

# Fond du Lac School District

72 W. Ninth St. • Fond du Lac, WI 54935

(920) 929-2900

Date: October 24, 2022

Susan Heitzman  
[REDACTED]

Mrs. Heitzman:

It has come to my attention that there are a number of issues related to your performance of your job duties that are cause for concern, which include your absenteeism, evidence of ineffective instructional practices, and lack of communication with families and colleagues.

On Friday, October 14, 2022, you were absent from work in the morning. You entered a ½ day morning absence in Frontline Absence Management for Monday, October 17, 2022. The Boys and Girls Club contacted the district when you did not report for work on October 14th, leaving the students without an instructor. Because we did not know if you would be reporting for work, Mrs. Suemnicht sent the students home and called the families of the afternoon students to let them know not to report for their class in the afternoon. While you did report for work that afternoon, all but one of the students, who are some of our most academically at risk, did not have an instructor for this day and lost valuable instructional time. Clearly you failed to complete your most basic job duties.

In addition, as of the date of this letter, we have completed 7.5 weeks of the school year; in that same time period you have recorded ten and a ½ (10.5) days of absence. Five a ½ (5.5) of those absences were not filled by a substitute, resulting in students yet again not having the benefit of an instructor during their academic time. A review of your attendance records from last school year indicates that chronic absenteeism was also an issue then; you were absent for thirty one and a half (31.5) days between 11/2/21-3/25/22. Note that these numbers do not include additional days that were excused for [REDACTED]

In response to my email asking for an explanation of your failure to report your absence and to report to work, you replied that you had entered the absence for the correct day and that the absence management system had changed it, which is false. Additionally you accused the Boys and Girls Club staff of "tracking" you, and the School District of monitoring you by video camera, which is also false.

Your ability to effectively provide instruction and services to the students under your care requires that you come to work regularly, and that you accurately report your absences via the Frontline Absence Management system so that a proper replacement can be found in time for the arrival of your students. Continuous absences result in a loss of academic learning for your students, which is unacceptable. Board Policy 2105 states "The mission of the Fond du Lac School District, in partnership with the family and community, is to promote high achievement and foster continuous growth of the whole child, so that each becomes a creative, contributing citizen in a culturally diverse society, by providing personalized learning opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment." That mission is not possible without the presence and full participation of each and every teacher.

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Due to these concerns we are placing you on a two (2) day suspension without pay due to your failure to correctly report your absence and excessive absenteeism, resulting in the lack of a substitute teacher for your students. The effective dates of your suspension are October 25, 2022 through October 26, 2022. An additional area of concern is the very recent discovery that you are no longer licensed as a teacher by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Although you have assured us that your loss of license is simply a tax issue that will be corrected as soon as possible, we have no current option but to continue your unpaid status, following your suspension, until your license is renewed. At that time, we will place you on a paid leave of absence, during which time we will continue to investigate our concerns regarding our most academically at risk students not receiving the education to which they are entitled, as a result of your overall performance and the issues which are identified in this letter.

Sincerely,

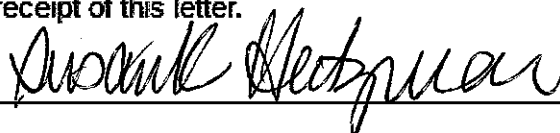


Dean Nemoir  
Director of Human Resources

Cc: District Personnel File

I hereby acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Employee's Signature:



Date:

10-24-22



*The mission of the Fond du Lac School District, in partnership with the family and the community, is to promote high achievement and foster the continuous growth of the whole child, so that each becomes a creative, contributing citizen in a global society by providing personalized learning opportunities in a safe, nurturing environment.*

FOND DU LAC SCHOOL DISTRICT

# Fond du Lac School District

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**To:** Sue Heitzman, FHS Teacher  
**From:** Alex Garcia, Associate Principal & Dave Michalkiewicz, Principal  
**Date:** June 21, 2022  
**RE:** Summary of Meeting Leading to Improvement Plan

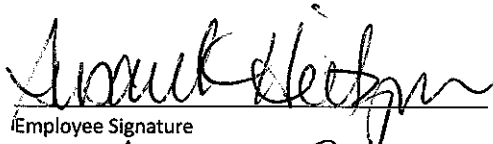
As discussed on June 21, 2022, we met regarding an instance of improper communication, concerns regarding feedback for students and progress monitoring being communicated in a timely manner, and the missed deadlines with your own professional growth through the Effective Educator process. As a result, you will be involved in an Improvement Plan for the 2022- 2023 school year.

