

February 22, 2007

Ms. Rebecca Platzner

Re: In the Matter of the Application for Certification of Rebecca Platzner
Docket No. 0607-160

Dear Ms. Platzner:

As you are aware, you have appealed the determination that you were ineligible for a Provisional School Library Media Specialist (SLMS) certificate as of September 2005. At its meeting of January 18, 2007, the State Board of Examiners reviewed the information that you provided in support of your appeal. After careful consideration, at its February 22, 2007 meeting, the Board voted to deny your appeal because the documentation that you submitted failed to prove that you were eligible for the provisional certificate as of the asserted September 2005 date. However, the Board did vote to backdate your Provisional SLMS certificate to February 1, 2006.

On August 17, 2005, the Office of Licensure and Credentials denied your application for a standard SLMS certificate and sent you an evaluation indicating that you had to complete graduate work in three required areas of study, as well as hold a standard New Jersey instructional certificate or participate in a year-long school-based residency program. The evaluation also stated that a provisional certificate was a requirement for the residency. Although you did not hold certification, you accepted a position with the Hackensack School District (Hackensack) that required the SLMS certificate. Thereafter, the Office of Licensure and Credentials received a letter from Hackensack, dated September 26, 2005, enclosing a letter from Rutgers University that provided further information about your credentials and requesting a re-evaluation. Since Rutgers' letter was not specific regarding the alignment between the coursework you were lacking and the courses you had taken, Rutgers was asked to submit more specific information. After receipt of Rutgers' second letter, the Office of Licensure and Credentials issued a second evaluation indicating that you had completed the required coursework; however, the same evaluation indicated that you still lacked the instructional certificate or year-long residency under a provisional certificate. The Office issued you a provisional SLMS certificate dated April 2006 upon Hackensack's representation that it had hired you for the 2006-2007 school year.

You have asked that your employment with Hackensack during the 2005-2006 school year count as your provisional year and that your certificate be backdated to September 2005 when you began your employment. The Board of Examiners cannot grant this request because you did not prove to the Board that you met the requirements for certification as of September 2005. Since you did not possess a provisional certificate for the entire 2005-2006 school year, your employment with Hackensack during that year did not satisfy the requirement of a year-long residency program. Moreover, because your certification application was not completed until March 2006, the Office could not backdate your certificate to September 2005. Pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-5.16(a)*, applications are deemed complete when “the application and all required supporting documentation has been received.”

However, upon its review of your submission, the Board of Examiners voted to backdate your provisional certificate to February 1, 2006, because according to your affidavit you submitted Rutgers’ second letter of explanation of your coursework by January 28, 2006 and it was subsequently lost within the Department of Education. The Board will honor that submission date and direct the Office of Licensure to backdate your certificate to February 1, 2006. The Board, however, will not backdate your certificate any further, because your application was not complete in September 2005. Accordingly, the Board voted to deny your appeal.

Sincerely,

Robert R. Higgins, Acting Secretary
State Board of Examiners

RRH/MZ

By certified and regular mail

Date of mailing: MARCH 3rd, 2007

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