



Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board

JB Pritzker, Governor
Keith Calloway, Executive Director

Phone: 217/782-4540
Fax: 217/524-5350
TDD: 866-740-3933

September 16, 2026

Jerame MT Simmons
c/o Patrick Sullivan
Patrick Ryan Dunn Sullivan Law, LLC
107 W. Main St.
Belleville, IL 62220
Via Hearing Portal Delivery

NOTICE OF FINAL DECISION OF THE BOARD

Case #2025-D-1 (ILETSB v. Simmons)

On September 10, 2026, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training & Standards Board reviewed Case #2025-D-1 at their regularly scheduled meeting. At that meeting, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the attached recommendation of the Panel to DECERTIFY Jerame MT Simmons (PTB ID # 65160815).

Regards,


Keith Calloway
Executive Director

CC: Brooklyn Police Department
Certification Review Panel

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING STANDARDS BOARD**

Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Case No. 25-D-000001
	)	
Jerame MT Simmons, Jr.	)	
Respondent.	)	

**SUMMARY REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE
ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT CERTIFICATION
REVIEW PANEL’S AUGUST 27, 2026, MEETING**

I. INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURAL HISTORY

This matter came before the Illinois Law Enforcement Certification Review Panel ("Panel") pursuant to Section 6.3 of the Illinois Police Training Act (50 ILCS 705/6.3). On August 25, 2025, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board ("Board") filed a Formal Complaint against Jerame Simmons, Jr., for discretionary decertification.

**II. HEARING OFFICER'S FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW,
AND RECOMMENDED DISPOSITION**

The Administrative Law Judge’s Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law, and Recommended Disposition are incorporated herein and attached. The judge concluded as follows: “Based upon the above Finding of Facts and Conclusions of Law, the undersigned Administrative Law Judge recommends to the Illinois Law Enforcement Certification Review Panel that Respondent Jerame Simmons, Jr. (#65160815) be DECERTIFIED as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer.”

III. RECOMMENDATION & ORDER OF THE PANEL

The Panel reviewed the above-mentioned case on August 27, 2026, at their regularly scheduled meeting, including duly reviewing and discussing the administrative law judge’s decision and evidence testified to and submitted at the administrative hearing, and finds that the testimony and evidence presented at the administrative hearing prove by clear and convincing evidence the allegations against Jerame Simmons, Jr. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the Board DECERTIFY Respondent Jerame Simmons, Jr.



Katie Hill
Certification Review Panel Chair

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
CMS BUREAU OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS
FOR
ILLINOIS LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING AND STANDARDS BOARD**

Illinois Law Enforcement Training and	)	
Standards Board	)	
Complainant,	)	
	)	
v.	)	Case No. 25-D-000001
	)	
Jerame Simmons, Jr.	)	
Respondent.	)	

**FINDING OF FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND RECOMMENDED
DECISION**

THIS MATTER comes for issuance of Finding of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Recommended Decision regarding the Complaint issued by Complainant, the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board (“ILETSB”) against Respondent seeking the decertification of Respondent as a Law Enforcement Official pursuant to 50 ILCS 705/6.3.

For the reasons discussed below, the undersigned Administrative Law Judge recommends to the Board’s Certification Review Panel that the prayer of the Complaint be allowed and that Respondent be DECERTIFIED as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer.

PROCEDURAL HISTORY

On August 25, 2025, Complainant, ILETSB, filed a Complaint for Decertification against Respondent, Jerame Simmons, Jr. Respondent was served with this Complaint on October 24, 2025, and on October 30, 2025, Attorney Patrick R.D. Sullivan entered his appearance on Respondent’s behalf. This cause was referred to the Illinois Bureau of Administrative Hearings on January 12, 2026, and was assigned to Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) Sarah J. Carlson.

On February 5, 2026, Complainant filed an Amended Complaint for Decertification alleging that Respondent violated the Illinois Police Training and Standards Act (50 ILCS 705/6.3) in that he engaged in deceptive behavior by submitting false statements on his

applications for employment as a police officer with the Dupo, Cahokia Heights, Sauget and Brooklyn, Illinois Police Departments in 2024 and 2025. In each of those applications, Complainant alleges that Respondent provided false information as to his high school graduation or his graduation from a homeschooling program.

