

BEFORE THE IMPARTIAL HEARING OFFICER

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In the Matter of the Grievance of  
BEVERLY HAMILTON WILLIAMS  
Under the Grievance Procedure of  
MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Case ID: 22.0024  
Case Type: IHO

DECISION NO. 37270

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**Appearances:**

Barbara Zack Quindel, Attorney, Hawks Quindel, S.C., 222 East Erie Street, Suite 210, P.O. Box 442, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, appearing on behalf of Grievant Beverly Hamilton Williams.

Sarah Hanneman, Employment Relations Specialist III, Milwaukee Public Schools, 5225 West Vliet Street, P.O. Box 2181, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, appearing on behalf of Milwaukee Public Schools.

**DECISION OF THE IMPARTIAL HEARING OFFICER**

On May 30, 2017, Beverly Hamilton Williams and the Milwaukee Public Schools requested that the Wisconsin Employment Relations Commission appoint Raleigh Jones, a member of the Commission's staff, to serve as the Impartial Hearing Officer in a proceeding involving Ms. Williams' termination. Ms. Williams was represented by Attorney Barbara Zack Quindel as noted above. A hearing was held on August 15, 2017, in the offices of the Milwaukee Public Schools. The hearing was transcribed. No briefs were filed in this matter. Having considered the evidence, the arguments of the parties, and the record as a whole, I issue the following decision.

**ISSUE**

The parties stipulated to the following issue:

Was there just cause for the termination? If not, what should the remedy be?

### **BACKGROUND**

The District operates a public school system. The MTEA is the collective bargaining representative for the District's teachers.

Teachers periodically move from one school to another. When this happens, it can sometimes take them a day or more to move all their personal belongings. There is no specific procedure that is always followed when teachers move from one building to another. Normally, though, these moves occur outside the regular school day (meaning in the evening or on weekends). Insofar as the record shows, prior to this case, there had never been a situation where a problem arose that involved a teacher cleaning out their old classroom, even those situations where the teacher had been discharged.

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Up until her discharge, Beverly Hamilton Williams (hereinafter Williams) was a teacher with the District. This case involves her discharge. The record reflects that prior to being discharged, Williams was suspended for four days. This happened in 2014.

### **FACTS**

Williams was a special education teacher with the District for 20 years. For the last 10 years, she was assigned to the Lloyd Barbee Montessori School. In the 2016-17 school year, she had what the District calls a MRP (Most Restrictive Placement) class. She taught eight students who are some of the highest needs students that the District has. Her students ranged in ages from first through sixth grade. She was assisted in this endeavor by two paraprofessional employees.

While she was at Barbee, Williams clashed repeatedly with Principal Catherine Loss over a number of matters. As a result, they did not have a good relationship.

On February 1, 2017, the District convened a disciplinary hearing involving several misconduct charges against Williams. One of the charges involved alleged insubordination against Principal Loss. Following the hearing, settlement discussions ensued between MTEA Assistant Director Bonnie Brusky (who was Williams' representative) and District Director of Employment Relations Leia Scoptur. They decided that the working relationship between Loss and Williams was damaged to the point that it could not be repaired, and Williams was in need of a "fresh start." To effectuate that, it was decided that Williams would be transferred to a different school. Williams was subsequently offered a number of schools to move to, and she chose Maple Tree School. She was to start at that school on Monday, February 6, 2017.

After this agreement was reached, a question arose concerning when Williams would move her personal belongings out of her old classroom at Barbee. Per its normal practice, the District proposed that she do it at night or on the weekend. Williams did not want to do that though and insisted that she be allowed to move her personal belongings during the workday. This became another issue that Scoptur and Brusky had to deal with. The end result of their negotiations on this point was that Williams was to move her personal belongings out of Barbee on the afternoon of Monday, February 6, 2017. That day was a professional development day for the District's teachers (meaning students were not present), so Williams was to attend a mandatory training session in the morning. Then in the afternoon, she could go back to Barbee to clean out her personal belongings and stay there until the principal left the building that day.

Williams strongly disapproved of this arrangement. Simply put, she did not want to start the moving process in the afternoon; she wanted to start the process first thing in the morning so that she had the entire day to do it. She felt that not starting the moving process until the afternoon would make it difficult to finish that day. Williams did not keep her anger and frustration with this arrangement to herself. After she learned of same, she called the District's Department of Employment Relations and yelled at a staff person that the District had to pay her for the time spent moving her stuff.

