

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Travis Williams
Certificate 260529

**ORDER OF
PUBLIC REPRIMAND**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on February 13, 2024. On April 27, 2023, and May 17, 2023, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Travis Williams a notice letter by certified mail, return receipt, restricted delivery, and regular mail, regarding possible action against his educator certificate. Mr. Williams contacted the SCDE on June 6, 2023, but did not request a hearing at that time. Under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure 5(b), Mr. Williams has been given fair notice of constitutional due process. He has not requested a hearing and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Mr. Williams and approved this Order of Public Reprimand.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Williams holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate and has over eight years of experience. He has no prior disciplinary action from the State Board. At the time of the incident, Mr. Williams was employed by the Greenville County School District (District) as a teacher at Berea Middle School (School).

On February 20, 2022, Mr. Williams was playing a video game outside of school with one of his students. The two played the game remotely, communicating via texts. During one conversation, the student referred to Mr. Williams as "Mrs. Williams." Mr. Williams was offended by the comment and sent the student an inappropriate message containing profanity. Mr. Williams acknowledged he should never have been texting with a student regarding nonacademic matters and he should not have responded as he did.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to issue a public reprimand to Mr. Williams and approved 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 (2020); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2020); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2021). 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 Travis Williams; however, the evidence would support a conclusion that Mr. Williams engaged in unprofessional conduct as a result of making an inappropriate, explicit remark to a student. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the issuance of a Public Reprimand to Mr. Williams by the State Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, it is ordered that the State Board hereby issues a Public Reprimand to Travis Williams, certificate 260529. 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/David C. O'Shields
David C. O'Shields, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
February 13, 2024