

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
ROBIN WINKIS : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 1011-213

At its meeting of June 16, 2011, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information regarding Robin Winkis. In November 2006, the Pennsylvania Professional Standards and Practices Commission revoked Winkis' Pennsylvania certificates after she pled guilty in July 2006 to Corruption of Minors, Unlawful Contact or Communication With a Minor and Selling or Furnishing Liquor or Malt or Brewed Beverage to a Minor. She also pled Nolo Contendere to charges of Indecent Assault-Forcible Compulsion. Winkis was sentenced to up to 23 months in prison on the Indecent Assault-Forcible Compulsion conviction and up to one year of probation on the other convictions. In New Jersey, Winkis currently holds a Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility With Advanced Standing, issued in October 1999 and a Teacher of English certificate, issued in August 2000. Upon review of the above information, at its July 28, 2011 meeting, the Board voted to issue Winkis an Order to Show Cause.

The Board sent Winkis the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on August 2, 2011. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned. The regular mail copy was not returned. The Order provided that Winkis must file an Answer within 30 days. Winkis did not file an Answer. Thereafter, on October 7, 2011, the Board sent Winkis another notice by certified and regular mail providing her an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail copy was returned as unclaimed. The regular mail copy was not returned. Winkis did not respond to the second notice.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.7(e)*, on November 4, 2011, the Board sent Winkis a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that it appeared that no material facts were in dispute. Thus, Winkis was offered an opportunity to submit written

arguments on the issue of whether the conduct addressed in the Order to Show Cause constituted conduct unbecoming a certificate holder as well as arguments with regard to the appropriate sanction in the event that the Board determined to take action against her certificates. It also explained that upon review of the charges against her and the legal arguments tendered in her defense, the Board would determine if Winkis' conduct warranted action against her certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Winkis was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The certified mail copy was returned as unclaimed and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Winkis did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter, therefore, is whether Winkis' conviction and the revocation of her Pennsylvania licenses constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder. Since Winkis failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause or the hearing notice, at its meeting of January 19, 2012, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The Board determined that no material facts related to Winkis' offenses were in dispute since she never denied that she had been convicted of the offenses charged and had been sentenced accordingly. Nor did she deny that her Pennsylvania teaching certificates had been revoked. Thus, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.7(h)*. It is therefore ORDERED that the charges in the Order to Show Cause are deemed admitted for the purpose of this proceeding.

The Board must now determine whether Winkis' conviction and the revocation of her Pennsylvania certificates, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provide just cause to act against her certificates pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9-17.5*. The Board finds that they do.

The Board 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. Winkis’ acts of Corruption of Minors, Unlawful Contact or Communication With a Minor, Selling or Furnishing Liquor or Malt or Brewed Beverage to a Minor and Indecent Assault-Forcible Compulsion are inexcusable for any individual, teacher or not.

The Commissioner has long held that teachers serve as role models for their students. Clearly, a teacher convicted of Corruption of Minors, Unlawful Contact or Communication With a Minor, Selling or Furnishing Liquor or Malt or Brewed Beverage to a Minor and Indecent Assault-Forcible Compulsion cannot claim status as a role model to anyone. Winkis’ conviction therefore warrants revocation. *In the Matter of the Certificates of Kevin Jordan*, Dkt. No. A-0155-08T3 (App. Div. October 5, 2009) (Unpublished Opinion).

Accordingly, on January 19, 2012, the Board voted to revoke Robin Winkis’ Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility With Advanced Standing and Teacher of English certificate. On this 1st day of March 2012 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that the revocation of Winkis’ certificates be effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Winkis return her certificates to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Licensure, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within 30 days of the mailing date of this decision.

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Robin R. Higgins, Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing:

Appeals may be made to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38.4.