

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Suspension)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Shakirah Yasmine Crawford,)
)
Certificate 262319)
_____)

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

(BREACH OF CONTRACT)

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 14, 2018. On May 7, 2018, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Shakirah Yasmine Crawford a notice via regular and certified mail of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate regarding her alleged breach of contract with the Lexington County School District Two. On May 16, 2018, Ms. Crawford was sent a final notice of her right to a hearing. Ms. Crawford received the certified mail on May 19, 2018, as evidenced by the postal tracking confirmation. Ms. Crawford 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. Crawford's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on August 14, 2018, and ending on August 13, 2019.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint by the Lexington County School District Two (District) seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Shakirah Yasmine Crawford for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2017) and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2017).

Ms. Crawford holds a valid South Carolina educator certificate and has over four years of teaching experience. On May 10, 2017, Ms. Crawford signed a Contractual Agreement with the Lexington County School District Two for a 2017-2018 school year teaching position.

On January 8, 2018, Ms. Crawford sent a letter to Human Resources stating that due to personal circumstances, Ms. Crawford would have to resign from her position, effective January 10, 2018. On January 18, 2018, the Lexington Two Board of Trustees voted to report Ms. Crawford to the SCDE for breach of contract. On January 22, 2018, Dr. Angela Cooper, District

Director of Human Resources, responded to Ms. Crawford in a letter advising that Ms. Crawford's resignation was accepted and that the Lexington Two Board of Trustees had voted to report her breach of contract to SCDE. On May 1, 2018, the District reported this matter to SCDE, requesting that the State Board take disciplinary action on Ms. Crawford's educator certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct" and "willful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (3) and (4) (2017). Pursuant to 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2) and (14) (Supp. 2017), the State Board of Education has the legal authority, *inter alia*, to suspend a certificate for "willful neglect of duty" and "failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board."

With respect to breach of contract, "any teacher who fails to comply with the provisions of his [of her] contract without written consent of the school board shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2004). "Upon the formal complaint of the school board, substantiated by conclusive evidence, the state board shall suspend or revoke the teacher's certificate, for a period not to exceed one calendar year." *Id.*

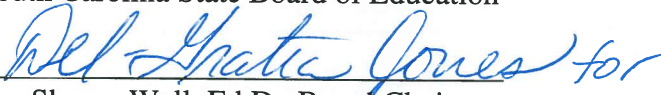
The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Crawford breached her contract and engaged in unprofessional conduct, and failed to comply with the provision of her contract without the written consent of the Lexington County School District Two. The evidence presented further supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Shakira Yasmine Crawford, certificate 262319, for a period of one year, commencing August 14, 2018, and ending August 13, 2019. If Ms. Crawford 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 Certification, Recruitment, and Preparation, and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement. Ms. Crawford shall also pay all applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Ms. Crawford's educator certificate 262319 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within 30 days from the date of this order with the reason stated as "unprofessional

Shakirah Yasmine Crawford
Order of Suspension
August 14, 2018
Page 3

conduct, breach of contract, and failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board.”

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education


By: Sharon Wall Ed.D., Board Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

August 14, 2018