

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CREDENTIAL OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
RACHEL A. WALL : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 1516-206

At its meeting of June 23, 2016, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information the Criminal History Review Unit (CHRU) and the Washington Police Township Department (WTPD) had forwarded regarding Rachel A. Wall. On March 14, 2016, Wall was convicted of Harassment and Making Communications in an Annoying/Alarming Manner. Wall's convictions arose from a series of incidents over the Summer of 2015.

On May 15, 2015, Wall was charged with Simple Assault and Harassment of her mother and sister. In that incident, Wall was accused of scratching her sister in the face and causing a laceration to her mother's right eye when Wall grabbed her mother's face in an attempt to take away her telephone. Wall was intoxicated at the time.

On June 21, 2015, Wall was charged with Threatening to Kill her mother, Harassment and Disorderly Conduct. Wall allegedly stated "Fuck it, I'm gonna kill her" after engaging in a verbal dispute with her mother. Wall was intoxicated at the time.

On July 31, 2015, Wall was charged with Simple Assault upon both her mother and her sister. Wall attacked her mother causing scratches and lacerations to her mother's face. She also attacked her sister, causing lacerations to her sister's nose and neck. Wall attacked her mother after she discovered her mother had poured out a bottle of Wall's alcohol.

On August 27, 2015, Wall received four motor vehicle violations and was found guilty of driving while intoxicated. As a result of the DUI her driver's license was suspended until October 7, 2016.

Wall currently holds a Substitute Credential, which expires in July 2018. Upon review of the above information, at its September 16, 2016 meeting, the Board voted to issue Wall an Order to Show Cause as to why her credential should not be revoked.

The Board sent Wall the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on September 22, 2016. The Order provided that Wall had 30 days to respond. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Wall did not file a response.

Thereafter, on November 9, 2015, the Board sent Wall another notice by certified and regular mail providing her an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular copy was not returned. Wall did not respond.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on December 6, 2016, the Board sent Wall a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that the allegations in the Order to Show Cause were deemed to be admitted as a result of her failure to file an Answer. Thus, Wall was offered an opportunity to submit written arguments on the issue of whether the conduct as set forth in the Order to Show Cause provided just cause to take action against her credential, as well as arguments with regard to the appropriate sanction in the event that the Board found just cause to take action against her credential. Wall was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned and the regular mail copy was not returned. Once again, Wall did not respond.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Wall's conduct and convictions constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Since Wall failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause, the allegations therein are deemed admitted. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(c)*. Consequently, at its meeting of March 3, 2017, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause and the information received from the CHRU and the WTPD. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Wall's offense were in dispute since she never denied that she engaged in the conduct alleged or was convicted and therefore determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.7(h)*. After reviewing the allegations, the Board found that Wall had engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Wall's conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provides just cause to act against her credential pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.4*. The Board finds that it does.

The Board may revoke or suspend the certification of any certificate holder on the basis of demonstrated inefficiency, incapacity, conduct unbecoming a teacher or other just cause. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.4*. “Teachers... are professional employees to whom the people have entrusted the care and custody of ... school children. This heavy duty requires a degree of self-restraint and controlled behavior rarely requisite to other types of employment.” *Tenure of Sammons*, 1972 *S.L.D.* 302, 321. Moreover, unfitness to hold a position in a school system may be shown by one incident, if sufficiently flagrant. *Redcay v. State Bd. of Educ.*, 130 *N.J.L.* 369, 371 (1943), *aff’d*, 131 *N.J.L.* 326 (E & A 1944). Wall’s pattern of ongoing violent and belligerent behavior and convictions for Harassment and Making Communications in an Annoying/Alarming Manner is conduct that indicates a serious lapse in judgment. Wall has demonstrated that she is ill fit to be a role model for students and the Board therefore concludes that the appropriate response to her multiple breaches is the revocation of her Substitute Credential.

Accordingly, on March 3, 2017, the Board voted to revoke Rachel A. Wall’s Substitute Credential. On this 6th day of April 2017 the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that the revocation of Wall’s credential be effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Wall return her credential to the Secretary of the State Board of Examiners, Office of Certification and Induction, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 within 30 days of the mailing date of this decision.

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Robert R. Higgins, Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

RRH/MZ/th

Date of Mailing:

Appeals may be made to the Commissioner of Education pursuant to the provisions of *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-38.4*.