

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
JASMINE D. HAIRSTON : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 1819-115

At its meeting of November 1, 2018, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information the Essex County Superior Court and the Criminal History Review Unit (CHRU) had forwarded regarding Jasmine D. Hairston. On November 3, 2017, Hairston was charged with Theft By Unlawful Taking after it was alleged she took \$5,738.10 from students and parents for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade prom and graduation. On February 5, 2018, Hairston received an Order of Postponement and was entered into a Pre-Trial Intervention program for a period of 12 months. In addition to other fines and assessments, she was also ordered to perform 150 hours of community service and pay \$5,738.10 in restitution to the school district.

Hairston currently holds a Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing and a Teacher of English certificate. Upon review of the above information, at its December 17, 2018 meeting, the Board voted to issue Hairston an Order to Show Cause as to why her certificates should not be revoked.

After securing a correct address for Hairston, the Board sent her the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on January 24, 2019. The Order provided that Hairston had 30 days to respond. Neither the certified or regular copies were returned. Hairston did not respond. Thereafter, on March 7, 2019, the Board sent another notice providing Hairston an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail copy was returned as "Unclaimed" and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Hairston did not respond.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on March 28, 2019, the Board sent Hairston a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that the allegations in the

Order to Show Cause were deemed to be admitted as a result of her failure to file an Answer. Thus, Hairston 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 found just cause 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 Hairston's offense warranted action against her certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Hairston was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. Neither the certified or regular copies were returned. Once again, Hairston did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Hairston's conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Since Hairston failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause, the allegations therein are deemed admitted. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(c)*. Consequently, at its meeting of June 28, 2019, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause and the information received from the Superior Court and the CHRU. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Hairston's offense were in dispute since she never denied that she had engaged in the alleged conduct. Thus, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(h)*. After reviewing the allegations, the Board found that Hairston had engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Hairston's conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provides just cause to act against her certificates pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.4*. The Board finds that it does.

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-4.4. “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). Hairston’s actions of taking and keeping money from students and parents for prom and graduation clearly demonstrate conduct that is unacceptable for a role model. The Board therefore concludes that the appropriate response to her breach is the revocation of her certificates.

Accordingly, on June 28, 2019, the Board voted to revoke Jasmine D. Hairston’s Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing and her Teacher of English certificate. On this 1st day of August 2019 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Hairston’s certificates are hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Hairston return her certificates to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Certification and Induction, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within 30 days of the mailing date of this decision.

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Rani Singh, Acting Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

**Date of Mailing:**  
**Via certified and regular mail**

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