Notwithstanding her disapproval of what she considered an insufficient amount of time to move her personal belongings on the afternoon of February 6, Williams knew that if she wanted more time to move her personal belongings out of Barbee (than just the afternoon of February 6), she could have asked for that to happen. If Williams had asked, those arrangements could have been made. However, she didn't ask, so no alternate arrangements were made.

What normally happens when a teacher moves out of a school building is that the principal is advised in advance that that will be occurring. Here, though, that did not happen, and Principal Loss did not learn that Williams was in the building moving her personal belongings until the afternoon of February 6. Additionally, Loss was not told that she needed to stay late that day to accommodate Williams.

Curtis Smith is a substitute teacher who had been assigned to replace Williams and teach the eight students in that classroom (which will hereinafter be referred to Room 39). He used the morning of February 6 to prepare lesson plans and student worksheets for the remainder of the week. Smith wrote his individualized lesson plans on the chalkboard so the children could see them. He placed the student worksheets and other lesson plans on the teacher's desk. That afternoon, Smith was notified that Williams was returning to Barbee to clean out her personal belongings from Room 39, and he was directed to "give her space." He complied with this directive and left Room 39 at 2:00 p.m. so that Williams could collect her personal belongings from her former classroom.

After Smith left Room 39, Williams arrived, accompanied by her adult son. She testified that she planned on being at the school until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. For the remainder of the afternoon, Williams sorted what she considered her personal belongings from the District's

property. Her personal property included books, games, posters, pictures, baskets, wall borders, various educational materials (including alphabet guides, handwriting and multiplication charts), a refrigerator, a microwave, and a piece of medical equipment. After she finished the sorting process, she put her personal items in plastic trash bags; she left the District's property scattered on various tables; and she put what she considered trash in plastic trash bags.

About 3:30 p.m., Smith returned to Room 39. When he walked into the room, Williams was taking stuff off the wall and putting it in trash bags. Smith greeted Williams cordially. Williams did not respond in kind. Instead, she responded with a mumbled statement to the effect that she did not appreciate his presence there. Her animosity toward him surprised Smith, because he had worked with Williams in the past and had not had problems with her. He inferred that Williams was directing her animosity at the situation she faced (i.e. her forced transfer to another school) to him instead. Smith then looked for the worksheets and lesson plans that he had left on the teacher's desk, but they were not there. They were gone. Additionally, the lesson plans that he had written on the chalkboard for each student were erased. Smith was dismayed and upset by what he encountered, but he said nothing to Williams about it. Instead, he left the room.

About 4:30 p.m., Williams and her son left the school and took a load of stuff back to her home. Williams subsequently returned to Barbee, this time accompanied by both her son and her daughter.

At 5:45 p.m., Principal Loss made an announcement on the school's PA system that staff needed to be out of the building by 6:00 p.m. because the cleaning staff was leaving early that day. After hearing this message, Williams said she really started rushing.

At 6:00 p.m., Loss asked some building cleaners if everyone was gone from the building and was told that there were still people on the third floor. Loss went there to check it out because she knew that's where Williams' old classroom was.

When Loss walked down the hallway toward Room 39, she saw that the student projects and artwork that had been posted on the wall outside that classroom had been taken down. She also saw a big pile of trash bags outside Room 39. When Loss looked inside the trash bags, she saw that it contained crumpled up student projects and artwork.

Loss then entered Room 39 and was shocked and dismayed by what she saw. The room was in shambles. There were piles of papers, folders, binders, books, and other material strewn in disarray on the floor and on desks throughout the classroom. The sink in the classroom was filled with vases, paintbrushes, and dishes. Additionally, all of the walls and bulletin boards in the room were stripped bare of the student work that had been posted there. While it is normal for items to be put on and taken off of bulletin boards, in this school building there is colored backing paper which covers all of the bulletin boards (to make the room warmer). This backing paper – which is supplied by the school to the teachers – is not taken off when the bulletin boards are changed. Here, though, even the colored backing paper had been ripped off all of the bulletin boards, leaving only staples and bits of paper stuck to them. Additionally, the chalkboard was

completely erased. Prior to being erased, the chalkboard in Room 39 had been filled with content (namely, information and instructions). Some of this content had been written by Williams and some by Smith. The chalkboard also contained the students' schedules for art and gym rotations and student behavior charts that were used to track and reward positive behavior. All of it was erased. Loss decided to not say anything to Williams about the condition of the classroom. Instead, she simply picked up trash and student work from the floor and stacked it onto tables. One of the items she picked off the floor was a new pencil sharpener that she had just given to Williams for the classroom. When Williams saw that Loss was picking up stuff, Williams said that if she had more time she would clean up the room. Loss responded by saying no, you have to leave. Loss then asked Williams if all the stuff she was taking out of the room was hers, and Williams replied that it was. Loss then left the room.

