

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA	)	DIVISION OF THE SECRETARY
	)	
COUNTY OF HUGHES	)	SOUTH DAKOTA DEPT. OF EDUCATION

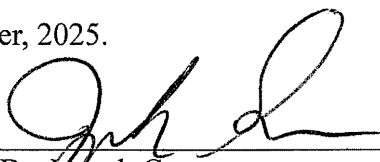
In re: Certification Application of	)	DSE 2025-12
THOMAS GRAVES	)	ORDER DENYING
	)	EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE

In accordance with and pursuant to the authority granted to the Secretary by SDCL § 13-42-4, 13-42-9, and ARSD article 24:18, and after review of the record herein, the Secretary issues the following Order:

1. The Secretary accepts the allegations of the Notice of Intent to Deny Educator Certificate as true and enters the attached Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.
2. The application of Thomas Graves for an educator certificate is DENIED.
3. Thomas Graves is permanently prohibited from reapplication for an educator certificate in the State of South Dakota.
4. The Order and Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law are a public record pursuant to SDCL § 13-42-17.1 and ARSD 24:18:04:05.
5. Notification of this denial is to be placed on the NASDTEC registry and be placed in applicant's permanent certification file within the South Dakota Department of Education.

This constitutes final agency action and may be appealed to circuit court pursuant to ARSD 24:18:02:06.

Dated this the 10th of December, 2025.



Dr. Joseph Graves
Secretary
South Dakota Department of Education
800 Governors Drive
Pierre, SD 57501

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In re: Certification Application of)
THOMAS GRAVES)
) DSE 2025-12
) FINDINGS OF FACT AND
) CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Thomas Graves filed an application for an Initial Educator Application which was activated on July 29, 2025. After a review of the entire file, the Secretary enters the following Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On or about October 23, 2025, the South Dakota Department of Education Office of Educator Certification (hereinafter “Department”) served a Notice of Intent to Deny Educator Certificate on Thomas Graves (hereinafter “Graves”) via certified mail, first-class mail, and email. The certified mail receipt was returned unsigned, yet the first-class mail was not returned.
2. The Notice of Intent informed Graves that if he failed to request a hearing within 30 days after service of the notice, the allegations of the Notice would be accepted as true by the Secretary.
3. The Department received no request for hearing from Graves within the 30-day period.
4. Graves made no disclosures on the Conduct Review portion of his application.
5. The certification system alerted that Graves had records on NASDTEC.
6. Graves’ application for a Standard Educator License in Wyoming and Assistant Coaching Permit was denied on July 9, 2019, for “knowing misrepresentation of information on an application.”
7. Graves’ Provisional Alaska Teaching Certificate was suspended on February 2, 2021, for violations of state law pertaining to immorality and violations of ethical or professional standards or contractual obligations.

8. Graves failed to disclose any information pertaining to his denial in Wyoming, suspension in Alaska, or the underling conduct resulting in that denial and suspension.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

9. Grounds for the denial or non-renewal of an educator certificate are provided in SDCL § 13-42.
10. The Secretary of the Department of Education has the power and authority to refuse to issue or renew a certificate. SDCL § 13-42-9.
11. ARSD 24:18:03:02. Revocation or suspension in another jurisdiction. If the certificate of an applicant in another jurisdiction has been revoked or suspended by that jurisdiction, the order of revocation or suspension is prima facie evidence that the applicant does not meet the requirements for certification in this state.
12. Graves' application being denied in Wyoming and his certificate being suspended in Alaska is prima facie evidence that Graves does not meet the requirements for certification in South Dakota.
13. Graves' failure to disclose and disregard of the law constitutes acts of moral turpitude to support the Department's intent to deny.
14. Any Conclusion of Law more properly designated as a Finding of Fact is hereby so designated.
15. Graves' application should be denied pursuant to SDCL § 13-42-9.
16. Graves should be permanently prohibited from reapplication for an educator certificate in the State of South Dakota.

Dated this the 10th of December, 2025.



Dr. Joseph Graves
Secretary, South Dakota Department of Education