

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
ROBERT QUINN : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 0506-224

At its meeting of March 30, 2006, the State Board of Examiners reviewed information received from the Bergen County Prosecutor indicating that on March 15, 2004, Robert Quinn had pled guilty to endangering the welfare of a child. On May 21, 2004, Quinn was sentenced to five years' probation and fined. The court also ordered him to undergo random drug and alcohol testing, maintain gainful employment, pay full restitution to the Leonia Board of Education, have no unsupervised contact with any child under the age of 18 years old and complete sex offender therapy. Quinn also agreed to forfeit his teaching certificates as a condition of probation. Quinn currently holds Teacher of Elementary School and Teacher of Social Studies certificates, both issued in July 1988. Upon review of the above information, at its March 30, 2006 meeting, the State Board of Examiners voted to issue Quinn an Order to Show Cause. On May 4, 2006, the Board formally adopted its Order to Show Cause.

The Board sent Quinn the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on May 11, 2006. The Order provided that Quinn's Answer was due within 30 days. Quinn submitted an Answer on May 17, 2006. In that response, he stated that he had forfeited his certificates and could no longer teach children. (Answer, p. 1). He also stated that he could "show you no cause why my teaching certificates should not be revoked or suspended." (Answer, p. 1).

The threshold issue before the State Board of Examiners in this matter, therefore, is whether Quinn's conviction constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder. Since Quinn did not contest the proceeding, the State Board of Examiners considered his Answer as the only responsive pleading in the hearing process.

At its meeting of September 21, 2006, the State Board of Examiners reviewed the charges and papers Quinn filed in response to the Order to Show Cause. After review of the response, the Board of Examiners determined that no material facts related to Quinn's offense were in dispute since he never denied that he had pled guilty to the offense and had been sentenced accordingly. Thus, the Board of Examiners determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.7(h)*.

The issue before the State Board of Examiners in this matter, therefore, is whether Quinn's offense and the forfeiture of his certificates, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, represent just cause to act against his certificates pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5*. The Board finds that they do.

The State Board of Examiners may revoke or suspend the certification of any certificate holder on the basis of demonstrated inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher or other just cause. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5*. "Teachers... are professional employees to whom the people have entrusted the care and custody of ... school children. This heavy duty requires a degree of self-restraint and controlled behavior rarely requisite to other types of employment." *Tenure of Sammons*, 1972 *S.L.D.* 302, 321. Quinn's act of endangering the welfare of a child, is inexcusable for any individual, teacher or not.

Furthermore, unfitness to hold a position in a school system may be shown by one incident, if sufficiently flagrant. *Redcay v. State Bd. of Educ.*, 130 *N.J.L.* 369, 371 (Sup. Ct. 1943), *aff'd*, 131 *N.J.L.* 326 (E & A 1944). In this instance, Quinn's conduct is egregious because it was harmful to a child.

Accordingly, on September 21, 2006, the Board of Examiners voted to revoke Quinn's certificates. On this 2nd day of November 2006 the Board formally adopted its written decision to revoke and it is therefore ORDERED that Robert Quinn's Teacher of Elementary School and Teacher of Social Studies certificates be revoked effective this day. It is further ORDERED that Quinn return his certificates to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Licensure, PO Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within 20 days of the mailing date of this decision.

Robert R. Higgins, Acting Secretary
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing: NOVEMBER 8, 2006

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