

Sherri Baffa
Revocation, Automatic

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: On January 15, 2013, Ms. Baffa, a former teacher at Sullivan East High School, pleaded guilty to seven Class B felony counts of sexual exploitation of a minor pursuant to T.C.A. § 39-17-1003(d). Ms. Baffa was originally charged with seven counts of aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor after it was discovered that she had a sexual relationship with a former student who was 16 years old; the charges were ultimately amended to sexual exploitation of a minor. As a result of her conviction, Ms. Baffa was sentenced to eight (8) years in prison.

Applicable Rule: 0520-02-04-.01(9)(a) provides The State Board of Education shall automatically revoke the license of a licensed teacher or administrator without the right to a hearing upon receiving verification of the identity of the teacher or administrator together with a certified copy of a criminal record showing that the teacher or school administrator has been convicted of any felony or offense listed at T.C.A. § 40-35-501(i)(2) or T.C.A. § 39-17-417 (including conviction on a plea of guilty or nolo contendere). The Board will notify persons whose licenses are subject to automatic revocation at least 30 days prior to the Board meeting at which such revocation shall occur.

T.C.A. § 49-5-417 provides The State Board of Education shall automatically revoke the license of a licensed teacher or administrator without the right to a hearing upon receiving verification of the identity of the teacher or administrator together with a certified copy of a criminal record showing that the teacher or school administrator has been convicted of any felony or offense listed at § 39-13-532, § 39-17-417, or § 40-35-501(i)(2)

T.C.A. § 40-35-501(i)(2) provides the included offenses (M) Sexual exploitation of a minor involving more than one hundred (100) images and (O) Especially aggravated sexual exploitation of a minor.

T.C.A. § 39-17-1003(d) provides Sexual exploitation of a minor is a class D felony; however, if the number of individual images, material, or combination of images and materials, that are possessed is more than fifty (50), then the offense shall be a Class C felony. If the number of individual images, material, or combination of images and materials, exceeds one hundred (100), the offense shall be a Class B felony.

0520-02-03-.09(9) provides Individuals have a duty to maintain up-to-date contact information, including but not limited to address, e-mail address, and phone number, in

the state of Tennessee's educator licensure database (TN Compass). Any changes to the educator's contact information shall be updated by the educator in the educator license database (TN Compass) within thirty (30) days of the change.

Status: Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board's intent to **automatically revoke** her educator license based upon these findings. The certified letter was returned unclaimed. Board counsel attempted to contact Respondent by phone and electronic mail but was unsuccessful.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

October 2017 – The Board ordered the automatic revocation of an educator's license for a conviction of an offense listed in T.C.A. § 40-35-501(i)(2).

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April 2018 – The Board ordered the automatic revocation of an educator's license for a conviction of an offense listed in T.C.A. § 40-35-501(i)(2).

July 2018 – The Board ordered the automatic revocation of an educator's license for a conviction of an offense listed in T.C.A. § 40-35-501(i)(2).

July 2019 – The Board ordered the automatic revocation of an educator's license pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-5-417.

The Recommendation:

The Board staff recommends the automatic revocation of Respondent's Tennessee educator license.