

***Before the School Ethics Commission
OAL Docket Nos.: EEC 04630-22 and 10863-22
SEC Docket Nos.: C75-21 and C37-22
(Consolidated)
Final Decision***

***In the Matter of Christine Skurbe,
Monroe Township Board of Education, Middlesex County,
Respondent***

Procedural History

This matter arises from two separate but related Complaints that were filed with the School Ethics Commission (Commission). First, in C74-21, a Complaint was filed with the Commission on November 8, 2021, by Steven Riback (Complainant Riback), alleging that Christine Skurbe (Respondent), a member of the Monroe Township Board of Education (Board), violated the School Ethics Act (Act), *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq.* More specifically, the Complaint avers that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, as well as *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)* and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* of the Code of Ethics for School Board Members (Code).

On December 7, 2021, Respondent filed a Motion to Dismiss in Lieu of Answer (Motion to Dismiss), and Complainant filed a response to the Motion to Dismiss on December 13, 2021. At its special meeting on February 25, 2022, the Commission considered the filings in this matter and, at its meeting on March 22, 2022, the Commission voted to deny the Motion to Dismiss in its entirety and Respondent was directed to file an Answer. At its meeting on April 26, 2022, the Commission considered Respondent's Answer and, at its meeting on May 24, 2022, the Commission voted to find probable cause for *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)*. Based on its finding of probable cause, and as further detailed below, the Commission voted to transmit the within matter to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for a hearing. The matter was transmitted to the OAL on May 31, 2022.

Next, in C37-22, a Complaint was filed on April 1, 2022, by Brian Fabiano (Complainant Fabiano), alleging that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, as well as *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* of the Code. At its special meeting on October 17, 2022, the Commission considered the filings in this matter, and at its regularly scheduled meeting on November 22, 2022, the Commission voted to find probable cause for the allegations that *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* were violated. Based on its finding of probable cause, the Commission voted to transmit the above-captioned matter to the OAL for a hearing. The matter was transmitted to the OAL on November 29, 2022.

At the OAL, the matters were consolidated with consent of the parties and heard on March 22, 2024, and the record was closed at that time. Thereafter, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) issued an Initial Decision on March 20, 2025, finding that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* and recommending

a penalty of reprimand. Complainants and Respondent filed exceptions and replies to the exceptions to the Initial Decision, in accordance with *N.J.A.C. 1:1-18.4*.

At its meeting on June 17, 2025, the Commission considered the full record in this matter. Thereafter, at its meeting on July 22, 2025, the Commission voted to adopt the Initial Decision's findings of fact, the legal conclusion that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* and the recommended penalty of reprimand.

II. Initial Decision

The ALJ submitted the following undisputed facts:

- Respondent was elected to the Board in November 2020 and was elected as Board President in January 2022.
- Prior to her election to the Board, Respondent was an active member of the community and was at times at odds with the then existing Board and administration.
- Respondent was the administrator of the FB page, "Monroe Township Watchdog" and "Unity in Community" where she and other community members would post things related to the township and the Board.
- Complainants in both matters allege that Respondent posted comments/information without providing the requisite disclaimer, and therefore, violated the Act and the Code.

Initial Decision at 2-3

Based on the evidentiary evidence and witness testimony of Brian Fabiano, Rupa Siegal and Respondent, the ALJ issued the following findings of fact:

The following Facebook posts were admitted into evidence by the ALJ:

Monroe Watchdog October 1, 2021

And let's be clear, the Board does actively discuss what to do with the overcrowding wand with Applegarth. The "just build new schools" mentality go us where we are, 2, not 1, but 2 referendums failed that were to build a new school. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. Not its [(sic)] fine to look at alternatives – and we are!

Let's look at who caused the issues and vote against her cronies getting elected to perpetuate the issues they cause.

No Disclaimer (P-1)

Monroe Watchdog October 5, 2021

Rupa Siegal/Richard Michael – you are not a teacher in Monroe you are Board of Ed Member. Are you sharing your knowledge of the negotiation committee you sat on?

