



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the School Board
Chair and Members of the Audit Committee

FROM: Teresa Michaels, Inspector General *TM*

DATE: February 3, 2023

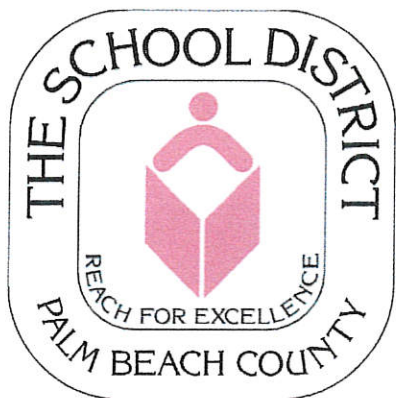
SUBJECT: Transmittal of Final Investigative Report: *Forest Hill Community High School Case #21-0014-1 Financial Athletic Supplements*

In accordance with School Board Policy 1.092 we hereby transmit the above-referenced final report.

The report addresses the following allegation(s):

1. Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk and Spanish/Avid Teacher Laura Hayden enlisted staff members that did not coach a sport to collect and receive the 2020-21 annual athletic coaches supplement. Staff members who received a supplement transferred a portion of those funds through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as a payment, thus, the Allegation was ***Substantiated***.
2. Principal Esther Rivera approved athletic assistant coaches' supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sport, hence enabling staff to misappropriate monies, the Allegation was ***Substantiated***.

The report is finalized and will be posted on the Inspector General's website;
https://www.palmbeachschools.org/about_us/reports_and_publications/inspector_general_reports.



OIG CASE NUMBER 21-0014-I
Forest Hill Community High School

TYPE OF REPORT: FINAL

DATE OF REPORT: March 21, 2022



Teresa Michael

**Teresa Michael, Inspector General
Office of Inspector General
School District of Palm Beach County**

THIS REPORT MAY CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT IS CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER APPLICABLE LAW. DO NOT RELEASE WITHOUT PRIOR COORDINATION WITH THE OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.

Office of Inspector General

Report of Investigation #21-0014-I

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From June 11, 2021, to September 17, 2021, the Office of Inspector General staff conducted interviews and reviewed pertinent documentation and records related to an anonymous allegation. As a result of the investigation, OIG staff determined Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS), Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk, and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden did violate School Board Policies, 2.61 Fraud, 3.02 Code of Ethics, Administrative Policies and Procedures of the Payroll/Accounting Services Department, the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and The Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association (CTA), and School District Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12C regarding Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplements.

Wells received \$1,344 of a \$2,124 bowling supplement from Blum via a mobile payment service on December 11, 2020, and transferred \$1,913 to Lauren Burk (bowling supplement) on the same day. Principal Rivera said she was aware that Lauren Burk assisted the Bowling Team, and that she approved all athletic supplements. Lauren Burk became an administrator as a Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020 and was not approved to receive a 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement per Principal Rivera. The 2020-21 FHCHS Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Principal Rivera did not approve of Burk receiving a bowling supplement, knowing that Burk assisted the bowling team. However, despite Burk not being approved to receive a bowling supplement, Wells provided Burk the bowling supplement through a mobile payment service. This alone shows that Wells and Burk undermined Principal Rivera authority to receive the bowling supplement. Furthermore, another employee who was not an administrator could have been given the opportunity to be selected to earn a supplement. **See Figures 1a, 1b, and 1 inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells to Burk.**

