

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
THE CREDENTIAL OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS  
MEGAN ORLANDO : ORDER OF REVOCATION  
\_\_\_\_\_ : DOCKET NO: 1819-210

At its meeting of May 17, 2019, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information the Cape May County Prosecutor's Office and the Office of Student Protection (OSP) forwarded regarding Megan Orlando. On November 20, 2018, Orlando was indicted on charges of Theft by Unlawful Taking (3<sup>rd</sup> degree) and two counts of Conspiracy (3<sup>rd</sup> degree). Orlando had lived in the victim's house with her boyfriend when she stole over \$45,000 worth of jewelry belonging to the victim's deceased wife. Orlando and her boyfriend later sold the jewelry to a pawn shop. On February 28, 2019, Orlando received an Order of Postponement and entered a Pre-Trial Intervention (PTI) program for a period of 18 months.

Orlando currently holds a Substitute Credential that expires on January 1, 2022. Upon review of the above information, at its June 28, 2019 meeting, the Board voted to issue Orlando an Order to Show Cause as to why her credential should not be revoked.

The Board sent Orlando the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on July 2, 2019. The Order provided that Orlando had 30 days to respond. The certified mail was received, the return card signed, and the regular mail was not returned. Orlando submitted an Answer in which she indicates she was involved in an abusive relationship and was present during the incident at issue in February, 2019. As a result of her presence she was considered a co-conspirator. Since this incident, Orlando claims she obtained a restraining order against her co-conspirator and has sought sole custody of their child.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on August 7, 2019, the Board sent Orlando a hearing notice by regular and certified mail. The notice explained that it appeared that no material

facts were in dispute. Thus, Orlando was offered an opportunity to submit written arguments on the issue of whether the conduct addressed in the Order to Show Cause constituted conduct unbecoming a certificate holder, 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. It also explained that, upon review of the charges against her and the legal arguments tendered in her defense, the Board would determine if Orlando's offense warranted action against her credential. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Orlando was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The certified mail card was returned with signature and the regular mail was not returned. Orlando did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Orlando's conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. At its meeting of November 1, 2019, the Board considered the allegations in the Order to Show Cause as well as Orlando's Answer. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Orlando's offense were in dispute since she did not deny that she engaged in the alleged conduct and admitted that she was present during the incident at issue. Thus, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(h)*. After reviewing the allegations, the Board found that Orlando engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Orlando'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). Orlando’s actions of taking over \$45,000 worth of jewelry belonging to the victim’s deceased wife and later selling it with her boyfriend at a pawn shop is unacceptable for a role model. The Board therefore concludes that the appropriate response to her breach is the revocation of her credential.

Accordingly, on November 1, 2019, the Board voted to revoke Megan Orlando’s substitute credential. On this 13<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2019 that the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Orlando’s credential is hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Orlando 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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Rani Singh, Secretary  
State Board of Examiners

**Date of Mailing:**  
**Via certified and regular mail**

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