Is this what we can expect if you are on town council – sympathetic head nodding and toxic positivity at meeting all while having no intention to fight for fair funding for Monroe.

We are not “poor old Monroe” we are MONROE STRONG!

And her name is Gazala Bohra – stop calling her a selfish woman. That title belongs to you!

I’m speaking as a private citizen and these are my opinions as a resident and a tax payer. (P-2)

Monroe Township Unity October 2, 2021

How dare Rupa Siegel pose for a picture on the very corner where she insisted, as a Board of Education member, that this was safe to build a new school”

Vote Time Eosso and stop Rupa Seigel from lying and hurting any more kids!

Speaking as private citizen (R-4)

Monroe Township Unity October 17, 2021

Rupa Seigel accepting campaign contributions from builders and trucking unions while she is a sitting BOE members shows how much she really cares” about the community. [(sic)] She SOLD OUT our kids for campaign contributions and she will continue to SELL OUT Monroe! She wants to stop the truck traffic – by accepting money form [(sic)] truck unions.... Don’t let her make a fool of you. VOTE for CHANGE in NOV...or you will pay later with higher tax bills, more houses that will cripple the schools and MORE TRUCKS!

No disclaimer (P-6)

Monroe Township Unity in Community October 21, 2021

“Monroe has hit rock bottom! I am appalled with the misuse of our police department! We can’t get police officers to help manage the dangerous traffic situation at the HS drop off and pick up but its ok for them to make fake arrests with zero evidence no Miranda rights or even telling a person they are arrested.

Speaking as a private citizen and taxpayer who is fed up with local corruption hurting our community. These are my personal opinions and does not represent any official elected position. (P-8)

Watchdog Monroe, November 2, 2021

For the sake of our children, please get out and vote 2, 3 and 5 for the Board of Education

No disclaimer (P-17)

Monroe Watchdog, December 1, 2021

Something that the community might not realize –by appointing an internal acting superintendent the district is saying [(sic)] a substantial amount of money. An entire salaried point is eliminated until a permanent superintendent is hired. Benefits per employee is estimated over 30K a year so for the time being each month is substantial savings on benefits alone.

Another thing to note – the last 2 acting superintendents were internal appointees and did not have a doctorate degree. No external search was conducted by the previous boards for Acting Superintendent.

Virginia Ann is trying to stir up outrage on Sarah’s page – meanwhile the district is saying [(sic)] a lot of money with the decision to appoint an internal acting superintendent.

When you know the actual facts, it's clear that fiscally responsible decision [(sic)] are being made.

No disclaimer (P-18)

Monroe Watchdog, March 30, 2022

This is a private group dedicated to discussing everything going on in Monroe Township and how it impacts our community. Any board Member posting on his page is doing so as a private citizen as this group is not affiliated with the Board of Education. (P-20).

Monroe Watchdog, October 2021

\$283 million High School in Perth Amboy!

This is what Monroe's tax dollars goes to fun [(sic)]. We send over \$30 million out of Monroe each year to Trenton and we don't get back nearly enough to help us with school funding. So we are forced to pay for other schools to be build [(sic)] and our own!

Elect people in November that will fight for Monroe.

Ward 2: Vote for Tim Eosso

He wont's [(sic)] sit silently nodding his head sympathetically

Our students deserve "high quality education" too! (P-1)

Monroe Watchdog, October 2021

There is absolutely no reason to bring politics into our schools. We need BoE members who can make the best decision for what is educationally important and NOT what their party who got them elected wants them to do.

Please vote to keep politics out of our schools

Bohra, Fabiano, Rattner
United for Education (P-2)

Monroe Watchdog, October 2021

Rupa Siegel spreads lies and goes after kids! No one should be voting for her let alone running on the same ticket with her. Ward 2-VOTE Tim Eosso! (P-3)