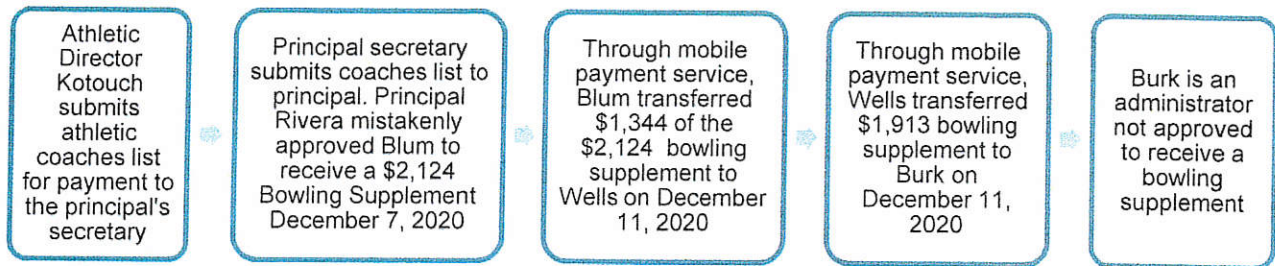
Figure 1a

Sport	Staff(s) who Actually Performed Duties as Coach	Staff who received monies from District Payroll Department for Coaching	Staff who received a Transfer of monies through a Cash-App	Staff who received monies for coaching but did not coach/participate in Sport
Bowling	Lauren Burk & Ryan Wells	Anjelica Blum	Ryan Wells & Lauren Burk	Anjelica Blum
Wrestling	Leslie Toussaint	Laura Hayden	Lauren Burk	Lauren Burk & Laura Hayden
Soccer	Lauren Burk	Ryan Wells	Lauren Burk	

Figure 1b

Staff	Issue	Policy/Rule	Examples of Potential Risk/Issues
Burk & Wells	Coached Bowling without Principal's Approval.	F.S. 1012.28. (1) and (3) Duties of School Principals & SBP-1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Given the opportunity another employee may have been chosen. 2). Liability/Risk Management issues of unapproved coach. 3). Undermines Principal's Authority/Judgement
Blum	Authorized Bowling Coach-received Bowling Supplement but did not Coach Bowling.	SBP-2.61.3.d.f. Fraud	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Given the opportunity another employee may have Been chosen. 2). Liability/Risk Management issues of unapproved coach. 3). Undermines Principal's Authority/Judgement
Hayden & Burk	Authorized Wrestling Coach-received Wrestling supplement but did not Coach Wrestling.	SBP-2.61.3.d.f. Fraud	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Given the opportunity another employee may have been chosen. 2). Liability/Risk Management issues of unapproved Coach. 3). Undermines Principal's Authority/Judgement. 4). Received payment for work not performed.
Burk	Coached Soccer without Principal's Approval.	FS 1012.28. (1) and (3) Duties of School Principals & SBP-1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). Given the opportunity another employee may have been chosen. 2). Liability/Risk Management issues of unapproved coach. 3). Undermines Principal's Authority/Judgement.

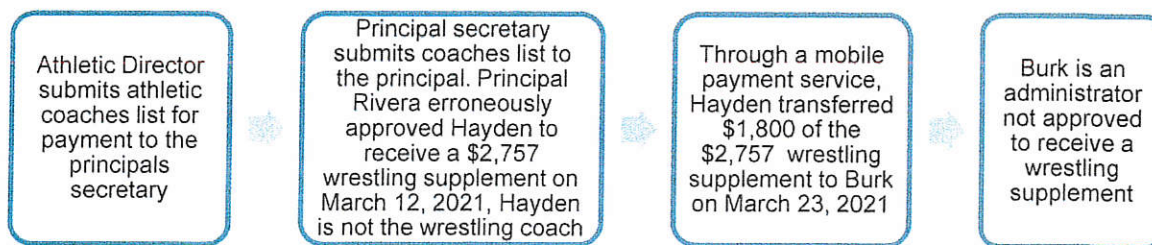
Figure 1



Hayden is the cross-country head coach. Wells asked Hayden if she would assist with coaching soccer. Hayden agreed but realized a week later that the two sports (cross-country/soccer) overlapped and that she would not help the soccer program. To replace Hayden as the assistant soccer coach Wells asked Burk to assist the soccer program. In error, Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement on March 12, 2021. Hayden was not the wrestling coach. Principal Rivera and Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch said Leslie Toussaint was the wrestling coach, and Toussaint did not submit documentation on behalf of Hayden as an assistant wrestling coach. The FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms Toussaint received the wrestling head coach supplement of \$3,611 on March 1, 2021. Moving forward, on March 23, 2021, Hayden facilitated a mobile payment transaction to transfer the inappropriate \$2,757 wrestling supplement to Burk. Principal Rivera did not approve Burk to receive an assistant coach's wrestling supplement due to her position as an administrator. However, despite Burk not being approved by Principal Rivera to receive a supplement, Hayden provided Burk with the inappropriate wrestling supplement through a mobile payment service. The mobile payment transaction receipt between Hayden and Burk shows a transference of \$1,800 of the \$2,757 wrestling supplement and a photo of Hayden's comments stating, "The best wrestling coach out there."

