

New Jersey Commissioner of Education

Decision

In the Matter of the Suspension of the
Teaching Certificates of Courtney Lelli, Vineland
Public Charter School, Cumberland County.

For petitioner, Geoffrey N. Stark, Esq.

For respondent, Courtney Lelli, *pro se*

This matter was opened before the Commissioner of Education on January 13, 2022, by way of an Order to Show Cause served by petitioner (Vineland Public Charter School) upon respondent (Courtney Lelli), requiring respondent to show cause why an order should not be entered suspending her teaching certificates pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:26-10* for resigning without giving the notice required by her teaching contract. By notice dated January 13, 2022, the Office of Controversies and Disputes (Office) acknowledged proof that the Order to Show Cause had been served upon respondent and directed respondent to answer within 20 days.

On January 24, 2022, respondent sent email communication to the Office indicating that she would not be taking further action with respect to this matter. The Office sent a response on January 25, 2022 advising respondent that if she chooses not to contest the matter, then each allegation in petitioner’s papers would be deemed admitted and that the Commissioner would decide this matter on a summary decision basis, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.5(e)*. Alternatively, the Commissioner advised that respondent had the opportunity to submit opposition challenging the

petition. On January 29, 2022, respondent confirmed that she was not contesting this matter any further.

The petition, certification, and supporting exhibits submitted by petitioner in this matter indicate that: the respondent was hired by petitioner as a ten-month kindergarten teacher for the 2021-22 school year; respondent entered into an employment contract with petitioner that required 60-days' written notice prior to respondent's termination; after the close of business on November 24, 2021, respondent sent an email to the Principal indicating that she was resigning, effective immediately, and that she would not be reporting to work after the Thanksgiving holiday. The respondent has not denied these allegations; therefore, the Commissioner deems such allegations to be admitted pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:3-1.5(e)* and further deems them sufficient to justify suspension of respondent's teaching certification pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:26-10*.

Accordingly, summary decision is hereby granted to petitioner, and respondent's teaching certification is suspended for a period of one year from the filing date of this decision, a copy of which shall be forwarded to the State Board of Examiners for implementation of the suspension.

IT IS SO ORDERED.¹



ACTING COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Date of Decision: February 23, 2022
Date of Mailing: February 23, 2022

¹ This decision may be appealed to the Appellate Division of the Superior Court pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-9.1*. Under *N.J.Ct.R. 2:4-1(b)*, a notice of appeal must be filed with the Appellate Division within 45 days from the date of mailing of this decision.