

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
BRADLEY SAKEVICH : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 1819-231

At its meeting of September 19, 2019, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) and the Florida Education Practices Commission (Commission) regarding Bradley Sakevich. On May 17, 2019, Florida suspended Sakevich’s educator license after it found that he engaged in inappropriate behavior when he used profanity in the presence of students. Specifically, it is alleged that Sakevich said “You’ve got to be fucking kidding me,” “I can’t believe this shit,” and “Fucking retard,” or words to that effect.

During the 2017-2018 school year Sakevich made disparaging comments to students including “What does your boyfriend do to your face? Why are you so white?;” called a student a “skinny ass;” “what are you the Egyptian Peter pan;” “what are you, a stripper, do you work at diamond dolls;” “sweetheart if you’re going to wear shorts like that you better at least have an ass;” “this is an ugly class, what is this, a special ed. class;” and “any reason to slut it up, homecoming week, any reason to slut it up.”

In New Jersey, Sakevich currently holds a Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate of Eligibility and Teacher of Health and Physical Education certificate. Upon review of the above information, at its November 1, 2019 meeting, the Board voted to issue Sakevich an Order to Show Cause as to why his certificates should not be revoked.

The Board sent Sakevich the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on November 7, 2019. The Order provided that Sakevich had 30 days to respond. Per the United States Postal Service tracking, the certified mail receipt was received, and the regular mail copy

was not returned. Sakevich did not respond. On December 31, 2019, the Board sent Sakevich another notice by certified and regular mail providing him an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail receipt was unclaimed, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Sakevich did not file a response.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(e), on January 29, 2020, the Board sent Sakevich 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, Sakevich 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 Sakevich's offense warranted action against his certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Sakevich 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.

Sakevich responded to the hearing notice; based upon his indicating that he was moving and did not receive the order to show causes notices, the Board permitted him to file an Answer. Accordingly, Sakevich submitted an Answer. He indicated that he was grief stricken with the news that one of his former students had drowned, his assistant wrestling coach was mourning the loss of his son and his fiancé required emergency surgery and their unborn child may not survive same. Answer at ¶ 8. Accordingly, the comments made to students, which form the basis for this action, were the result of emotional tragedies which impacted his decision-making process.

Answer at ¶ 9. He acknowledges that he “pushed too hard and made some poor decisions.” *Id.* He states that he was unable to contest the action in Florida as he was “mentally incapable of doing so in (sic) time frame stated.” Answer at ¶ 10.

Sakevich was then given an opportunity to appear before the Board and make a submission in writing. During the public health emergency, Sakevich communicated with the Board via email and confirmed the use of his email address for communication. He indicated he wished to appear for a hearing. A hearing was scheduled for February 26, 2021. Sakevich was provided with the virtual meeting access information at the email address he provided. He did not appear on February 26, 2021, and thereafter did not provide good cause as to why he did not appear. The Board therefore scheduled the matter for a hearing on the papers.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Sakevich’s conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. At its meeting of April 1, 2021, the Board considered the allegations in the Order to Show Cause as well as Sakevich’s Answer. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Sakevich’s offense were in dispute since he did not deny that he engaged in the alleged conduct, but rather provided information on why he engaged in the 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 Sakevich engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Sakevich’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). Sakevich’s actions in using inappropriate language with students and making improper comments/statements to students repeatedly, is unacceptable for a role model. Those actions, coupled with the suspension from the Florida Commission, lead the Board to conclude that the appropriate response to his breach is the revocation of his New Jersey certificates.

Accordingly, on April 1, 2021, the Board voted to revoke Bradley Sakevich’s Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate of Eligibility and Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate. On this 13th day of May 2021, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Sakevich’s certificates are hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Sakevich 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.

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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.