After Prehearing Conferences on March 19 and April 1, 2026, the Hearing commenced on April 27, 2026, in person, at the ILETSB facility at 500 S. 9th Street, Springfield, Illinois. Complainant was present by its counsel, Nicholas Kondelis and Jae Kwon. Respondent was present personally and with his counsel, Patrick R.D. Sullivan. The Hearing concluded that same day.

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Complainant is the State of Illinois agency authorized to certify, decertify, recertify and conduct emergency suspensions of certification of Law Enforcement Officers in the State of Illinois pursuant to 50 ILCS 705 and 710 as well as pursuant to 20 IAC 1790, et. seq.
2. Respondent was a duly certified Law Enforcement Officer under the Complainant's authority at all times relevant to these proceedings.
3. Respondent was certified by Complainant as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer on August 14, 2024.
4. Respondent told ILETSB Investigator Shownes on April 2, 2025, that he did not graduate from high school, nor was he homeschooled.
5. Respondent was certified as a Law Enforcement Officer at the time he completed, signed, and submitted applications to the following police departments on the following dates:
 - Dupo, Illinois on September 14, 2024
 - Cahokia Heights, Illinois on September 30, 2024
 - Sauget, Illinois on October 1, 2024
 - Brooklyn, Illinois, June 5, 2025
6. The applications to the Dupo Police Department, Cahokia Heights Police Department and Sauget Police Department, all submitted and signed by Respondent, represented that Respondent was a graduate of Dupo Junior/Senior High School.¹

¹ There is only one Junior/Senior High School in Dupo, Illinois. In this cause, the same school has been identified in exhibits and testimony as "Dupo High School," "Dupo Jr./Sr. High School," and "Dupo Junior/Senior High School." For consistency, the term "Dupo Junior/Senior High School" will be used to refer to this school, unless this Tribunal is quoting a document, and, the term "Dupo school system" or "Dupo School District" refers to all public schools within the Dupo Community Unit School District 196.

7. Respondent did not ever earn or possess a valid diploma from Dupu Junior/Senior High School as testified to by witnesses Keith Book, Lori Costello, and by Respondent himself.
8. The application to Brooklyn Police Department from June 5, 2025, submitted and signed by Respondent, represented that Respondent had attended Dupu Junior/Senior High School but was homeschooled and possessed a diploma from such a program.
9. That Respondent admitted to Investigator Shownes that he was not homeschooled at all when interviewed on April 2, 2025.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Respondent had previously admitted to Allegations 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and the parties agreed that Complainant's Exhibits A, B, C and D should be admitted into evidence.

After opening statements were given, Complainant presented its case as follows:

Respondent, Jerame Simmons, Jr. was called to testify. After being sworn, Mr. Simmons, Jr.² testified substantially as follows:

Respondent testified that his first job as a police officer in Illinois was in East Carondelet, Illinois, beginning in July of 2023. He was still in the police academy and was not yet certified as a full-time officer. He was not so certified until August of 2024. Respondent testified that he applied for full-time employment at the Dupu, Illinois Police Department on September 14, 2024. He was shown Complainant's Exhibit A, which was a copy of that application. Respondent identified the exhibit and confirmed it was a copy of the application he had made for that job.

This application is a multiple page form and on page 9 of that application, an applicant is asked if they are a high school graduate. They are asked to circle "yes" or "no" and are asked to provide the name of that high school in a box below the yes/no. Next to that box is another box which reads "If no: How Many Years Completed:" and there is an empty space below that to provide the location of the school that was attended. Respondent testified that he filled out this application himself and that he did write on page 9 that he was a graduate of "Dupu Junior Senior High."

² Because of the same last name of the Respondent and two witnesses, Mr. Jerame Simmons, Jr. will be referred to only as "Respondent" from this point forward. Witness Chrissy Simmons is Ms. Simmons, Mr. Jerame Simmons, Sr. will be referred to as Mr. Simmons, Sr.

Respondent confirmed that he understood the application, there was nothing that was unclear to him in the application, and that he understood the importance of being honest in submitting that application.

