

NEW BRUNSWICK

Suspended teacher wins bid to suppress his confession

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MIDDLESEX COUNTY — A suspended New Brunswick special education teacher won a bid this week to have his confession suppressed in a criminal case involving charges that he sent a phony doctor's note written on a stolen prescription form to school officials to justify absences.

A two-judge panel sided with Stanley Williams, 56, who contended he did not waive his Miranda rights against self-incrimination when interviewed by investigators in August 2007.

The Appellate Division decision affirms a ruling by Judge Frederick DeVesa in Superior Court, New Brunswick that granted Williams motion to suppress the confession in May.

"After reviewing the record, including watching

the video, we find no basis to disturb Judge DeVesa's factual findings, which are supported by substantial credible evidence," the two-judge panel found.

Williams of Newark was charged in a December 2007 indictment with official misconduct, receiving stolen property and uttering a forged instrument. Authorities said the prescription form was stolen from a Newark pediatrician.

Investigators talked to Williams about the prescription form in August 2007 and read him his Miranda rights, but investigator Robert Torrisi of the Middlesex County Prosecutor's Office improperly downplayed the reading of those rights when he called them "routine," DeVesa found.

During the interrogation, Williams acknowledged that he bought the

phony prescription from a man in downtown Newark, according to Appellate Division opinion.

"Anything you need, they'll (write) it for you," Williams told investigators, according to the opinion. "I didn't go to a doctor. Um, I didn't forge anything on here but I did turn it in."

He was later issued a summons to appear on the charges on which he was eventually indicted.

Williams, who had been with the district for 20 years before his suspension at the start of the 2007-2008 school year, taught at New Brunswick High School.

If convicted of the second-degree misconduct charge alone, Williams faces up to 10 years in prison.

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