

100-21

Agency Dkt. No. 36-3/21

**New Jersey Commissioner of Education**  
**Final Decision**

In the Matter of the Tenure Hearing of Lauren Puglisi, School District of the Township of Gloucester, Camden County.

For the Petitioner, Daniel Long, Esq.

No appearance by or on behalf of Respondent, Lauren Puglisi

This matter was opened before the Commissioner of Education on March 5, 2021, through tenure charges of excessive absenteeism and unbecoming conduct certified by John Bilodeau, Superintendent of the Gloucester Township School District (“District”), together with supporting evidence against respondent, Lauren Puglisi, a tenured teacher in the District’s employ. The District provided respondent with written notice of such certification at the respondent’s last known address, via certified mail, on February 24, 2021.

On March 9, 2021, the Commissioner directed the respondent, via regular mail to file an answer to the charges. This communication clearly provided notice to respondent that, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:3-5.3 and 6A:3-5.4*, an individual against whom tenure charges are certified “*shall have 15 days from the day such charges are filed with the Commissioner to file a written response to the charges with the Commissioner,*” and that failure to answer within the prescribed period would – absent granting of an extension for good cause shown – result in the charges being deemed admitted. No reply to the tenure charges was received from or on behalf of the respondent.

The certified tenure charges and statement of supporting evidence filed by the District in this matter indicate that the respondent has a history of excessive absenteeism. The respondent was absent for 88.5 days during the 2019-2020 school year and between September 2021 through January 13, 2021 the respondent was absent for 55 days. Deeming the allegations to be admitted and noting that the respondent has failed to respond to the charges certified against her, the Commissioner finds that the District's charges of excessive absenteeism and unbecoming conduct have been proven and warrants the respondent's dismissal. Accordingly, summary decision is hereby granted to the District, and the respondent is dismissed from her tenured position with the District.

IT IS SO ORDERED.\*



ACTING COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Date of Decision: May 4, 2021  
Date of Mailing: May 4, 2021

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\* This decision may be appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-9.1. Under *N.J.Ct.R.* 2:4-1(b), a notice of appeal must be filed with the Appellate Division within 45 days from the date of mailing of this decision.