

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Discipline)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Bruce J. Snipes,)
)
Certificate 246849)

ORDER OF PUBLIC REPRIMAND

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on November 14, 2017. On June 29, 2017, and on August 10, 2017, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Bruce J. Snipes notices informing him that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding possible disciplinary action of his educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. On August 14, 2017, the notice was delivered, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt. Mr. Snipes did not request a hearing and is in default. After considering the information presented by the SCDE, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Mr. Snipes and approve this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Snipes holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has eight years of teaching experience. He has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Mr. Snipes was employed by the Lancaster County School District (District) as a physical education teacher at Brooklyn Springs Elementary School (School) for the 2016-2017 school year.

On March 8, 2017, Mr. Snipes assaulted a student during a physical education class on bowling. A video of the incident shows the student first throwing a bowling pin at Mr. Snipes. Mr. Snipes responds by pushing the student down and appears to be verbally scolding him. The School reported the incident to law enforcement and the student's guardian. The guardian advised the student was unhurt and they did not wish to press charges. However, the State did charge Mr. Snipes with Assault & Battery, 3rd degree. The criminal charge is still pending in the State courts.

May 1, 2017, the District reported to SCDE that Mr. Snipes' resigned from his employment, effective April 30, 2017. Mr. Snipes has failed to respond to any of the

notice letters sent by the SCDE and is now in default. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to publicly reprimand Mr. Snipes 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 Bruce J. Snipes and that the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Mr. Snipes by the State Board is an appropriate sanction in this matter. The State Board finds that the record outlined above demonstrates that Mr. Snipes engaged in unprofessional conduct by grabbing a student and pinning them down.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that a Public Reprimand is issued to Bruce J. Snipes, certificate 246849. The public reprimand of Mr. Snipes, certificate 246849 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



Ivan Randolph, Ph.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
November 14, 2017