

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATE OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
G. STEPHEN ZELTMAN : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 1011-233

At its meeting of July 28, 2011, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information regarding G. Stephen Zeltman. On May 17, 2005 Zeltman pled guilty in South Carolina to Criminal Sexual Conduct With a Minor-Victim Under 16 Years of Age, 2nd Degree. Zeltman was sentenced to six years in prison. As a result of the conviction, Zeltman's teaching certificates were revoked in New York, North Carolina and South Carolina. In New Jersey, Zeltman currently holds a Teacher of Music certificate, issued in December 1979. Upon review of the above information, at its September 22, 2011 meeting, the Board voted to issue Zeltman an Order to Show Cause.

The Board sent Zeltman the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on January 10, 2012. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned. The regular mail copy was not returned. The Order provided that Zeltman must file an Answer within 30 days. Zeltman did not file an Answer. Thereafter, on March 8, 2012, the Board sent Zeltman another notice by certified and regular mail providing him an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail copy was returned as unclaimed. The regular mail copy was not returned. Zeltman did not respond to the second notice.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.7(e)*, on March 27, 2012, the Board sent Zeltman a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that it appeared that no material facts were in dispute. Thus, Zeltman was offered 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 as well as arguments with regard to the appropriate sanction in the event that the Board determined to take action against his certificate. It also explained that upon review of the charges against him and the legal arguments tendered in his defense, the Board would determine if Zeltman's conduct warranted action against his certificate. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Zeltman was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction

issue. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Zeltman did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter, therefore, is whether Zeltman's conviction and the revocation of his New York, North Carolina and South Carolina licenses constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder. Since Zeltman failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause or the hearing notice, at its meeting of June 21, 2012, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The Board determined that no material facts related to Zeltman's offenses were in dispute since he never denied that he had been convicted of the offenses charged and had been sentenced accordingly. Nor did he deny that his New York, North Carolina and South Carolina teaching certificates had been revoked. Thus, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.7(h)*. It is therefore ORDERED that the charges in the Order to Show Cause are deemed admitted for the purpose of this proceeding.

The Board must now determine whether Zeltman's convictions and the revocation of his New York, North Carolina and South Carolina certificates, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provide just cause to act against his New Jersey certificate pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5*. The Board finds that they do.

The Board 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. 6A:9-17.5*. "Teachers... are professional employees to whom the people have entrusted the care and custody of ... school children. This heavy duty requires a degree of self-restraint and controlled behavior rarely requisite to other types of employment." *Tenure of Sammons*, 1972 *S.L.D.* 302, 321. Zeltman's acts of Criminal Sexual Conduct With a Minor-Victim Under 16 Years of Age are inexcusable for any individual, teacher or not.

The Commissioner has long held that teachers serve as role models for their students. Clearly, a teacher convicted of Criminal Sexual Conduct With a Minor-Victim Under 16 Years of Age cannot claim status as a role model to anyone. Zeltman's conviction therefore warrants revocation. *In the Matter of*

the Certificates of Kevin Jordan, Dkt. No. A-0155-08T3 (App. Div. October 5, 2009) (Unpublished Opinion).

Accordingly, on June 21, 2012, the Board voted to revoke G. Stephen Zeltman's Teacher of Music certificate. On this 26th day of July 2012 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that the revocation of Zeltman's certificate be effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Zeltman return his certificate to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Licensure, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within 30 days of the mailing date of this decision.

Robert R. Higgins, Secretary
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing:

Appeals may be made to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38.4.