

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
ANDREW WEPNER : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 2223-112

At its meeting of September 19, 2024, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the Department of Education (DOE) – Office of Legal Affairs, Accountability & Compliance (OLAAC), and DOE - Office of Student Protection (OSP) regarding Andrew Wepner, including documents received from the Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office (BCPO). Wepner currently holds a Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, issued in February 2011; and a Standard Teacher of Social Studies certificate, issued in July 2012.

On or about September 23, 2022, Wepner was indicted on one count of Manufacture, Distribute or Dispense a Controlled Dangerous Substance (CDS) (1st degree), N.J.S.A. 2C:35-5a(1) and -5b(10)(a); and one count of Maintain or Operate a CDS Production Facility, N.J.S.A. 2C:35-4. It was alleged that Wepner had more than fifty marijuana plants at his home, separated into five different grow rooms.

On May 10, 2024, Teixeira received an Order of Postponement and was entered into the Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI) program for a period of twenty-four (24) months, and was ordered to complete drug and alcohol treatment to be determined by probation, complete 25 hours of community service, and pay \$2,250.00 in fines and penalties. He was also ordered to enter a guilty plea for 2nd degree offenses as to both counts of the indictment.

Upon review of the above information, the Board voted at its meeting of November 1, 2024, to issue Wepner an Order to Show Cause as to why the certificates he holds should not be revoked. The Board sent Wepner the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail, return

receipt requested, on November 6, 2024. The Order provided Wepner 30 days to respond pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B- 4.6(b)*. The certified mail copy was marked “Delivered” and the regular mail copy was not returned. Wepner did not file a response.

On February 4, 2025, the Board sent a second notice to Wepner, providing him with an additional fifteen (15) days to respond. The certified mail copy was marked “Unclaimed”, and the regular mail copy was not returned.

On August 25, 2025, Wepner submitted an Answer to the OTSC, after being granted an extension of time to respond. *See Answer*. In his Answer, Wepner admitted he was indicted for the Manufacture, Distribute or Dispense a Controlled Dangerous Substance (CDS) (1st degree), N.J.S.A. 2C:35-5a(1) and -5b(10)(a); and Maintain or Operate a CDS Production Facility (1st degree), N.J.S.A. 2C:35-4. *Id.* at ¶ 3. He also admitted that it was alleged that he had more than fifty marijuana plants in his home, separated into five different grow rooms. *Id.* at ¶ 4. Further, he admitted that he pled guilty to Manufacture, Distribute or Dispense a Controlled Dangerous Substance (CDS) (2nd degree), N.J.S.A. 2C:35-5b(10)(b) and was entered into the Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI) program for a period of 24 months, and ordered to complete drug and alcohol treatment to be determined by probation, 25 hours of community service, and pay \$2,250.00 in fines and penalties. *Id.* at ¶ 5. Wepner claimed that he successfully completed PTI and that he would soon be eligible for expungement of his criminal record. *Id.* at ¶ 6. He also “insist[ed] that the actual facts of the criminal case, which ultimately resulted in dismissal, [were] complex and do not reveal any poor or unbecoming conduct on [his] behalf.” *Id.* at ¶ 7.

Wepner attached to his Answer, an August 25, 2025 letter to the Board signed by his counsel. *See Letter to the Board*. In the letter, Wepner’s counsel claimed that Wepner’s co-defendant was also charged but never apprehended and that Wepner accepted the plea offer “as he

did not want to await a protracted prosecution while his co-defendant, Ms. Brown, was unable to be located by the authorities.” *Id.* at p. 1. Wepner’s counsel argued that “[n]o evidence in this case exists which merits the revocation of Mr. Wepner’s teaching certificates.” *Id.* at p. 2. Specifically, he claimed that there was never any evidence that Wepner engaged in the illegal sale of marijuana and that “Wepner grew these plants for personal use and grew same as a hobby which was ultimately recognized in his admission in the Bergen County Pretrial Intervention Program[.]” *Ibid.*

Pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(e), the Board sent Wepner a hearing notice by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, on November 17, 2025. The notice explained that there appeared to be no dispute as to material facts in this matter. Thus, Wepner 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. Wepner was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue.

On December 17, 2025, Wepner submitted a written response and requested to appear before the Board. *See Written Submission.* In his response, Wepner stated that “[a]lthough the initial charges against [him] were serious in nature, including allegations of drug distribution, the case was ultimately resolved in his favor through a diversionary program resulting in the dismissal of all charges following his successful completion.” *Id.* at 1. He reiterated his claim that there was no evidence to substantiate the drug distribution allegations. *Ibid.* He provided a copy of the May 28, 2025 Order terminating him the PTI program after successful completion. *Ibid.* He argued that there was no valid reason to revoke or suspend his teaching certificates because there

was never any evidence that he “engaged in the illegal sale of marijuana.” *Id.* at 2. Rather, he claimed that he grew the large number of plants “for personal use as a hobby.” *Ibid.* Lastly, he argued that no sanctions against his certificates is necessary because he successfully completed the PTI program. *Ibid.* On Marc 6, 2026, Wepner appeared before the Board with his counsel and provided testimony.

