

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the

Disciplinary Action of the

Educator Certificate of

Wright Linder Parker

Certificate 290660

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

(UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT)

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 13, 2019. On June 25, 2019, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Wright Linder Parker a notice via regular and certified mail of his right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of his South Carolina educator certificate. Mr. Parker received the notice on June 28, 2019, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt. Mr. Parker has not contacted the SCDE to request a hearing and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Mr. Parker's educator certificate for a period of two years, commencing August 13, 2019, and ending August 12, 2021. Mr. Parker will be required to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course prior to his reinstatement.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Parker holds a valid South Carolina teaching certificate and has less than one year of educator experience. Mr. Parker was employed by Anderson County School District Five (District) as a teacher at Westside High School (School).

Mr. Parker was placed on administrative leave on January 7, 2019, after allegations arose that he was charged with driving under the influence while transporting a student. The District investigation found that Mr. Parker was a neighbor to a student at the School. Sometime late Saturday night or early Sunday morning, the neighbor student and another student were outside drinking when Mr. Parker joined them. They continued drinking until someone suggested a trip to a convenience store. Mr. Parker drove himself and one of the students to the store. On the way back, Mr. Parker was pulled over by local

law enforcement and failed a field sobriety test. The student also failed a sobriety test and was transported home by a police officer.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board finds just cause exists to suspend Mr. Parker's certificate 290660 for a period of two years, commencing on August 13, 2019, and ending on August 12, 2021. Mr. Parker will be required to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course prior to his reinstatement.

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. Parker engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of consuming alcohol with students and transporting a student while intoxicated.

Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Wright Linder Parker, educator certificate 290660, for a period of two years, commencing on August 13, 2019, and ending on August 12, 2021. Mr. Parker is further ordered to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course prior to his reinstatement.

If Mr. Parker wishes to have his educator certification reinstated at the end of the suspension period, he shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services. Mr. Parker shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement and the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. He shall submit proof he has completed the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course prior to the reinstatement of his educator certificate. The suspension of Mr. Parker's educator certificate 209660 shall be reported to the NASDTEC clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

s/Del-Gratia Jones
Del-Gratia Jones, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
August 13, 2019