

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

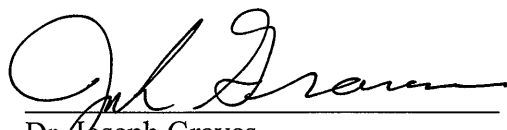
In re: Certification of)
JEROMY LOKEN) DSE 2025-05
) ORDER REVOKING
) EDUCATOR CERTIFICATE

Pursuant to the authority granted to the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education by SDCL §§ 13-43-28.1, 13-42-9, and 13-42-15, following the receipt of a Complaint seeking revocation of a certificate from the South Dakota Professional Teachers Practices and Standards Commission, and after review of the entire file herein, the Secretary enters the following ORDER:

1. The Secretary affirms and adopts the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the Professional Teachers Practices and Standards Commission (“Commission”). These Findings and Conclusions, attached as Exhibit 1, are hereby incorporated into this Order by this reference as if set forth in full.
2. The Commission found clear and convincing evidence Loken violated the following provision of the South Dakota Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers—ARSD 24:08:03:02 (8).
3. Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the teaching certificate of Jeromy Loken, Certificate #72664, issued on July 6, 2022, is hereby **permanently revoked**.
4. The Order and Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law are a public record pursuant to SDCL § 13-42-17.1.
5. Notification of this revocation is to be placed on the NASDTEC registry and be placed in Loken’s permanent certification file within the South Dakota Department of Education.

This constitutes final agency action and may be appealed to circuit court.

Dated this the 26th of June, 2025.



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



STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA)
 SS
COUNTY OF HUGHES)

SOUTH DAKOTA PROFESSIONAL
TEACHERS PRACTICES AND
STANDARDS COMMISSION

TRENT OSBORNE, Superintendent,
Ipswich Public School District 22-6,

Complainant,

vs.

JEROMY LOKEN,

Respondent.

PTPSC 2024-06

FINDINGS OF FACT,
CONCLUSIONS OF LAW,
AND ORDER

This matter came on for hearing pursuant to the provisions of SDCL § 13-43-28 before the South Dakota Professional Teachers Practices and Standards Commission. A public hearing was held on May 5, 2025, in MCR1, MacKay Building, 800 Governors Drive, Pierre, South Dakota.

The following members of the South Dakota Professional Teachers Practices and Standards Commission ("Commission") were present at the hearing: Chairperson Joy Robbins, Nichole Bowman, Caitlyn Graf, Christine Saltsman, and Kaye Wickard. Kendra Mulder-Mews counsel for the Commission and Hailey Spaid, Executive Secretary of the Commission, were also present. The Complainant, Trent Osborne was personally present with his counsel of record, Rodney Freeman. The Respondent, Jeromy Loken, failed to appear for the hearing despite proper notice.

Based upon the evidence presented at the hearing and the documents contained in the official file, the Commission makes the following Findings of Fact:

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Respondent, Jeromy Loken ("Loken"), is the holder of a valid South Dakota Teacher's Certificate Number 72664. He was issued this certificate on July 6, 2022, and it is set to expire on July 1, 2027.
2. On or about June 20, 2024, Trent Osborne, Superintendent, of Ipswich Public School District 22-6 ("Complainant"), filed a complaint against Loken on his own behalf and on the behalf of the School Board of Education.
3. The Complaint alleged that Loken violated the following section(s) of the Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers:

- a. ARSD 24:08:03:02(8) which provides that in fulfilling their obligation to the public, educators shall act as follows: exemplify high moral standards by not engaging in or becoming a party to such activities as fraud, embezzlement, theft, deceit, moral turpitude, gross immorality, sexual contact with students, illegal drugs, or use of misleading or false statements.
4. On or about July 25, 2024, Loken filed a Response with the commission.
5. In his response Loken states:

