

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATE OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
BRADLEY E. MEA : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 1617-266

At its meeting of September 19, 2019, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification provided to the New Jersey State Board of Examiners (Board) regarding Bradley E. Mea. On December 18, 2016, Mea was charged in South Carolina with Sexual Exploitation of a Minor, 1st degree and 2nd degree, as well as Criminal Solicitation of a Minor, based on allegations that he solicited a 13-year-old girl for nude photographs over the internet and then threatened to post the photos if she did not provide him with additional ones. On December 21, 2016, the South Carolina Board of Education (South Carolina) entered a Summary Suspension of Mea’s teaching certificates.

On May 8, 2019, South Carolina permanently revoked Mea’s educator certificate(s). South Carolina found that Mr. Mea presented himself as a teenage female by sending photos to a 13-year-old female victim that depicted females that appeared to be approximately 12-15 years old, in a state of sexually explicit nudity. He also convinced the female victim to send him multiple nude photos and videos through SnapChat. Mr. Mea was aware of the female victim’s age and threatened to post the nude photos of the female victim if she did not continue to cooperate with him and send more sexually explicit photos.

South Carolina found that “[r]egardless of the outcome of the criminal charges, Mr. Mea’s conduct with the female victim demonstrates that he has engaged in unprofessional conduct, conduct involving moral turpitude, immorality, and demonstrated evident unfitness for teaching.” The criminal charges against Mea have been dismissed.

Mea currently holds a Teacher of Music Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing. Upon review of the above information, at its November 1, 2019 meeting, the Board voted to issue Mea an Order to Show Cause as to why his certificate should not be revoked.

After securing a correct address for Mea, the Board sent him the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on November 19, 2019. The Order provided that Mea had 30 days to respond. The certified mail receipt was “unclaimed” and the regular mail copy was not returned. Mea did not respond. Thereafter, on December 31, 2019, the Board sent another notice providing Mea an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Mea did not respond.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on January 29, 2020, the Board sent Mea 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 his failure to file an Answer. Thus, Mea 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 his certificate. It also explained that, upon review of the charges against him and the legal arguments tendered in his defense, the Board would determine if Mea’s offense warranted action against his certificate. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Mea was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The certified mail receipt was delivered and the regular mail copy was returned. Once again, Mea did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Mea’s conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Since Mea 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 NASDTEC and OSP. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Mea’s offense were in dispute since he never denied that he 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 Mea had engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Mea's conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provides just cause to act against his certificate 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). Mea's actions of sending photos to a 13-year-old female that contained explicit nudity clearly demonstrate conduct that is unacceptable for a role model. The Board therefore concludes that the appropriate response to his breach is the revocation of his certificate.

Accordingly, on June 26, 2020, the Board voted to revoke Bradley E. Mea's Teacher of Music Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing. On this 30th day of July 2020 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Mea's certificate is hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Mea return his certificate 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.

Rani Singh, 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*.