

Teacher

From A1

Burlington school district records show that the school board voted Nov. 14 to accept Francisco's resignation retroactive to Oct. 10 — the date of her arrest.

Jamie Rook, the district's human resources director, said that whenever approached about a former employee, the district provides only the employee's former job title, dates of employment and salary.

Asked why Francisco was permitted to resign rather than face possible termination, Rook said, "It is within Ms. Francisco's right to resign her position."

Court records show that Francisco is due in court March 20 for a status conference on charges of operating while intoxicated and operating with a prohibited blood-alcohol content.

She has pleaded not guilty to both charges, which are non-criminal civil citations in

Burlington Municipal Court.

Wisconsin state law makes first-time drunken driving a non-criminal offense.

Francisco has a previous misdemeanor conviction in a 2003 drunken-driving case, but that case occurred in Michigan, so it does not count on her record in Wisconsin.

Burlington school district officials said Francisco was hired as a special education teacher's aide in August 2020.

She was paid \$17.50 an hour, or about \$36,000 a year.

According to the police report, Waller Elementary Principal Ann Phillips called police around 10 a.m. Oct. 10 to report an intoxicated employee at the school, 195 Gardner Ave.

School staff had offered to give Francisco a ride home, the report states, but she decided to drive herself.

The principal told officers that Francisco had a bottle of alcohol in her purse and that she appeared to be drunk at school.



LAUREN HENNING, JOURNAL TIMES FILE PHOTO

Located at 195 Gardner Ave. in Burlington, Waller Elementary School is where police were called Oct. 10, 2022, after teacher's aide Amy Francisco was accused of showing up for work while intoxicated.

Officers waited outside Francisco's home on Barbara Street and confronted her when she approached in her minivan.

Francisco allegedly told officers that she had two or three glasses of vodka and orange juice that day.

"Amy said she is struggling with stress, work overload and family life," the police report states.

Racine County court records

show that Francisco's husband filed for divorce a few weeks after the arrest, in a case that is still pending.

Police reported that Francisco failed sobriety tests, and that a breathalyzer showed her blood-alcohol content was far above the .08 threshold for driving under the influence.

Officers also reported finding

an unopened liter-sized bottle of vodka in the minivan's center console.

Francisco was handcuffed, arrested and issued citations.

As a matter of routine, the case was registered on Jan. 3 — after Francisco had been hired in the Waterford school district — for a future jury trial date in Racine County Circuit Court.

The trial is scheduled for April 20.

Spence said his district hired Francisco on Oct. 25 as a teacher's aide at Trailside Elementary, located at 615 N. Milwaukee Ave. in Waterford.

Spence said he became aware of the OWI case later — after it was registered in circuit court — but he was not aware of details of the case.

He declined to comment on whether the allegations leading up to Francisco's arrest would affect her eligibility to work in a classroom in Waterford.

"I'd have to reflect on that now," he said.