

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
CHRYSTINE COOPER HOELTZEL : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 1314-202

At its meeting of April 4, 2014, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information regarding Chrystine Cooper Hoeltzel. In July 2011, Hoeltzel pled guilty in Pennsylvania to DUI: High Rate of Alcohol (BAC .10-.16), DUI: General Impairment/Incapable of Driving Safely, Accidents Involving Death or Personal Injury and Careless Driving-Serious Bodily Injury. In addition to her guilty plea, Hoeltzel surrendered her certificates in lieu of discipline in Pennsylvania in December 2013. In New Jersey, Hoeltzel holds a Teacher of Elementary School Certificate of Eligibility With Advanced Standing, issued in December 2001 and a Teacher of Elementary School certificate, issued in May 2003. Upon review of the above information, at its May 22, 2014 meeting, the Board voted to issue Hoeltzel an Order to Show Cause.

The Board sent Hoeltzel the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on May 28, 2014. The Order provided that Hoeltzel had 30 days to respond. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Hoeltzel did not respond. Thereafter, on July 30, 2014, the Board sent Hoeltzel another notice by certified and regular mail providing her an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular copy was not returned. Hoeltzel did not respond.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.7(e)*, on August 20, 2014, the Board sent Hoeltzel a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that it appeared that no material facts were in dispute. Thus, Hoeltzel 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 Hoeltzel's offenses warranted

action against her certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Hoeltzel was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Hoeltzel did not respond.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Hoeltzel's conduct and crime constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder. Since Hoeltzel failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause or the hearing notice, at its meeting of October 23, 2014, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The Board determined that no material facts related to Hoeltzel's offense were in dispute since she never denied that she had been convicted or that her Pennsylvania certificates had been revoked. Thus, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.7(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 Hoeltzel's conviction and the revocation of her Pennsylvania certificates, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provide just cause to act against her New Jersey certificates pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.5*. 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:9B-4.5*. "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. Moreover, 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 (1943), *aff'd*, 131 *N.J.L.* 326 (E & A 1944). In this matter, Hoeltzel has a conviction for a serious offense involving bodily injury. That conviction and the revocation of her Pennsylvania certificates leave no doubt that she is unfit to be a teacher in New Jersey. Her conduct demonstrates behavior that falls so far short of a role model that the Board believes that the only appropriate sanction in this case is the revocation of Hoeltzel's New Jersey certificates.

Accordingly, on October 23, 2014, the Board voted to revoke Hoeltzel's Teacher of Elementary School Certificate of Eligibility With Advanced Standing and her Teacher of Elementary School certificate. On this 12th day of December 2014 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that the revocation of Chrystine Cooper Hoeltzel's certificates be effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Hoeltzel 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.

Robert R. Higgins, Secretary
State Board of Examiners

RRH:MZ:th

Date of Mailing:

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