“I believe that this process is premature, for several reasons. First none of the allegation’s stem from any actions or happenings that would have occurred on any school grounds or facilities. Secondly, I am currently unable to present any findings or discovery as either myself or my lawyer has not been presented any information for more than 31 days following initial arrest, which is very unusual. Also, the protection order that was filed against me was dismissed. And lastly, the 14th amendment of the constitution allows for every person due process of the law. Due process generally means the government can not deprive you of your freedom or property unless they follow the proper procedures. Through statutes and court decisions a person’s right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty is fundamental to due process. Therefore, it is my recommendation that this is tabled until the end of the hearing or trial when all the facts of the situation are presented, and this case is dropped, or a verdict is rendered.”
6. A due and proper Notice of Hearing was served on the parties setting a hearing for October 3, 2024.
7. On September 9, 2024, the Commission received a letter from Complainant requesting that the October 3, 2024, hearing be continued until after Loken’s November trial date. The continuance request was granted.
8. A due and proper Notice of Hearing was served on the parties setting a hearing for May 5, 2025.
9. Loken failed to appear for the Hearing.
10. A public hearing on this matter was held on May 5, 2025.
11. Loken was employed by the Ipswich School District as the industrial arts and PE teacher. He was employed in that position for two years.
12. On June 5, 2024, a staff member approached Complainant to tell him there were “cop cars” at Loken’s residence over the weekend.
13. On June 6, 2024, Complainant received a phone call from a sheriff’s deputy informing him that they were pursuing an active complaint against Loken and they may need to see the school-issued laptop.

14. Complainant did not receive any further information from the sheriff's office but began receiving phone calls from news reporters.
15. On June 11, 2024, Complainant learned that Loken was being formally charged for rape of a child under 13 and stalking.
16. The victim was not a student of the Ipswich School District.
17. Complainant wrote a letter to Loken informing him that it would be his recommendation at the special board meeting on June 13, 2024, to suspend him with pay through the end of the 23'-24' school year and suspend him without pay for the next school year.
18. On June 18, 2024, indictment proceedings were held for the allegations of first degree rape of a victim younger than 13, sexual exploitation of a minor and sexual contact with a child under 18 by a person in authority.
19. Loken was indicted by a grand jury in June of 2024.
20. At the conclusion of a trial, Loken was found guilty to the charge of sexual exploitation of a minor and sexual contact with a child under 18 while being in a position of authority.
21. Loken was sentenced to four years in the penitentiary where he is currently serving time.
22. Following the guilty verdict, Complainant made a recommendation to the School Board of Education that Loken's contract be nonrenewed for the upcoming school year. Those recommendations were adopted.
23. Loken failed to exemplify high moral standards by engaging in acts of moral turpitude and gross immorality.
24. The evidence presented to the Commission and all reasonable inferences therefrom demonstrate that Loken violated ARSD 24:08:03:02(8).
25. Any findings of fact improperly denotated as a conclusion of law is hereby incorporated as a finding of fact.

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact, the Commission hereby issues the following Conclusions of Law:

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

26. The Commission has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to SDCL §§ 13-43-28, 13-43-28.1, SDCL Ch. 1-26, and the Administrative Rules of South Dakota, Chapters 24:08:03 and 24:08:04:01.
27. The burden of proof in this matter as a contested case hearing is clear and convincing. *In Re: Setliff*, 2002 SD 58, 245 N.W.2d 601, 605.

28. The South Dakota Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers provides as ARSD 24:08:03:02 that in fulfilling their obligation to the public, educators shall act as follows:

- (8) Exemplify high moral standards by not engaging in or becoming a party to such activities as fraud, embezzlement, theft, deceit, moral turpitude, gross immorality, sexual contact with students, illegal drugs, or use of misleading or false statements.

29. Clear and convincing evidence exists that Loken violated ARSD 24:08:03:02(8).

30. Any conclusions of law improperly denoted as a finding of fact is hereby incorporated as a conclusion of law.

Based upon the foregoing Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law, the Commission hereby issues the following Order:

ORDER

ORDERED that this matter be referred to the Secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education for proceedings to permanently revoke the teaching certificate of Jeromy Loken as provided for in SDCL § 13-43-28.1. It is further

ORDERED that a copy of the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order be provided to the Secretary of South Dakota Department of Education for placement on the National Association of the State of Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) clearinghouse and that it remains with the Department's permanent certification file. It is further

ORDERED that a copy of the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order be sent to the parties herein. It is further

ORDERED that the Department may release the Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Order to the certificate office of any state in which respondent holds or applies for the certificate.

Dated this 12th day of June, 2025.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS PRACTICES
AND STANDARDS COMMISSION

By: 
Joy Robbins, Chair