

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Eric Lee Jackson
Certificate 320189

**ORDER OF SUSPENSION
(BREACH OF CONTRACT)**

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on March 4, 2025. On October 11, 2024, November 18, 2024, December 9, 2024, January 13, 2025, and February 10, 2025, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Eric Lee Jackson a notice via regular and certified mail of his right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of his South Carolina educator certificate. The SCDE has verified Mr. Jackson's address and the letter sent via regular mail has not been returned. On February 21, 2025, the SCDE informed Mr. Jackson via regular mail that the State Board would meet on March 4, 2025, or as soon thereafter as is feasible, to consider action against his educator certificate. Under the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure 5(b), Mr. Jackson has been given fair notice of constitutional due process. He 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 Mr. Jackson's educator certificate for a period of one year, commencing March 4, 2025, and ending on March 3, 2026.

FINDINGS OF FACT

This case concerns a formal complaint from the Berkeley County School District (District) seeking the suspension of the educator certificate of Mr. Jackson 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 May 5, 2024, Mr. Jackson signed a contractual agreement with the District to serve as a teacher for the 2024-2025 school year. On July 8, 2024, Mr. Jackson submitted

his resignation to the District, effective immediately. He stated that, due to unforeseen circumstances, he was leaving South Carolina. On September 18, 2024, the District informed Mr. Jackson he was not released from his contract and his failure to perform his contractual duties was considered a breach of contract. The District Board voted to report Mr. Jackson's breach of contract to the SCDE on September 16, 2024. The District reported the matter to the SCDE on September 18, 2024.

After considering the evidence, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Mr. Jackson breached his contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Mr. Jackson's certificate 320189 for a period of one year, commencing on March 4, 2025, and ending on March 3, 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 Mr. Jackson breached his contract without the consent and/or approval of the District. Accordingly, the evidence presented supports the State Board's determination that just cause exists

Eric Lee Jackson, Certificate 320189
Order of Suspension
March 4, 2025
Page 3

to suspend the educator certificate of Eric Lee Jackson for a period of one year, commencing on March 4, 2025, and ending on March 3, 2026.

If Mr. Jackson wishes to have his educator certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, he shall make a written request to the SCDE's Office of Educator Services and shall meet all certification requirements in effect at the time he requests reinstatement. Mr. Jackson shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee. The suspension of Mr. Jackson's educator certificate 320189 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
March 4, 2025