

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
KYLE W. KACICZ : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____: DOCKET NO: 2122-164

At its meeting of April 7, 2022, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the Department of Education (DOE) – Office of Legal Affairs, Accountability & Compliance (OLAAC), and DOE - Office of Student Protection (OSP) regarding Kyle W. Kacicz, including documents received from the Warren County Prosecutor’s Office, Hackettstown Police Department, and New Jersey Superior Court, Warren County. Kacicz currently holds a Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, issued March 1995; a Standard Teacher of the Handicapped certificate, issued February 1998; a Standard Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 certificate, issued December 1999; and a Standard Supervisor certificate, issued September 2015.

On or about September 26, 2020, Kacicz was charged with Possession of a Weapon with the Purpose to Use it Unlawfully (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4D*, and Aggravated Assault – Attempt to Cause Bodily Injury with Deadly Weapon (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:12-1B(2)*. It was alleged that Kacicz stabbed a victim multiple times in the chest and abdomen while in the emergency room area of Hackettstown Hospital. The victim required medical treatment.

OSP originally advised the Board that Kacicz pled guilty to a lesser included offense of simple assault, which is a non-disqualifying offense. Following review of the above, on May 19, 2022, the Board voted to issue an Order to Show Cause to Kacicz.

Thereafter, OSP confirmed that, on October 14, 2022, Kacicz pled guilty to Possession of a Weapon with the Purpose to Use it Unlawfully (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4D*. On January 13,

2023, Kacicz was sentenced to two years of noncustodial probation. OSP also advised that as a result of his conviction for Possession of a Weapon with the Purpose to Use it Unlawfully (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4D*, Kacicz was permanently disqualified from public school employment pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq.*

At its meeting of March 1, 2024, the Board voted to vacate its May 19, 2022 Order to Show Cause in this matter. At its meeting of April 11, 2024, the Board voted to issue a new Order to Show Cause to Kacicz as to why his certificates should not be revoked. On June 3, 2024, the Board sent Kacicz the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. The Order provided that Kacicz had 30 days to respond pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B- 4.6(b)*.

On June 12, 2024, Kacicz submitted an Answer to the Order to Show Cause. In his answer, Kacicz provided an “actual account of what occurred before, during and after the incident.” *See Answer*, p.1. Kacicz stated that he, along with his wife, took his stepson to the hospital for medical attention for suspected use of illegal drugs. *Ibid.* And that while still in the parking lot, his stepson jumped out of the car and ran across the “[p]arking lot into the night.” *Ibid.* Approximately fifteen minutes later, Kacicz found his stepson sitting in the truck of James Steen, the ex-husband of Kacicz’ wife. *Ibid.* Kacicz stated that a verbal disagreement relating to getting medical care for the step-son took place between his wife and Steen, and that he moved closer to make sure his wife was safe. *Ibid.*

Kacicz claims that Steen, who is twice his size, threatened him and his wife, pushed him against the back of his car, was ready to throw a punch at him, and were nose to nose while Steen was screaming at him. *Id.* at 1-2. Kacicz acknowledged that he assaulted Steen, but claimed it was in self-defense to get Steen to “let go of [him,]” “[l]esson the threat of physical violence,” and to “[a]llow [him] to escape[.]” *Id.* at 2. Kacicz states that Steen then grabbed him by the back of

his neck, picked him up and threw him to the ground face first, sat on his back and punched his back and the sides of his face, and “trie[d] to choke the life out of [him].” *Ibid.*

On October 10, 2024, after reviewing Kacicz’ response, the Board sent him a letter acknowledging receipt but stating that he needed to specifically respond as to each allegation/numbered paragraph in the Order to Show Cause by November 10, 2024 or the allegations would be deemed admitted. *See N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(b).* Kacicz did not file a response.

Thereafter, pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*, the Board sent Kacicz a hearing notice by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested on March 4, 2025. The notice explained that there appeared to be no dispute as to material facts in this matter. Thus, Kacicz 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. Kacicz was also offered the opportunity to appear before the Board to provide testimony on the sanction issue.

