

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the
Disciplinary Action of the
Educator Certificate of
Justin Nathan Girone
Certificate 266275

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

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on May 5, 2026. On March 5, 2026, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sent Justin Nathan Girone a notice via regular and certified mail of his right to a hearing regarding the possible suspension of his South Carolina educator certificate. Mr. Girone received the notice on March 21, 2026, as evidenced by a signed postal receipt. 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. Girone's educator certificate for a period of six (6) months, commencing on December 19, 2025, and ending on June 18, 2026.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Girone holds a South Carolina educator certificate. He has over ten years of educator experience and has no prior record of disciplinary action with the State Board. At the time, Mr. Girone was employed by the Greenville County School District as a teacher at Dr. Phinnize J. Fisher Middle School.

On May 5, 2025, Mr. Girone signed a contractual agreement with the District to serve as a teacher for the 2025-26 school year. On December 15, 2025, Mr. Girone submitted his resignation to the District, effective December 19, 2025. Mr. Girone did not provide a specific reason for his resignation. On December 17, 2025, the District informed Mr. Girone he would not be released from his contract until a satisfactory replacement was found or the superintendent determined that no replacement was necessary. He did

not return to fulfill his contract. The District Board voted to report Mr. Girone's breach of contract to the SCDE on February 10, 2026. The District reported the matter to the SCDE on February 12, 2026.

After considering the evidence, the State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Justin Nathan Girone breached his contract with the District, and that just cause exists to suspend Mr. Girone's certificate 266275 for a period of six (6) months, commencing on December 19, 2025, and ending on June 18, 2026.

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). Just cause includes "breach of contract." S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (13) (2025). 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 educator who fails to comply with the provisions of his contract without the written consent of the school board is considered to be in breach of contract." S. C. Code Ann. § 59-25-530 (2025). "Upon formal complaint of the school board, substantiated by conclusive evidence, the state board shall suspend or revoke the teacher's certificate." *Id.* The period of suspension for breach of contract, "must begin on the date such contract is breached with the district and run for a period of time deemed appropriate by the State Board of Education, not to exceed six months from the date of breach." *Id.* An educator may not be signed to an employment contract by any South Carolina public school during the term of suspension. *Id.*

The State Board finds that the evidence presented demonstrates that Justin Nathan Girone 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 to suspend the educator certificate of Justin Nathan Girone for a period of six (6) months, commencing on December 19, 2025, and ending on June 18, 2026.

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If Mr. Girone 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. Girone shall also pay the applicable reinstatement fee. The suspension of Justin Nathan Girone's educator certificate 266275 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 "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/David M. Mathis

David M. Mathis, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina
May 5, 2026