

IN THE MATTER OF : NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
THE CERTIFICATES OF : STATE BOARD OF EXAMINERS
LORRAINE A. LAND : ORDER OF REVOCATION
_____ : DOCKET NO: 2223-118

Lorraine A. Land (Land) is the holder of a Teacher of English standard certificate, issued in December 2002, and a Student Personnel Services certificate, issued in December 2002.

At its meeting of October 28, 2022, the State Board of Examiners (Board) reviewed information from the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification and the Pennsylvania Professional Standards and Practices Commission regarding Land. On or about December 13, 2010, Land pled guilty to Theft by Deception – False Impressions, 18 Pa.C.S. § 3922(a)(1). It was alleged that she submitting falsified weekly mobile therapist reports to Chester County and received payment for services not actually rendered. As a result, she was sentenced to one year of probation and 50 hours of community service.

On May 16, 2022, Land surrendered her Pennsylvania educator certificates – English 7-12 Instructional I and Secondary School Counselor Education Specialist I.

Upon review of the above information, the Board voted at its December 9, 2022 meeting to issue Land an Order to Show Cause as to why her certificates should not be revoked. The Board sent Land the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail on December 14, 2022. The Order provided that Land had 30 days to respond pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B- 4.6(b)*. The certified mail copy was marked “Unable to Forward,” and the regular mail was not returned. On January 12, 2023, Land emailed the Board, attaching a letter response of the same date and a May 2022 neuropsychological assessment. Her response included a general claim that the criminal conviction was inaccurate but otherwise failed to address the conduct alleged in the Order to Show

Cause, as well as failed to address whether she surrendered her Pennsylvania educator certificates.

On February 9, 2023, the Board sent Land another notice by certified and regular mail providing her an additional 15 days to respond to the Order to Show Cause pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.6(c). The certified mail copy was marked “Unable to Forward” and the regular mail copy was returned and marked “Refused Unable to Forward.” On February 16, 2023, an adult child of Land’s sent an email to the Board stating that: (1) the address the Board sent the correspondence to was not Land’s address; (2) that Land was under treatment for “several health concerns at an undisclosed location for an unspecified amount of time[;]” (3) and that “[w]hen [Land] is able and available to attend any necessary hearings she will contact [the Board].” Further, on February 19, 2023, the “Land Family” sent an email to the Board attaching a letter from their “family business representative” stating that “Dr. Land no longer resides at [] Drive, Bear, Delaware 19701” and that they could not reveal her location or how long treatment will take place due to HIPAA. As a result, the matter was put into abeyance.

On August 9, 2023, the Board sent an email to both Land and her “family” stating that since it had been several months with no additional information, the matter would be moving forward and that the Board was seeking an answer to the allegations in the Order to Show Cause. The email also stated that if there was a different address for Land to please provide same to the Board and that if no response was received, the Board would use the most recent address to communicate.

On August 10, 2023, Ian Land responded and stated that he is the caregiver to his elderly parents at the Bear, Delaware address, but that his mother, Land, does not reside at that address. He further stated that Land was in Canada receiving medical care and he did not have the address of the hospital.

On March 27, 2024, after discovering a new address for Land in Pennsylvania, the Board sent her the Order to Show Cause by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. The certified copy was signed and returned, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Land did not file a response. On July 8, 2024, a second notice was sent to Land by regular and certified mail, return receipt requested. The certified copy was signed and returned, and the regular mail copy was not returned. Land did not file a response.

On August 16, 2024, the Board sent Land a hearing notice by regular and certified mail pursuant to *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.6(e)*. The notice explained that there appeared to be no material facts in dispute. Thus, Land 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 certificates. It also explained that, upon review of the charges against her and the legal arguments tendered in her defense, the Board would determine if her offense warranted action against her certificates. Thereupon, the Board would also determine the appropriate sanction, if any. Land 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. Land did not file a response.

The threshold issue before the Board in this matter is whether Land's actions here constitute conduct unbecoming a certificate holder or other just cause. Because Land 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 December 6, 2024, the Board considered only the allegations in the Order to Show Cause and the information received from the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification and the Pennsylvania Professional Standards and Practices

Commission. The Board concluded that no material facts related to Land's offense were in dispute because she never denied that she had engaged in the alleged conduct. Thus, since no material facts related to Land'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 Land engaged in conduct unbecoming of an educator. Pursuant to *N.J.A.C.* 6A:9B-4.4, the Board may take action against a certificate holder on the basis of conduct unbecoming a teacher. The "elastic" concept of "conduct unbecoming" includes "conduct which adversely affects the morale or efficiency" of the public entity or "which has a tendency to destroy public respect for . . . [public] employees and confidence in the operation of [public] services." *In re Emmons*, 63 N.J. Super. 136, 140 (App. Div. 1960); *accord Bound Brook Bd. of Educ.*, 228 N.J. at 13. "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.

A "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 legally correct" may provide the basis for a finding of unbecoming conduct. *Bound Brook Bd. of Educ. v. Ciripompa*, 228 N.J. 4, 14 (2017) (quoting *Karins v. City of Atlantic City*, 152 N.J. 532, 555 (1998)). 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). Land's actions in submitting falsified therapist reports and receiving payment for services not actually rendered certainly demonstrate inappropriate conduct and not conduct we would expect of a role model for students. Thus, the Board finds Land engaged in conduct unbecoming an educator.

Land's criminal conviction in Pennsylvania and resulting surrender of her Pennsylvania educator certificates also provides the basis for the Board's finding.

Having found that Land engaged in unbecoming conduct, the Board must now determine the appropriate penalty to be applied. The Board may revoke or suspend the certification of any certificate holder if the certificate holder engages in conduct unbecoming a teacher. *N.J.A.C. 6A:9B-4.4*. In this instance, the Board concludes that the appropriate response to Land's breach in conduct of an educator is revocation of her credential. Specifically, Land's actions in submitting falsified documents to receive payment from the public coffers in Chester County, Pennsylvania for services she did not provide warrant revocation of her New Jersey certificates because such actions tend to destroy confidence in the operation of public services. Land's conviction for Theft by Deception – False Impressions, 18 Pa.C.S. § 3922(a)(1), and thereafter, her surrender of her Pennsylvania educator certificates, provide further support that revocation of her New Jersey certificates is warranted.

Accordingly, on December 6, 2024, the Board voted to revoke Lorraine A. Land's Teacher of English standard certificate and Student Personnel Services certificate. On this 16th day of January 2025, the Board voted to adopt its formal written decision, and it is therefore ORDERED that Land's certificates be REVOKED, effective immediately. It is further ORDERED that Land return her 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:
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.