

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Michael Alexander Hood
Certificate 277041

CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on October 8, 2019. On August 28, 2019, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Michael Alexander Hood a notice letter by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against his educator certificate. After receiving the notice letter, Mr. Hood contacted the SCDE and advised that he desired to waive his right to a hearing and wished to pursue an alternative resolution in this matter. Mr. Hood has agreed to this Consent Order of Suspension. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Mr. Hood's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2019, and ending on October 6, 2020. Mr. Hood has also agreed to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course before seeking reinstatement of his educator certification.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Hood holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over three years of educator experience. He has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Mr. Hood was employed by the Berkeley County School District (District) as a teacher at Stratford High School (School).

Mr. Hood was placed on administrative leave on December 14, 2018 following allegations that he made inappropriate comments to students and discussed inappropriate topics in his classroom. The District investigation revealed audio recordings corroborating the allegations. Several of Mr. Hood's students also corroborated the allegations. The District investigation also uncovered several instances where Mr. Hood

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failed to maintain appropriate decorum in his classroom. Mr. Hood resigned from the District, effective December 17, 2018.

Mr. Hood has agreed to waive his right to a hearing and to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into an alternate resolution to the action against his educator certificate. Further, he has agreed to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course prior to the reinstatement of his educator certification. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Mr. Hood's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2019, and ending on October 6, 2020. Mr. Hood will complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course prior to reinstatement of his educator certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2017); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2017). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Mr. Hood engaged in unprofessional conduct by engaging in inappropriate discussions with students. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Mr. Hood's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2019, and ending on October 6, 2020. Mr. Hood will also be required to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course prior to requesting reinstatement of his educator certification.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the educator certificate of Michael Alexander Hood, certificate 277041, is suspended for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2019, and ending on October 6, 2020. Mr. Hood is required to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course prior to the reinstatement of his educator certification.

If Mr. Hood wishes to have his certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the period of suspension, he shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and submit proof of completion of the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction Course. Mr.

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Hood shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement and for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Mr. Hood's educator certificate 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

s/Del-Gratia Jones

Del-Gratia Jones, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
October 8, 2019

I, Michael Alexander Hood, S.C. Educator Certificate 277041, understand there has been an investigation concerning alleged violations of the laws and regulations governing the practice of educator certificate holders and that I have waived my right to a hearing in this matter. I understand that the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I have read the Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I understand that this Order will be presented to the South Carolina State Board of Education for approval on Tuesday, October 8, 2019. I understand this Consent Order will not become effective until approved by the State Board and, if not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest in this proceeding or prejudice the right of the State Board to adjudicate this matter. If approved by the State Board, I give the SCDE permission to use my electronic signature in the style of "/s/ name" for required website publication.

s/ Michael Hood

Michael Alexander Hood

09/ /19

Date