BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Disciplinary Action of the Educator Certificate of Harriett S.C. Snelling Certificate 138199	**ORDER OF SUSPENSION** **(BREACH OF CONTRACT)**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 1, 2025. On January 27, 2025, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Harriett S.C. Snelling a notice via regular and certified mail of her right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of her South Carolina educator certificate. Ms. Snelling received the notice on February 8, 2025, as evidenced by a 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. Snelling's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing on April 1, 2025, and ending on March 30, 2026.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint from Greenwood County School District 52 (District) seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Ms. Snelling for breach of contract. The State Board has jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-150 (2020) and S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2020).

On April 22, 2024, Ms. Snelling signed a contractual agreement with the District to serve as a teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. On November 13, 2024, Ms. Snelling submitted her resignation to the District, effective January 2, 2025. She informed the District she wished to retire at that time. On December 11, 2024, the District informed Ms. Snelling that her resignation would be reported as a breach of contract. She did not return to fulfill her contract. The District Board voted to report Ms. Snelling's breach of

contract to the SCDE on December 10, 2024. The District reported the matter to the SCDE on January 17, 2025.

After considering the evidence, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Snelling breached her contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Ms. Snelling's certificate 138199 for a period of one year, commencing on April 1, 2025, and ending on March 30, 2026.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

"The South Carolina Board of Education may, for just cause, either revoke or suspend the certificate of any person." Just cause includes, *inter alia*, "unprofessional conduct" and "willful violation of the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (3) and (4) (2020). Pursuant to 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (2) and (14) (2021), the State Board of Education has the legal authority to suspend a certificate for "failure to comply with the provision of a contract without the written consent of the local school board." With respect to breach of contract, "any teacher who fails to comply with the provisions of his [or her] contract without written consent of the school board shall be deemed guilty of unprofessional conduct." S. C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2020). "Upon formal complaint of the school board, substantiated by conclusive evidence, the state board shall suspend or revoke the teacher's certificate, for a period not to exceed one calendar year." *Id.*

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Ms. Snelling breached her contract without the consent and/or approval of the District. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists to suspend the educator certificate of Harriett S.C. Snelling for a period of one year, commencing on April 1, 2025, and ending on March 30, 2026.

If Ms. Snelling wishes to have her educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, she shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time she requests reinstatement. Ms. Snelling shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee. The

suspension of Ms. Snelling's educator certificate 138199 shall be reported to the NASDTEC Clearinghouse and all South Carolina school districts within thirty days from the date of this order, with the reason stated as "unprofessional conduct, breach of contract, willful neglect of duty, and failure to comply with the provisions of a contract without the written consent of the local school board."

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

South Carolina State Board of Education

s/Rita Allison
Rita Allison, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
April 1, 2025