Id. at 5-8

According to the ALJ, a “credibility determination regarding some of the critical facts” is required. *Id.* at 9. The ALJ maintains that the relevant facts in this case are not in dispute and the Facebook posts have been entered into evidence. *Ibid.* Further, the choice of accepting or rejecting witnesses’ testimony rests with the finder of fact and the testimony must not only come from the mouth of a credible witness, but must also be credible. Therefore, the ALJ further maintains that having had the opportunity to observe the witnesses, the testimony of Petitioner’s witnesses (Fabiano and Siegal) was sincere and credible; however, Respondent’s testimony was not credible and was inconsistent with the facts and documentation. *Ibid.* The ALJ notes that despite Respondent’s claims to the contrary, the posts were directly relevant to Board matters, many did not include a disclaimer, and some of the posts that did include a disclaimer were directly related to Board matters and/or were related to matters that she had specific knowledge of due to her position on the Board. Therefore, the ALJ finds Respondent was using or attempting to use her official position to secure advantages for the candidate or candidates that she supported in the upcoming election. *Id.* at 10. The ALJ further finds Respondent made personal references to Board matters that could have compromised the Board and surrendered her independent judgment as a Board member to support a particular political group. *Id.* at 10.

Legal Analysis and Conclusion

The ALJ cites In the Matter of Shaun Giordano, Lacy Township Board of Education (Initial Decision 4/27/23) and maintains that Respondent’s posts have a clear nexus to the Board and Respondent raised several issues related to Board business. *Id.* at 12. More specifically, the ALJ provides Respondent posted about: payment to an Acting Superintendent hired by the Board, the potential use of police force at the high school and denigrating the police for not assisting, a potential new site for the new school and fellow Board members, including her support for a candidate for council over another sitting Board member, implying that she has personal knowledge of the candidates due to her position on the Board. *Ibid.* The ALJ also states that the “the nature of these posts leaves no doubt that they are the opinions of a sitting Board member.” *Id.* at 13. Additionally, the ALJ stated “the use of a disclaimer in some of these posts is not dispositive, nor does it vitiate the nature of these posts.”

Therefore, the ALJ concludes, the Petitioner has met its burden of proof and the violation of *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e), and *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f) are sustained.

Penalty

The ALJ finds Respondent published several posts on several social media sites, which had the potential to compromise the Board, as well as secure an advantage for certain candidates. The ALJ notes, although a Board member is free to have opinions, these opinions must be balanced against the legal and ethical obligations as a Board member. Because this is Respondent's first infraction, and given the conduct in question, the ALJ recommends a reprimand.

III. Exceptions

Respondent's Exceptions

Respondent initially argues the ALJ's findings were not supported by the record, exceeded the scope of the issues as framed in the underlying complaints and the decision on probable cause finding, misconstrued the Commission's precedents on social media posts and cannot be reconciled with our State and federal courts' case law.

First, Respondent argues that the ALJ's formulation of the Act's limitations on board members' speech conflict with the First Amendment and the New Jersey Constitution. According to Respondent, she "exercised her well-established constitutional right to endorse candidates in the 2021 annual school election. Her messages did not disclose confidential district information or attempt to direct or influence any ongoing district operations. Their sole purpose was to encourage members of the community . . . It was core political speech in its purest form." Respondent further argues, "The assertion that elected school board members may not speak out on district-related matters in their official capacity as such, but only as private citizens, defies common sense and, more importantly, contradicts the U.S. Supreme Court's holdings in Wood and Bond." Respondent asserts that unlike the recent Donnerstag cases, she did not use her social media account "to promote action that was contrary to the Board's obligations under the law."

Second, Respondent maintains reasonable observers would not have believed Respondent was speaking for anyone other than herself. Respondent notes that although most of her posts had disclaimers, none were necessary because the community "would have no reason to believe she was speaking for the Board." Respondent further maintains her posts were not government pages, the format nor content would have suggested that she was speaking on behalf of the Board and she did not exploit "the official trappings of her office like the respondent in Discenza." Respondent contends that 23 of the 35 posts contained disclaimers, and the "remaining 12 were either so truncated that it is impossible to determine if a disclaimer was included, or had nothing to do with district matters." Respondent further contends the ALJ "cherry-picked a small number of these posts in isolation, ignoring the backdrop of these other posts." According to Respondent, the ALJ found her "guilty solely because her posts had a 'clear nexus' to 'the business of the board,' '[l]eft no doubt that they were the opinions of a sitting Board member[.]' and in the

ALJ's view, had the potential to 'compromise' the Board because they were viewed as incendiary or partisan."