The Board has the authority to “issue appropriate certificates to teach or to administer” and “may revoke the same under rules and regulations prescribed by the State board.” *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38; *see also N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-3.2 and -4.4; *Morison v. Willingboro Bd. of Educ.*, 478 N.J. Super. 229 (App. Div. 2024), *cert. denied* 258 N.J. 143 (July 11, 2024). The Board may take action against a 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; *see also Morison*, 478 N.J. Super. at 246, 248 (explaining the Board is responsible for protecting schoolchildren from improper teacher conduct and may suspend or revoke an educator’s continued ability to serve as a teacher at any public school based on unbecoming conduct).

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Wepner’s actions here constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Wepner did not dispute the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. Consequently, at its meeting of April 17, 2026, the Board considered only the allegations in the November 1, 2024 Order to Show Cause and the information received from the OSP, OLAAC, and BCPO. Because the allegations were not disputed, the Board concluded that no material facts related to Wepner’s offenses were in dispute. And because no material facts related to Wepner’s conduct were in dispute, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(h).

The Board finds that Wepner engaged in conduct unbecoming of an educator. Unbecoming

conduct is defined as “conduct ‘which adversely affects the morale or efficiency of the [department]’ or ‘has a tendency to destroy public respect for [government] employees and confidence in the operation of [public] services.’” *Bound Brook Bd. of Educ. v. Ciripompa*, 228 N.J. 4, 13 (2017) (quoting *In re Young*, 202 N.J. 50, 66 (2010) (citing *Karins v. Atl. City*, 152 N.J. 532, 554 (1998))). “[A] finding of unbecoming conduct ‘need not be predicated upon the violation of any particular rule or regulation, but may be based merely upon the violation of the implicit standard of good behavior which devolves upon one who stands in the public eye as an upholder of that which is morally and legal correct.’” *Id.* at 13-14 (quoting *Karins*, 152 N.J. at 555). “It focuses on the morale, efficiency, and public perception of an entity, and how those concerns are harmed by allowing teachers to behave inappropriately while holding public employment.” *Id.* at 14. “The touchstone of the determination lies in the certificate holder’s ‘fitness to discharge the duties and functions of one’s office or position.’” *Young*, 202 N.J. at 66 (quoting *In re Grossman*, 127 N.J. Super. 13, 29 (App. Div. 1974)).

Here, the Board finds that having more than fifty (50) marijuana plants at one’s home, separated into five different grow rooms, clearly demonstrates violations of the implicit standard of good behavior expected of public-school teachers and has the tendency to destroy public respect for teachers and confidence in the public school system. Thus, the Board finds that Wepner engaged in conduct unbecoming an educator and provides the basis for the Board’s finding.

Having found that Wepner engaged in unbecoming conduct, the Board must now determine the appropriate penalty to be applied. In doing so, the Board considers the “nature and gravity of the offenses under all the circumstances involved, any evidence as to provocation, extenuation or aggravation,” and any “harm or injurious effect” on the maintenance of discipline and the proper administration of the school system. *In re Fulcomer*, 93 N.J. Super. 404, 422 (App. Div. 1967).

Central to this evaluation is the understanding that “[t]eachers... 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. Fitness to teach depends on a broad range of factors, including the teacher’s impact and effect upon the students, because a “teacher works in a sensitive area in a schoolroom” and “shapes the attitude of young minds toward the society in which they live.” *Grossman*, 127 N.J. at 30 (quoting *Adler v. Bd. of Educ. of City of New York*, 342 U.S. 485 (1952)). Importantly, unfitness to hold a position in a school system may be shown by one incident if sufficiently flagrant. *Fulcomer*, 93 N.J. Super. at 421; *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 instance, the Board concludes that the appropriate response to Wepner’s breach in conduct of an educator is a revocation of his certificates. The charges of manufacturing and/or distributing CDS and maintaining and/or operating a CDS production facility were serious offenses, and if he had been convicted of either offense, he would have permanently disqualified him from public school employment. Wepner’s entrance into and completion of PTI does not negate his conduct in this matter. Although he claims he never engaged in the illegal sale of marijuana, he never disputed the fact that he had more than fifty marijuana plants in his home, separated into five different grow rooms. His claim that the large number of plants were for his personal use appears incredulous. Further, having a certificated educator who maintains a large number of marijuana plants at his home as a hobby erodes confidence in the proper administration of the public school system. For these reasons, the Board finds that revocation of Wepner’s certificates is the appropriate response in this matter.

Accordingly, on April 17, 2026, the Board voted to revoke Wepner’s certificates. On

this 21st day of May 2026, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision, and it is therefore ORDERED that Andrew Wepner's Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing and Standard Teacher of Social Studies certificate are hereby REVOKED, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Wepner return his paper certificates, if issued, 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.



Kimberly Gatti, Acting Secretary
State Board of Examiners

Date of Mailing: [May 29, 2026](#)
By 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.