Respondent was next asked about Complainant's Exhibit B, an application to the Cahokia Heights, Illinois Police Department made by Respondent on September 30, 2024. Complainant directed Respondent's attention to the bottom of page 3 of that application where an applicant is asked about their educational background. This form, at page 3, asks the applicant to list all elementary, middle, and high schools attended. It then provides several lines for the applicant to name the school, the location of that school and the dates attended, and concludes with asking if the applicant graduated. Respondent testified that he filled out this application himself, remembers writing all the answers out and that he did write that he both attended "Dupo High School" in Dupo, Illinois and graduated from that school. Respondent testified that he did tell the Cahokia Heights Police Department that he graduated from Dupo Junior/Senior High School but testified that he provided the wrong dates of attendance by mistake.

Respondent was next asked about an application he made to the Sauget, Illinois Police Department, Complainant's Exhibit C. Respondent was shown this Exhibit and he confirmed that he filled out this application and had submitted in writing to the Sauget Police Department that he was a graduate of "Dupo High School."

This was followed with Complainant's Exhibit D, which was identified as an application to the Brooklyn, Illinois Police Department made by Respondent on June 5, 2025. On this form, again completed by Respondent, he wrote he attended "Dupo High School" from 2018 to 2019 and that he attended homeschool from 2019-2022, from which he was awarded a diploma.

Complainant then showed Respondent their Exhibit F, a purported High School diploma from his homeschooling experience with his name on it as the graduate, dated January 15, 2021, which bore the signature of his parents as the persons conferring the certificate.

Respondent was next asked about an interview that was conducted by ILETSB Investigator Brendt Shownes at the Columbia, Illinois Police Department on April 2, 2025. While he recalled the interview, Respondent testified that he does not remember telling Shownes that he was not homeschooled by his parents. He confirmed that he did not "walk the stage" as a Dupo High School graduate.

Respondent testified that he is still in the process of taking the General Educational Development (GED) test to get his Illinois High School equivalency certificate. He testified that

he has taken the test several times but has not passed. Respondent confirmed that as he sat there testifying, he still did not have a high school diploma or GED and that he last attended Dupo Junior/Senior High School in his 10th grade year.

On cross-examination, Respondent testified that when he completed the job application at the Dupo Police Department, he believed that he had a high school diploma from Dupo Junior/Senior High School and again identified Respondent's Exhibit F as a document given to him by his mother, bearing her signature and that of his father, that he believed it was a valid diploma from Dupo Junior/Senior High School issued January 15, 2021. Respondent confirmed that where it pertained to his homeschooling, that he also relied upon his mother for the details. He did not contact the Illinois State Board of Education on his own behalf and believed that he had a valid Dupo Junior/Senior High School diploma when he applied to the Dupo Police Department. Similarly, when he applied to Cahokia Heights, Brooklyn and Sauget, he believed he had a Dupo Junior/Senior High School diploma that he obtained via homeschooling.

Attorney Sullivan asked his client about the interview with Investigator Shownes. Respondent reiterated that he did not recall telling Shownes that his parents did not homeschool him. Respondent detailed the homeschool experience he had, including locations, times, and curriculum. When asked why he started taking the GED exam in 2026 if he believed he had a valid high school diploma, Respondent advised that Investigator Shownes told him that if he did so, he would have "nothing to worry about."

Complainant next called witness Brendt Shownes to the stand. After being sworn, Brendt Shownes testified substantially as follows:

The witness explained that he is employed as a Field Investigator and Police Training Specialist for ILETSB. He has been so employed since 2024. Among his duties is the investigation of certified law enforcement officers in disciplinary actions such as this one, and Shownes testified that he was assigned to this case.

Shownes confirmed that he interviewed Respondent on April 2, 2025. Shownes specifically asked Respondent if he had been homeschooled, graduated from high school or did he have a GED. Shownes testified as follows: "...he informed me that he was not homeschooled, did not receive a GED and he did graduate from Dupo High School." (Emphasis added.)

Shownes had previously been the Chief of Police for Troy, Illinois. He is familiar with the East Carondelet Police Department, where Respondent had previously been employed. The East Carondelet Police Department requires an officer to have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Shownes was provided with Complainant's Exhibit J, which he identified as an application packet in Respondent's name for the East Carondelet Police Department. Shownes testified that this packet contains a copy of a document that is a purported high school diploma in Respondent's name that was signed by Respondent's parent.

