



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

KEVIN DEHMER
Acting Commissioner

STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS MINUTES OF MEETING VIRTUALLY VIA MS TEAMS May 23, 2024

Present: Mr. Abdul Saleem Hasan
Ms. Kristen Ludman
Ms. Dayna Desiderio Orlak
Ms. Melissa Pearce
Dr. Thelma Ramsey

Absent: Mr. Derek Jess

Others: Ms. Rani Singh, Secretary
Ryan Silver, Deputy Attorney General
Laurie Fichera, Coordinator, State Board of Examiners

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA MS TEAMS.

This meeting was duly noticed pursuant to the requirements of law. In compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-10a, the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, and publication in Trenton Times and Star Ledger in New Jersey. Notice of the virtual access information was provided online on the Department's website, via memorandum to the Secretary of State and several other individuals and entities and is available at the physical conference room where the meeting has been conducted prior to the public health crisis.

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dayna Desiderio Orlak, Acting Chairperson, who read the appropriate notice that the meeting complied with the Open Public Meetings Act. She also read the notice provisions regarding access to the virtual meeting.

Ms. Kristen Ludman moved to adopt the minutes of the April 11, 2024, meeting (Regular and Executive Session). Ms. Melissa Pearce seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by a vote of 5-0.

Individual Credentials Review Presentations

The following applicants attended the meeting to respond to any questions from the Board regarding their applications:

Jennifer DiGiorgio
Brittany Harden
Sam Koshy
Mary Michael
Andrew Scott Nelson
Nicole Velba

The following applicants were unable to attend the meeting.

Soungchul David Cho

The Board didn't have any questions for any of the candidates.

Credentials Review Consent List

Dr. Thelma Ramsey made a motion to table items E and G— Christina Kavaja and Margarita Lopez – on the credentials review consent list and Ms. Ludman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by a vote of 5-0.

Dr. Ramsey made a motion to adopt the decisions on all other items on the credentials review consent list, except items e and g (that is items a through d, item f and items h through j), of the candidates who were present at the April 11, 2024 meeting, and Ms. Ludman seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by a vote of 5-0.

Dr. Ramsey made a motion to adopt the decisions in items k through m on the credentials review consent list, candidates who were not present at the April 11, 2024 meeting, and Ms. Pearce seconded the motion. The motion was adopted by a vote of 5-0.

The candidates in the following cases were present at the April 11, 2024 meeting. The Board adopted the following decisions:

Jennifer Auer

Standard Teacher of Middle School with Mathematics subject matter endorsement - The Board granted the certificate.

Standard Teacher of Middle School with Language Arts subject matter endorsement certificate – The Board partially granted, as to the completion of a course in child and early adolescent development as aligned with standard two of

professional standards for teachers at N.J.A.C. 6A:9B:3.3(a)(2), per N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-11.9(a)(2) and the Board denied, as to one semester-hour credit in English.

Richard Bogath	Teacher of Comprehensive Business Certificate of Eligibility – The Board partially granted three (3) semester hour credit course in computer applications and denied as to the twenty-one semester-hour credits in business, with nine at the advanced level of study.
Sofia De Jesus	Standard School Counselor certificate -The Board partially granted. Her work experience is equivalent to three (3) semester hour credits in counseling including study in theory and procedures of individual and group counseling and is denied as to the remaining requirements. The Board denied the certificate.
Noa Feldberg	Teacher of English Limited Certificate of Eligibility– The Board denied the certificate.
Christina Kavaja	Supervisor certificate – The Board tabled this application.
Maria Lago	Standard Teacher of Spanish Non-Citizen certificate – The Board denied the certificate.
Margarita Lopez	Supervisor certificate – The Board tabled this application.
Ashley Sarmiento	Teacher of Cosmetology/Hair Styling Certificate of Eligibility – The Board granted the certificate.
Jibril Smitherman	Teacher of Cosmetology/Hair Styling Certificate of Eligibility Provisional Renewal – The Board denied the Provisional Renewal.
Christine Sullivan	Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing – The Board denied the certificate.

The candidates in the following cases were not present at the May 23, 2024 meeting. The Board adopted the following decision:

Cassandra Capadona	Principal Certificate of Eligibility – The Board granted the certificate.
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Anthony Merendino	Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility – The Board denied the certificate.
Holly Romeo	Teacher of Preschool Through Grade 3 Certificate of Eligibility (CE) and Teacher of Students with Disabilities Certificate of Eligibility – The Board denied the certificates.

