

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE LICENSES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
ROSEANN RAVO : ORDER OF SUSPENSION  
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DOCKET NO. 311-06/95 - 112

At its meeting of June 15, 1995 the State Board of Examiners reviewed information received from the Office of Criminal Justice indicating that Roseann Ravo was convicted in February, 1994 on charges of endangering the welfare of a child in the third degree. Respondent holds Teacher of Elementary School and Teacher of the Handicapped licenses in New Jersey.

At that meeting, the Board voted to issue an Order to Show Cause based on the seriousness of the offense with which she was charged. The Order to Show Cause was mailed to Respondent by regular and certified mail on July 10, 1995. On July 31, 1995, Ralph M Fava, Jr., Esq., filed an Answer to the Order to Show Cause on behalf of Respondent. In the interim, two cases decided by the State Board of Examiners were appealed to the State Board of Education, which affected the hearing process before the State Board of Examiners. The first was captioned In the Matter of the Certificate of Sheridan. The other was In the Matter of the Certificates of Vitola. Within those two cases the State Board of Education determined that the State Board of Examiners was required to amend its regulations in order to permit it to hear directly legal matters in which material facts are not in dispute. During the process of codifying the new hearing procedure, which was finalized in May of 1997, all hearings before the State Board of Examiners were held in abeyance.

On July 9, 1997, a hearing notice was mailed by certified mail to Mr. Fava pursuant to the new hearing procedures embodied in N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.6(a)1. A regular mail copy was forwarded to Respondent. Said notice explained that it appearing that no material facts were in dispute,

Respondent was being provided the opportunity to offer legal argument regarding the issue of whether her conviction constituted conduct unbecoming a teacher. The certified mail return receipt was signed and returned. The regular mail copy was not returned. No response has been received from, or on behalf of, Respondent.

On September 2, 1997 Mr. Fava was advised by certified mail that Respondent was being provided an additional ten days to offer legal argument on the issue whether her conviction constituted conduct unbecoming a teacher. A regular mail copy was forwarded to Respondent. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned. The regular mail copy was not returned. No response was received from, or on behalf of, Respondent. Accordingly, the State Board of Examiners will decide this matter having before it only what Respondent submitted in her Answer to the Order to Show Cause.

Respondent's Answer to the Order to Show Cause admits she filed a guilty plea to the charges of endangering the welfare of a child, she received a sentence of two-years, probation with drug and alcohol rules to apply. She further admits she was ordered to maintain full-time employment and to pay for counseling undertaken by the victim. Respondent acknowledges that she was also ordered to participate in mental health treatment and counseling on an outpatient basis if deemed necessary by probation and to perform 100 hours of community service. Finally, she admits in the Answer that her probation terminated in February of 1996.

Respondent's Answer also states that while the 13-year-old victim observed her engaging in sexual activity, the child was not physically involved in any sexual activity or drug use. Respondent claims in her Answer that the child was there because of Respondent's negligent supervision, but not for any illicit purpose. While admitting that she was wrong to place the child in a position where sex could have been observed, she claims it was never her intention or desire that observations of any

kind would take place. She implores the Board not to rescind her licenses because she has learned a great deal from this experience.

Respondent provided a letter of recommendation from her employer, a parochial school administrator. She claims that Respondent is a "tremendous" teacher who makes a positive impact on the lives of her students, the staff and community where she works.

At its meeting of October 9, 1997, the State Board of Examiners reviewed the charge against Respondent as well as her response to the Order to Show Cause. After its review, the State Board of Examiners determined that no material facts were in contest. Respondent did not dispute the fact of her conviction, the conduct that gave rise to the Order to Show Cause in this matter. The matter could, therefore, proceed to a determination as to whether the conviction identified in the Order to Show Cause constitute conduct unbecoming a license holder pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6:11-3.6(a)1.

As noted, Respondent admits that she was convicted on charges of endangering the welfare of a child. By virtue of holding a teaching license, Respondent has been entrusted by the State with the care and custody of school children. Tenure Hearing of Sammons, 1972 S.L.D. 302, 321. Respondent has, however, by her conduct, violated that most sacred trust. She has impermissibly endangered a minor. Such comportment is so foreign to the expectations of the deeds and actions of a professional certificated teacher - or of any person - as to cast doubt as to her judgment and, therefore, fitness to remain in contact with the school children of this state.

Accordingly, the State Board of Examiners finds respondent's conviction conduct unbecoming a license holder. The appropriate penalty for her unbecoming conduct is the suspension of Respondent's teaching licenses with further safeguards attached to its restoration after the period of suspension.

It is, therefore ORDERED that Roseann Ravo's Teacher of Elementary School and Teacher of the Handicapped licenses are hereby suspended on this 20<sup>th</sup> day of November, 1997 for a minimum of two (2) years commencing on the date of this decision through November 19, 1999.

It is further ORDERED that upon the expiration of the two year period, Roseann Ravo must present to the State Board of Examiners evidence of her fitness to return to the classroom in the form of 1) a psychological report filed by a psychologist of the Board's choosing, and at Respondent's expense, bespeaking her fitness to resume her professional duties; 2) a statement from Respondent addressing her understanding of why her licenses were suspended and why she is confident that the conduct for which she was convicted will not reoccur; 3) a narrative listing her employment since the date her licenses were suspended together with job evaluations or letters of recommendation from employers or job supervisors with respect to each job held since her licenses were suspended. Upon consideration of the above, the State Board of Examiners will consider restoration of her licenses. In the interim it is further ORDERED that Roseann Ravo return her licenses to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Licensing, CN 503, Trenton, NJ 08625-0503 within fourteen (14) days of receipt of this letter.

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Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing: December 23, 1997

Appeals may be made to the State Board of Education pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-28.

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