Complainant next called witness Keith Book. After being sworn, Keith Book testified substantially as follows:

Mr. Book is the current Principal at Dupo Junior/Senior High School. He has been so employed for the past 5 years, was Assistant Principal of the school for one year prior to that and has been a teacher for just under 20 years. He testified that Dupo Junior/Senior High School is a small high school, with an average 60 person graduating class. He is responsible for many duties involving the students and is familiar with each one as it is such a small school. Mr. Book has never met Respondent and did not recognize him in the hearing room. Book was, however, familiar with Respondent's academic record while in the Dupo Junior/Senior High School.

To prepare for this hearing, Book testified that he reviewed those records and also met with the Director of Special Education Services as Respondent's records indicate that when he was enrolled at the Dupo Junior/Senior High School, he received such services. Book testified that Respondent had been in and out of the Dupo school system; sometimes changing districts and for a period of time attending Menta Academy.³ Book added that Simmons, Jr. returned to Dupo Junior/Senior High School in 2021 but was ultimately dropped from the school system. Book elaborated that Respondent withdrew from the school district but did not notify the school of an intent to be homeschooled. The witness testified that Respondent did not graduate from Dupo Junior/Senior High School.

Book reviewed Complainant's Exhibit F. He testified that he did not recognize it and added that, despite saying it was from the Dupo Junior/Senior High School, it was not the form that is used by the school. Book confirmed that the signatures on the purported diploma were Jerame Simmons, Sr. and Chrissy Simmons, neither of whom have any affiliation with the Dupo School District or the Regional Office of Education for St. Clair County, Illinois.⁴ Book was shown Complainant's Exhibit I which he identified as the template document in use by the Dupo Junior/Senior High School for a high school diploma awarded by the school.

³ Menta Academy is an entity that contracts with many schools in Central and Southern Illinois to provide alternative schools for students with behavioral difficulties.

⁴ Dupo, Illinois is located in St. Clair County.

Book explained that people using falsified or unearned high school diplomas devalues the education that other students have received by attending and clearing all the milestones to be considered a graduate. It is detrimental to the value of both the education and the weight of a high school diploma generally. On cross-examination, Book explained that children do leave school to participate in homeschooling. He explained this requires a release to withdraw and then the school has the student's family complete paperwork with the Regional Office of Education. Mr. Book confirmed that no one is authorized to issue certificates in the name of the school besides himself and other paid school administrators employed by the Dupo School District.

Complainant called as its next witness Ms. Lori Costello. After being sworn, Ms. Costello testified substantially as follows:

Ms. Costello is the Regional Superintendent of Schools for St. Clair County, Illinois. She has been so employed for the past two and a half years, working previously as a high school principal and assistant principal for 16 years in Southern Illinois. Costello testified that she was asked to review Respondent's academic records from the Dupo School District for the purpose of this hearing. She was provided with Complainant's Group Exhibit H which she identified as Respondent's academic record that is maintained by the St. Clair County Regional Office of Education.

She reviewed these documents and testified that they consisted of a purported high school diploma, a preliminary GED score document, a letter revoking a grade on a portion of the GED, and notes for additional failures of portions of the GED that pertained to Respondent. Costello confirmed that the Regional Office of Education does not generate these documents but does retain them for all students. Costello confirmed that in the revocation letter corresponding to Respondent's GED test, that the testing authorities believed there were issues that raised concerns of cheating from the testing agency.

Costello testified that, as the initial documents from the GED testing agency indicated that Respondent had passed, he was awarded a temporary State of Illinois High School Diploma. January 22, 2026. (See Exhibit G.) This is not an official diploma. She testified that Respondent has never received an official State of Illinois High School Diploma as he, to date, has still not passed his GED in its entirety, despite three additional attempts to do so in 2026.

The witness was asked if a homeschooled student in the region served by her Regional Office of Education could have a valid high school diploma awarded by a homeschool instructor that purported to be from an actual public school. She testified that this could "absolutely not" happen and that any such certificate would not be considered a valid diploma. Costello explained

the homeschooling process in Illinois. While she did agree that there are no legal standards in Illinois, when a family wishes to homeschool, they will generally contact the Superintendent's office and meet with a registrar to get the proper paperwork to document that the child is participating in a program of academic instruction. The Respondent and his family did not do that.

