

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
or Revocation of the Educator)
)
Certificate of Christine H. Dobson)
)
Certificate 149839)

**CONSENT ORDER OF
SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 10, 2015. On April 3, 2015, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice to Christine H. Dobson of the possible suspension of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. After receiving the notice, Ms. Dobson's attorney contacted the SCDE and informed the SCDE that she had agreed to waive her right to a hearing and accept a one year period of suspension of her educator certificate. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Dobson's certificate for one year, commencing on June 10, 2015, and ending on June 9, 2016.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Dobson holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over twenty-four years of teaching experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board.

Ms. Dobson had been employed by Palmetto Unified School District (District) since 2013 as an Adult Basic Education Teacher at Allendale Correctional Institution until she was terminated on September 5, 2014, following an investigation into allegations that Ms. Dobson was providing contraband to inmates. On September 5, 2014, Lt. Jenkins reported to Agent Orr that an inmate had informed him that Ms. Dobson had brought an inmate tobacco and was willing to bring in contraband (marijuana). The inmate alleged that Ms. Dobson was bringing in contraband because she needed money. He further alleged that he had arranged to exchange money, via a green dot number for the contraband. After receiving the information from the inmate, Agent

Accepted:
Christine
H. Dobson
149839



Initial Here

6/2/15

Date

Orr and Lt. Jenkins searched the Education building, and Ms. Dobson’s classroom and office. These searches did not yield any evidence. Female officers then strip searched Ms. Dobson and discovered a piece of torn paper in her bra. Written on the paper was the green dot number provided by the inmate and the amount of \$150.00. This torn paper was found to match a piece of paper in Ms. Dobson’s office. No criminal charges were filed against Ms. Dobson.

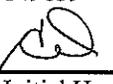
Ms. Dobson acknowledges that she has waived her right to a hearing and understands that the terms set forth are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. Ms. Dobson consents to the suspension of her educator certificate for a period of one year and agrees that she will not be employed or volunteer, in any capacity, in any school district in South Carolina during the suspension period.

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 (Rev. 2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2011). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-2-160 (Rev. 2004). The State Board finds that the evidence presented, and the allegations made, warrants a finding that Ms. Dobson engaged in unprofessional conduct, as a result of providing contraband to an inmate. Ms. Dobson has asserted her Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and has made no admissions.. The evidence presented supports the State Board’s decision to accept the Consent Order of Suspension.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the Consent Order of Suspension is accepted and the educator certificate of Christine H. Dobson, certificate 149839, is hereby suspended for a period of one year, commencing on June 10, 2015, and ending on June 9, 2016. The suspension of Ms. Dobson’s educator certificate 149839 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

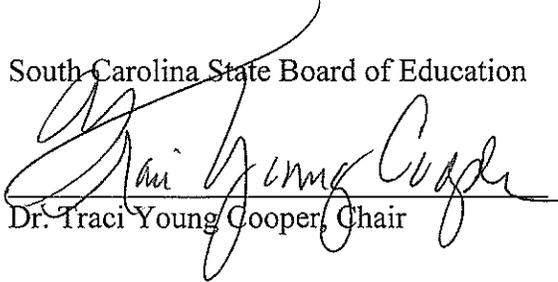
If Ms. Dobson desires to have her educator certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the suspension period, she shall make a written request to the SCDE’s Office of Educator Services. Ms. Dobson must also meet all certification requirements in effect at

Accepted: Christine H. Dobson 149839  Initial Here <u>6/2/15</u> Date

the time she requests reinstatement and shall be responsible for the payment of all applicable reinstatement fees.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education


Dr. Traci Young Cooper, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

June 10, 2015

I, Christine H. Dobson, S.C. Educator Certificate 149839, have read the Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I also agree that I will not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher, band teacher, coach, or in any other position 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 three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented as signed to the South Carolina State Board of Education on June 10, 2015.


Christine H. Dobson

6/2/15
Date