

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

THE CERTIFICATE OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS

ABLITY Z. MOUWON : ORDER OF REVOCATION

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At its meeting of September 17, 2021, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the Office of Student Protection (OSP), the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office (ECPO), and the Department of Child Protection and Permanency, Institutional Abuse Investigation Unit (IAIU), regarding Ablity Z. Mouwon. Mouwon currently holds a Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility, issued in October 2015.

On December 12, 2018, Mouwon was criminally charged with Sexual Assault – Victim Under the Age of 13 (2nd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:14-2B*, and Endangering the Welfare of a Child – Sexual Conduct With Minor (2nd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:24-4A(1)*. It was alleged that Mouwon intentionally squeezed the bare behind of a young student while helping her pull her pants up in the classroom bathroom. During the criminal investigations, Mouwon admitted to a detective that he had touched about 4 other children—3 girls and 1 boy—at his home, that “oral” occurred with one of these children, who was his niece, and that he touched her vagina with his hands and that the child’s clothes were off. Mouwon stated that the contact occurred several times and that he touched his penis with her mouth and that he was sexually attracted to children. On November 30, 2020, the criminal charges were ultimately dismissed by motion of the prosecutor.

On March 7, 2019, following an investigation of the allegations, IAIU substantiated findings of sexual abuse/sexual abuse-molestation against Mouwon. The results of the IAIU investigation determined that sexual/genital contact occurred between Mouwon and the young student and that the contact occurred when Mouwon was alone with the student inside of the classroom bathroom. During the IAIU investigation, Mouwon admitted to other inappropriate

conduct with other children, outside of his employment.

Upon review of the above information, the Board voted at its October 28, 2021 meeting to issue Mouwon an Order to Show Cause as to why his certificate should not be revoked. The Board attempted to send the OTSC to Mouwon at multiple addresses on November 2, 2021; February 11, 2022; May 6, 2022; and February 8, 2023. On May 30, 2023, the Board sent Mouwon the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. The Order to Show Cause provided that Mouwon had 30 days to respond pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B- 4.6(b)*. The regular mail copy was not returned, and the certified mail copy appeared to stall and never progressed in the delivery process. Mouwon did not file a response.

On June 14, 2024, the Board sent Mouwon a second notice, by regular and certified mail, providing him an additional fifteen (15) days to respond to the Order to Show Cause pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(c)*. Again, the regular mail copy was not returned, and the certified mail copy appeared to stall and never progressed in the delivery process. Mouwon did not file a response.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, the Board sent Mouwon a hearing notice by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested, on February 5, 2025. The notice explained that because no answer was filed there appeared to be no dispute as to material facts in this matter. Thus, Mouwon 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 certificate. Mouwon was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue. The regular mail copy was not returned, and the certified mail copy again appeared to stall and never progressed in the delivery process. Mouwon did not file a response or request to appear before the Board.

On March 24, 2025, the Board sent a second notice via regular mail, certified mail, and FedEx delivery. The certified mail copy was signed and returned, and the regular mail copy was

not returned. Mouwon did not file a response or request to appear before the Board.

The Board has the authority to “issue appropriate certificates to teach or to administer” and “may revoke the same under rules and regulations prescribed by the State board.” *N.J.S.A.* 18A:6-38; *see also N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-3.2 and -4.4; *Morison v. Willingboro Bd. of Educ.*, 478 N.J. Super. 229 (App. Div. 2024), *cert. denied* 258 N.J. 143 (July 11, 2024). The Board may take action against a 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; *see also Morison*, 478 N.J. Super. at 246, 248 (the Board is responsible for protecting schoolchildren from improper teacher conduct and may suspend or revoke an educator’s continued ability to serve as a teacher at any public school based on unbecoming conduct).

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Mouwon’s actions here constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Because Mouwon failed to respond to the Order to Show Cause, the allegations are deemed admitted. *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(c). Consequently, at its meeting of June 26, 2025, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause and the information received from OSP, ECPO, and IAIU. Because the allegations were deemed admitted, the Board concluded that no material facts related to Mouwon’s offenses were in dispute. And because no material facts related to Mouwon’s conduct are in dispute, the Board determined that summary decision was appropriate in this matter. *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(h).

The Board finds that Mouwon engaged in conduct unbecoming of an educator. Unbecoming conduct is defined as “conduct ‘which adversely affects the morale or efficiency of the [department]’ or ‘has a tendency to destroy public respect for [government] employees and confidence in the operation of [public] services.’” *Bound Brook Bd. of Educ. v. Ciripompa*, 228 N.J. 4, 13 (2017) (quoting *In re Young*, 202 N.J. 50, 66 (2010) (citing *Karins v. Atl. City*, 152 N.J. 532, 554 (1998))). “[A] finding of unbecoming conduct ‘need not be predicated upon the violation

of any particular rule or regulation, but may be based merely upon the violation of the implicit standard of good behavior which devolves upon one who stands in the public eye as an upholder of that which is morally and legal correct.” *Id.* at 13-14 (quoting *Karins*, 152 N.J. at 555). “It focuses on the morale, efficiency, and public perception of an entity, and how those concerns are harmed by allowing teachers to behave inappropriately while holding public employment.” *Id.* at 14. “The touchstone of the determination lies in the certificate holder’s ‘fitness to discharge the duties and functions of one’s office or position.’” *Young*, 202 N.J. at 66 (quoting *In re Grossman*, 127 N.J. Super. 13, 29 (App. Div. 1974)).

Here, the Board finds that Mouwon’s actions of intentionally squeezing the bare behind of a young student while helping her pull her pants up in the classroom bathroom and inappropriately sexually touching other young children at his home clearly are highly egregious and demonstrate violations of the implicit standard of good behavior expected of public school teachers. Thus, the Board finds that Mouwon engaged in conduct unbecoming an educator and provides the basis for the Board’s findings.

Having found that Mouwon engaged in unbecoming conduct, the Board must now determine the appropriate penalty to be applied. In doing so, the Board considers the “nature and gravity of the offenses under all the circumstances involved, any evidence as to provocation, extenuation or aggravation,” and any “harm or injurious effect” on the maintenance of discipline and the proper administration of the school system. *In re Fulcomer*, 93 N.J. Super. 404, 422 (App. Div. 1967). “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. Fitness to teach depends on a broad range of factors, including the teacher’s impact and effect upon the students, because a “teacher works in a sensitive area in a schoolroom” and “shapes the attitude of young minds toward the society in which they live.” *Grossman*, 127

N.J. at 30 (*quoting Adler v. Bd. of Educ. of City of New York*, 342 U.S. 485 (1952)). Importantly, unfitness to hold a position in a school system may be shown by one incident if sufficiently flagrant. *Fulcomer*, 93 N.J. Super. at 421; *Redcay v. State Bd. of Educ.*, 130 N.J.L. 369, 371 (1943), *aff'd*, 131 N.J.L. 326 (E & A 1944).

In this instance, the Board concludes that the appropriate response to Mouwon's multiple breaches in conduct of an educator is revocation of his certificate. Mouwon's conduct in intentional inappropriate sexual touching of a student and multiple other young children demonstrates that he is unfit to discharge the duties and functions as a public school teacher. Allowing him to maintain certification to teach in a public school would have a negative impact on the proper administration of the school system. Thus, revocation of his certificate is the appropriate response in this matter.

Accordingly, on June 26, 2025, the Board voted to revoke Ability Mouwon's Teacher of Social Studies Certificate of Eligibility. On this 8th day of August 2025, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision, and it is therefore ORDERED that Mouwon's certificate is REVOKED, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Mouwon return his paper certificate, if issued, 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:
By 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.