

# INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

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## Work time theft allegation against Cory Hendrix.

Submitted by Jason Dahlberg, HR Investigator

September 5, 2024

### INTRODUCTION; SUMMARY OF ALLEGATION

The Seattle Public Schools (SPS) Human Resources Department (HR) investigated allegations made against Custodial Engineer Cory Hendrix (Hendrix.) Hendrix was alleged to have falsified his work time sheets, submitted false timesheets and was paid for time that he did not work. From the time period from July 14, 2023, through August 31, 2023, Hendrix was allegedly paid for approximately 70 hours of work that he did not work.

Custodial Services Manager John Hughes (Hughes) sent an email (**Exhibit A**) to HR dated May 2, 2024, where he stated that Security check in and check out logs<sup>1</sup> for Hendrix check out times from his work location where not consistent with the timesheets that he submitted.

A thorough investigation has been conducted into this matter and the following is the investigative report. Findings were reached after considering all the information obtained during the investigation. The report may not include an exhaustive account of all investigative efforts, or all the evidence obtained, but may include only what is relevant to the findings.

The evidentiary standard used for the investigation is “preponderance of the evidence” relevant to the factual findings and any conclusions. Under this standard, the assigned decision-maker will determine whether an alleged policy violation was more likely than not to have occurred after considering all the evidence presented.

### POLICIES REVIEWED

The following policies were reviewed as part of this investigation<sup>2</sup>:

- SPS District Policy No. 5006 – Unprofessional Conduct of Staff
- SPS District Policy No. 5281 – Staff Disciplinary Action and Discharge

### INVESTIGATION

#### A. Persons Interviewed/Consulted<sup>3</sup>

- John Hughes, Custodial Services Manager, witness. Interviewed on June 20, 2024, via MS Teams.
- Julia Silva, Supervisor Facilities Admin & Budget, witness. Interviewed on June 20, 2024, at HR with Investigator Shannon McBride present.
- John Hughes, Custodial Engineer. Interviewed on August 23, 2024, at HR with Union Representative Shelli Filippi present.

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<sup>1</sup> Security check in/check out logs are logs where custodian staff calls into the security office when then report to and leave work locations and security staff records the date and times.

<sup>2</sup> Note that this is not an exhaustive list of possible applicable policies for a decision-maker to consider when making a determination whether a district policy was or was not violated.

<sup>3</sup> Interview transcripts and/or Records of Interviews/Contacts are located in the investigative file.

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## B. Documents Reviewed/Exhibits

- **Exhibit A** – Hughes email dated May 2, 2024, with concerns of Hendrix time sheets.
- **Exhibit B** – Hendrix email dated October 17, 2023.
- **Exhibit C** – Hendrix security check in/out log.
- **Exhibit D** – Spreadsheet calculation for Hendrix work time.

## C. Narrative of Investigation

Hughes said that Hendrix's work hours were from 6 am to 2:30 pm for the summer when he was working at Wedgewood Elementary (Wedgewood) which was hosting a Seattle Parks children's program. His duties were to clean up after the program was over, arm the security alarm and lock up the school.

Hughes said that the department monthly audit of timesheets showed some discrepancies with Hendrix's submitted work time. The audit showed that Hendrix was submitting for overtime and claimed that he was working until 6 pm.

Hughes said that Hendrix was initially only submitting for 30 minutes of extra work time for the Seattle Parks children's program at Wedgewood. Due to the results of the audit Hendrix was specifically asked about his work time at Wedgewood in an October 17, 2023, via email (**Exhibit B**) where he had claimed that he worked from 7 am to 6 pm from July 3, 2023, through August 31, 2023. Hendrix responded by saying that, "I only put 30 minutes each day because that is all the cleaning I did but I was here and locked up from 3-6 pm. Can I go back and claim those hours, I honestly didn't think about it & only claimed the time it took to trash & do bathrooms."

Facilities Admin & Budget Supervisor Julia Silva (Silva) responded to Hendrix in the October 17, 2023, email thread and said if he worked from 7 am to 6 pm then put in for that time which would include 2.5 hours of overtime each day. Hendrix wrote back saying, "Ok thank! I'll change it."

Hughes said that the Security check in /out log (**Exhibit C**) for Hendrix at Wedgewood showed that Hendrix was generally calling in for his departure time at 2:30pm, which was not consistent with Hendrix timesheets, which claimed that he worked until 6 pm.

Hughes said that he later learned that the Seattle Parks children's program ended at 4 pm each day, so there was no need for Hendrix to stay until 6 pm.

Hughes said that he also suspected Custodial Engineer Christy Conner (Conner) was assisting Hendrix with his work time theft. Please see separate Investigation report for Connor. Hughes said that Conner had filled out Hendrix's timecards with the inaccurate work time. As background, Hughes said that Hendrix had been out on medical leave prior due to a hand injury and when he came back to work he was unable to sign his timesheets. Hughes said that Conner filled out Hendrix's timesheets for him during that time period and the timesheets were in the same handwriting as Connor's.

