

Board Meeting Questions and Responses

1. Under whose authority did you contact Ira Weiss before the board approved his hiring as solicitor?

School board policy 611 indicates that a business manager and most certainly the superintendent is authorized to purchase services needed in the district. The audit was becoming finalized and a special counsel was needed. The law offices of Ira Weiss received no payment until Weiss, Burkhardt, Kramer were hired. I knew there were excess funds available due to personnel changes at Highland and the high school and I would have sufficient funds to pay for these services.

2. Under whose authority did you contract with Dr. Dan Miller to provide professional development at Blackhawk Middle School for math educators?

Policy 433 indicates that professional development is required to offer maximum support and instruction to teachers. Upon my arrival at Blackhawk July 1 I had no orientation from Dr. Mike Thomas or Mrs. Nancy Bowman. This highly unusual situation made it very difficult to unravel the math debacle at the intermediate school. Four pilot programs were slated to be used this year and I expressed concern at the number and the lack of cohesion of the program. I promptly narrowed the math options to two and contacted Jim Turner and Dr. Shula Nedley at On Hands Schools to discuss this matter. They suggested Dr. Dan Miller, a longtime educator and math specialist. I had conversations with the board about this and began him on a calendar of sessions, knowing once again that I had the funds to pay for these services, neither of which was frivolous. These were not for travel, redecorating new offices or purchasing furniture. In both cases, the monies were spent to purchase much needed services for the school district.

3. Why is there not yet a service agreement with Kelly Services for substitute teachers?

I contacted Kelly before the holiday and they explained their program. To my knowledge they set up a meeting for this month and we hope to discuss options. As I have repeatedly indicated, those with clearances that are not out of date will have their clearances transferred to Kelly. Those who would need new clearances would have to obtain them regardless if AESOP or Kelly were handling subs. Clearances do not have to be renewed anywhere until they expire. Renewal time including Cogent Background check is less than two weeks.

4. To date, what is the total sum of money that has been spent on legal fees to respond to the unfair labor practices grievance presented by the Blackhawk Education Association?

\$45,500.96 as of December 31, 2014