

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Sharon C. Osteen,)
)
Certificate 174975)
_____)

**ORDER OF
REVOCATION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on December 9, 2015. On October 1, 2015, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice to Ms. Osteen informing her that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. On October 23, 2015, Ms. Osteen received the notice as evidenced by a signed postal receipt. Ms. Osteen did not request a hearing in this matter and is in default.

After considering the evidence presented concerning Ms. Osteen's unprofessional conduct, the State Board voted to revoke Ms. Osteen's educator certificate 174975, effective December 9, 2015.

FINDINGS OF FACT

The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004).

Ms. Osteen holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has over seventeen (17) years of teaching experience. Ms. Osteen was employed with the Horry County School District (District) from 2013 as a teacher at Green Sea Floyd's Middle/High School (School) until her resignation from the District, effective August 6, 2015.

On May 29, 2015, the District learned that a parent had reported that her daughter had gone home from school to her boyfriend's house as the result of a forged note, which the parent believed had been written by Ms. Osteen. The District compared the handwriting in the note to Ms. Osteen's handwriting and found the similarities striking. On June 1, 2015, Ms. Osteen denied the allegations in a statement. On June 2, 2015, the parent filed a report with the police. During a meeting held with Ms. Osteen and District staff on June 23, 2015, Ms. Osteen admitted

to writing the note, but claimed she did not know whose name she signed. Ms. Osteen also admitted to purchasing a pregnancy test for the same student. When confronted with copies of text messages with students, Ms. Osteen stated that she may have sent the text messages and that she was very close to her students. Ms. Osteen denied the other allegations against her, which included allowing a student to use chat sites on a classroom computer, allowing students to go to the restroom to engage in a game called "slap boxing," discussing inappropriate personal details with students, engaging in a conversation about suicide with students, allowing students to read emails Ms. Osteen received from school administration, and allowing students to use inappropriate language in class. On June 12, 2015, Ms. Osteen was arrested and charged with Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-17-490 (2003). She subsequently resigned from the District, effective August 6, 2015.

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CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

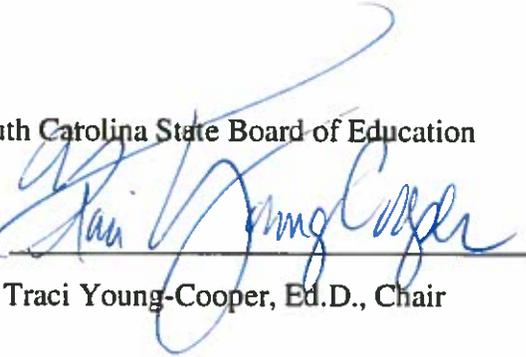
"The State Board may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Just cause includes, unprofessional conduct, and evident unfitness for position for which employed. S. C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2011). The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE demonstrates that Ms. Osteen engaged in unprofessional conduct and exhibited evident unfitness for position for which employed as a result of her poor judgment and inappropriate interactions with students.

The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE supports its decision that just cause exists to revoke educator certificate 174975 issued in the name of Sharon C. Osteen. The revocation of Ms. Osteen's educator certificate 174975 shall be reported to the NASDTEC

Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 

Traci Young-Cooper, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

December 9, 2015