

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CERTIFICATE OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
WILLIAM GREEN : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 506-01/99-213

This case arose when the State Board of Examiners received information from the Middlesex County Superintendent of Schools indicating that William Green had presented a fraudulent Teacher of Mathematics certificate in order to obtain employment in the South Amboy Public School District. In August 1994, personnel in the Office of Licensing and Credentials issued Green a Teacher of Mathematics Certificate of Eligibility, which authorized him to teach in the Provisional Teacher Program/Alternate Route. That Certificate of Eligibility bore the number 00141925. When Green applied for a position in South Amboy, he submitted a standard Teacher of Mathematics certificate with the same number as that of the Certificate of Eligibility he received in 1994. Each certificate the Office of Licensing and Credentials issues bears a different certificate number. In addition, the bogus certificate bears the title "STANDARD CERTIFICATION" in upper case letters that is not the format or title for computer generated standard certificates issued by the Office of Licensing and Credentials. Based upon the foregoing information, at its meeting of January 21, 1999, the State Board of Examiners issued Green an Order to Show Cause why his properly held Teacher of Mathematics Certificate of Eligibility should not be revoked or suspended.

The Order to Show Cause was mailed to Green by regular and certified mail on February 24, 1999. The Order provided that an Answer must be filed within twenty (20) days. Green's Answer was received on March 22, 1999.

In his Answer Green denied that he had ever applied to the South Amboy School District for a job in 1998. (Answer, ¶ 2). He admitted that he had never been issued a standard Teacher of Mathematics certificate. (Answer, ¶ 4). He confirmed that he held a Teacher of Mathematics Certificate of Eligibility. (Answer, ¶ 1).

Thereafter, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.6(a)1, on September 24, 1999, the Board of Examiners sent Green a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that, since it appeared that no material facts were in dispute, respondent had an opportunity to submit written arguments on the issue of whether the conduct addressed in the Order to Show Cause constituted conduct unbecoming a certificate holder. It also advised Green that, upon review of the charges against him and the legal arguments tendered in his defense, the State Board of Examiners would determine if the conduct warranted action against his certificate. If so, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. The certified mail copy of the hearing notice was returned unclaimed. The regular mail copy was never returned. Green never responded to the hearing notice.

On December 23, 1999, the Board of Examiners advised Green by regular and certified mail that he had an additional ten days to respond to the hearing notice. Once again the certified mail copy was returned unclaimed and the regular mail copy was not returned.

At its meeting of April 6, 2000, the State Board of Examiners reviewed all of the information before it regarding Green's conduct. The Board determined that no material disputes existed relating to Green's conduct since Green never denied that he was not entitled to a standard Teacher of Mathematics certificate. Moreover, although he claimed that he never applied for a position in South Amboy, the Board of Examiners had his application letter and submissions before it. Furthermore, Green never alleged that anyone else had forged his certificate. Indeed, he even admitted that the only certificate he possessed was his certificate of eligibility. Based upon all of these uncontested facts, the Board of Examiners proceeded to hear the matter directly.

The issue before the State Board of Examiners in this matter, therefore, is whether Green's conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, represents just cause to act against Respondent's certificate pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.6(a)1. The State Board of Examiners finds that it does.

In this case, Green has presented a bogus certificate in order to obtain employment. The Office of Licensing has no record that it issued Green a standard Teacher of Mathematics certificate. The State Board of Examiners may revoke or suspend the certification of any certificate holder on the basis of

demonstrated inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher or other just cause. N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.4. The system of certification in this State ensures the public that each certificate holder is properly qualified for the position held. Any certificate fraudulently obtained “demeans the value of all certificates” and “harms the integrity of the teacher certification system.” In re Williams, No. 214-2/94 (Examiners Dec. 14, 1995)(decision on remand).

Although Green alleges that he never applied for a position in South Amboy, the record proves otherwise. An application letter, resume and the bogus certificate were all submitted to the South Amboy Board of Education. These documents all bear Green’s name and the certificate bears his Social Security number. Thus the statement that he never applied for the job is not credible. Furthermore, the Office of Licensing and Credentials has no record of issuing a standard certificate to Green, a fact that he admits. Green’s inability to explain the existence and submission of the bogus certificate is sufficient to impute culpability. See In re Shaffer, 92 N.J.A.R. 2D (EDE) 1, 2 (St. Bd. May 2, 1991)(teacher argued unsuccessfully that proofs against him were hearsay and that his certificate was altered by unknown others but not by him).

Thus, the only issue that remains in this matter is the imposition of the appropriate sanction. In the past the Board of Examiners has ordered revocation of an individual’s legitimately-held certificates where a certificate had been altered in order to secure employment in an area for which the individual was not certified. See, e.g., In re Shaffer, supra, (New Jersey teacher altered Pennsylvania certificate to include Teacher of the Handicapped authorization); State Bd. of Examiners v. Kaufman, Dkt. No. 226-8/93-15 (Examiners Feb. 24, 1994)(health teacher fabricated certificate to seek employment as a school psychologist); In re Certificate of Nieves, OAL Dkt. No. EDE 7908-88, adopted (Examiners March 3, 1989)(teacher of cosmetology presented falsified elementary education certificate). This case presents similar concerns. A teacher who knowingly alters his certificate in order to teach a subject matter for which he is not qualified does a great disservice to his students and his school district. That individual has no place in a classroom.

Accordingly, it is therefore ORDERED that William Green's Teacher of Mathematics Certificate of Eligibility be revoked on this 6th day of April, 2000. It is further ORDERED that Green 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 decision.

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Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing: September 26, 2000

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

IBG:MZ:kb:Green William rev based on fraud