

**State Board of Examiners
Minutes of the Meeting
held at the Library for the Blind
2300 Stuyvesant Avenue, Trenton, NJ**

April 11, 2002

Present: Dr. Donald Farish, Acting Chairperson
Mr. Jay Doolan, Acting Secretary
Michael Walters, Deputy Attorney General
Dr. Vito Germinario, Chairperson, Legal Committee
Dr. Mary Jean Guidette, Chairperson, Credentials Review Committee
Mr. Richard Dorow
Ms. Joanne Gales
Mr. James Gay
Dr. Michael Knowlton
Ms. Mary Jane McNally
Dr. Robert Petix
Mr. Peter Tirri

Absent: Assistant Commissioner Richard C. Ten Eyck, Chairperson
Dr. Ronald Applbaum
Ms. Ida Bilbow
Ms. Gloria Tunstall

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Donald Farish. Dr. Farish announced that notice of the meeting had been provided in accord with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act, *N.J.S.A.* 10:4-6 et seq.

The minutes of February 21, 2002 meeting were approved and adopted.

The Board voted to go into executive session at 10:50 a.m. to discuss legal matters. The Board moved out of executive session at 10:55 a.m.

Individual Credentials Review – Presentation

The following individuals attended the meeting, made brief presentations and answered questions from the Board regarding their experiences:

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| a. | Deborah Merolla | Teacher of the Handicapped |
| b. | Judith Rottenberg | Standard Teacher of Elementary School |
| c. | Kathleen A. Young | Student Personnel Services |

Anna Marie Castaneda, who is applying for Standard Teacher of Elementary School certification, and Tyone Jackson, who is applying for School Social Worker certification, did not attend the meeting.

Credentials Review Committee Report

The Credentials Review Committee reviewed all credentials review cases and presented its recommendations to the Board. The Board took the following action:

Carol Risano - Teacher of Elementary School Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing - Denied

Legal Committee Report

The Legal Committee reviewed all legal cases and presented its recommendations to the Board. The Board took the following actions:

Order to Show Cause

Jeffrey Bolden – County Substitute Certificate- Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction for 3rd degree possession of a weapon.

Gregory Brewer – Criminal conviction for 3rd degree arson.

Dianne Davis – Tenure charges alleging unbecoming conduct. Ms. Davis entered into a settlement with the school district that involved her resignation from the school district. The Order to Show Cause was based on the level and nature of her alleged conduct.

Ronald Dukes – County Substitute Certificate- Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction for possession of marijuana and cocaine.

Christopher Grendysa – Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction for possession of marijuana. Additional conviction for Unauthorized Use of a Computer-Wrongful Access, a disorderly person's offense.

Elmena Jean – Tenure charges of unbecoming alleging inefficiency. Ms. Jean resigned from the school district. The Order to Show Cause was based on the level and nature of her alleged conduct.

John Hilkevich –Criminal conviction for sexual offenses. Sentenced to serve a total of forty years in a New Jersey State Prison.

David Hughes – Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction on weapons and false bomb report charges. .

Anthony Mangan – Tenure charges alleging inappropriate physical contact with a student, making inappropriate and vulgar comments and making innuendos of a sexual nature. The Order to Show Cause was based on the level and nature of his alleged conduct.

Carol Nesbitt – Criminal conviction for Frauds Relating to Public Records and Recordable Instruments.

Laurie Rosen – Tenure charges alleging unbecoming conduct involving the physical mistreatment of a ten-year old student. The Order to Show Cause was based on the level and nature of her alleged conduct.

Marvin T. Simpson – **County Substitute Certificate** - Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Nicholas Varanelli – Tenure charges alleging unbecoming conduct involving slapping a student and using expletives in his classroom. Mr. Varanelli resigned from the school district. The Order to Show Cause was based on the level and nature of his alleged conduct.

Robert R. Vitacco – Federal criminal conviction on two counts of tax evasion. Proven tenure charges of unbecoming conduct involving financial mismanagement, tax evasion, misappropriation of public funds and destruction of public records.

Viva L. White – **County Substitute Certificate**- Permanent disqualification from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History Review due to a conviction for possession and use of a controlled dangerous substance.

