

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
REYNALD A. PERRY : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 1920-115

At its meeting of November 1, 2019, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the Vineland Board of Education (Vineland) regarding Perry. Perry was a teacher in Vineland who resigned his position as a result of allegations that he was under the influence of controlled substances in his classroom. On March 6, 2018, Perry advised Vineland that he was arrested on a possession of CDS charge. He indicated that he started attending 12 step program meeting(s) and was referred to substance abuse counseling. After receiving the report, Vineland met with Perry and provided him with information on residential treatment programs. Perry was advised that upon his return to work he would be subject to reasonable suspicion drug testing and that “any further incidents may result in tenure charges being brought against you.”

On May 6, 2019, the administration of Pilla School found Perry asleep in his classroom. When he awoke he was found to be disoriented. As a result of this, and due to the prior incident, Perry was transported to Inspira for drug and alcohol testing. Test results confirm that Perry was positive for cocaine, amphetamines, and methamphetamines. As a result, on or about June 12, 2019, Perry entered into a Separation Agreement and General Release and resigned his teaching position.

Perry currently holds a Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility and a Teacher of English Standard Certificate. After reviewing the above information, at its December 13, 2019 meeting, the Board voted to issue an Order to Show Cause to Perry as to why his certificates should not be revoked.

The Board sent Perry the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on December 19, 2019. The Order provided that Perry had 30 days to respond. The certified mail receipt was “unclaimed” and the regular mail copy was not returned. Perry did not respond. On January 29, 2020, the Board sent Perry another notice by certified and regular mail providing him an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to

Show Cause. The certified mail copy was returned and signed, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Perry did not file a response.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on February 21, 2019, the Board sent Perry 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, Perry 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 certificates. It also explained that, upon review of the charges against him and the legal arguments tendered in his defense, the Board would determine if Perry's offense warranted action against his certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Perry 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, Perry did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Perry's conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Since Perry 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 26, 2020, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Perry's offense were in dispute since he never denied that he had engaged in the conduct alleged. 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 Perry engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Perry's conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provides just cause to act against his 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). Perry’s actions, which led to his resignation, clearly demonstrate conduct that is unacceptable for any adult, especially one who is ostensibly a role model. The Board therefore concludes that the only appropriate response to his breach is a revocation of his certificates.

Accordingly, on June 26, 2020 the Board voted to revoke Reynald A. Perry’s Teacher of English Certificate of Eligibility and his Teacher of English Certificate. On this 30th day of July 2020 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Perry’s certificates are hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Perry return his 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.

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 *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38.4.