

New Jersey Commissioner of Education

Final Decision

In the Matter of the Tenure Hearing of
Richard Wilder, School District of the
City of Camden, Camden County.

For the Petitioner, Louis R. Lessig, Esq.

No appearance by or on behalf of Respondent, Richard Wilder

This matter was opened before the Commissioner of Education on November 24, 2021, through tenure charges of unbecoming conduct certified by Katrina T. McCombs, Superintendent of the Camden City School District (“District”), together with supporting evidence against respondent, Richard Wilder, a tenured teaching staff member in the District’s employ. The District provided respondent with written notice of such certification at the respondent’s current address, via certified and regular mail, on November 23, 2021.

On November 29, 2021, the Commissioner directed the respondent via 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. On June 25, 2021, the Principal of Camden High School was made aware that the respondent was

investigated by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services for allegations of causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act; the investigation concluded that respondent was “indicated” for sexual abuse and/or exploitation of a child. A determination of “indicated” means that sufficient evidence was obtained to support the conclusion that the alleged abuse occurred.

Deeming the allegations to be admitted and noting that the respondent has failed to respond to the charges certified against him, the Commissioner finds that the District’s charge of unbecoming conduct has been proven and overwhelmingly warrants the respondent’s dismissal. Accordingly, summary decision is hereby granted to the District, and the respondent is dismissed from his tenured position with the Camden City School 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.¹


ANGELINA ALLEN McMILLAN, Ed.S.
ACTING COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

Date of Decision: January 20, 2022
Date of Mailing: January 20, 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.