

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

In the Matter of the Revocation)
)
of the Educator Certificate of)
)
Martha Deschamps Petoskey,)
)
Educator Certificate #211757)
_____)

**ORDER OF REVOCATION
(DISCIPLINARY)**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 13, 2018. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) notified Martha Deschamps Petoskey (Petoskey) of her right to a hearing regarding potential disciplinary action against her South Carolina Educator Certificate by letter dated January 25, 2017, sent via certified and regular U.S. Mail. Petoskey timely requested a hearing. On November 29, 2017, a hearing was held concerning Petoskey's alleged unprofessional verbal and physical conduct, which included dishonesty, several arrests outside of school, as well as inappropriate behavior while working with school staff, students, and parents.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board hereby voted to revoke Petoskey's educator certificate, effective immediately.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case is a disciplinary matter involving Petoskey's unprofessional verbal and physical behavior on and off school premises and in the presence of others. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004).

Petoskey holds a valid South Carolina Educator Certificate and was employed by the Calhoun County School District (District) as a School Psychologist. Petoskey was hired in January 2013. By August of 2013, she began to exhibit unacceptable behaviors that steadily became more alarming and resulted in her resignation effective January 4, 2016. The specifics of this conduct involved dishonesty to District officials; disrespectful conduct toward District officials; inappropriate and disturbing comments made to staff and parents; inappropriate and disturbing conduct in the presence of staff, students, and parents; arrests for driving under the

influence and defrauding an innkeeper; and failure to follow policies and directives of the District. Petoskey continued these behaviors after her resignation resulting in her arrest for the inappropriate use of a gun. For this offense, she served three days in jail and was placed on probation. It is also alleged that she threatened to harm her ex-boss and others unconnected with the District.

In addition to all of the above, Petoskey exhibits a propensity for engaging in relationships that result in some level of criminal domestic violence. Further, she mixes prescription medications for anxiety and depression with alcohol, which is known to have serious side effects. Not only are all the behaviors listed above unprofessional, but they also pose safety risks to the school environment.

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Petoskey a notice of her right to a hearing regarding possible disciplinary action affecting her South Carolina Educator Certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Petoskey timely requested a hearing. On November 29, 2017, a hearing was held concerning Petoskey's conduct in the various incidents described above.

After considering the evidence presented at the November 29, 2017 hearing, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Petoskey engaged in conduct that was inappropriate, unprofessional, and poses significant risks to the school and the District. As such, the Board finds that just cause exists to revoke Petoskey's Educator Certificate, effective immediately.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct". S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (4) (2004).

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Petoskey's conduct was, at a minimum, unprofessional. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to revoke the Educator Certificate of Martha Deschamps Petoskey, Educator Certificate #211757.

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Petoskey has the right to apply for certification after three years. Petoskey shall, pursuant to State Board Rule BBCDB, be subject to a character and fitness review before the State Board, shall be required to provide the State Board with employment information during the period of certificate revocation; community service records; letters of support from a current or prospective school district employer, if applicable; letters of support from community leaders; and SLED and FBI background checks. Petoskey shall also pay all applicable fees, if any. The revocation of Petoskey's Educator Certificate #211757 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty (30) days from the date of this order with the reason stated as "unprofessional conduct."

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: 
Sharon Wall, Ed. D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
March 13, 2018