Hayden said if she were aware that Burk was an administrator, she would not have facilitated a mobile payment of the wrestling supplement to Burk. Hayden was not the approved wrestling coach, and the wrestling supplement she received was an error. Hayden did not inform the Principal or District payroll officials about the wrestling supplement. Hayden knowingly transferred the inappropriate wrestling supplement she received to Burk, who was not approved to receive a supplement. Hayden and Burk were fully aware that they did not coach wrestling and should not have receive a wrestling supplement. Hayden and Burk undermined Principal's Rivera authority to receive payment for work not performed. **See Figure 2, an inappropriate wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk.**

Figure-2



Burk is an administrator (Single School Culture Coordinator) whom Principal Rivera did not approve to receive an athletic supplement. District's PeopleSoft Personnel Records shows that a Single School Culture Coordinator is categorized as an administrative S2 position. District's Athletic Manger Valerie Miyares confirmed with the District's payroll Department that administrative level personnel are ineligible for supplements (**Exhibit 14**). However, Burk assisted the bowling and soccer programs. The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and The Classroom Teachers Association (CTA), Appendix-B states in part, "District may fill the position with an employee assigned to a different work site or with personnel not in the T-bargaining unit." The Director of Accounting Services Nancy Samuels reaffirms the CTA's directive saying the Principal is permitted to have other employees fulfill a coaches' position. Principal Rivera is the sole administrator responsible for approving supplements payable to athletic coaches. Principal Rivera did not authorize Hayden or Wells to facilitate a mobile service transaction of the wrestling and bowling supplements to Burk. Principal Rivera said she was aware of Burk assisting the bowling program, but was not aware of Burk assisting the soccer program. Principal Rivera did not approve Burk to receive a bowling supplement. However, despite Principal Rivera's disapproval of Burk receiving bowling and soccer supplements, Burk received two supplement payments facilitated through a mobile payment service from Wells and Hayden. District Code of Ethics Policy 3.02.4.g, states in part, "each employee agrees and pledges to avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance of impropriety." District's PeopleSoft Personnel Records show that Burk, Hayden, and Wells reside at the same residence. Wells indicated to the OIG that he and Burk are in a relationship.

The allegation that Mr. Wells listed staff that did not coach a sport in the school year 2020-21, but collected seasonal assistant coaches' supplements, and the staff who received

the supplements transferred a portion of the funds through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as payment was **Substantiated**.

During the investigation, the OIG identified the following allegation against Principal Esther Rivera. Principal Rivera violated Florida Statute 1012.28(1) and (3) and School Board Policy 1.014 by erroneously approving athletic assistant coaches' supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sports, thus unintentionally enabling staff to ultimately misappropriate monies was **Substantiated**.

On December 7, 2021, OIG staff forwarded a copy of the draft report to Principal Esther Rivera, Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk, and Spanish Avid Teacher Laura Hayden for a response by January 14, 2022. On January 12, 2022, Math Teacher Ryan Wells responded via email. This response has been transcribed in its entirety and attached as **(Exhibit 17)**. On January 14, 2022, Spanish/Avid Teacher Laura Hayden responded via email. This response has been transcribed in its entirety and attached as **(Exhibit 18)**. On January 14, 2022, Principal Esther Rivera responded via email. This response has been transcribed in its entirety and attached as **(Exhibit 19)**. On January 14, 2022, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk review responded via email. This response has been transcribed in its entirety and attached as **(Exhibit 20)**. A review of the responses reveals the following.

*"Ryan Wells,
January 11, 2022*

Response to case 21-0014-I

Please include this statement in the final report of the above mentioned investigation.

After reviewing this report in its entirety, I would like to state my involvement as it is not clearly stated in the report by the inspector general. I was the bowling coach in 2020 which there is only one stipend. Ms. Blum received this stipend and then transferred it to me as I was the correct recipient of this stipend. In retrospect, we should have handled this situation differently by having Ms. Blum return the stipend to the district and then it being sent to me. I understand the way we did this was incorrect but the money did end up with the person who was the coach. Ms. Burk kindly volunteered with bowling. I decided that I would give her part of my deserved stipend (not a second stipend) as she helped at all the bowling matches. As the report states, this stipend was given to Blum by mistake so I am not sure how the findings can state this is a kickback scheme or that I enlisted others to receive and underserved stipend..

