

Zeb Bulla
Denial

The Background:

Prior History: N/A

Facts: On June 13, 2025, the Board received Mr. Bulla’s application for a Tennessee educator license through the out-of-state teacher pathway. On his application, Mr. Bulla failed to report a previous suspension of his California license. On July 17-18, 2021, the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing suspended his license for thirty (30) days for allegations involving unprofessional conduct with students and leaving a student behind and unsupervised during a field trip.

Applicable Law

/Rule: 0520-02-03-.09(3)(d) provides, “The State Board of Education may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator’s license ... for ... falsification or altering of a license or permit or documentation required for licensure or permit.”

0520-02-03-.09(3)(h) provides, “The State Board of Education may revoke, suspend, formally reprimand, or refuse to issue or renew an educator’s license ... for ... denial, formal reprimand, suspension, or revocation/surrender of a license or certificate in another jurisdiction for reasons which would justify denial, formal reprimand, suspension, or revocation under this Rule.”

0520-02-03-.09(8)(a) provides, “If the individual indicates an affirmative answer on the personal affirmation section of the application for a Tennessee educator license, the individual shall show why the license should be issued despite the individual’s affirmative answers. Issuance of a license is considered on a case-by-case basis and the burden of proof rests with the individual applying for the license. In the case of a felony conviction, the individual shall also show that any sentence imposed, including any pre-trial diversion or probationary period has been completed. An application for issuance of a license may be denied if an action against the individual’s license has been taken or is pending in another state.”

0520-02-03-.09(8)(b) provides, “There shall be a rebuttable presumption that any individual applying for an educator license who has committed an offense that would subject him or her to revocation or suspension shall be presumed ineligible to receive a Tennessee educator license.”

T.C.A. § 49-5-1004(b)(1) provides that educators shall not “Deliberately make a false statement or fail to disclose a material fact related to competency and qualifications in an application for a professional position.”

Status: Respondent was notified by certified mail of the Board’s intent to **deny** Respondent’s educator license application based upon these findings. Respondent was also provided Board policy with respect to requesting permission to speak on behalf of his Tennessee educator license application. Respondent received said notice.

Board Action Consistency Considerations:

May 2025 – Board approved the denial of an application for licensure due to failure to report license discipline in another state on their application for licensure in Tennessee.

November 2023 – Board approved the denial of an application for licensure due to failure to report license discipline in another state on their application for licensure in Tennessee.

The Recommendation:

Board counsel recommends the Board deny Respondent’s application for a Tennessee educator license based upon the facts and applicable rule noted above.