Legal Committee Report

There was one hearing on the agenda, *IMO the Certificates of Mr. Brian Morgan*. Mr. Morgan represented himself and presented his statement to the Board.

Ms. Orlak made a motion to go into executive session to receive legal advice regarding matters on the Legal Consent Order portion of the agenda, which was duly seconded by Mr. Hasan and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0. The Board went into closed session at 10:53 am.

The Board returned to the public session following a motion by Ms. Ludman, seconded by Dr. Ramsey and carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0. The Board returned to the public portion of the meeting at 11:57 am.

On return to the public meeting, Ms. Orlak turned the meeting over to Ms. Ludman to continue the Legal committee report.

The Board then took the following action regarding items on the agenda:

Marisa A. D'Ambola-Gompertz– By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order in this matter.

Ryan W. Tencza – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order in this matter.

Sharon Vadovic - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order in this matter.

Alim A. Hasan – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted given that no material facts are in dispute and the level and nature of conduct is unbecoming of a teacher, the appropriate response is revocation.

Christopher R. Icochea – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted given that no material facts are in dispute and the level and nature of conduct is unbecoming of a teacher, the appropriate response is revocation.

Craig A. Levin – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted given that no material facts are in dispute and the level and nature of conduct and crime is unbecoming of a teacher, and due

to being disqualified from employment with any institution under the supervision of the Department of Education, the appropriate penalty is revocation.

Steven Brooks – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based on level and nature of conduct and crime and due to being disqualified from employment with any institution under the supervision of the Department of Education.

Natakie Chestnut-Lee– By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why her certificate(s) should not be revoked based on level and nature of conduct.

Jill (Albrecht) Cichanowsky - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to seal the record.

Jill (Albrecht) Cichanowsky - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why her certificate(s) should not be suspended based on level and nature of conduct.

Nataly Diaz – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based on level and nature of conduct and crime and due to action against out of state licenses.

Rafael Dossantos-Rocha- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to seal the record.

Rafael Dossantos-Rocha - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why her certificate(s) should not be revoked based on level and nature of conduct.

Gail A.Grube- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why her certificate(s) should not be revoked based on level and nature of conduct.

Kenya Miller- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to block the application for certification.

James Geist - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to block the application for certification.

Gary Olaff, - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to take no action.

Adam M. Winter - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to take no action.

Catherine (Mitchko) Bannister - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Luisa Blanco - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Mulan I. Burgess - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Joseph M. DePuglio - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Patrick Dunne - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Dominic Salvatoriello - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Matthew V. Swajkowski - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Fayez S Yassa - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Joshua A. Yoder - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of licenses with the same force and conditions as a revocation.

Casey (Birchett) Blaha - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law with the modification of the penalty to a 2-year suspension.

Gina Cinotti - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law with the modification of the penalty to a 1-year suspension.

Myron Fairley - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law in this matter.

Christopher Faley- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the finding from the Office of Administrative Law in this matter.

Motjaba Kahn - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law with the modification of the penalty to a 6-month suspension.

Edward Meier- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to remand to back to the Office of Administrative Law for further explanation and clarification of the credibility findings and whether or not the expert testimony constitutes a net opinion.

Zachery Smith - By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to adopt the finding from the Office of Administrative Law in this matter.

David Niglio- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of license.

Peter James Naumowicz- By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to take no action.

Legal Consent List

Ms. Ludman then made a motion to adopt items a through j on the legal consent list below. Ms. Pearce seconded, and the motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Orders to Show Cause

- a. Andrew Fantasia
- b. Spencer J. Frohwirth
- c. Carlos Menendez
- d. Vanessa Morrison
- e. JeanMary Ovide

Revocations/Suspensions

- a. Candice O. Bland
- b. Erika Caceres
- c. Romie Lane Doss
- d. Kenneth E. Fellows III
- e. Shannon M. Kennedy
- f. Kimberly Killion
- g. Hector Montes
- h. Joseph Piparo

Other

- i. Amy Lowers – block
- j. Jacqueline Nisbett – block

Old Business

None.

New Business

None.

Secretary's Report

None.

Adjournment

Ms. Ludman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was duly seconded by Ms. Pearce, and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 12:12pm.

The next scheduled regular public meeting of the State Board of Examiners will be held on June 27, 2024, either in the first-floor conference room, 100 River View Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey or virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Minutes prepared by Laurie Fichera

Minutes certified by Rani Singh, Secretary