In regard to the soccer stipend, the report correctly states that I told the athletic director that Ms. Hayden was going to be the assistant coach. When she was unable to fulfill this duty I told the athletic director that Ms. Burk would be taking Ms. Hayden's role as assistant coach. This is also stated in the report. As both of these statements are in the report, again, I am not sure how the inspector general is able to make the claim that there is evidence of a kickback scheme or that I enlisted others as I was not involved with

stipend disbursement, did not receive any of this stipend, nor did I claim people were coaching that were not actually coaching.

Sincerely,

Ryan Wells" [sic] (Exhibit 17).

*"Laura Hayden,
Response to Draft Report for Office of Inspector General
Case No. 21-0014.I
Forest Hill Community High School Misappropriation/Athletic Supplements*

After reviewing the draft report, I would like to address the following concerns, as I believe some findings by the Inspector General are inaccurate. These are discrepancies from the figures and exhibits, and the follow-up notes by the Inspector General.

I never approached the wrestling coach (Touissant), Athletic Director (Kotouch), or Principal (Rivera) to enlist myself as the wrestling coach. As the report also states that Ms. Rivera gave the stipend by mistake. If I was not listed on this document and the principal admits to her error, this cannot be evidence of a kickback scheme or enlisting others.

At the start of soccer season I did agree with the head boy's soccer coach, Ryan Wells, to be his assistant coach. During this time, I was still in season as the girl's cross country coach. The season was extended to make up for the late start of the school year due to COVID-19. Therefore, the two sports (cross country, a fall sport, and soccer, a winter sport) overlapped and I could no longer commit to helping Ryan Wells. In turn, Lauren Burk stepped in and took over as the boy's assistant soccer coach.

I am not an employee with access to payroll or inputting stipends. If a closer look is taken at the exhibits that the Inspector General included in the draft report, the stipend I received was in my paycheck on March 12, 2021 while all other winter sports stipends were batched and received on March 1, 2021. If the stipend I received was entered weeks later, it must have been done purposely by an administrator with access as all other winter stipends had already been dispersed.

When I received the stipend in my paycheck and its description read WRESTLING JV COACH (WINTER) HS, I mistakenly presumed athletic stipends could be allocated as needed by the principal based on her coaching needs. This has occurred multiple times in past with coaches" [Sic] (Exhibit 18).

*"Esther Rivera,
January 14, 2022*

Re 21-0014-I

To Whom It May Concern:

In Response to investigative Report #21-0014-I from the Office of Inspector General in the School District of Palm Beach County regarding Allegation #2:

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Principal Esther Rivera violated Florida Statute 1012.28(1) and (3) Public School Personnel, Duties of School Principals, and School Board Policy, 1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals by erroneously approving athletic assistant coaches supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sports, thus enabling staff to ultimately to misappropriate monies.

*I **agree** that I “erroneously” approved athletic supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sport. I **do not agree** that this action resulted in “enabling staff to misappropriate funds” through the use of cash-apps and other methods in exchanging monies not merited between other staff members. Additionally, it is imperative that this investigation provides a foundation for a universal systems-based approach to be created by the School District of Palm Beach County when School Principals are approving athletic stipends as currently there is none existing district-wide. Since I learned of my error, prior to this investigation commencing, I contacted the Department of Professional Standards and my instructional superintendent to make them aware of the mistake. Lastly, I created a school-based system in which coaches must acknowledge the responsibilities of their coaching positions provide evidence of practices and games and maintain records of students/staff involved in order to receive a stipend.*

Sincerely,

*Esther M. Rivera
Principal” [sic] (Exhibit 19)*

*“Lauren Burk
Good evening,*

Please include the below response in the 21-0014-I/FHCHS Report.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft of report 21-0014-I/FHCHS. Though I respect the findings of the Investigator, I would like to state a few items in this report that are incorrect and written in a negative connotation by the Investigator.

