

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
GLENN DONAHUE : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 2021-124

At its meeting of January 22, 2021, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed a tenure arbitration settlement regarding Glenn Donahue, a former Lower Township Elementary School District (Lower Township) teacher. Lower Township certified tenure charges against Donahue for incapacity, unbecoming conduct, and other just cause after he allegedly engaged in offensive and inappropriate conduct with a fellow staff member, as well as being present on school grounds smelling of alcohol.

The tenure charges allege that in March, 2017, Donahue engaged in offensive and inappropriate conduct constituting sexual harassment against a fellow staff member. Donahue received and responded to an inappropriate text message regarding a female colleague. As a result of the investigation into this incident, Donahue's classroom had to be relocated to avoid contact with the impacted colleague.

On May 23, 2018, Principal of the Sandman School discovered a glass bottle in Donahue's classroom that smelled of alcohol. Donahue admitted that the bottle contained alcohol but stated that it had been consumed the night before. Donahue was thereafter suspended and instructed to participate in a treatment program. In September 2018, Donahue was permitted to return to work under a professional development plan containing identified areas of improvement and goals.

On April 8, 2019, Donahue was found to be extremely emotional during instructional time with students. Shortly thereafter, Lower Township received complaints that Donahue smelled of alcohol during work hours. A blood test detected traces of alcohol. As a result of this incident, Donahue was referred to a licensed psychologist for an evaluation. Upon evaluation by Dr. Gary Glass, M.D., licensed psychologist, Donahue was deemed unfit to perform his job duties and he required treatment and to attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. Dr. Glass found that Donahue would not be fit for duty unless he complied with these recommendations. Donahue was notified of the recommendations and did not provide the required

documentation demonstrating his compliance. Accordingly, the Board instituted the Tenure Charge proceedings. On November 6, 2020 the Arbitrator accepted Donahue's letter of resignation in lieu of an arbitration hearing in this matter.

Donahue currently holds a Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, a Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, and a Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 Standard Certificate. After reviewing the above information, at its January 22, 2021 meeting, the Board voted to issue an Order to Show Cause to Donahue as to why his certificates should not be revoked.

The Board sent Donahue the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on March 3, 2021. The Order provided that Donahue had 30 days to respond. The certified mail receipt was signed and returned, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Donahue did not respond. On April 13, 2021, the Board sent Donahue another notice by certified and regular mail providing him an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause. The certified mail copy was delivered per the United States Postal Service online tracking system, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Donahue did not file a response.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, on May 25, 2021, the Board sent Donahue 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 his failure to file an Answer. Thus, Donahue 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 his certificates. It also explained that, upon review of the charges against him and the legal arguments tendered in his defense, the Board would determine if Donahue's offense warranted action against his certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Donahue was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue.

The matter was scheduled for a hearing on the papers on July 30, 2021. Donahue submitted an email to the Board on or about July 24, 2021, acknowledging that his email was late, but that he wanted to

share some information. He stated that he has been ill and that he wished to clarify some information regarding his conduct. The email was shared with the Board on the day of the scheduled hearing on the papers and the Board wanted Donahue to have time to properly file an Answer if he so chose. Accordingly, on August 3, 2021, Donahue was provided with an opportunity to Answer. He indicated he had a medical issue but would respond. On August 27, 2021 Donahue submitted an email in which he stated that he was having difficulty responding. He stated that he cannot teach again and cannot risk being “in close proximity of people.” In response, the Board’s staff offered him additional time to submit an Answer and he indicated that he is “exhausted” and that he is dealing with his medical issues. He did not submit an Answer.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Donahue’s conduct constitutes conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Since Donahue failed to Answer 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 October 28, 2021, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Donahue’s offense were in dispute since he never denied that he had engaged in the conduct alleged. 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 Donahue had engaged in unbecoming conduct.

The Board must now determine whether Donahue’s conduct, as set forth in the Order to Show Cause, provides just cause to act against his certificates 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). Donahue’s actions, which

led to his resignation from Lower Township, clearly demonstrate conduct that is unacceptable for any adult, especially one who is ostensibly a role model. The Board therefore concludes that the only appropriate response to his breach is a revocation of his certificates.

Accordingly, on October 28, 2021, the Board voted to revoke Glenn Donahue's Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, Teacher of Health and Physical Education Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing and his Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 certificate. On this 16th day of December 2021, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision and it is therefore ORDERED that Donahue's certificates are hereby revoked, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Donahue return his certificates 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.

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 *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38.4.