

November 3, 2005

Mr. Jefferey Skolnick

Re: In the Matter of the Appeal of Jefferey Skolnick
Docket No. 0506-143

Dear Mr. Skolnick:

As you are aware, you have appealed the determination that you are ineligible for teacher certification because you lack the requisite 2.75 grade point average (GPA). At its meeting of November 3, 2005, the State Board of Examiners reviewed the information that you provided in support of your appeal. After careful consideration, the Board voted to deny your appeal because the documentation that you submitted failed to prove that your grades meet the requisite GPA.

You contended in your appeal that you completed your coursework in the summer of 2004, prior to the September 1, 2004 effective date of the new 2.75 GPA requirement, notwithstanding that you did not graduate until October, 2004. While the Board understands your position, the governing regulation requires that students graduate prior to September 1, 2004 in order to come under the 2.5 GPA requirement. Since you did not graduate until October, 2004, you must meet the higher standard.

The intent of the GPA requirement is to enhance teacher quality in New Jersey. The State Board of Education placed the GPA requirement in regulation; all candidates must therefore meet that standard. The State Board of Examiners is unable to issue teaching certificates to individuals who do not have the requisite grade point average. Nor does the Board have the authority to waive the requirement or substitute applicants' life experiences for the grade requirement, regardless of the applicants' circumstances.

There are two options that you may wish to consider that may further your goal of becoming a teacher in New Jersey. The regulation governing the GPA requirement permits prospective teachers to meet the grade point requirement with either a baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate end-of-program GPA. Accordingly, the options permit you to present either the GPA from a graduate degree or the GPA achieved at completion of a State-approved post-baccalaureate certification program that has a minimum of 13 credits. You should be aware, however, that the GPA from any degree or post-baccalaureate certification programs completed after September 1, 2004 has to be 2.75 in order for the department to accept it in lieu of your undergraduate GPA.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Higgins, Acting Secretary
State Board of Examiners

RRH/AGL/skolnickjefferey-GPA appeal

Date of mailing:

Certified and regular mail

This matter may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A-3.