She testified on cross and redirect examinations that this is not required by law. However, Costello testified that a student in Illinois should receive education in English, social studies, science, and mathematics as well as completing successfully both the State and Federal Constitution tests to be considered a successful holder of a diploma representing their completion of homeschooling. She further testified that the instructor/parent should keep a transcript for that student that documents the education that was received.

Costello testified that the purported high school diploma that was the first page of Exhibit H was not valid. While the document states that it was awarded by the school, it is signed by Respondent's parents, neither of whom are authorized to issue such a document on behalf of that school. She confirmed Mr. Book's testimony that the value of a high school diploma is impugned by people having false or invalid diplomas. On cross-examination, she explained that this document is considered to be fake as it asserts that it was awarded by Dupu Junior/Senior High School, regardless of the student's completion of a course of home study. She also added that the school district itself is named in Exhibit H and that no entity or person outside of the district itself is authorized to use their name.

At this point Complainant's Exhibits A through J (inclusive) were moved into evidence. Exhibits G and H were accepted into evidence over objection of Respondent; the remainder were accepted without objection. Upon acceptance of the exhibits, Complainant rested.

Respondent then presented his case in chief.

Respondent called his first witness, Chrissy L. Simmons. After being sworn, Ms. Simmons testified substantially as follows:

Ms. Simmons is the Respondent's mother. She described Respondent's high school journey, advising that he started at Dupu Junior/Senior High School in 2017 as a freshman and that he did complete his studies there that year. While Respondent started his sophomore year there in 2018, he left Dupu Junior/Senior High School in March of 2019 to attend Menta Academy. She testified that Respondent returned to Dupu Junior/Senior High School in the fall

semester of 2019, where he stayed until being sent home for remote learning for the Covid-19 pandemic.⁵

Ms. Simmons continued that Respondent did not return to in-person schooling at Dupo Junior/Senior High School after the lockdown was lifted. The family elected to have Respondent homeschooled as they were concerned about Respondent's behavioral problems and his ADHD. Ms. Simmons testified that when the decision was made to homeschool Respondent, she reached out to the Regional Office of Education which informed her she had to call "someone" in Chicago. That unnamed person told her to reach out to "someone" in Springfield. Ms. Simmons never specified whom she spoke to in Springfield but testified that they told her that if she would teach Respondent "English, math, things like that" and test him on that material, that would be sufficient for homeschooling.⁶ She stated she was told by an unspecified person that she did not need to keep records but was instructed to tell the school that she was going to start homeschooling Respondent. Ms. Simmons testified that she did so by telling a Tiffany Zobrist (then the Principal at Dupo Junior/Senior High School) and a Mr. Roth.⁷

Ms. Simmons testified to the particulars of Respondent's homeschooling schedule and curriculum. She testified that Respondent finished his homeschool course of education in 2020 but that she continued to homeschool him until 2022 because she didn't want to have issues. When asked what she meant by that, Ms. Simmons expounded, saying that school was still in session. She then stated that Respondent finished homeschooling in 2021, which is why she chose January 15, 2021, to put on the diploma she authored for Respondent.

She continued that when she finished Respondent's homeschooling, she called the State and Regional Office of Education. She testified that an unnamed person at one of these offices gave her a website to go to to complete a diploma for Respondent that she and his father were to sign. Simmons could not remember the name of the website. She confirmed that she did not have to create an account to print out a certificate of her own creation and that it was a very simple process. Ms. Simmons testified, "I literally could print any high school diploma that I wanted to and pay for it."

She identified Complainant's Exhibit F as the document that she generated from this website. Ms. Simmons testified that she was instructed by the Regional Office of Education

⁵ March of 2020.

⁶ The use of quotation marks in this paragraph is used for the exact words used by the Witness and are not meant to convey any opinion of the Tribunal.

⁷ Mr. Roth's identity or position in the Dupo schools as it relates to this cause was never testified to.

(person not named) that she was to put in the year Respondent would have graduated and the name of the last school Respondent attended in order to create the diploma.

Ms. Simmons later testified that Exhibit F is, in fact, inaccurate, because she put the name of Dupo Junior/Senior High School on it and because it contains the language that Respondent completed the course of study prescribed for graduation from that academic institution. She confirmed that Respondent's father was not involved in the homeschool education portion and that neither he, nor Respondent, were involved in the process to issue the diploma. All planning and efforts for compliance were done by her.

