

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Amy Margaret Kaufman
Certificate 230383

ORDER OF DISMISSAL

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on January 14, 2020. The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) notified Amy Margaret Kaufman of potential disciplinary action against her teaching certificate and informed her of her right to a hearing via a certified letter dated August 21, 2019. Ms. Kaufman timely requested a hearing. By agreement of the parties, a Hearing on the Documents, defined as “the prehearing statement and any accompanying exhibits relevant to the proceeding that the parties wish to be presented to the hearing officer for review to make a determination of the disciplinary matter”, occurred. On November 25, 2019, the SCDE and Ms. Kaufman received the hearing officer’s report and recommendation. The hearing officer recommended that the action against Ms. Kaufman be dismissed. After considering the evidence, the State Board voted to dismiss this matter.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint by the District seeking the suspension of Ms. Kaufman’s educator certificate for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter, pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2004). Ms. Kaufman holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over sixteen years of experience. She has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board.

Ms. Kaufman signed a professional contract with the District on April 10, 2018, as an Elementary Director of Royal Live Oaks Academy of the Arts and Science Charter School, sponsored by the Charter Institute at Erskine. On March 25, 2019, Ms. Kaufman submitted her resignation, effective April 5, 2019, citing an out-of-state move to assist with her mother’s health care. On April 30, 2019, the District informed Ms. Kaufman that

the Board had not accepted her resignation and reported the breach of contract matter to the SCDE.

By agreement of the parties, a Hearing on the Documents, defined as “the prehearing statement and any accompanying exhibits relevant to the proceeding that the parties wish to be presented to the hearing officer for review to make a determination of the disciplinary matter”, occurred. The hearing officer noted in her report and recommendation that Ms. Kaufman had submitted her resignation in the manner prescribed by the District and her contract. The hearing officer further found that the Executive Director/CEO verbally accepted Ms. Kaufman’s resignation, and further assisted in constructing a letter to the parents at the School notifying them of her resignation. Finally, the Hearing officer found that the District accepted the resignation as provided in the District’s policies and erroneously presented the educator to their Board as a breach of contract matter for a vote on whether or not to report the matter to the SCDE as a breach of contract.

After considering the evidence presented at the hearing and the hearing officer’s recommendation and report, the State Board finds that this matter should be dismissed.

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 (2018); The State Board may, for just cause, issue a public reprimand. S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2018). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §59-25-160. The State Board finds that the evidence presented supports its conclusion that just cause does not exist to suspend or revoke the professional educator certificate of Amy Margaret Kaufmane in this matter.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the matter of Amy Margaret Kaufmane, certificate 230383, be dismissed. The dismissal of the matter of Amy Margaret Kaufmane,

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certificate 230383, 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

s/Michael Brennan

Michael Brennan, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
January 14, 2020