

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Adrian Jermaine Adams
Certificate 261066

**Adams Adrian Hermaine Order of
Permanent Revocation**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on January 17, 2023. On July 20, 2021, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Adrian Jermaine Adams a notice via regular and certified mail of his right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension or revocation of his South Carolina educator certificate. Mr. Adams timely requested a hearing and such was held on October 28, 2022. This matter is properly before the State Board pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2017) and referred to a hearing officer pursuant to S.C. Code ann. § 59-5-70 (2004). After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Adams' educator certificate 261066, effective January 17, 2023.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Adams holds a summarily suspended South Carolina educator certificate and has over six years of teaching experience. During the 2018-19 school year, Mr. Adams served as the Director of Bands at Goose Creek High School (School) for the Berkeley County School District (District).

Mr. Adams was tasked with closing the School's Band Booster Club bank account and transferring the funds to a school activity account. In the summer of 2019, Mr. Adams submitted the Band Booster account's June statement. The statement showed a \$600.00 withdrawal from an ATM in Pennsylvania. Also shown were two checks made payable to Mr. Adams. The checks were intended to cover Mr. Adams' expenses for the Charleston Band Director Institute Conference. However, Mr. Adams did not attend the conference. He did vacation in Pennsylvania in June 2019.

The District requested an internal audit and investigation of the bank account activity. During this investigation, Mr. Adams admitted to using at least \$3,000 to \$4,000 for personal expenses such as rent, insurance, and student loans. The issue was reported to local law enforcement, and Mr. Adams was ordered to pay \$5,000 in restitution to the District. The restitution payments were completed by May 13, 2021.

After reviewing the evidence, the Hearing Officer recommended a permanent revocation of Mr. Adams' educator certification. It was noted that Mr. Adams admitted to unlawful taking of school funds, an act of unprofessional conduct and dishonesty. During the hearing, Mr. Adams attempted to rationalize his actions. The Hearing Officer did not find the rationalizations to be credible, and noted that even if the assertions were true, they did not excuse Mr. Adams' dishonesty. The Hearing Officer further noted that the restitution paid to the District was not considered as an indication that Mr. Adams learned from his misconduct. Rather, the restitution was agreed to as part of a court pre-trial intervention program of the criminal charges.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to permanently revoke Mr. Adams' educator certificate 261066, effective January 17, 2023.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The State Board may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2016). Just cause includes "incompetence; willful neglect of duty; willful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education; unprofessional conduct; drunkenness; cruelty; crime against the law of this State or the United States; immorality; any conduct involving moral turpitude; dishonesty; evident unfitness for position for which employed; or sale or possession of narcotics." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-58 (2016).

The State Board finds that the evidence presented by the SCDE supports its determination that just cause exists to permanently revoke education certificate 261066, issued in the name of Adrian Jermaine Adams, effective January 17, 2023. The permanent revocation of Adams's educator

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certificate 261066 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 Board of Education

Crystal F. Stapleton, Ed.D.

Crystal F. Stapleton, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

January 17, 2023