On cross-examination, Ms. Simmons admitted that she did issue her son a high school diploma only 5 months after beginning his homeschooling. She advised that she did so, despite Respondent's academic deficiencies and special education needs because "they" (never specified) told her to put the January 2021 date on the certificate. This unspecified person never said it had to be a specific month, just the year Respondent would have finished high school.

Ms. Simmons testified that she didn't read the templates she was filling out regarding the diplomas and said that the Regional Office of Education gave her the template. This is contrary to her testimony that she got the forms on the internet. She admitted that school generally ends in May of each calendar year and that she continued to educate Respondent through 2022.

Ms. Simmons went on to testify that she was done teaching Respondent in January of 2021 but also contradicted herself by saying that, because of Respondent's academic deficiencies and special needs, she educated him through 2022. She later testified that she gave Respondent the purported diploma in May of 2021 but chose to use the date of January 15, 2021, because an unspecified person said the date didn't matter, just the year. Ms. Simmons also testified that she helped Respondent apply for the police officer positions by helping him fill out the applications.

Respondent called as his next witness Mr. Jerame Simmons, Sr. Mr. Simmons Sr., after being duly sworn, testified substantially as follows:

Mr. Simmons, Sr. is Respondent's father and was and is married to Ms. Simmons, the prior witness. The Respondent is their child. Mr. Simmons, Sr. did not remember what year the Respondent began high school but did confirm his wife's testimony concerning Respondent's difficulties at Dupo Junior/Senior High School. He testified that when Covid-19 closed the schools, he helped make sure that Respondent was complying with the rules of remote learning.

Mr. Simmons, Sr. testified that when remote learning ended, or close to the time that happened, that Respondent had gotten a job at “Bottom Tarp⁸” and had told his parents that he wanted to keep the job. Mr. Simmons, Sr. testified that he believed in the importance of graduating from high school, so that when Ms. Simmons suggested homeschooling as an alternative for Respondent, he agreed.

Mr. Simmons, Sr. did not participate in Respondent’s academic education but did assist in making sure that Respondent was completing what Ms. Simmons had assigned him to do and stayed on task. He testified that the content of the academics was administered and graded by Ms. Simmons. Mr. Simmons, Sr. testified that he learned that Respondent was done with this homeschooling when a certificate (that the witness signed upon its arrival) came in the mail. Mr. Simmons, Sr. testified that he learned in a speaker phone conversation between Ms. Simmons and the principal of Dupo Junior/Senior High School that Respondent had to be the person who declared he was withdrawing from that school as Respondent was 18 years of age.

Petitioner’s Exhibit K was offered into evidence by Respondent. It was allowed over objection.

Respondent then rested his case and closing arguments ensued.

(Please see attached list of Exhibits at the end of this Finding of Facts, Conclusions of Law and Recommended Decision.)

ANALYSIS

That Respondent has no valid diploma from Dupo Junior/Senior High School is not in dispute. Respondent admitted to allegations 2 through 7 of the Amended Complaint. He has testified that he did not graduate from the Dupo High School. That is also confirmed by the testimony of Mr. Book and Ms. Costello. It is not in dispute that Respondent represented that he had such a degree with the applications to Dupo, Cahokia Heights and Sauget Police Departments and that he represented to the Brooklyn Police Department that he had a diploma from a homeschooling course of study.

The crux of the Respondent’s case is that the Respondent did not lie or behave dishonestly when he said on these applications that he did have either a valid Dupo Junior/Senior High School diploma or had a diploma from a homeschool course of study. Respondent asserts that he relied upon his mother’s actions that led him to believe he had such credentials.

⁸ The spelling of this business entity is taken directly from the transcript, which also has it in quotation marks. No further testimony was provided as to this business.

Respondent's date of birth is March 15, 2002. He was 18 years of age (a legal adult in Illinois) when he withdrew from Dupu Junior/Senior High School. He was an adult (22 and 23 years of age) at the time he was making these applications where he verified his educational accomplishments. He was an adult of 24 years of age when he testified before this Tribunal.

