

SCHOOL ETHICS COMMISSION	:	BEFORE THE
	:	SCHOOL ETHICS COMMISSION
v.	:	RESOLUTION
PATRICIA BEERS,	:	SEC Docket No.: T13-98
Harmony Board of Education	:	
Warren County	:	

**WHEREAS**, the School Ethics Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 *et. seq.* was enacted by the New Jersey State Legislature to ensure and preserve public confidence in school board members and school administrators and to provide specific ethical standards to guide their conduct; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 requires new board members to attend training within one year of election or appointment to the board to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to serve as a school board member; and

**WHEREAS**, Patricia Beers was elected a member of the Harmony Board of Education in April 1997 and before that filled a vacancy for five months; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) advises prospective board members of the training requirement in the “candidate kit;” and

**WHEREAS**, The NJSBA mails correspondence to all new board members who have failed to register for or attend an orientation and did mail such correspondence to this board member on February 23, 1998; and

**WHEREAS**, the NJSBA conducted seven training sessions between April 1997 and April 1998 at varying locations and continuously published the dates and times of the sessions in its publication, *School Board Notes*; and

**WHEREAS**, the last training session to fulfill the requirement was held on March 14, 1998; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission issued an Order on April 15, 1998, directing Patricia Beers to Show Cause why she should not be found in violation of the Act; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Beers replied that she could not attend the session to which she was registered due to medical reasons, which she supports with bills, and child care obligations, but that she planned to attend the June 5-7, 1998 training session; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission notified her that the Commission would discuss this matter at its May 26, 1998 meeting, that she had the right to attend, and could be found in violation of the School Ethics Act and receive a penalty up to removal; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission has considered the reasons for failing to attend the required training program for the one year allowed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission finds that this failure to attend board member training from April 1997 to April 1998 constitutes a violation of N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33; and

**WHEREAS**, she could have attended one of the sessions offered;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the School Ethics Commission finds that Patricia Beers violated N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 of the School Ethics Act and recommends that the Commissioner of Education suspend her for one board meeting if she attends the June session but remove her from the board if she fails to attend the June training session.

Dated: May 26, 1998

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Paul C. Garbarini, Chairperson

This matter shall be transmitted to the Commissioner of Education for action on the Commission's recommendation for sanction pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-29. Within thirteen (13) days from the date on which the Commission's decision was mailed, the board member may file written comments on the recommended sanction with the Commissioner of Education, c/o Bureau of Controversies and Disputes, 100 Riverview Plaza, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625, marked "Attention: Comments on Ethics Commission Sanction." A copy of any comments filed must be sent to the School Ethics Commission and all other parties.

I certify that the within Resolution  
was duly adopted by the School Ethics  
Commission at its Public Meeting  
on May 26, 1998.

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Lisa James-Beavers, Executive Director