Finally, Respondent asserts the ALJ's credibility determinations are not dispositive on any issue material to the case. Respondent further asserts "on a close reading," the ALJ did not find that Respondent's testimony was untruthful, but rather the ALJ rejected Respondent's conclusions "about the import of her various posts." Respondent further asserts that the ALJ did not mention in her decision that the Board was "sharply divided," nor that the other Board members' posts during that time did not include disclaimers, "two important and undisputed facts . . . that *all* of these Board members, including her, were speaking for themselves, not purporting to speak for the Board." Therefore, Respondent concludes the ALJ's decision "should be vacated, and . . . dismissed."

Petitioner's Exceptions

Petitioner only takes exception to the ALJ's recommendation of a reprimand. Petitioner argues that because Respondent is no longer a Board member a censure should be issued. According to Petitioner, Respondent "engaged in conduct which had the potential to compromise the Board and effect its integrity." Petitioner argues Respondent referenced the Board deliberations and business in her post to "advocate on behalf of her preferred candidate and disparage a fellow Board member, Respondent's actions brought her personal interests in direct conflict with her ethical obligations under the Act." Petitioner further argues Respondent's disclaimers were inconsistent. Therefore, Petitioner maintains Respondent "flagrantly ignored the Commission's long-standing disclaimer requirement," and therefore, Respondent should receive a censure.

Respondent's Response to Petitioner's Exceptions

Respondent reaffirms that she "should not suffer any penalty at all because she is not guilty of the charges against her." Therefore, the DAG's "argument for a censure is without merit and should be rejected."

Petitioner's Opposition to Respondent's Exceptions

Petitioner asserts that Respondent's arguments related to her free speech rights should be disregarded, because "[n]othing in the free speech jurisprudence . . . prohibits the State from maintaining the public trust in elected officials by requiring them to avoid using their official position for the gain of friends, family, or themselves." According to Petitioner, the Commission "has repeatedly addressed when a public official's speech amounts to an attempt to 'secure unwarranted privileges' by using their official position." Moreover, Petitioner asserts "the analysis hinges on 'whether a reasonable member of the public could perceive that the school official is speaking in his or her official capacity or pursuant to his or her official duties.'" Petitioner further asserts "[n]either the Act nor its interpreting decisions run afoul of the First Amendment." Petitioner argues that Respondent "misreads" Wood v. Georgia, as well as Bond v. Floyd, and notes "nothing in either case indicates that state laws which distinguish between speech made in one's private capacity, as opposed to one's official capacity, are factually valid."

Petitioner also argues that the issuance of a reprimand or censure “is insufficient to give rise to a First Amendment claim because it does not infringe on her free speech rights.” Petitioner notes that Respondent does not challenge the ALJ’s finding that “several of her posts lacked a disclaimer,” nor that the “posts at issue discussed Board matters and advocated for personal benefits to her preferred candidates.” Rather, Petitioner maintains Respondent “argues that the record lacks evidence to support the ALJ’s determination that [Respondent] spoke in her official capacity when she made her Facebook posts.” Petitioner asserts this argument is meritless and notes the ALJ’s decision was based on “competent, credible evidence of record,” related to 19 social media posts. Therefore, Petitioner contends the ALJ’s findings of fact and conclusions of law should be upheld; however, the penalty should be modified to a censure.

IV. Analysis

Upon a careful, thorough, and independent review of the record, the Commission agrees with the ALJ’s findings of fact and legal conclusion that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* and the recommended penalty of reprimand.

N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b) prohibits a school official from using or attempting to use her official position to secure unwarranted privileges, advantages or employment for herself, members of her immediate family or others.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)*, a board member must recognize that authority rests with the board and a board member shall not make any personal promises or take any action that may compromise the board.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)*, a board member must refuse to surrender independent judgment to special interest or partisan groups or use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends.