In multiple places within the report, the Investigator states that the stipend list my former Principal, Ms. Esther Rivera, submitted, “disapproved” of me receiving any stipends as I was the Single School Culture Coordinator (SSCC) at the school at the time of this investigation. This stipend list is a list of coaches' names and what sport they are coaching. It is not a document of notes stating who is approved or not approved for stipends. This list does not state that I requested and was denied a stipend as the Investigator eluded. Also, at no point did I ask Ms. Rivera or anyone to provide me with a stipend for any sport while I was the Single School Culture Coordinator. It is also important to note that the IG states I was paid stipends in 2020 after becoming SSCC for

work I had completed as a coach and sponsor prior to becoming SSCC within the same school year. Per Human Resources, it was appropriate for me to receive these stipends; however, the Investigator contacted the Manager of Athletics rather than Human Resources to confirm if the payments were acceptable.

In regard to the money that was sent to me for coaching both bowling and soccer: I told Mr. Ryan Wells that I would assist him with the Fall bowling team, as I had the previous year, and soccer when Ms. Laura Hayden found she could no longer do so. There is only one bowling stipend per school. Mr. Wells was kind enough to send me some of his stipend though I did not request or expect this money. Also, as stated above, I did not receive an additional stipend, but rather I was given some of Mr. Wells' as he saw fit. In regard to soccer, Ms. Hayden stated to me that she received a stipend that she believed was for soccer as she was initially the Assistant Coach for soccer before telling Mr. Wells she could not assist. Ms. Hayden knew that I had supported Mr. Wells with the soccer team throughout the entire season and she sent me her stipend though I did not request it from her. The Investigator states that I enlisted people to receive stipends. At no point did I ask for or expect any stipends for helping these two teams. Additionally, in the ten years I worked at Forest Hill Community High School, I coached and sponsored various activities each year. Never have I received money for work that I did not complete or enlist others to provide me money.

*With appreciation,
Lauren Burk [Sic] (Exhibit 20)*

RECOMMENDATIONS

During the investigation, the following management issues were observed and are referred to Principal Esther Rivera and Director of Professional Standards Vicki Evans-Pare for review and consideration.

- The OIG acknowledges that Principal Rivera had taken steps to ensure that the Assistant Principal over athletics, Athletic Director, and all athletic coaches, staff members, and volunteers receive training regarding supplements for extracurricular athletics.
- The OIG recommends the Superintendent review School Board Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12 Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplements, as the bulletin was last updated on January 16, 2013.¹ The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association Appendix B-Supplements does not explain or indicate any duties or responsibilities of the Athletic Directors within District schools.²

¹ School Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12 Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplements

² The Collective Bargaining Agreement Between The School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and The Palm Beach County teacher association

- The OIG recommends that FHCHS leadership staff create a school operational plan (SOP) to define and describe the responsibilities of the Athletic Director (AD). The aims are to provide the AD with detailed instructions on carrying out all job-related tasks, including the coaches' assignment, monitoring athletic programs, and disbursement of supplements. Listed below are recommended procedural processes to guide leadership with the review of seasonal supplements paid to athletic coaches:
 - Head athletic coaches complete and submit daily or weekly attendance logs to the Athletic Director (AD) to demonstrate assistant athletics coaches' and students' attendance.
 - The AD verifies attendance logs completed by head coaches and forwards them to the appropriate Assistant Principal (AP).
 - The appropriate AP reviews the attendance logs and forwards them to the Principal. The Principal reviews the attendance logs before authorizing supplement payments to athletic coaches.
 - Procedure with associated forms are developed as to wherein staff sign and affirm that they are actively participating and performing the duties related to the specified supplement.

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INVESTIGATIVE PREDICATE

On June 11, 2021, the School District of Palm Beach County, Office of Inspector General (OIG) received an anonymous complaint via the OIG Hotline regarding alleged misconduct by Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk, and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden. It is alleged that Mr. Wells allegedly listed staff members as assistant coaches despite the staff members not coaching a sport. The staff members then collected 2020-21 seasonal assistant coaches' supplements. The staff member who received the supplement allegedly then transferred a portion of those supplements through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as payment (Allegation 1).

In the additional allegation, Principal Rivera erroneously approved athletic assistant coaches' supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sports, thus unintentionally enabling staff to ultimately misappropriate monies (Allegation 2).

The OIG investigation concluded that Allegation 1 and Allegation 2 were substantiated. The investigative findings of the Allegations will be discussed in detail later in this report.

