

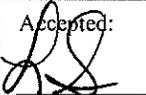
BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
or Revocation of the Educator)
)
Certificate of Leslie S. Stephens)
)
Certificate 226253)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

This matter comes before the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) on April 9, 2014. On February 22, 2014, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Leslie S. Stephens notice of the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. On February 28, 2014, Ms. Stephens contacted the SCDE, acknowledging receipt of the notice. Ms. Stephens agreed to a suspension of her educator certificate for a period of one year, beginning April 9, 2014, and ending on April 8, 2015. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to accept the suspension of Ms. Stephens' educator certificate for this period.

Accepted: 
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3/12/14
Date

FINDINGS OF FACT

Leslie S. Stephens holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has ten years of teaching experience in South Carolina, having most recently served as a guidance counselor at Colleton County High School.

During the 2011-2102 school year, while employed as a guidance counselor, Ms. Stephens made inappropriate modifications to student records in the Colleton County School District. Ms. Stephens made these changes without proper authority and absent the consent of a supervising counselor or administrator.

The SCDE sent notice to Mrs. Stephens on February 22, 2014. On February 28, 2014, Mrs. Stephens contacted the SCDE, acknowledging receipt of said notice, and seeking to resolve the matter through this Consent Order of Suspension.

Mrs. Stephens agrees to the suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate 226253 for a period of one year, beginning April 9, 2014, and ending on April 8, 2015. She has waived her right to a hearing and acknowledges that the terms set forth herein are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review, and that the suspension of her educator certificate will be reported to all school districts in South Carolina and the NASDTEC Clearinghouse as a one year suspension.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). "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). Just cause includes "unprofessional conduct". S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004) 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2011). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Stephens has engaged in unprofessional conduct by making inappropriate modifications to student records without proper authority and absent the consent of a supervising counselor or administrator, and that just cause exists to suspend her educator certificate for a period of one year, beginning on April 9, 2014, and ending on April 8, 2015.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the educator certificate of Leslie S. Stephens, certificate 226253, is hereby suspended for a period of one year, beginning on April 9, 2014, and ending on April 8, 2015.

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3/12/14
Date

If Ms. Stephens wishes to have her educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, she must meet all certification requirements and shall submit a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services. Ms. Stephens shall be responsible for the payment of all applicable fees, including any reinstatement fees. The suspension of Ms. Stephens' educator certificate 226253 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.

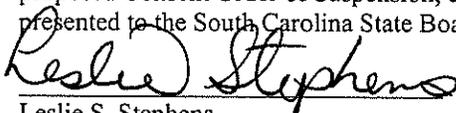
South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 

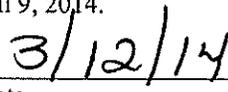
Barry F. Bolen, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 9, 2014

I, Leslie S. Stephens, S.C. Educator Certificate 226253, understand there has been an investigation concerning alleged violations of the laws and regulations governing the practice of education certificate holders and that I have waived my right to a hearing in the matter. I understand that the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review; and I hereby freely, knowingly and voluntarily consent to the suspension of my educator certificate to the South Carolina State Board of Education. I agree that, during the period in which my educator certificate is suspended, I will not serve in any position that would allow me access to the entry or modification of the student records of a public school or district in the State of South Carolina. I agree to the terms of the proposed Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and understand that the Order will be presented to the South Carolina State Board of Education on April 9, 2014.



Leslie S. Stephens



Date