

July 25, 2006

Dr. Aurelio Nicolas

Re: In the Matter of the Appeal of Aurelio Nicolas
Docket No. 0506-299

Dear Dr. Nicolas:

As you are aware, you were advised that you are not currently eligible for a New Jersey Principal Certificate of Eligibility because you do not hold a master's or doctorate degree from a regionally accredited college or university, as required by N.J.A.C. 6A:9-12.5(a)1. The institution from which you received your advanced degrees, Pacific Western University, is not regionally accredited.

At its meeting of June 8, 2006, the State Board of Examiners considered the appeal that you filed to challenge the determination of the Office of Licensure and Credentials that you are ineligible for certification. After thorough review of the documentation that you provided, at its July 20, 2006 meeting, the Board voted to deny your appeal. While you presented information regarding Pacific Western University's authorization as a degree-granting institution, you did not provide evidence to show that it is a regionally accredited institution. In fact, your submission includes documentation which specifically states that Pacific Western is unaccredited and unapproved. Accordingly, as you do not have an advanced degree from a regionally accredited institution, you are not eligible for the Principal Certificate of Eligibility.

There are many accrediting agencies in the United States; the State Board of Examiners will accept degrees only from those colleges and universities that are accredited by one of the six regional accrediting associations. The six regional accrediting associations maintain high standards for evaluating educational institutions. By relying on the approval of the six associations, the State Board of Examiners is assured that graduates who apply for certification have attended institutions that meet the high standards. Accordingly, the State Board of Examiners cannot accept an application from a graduate of a college or university that lacks regional accreditation.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Higgins, Acting Secretary
State Board of Examiners

RRH/MZ/nicolas-appeal-unaccredited college
By certified and regular mail
Date of mailing: JULY 25, 2006

This matter may be appealed to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to *N.J.A.C.6A:3-1 et seq.*