

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Laura O'Shields Crisp
Certificate 232484

ORDER OF SUSPENSION

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on October 8, 2024. On August 1, 2024, and August 20, 2024, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Laura O'Shields Crisp a notice via regular and certified mail of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate. Ms. Crisp received the notice on August 24, 2024, as evidenced by signed postal receipt. She has not contacted the SCDE to request a hearing and is now in default.

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Ms. Crisp's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2024, and ending on October 7, 2025.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Ms. Crisp holds a valid South Carolina professional educator certificate. Ms. Crisp has over sixteen years of educator experience and has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. At the time of the incident, Ms. Crisp was a teacher at Monarch Elementary School (School) with the School District of Union County (District).

On May 20, 2024, School administration reported to Ms. Crisp's classroom for a discipline issue. As the administrator entered the room, they saw Ms. Crisp ducking behind an open cabinet door. Ms. Crisp straightened and kept her hands at her side until the administrator left. The administrator believed Ms. Crisp was holding a vape pen and had used the pen inside the classroom. This was reported to the District and a search of the classroom was conducted.

A vape pen and cartridge was found in Ms. Crisp's purse. The cartridge was tested by the Spartanburg County Sheriff's office and found to have delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). THC is the main psychoactive ingredient in the cannabis plant. Also in her purse was a shot bottle of kratom extract. Though legal, kratom is listed as a Drug and Chemical of Concern by the Drug Enforcement Administration. The District found this to be a violation of District Policy GBEB – Staff Conduct. Ms. Crisp was placed on administrative leave on May 20, 2024, and subsequently resigned from the District effective June 01, 2024

After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to accept the Order of Suspension of Ms. Crisp's educator certificate 232484 for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2024, and ending on October 7, 2025.

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 (Rev. 2004); S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016). Just cause includes unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2016); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2016). The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Laura O'Shields Crisp engaged in unprofessional conduct by possession of a vape device and a shot bottle, both containing THC. The State Board further finds that just cause exists for the suspension of Ms. Crisp's educator certificate 232484 for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2024, and ending on October 7, 2025.

Now, therefore, it is hereby ordered that the educator certificate of Laura O'Shields Crisp educator certificate 232484, is suspended for a period of one year, commencing on October 8, 2024, and ending on October 7, 2025.

If Ms. Crisp wishes to have the certificate reinstated at the conclusion of the period of suspension, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services. Ms. Crisp shall be responsible for meeting all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement and for the payment of any applicable reinstatement fees. The suspension of Ms.

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Crisp's educator certificate 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 State Board of Education

s/David C. O'Shields

David C. O'Shields, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

October 8, 2024