Notably, all 4 applications were made after he had been employed as a part-time officer in East Carondelet. These applications were made after he completed formal police training and received his certification as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer. This Tribunal does not believe that Respondent credibly relied upon a parent or parents' representation that he had received a diploma from a high school he stopped attending as a Sophomore.

This Tribunal is persuaded that what Respondent knew about his actual educational achievements is as follows:

1. When Respondent applied to the first 3 police departments he knew that he had not graduated from Dupu Junior/Senior High School when he wrote that he did, which was an act of deception;
2. That Respondent reported his academic history accurately (no Dupu Junior/Senior High School diploma and no one had homeschooled him) to ILETSB Investigator Shownes on April 2, 2025;
3. That Respondent knew that he had told Shownes that he (Respondent) did not graduate from Dupu Junior/Senior High School nor had he been homeschooled when he filled out the application for the Brooklyn Police Department stating he had a diploma from being homeschooled;
4. That the statement on the Brooklyn application was made 64 days after the interview with Shownes;
5. That the Brooklyn application was made and submitted by Respondent in consideration of a position as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer, and;
6. That Respondent's assertion in this application that he had graduated from a course of homeschool study with a diploma was false, and therefore, deceptive.

In this case, Respondent has self-interest in retaining his police certification. Police training is not easy and represents a significant accomplishment. It is not something one would want to have taken from them. It allows one who has such a certificate to apply for law enforcement jobs across the State of Illinois. Accordingly, Respondent has both a personal and an economic interest in keeping this certification.

Ms. and Mr. Simmons Sr. obviously love and care about Respondent as he is their son. Ms. Simmons testified that she was the one to organize, research, and administer Respondent's education. This would represent a significant commitment of her time and effort. Mr. Simmons, Sr. also invested his time and effort to make sure that Respondent was compliant with his course of study. Any parent is interested in their child having opportunities and having the means to support themselves. In this case, Respondent's certification to allow him to serve as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer is at stake.

However, both Respondent's and Ms. Simmons' testimony is contradicted in multiple ways. Overall, by the Respondent's own statement to Investigator Shownes that he was not homeschooled by anyone and by Respondent's own testimony that he knew he did not graduate from Dupu Junior/Senior High School. Respondent's testimony is further contradicted by his inconsistent job applications, culminating in the timing in the change in his educational qualifications once he applied to Brooklyn after the interview.

Ms. Simmons also contradicts herself when she testifies that she got the diploma at an unspecified site but also says that she received it from the Regional Office of Education. The testimony that unidentified educational staff from various offices in Illinois gave Ms. Simmons instruction that she acted upon regarding the issuance of the diplomas is unverified and cannot be relied upon by this Tribunal to be accurate.

Complainant, however, has both exhibits and testimony that do not have credibility concerns. Investigator Shownes' testimony is part of his everyday professional duties and he explained that, without equivocation, Respondent told him, on April 2, 2025, that he had neither graduated from the Dupu School System nor had either of his parents homeschooled him.

Mr. Book and Ms. Costello have no stake in this case, except to promote the integrity of the educational process and the value of valid High School and homeschool diplomas. They both testified credibly that Respondent did not graduate from Dupu Junior/Senior High School. Book explained and Costello confirmed that the manner of issuing a valid homeschool diploma would never involve a parent signing a diploma in the name of an actual school or school district.

Society gives law enforcement officers tremendous responsibility and power. A certified, sworn law enforcement officer can legally deprive citizens of their freedom and property for violations of the law. That is why these persons are held to a standard of integrity and truthfulness that is codified in 50 ILCS 705/6.3(b)(6). A law enforcement officer shall not bring the reputation of the profession into disrepute by making misrepresentations to get a job. Respondent knew better. And each time he claimed he was a Dupu Junior/Senior High School graduate or that he