When Loss was walking down the hallway, she passed Williams' adult son who was walking toward Room 39. He was cursing loudly. Loss could not tell whether he was directing his words at her or the general situation.

Loss then waited for Williams and her children to leave the building.

Williams and her children left the building about 6:30 p.m. When they were leaving, Williams apologized to the two building cleaners who were on that floor about the state of her former classroom. She told them that if she had more time she would have cleaned the room better, but Loss wouldn't allow her to stay.

After Williams left the building, Loss went back up to Room 39. As she was doing so, she asked the two building cleaners to pick stuff up off the floor in that room and "straighten it up." She did not give the cleaners instructions though about what to throw out.

When Loss went back to the classroom, she decided to document its condition by taking pictures of it. She took half a dozen pictures of the room with her cell phone.

After Loss left the building, the two building cleaners worked in Room 39 for about half an hour. As part of their cleaning efforts they swept up the papers on the floor, put items on desks into crates, and threw out the trash bags that were in the classroom and hallway.

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The next day – Tuesday, February 7, 2017 – the first thing that Loss did when she arrived at the school was to check on the status of Room 39. After doing so, she decided that it was still a mess, and as a result, not ready for students. Consequently, she moved the students and staff to another classroom. The students who were moved to another classroom do best when they are in a familiar environment and function with familiar routines. The students reacted negatively to being moved to a different classroom and having their routines changed. Additionally, the students were upset that their projects and classwork were missing. The students were used to putting their classwork in individualized binders. Initially, none of their binders could be found.

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Later that day, Williams was placed on emergency paid suspension pending a due process hearing. That hearing was held on February 13. Hearing Examiner Scoptur subsequently found that Williams' behavior in her former classroom, on February 6, was "vengeful, retaliatory and malicious" and terminated her effective February 15, 2017.

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District staff subsequently spent substantial time making Room 39 presentable for students again. To do that, they had to clean the room and essentially put it back together again. In the course of doing that, two binders containing the classwork for two students were found. However, the binders for the other six students in the class (which contained their classwork) were not found. As a result, they had to be recreated from scratch. Substitute teacher Smith's lesson plans and worksheets were not found either. As a result, he had to recreate them. Also, the student work that had been posted on the walls was not found either. Finally, the new pencil sharpener was never found. Weeks after Williams was discharged, three District books which Williams took home with her on February 6 were returned to the District.

### **DISCUSSION**

The parties stipulated that the issue to be decided here is whether there was just cause for Williams' termination. I answer that question in the affirmative, meaning that I find that the District had just cause to terminate Williams. My rationale follows.

The threshold question is what standard or criteria is going to be used to determine just cause. The phrase "just cause" is not defined in the District's Employee Handbook, nor is there language therein which identifies what the District must show to justify the discipline imposed. Given that silence, those decisions have been left to the IHO. While there are many formulations of "just cause," one commonly accepted approach consists of addressing these two elements: first, did the employer prove the employee's misconduct, and second, assuming the showing of wrongdoing is made, did the employer establish that the discipline which it imposed was justified under all the relevant facts and circumstances. That's the approach I'm going to apply here.

As just noted, the first part of the just cause analysis being used here requires a determination of whether the employer proved the employee's misconduct. Attention is now turned to making that call.

Before I address what Williams is charged with doing, I'm going to make some preliminary comments.

