

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Christopher M. Lawrence
Certificate 191783

**CONSENT ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 9, 2024. On February 28, 2024, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Christopher M. Lawrence a notice letter by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against his educator certificate. Mr. Lawrence received the notice and contacted the SCDE to advise that he desired to waive her right to a hearing and wished to pursue an alternative resolution in this matter. He has agreed to a public reprimand of his educator certification.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept this Consent Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Lawrence holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over twenty-five years of experience. He has no prior discipline history with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Mr. Lawrence was employed by the Greenville County School District (District) as a teacher at Woodmont Middle School (School).

On September 29, 2023, Mr. Lawrence was placed on administrative leave after it was alleged he was under the influence on school grounds. Mr. Lawrence denied this allegation and there was no evidence presented that he was under the influence. However, he admitted he did have alcohol on school grounds, in his personal vehicle. Mr. Lawrence stated that the alcohol was intended for use during a social event after he left school in the afternoon. He was allowed to resign from the District.

Christopher M. Lawrence
191783
s/CL
Initial
3/12/24
Date

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the 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 Mr. Lawrence; however, the evidence would support a conclusion that Mr. Lawrence engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of possessing alcohol on school grounds in his personal vehicle. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Mr. Lawrence by the State Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Christopher M. Lawrence, certificate 191783. 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 Consent Order of Public Reprimand shall be posted on the SCDE’s website 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/David C. O’Shields
Dr. David O’Shields, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 9, 2024

Christopher M. Lawrence
191783
s/CL
Initial
3/12/24
Date

I, Christopher M. Lawrence, SC Educator Certificate 191783, understand there has been an investigation concerning alleged violations of the laws and regulations governing the practice of educator certificate holders and that I have waived my right to a hearing in this matter. I understand the terms set forth in this Consent Order of Public Reprimand are not subject to reconsideration, collateral attack, or judicial review. I agree to the terms of this Consent Order of Public Reprimand, consisting of three pages, and understand that this Order will be presented to the State Board for approval on April 9, 2024. I understand this Order will not become effective until approved by the State Board and, if not approved, it shall not constitute an admission against interest in this proceeding or prejudice the right of the State Board to adjudicate this matter. If approved by the State Board, I have the SCDE permission to use my electronic signature in the style of "s/name" for required website publication.

S/Christopher Lawrence
Christopher M. Lawrence

3/12/24
Date

Christopher M. Lawrence
191783
s/CL
Initial
3/12/24
Date