BACKGROUND

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) is a District school located at 6901 Parker Avenue, West Palm Beach, FL 33405. The total school enrollment is 2,463, with a 19:3 Student-Teacher Ratio. The school serves high school students for grades 9-12.³ Esther Rivera has been the Principal at FHCHS since 2019. Ryan Wells has been a Math Teacher at FHCHS since 2015. Lauren Burk has been the Single School Culture Coordinator at FHCHS since 2020. Laura Hayden has been a Spanish Teacher at FHCHS since 2007.⁴

FHCHS 2020-21 athletic programs consist of 14 of the 19 Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) extracurricular sporting activities. FHCHS athletics did not participate in the following sports: Water Polo, Lacrosse, Golf, Softball, and Beach Volleyball. FHSAA extracurricular sporting practices and District sanctioned events occur after school operating hours and are categorized into seasonal groups, Fall Sports, Winter Sports, Spring Sports, and Summer Sports.⁵

Approximately \$147,221.96 was paid to FHCHS athletic coaches for the 2020-21 school year (**See Tables 1-4**). The FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List shows that 37 coaches who coached one or more sports were paid an annual supplement ranging from \$731.50 to \$4,532 between December 2020 and May 2021. Of the 37 coaches, 12 coached various seasonal sports and received multiple supplements (**Exhibit 1**). The 12

³Palm Beach County School District

⁴ Palm Beach County School District PeopleSoft Personnel Records

⁵ Florida High School Athletic Association/FHSAA.COM

coaches that received multiple supplements are highlighted with the color yellow in tables 2-4.

Table 1
FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Athletic Supplements

Athletic Seasons	Annual Supplement Amount Paid
Fall Sports	\$54,295.46
Winter Sports	\$51,916.00
Spring Sports	\$41,010.50
Total:	\$147,221.96

Table 2
FHCHS 2020-21 Fall Sports Seasonal Supplement List

#	Name	# of Sports Coached	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
1.	Anjelica Blum	1	Bowling-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$2,124.00
2.	Laura Hayden	1	Cross-Country-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$2,410.00
3.	Justin Boruch	1	Cross-Country-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$2,410.00
4.	Jude Blessington	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-20	\$4,266.46
5.	Dwayne McClendon	1	Football-Fall Sport	01/04/21	\$2,593.50
6.	Brian Pulaski	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
7.	Kyle Lawrence	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
8.	James Basford	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
9.	Evan Williams	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
10.	Vincent DeAquila	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
11.	Ronald Mack	1	Football-Fall Sport	01-04-21	\$2,593.50
12.	Mathew Graham	1	*Football-Fall/Spring Sport	12-07-20 & 05-10-21	\$3,325.00
13.	Tina Murphy	1	Swimming-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$3,611.00
14.	Kimberly Prisino	1	Volleyball-Fall Sport(g)	12-07-20	\$3,611.00
15.	Ashley O'Brien	1	Volleyball-Fall Sport(g)	12-07-20	\$2,124.00
16.	Emma Kapusta	1	Volleyball-Fall Sport(g)	12-07-20	\$2,124.00
17.	Geneene Kinder	1	Cheerleader-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$1,805.00
18.	Madison Kinder	1	Cheerleader-Fall Sport	12-07-20	\$1,062.00
19.	Ryan Wells	1	Fall Sport/Female ⁶	12-07-20	\$3,611.00
Total:					\$54,295.46

Table 3
FHCHS 2020-21 Winter Sports Seasonal Supplement List

#	Name	# of Sports Coached	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
1.	Anjelica Blum	1	Winter Gender ⁷	03-01-21	\$2,124.00
2.	Laura Hayden	1	Wrestling-Winter Sport	03-12-21	\$2,757.00
3.	Tony Watson	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$4,532.00
4.	Nicolas Orlando	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	05-24-21	\$4,532.00
5.	Shawn Martin	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,124.00
6.	Westley Shelton	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$3,325.00
7.	Ryan Nani Taylor	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$3,325.00
8.	Karllyn Louis-Charles	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,124.00
9.	Clayton Williams	1	Basketball-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,124.00
10.	Geneene Kinder	1	Cheerleader-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$1,805.00
11.	Madison Kinder	1	Cheerleader-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$1,062.00
12.	Liliana Sanchez	1	Soccer-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$3,611.00
13.	Rehana Seeden Vargas	1	Soccer-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,757.00
14.	Nihara Sedeen	1	Soccer-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,124.00
15.	Ryan Wells	1	Soccer-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$3,611.00
16.	Isias Elon Trujillo Trobos	1	Soccer-Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$2,757.00
17.	Caitlin Schubiger	1	Winter Gender Equity ⁸	03-01-21	\$3,611.00
18.	Leslie Toussaint	1	Wrestling - Winter Sport	03-01-21	\$3,611.00
Total:					\$51,916.00