On March 28, 2025, Kacicz submitted a response and requested to appear before the Board. In his response, he admitted that he “used a ‘weapon’ to defend [him]self as well as [his] wife and son during this incident.” *See Hearing Response*, p.2. He also admitted that he “pled guilty in order to not be jailed for a lengthy period of time as agreed between [his] lawyer, [him]self and the prosecutor in order to continue to work and support [his] family both emotionally, spiritually and financially and was put on probation for two years.” *Ibid.* He claimed he has never been in “trouble with law” previously and that he completed his probation and has had not “trouble with the police” subsequently. *Ibid.* He also claimed that “[a]s a husband and father, he had to make a split decision. Either protect [his] family or let the danger that was upon us hurt [his] wife, [his]

child or [him]self.” *Ibid.* He argued that he “was punished for [his] actions through the NJ Legal System,” and that the Board revoking his teaching certificates after a “spotless career as a special educator” for 22 years would punish him twice and infringe on his liberty and livelihood and his ability to continue to give back to the community. *Id.* at 2-3. Further, he argued that the incident did not take place at a school and no students were harmed or were witnesses to this incident. *Id.* at 2. On October 30, 2025, Kacicz appeared before the Board and provided testimony on the whether his conduct constituted conduct unbecoming a certificate holder, and the appropriate sanction in the event that the Board found just cause to take action against his certificates.

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 (explaining 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 Kacicz’s actions here constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Kacicz did not dispute the allegations in the Order to Show Cause and because he did not admit or deny the allegations, even after being provided two opportunities to do so, the allegations were deemed admitted. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(c)*. Consequently, at its meeting of December 12, 2025, the Board considered only the allegations in the April 11, 2024 Order to Show Cause and the information received from the

OLAAC and OSP and Kacicz's hearing submission. Because the allegations were not disputed, the Board concluded that no material facts related to Kacicz's offenses were in dispute. And because no material facts related to Kacicz's conduct were 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 Kacicz 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 Kacicz's conviction for Possession of a Weapon with the Purpose to Use it Unlawfully (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4D*, clearly demonstrates violations of the implicit standard of good behavior expected of public school teachers. And his actions of using a weapon to stab a victim multiple times in unacceptable for a role model. Further, in enacting the Criminal History Review statute, *N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq.*, in 1986, the Legislature sought to

protect public school pupils from contact with individuals whom it deemed to be a danger. The strong legislative policy statement is also in accord with the Commissioner's long-standing belief that teachers must serve as role models for their students. Here, OSP determined that Kacicz's conviction permanently disqualifies him from public school employment. *See N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1(c)(2) and (d).* Thus, the Board finds that Kacicz engaged in conduct unbecoming an educator and provides the basis for the Board's finding.

Having found that Kacicz 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). Central to this evaluation is the understanding that "[t]eachers... 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 Kacicz's breach in conduct of an educator is revocation of his certificates. Kacicz's conduct of stabbing a victim

multiple times in the chest and abdomen demonstrates he is unfit to discharge the duties and functions as a public school teacher and demonstrates strong evidence that revocation is appropriate. Allowing him to maintain certification to teach in a public school would have a negative impact on the proper administration of the school system. And contrary to his claims, the Board has proper authority to take action on his certificates as it sees fit, in addition to any penalty imposed in his criminal proceeding as the two legal proceedings are separate and distinct.

Further, the record established that, as a result of his conviction for Possession of a Weapon with the Purpose to Use it Unlawfully (3rd degree), *N.J.S.A. 2C:39-4D*, Kacicz is disqualified from public school employment. An educator who is not qualified for public school employment should not be able to hold himself out as a public educator. Thus, revocation of his certificates is the appropriate response in this matter.

Accordingly, on December 12, 2025, the Board voted to revoke Kyle W. Kacicz's Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing, Standard Teacher of the Handicapped certificate, Standard Teacher of Elementary School in Grades K-8 certificate, and Standard Supervisor certificate. On this 22nd day of January 2026, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision, and it is therefore ORDERED that Kacicz's certificates are REVOKED, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Kacicz return his paper certificates, 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.