As a preliminary matter, the Commission finds it necessary to set forth the framework by which it will review the allegations in Count 3. The Commission has explained that in order for a social media post to be offered pursuant to official duties, there must be a sufficient nexus between the social media page and the role/membership on the Board. *Hodrinsky v. Faussette, Hasbrouck Heights Board of Education, Bergen County*, Docket No. C11-21 (August 30, 2021); *Donnerstag, et al. v. Borawski, Central Regional Board of Education, Ocean County*, Docket No. C20-22 (August 22, 2023) Additionally, as the Commission explained in *Aziz v. Nikitinsky et al., Monroe Township Board of Education, Middlesex County*, Docket No. C56-22 (October 17, 2022):

As a general matter, a school official does not violate the Act merely because he/she engages in social media activity. Instead, the Commission’s analysis is guided by whether a reasonable member of the public could perceive that the school official is speaking in his or her official capacity or pursuant to his or her official duties. Whether a school official is perceived as speaking in his or

her official capacity and pursuant to his or her official duties turns, in large part, on the content of the speech. If the speech in question has absolutely no correlation or relationship to the business of the Board and/or its operations and, therefore, could not possibly be regarded as a statement or position on behalf of the Board (as a body), a school official will not violate the Act. Conversely, if the speech in question *does* relate to the business of the Board and/or its operations, it is then reasonable for the reader to perceive the speech as being offered in an official capacity and pursuant to his or her official duties. Nonetheless, the filing party would still need to prove *all* elements of the cited provision of the Act ...

Moreover, the use of a disclaimer on social media can help to clarify whether an individual is speaking in his or her official capacity and pursuant to his or her official duties; however, the presence of a disclaimer is not dispositive. In previous advisory opinions and decisions, the Commission has stated that disclaimers such as, “this endorsement is [Board Member’s Name] personal one, and not as a member of the [Township] Board of Education, nor is the endorsement on behalf of the entire Board,” or “THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE MADE IN MY CAPACITY AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN, AND NOT IN MY CAPACITY AS A BOARD MEMBER. THESE STATEMENTS ARE ALSO NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BOARD OR ITS INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS, AND SOLELY REPRESENT MY OWN PERSONAL OPINIONS” would be appropriate. *Advisory Opinion A36-14* (October 29, 2014); [*I/M/O Treston, Randolph Township Board of Education, Morris County*, Docket No. C71-18 (April 27, 2021)]. The failure of a school official to parrot the exact language recommended by the Commission will not mean, without more, that he or she did not use an appropriate disclaimer. In addition, if a school official utilizes an appropriate disclaimer, but the content or substance of the statements would still lead a reasonable member of the public to believe that the school official is speaking in his or her official capacity or pursuant to his or her official duties, then the disclaimer will be inadequate and of no force or effect, and the social media activity could violate the Act. *See I/M/O Treston*.

The Commission notes that throughout Respondent’s posts, she references the Board and Board matters, including but not limited to, using the word “we” to discuss Board matters. In addition, while some posts contained a disclaimer, others did not. The Commission notes that even when the posts contained a disclaimer, the content of the posts was still related to Board matters and/or Board elections. As such, the Commission finds there is a sufficient nexus between Respondent’s social media posts and her Board membership and, given the context of her posts, a reasonable member of the public would perceive that the school official is speaking in his or her official capacity or pursuant to his or her official duties. Accordingly, the Commission must review whether Respondent violated *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24(b)*, *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(e)* and *N.J.S.A. 18A:12-24.1(f)* when, in her capacity as a Board member, she posted repeatedly on social media.

With respect to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), the Commission finds that by posting on Facebook in her capacity as a Board member, Respondent used her official position to secure unwarranted privileges or advantages for herself and/or “United for Education.” Further, “United for Education” and its candidates also received unwarranted advantages from Respondent’s posts by receiving a public endorsement from a sitting Board member in her official capacity. As such, the Commission agrees with the ALJ that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b).

Additionally, as to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e), Respondent’s social media posts in her official capacity as a Board member is action beyond the scope of her duties that has the potential to compromise the Board. Therefore, the Commission concurs with the ALJ that a violation of *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e) has been established as Respondent “made personal references to Board matters that could have compromised the Board.” *Id.* at 10.

Finally, regarding *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f), Respondent’s posts endorsing a candidate for School Board elections were posts in her official capacity as a Board member where she surrendered her independent judgment as a Board member to support a particular political group. Additionally, Respondent used the schools and her position on the Board to acquire a benefit for her friends by encouraging the election of “United for Education” in her official capacity as a Board member. Accordingly, the Commission agrees with the ALJ that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f).

The Commission does not find the parties’ exceptions to be persuasive. The Commission agrees with Respondent that the mere absence of a disclaimer on a social media post does not make a social media post a violation of the Act. However, as the ALJ found in the present matter, Respondent’s posts have a clear nexus to Respondent’s position on the Board and to Board matters.

Finally, the Commission agrees with the ALJ that a reprimand is the appropriate penalty for Respondent’s violation of *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e) and *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f). While Respondent’s behavior compromised the Board, this is Respondent’s first discipline as a Board member.

IV. Decision

For all of the aforementioned reasons, the Commission adopts the Initial Decision’s findings of fact, the legal conclusion that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e) and *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f) and the recommended penalty of reprimand.

Pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-29(c), this decision shall be forwarded to the Commissioner of Education for review of the Commission’s recommended penalty. The parties may either: 1) file exceptions to the recommended sanction; 2) file an appeal of the Commission’s finding of a violation; or 3) file both exceptions to the recommended sanction together with an appeal of the finding of a violation.

Parties taking exception to the recommended sanction of the Commission but *not disputing* the Commission’s finding of a violation may file, **within thirteen (13) days** from the

date the Commission's decision is forwarded to the Commissioner, written exceptions regarding the recommended penalty to the Commissioner. The forwarding date shall be the mailing date to the parties, as indicated below. Such exceptions must be forwarded to: Commissioner of Education, c/o Office of Controversies and Disputes, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, marked "Attention: Comments on Ethics Commission Sanction," as well as to (ControversiesDisputesFilings@doe.nj.gov). A copy must also be sent to the Commission (school.ethics@doe.nj.gov) and all other parties.

Parties seeking to appeal the Commission's finding of violation *must* file an appeal pursuant to the standards set forth at *N.J.A.C. 6A:4:1 et seq.* **within thirty (30) days** of the filing date of the decision from which the appeal is taken. The filing date shall be three (3) days after the date of mailing to the parties, as shown below. In such cases, the Commissioner's review of the Commission's recommended sanction will be deferred and incorporated into the Commissioner's review of the finding of violation on appeal. Where a notice of appeal has been filed on or before the due date for exceptions to the Commission's recommended sanction (thirteen (13) days from the date the decision is mailed by the Commission), exceptions need not be filed by that date, but may be incorporated into the appellant's briefs on appeal.

Robert W. Bender, Chairperson

Mailing Date: July 22, 2025

***Resolution Adopting Decision
in Connection with C75-21 and C37-22 (Consolidated)***

Whereas, at its meetings on April 26, 2022, and October 17, 2022, the School Ethics Commission (Commission) voted to transmit the above-captioned matters to the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) for a plenary hearing; and

Whereas, the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) issued an Initial Decision dated March 20, 2025; and

Whereas, the ALJ found that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e) and *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f), and recommended a penalty of reprimand; and

Whereas, both Petitioner and Respondent filed exceptions to the Initial Decision and replies to the exceptions; and

Whereas, at its meeting on June 17, 2025, the Commission reviewed the record in this matter, and discussed adopting the ALJ's legal conclusions that Respondent violated *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24(b), *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(e) and *N.J.S.A.* 18A:12-24.1(f), and the recommended penalty of reprimand; and

Whereas, at its meeting on July 22, 2025, the Commission reviewed and voted to approve the within decision as accurately memorializing its actions/findings from its meeting on June 17, 2025; and

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, the Commission hereby adopts the within decision.

Robert W. Bender, Chairperson

I hereby certify that this Resolution was duly
adopted by the School Ethics Commission
at its meeting on July 22, 2025

Dana C. Jones
School Ethics Commission