

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Karen A. Keffer,)
)
Certificate 209992)
_____)

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 14, 2012. On October 27, 2007, Ms. Karen A. Keffer signed a promissory note with the State of South Carolina to obtain a loan of \$2,500.00 to pay for the costs of applying for certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). Ms. Keffer did not obtain NBPTS certification and failed to repay her loan. On September 20, 2011, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Ms. Keffer a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate via certified and regular mail resulting from her failure to repay the outstanding balance of her loan. Ms. Keffer received the notice and requested a National Board Certification Default Repayment Agreement (Repayment Agreement).

Ms. Keffer signed the Repayment Agreement and agreed to its repayment terms and conditions. She returned the Repayment Agreement dated September 22, 2011. Ms. Keffer has not made any payments since November 4, 2011, and is in default. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Keffer's educator certificate until she repays the full amount owed on her outstanding loan with the State of South Carolina obtained through the Center for Teacher Education, Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA) and pays the reinstatement fee.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Keffer holds a valid South Carolina educator certificate and has over eight years of teaching experience. On October 27, 2007, Ms. Karen A. Keffer signed a promissory note with the State of South Carolina to obtain a loan of \$2,500.00 to pay for the costs of applying for certification from the NBPTS. On September 20, 2011, the SCDE sent Ms. Keffer a notice of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate

via certified and regular mail resulting from her failure to repay the outstanding balance of her loan from. Ms. Keffer received the notice and requested a Repayment Agreement.

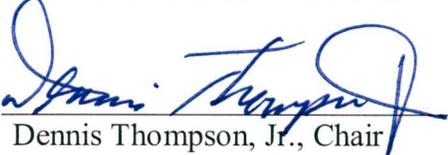
Ms. Keffer signed the Repayment Agreement and agreed to its repayment terms and conditions and returned the Repayment Agreement dated September 22, 2011. The terms of the Repayment Agreement stated that Ms. Keffer would pay the outstanding balance of \$1,250.00 in monthly installments of \$104.17 until the balance was paid in full. The Repayment Agreement also provided that if Ms. Keffer failed to make any monthly payment, she would be in default of the Repayment Agreement with no right to cure and SCDE would resume certificate suspension proceedings. Ms. Keffer has not made any payments since her payment of \$105.00 on November 4, 2011, and owes an outstanding balance of \$1,145.00, which is now past due. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Keffer's educator certificate until she repays the full amount owed on her outstanding loan with the State of South Carolina obtained through CERRA and pays the reinstatement fee.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board may suspend the certificate of any person for unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-25-150 and 160 (2004). The State Board finds that there is sufficient information to support its decision to suspend Karen A. Keffer's educator certificate 209992 from the date of this Order until she has paid the outstanding balance of \$1,145.00. Upon full payment of the balance due, if Ms. Keffer wishes to have her certificate reinstated, she may make a written request for reinstatement to the Department's Office of Educator Certification, Recruitment, and Preparation and pay the reinstatement fee.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 
Dennis Thompson, Jr., Chair