

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATE OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
BETHANY CHAPPLE : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 476-05/98-157

At its meeting of May 14, 1998, the State Board of Examiners reviewed information received from the Division of Criminal Justice indicating that on November 3, 1995, respondent Bethany Chapple pled guilty to fourth degree child abuse and fourth degree criminal sexual contact in Hudson County Criminal Court. As a result of such conviction, Respondent was sentenced to five years probation, ordered to forfeit all professional licenses, undergo counseling and perform 250 hours of community service. Moreover, Chapple was forever disqualified from holding any position of honor, trust or profit under this state or any of its administrative or political subdivisions pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:51-2c. Upon review of the above-mentioned information, at its May 1998 meeting the State Board of Examiners voted to issue an Order to Show Cause to Chapple. Chapple currently holds a Teacher of Physical Education certificate.

The Order to Show Cause was mailed to Respondent by regular and certified mail on June 9, 1998. The certified mail return receipt card was signed and returned. The regular mail copy was not returned. The Order provided that if Respondent desired to file an Answer to the Order such Answer must be filed within twenty (20) days. Chapple did not file an Answer to the Order to Show Cause. Chapple currently holds a Teacher of Physical Education certificate.

Since Chapple failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause, the State Board of Examiners determines that the charges in the Order are admitted for purposes of the hearing process. The issue before the State Board of Examiners in this matter, therefore, is to determine whether Chapple's criminal conviction and subsequent permanent disqualification present just

cause to act against his teaching certificate pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.6(a)2. We find that they do.

A teaching certificate confers upon an individual a trust that should be inviolate: the care and custody of school children. Tenure Hearing of Sammons, 1972 S.L.D. 302, 321. Chapple's destruction of that trust in so heinous a manner leaves no doubt that he is unfit to remain in the classroom. Tenure of Blasco, OAL Dkt. EDU 3842-79 (July 15, 1980), mod. Comm'r of Ed. (August 28, 1980), mod. St. Bd. of Ed. (Feb. 4, 1981). Moreover, he should no longer have access to children as a teacher even after his probation ends. The forfeiture of his teaching position in Bayonne ensures that children in that city are protected. Although the Legislature recognized that permanent forfeiture of any position of honor, trust or profit will protect others, only revocation of Chapple's teaching certificate will provide such protection to all of New Jersey's children.

Accordingly, it is therefore ORDERED that Bethany Chapple's Teacher of Physical Education certificate be revoked on this 24th day of September 1998. It is further ORDERED that Chapple return his certificate to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Licensing, CN 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within fifteen (15) days of receipt of this letter.

Secretary
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing: November 6, 1998

Appeals may be made to the State Board of Education pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-28.

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