

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Beverly Roy Steele
Certificate 270927

ORDER OF SUMMARY SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The Chair of the South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 24, 2021. In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), § 59-5-10 (2017), and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requested that the Chair of the State Board summarily suspend the educator certificate of Beverly Roy Steele, educator certificate 270927, as a result of her arrest on 60 counts of the felony charge of forgery, value less than \$10,000, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-10(A) (2018).

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of these allegations of misconduct, Ms. Steele may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students, who may be under her instruction and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Ms. Steele's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Ms. Steele of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Steele holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over thirteen years of educator experience. At the time of her arrest, Ms. Steele was a teacher in Florence County School District 1 (District). She has resigned from the District, effective March 31, 2021.

On or about May 21, 2020, Ms. Steele was arrested on for multiple counts of felony forgery, S.C. Code Ann. § 16-13-10(A) (2018). It is alleged that Ms. Steele illegally obtained checks from a friend's bank account. Ms. Steele wrote multiple checks to herself

from 2018 to 2020, with a final amount around \$30,000. On March 19, 2021, the SCDE received notice of the arrest and Ms. Steele's resignation from the District.

The SCDE has reason to believe that, due to the serious nature of this allegation of misconduct, Ms. Steele may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students who may be under her instruction, and that emergency action is required. After considering the evidence presented by the SCDE, the Chair of the State Board finds that Ms. Steele's educator certificate shall be summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Ms. Steele of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate.

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, crime against the law of this State, and evident unfitness for position for which employed. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2017); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2017). In accordance with S.C. Code Ann. § 1-23-370(c) (2017), "If the agency finds that the public health, safety or welfare imperatively requires emergency action, and incorporates a finding to that effect in its order, summary suspension of a license may be ordered pending proceedings for revocation or other action." Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-5-10 (2017) and State Board Rule of Governance BBABA, the Chair of the State Board finds that as a result of the allegations of Ms. Steele's unprofessional conduct, crime against the law of this State or the United States, and evident unfitness for the position for which employed, due to her felony arrest for 60 counts of forgery, value less than \$10,000, SC Code Ann. § 16-13-10(A) (2018), there is reason to believe Ms. Steele may pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of students and emergency action is required.

Accordingly, the educator certificate of Beverly Roy Steele, certificate number 270927, is summarily suspended until a due process hearing is held and/or this matter is

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otherwise resolved. The SCDE is directed to serve notice on Ms. Steele of the summary suspension, as well as the possible suspension or revocation of her educator certificate.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

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

Columbia, South Carolina
March 24, 2021