

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Christopher M Parker
Certificate 221557

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on August 10, 2021. On May 26, 2021, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Christopher M Parker a notice via regular and certified mail of his right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of his South Carolina educator certificate. The SCDE has verified Mr. Parker's address. On June 7, 2021, Mr. Parker reached out to the SCDE in an effort to reach a consent agreement. Mr. Parker last spoke with the SCDE on July 21, 2021 and advised that he would not request a hearing. Under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure 5(b), Mr. Parker has been given fair notice of constitutional due process. Mr. Parker 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 Christopher M Parker's educator certificate 221557 for a period of two years, commencing on August 10, 2021, and ending on August 9, 2023.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Christopher M Parker holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate. Mr. Parker has over sixteen years of educator experience and has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. Mr. Parker was employed by School District of Oconee County (District) as a school counselor, at Oconee Academy (School).

On January 14, 2021, the SCDE received a letter from the District, reporting that Mr. Parker had resigned from his position during an ongoing investigation regarding the falsifying of student records. The investigation revealed that Mr. Parker created an additional computer class on the student's record which completed the student's remaining computer credit allowing him to graduate early. In addition to adding credits to the student's records, Mr. Parker also changed the percentage grade earned in the student's first computer class.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Order of Suspension of Christopher M Parker educator certificate 221557 for a period of two years, commencing on August 10, 2021, and ending on August 9, 2023.

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 (Rev. 2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Christopher Parker engaged in unprofessional conduct by falsifying student records. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Christopher M Parker educator certificate 221557 for a period of two years, commencing on August 10, 2021, and ending on August 9, 2023.

If Mr. Parker wishes to have the certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the suspension period of suspension, he shall make a written request to the SCDE’s Office of Educator Services. Mr. Parker shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement and for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Mr. Parker’s educator certificate shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order. Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Christopher M Parker educator certificate 221557, is suspended for a period of two years, commencing on August 10, 2021, and ending on August 9, 2023.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: s/ Kristi Woodall
Kristi Woodall, Ed.D., Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
August 10, 2021