



**State of New Jersey**

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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TRENTON, NJ 08625-0500

PHILIP D. MURPHY  
*Governor*

SHEILA Y. OLIVER  
*Lt. Governor*

ANGELICA ALLEN-McMILLAN, Ed.D.  
*Acting Commissioner*

**State Board of Examiners  
Minutes of Meeting  
VIRTUALLY VIA MS TEAMS  
April 13, 2023**

**Present:** Laurie Fichera, Deputy Attorney General  
Dr. Mary Jane McNally  
Ms. Melissa Pearce  
Mr. Abdul Saleem Hasan  
Ms. Kristen Ludman  
Mr. Derek Jess  
Ms. Dayna Desiderio Orlak  
Ms. Rani Singh, Secretary

**Absent:** Dr. Jonathan Dauber  
Ms. Thelma Ramsey

**THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY VIA MS TEAMS.**

This meeting was duly noticed pursuant to the requirements of law. In compliance with N.J.S.A. 10:4-10a, the Open Public Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was given by way of notice filed with the Secretary of State, and publication in Trenton Times and Star Ledger in New Jersey. Notice of the virtual access information was provided online on the Department's website, via memorandum to the Secretary of State and several other individuals and entities and is available at the physical conference room where the meeting has been conducted prior to the public health crisis.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Derek Jess, Acting Chairperson, who read the appropriate notice that the meeting complied with the Open Public Meetings Act. He also read notice provisions regarding access to the virtual meeting.

Ms. Ludman moved to adopt the minutes of the meeting of March 3, 2023 (Regular and Executive Session). Mr. Hasan seconded the motion. The minutes were then approved by a unanimous vote.

**Individual Credentials Review Presentations**

The following applicants attended the meeting to respond to any questions from the Board regarding their applications:

Yvette (Baldeon) Alvarado  
Laura Desai  
Melanie Foltz  
Melanie Keenan  
Elena Kim  
Jiwon Lee  
Robert F. Nutile  
Anna Maria Osella  
Damian Rodriguez  
Spiros Zambas

The Board had no questions for the candidates.

### **Credentials Review Consent List**

Dr. McNally made a motion to adopt the decisions in the following matters on the credentials review consent list, and Ms. Desiderio Orlak seconded the motion. The Board adopted the following decisions by a unanimous roll call vote. The candidates in the following cases were present at the March 3, 2023 meeting. The Board adopted the following decisions:

Jessika Baldini	Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate of Eligibility - The Board denied the application.
Priyanka Priyesh Bhishnurkar	Teacher of Mathematics Certificate of Eligibility - The Board partially granted the application as to one semester-hour advanced level credit in Mathematics and partially denied as to the remaining eight and a half semester-hour advanced level credits in Mathematics required for the certificate.
Onika Burrowes	Student Assistance Coordinator (SAC) Certificate of Eligibility - The Board denied the application.
Jeremy Cohen	Teacher of Elementary Grades K-6 Certificate of Eligibility - The Board denied the application.
Joshua Freimark	Teacher of Biological Science Certificate of Eligibility - The Board denied the application.
Robert Gilinsky	Teacher of English as a Second Language Certificate of Eligibility - The Board granted the application.
Melissa Leonforte	Teacher of Elementary Grades K-6 and Teacher of Students with Disabilities certificates - The Board denied the applications.

Eileen MacDonald	School Administrator Certificate of Eligibility – The Board granted the application.
Delsheka Palmer	Principal Certificate of Eligibility – The Board denied the application.
Barbara M. Parker	Teacher of Visual Arts Certificate of Eligibility – The Board denied the application.
Melanie Rudden	Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility – The Board denied the application.

Dr. McNally then made a motion to go out of order on the agenda items. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hasan and passed unanimously.

Ms. Ludman then made a motion to adopt item q. on the legal consent list. The motion was seconded by Ms. Orlak, and with Mr. Hasan recusing, passed unanimously.

Ms. Pearce then made a motion to issue an Order to Show Cause for revocation to Melissa Hilliard based upon the level and nature of conduct, which was seconded by Ms. Orlak. With Ms. Ludman recusing, the motion passed unanimously.

**Legal Committee Report**

There were no hearings on the agenda. Accordingly, Dr. McNally made a motion to go into closed session to receive legal advice regarding matters on the Consent Order portion of the agenda, which was duly seconded by Ms. Ludman and carried by a unanimous vote. The Board went into closed session at 10:47 am.

