

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Michael B. Galloway
Certificate 273546

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered the matter on December 10, 2019. On October 31, 2019, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent a notice letter to Michael B. Galloway informing him that the State Board would meet to make a determination regarding the possible disciplinary action of his educator certificate, by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Mr. Galloway received the notice on November 4, 2019, as evidenced by the USPS Tracking. He has not requested a hearing and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Mr. Galloway's educator certificate for a period of two years, commencing on December 10, 2019, and ending on December 9, 2021. Mr. Galloway is further instructed to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Galloway holds a valid South Carolina educator certificate and has over three years of teaching experience. Mr. Galloway was employed by the Kershaw County School District (District) and served as an 8th grade history teacher at North Central Middle School (School) at the time of the allegations.

On July 17, 2019, the School's administration received a report from a District parent that Mr. Galloway was exchanging texts with her daughter. The female student attended a District high school and was Mr. Galloway's former student. The student was 16 years old at the time of the messages, which occurred from May 11, 2019, to June 28, 2019. The messages revealed the student visited Mr. Galloway's classroom at the School and were inappropriate and of a personal sexual nature.

Days after receiving this report, a second report was made concerning a second student. Mr. Galloway began messaging this female student in January of 2019. The student had experienced a loss in her family and felt Mr. Galloway was initially trying to comfort her during a hard time. However, as they continued to exchange messages, Mr. Galloway adopted a flirty tone with winking emojis and compliments on the student's appearance. After explicitly asking the student if she thought of him in a sexual way, the student reminded Mr. Galloway he was an adult with a family and job responsibilities. The student was assigned to Mr. Galloway's class when the messaging began.

During the investigation, a search of Mr. Galloway's phone revealed he was communicating with other female students in the District. These communications were not of a sexual nature, but also failed to serve an educational purpose and were therefore inappropriate.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Mr. Galloway's educator certificate for a period of two years, commencing on December 10, 2019, and ending on December 9, 2021. Mr. Galloway is further instructed to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course.

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 Mr. Galloway engaged in unprofessional conduct through inappropriate communications with students. The State Board finds that the evidence presented supports its conclusion that just cause exists to suspend the certificate of Michael B. Galloway.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that educator certificate of Michael B. Galloway, Educator Certificate 273546, is suspended for a period of two years, commencing on December 10, 2019, and ending on December 9, 2021. Mr. Galloway is further instructed to complete the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course. If Mr. Galloway wishes to have his educator

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certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, he shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement. Mr. Galloway must submit paperwork for the completion of the NASDTEC Prevention and Correction course at the time he requests reinstatement. The suspension of Mr. Galloway's Educator Certificate 273546 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

Del-Gratia Jones, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
December 10, 2019