

**In the Matter of the Public Suspension
Or Revocation of the
Educator Certificate of
Shannon Bradley Brown
Certificate 181070**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

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 Shannon
 Bradley
 Brown
 #181070

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On June 15, 2006, Ms. Brown was arrested and charged with two counts of Transferring Beer or Wine for Underage Person's Consumption and two counts of Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor. The arrest on these charges stemmed from the allegations that Ms. Brown bought alcohol for two minors on May 24, 2006, but that she did not involve herself any further in their activities. One of the minors had graduated from Beaufort High School. The other minor, a Beaufort High School student, was also the babysitter for Ms. Brown's children. Ms. Brown had previously taught Spanish to the minors. On August 3, 2006, the District placed Ms. Brown on administrative leave based on allegations of Ms. Brown's inappropriate conduct which resulted in her arrest on June 15, 2006. On February 20, 2007, the District Board voted to affirm the Superintendent's suspension of Ms. Brown's employment and to sustain the Superintendent's recommendation for dismissal. The District and Ms. Brown subsequently entered into a Settlement Agreement and Ms. Brown resigned from the District effective June 6, 2007.

On June 26, 2006, the SCDE sent notice to Shannon Bradley Brown of the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. Ms. Brown received the notice as evidenced by a postal receipt bearing her signature. On July 6, 2006, the SCDE received a notice of representation from Ms. Brown's attorney requesting a hearing following the resolution of the criminal charges.

From August 2007 until the present, Ms. Brown has been employed by the Jasper County School District One (District One) as a Spanish teacher. Prior to her employment, Ms. Brown disclosed her arrest to District One administration. Ms. Brown greatly enjoys teaching Spanish to the students in District One and has provided excellent instruction to her students. She currently serves as the Chair of the Foreign Language Department for Ridgeland High School. Since the 2006 incident, Ms. Brown has had no further incidents of unprofessional conduct or any transgressions of the law.

On August 27, 2009, Ms. Brown pled guilty to one count of Transferring Beer or Wine for Underage Person's Consumption and paid a fine in the amount of \$200. Pursuant to § 16-4-90 (A) (1) (2009), Transfer of Beer or Wine for Underage Person's Consumption states that a person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction "for a first offense must be fined not less than two hundred dollars nor more than three

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hundred dollars or imprisoned not more than thirty days, or both. Ms. Brown paid the minimum fine of \$200 and received no further sentence. Section 16-1-10 (C) (2003) provides that: "All offenses with a term of imprisonment of less than one year are misdemeanors and are exempt from the classification system" for the categorization of felonies and misdemeanors. All other charges were dismissed and have been ordered expunged by a circuit court judge. Ms. Brown's attorney intends to have Ms. Brown's August 27, 2009 conviction expunged following three years from the date of conviction.

Following the resolution of the criminal charges, SCDE attempted to schedule a hearing on several occasions. After the scheduling of a hearing in this matter, the SCDE received notice that Ms. Brown had retained another attorney to represent her. Prior to the hearing scheduled for March 9, 2011, Ms. Brown's attorney informed the SCDE that Ms. Brown acknowledged that she engaged in unprofessional conduct and committed a crime against the law of this state as a result of her guilty plea on August 27, 2009, to one count of Transferring Beer or Wine for Underage Person's Consumption. Ms. Brown's attorney advised SCDE that Ms. Brown had agreed to waive her right to hearing and agreed to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into a Consent Order of Public Reprimand, subject to the following terms: (1) a Public Reprimand shall be issued by the State Board; (2) the Public Reprimand shall be reported to all school districts in South Carolina with the grounds listed as "unprofessional conduct and crime against the law of this state;" (3) the Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE's web site and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE's Office of General Counsel; and (4) Ms. Brown is completing a course in Professional Ethics and will provide SCDE with documentation of successful completion of this course.

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CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct and crimes against the laws of this state. S.C. Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (Supp. 2010). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Brown engaged in unprofessional conduct and committed a crime against the laws of this state as a result of her

guilty plea to one count of Transferring Beer or Wine for an Underage Person's Consumption on August 27, 2009. Ms Brown acknowledges that she has engaged in unprofessional conduct and has been convicted of a crime against the laws of this state. However, considering all the evidence presented by SCDE and Ms. Brown's attorney, the State Board finds that the evidence supports its conclusion that just cause does not exist to suspend or revoke the educator certificate of Shannon Bradley Brown; however, the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Brown engaged in unprofessional conduct and committed a crime against the law of this state as a result of her conviction for Transferring Beer or Wine to an Underage Person for Consumption on August 27, 2009, and that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand by the State Board.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Shannon Bradley Brown, certificate 181070. The Public Reprimand shall be reported to all school districts in South Carolina with the grounds listed as "unprofessional conduct and crime against the law of this state." This Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE's web site and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE's Office of General Counsel.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

BY: *Gerrita Postlewaite*
Gerrita Postlewaite, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
March 11, 2011

I, Shannon Bradley Brown, S.C. Educator Certificate 181070, do hereby agree to the proposed Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of four pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board for approval on March 11, 2011.

I understand that if this Consent Order of Public Reprimand is not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest in this proceeding, nor prejudice the ability of the State Board to adjudicate this matter.

Shannon Bradley Brown
Shannon Bradley Brown

3-4-11
Date