

Teacher indicted in theft, forgery

By Ken Serrano
Staff Writer

Middlesex County: A New Brunswick special education teacher was indicted Friday on charges that he passed a phony doctor's note written on a stolen prescription form to school officials in June to justify excessive absences.

Stanley Williams, 55, of Newark was charged in the indictment with official misconduct, receiving stolen property and uttering a forged instrument.

Authorities said the prescription for was stolen from a Newark pediatrician. Williams with the district for 20 years, taught in New Brunswick High School.

He was suspended with pay from his 10-month job at the start of the school year, said Superintendent of Schools Richard Kaplan. That will now be changed to a suspension without pay, Kaplan said.

Williams' salary for last year was \$75,107.

If convicted of the second-degree misconduct charge alone, Williams faces up to 10 years in prison. An arraignment date has not been set.

His attorney, Timothy Smith of South Orange, expressed dismay over the indictment, saying it represents overzealous prosecution.

"It's overkill," he said. "This is normally something handled administratively. The Board of Education had an agenda, and they were given undue deference."

Smith said the board and Williams have been locked in an ongoing battle of employment issues. Calling the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office was the board's way of circumventing the process required in dealing with a tenured teacher, he said.

"I'm confident when the facts of the case come out the integrity of this extraordinary individual will remain intact," he said.

In response to Smith's comments, Assistant Middlesex County prosecutor Brian Gillet said William's actions "fit under the official misconduct statute."

The law was beefed up in March by the state Legislature, which stiffened penalties for public official and public employees convicted under it.

Smith said Williams had health issues, but he did not know the nature of them. Kaplan said Williams was absent 33 days and late 20 days in the 2006-2007 school year.

“It was chronic,” Kaplan said. “He claimed he was under a doctor’s care so we asked for a doctor’s note in June. “

Kaplan could not be reached again to get a response to Smith’s remarks.