

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Richard Jayson Jones,)
)
Certificate 213174)
_____)

**ORDER OF PERMANENT
REVOCATION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 9, 2014. On July 19, 2012, Mr. Richard Jayson Jones was arrested in Great Falls, South Carolina and charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, second degree, and Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon a Child Under Sixteen in Chester County. On July 26, 2012, the Chair of the State Board summarily suspended Mr. Jones' educator certificate. After several unsuccessful attempts by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to personally serve Mr. Jones with notice by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, Mr. Jones received notice on October 10, 2012, that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding disciplinary action of his South Carolina educator certificate.

On August 29, 2013, Mr. Jones plead guilty to Assault and Battery, 1st Degree pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-600 (C)(1) (Supp. 2013). He admitted that he engaged in inappropriate sexual physical activity with a victim who was a minor male child. The Court sentenced Mr. Jones to ten years in prison, provided that upon the service of three years, the balance would be suspended with probation for three years. The Court also ordered that Mr. Jones must register as a sex offender.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Jones' educator certificate 213174, effective April 9, 2014.

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 (Rev. 2004).

Mr. Jones holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has over nine years of teaching experience. Mr. Jones had been employed by the Chester County School

District One (District) as an Art teacher at Great Falls Elementary School (School). Mr. Jones was arrested on July 19, 2012, in Chester County, South Carolina, and charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, second degree, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-655(B) (Supp. 2011) and Lewd Act, Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon a Child Under Sixteen, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-140 (Supp. 2011). The charges alleged that Mr. Jones engaged in this misconduct with a male minor victim between the dates of July 11, 2007, and July 10, 2010, when he was employed by the District. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(C) (2004) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the SCDE requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend Mr. Jones' educator certificate as a result of his arrest and his alleged unprofessional conduct of a sexual nature with a male minor victim. On July 26, 2012, the Chair of the State Board summarily suspended Mr. Jones' educator certificate. On August 26, 2012, the District terminated his employment.

The SCDE attempted several times to personally serve Mr. Jones with notice by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, restricted delivery that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding disciplinary action of his South Carolina educator certificate. On October 10, 2012, Mr. Jones received the notice as evidenced by a signed domestic return receipt bearing his signature. Mr. Jones did not request a hearing and is in default.

On August 29, 2013, Mr. Jones plead guilty to Assault and Battery, first degree, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-600(C) (Supp. 2013). The crime of Assault and Battery, first degree, is classified as a felony. The Court sentenced Mr. Jones to ten years in prison, provided that upon the service of three years the balance would be suspended with probation for three years. He must also register as a sex offender.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Jones' educator certificate 213174, effective April 9, 2014.

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 (Rev. 2004). Just cause includes "unprofessional conduct, conduct involving moral turpitude, crime against the law of this State, immorality, and evident unfitness for position for which employed." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (Supp. 2011). The State Board finds that Mr. Jones engaged in

unprofessional conduct, conduct involving moral turpitude, immorality, committed a crime against the law of this state, and demonstrated evident unfitness for position for which employed, as a result of his sexual misconduct with a minor male victim and his guilty plea on August 29, 2013, to Assault and Battery, first degree, in violation of S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-600(C) (Supp. 2013).

The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE supports its decision that just cause exists to permanently revoke educator certificate 213174 issued in the name of Richard Jayson Jones. The permanent revocation of Mr. Jones' educator certificate 213174 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:  _____

Barry F. Bolen, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

April 9, 2014