

**BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

In the Matter of Revocation )  
 )  
of the Educator Certificate of )  
 )  
Tamatha D. Crain Sloan, )  
 )  
Certificate 225529 )  
\_\_\_\_\_ )

**ORDER OF SUSPENSION**

**SUMMARY OF THE CASE**

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered the matter on May 9, 2017. On March 2, 2016, and June 8, 2016, March 17, 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice letters to Ms. Sloan, informing her that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible disciplinary action of her educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Ms. Sloan declined to sign for the notice letters sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee and were returned as unclaimed. The SCDE confirmed Ms. Sloan's address and the regular mail was not returned. On March 17, 2017, the SCDE informed Ms. Sloan via regular and certified mail that the State Board would meet on May 9, 2017, to consider the circumstances surrounding her unprofessional conduct. Under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure 5(b), Ms. Sloan has been given fair notice of constitutional due process. Ms. Sloan has not contacted the SCDE to request a hearing and is now in default. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Sloan's educator certificate for a period of two calendar years, commencing on May 9, 2017, and ending on May 8, 2019.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

Ms. Sloan holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over ten years of teaching experience. The Greenville County School District (District) employed Ms. Sloan as a teacher at Lake Forest Elementary School (School) as a kindergarten teacher. On May 7, 2015, Ms. Sloan was placed on administrative leave after allegations arose that she was mistreating the kindergarten students in her classroom.

On May 7, 2015, several teacher aides were interviewed after one reported Ms. Sloan's unprofessional conduct with her students. The aides reported Ms. Sloan often yelled at the

kindergarteners, belittling them. It was also alleged that Ms. Sloan made the students run in place, run up and down stairs, or do push-ups as punishment in the classroom. Ms. Sloan often made her kindergarten students cry with her harsh demeanor and then berated the students by calling them "sensitive." Allegations also arose that Ms. Sloan frequently disappeared from the classroom without giving the aides instructions, and in at least one instance left the students completely unsupervised.

The aides recorded several additional instances of Ms. Sloan's unprofessional behavior, including demeaning a child who selected barbeque on his lunch form. Ms. Sloan admonished a student in front of the class because she believed his religion forbade him from eating barbeque. She yelled at the student that she should have known better since his religion does not allow him to eat pork; and she called the student to immediately return to her desk to select a different option. Ms. Sloan also commented on student's weights. One such incident involved Ms. Sloan yelling at a girl until the student cried while Ms. Sloan asserted the student should have been wearing one or two sizes larger than she was wearing. Ms. Sloan additionally advised a parent that the child was suspended, even though she failed to follow the policies and pursue the channels needed for a suspension. Ms. Sloan asked the teacher's aide not to mention the suspension to school administration because she was doing the student a favor by not putting him in the system. The parent kept the child out of school the next day.

On May 28, 2015, during the investigation, the School recorded two statements from Ms. Sloan's coworkers who recounted that Ms. Sloan asked them for prescription medications. Ms. Sloan knew that one coworker had access to the pain medication, OxyContin (C-II). She telephoned the coworker's home several times requesting the drug but the coworker claimed that she was unable to locate it. Another instance occurred after a staff meeting, when Ms. Sloan followed a coworker back to their classroom. Ms. Sloan appeared overly nervous and stated she wanted something to calm her down. She sought the co-worker out and requested the co-worker to give her some Xanax (C-IV) Ms. Sloan knew she possessed. Ms. Sloan resigned her employment with the District, effective August 1, 2015, after the District conducted a thorough investigation into the allegations.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Sloan's educator certificate for a period of two calendar years, commencing on May 9, 2017, and ending on May 8, 2019.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

"The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2016); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Sloan engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of her inappropriate conduct towards the students and her efforts to solicit prescription medication from her coworkers. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Tamatha D. Crain Sloan, Educator Certificate 225529, for a for a period of two calendar years, commencing on May 9, 2017, and ending on May 8, 2019.

If Ms. Sloan wishes to have her educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement. Ms. Sloan shall also be responsible for the payment of the applicable reinstatement fee. The suspension of Ms. Sloan's Educator Certificate 225529 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

By:   
Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina  
May 9, 2017