Hughes further explained Hendrix and Conner live together in Tacoma Washington (later identified as Algonia, Washington) and drive to and from work together every day. He said that they are a couple and are married or dating. Hughes said that Conner would have known that Hendrix was not working until 6 pm as she drove home with him afterwork at 2:30 pm. Additionally, Connor filled out his time sheets that claimed he had worked until 6 pm.

Silva confirmed the information that Hughes provided. She said that she was the person that first noticed the discrepancies in Hendrix's time sheets and work times. Silva said that she calculated the work time that Hendrix submitted and did not work, based on his timesheets and the security log times. She

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submitted a spreadsheet (**Exhibit D**) and calculated that Hendrix submitted for approximately 70 hours of work that he did not work.

Hendrix confirmed that he and Connor drove to and work together every workday, and that they left work at around 2:30pm every day. He confirmed that he and Connor lived together in Algona, Washington.

Hendrix confirmed that Connor filled out his timesheets. He said that he would verbally give her his work hours and she would fill out his timesheets for him and then he would sign his timesheets. Hendrix confirmed that he signed his timesheets and he said they were accurate.

Hendrix confirmed that he worked at Wedgewood Elementary School last summer and he cleaned up after a summer program. He said that he completed some overtime time work but he was not able to approximate how many hours of overtime he worked. He was unable to make any approximation. He was asked if his overtime was 10 hours, 20, hours, 40 hours, or 60 hours and he said, "I have no idea" of how much overtime he worked. However, he claimed he worked until 6pm.

Hendrix said that from 3:30pm to 6pm he would clean up the bathrooms and then lock up.

Hendrix was asked about the October 17, 2023, email questioning his worktime and he said he did not recall receiving the email. Hendrix was asked about his statement in the email where he said, "I only put in 30 minutes each day because that is all the cleaning I did..." and he said he did not recall. He was asked if he only did 30 minutes of work as his email stated and he said, "I don't remember."

Hendrix was asked what he specifically did from 3:30 pm to 6 pm and he said that he just "waited" until the program was done so he could lock up.

Hendrix was asked if he was the only person who could lock up and he said that he was, but then said that the program was able to lock up later.

Hendrix was asked how he and Connor drove home together every day, as he had just said, if she got off work at 2:30 pm and he was working until 6 pm. Hendrix changed his earlier answer and said that he and Connor did not always drive the same car. He claimed that she would sometimes go to his job site and wait for him to be done.

Hendrix was asked if his timesheets indicating that he worked overtime from 3:30 pm to 6 pm most workdays was accurate, and he said, "I would say, yea." He then said, "I am trying to think about when I started and ended at Wedgwood." Hendrix was showed a copy of his timesheets and he confirmed that he signed and submitted the timesheets.

Hendrix confirmed that he called into the security office daily when he got to work and when he left work, as per procedure. He said that these dates and times were recorded in the Security check in/check out logs.

Hendrix was shown a copy of the Security check in/check out logs at Wedgwood that showed that he was leaving work at around 2:30 pm every day and NOT working until 6pm as his timesheets claimed. Hendrix was asked how he could have completed his overtime work from 3:30 pm to 6 pm if he was leaving work at 2:30 pm as the Security check in/check out logs showed. Hendrix said, "You got all the evidence right there."

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Hendrix was asked If he did the overtime work and he said, “I did the work.” He was asked how he did the work from 3:30 pm to 6 pm when the evidence showed he left work at 2:30 pm, and he again claimed that “I did the work.”

## FINDINGS OF FACT

After considering all the evidence obtained in the investigation into Hendrix’s conduct, the following are findings of fact as they relate to the District’s policies regarding unprofessional staff conduct.

It was found that Hendrix inaccurately submitted work time and was paid for work that he did not complete. Hendrix submitted for overtime from July 14, 2023, through August 31, 2023, as working from 3:30 pm to 6 pm and it was found that he did not work this time.

Hendrix’s Security check in/check out logs showed he was regularly leaving work at 2:30 pm during this time period.

Further evidence of Hendrix not working his claimed overtime was that he and Connor both confirmed that they carpooled to and from work and stated that they both left work together at around 2:30 pm each workday.


When Hendrix was asked how he was completing the overtime work when his Security check in/check out logs showed he was leaving the work at 2:30 pm, Hendrix said, ““You got all the evidence right there.”

When confronted with the evidence that showed he did not work the overtime Hendrix was asked again, if he completed the overtime work and he falsely said, “I did the work.”

Policy 5006 under section B (Classified Staff) states that unprofessional conduct includes: 4. *Providing false information to the District (i.e., timesheets...)*

Policy 5281 regarding Staff Disciplinary Action and Discharge lists under 6. *Falsifying application materials or District records, timesheets, or reports.*

This report and exhibits are being forwarded to HR management for further review and personnel action as warranted.



Jason Dahlberg, Investigator

9/5/24

Date