As summarized in our meeting, the two areas of improvement will be: timely and professional feedback and reporting to students and families, and professional responsibilities with your own professional growth as demonstrated through the Effective Educator process. The Improvement Plan will be written, with your input, before the end of the 2021-22 school year.

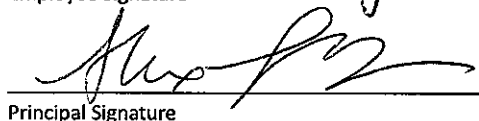
The expectation is that you meet each component of the Improvement Plan with measurable results by March 2023 so that we can inform you of the District's intention for renewal or non renewal for future employment at or around that time. We will continue to provide supports throughout the year.

If you have a need for further assistance, please access the District's Employee Assistance Program at 920-924-0614.

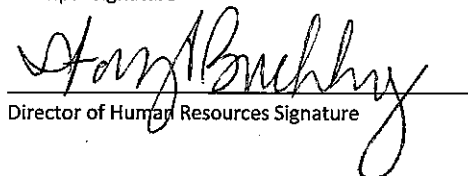
By signing this document, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the expectations set forth for your employment with the Fond du Lac School District.

  
Employee Signature

6-27-22  
Date

  
Principal Signature

6-27-22  
Date

  
Director of Human Resources Signature

6-30-22  
Date

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## Response to Summary of Meeting Leading to Improvement Plan 6/27/22

On June 21, 2022, Alex Garcia, Matt Steinbarth, Paula Suemnicht, Tony Prus, and I met regarding a single instance of an email from me to a parent. This was deemed to be leaving much to be desired, in terms of professionalism.

I had included Paula on this email, dated 6/6/22 at 8:15 a.m. Paula did not express concerns about the professionalism of this communication until after [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (the parent) emailed Paula, Tiffany, and me at 4:11 p.m. on 6/16/22.

I was also reprimanded for the timeliness of these communications with Administrator and the family. I contend that I did reply quickly to [REDACTED] and Paula's emails. I'm including the timeline of communications to best explain the series of events.

On June 24, 2022, I met again with Alex Garcia, Matt Steinbarth, Dave Michalkiewicz, Tony Prus. I was to either sign the letter acknowledging an improvement plan or present questions I had about the document. I asked for examples of what I need to change, beyond this single communication. Alex said that she had not looked at other emails I'd sent, so she has no comparison and no other examples of what I might change. I stated that I can't change something if I don't know what's wrong with it. Again, this is the only instance Alex could refer to. I also disagreed with some language in the Improvement Plan, specifically the use of the term "unprofessional" in describing my communications in this situation.

I also asked how I am to know if an email meets Alex's standards of professionalism. I am to include her on each one.

I do acknowledge that I need to communicate with students and parents more promptly, and that I procrastinate—which I did with my Educator Effectiveness submissions.

1. I have an idea to streamline my WVS progress updates, which I plan to try out this summer.
2. I will also write an email to WVS students and parents, expressing that, from students, I expect courteous email communication which does not address me by my given name or only my last name.
3. I am trying to figure out a way to verify that students and parents have read this expectation of courtesy.
4. I will call families in a timely manner, to inform of problems with WVS progress and/or grades. Again, I will be implementing this during the summer.
5. I will include Alex Garcia on all emails sent to families regarding WVS progress and/or grades, as well as to families regarding e2020 progress.
6. I will submit all components of My Learning Plan on or before the due dates.

Juwank Heitzman 6-27-22