

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Discipline	)	
	)	
of the Educator Certificate of	)	ORDER OF
	)	
Mary Rachel Shockley,	)	PUBLIC REPRIMAND
	)	
<u>Certificate 265116</u>	)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 11, 2017. On January 26, 2017, and on March 16, 2016, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Mary Rachel Shockley notices informing her that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding possible disciplinary action of her educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. SCDE has verified Ms. Shockley's address and the letters sent via regular mail have not been returned. Ms. Shockley declined to sign for the notice letters sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. On March 16, 2017, the SCDE informed Ms. Shockley via regular and certified mail that the State Board would meet to consider the circumstances surrounding her unprofessional conduct while employed by Spartanburg County School District Five (District). Under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure 5(b), Ms. Shockley has been given fair notice of constitutional due process. After the default date, Ms. Shockley contacted the SCDE on March 24, 2017, and informed the Office of General Counsel that she did not desire a hearing in this matter. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Ms. Shockley and approve this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Shockley holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has one year of teaching experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Ms. Shockley was employed by the District as a drama teacher at Berry Shoals Intermediate School (School) for the 2015-2016 school year.

As the drama teacher, Ms. Shockley was often responsible for supervising students after school for play rehearsals. On November 2, 2015, Ms. Shockley allowed

seven of her fifth and sixth grade students to leave a rehearsal for early dismissal and pick-up by their parents. Ms. Shockley remained in her room with other students, leaving the seven early dismissal students unsupervised in the pick-up area. After being instructed by her assistant principal to have more care and to supervise the students at all times, Ms. Shockley again left a student unsupervised when no other students showed up to an optional rehearsal after school. Ms. Shockley saw the student in the hallway and advised that since no other students stayed after school for the rehearsal, the rehearsal was cancelled. She then left the student, who found another teacher who helped the student contact the parents and waited for them. The District also admonished Ms. Shockley for her choice of topics in her classroom and plays and Ms. Shockley denied these allegations.

Ms. Shockley was terminated when the District's Board of Trustees voted to accept her principal's recommendation for termination on December 9, 2015. On January 4, 2016, the District reported to SCDE that the District had terminated Ms. Shockley's employment, effective December 9, 2016. Ms. Shockley's dismissal was based on her poor classroom management and difficulty in teaching best practices. The District Superintendent also informed the SCDE that Ms. Shockley disregarded her principal's instructions regarding the use of drama performances with age appropriate themes. Ms. Shockley has failed to respond to any of the notice letters sent by the SCDE and is now in default. Ms. Shockley contacted the SCDE on March 24, 2017, and stated that she did not want a hearing in this matter. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to publicly reprimand Ms. Shockley and approve this Order of Public Reprimand.

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 (2016); The State Board may, for just cause, issue a public reprimand. 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-2-160 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented supports its conclusion that just cause does not exist to suspend or revoke the educator certificate of Mary Rachel Shockley and that the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Ms. Shockley by the State Board is an appropriate sanction in this matter. The State Board finds that the record outlined above

demonstrates that Ms. Shockley engaged in unprofessional conduct by leaving students unsupervised on two occasions and disregarded her principal's instructions with respect to her drama productions.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that a Public Reprimand is issued to Mary Rachel Shockley, certificate 265116. The public reprimand of Ms. Shockley, certificate 265116, shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ivan Randolph", is written over a horizontal line.

Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 11, 2017