

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

STATE OF GEORGIA

MATTIE CRANFORD, :
Appellant, :
v. : CASE NO. 1981-22
TALBOT COUNTY BOARD :
OF EDUCATION, :
Appellee. :

O R D E R

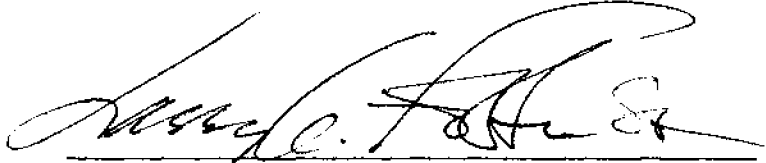
THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, after due consideration of the record submitted herein and the report of the Hearing Officer, a copy of which is attached hereto, and after a vote in open meeting,

DETERMINES AND ORDERS, that the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the Hearing Officer are made the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law of the State Board of Education and by reference are incorporated herein, and

DETERMINES AND ORDERS, that the decision of the Talbot County Board of Education herein appealed from is hereby sustained.

Mrs. Oberdorfer and Mr. Lathem were not present.

This 12th day of November, 1981.


LARRY A. FOSTER, SR.
Vice Chairman for Appeals

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

STATE OF GEORGIA

MATTIE CRANFORD,	:	
	:	
APPELLANT,	:	
	:	CASE NO. 1981-22
v.	:	
	:	REPORT OF HEARING OFFICER
TALBOT COUNTY	:	
BOARD OF EDUCATION,	:	
	:	
APPELLEE.	:	
	:	

PART I

SUMMARY OF APPEAL

This is an appeal by Mattie Cranford (hereinafter "Appellant") from a decision by the Talbot County Board of Education (hereinafter "Local Board") not to renew her contract as a teacher for the 1981-1982 school year based upon the finding that Appellant was incompetent. Appellant contends that there was no evidence to support the decision of the Local Board, and the decision was arbitrary and capricious. The Hearing Officer recommends that the decision of the Local Board be sustained.

PART II

FINDINGS OF FACT

Appellant was employed by the Local Board for forty (40) years. On April 13, 1981, she was notified that

her contract for the 1981-1982 school year would not be renewed. She requested a hearing on April 15, 1981. On May 18, 1981, the Superintendent of the Local Board notified Appellant that a hearing would be conducted on June 2, 1981. The notice also set forth reasons for the non-renewal and a listing of the witnesses to be heard. The Local Board conducted the hearing on June 2, 1981, and issued its decision not to renew Appellant's contract on June 5, 1981. On July 1, 1981, Appellant filed her appeal with the State Board of Education.

During the Spring of 1980, Appellant received an adverse evaluation of her performance for the year from the principal and he notified her that he would recommend renewal of her contract for the 1980-1981 school year but that her performance had to improve. Before then, she had always received good evaluations. A new principal was assigned to the school for the 1980-1981 school year. In an evaluation of all of the school teachers during the 1980-1981 school year, Appellant received one of the lowest evaluations.

Based upon the evidence presented, the Local Board found that Appellant did not maintain adequate lesson plans, did not follow the plans she had prepared, failed to control student behavior and conduct, and was deficient at language skills. The evaluation, and the recommendation not to renew, were based upon direct classroom observations

by the principal, the assistant principal, and the curriculum director.

PART III

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

Appellant contends on appeal that she was denied due process in that she was not afforded a fair hearing before an impartial tribunal, the decision of the Local Board was arbitrary and capricious, and the evidence submitted did not sustain the charges. She argues that the lack of any previous criticisms of her teaching abilities and the lack of any constructive counselling established that she was not incompetent. She maintains that the Local Board did not sustain the burden of proof.

The State Board of Education follows the rule that if there is any evidence to support the decision of a Local Board, the decision will not be disturbed upon review. See Ransum v. Chatooga County Board of Education 144 Ga. App. 783 (1978); Antone v. Greene County Board of Education Case No. 1976-11. In the instant case, Appellant was evaluated by two principals, an assistant principal, and a curriculum director. All of these individuals noted deficiencies in Appellant's teaching abilities. It is apparent from the record that Appellant was made aware of her deficiencies during the previous school year so that ample time was provided to her for improvement. The

Hearing Officer, therefore, concludes that there was satisfactory evidence before the Local Board to sustain the decision and that the Local Board's decision was not arbitrary and capricious.

PART IV

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the foregoing findings and conclusions, the record submitted, and the briefs and arguments of counsel, the Hearing Officer is of the opinion that the decision by the Local Board was supported by the evidence and that the decision was not arbitrary and capricious. The Hearing Officer, therefore, recommends that the decision of the Local Board not to renew Appellant's contract be sustained.

L. O. Buckland

L.O. BUCKLAND
Hearing Officer