graduated from homeschool, Respondent committed an act of deception that is decertifiable conduct as being harmful to the public and to the greater integrity of the law enforcement system in Illinois.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. This Tribunal has jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter as set forth in 20 IAC 1790, et. seq.
2. That the burden of proof in this cause is on Complainant and that the standard of proof is clear and convincing evidence as set forth in 20 IAC 1790.130.
3. That Complainant has proven by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent is eligible for discretionary decertification as a Law Enforcement Officer under 20 IAC 1790.250.
4. That the Complainant has proven by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed decertifiable misconduct in violation of 50 ILCS 705/6.3(b)(6) when Respondent engaged in deceptive behavior by submitting false statements on his employment applications with the Dupo, Cahokia Heights and Sauget, Illinois Police Departments on the dates in the Findings of Fact claiming that he had graduated from Dupo Junior/Senior High School.
5. That the Complainant has proven by clear and convincing evidence that Respondent committed decertifiable misconduct in violation of 50 ILCS 705/6.3(b)(6) when Respondent engaged in deceptive behavior when he represented himself to be a diploma holder from a homeschool program in his application to the Brooklyn, Illinois Police Department on June 5, 2025.
6. That these acts of decertifiable, deceptive misconduct are harmful to the public.

RECOMMENDED DECISION

Based upon the above Finding of Facts and Conclusions of Law, the undersigned Administrative Law Judge recommends to the Illinois Law Enforcement Certification Review Panel that Respondent Jerame Simmons, Jr. (#65160815) be DECERTIFIED as an Illinois Law Enforcement Officer.

NOTICE

This recommended decision of the Administrative Law Judge will be reviewed by the Illinois Law Enforcement Certification Review Panel, who will make the final decision as to whether Respondent will be decertified. (See 20 IAC 1790.630 and 20 IAC 1790.645)

Pursuant to 50 ILCS 705/6.6(a) and (b), all final administrative decisions regarding discretionary decertification of the Board (ILETSB) are subject to judicial review under the Administrative Review Law and its rules.

Entered : June 25, 2026.

Signed:

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the Administrative Law Judge.

Sarah J. Carlson
Administrative Law Judge

EXHIBITS

<u>Number and Party</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Ruling</u>
Complainant's Exhibit A	Dupo Police Department Application for Employment from Respondent dated September 14, 2024.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit B	Cahokia Heights Police Department Application for Employment from Respondent dated September 30, 2024.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit C	Sauget Police Department Application for Employment From Respondent dated October 1, 2024.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit D	Brooklyn Police Department Application for Employment From Respondent dated June 5, 2025.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit E	Complaint to ILETSB from East Carondelet Police Department against Respondent dated January 1, 2025.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit F	Purported "Dupo Jr./Sr. High School" dated January 15, 2021 signed by Mr. Jerame Simmons, Sr. and Chrissy Simmons.	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit G	Purported "State of Illinois High School Diploma" dated January 22, 2026 signed by Lori Costello and Dr. Brian Durham.	Admitted over objection
Complainant's Group Exhibit H	1 st page: Purported "Dupo Jr./Sr. High School" dated January 15, 2021 signed by Mr. Jerame	Admitted over objection

Simmons, Sr. and Chrissy Simmons.

2nd page: Purported “State of Illinois High School Diploma: dated January 22, 2026 signed by Lori Costello and Dr. Brian Durham.

3rd page: “Official Illinois High School Equivalency Transcript” issued by the State of Illinois as of April 15, 2026, pertaining to Respondent.

4th and 5th page:
“Informal Notice-Revoked Score for Simmons, Jerame Michael Taylor (Examinee ID: 1671784)” dated January 28, 2026.

6th and 7th page: “Informational Notice-Revoked Score for [CANDIDATE] [Examinee ID: [NUMBER]]” dated February 6, 2026, the body of which identifies that the notice pertains to the Respondent by name and Examinee ID number 1671784, indicating that Respondent’s exam score for the Social Studies portion of Respondent’s GED test has been revoked.

8th and 9th page: “Informational Notice-Revoked Score for Simmons, Jerame Michael Taylor (Examinee ID: 1671784 dated March 5, 2026), indicating that Respondent’s exam score for the Social Studies portion of Respondent’s GED test has been revoked.

10th through 18th page: printed pages
from the St. Clair County Regional Office
of Education pertaining to
Respondent's attempts at the
GED test taken on March 5,
March 12, and March 18, 2026.

Complainant's Exhibit I	Blank sample diploma from "Dupo Community High School."	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit J	East Carondelet Police Department Application for Employment From Respondent Dated "518 day of Wednesday, 2023."	Admitted without objection
Complainant's Exhibit K	Respondent's official transcript from Dupo CUSD 196 reflecting Respondent's grade and credits From 2017 through 2021.	Admitted over objection