

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation or)
Suspension of the Educator Certificate of)
Carole Ann Hendrix Hope,)
Certificate 188311)
_____)

**ORDER OF
SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 4, 2011. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2004), § 59-5-10 (2004), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend the educator certificate of Carole Ann Hendrix Hope, certificate 188311, as a result of her being arrested on or about November 2, 2011, in Darlington County, South Carolina, and being arrested on or about November 3, 2011, in Horry County, South Carolina. Ms. Hope has been charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-3-655 (B) (1) (Supp. 2010) and Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon a Child Under Sixteen, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-15-140 (2004) in Darlington County and in Horry County. The SCDE received official documentation of Ms. Hope's arrest from the County of Darlington on November 4, 2011. The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Ms. Hope may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that may be under her instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Ms. Hope's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Ms. Hope of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Hope holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has fourteen years of teaching experience. Ms. Hope has been employed by the Chesterfield County School District (District) as a seventh grade teacher at New Heights Middle School and is currently on administrative leave, effective November 3, 2011. On or about November 2, 2011, Ms. Hope

was arrested in Darlington County, South Carolina, and charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor and Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon Child Under Sixteen. On November 3, 2011, Ms. Hope was arrested in Horry County, South Carolina, and charged with Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor and Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon a Child Under Sixteen. It is alleged that Ms. Hope committed these offenses with a minor victim fourteen years of age between March 1, 2011, and October 31, 2011. The minor victim is a former student of Ms. Hope. The Chair of the State Board finds that due to the serious nature of these allegations, Ms. Hope may pose a threat to the safety and welfare of students that may be under her instruction and that emergency action is required to summarily suspend Ms. Hope's educator certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board has jurisdiction of this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann § 59-25-150 (2004). "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 (2004). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct, immorality, any conduct involving moral turpitude, crime against the law of this State, 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. 2010). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2004), "If the agency finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action." Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann § 59-5-10 (2004) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Ms. Hope's *unprofessional conduct*, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, evident unfitness for position for which employed and her arrests for Criminal Sexual Conduct with a Minor and Committing or Attempting Lewd Act Upon Child Under Sixteen, there is reason to believe that Ms. Hope may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students and that emergency action is required. Accordingly, the educator certificate of Carol Ann Hendrix Hope, certificate 188311, is summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Ms. Hope of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate.

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AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

Gerrita Postlewait

By: _____

Gerrita Postlewait, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

November 4, 2011