First, I'm going to put what happened on February 6 in an overall context. By her own admission, Williams was stressed out that day. Just several days before, she had undergone a

disciplinary hearing. As a way of resolving that matter – and averting the discipline which could possibly be imposed – Williams agreed to transfer to a different school. While some transfers can be characterized as the employee's own decision, that was not the situation here. In this case, it was a forced transfer, with Williams having to move away from the school she had been at for ten years. One way of looking at it was that Williams was being forced out of her existing (work) home. That had to hurt. It's not surprising to the undersigned that this move – which was occurring during the middle of the school year – would be stressful. Additionally, given their antagonistic relationship, it can reasonably be surmised that Williams was angry at the person she held responsible for her forced transfer – Principal Loss. Oftentimes, when people face a stressful situation and are frustrated about it, they say something that lets others know that they are stressed out. Williams did that when substitute teacher Smith came into the classroom while she was packing up her stuff, and she let him know that she did not appreciate his presence there. Smith was able to quickly discern that Williams was unhappy about her forced transfer out of Barbee, and she took out her anger and frustration over that on him. While it's never pleasant to be the person in Smith's shoes, many people have experienced something similar thereto.

Second, I understand that Williams had a lot of personal belongings in her former classroom at Barbee that she wanted to move to her new school. She not only had to sort out her stuff from the District's stuff, but then she had to physically move it. Obviously, that was a big job.

Third, as we know from the facts, Williams wanted an entire workday to move her stuff. However, she didn't get her wish in that regard and what Soptur and Brusky negotiated instead was that Williams could move her stuff on the afternoon of February 6 (following a mandatory in-service in the morning). We further know that Williams was ticked off about that agreement. Once that agreement was negotiated though, Williams could either attempt to get all of her stuff moved on the afternoon of February 6, or she could have asked for an additional date (to move her stuff). The record reflects that if Williams had asked for the latter (i.e. an additional moving day), those arrangements could have been made. However, Williams did not ask for an additional moving day. That was her choice.

Williams claimed at the hearing that she planned on staying at Barbee that night until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. However, that expectation on her part lacked an objective basis. Here's why. The record shows that Soptur and Brusky had not made arrangements for Williams to stay in the building late into the evening. To the contrary, their agreement was that Williams could be in the building cleaning out her personal belongings until the principal left the building. To emphasize that last point, Soptur had told Brusky that Williams could stay in the building only as long as Principal Loss was there (meaning that when Loss left, Williams would have to leave too). Finally, it's noteworthy that Loss was not told that she needed to stay late on February 6 to accommodate Williams. While Williams essentially made such a request of Loss at 6:00 p.m. that night, that request was untimely given that Loss was ready to leave the building. Also, since Williams had worked with Loss for many years, she would have a general idea what time Loss left the building each day, and it wasn't 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. That being so, Loss' denial of Williams' request to stay late that night was understandable under the circumstances.

The final remaining matter that I want to comment on is this: with an exception that will be noted later, this case is not really about what Williams took out of the classroom at Barbee. Rather, it's about the condition the classroom was in after she left.

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The focus now turns to what Williams is charged with doing on the day in question. She's charged with doing the following: 1) allegedly trashing her former classroom; 2) allegedly destroying student work; 3) allegedly destroying the substitute teacher's work; and 4) allegedly taking certain District property. I'll address these charges in the order just listed.

When Williams arrived at her former classroom at 2:00 p.m. on February 6, it looked like it normally did. By that, I mean there was student work posted on the walls and bulletin board and there was content written on the chalkboard. When Williams left at 6:30 p.m. though, the room looked dramatically different. Specifically, the room was in disarray because there were piles of papers, folders, binders and books strewn on the floor and on desks. Additionally, all the walls and bulletin boards – which had been filled with student work – were stripped bare. Additionally the chalkboard – which had been filled with content – was completely erased.

Williams admits to all of the foregoing. Thus, she admits that she left the room in disarray, that she stripped the bulletin board and walls bare, and that she erased the chalkboard.

Before I address the significance of those actions, I'm first going to address one of Williams' defenses. She claims that the reason that the room was in such bad shape when she left at 6:30 p.m. was because she had to leave before she could clean up the mess she had made. I have already addressed that claim above and found it unpersuasive. Aside from that though, perhaps if Williams had not spent time stripping the walls bare and erasing the chalkboard she would have had more time to clean the room before she left.

Stripping the walls bare was significant for two reasons. First, when Williams took her personal stuff like her border strips and posters off the bulletin board, there was no reason whatsoever for her to tear off the colored backing paper that was underneath Williams' stuff. She knew that staff would need that backing paper in place to put up the next bulletin board. However, she tore it down anyway. Williams' excuse that the walls would have looked worse if she left the backing paper in place simply doesn't pass muster. The District contended at the hearing that the only real reason to tear that backing paper completely off the walls was "out of malice or a mindset that if she was no longer using the paper, then neither would the students nor the school." I'm hard-pressed to disagree with that assessment.

