

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Stephan Matthew Botchie
Certificate 241704

CONSENT ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 9, 2020. On April 2, 2020, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent notice via regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, to Stephan Matthew Botchie concerning the pending action against educator certificate 241704. After receiving the notice letter, Mr. Botchie contacted the SCDE and advised that he desired to waive his right to a hearing and wished to pursue an alternative resolution in this matter. Mr. Botchie has agreed to this Consent Order of Suspension. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Consent Order of Suspension of Mr. Botchie's educator certificate for two years, commencing on June 9, 2020, and ending on June 8, 2022. Mr. Botchie will also complete the NASDTEC Prevention & Correction course prior to the reinstatement of his certification.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Botchie holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over eleven years of educator experience. At the time of the incident, Mr. Botchie was employed by Greenwood School District 50 (District) as a teacher at Emerald High School.

Mr. Botchie was placed on administrative leave on November 5, 2019, after a female student reported inappropriate communications she received from him. When asked about the allegations, Mr. Botchie admitted to using text messages to discuss inappropriate topics with multiple students. At least one of these communications included comments of a sexual nature. Mr. Botchie resigned from the District on November 11, 2019.

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Mr. Botchie has agreed to waive his right to a hearing and to resolve this disciplinary matter by entering into an alternate resolution to the action against his educator certificate. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the consent order of suspension of Mr. Botchie's educator certificate for two years, commencing on June 9, 2020, and ending on June 8, 2022. Mr. Botchie will also complete the NASDTEC Prevention & Correction course.

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 (2017); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2017). The State Board finds that the evidence presented would support a conclusion that Mr. Botchie engaged in unprofessional conduct as result of inappropriate communications with multiple female students. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Mr. Botchie's educator certificate for a period of two years, commencing on June 9, 2020, and ending on June 8,, 2022. Mr. Botchie will also complete the NASDTEC Prevention & Correction course prior to the reinstatement of his certificate.

Now, therefore, it is ordered that the educator certificate of Stephan Matthew Botchie, certificate 241704, is suspended for a period of two years, commencing on June 9, 2020, and ending on June 8, 2022.

If Mr. Botchie wishes to have his educator certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the period of suspension, he shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services. Prior to the reinstatement, Mr. Botchie will submit proof of completing the NASDTEC Prevention & Correction course. Mr. Botchie shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement and

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for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The Order of Suspension shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order with the grounds listed as “unprofessional conduct.” This Consent Order of Suspension shall be posted on the SCDE’s web site and shall be maintained as a public record in the SCDE’s Office of General Counsel.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

s/Michael Brennan

Michael Brennan, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
June 9, 2020

I, Stephan Matthew Botchie, S.C. Educator Certificate 241704, understand there has been an investigation concerning alleged violations of the laws and regulations governing the practice of educator certificate holders and that I have waived my right to a hearing in this matter. I understand that the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Suspension are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack or judicial review. I have read the Consent Order of Suspension, consisting of three pages, and I freely and voluntarily agree to the terms set forth therein. I understand that this Order will be presented to the South Carolina State Board of Education for approval on Tuesday, June 9, 2020. I understand this Consent Order will not become effective until approved by the State Board and, if not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest in this proceeding or prejudice the right of the State Board to adjudicate this matter. If approved by the State Board, I give the SCDE permission to use my electronic signature in the style of “/s/ name” for required website publication.

s/Stephen Matthew Botchie

Stephan Matthew Botchie

04/13/2020

Date