Suspension

Celese Segall – Proven tenure charges involving excessive absenteeism, which had a detrimental effect on student learning. The suspension is effective April 11, 2002 through April 11, 2004.

In the matter of **Steven Catena**, the Board voted to vacate the Order to Show Cause issued October 1, 2001 as his County Substitute teaching certificate expired January 2, 2002.

In the matter of **Joseph Q. Davis**, the Board voted to block his application for certification as his criminal history record would permanently disqualify him from public school employment by the Office of Criminal History.

In the matter of **Joy Northrop-Divencenzi**, the Board voted to accept the Settlement Proposal that includes the suspension of Ms. Northrop-Divencenzi's administrative certificates for one year to be effective from the date of the settlement agreement.

In the matter of **Captain Charles Dreyer**, the Board voted to accept the Settlement Proposal that includes allowing him to teach military science but not ROTC instruction.

In the matter of **David Hummel**, the Board voted to table the matter pending additional legal research and advice.

In the matter of **Rasheen Kornegay**, the Board voted to table the matter pending receipt of further information.

In the matter of **Charles Tumminelli**, the Board voted to accept the Settlement Proposal that includes Mr. Tumminelli surrendering his certificates at the time the settlement agreement is signed with revocation of his certificates to be effective July 2002. Additionally, Mr. Tumminelli agreed not to re-apply for certification and further agreed that the voluntary surrender of his certificate will have the same force and effect of revocation with all attendant repercussions.

The Board voted to take no action to suspend, revoke or block certificates of the following individuals:

Joseph Arcoleo	Robert C. Jacobson
Myisha Banks	Maria T. King
Alphefia Blount	Talitheia Murray
Amy K. Brand	Jessica Pfister
David Gurwitz	Sharon Weisberg
Winifred Haynes	

Acting Secretary Jay Doolan disseminated the draft letter to legislators addressing the Board's concern regarding the current Criminal History Record Statute, N.J.S.A. 18A-6-7.1 et seq. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that Marlene Zuberger, Esq., legal scribe for the Board, would add additional language to the letter for the Board's further review before forwarding the letter to Commissioner Librera requesting his support. The Board was unanimous and firm that they wanted discretionary legal authority when reviewing legal cases that fall under the purview of N.J.S.A. 18A-6-7.1 et seq. Additionally, Mr. Doolan agreed to find out who the sponsor of Bill 319 is, a bill that in part addresses the Board's concerns relative to criminal convictions that occurred many years ago.

Mr. Doolan also updated the Board on the Frank Dominianni matter. Mr. Dominianni appealed the Board's decision to deny his request for recognition of a master's degree from a university that was not approved or accredited for purposes of certification. The Commissioner affirmed the Administrative Law Judge's decision, which dismissed Mr. Dominianni's appeal.

Dr. Guidette led a discussion on the use of social security numbers for identification purposes on Board minutes distributed to County Superintendents. Difficulty arose when a candidate learned that an Order to Show Cause was being issued to him before he had it in hand. Deputy Attorney General Michael Walters advised that social security numbers should not be included in Board minutes. An alternate method for identifying candidates for school districts will be developed and County Superintendent's will be advised.

Mr. Doolan also reviewed the proposed certification code with the Board relative to the 2.75 G.P.A. amendments that include a provision directing appeals to the State Board of Examiners. Concerns may be addressed at regional hearings. Also, Mr. Doolan advised the Board that the new administration has a commitment to reorganizing the Office of Licensing and Credentials for better efficiency. He advised that a consultant was currently studying the office and that updated technology, including on-line application and review, was on the horizon. Mr. Doolan also gave the Board a brief overview of the department's reorganization plan that is before the State Board of Education for approval.

Board members agreed to forward a letter to Commissioner Librera to voice their concerns that their job as Board members is dependent on exemplary support staff with long historical memories and that their charge would be difficult with changing support staff.

The next meeting of the State Board of Examiners is scheduled to be held on **Thursday, May 9, 2002**, at the **Library for the Blind**, 2300 Stuyvesant Avenue, Trenton, New Jersey.