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|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| SCHOOL ETHICS COMMISSION      | : | BEFORE THE               |
|                               | : | SCHOOL ETHICS COMMISSION |
| v.                            | : |                          |
|                               | : | RESOLUTION               |
| SHERI A. SMITH,               | : |                          |
| Barrington Board of Education | : | SEC Docket No.: T19-98   |
| Camden County                 | : |                          |
|                               | : |                          |

**WHEREAS**, the School Ethics Act, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-21 et seq. was enacted by the New Jersey State Legislature to ensure and preserve public confidence in school board members and school administrators and to provide specific ethical standards to guide their conduct; and

**WHEREAS**, N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 requires new board members to attend training within one year of election or appointment to the board to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to serve as a school board member; and

**WHEREAS**, Sheri A. Smith was elected to serve a three-year term on the Barrington Board of Education in April 1997; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey School Boards Association (NJSBA) advises prospective board members of the training requirement in the “candidate kit;” and

**WHEREAS**, The NJSBA mails correspondence to all new board members who have failed to register for or attend an orientation and did mail such correspondence to this board member on February 23, 1998; and

**WHEREAS**, the NJSBA conducted seven training sessions between April 1997 and April 1998 at varying locations and continuously published the dates and times of the sessions in its publication, *School Board Notes*; and

**WHEREAS**, the last training session to fulfill the requirement was held on March 14, 1998; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission issued an Order on April 15, 1998, directing Sheri A. Smith to Show Cause why she had not attended training up until that time; but she apparently never received it; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission resent the Order to her on May 13, 1998, and a reminder letter to her on June 5, 1998; and

**WHEREAS**, Ms. Smith replied that she could not attend a session within the year because her husband was hospitalized six months prior to his heart transplant on April 5, 1998, but that she plans to attend the October 26, 1998 session; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission notified her that the Commission would discuss this matter at its June 23, 1998 meeting, that she had the right to attend, and could be found in violation of the School Ethics Act and receive a penalty up to removal; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission has considered the reasons for failing to attend the required training program for the one year allowed; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission finds that this failure to attend board member training from April 1997 to March 1998 constitutes a violation of N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33; and

**WHEREAS**, she could have attended one of the other sessions offered prior to November 1997 when her husband was hospitalized; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commission finds that Ms. Smith could have attended one of the June sessions rather than wait for the October 1998 session;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the School Ethics Commission finds that Sheri A. Smith violated N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33 of the School Ethics Act and recommends that the Commissioner of Education suspend her until she attends the October session, but remove her from the board if she fails to attend.

Dated: June 23, 1998

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Paul C. Garbarini, Chairperson

This matter shall be transmitted to the Commissioner of Education for action on the Commission's recommendation for sanction pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:12-29. Within thirteen (13) days from the date on which the Commission's decision was mailed, the board member may file written comments on the recommended sanction with the Commissioner of Education, c/o Bureau of Controversies and Disputes, 100 Riverview Plaza, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625, marked "Attention: Comments on Ethics Commission Sanction." A copy of any comments filed must be sent to the School Ethics Commission and all other parties.

I certify that the within Resolution was duly adopted by the School Ethics Commission at its Public Meeting on June 23, 1998.

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Lisa James-Beavers, Executive Director

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