

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Naomi Faith Motes
Certificate 286678

**ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on June 14, 2022. On May 25, 2022, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Naomi Faith Motes a notice letter by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against her educator certificate. On May 31, 2022, Ms. Motes contacted the SCDE to confirm she had received the notice and would not request a hearing. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Ms. Motes and approved this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Motes holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over four years of educator experience. She has no prior history of discipline from the State Board. At the time of the incident, Ms. Motes was employed by Lexington County School District Two (District) as an educator at Northside Middle School (School).

On February 23, 2022, the School was following a half-day schedule for students. After students left, the teachers had a lunch hour and were to report back to work for professional development sessions. During the lunch hour, Ms. Motes was part of a small group that attended lunch at a local restaurant. Another staff member witnessed Ms. Motes' group consuming alcohol prior to returning to work and reported the incident. When questioned about the incident, Ms. Motes admitted to drinking two margaritas during lunch.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to publicly reprimand Ms. Motes and approve this Order of Public Reprimand.

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 by the District would not support a conclusion that just cause exists to suspend or revoke the educator certificate of Ms. Motes; however, the evidence would support a conclusion that Ms. Motes engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of consuming alcohol on her lunch break during work hours. This is in violation of S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (Rev. 2018). The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Ms. Motes by the State Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Naomi Faith Motes, certificate 286678. The Public Reprimand 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 Order of Public Reprimand 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/Alan Walters
Alan Walters, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
June 14, 2022