

**New Jersey Commissioner of Education**  
**Final Decision**

In the Matter of the Tenure Hearing of  
Leah Armstrong, School District of the  
City of Camden, Camden County.

For the Petitioner, Louis R. Lessig, Esq.

No appearance by or on behalf of Respondent, Leah Armstrong

This matter was opened before the Commissioner of Education on December 6, 2019, through tenure charges of incapacity certified by Katrina T. McCombs, Superintendent of the Camden City School District (“District”), together with supporting evidence against respondent, Leah Armstrong, a tenured teaching staff member in the District’s employ. The District provided respondent with written notice of such certification at the respondent’s last known address, via certified mail and regular mail, on December 6, 2019.

On December 9, 2019, the Commissioner directed the respondent – via both certified and regular mail – to file an answer to the charges. This communication clearly provided notice to respondent that, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:3-5.3* and *6A:3-5.4*, an individual against whom tenure charges are certified “*shall have 15 days from the day such charges are filed with the Commissioner to file a written response to the charges with the Commissioner,*” and that failure to answer within the prescribed period would – absent granting of an extension for good cause shown – result in the charges being deemed admitted. No reply to the tenure charges was received from or on behalf of the respondent.

The certified tenure charges and statement of supporting evidence filed by the District in this matter indicate that the respondent was employed by the District as a tenured teacher. Respondent was on a leave of absence for the entire 2015-2016 school year commencing with a paid leave of absence as of September 2, 2015 to December 8, 2015. Respondent has remained on an unpaid leave of absence and she has not responded to the District's attempts to contact her to determine a return date.

Deeming the allegations to be admitted and noting that the respondent has failed to respond to the charges certified against her, the Commissioner finds that the District's charge of incapacity has been proven and overwhelmingly warrant the respondent's dismissal. Accordingly, summary decision is hereby granted to the District, and the respondent is dismissed from her tenured position with the District. This matter will be transmitted to the State Board of Examiners for action against respondent's certificate(s) as that body deems appropriate.

IT IS SO ORDERED.\*

COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Date of Decision: January 9, 2020  
Date of Mailing: January 10, 2020

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\* This decision may be appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court pursuant to *P.L. 2008, c. 36 (N.J.S.A 18A:6-9.1)*.