The second reason stripping the walls bare is significant is this: what had been posted on the walls was student work (which consisted of classwork, projects, and artwork). None of it was on the walls when Williams left. Williams contends that after she took the student work off the walls, she put all of it in folders which she left in the room. If that was indeed the case, the student work – which was missing the next day – would have turned up and been found as the room was eventually cleaned up and put back together again. However, only a small amount of

student work was ultimately found. Specifically, what was found was the classwork of two students; the classwork of the other six students was never found. Additionally, their projects and artwork were never found either. In light of that, the obvious question that needs to be answered is this: what happened to the missing student work? Given the record facts, the most logical conclusion is that it ended up in trash bags (that Loss testified she saw in the hallway). Williams points out that Loss did not ask her about the student work crumpled up in the trash bags in the hallway. It's Williams' view that the onus was on Loss to do that. I disagree. Given their adversarial relationship, it's not surprising that Loss chose not to speak to Williams about what Williams had done with the student work. Williams also points out that Loss did not retrieve any of the student work out of the trash bags. Again, it's Williams' view that the onus was on Loss to do that. Again, I disagree. It would have been one thing if there were just a few items of student work that could have been retrieved and preserved. Here, though, there were big trash bags that were filled with student work. Given their adversarial relationship, it's not surprising that Loss chose not to try to save Williams from what she had done. Finally, Williams points out that while Loss took pictures of the room after Williams left, she did not take a picture of the filled trash bags. That's true; she didn't. However, in my view, the lack of a picture of the filled trash bags is not controlling. What is controlling is that Loss testified that she saw them, and no reason was offered why that testimony should not be credited. The final question is what happened to the trash bags that were filled with student work. They were no longer in the hallway or classroom on the morning of February 7. Under the circumstances, the logical inference is that the building cleaners threw them out as part of their cursory cleaning of the room and hallway that night. The same inference can be made about the student work that Williams' claims she put in folders. Since most of the student work was never found, the logical inference is that it was thrown out too. Williams has to bear responsibility for that.

The focus now turns to the erased chalkboard. While one might think that erasing a chalkboard is no big deal, it was a big deal here. The following discussion explains why.

The record shows that the chalkboard in that classroom was filled with content (namely information and instructions). Specifically, the chalkboard contained the students' schedules for art and gym rotations, spelling words, behavior charts that were used to track and reward positive behavior, and individualized lesson plans so the children could see them. Some of this content had been written by Williams and some by Smith (the substitute teacher).

I'm first going to address what Williams wrote. She argues that she could erase what she wrote. Essentially, she contends it was hers to do with as she pleased. In this case, I don't need to decide whether that claim is meritorious or not. Instead, it suffices to say that even if Williams did "own" the content that she wrote on the chalkboard, she still should not have erased it. Here's why. Erasing it was a small and petty thing to do. All of the items Williams had put on the chalkboard were there for the students and were part of their daily routine. By erasing those items, she was punishing her former students. That's because she knew that they used, and relied on, that information as part of their daily routine. Her erasing that information disrupted their routine going forward. Finally, if one was to ask rhetorically what Williams gained by erasing those items, the answer is simple: nothing.

The focus now turns to what Smith had written on the chalkboard. He had written individualized lesson plans for the students. Williams admits she erased it. She should not have done so because it was not her work product; it was his. Erasing Smith's work was a malicious act.

While I just addressed one part of Smith's work (i.e. the part that he had written on the chalkboard), there's another part still to be addressed. It's the worksheets and lesson plans that he wrote and put in a basket on the teacher's desk. They turned up missing after Williams moved out her personal belongings. Unlike some of the missing student work that was later found, Smith's worksheets and lesson plans were never found. Rhetorically speaking, what happened to them? The logical inference which can be drawn from the circumstances is that they were thrown out. While Williams contends she did not intentionally throw out Smith's worksheets and lesson plans, that claim misses the mark for this reason. The question is not whether Williams intentionally threw them out; it's whether they were thrown out. Even if Williams inadvertently threw out Smith's worksheets and lesson plans, that still should not have happened. It was Williams' fault that it did.

The focus now turns to the allegation that Williams took some District property with her on February 6.

