

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation or)
Suspension of the Educator Certificate of)
Jerry Dean Blaxton,)
Certificate 267772)
_____)

**ORDER OF
SUMMARY SUSPENSION**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 29, 2017. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2016), § 59-5-10 (2016), 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 Jerry Dean Blaxton, certificate 267772, as a result of his being arrested on or about June 22, 2017, by law enforcement for eight felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree, SC Code Ann. § 16-15-405 (2014) and two felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 3rd degree, SC Code Ann. § 16-15-410 (2014). The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. Blaxton may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that may be under his instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Blaxton'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 Mr. Blaxton of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Blaxton holds a professional South Carolina educator certificate and has almost two years of teaching experience. Mr. Blaxton has been employed by the South Carolina Public Charter School District (District) since August 2015, as a robotics teacher at High Point Academy Spartanburg (School). On June 22, 2017, the District terminated his employment as a result of his arrest on or about June 22, 2017, by law enforcement for the eight felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree, and two felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 3rd degree. The SCDE has received notice from law enforcement that Mr. Blaxton confessed to the allegations.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Mr. Blaxton may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students that may be

under his instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Mr. Blaxton'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 Mr. Blaxton of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

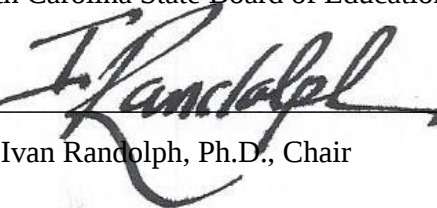
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"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). 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 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2016). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2016), "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 (2016) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Mr. Blaxton's unprofessional conduct, immorality, conduct involving moral turpitude, evident unfitness for position for which employed and his arrest on eight felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 2nd degree, and two felony counts of Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 3rd degree, and his confession regarding child pornography to law enforcement, there is reason to believe that Mr. Blaxton may pose a threat to the health, safety and welfare of students and that emergency action is required. Accordingly, the educator certificate of Jerry Dean Blaxton, certificate 267772, 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 Mr. Blaxton of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of his educator certificate.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By:



Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair