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| SCHOOL ETHICS COMMISSION | : | BEFORE THE SCHOOL |
| | : | ETHICS COMMISSION |
| V. | : | |
| | : | Docket No.: D16-06 |
| | : | |
| CHRIS CASTANO | : | DECISION FOR FAILURE TO |
| JERSEY CITY COMMUNITY CS | : | FILE A DISCLOSURE STATEMENT |
| HUDSON COUNTY | : | |
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WHEREAS, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-25 of the School Ethics Act requires each school official to file a personal/relative disclosure statement and N.J.S.A. 18A:12-26 requires each school official to file a financial disclosure statement with the School Ethics Commission; and

WHEREAS, Chris Castano is a member of the Board of Education for the Jersey City Community Charter School and thus a "school official" under N.J.S.A. 18A:12-23 of the Act and N.J.A.C. 6A:28-1.2 of the Code; and

WHEREAS, the deadline to file these disclosure statements was May 1, 2006 for school officials in office since January 30, 2005 and 30 days from swearing-in or start of employment for newly elected or appointed board members and administrators; and

WHEREAS, the School Ethics Commission was advised by the County Superintendent that this school official did not file a disclosure statement with his charter school and the County Superintendent's office as required by the Act; and

WHEREAS, the Commission sent a reminder letter to him on August 29, 2006, indicating that if the completed statement was not filed by September 15, 2006, the Commission would issue an Order to Show Cause that could result in disciplinary action; and

WHEREAS, the Commission issued an Order on September 28, 2006, through regular and certified mail return receipt requested, directing this school official to Show Cause why the Commission should not find him in violation of the Act for failing to file the disclosure statements; and

WHEREAS, in its letter enclosing the Order, the Commission notified this school official that he had 20 days to respond to the Order, that the Commission would discuss this matter at its October 24, 2006 meeting, that he had the right to attend the meeting, and he could be found in violation of the School Ethics Act and receive a penalty up to removal; and

WHEREAS, this school official did not provide an answer to the Commission's Order and has failed to file a disclosure statement; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that the failure to file a disclosure statement constitutes a clear violation of N.J.S.A. 18A:12-25 and 26; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that this school official was given ample opportunity to provide the complete disclosure statement; and

WHEREAS, the appropriate penalty for the violation is suspension until Mr. Castano files a disclosure statement, removal if the disclosure statement is not filed within 30 days of the Commissioner's decision on penalty, and censure if the disclosure statement is filed prior to issuance of the Commissioner's decision;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the School Ethics Commission finds that Chris Castano violated N.J.S.A. 18A:12-25 and 26 of the School Ethics Act and recommends that the Commissioner of Education impose a sanction of suspension until he files a disclosure statement, removal if the disclosure statement is not filed within 30 days of the Commissioner's decision on penalty, and censure if the disclosure statement is filed prior to issuance of the Commissioner's decision.

Paul C. Garbarini, Chairperson
School Ethics Commission

Dated: October 31, 2006

This matter shall be transmitted to the Commissioner of Education for action on the Commission's recommendation for sanction pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-29. Within thirteen (13) days from the date on which the Commission's decision was mailed to you, you may file written comments on the recommended sanction with the Commissioner of Education, c/o Bureau of Controversies and Disputes, 100 Riverview Plaza, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625, marked "Attention: Comments on Ethics Commission Sanction." A copy of any comments filed must be sent to the School Ethics Commission.