The Board returned to the public session following a motion by Ms. Ludman, seconded by Mr. Hasan and carried by a unanimous vote. The Board returned to the public portion of the meeting at 11:11 am.

The Board then took the following action regarding items on the agenda:

Lauren Andersen (Hill) – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order.

Raymond W. Coxe – Mr. Coxe withdrew the proposal prior to the meeting.

Caesar A. Dommar - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to reject the proposed consent order in this matter.

Thomas Fien – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to reject the proposed consent order in this matter.

Sandy D. McKeown – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order in this matter.

Linda Torres - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the proposed consent order.

Denis Jelcic - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to revoke Mr. Jelcic's educator certificate(s) based upon the level and nature of the underlying conduct.

Nancey A. Nikiperowicz – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to suspend Ms. Nikiperowicz' educator certificate(s) for 2 years based upon the level and nature of the underlying conduct.

Lenny Washington - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to revoke Mr. Washington's educator certificate(s) based upon the level and nature of the underlying conduct.

Michael P. Brown – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of the conduct and crime and disqualification from public school employment.

Thomas L. Fuller - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of the underlying conduct.

Paul L. Henshaw - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of the underlying conduct.

Melissa L. Hillard – By a vote of 5-0, the Board voted to consider this matter out of order (see above) and to issue an order to show cause as to why her certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of the conduct and crime. Ms. Ludman recused.

David J. Holmes - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to seal the record in this matter and to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of the crime and conduct and disqualification from public school employment.

Oscar E. Oquendo - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to seal the record in this matter and to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of conduct.

Joseph A. Scalfaro - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to seal the record in this matter and to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be suspended pending the outcome of the underlying criminal matter.

Louis J. Severino – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to issue an order to show cause as to why his certificate(s) should not be revoked based upon the level and nature of conduct.

Carlos Rodriguez – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to vacate the order to show cause.

Trevor A. Sanders – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to vacate the order to show cause.

Era Kovanxhi – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to block all applications.

Rayna E. Culver – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the relinquishment of certificate(s) with the force and effect of revocation.

Thomas M. Downes - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the relinquishment of certificate(s) with the force and effect of revocation.

Brandon E. Lighten - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law, suspending Mr. Lighten’s educator certificate(s).

Howard Zlotkin – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to adopt the initial decision from the Office of Administrative Law suspending Mr. Zlotkin’s educator certificate(s).

Heather E. Walsh (Herbert) – By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the voluntary surrender of Ms. Walsh’s teacher of social studies certificates.

Gustavo A. Barrientos - By a vote of 6-0, the Board voted to accept the consent order for suspension pending the outcome of underlying criminal charges.

### **Legal Consent List**

Ms. Ludman then made a motion to adopt items a-p on the consent list below. Ms. Pearce seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

### **Orders to Show Cause**

- a. Candice O. Bland
- b. Nicholas L. Brozina
- c. John P. Burdi
- d. Aubree J. Deminski (Gurkovich)
- e. Stacy Lockwood (Ewing)
- f. Elizabeth M. Mansfield
- g. Matthew J. Maxwell
- h. Christopher G. Miller
- i. Dana Sermabekian
- j. Edward A. Sterbach

### **Revocations/Suspensions**

- k. Tarley Cooper – revocation
- l. David Kane – revocation
- m. James McMullan – suspension
- n. Caesar I. Sabino – revocation
- o. Joshua D. Valvano – revocation

## **Other**

- p. Jernee Kollock – dismissal

## **Other – Board Member Recusals (vote upon out of order, see above)**

- q. David E. Staggers – Order to Show Cause (Mr. Hasan and Ms. Ramsey recusing)

## **Old Business**

None.

## **New Business**

None.

## **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary voted on the adoption of all Chapter 9 regulations.

## **Adjournment**

Ms. Ludman made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was duly seconded by Ms. Pearce and carried by a unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 am.

The next scheduled regular public meeting of the State Board of Examiners will be held on May 18, 2023 either in the first-floor conference room, 200 River View Plaza, Trenton, New Jersey or virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Minutes prepared by Kimberly A. Gatti

Minutes certified by Rani Singh, Secretary