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IN THE COURT OF APPEALS OF NORTH CAROLINA

No. COA25-355

Filed 17 September 2025

Catawba County, Nos. 22JT000091-170, 23JT000056-170

IN THE MATTER OF:

E.H.T. and E.B.L.,

Minor Juveniles

Appeal by respondent-father from judgment and order entered 13 January 2025 by Judge Scott D. Conrad in Catawba County District Court. Heard in the Court of Appeals 14 August 2025.

*Parent Defender Wendy C. Sotolongo, Esq., by Senior Assistant Parent Defender J. Lee Gilliam for respondent-appellant mother.*

*Edward Eldred for respondent-appellant father.*

*K&L Gates, LLP, by Sophie Goodman, for Guardian ad Litem.*

*No brief for petitioner-appellee.*

PER CURIAM.

Respondent-appellants (“Father” and “Mother”) appeal from the termination of parental rights (“TPR”) order. Father’s counsel and Mother’s counsel have each

filed a no-merit brief under Rule 3.1(e) of our Rules of Appellate Procedure. Under Rule 3.1(e), counsel filing a no-merit brief is required to “identify any issues in the record on appeal that arguably support the appeal and must state why those issues lack merit or would not alter the ultimate result.” N.C. R. App. P. 3.1(e) (2023).

Here, counsel for Mother and counsel for Father have each fully complied with all the requirements of Rule 3.1(e) and identified as an issue for our independent review: incapability. This Court conducts an independent review of the issues raised in the no-merit brief. *In re L.E.M.*, 372 N.C. 396, 402 (2019). “[T]he text of Rule 3.1([e]) plainly contemplates appellate review of the issues contained in a no-merit brief.” *Id.*

We have reviewed the issue raised by Father’s counsel and Mother’s counsel and “are satisfied that the trial court's order terminating [Father’s and Mother’s] parental rights is supported by clear, cogent, and convincing evidence and is based on proper legal grounds.” *In re K.M.S.*, 380 N.C. 56, 59 (2022). Accordingly, we affirm the trial court’s order.

AFFIRMED.

Panel consisting of Chief Judge DILLON and Judges ARROWOOD and GRIFFIN.

Report per Rule 30(e).