

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)
)
Or Suspension of the) **CONSENT ORDER OF**
)
Educator Certificate of) **SUSPENSION**
)
Amy S. Hiott)
)
Certificate 196500)

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on October 13, 2011. On March 29, 2011, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice to Ms. Amy Hiott of the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. On March 31, 2011, Ms. Hiott received the notice as evidence by a signed receipt bearing her signature. On April 20, 2011, SCDE received notice from Ms. Hiott's legal counsel stating that Ms. Hiott had appealed her termination from the District to the Circuit Court and requested that the SCDE delay the hearing in this matter. On July 12, 2011, the Greenville County Court of Common Pleas entered a Judgment upholding the decision of the Board of Trustees of the School District of Greenville County to terminate Ms. Hiott's employment. Ms. Hiott notified SCDE that she desired waive her right to a hearing and agreed to enter into this Consent Order of Suspension. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Hiott's educator certificate commencing on October 13, 2011, and ending on June 30, 2012.

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FINDINGS OF FACT

The State Board has jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Ms. Hiott holds a professional educator certificate and has over ten years of teaching experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Ms. Hiott had been employed by the Greenville County School District (District) since 2004. During the 2010-2011 school year, the District employed Ms. Hiott as a Special Education Resource Teacher at Mauldin High School (School). Ms. Hiott was terminated from the District, effective February 11, 2011, following her acknowledgement that she was involved in helping a student and giving guidance to a

student on a vocabulary quiz. Ms. Hiott admitted that she had engaged in unprofessional conduct by giving vocabulary quiz answers to a student in her class. Ms. Hiott stated that she did not provide any reading material answers to her students. She stated that she regretted that she had compromised her department and that she that she was sorry for her actions.

On March 29, 2011, SCDE sent notice to Ms. Amy Hiott of the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. On March 31, 2011, Ms. Hiott received the notice as evidence by a signed receipt bearing her signature. On April 20, 2011, SCDE received notice from Ms. Hiott's attorney stating Ms. Hiott had an Appeal hearing scheduled before the Circuit Court for May 19, 2011, and requested that the SCDE delay the disciplinary action until the receipt of the ruling from the Circuit Court.

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On July 12, 2011, the Greenville County Court of Common Pleas entered a Judgment upholding the decision by the Board of Trustees of the School District of Greenville County to terminate Ms. Hiott's employment. After receiving this Judgment, the SCDE contacted Ms. Hiott. Ms. Hiott informed the SCDE that she desired to waive her right to a hearing and had agreed to enter into this Consent Order of Suspension. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Hiott's educator certificate for a period commencing on October 13, 2011, and ending on June 30, 2012.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004), S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004), 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (Supp 2010). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct and any conduct which evidences unfitness for teaching. S. C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (Supp. 2010). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrated that Ms. Hiott engaged in unprofessional conduct and demonstrated an evident unfitness for teaching when she gave vocabulary quiz answers to a student in her class. The State Board further finds that the evidence presented supports its determination that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Hiott's educator certificate 196500

beginning October 13, 2011, and ending on June 30, 2012. If Ms. Hiott desires to have her educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension term, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Certification Recruitment and Preparation. Ms. Hiott shall be responsible for meeting all current certification requirements and will be responsible for the payment of all applicable reinstatement fees.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the State Board suspends the educator certificate of Amy S. Hiott, certificate 196500, for a period commencing on October 13, 2011, and ending on June 30, 2012. The suspension of Ms. Hiott's educator certificate 196500 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order as a suspension with the reasons for suspension stated as "unprofessional conduct and evident unfitness for position for which employed."

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: *Gerrita Postlewait*
Gerrita Postlewait, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
October 13, 2011

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I, Amy S. Hiott, S. C. Educator Certificate 196500, have read the Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of four pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I agree that I will not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher, band teacher, or coach in a public school in the State of South Carolina during this suspension period. I agree to the proposed Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of four pages, and understand that this Order will be presented, as signed, to the South Carolina State Board of Education on October 13, 2011.

Amy S. Hiott
Amy S. Hiott

9/26/2011
Date