First, there is the matter of the books. At the due process hearing that was held in this matter, Williams admitted that she took three books with her on February 6 that were District property. She also said at that hearing that she would return them. While these books were subsequently returned to the District, that happened weeks after Williams had been discharged.

Second, there is the matter of the pencil sharpener. The record indicates that on February 6, there was a new pencil sharpener in the classroom that was still in the box. After Williams left that day though, the pencil sharpener could not be found. Williams testified that she did not take the pencil sharpener, but rather left it in the room. To buttress her contention, she references one of the pictures that Loss took of the classroom and contends that if you scrutinize the picture with a magnifying glass, the pencil sharpener is visible behind a fan. For what it's worth, I could not make out a pencil sharpener in the picture – even using a magnifying glass. Notwithstanding that, if the pencil sharpener was in the classroom after Williams left, it would have turned up. It didn't. Since the pencil sharpener was never found, the question is what happened to it. The logical inference is that someone took it. While it's certainly possible that someone other than Williams took it, she was the only one who took bags upon bags of stuff out of that classroom. It would have been easy to put a pencil sharpener in one of those bags, just like Williams did with the three District books that she took and later returned. Since Williams admits to taking the three District books just referenced, it's not much of a stretch to conclude that she also took a District pencil sharpener.

Based on the discussion above, I find that the District substantiated the charges it made against Williams, namely that she 1) trashed her former classroom; 2) destroyed student work; 3) destroyed the substitute teacher's work; and 4) took a District pencil sharpener. Those actions constituted workplace misconduct.

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All Williams had to do on the day in question was get her personal belongings out of her former classroom. It was certainly possible to do that while treating the remaining stuff in the room with respect. That didn't happen. Instead, Williams trashed the room to the point that it was unusable by students for a substantial period of time. There was no reason for her to take student work that was being publicly displayed off the walls and stuff it in trash bags. That was not her work product to take or destroy; it belonged to the students. Also, there was no reason for her to erase the chalkboard. In doing that, she destroyed – among other things – the work that the substitute teacher had prepared for the students.

While Williams testified that she loved her students, her actions on February 6 belie that assertion. That's because her actions and behavior that day hurt the very students she was supposed to be helping, and showed a blatant disregard for them and their well-being. She destroyed their space and their stuff. Doing that demoralized them and had a negative impact on their emotional and educational well-being.

Why, then, did Williams trash her classroom as a parting gift to her former students and the school she had served for ten years? The answer can be inferred from the record. It was this: she was upset with Principal Loss over being forced to leave Barbee and being involuntarily transferred to another school. She took out her stress, animosity, and frustration over that on some of the objects in her former classroom and on their substitute teacher. By doing that, she essentially retaliated against her former students. That conduct – by a professional educator – should not have occurred.

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The second part of the just cause analysis being used here requires a finding of whether the disciplinary penalty which the District imposed was appropriate under the circumstances. Based on the following, I find that it was. First, it is noted that nothing in the District's Employee Handbook requires that a lesser form of discipline had to be issued in this particular case. All the Handbook does is identify the normal progressive disciplinary sequence. While a suspension is sometimes imposed prior to discharge, that had happened here because Williams received a suspension in 2014. Second, in some discipline cases, the employee makes a disparate treatment argument that attempts to show that other employees engaged in the same type of misconduct but received lesser discipline (than was imposed here). In this case, no such argument was made. The obvious inference then is that no other employee had ever engaged in the same type of misconduct that Williams did. It therefore follows that Williams was not treated unfairly or subjected to disparate treatment in terms of the punishment imposed. Finally, in those cases where I've overturned a discharge or reduced discipline, one common reason why I've done that is because a charge or charges made against the employee was not substantiated. Here, though, that did not happen. As my discussion shows, I found that the District substantiated all of the charges that it made in its discharge notice. Since those charges were substantiated, I have no objective factual basis for overturning the discharge.

Given the foregoing, I find that Williams' discharge was not excessive, disproportionate to her offenses, or an abuse of management discretion, but rather was reasonably related to her proven misconduct. The District therefore had just cause to discharge Williams.

In light of the above, I issued the following:

**DECISION**

There was just cause for the termination. Therefore, Williams' discharge stands, and her grievance is denied.

Dated at Madison, Wisconsin, this 23rd day of October, 2017.

**WISCONSIN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS COMMISSION**

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Raleigh Jones, Impartial Hearing Officer