); S.C. Reg. 43-58 (2011), S.C. Reg. 43-205.1 (2011). The State Board finds that sufficient evidence has been presented supporting its conclusion that Ms. Tolbert failed to meet ADEPT formal evaluation criteria for a second time, warranting the suspension of her certificate for a minimum period of two years, commencing on August 12, 2015, through August 11, 2017. An “ineligible for hire” indicator will be placed in Ms. Tolbert’s certification file with the Office of Educator Services and will not be removed prior to August 11, 2017.

Before reentry into the profession and removal of the suspension, Ms. Tolbert must complete a state-approved remediation plan based on the area(s) that were identified as deficiencies during the formal evaluation process. Remediation plans must be developed and implemented in accordance with the State Board’s ADEPT implementation guidelines. Following the minimum two-year suspension period and the completion of the remediation plan, as verified by the Office of Educator Services, Ms. Tolbert’s educator certificate suspension will be lifted and Ms. Tolbert will be eligible for employment at the annual-contract level. All fees and eligibility requirements that are in effect at the time of Ms. Tolbert’s reapplication will apply.

**AND IT IS SO ORDERED.**

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 

Traci Young Cooper, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina  
August 12, 2015