⁶Fall sport/female – one time seasonal assigned dollar amount for coaching a female varsity sport

⁷Winter gender sport – one time seasonal assigned dollar amount for coaching a boys varsity basketball sport

⁸Winter Gender Equity – assigned dollar amount for female sports

Table 4
FHCHS 2020-21 Spring Sports Seasonal Supplement List

#	Name	# of Sports Coached	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
1.	Anjelica Blum	1	Flag Football-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$3,611.00
2.	Laura Hayden	1	Track & Field-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$3,611.00
3.	Evan Williams	1	Track & Field-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$2,124.00
4.	Kimberly Prisino	1	Volleyball-Spring Sport (b)	01-15-21 & 05-10-21	\$3,611.00
5.	Ashley O'Brien	1	Volleyball-Spring Sport(b)	05-10-21	\$2,124.00
6.	Emma Kapusta	2	Volleyball/Flag Football-Spring	01-15-21 & 05-10-21	\$5,514.00
7.	Ryan Nani Taylor	1	Tennis-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$2,124.00
8.	Liliana Sanchez	1	Tennis-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$3,141.50
10.	Juan A. Galvez	1	Tennis-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$2,410.00
11.	Caitlin Schubiger	1	Weightlifting-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$2,124.00
12.	Earl Miiiken	1	Baseball-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$3,611.00
13.	Josue Guitierrez	1	Baseball-Spring Sport	06-07-21	\$2,757.00
14.	Anjelica Echeverria	1	Flag Football-Spring Sport	05-10-21	\$2,124.00
15.	Maura Withington	1	Track & Field-Spring Sport	05-24-21	\$2,124.00
	Total:				\$41,010.50

ALLEGATION 1

It is alleged that Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden violated School Board Policies, 2.61.3.d.f. Fraud, 3.02.5.c.f.i. Code of Ethics, School Board Administrative Policies and Procedures of the Payroll/Accounting Services, Page-15, paragraphs 2 & 4, The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and the Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association, Appendix B – Supplements, subsection-3, and School District Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12C, Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplement; by listing staff members who did not coach a sport to collect and receive the 2020-21 annual athletic coaches supplement. Staff members who received a supplement later transferred a portion of those funds through a mobile cash app to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as payment.

Per School Board Policy 2.61.3.d.and f., Fraud:

- “3. *Definition: Fraud is a willful or deliberate act or omission by which an individual intends to unlawfully deprive the District through an unauthorized benefit, service, property, or something of value by deception, misrepresentation, or other unethical or unlawful means. Fraud acts include, but are not limited to:*
- d. *Authorizing or receiving compensation for time not worked.*
- f. *Misappropriation of funds or impropriety in handling or reporting of money or financial transactions of the District;”*

Per School Board Policy 3.02.5.c.f.i, Code of Ethics:

- “5. *Ethical Standards*

- c. *Misrepresentation or Falsification – We are committed to candor in our work relationships, providing other Board employees, including supervisors, senior staff, and Board members, with accurate, reliable, and timely information. Employees should exemplify honesty and integrity in the performance of their official duties for the School District. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:*

- f. *Public Funds and Property – We are committed to ensuring that District facilities, equipment, supplies, or other District resources are used for District purposes only. Except for occasional and incidental personal use, we will not tolerate improper use of public resources and will report and reimburse the District for costs associated with personal use. The provisions herein shall not be applicable to community or public use of District facilities pursuant to School Board Policy 7.18 (Community Use of School Facilities). Employees entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to:*

- i. *Failing to use public or school-related funds and School Board property for School District purposes and in a manner specified by School Board Policy, administrative procedures or guidelines or by federal or state laws;*

Per the Policies & Procedures Payroll/Accounting Services Department Manual, Year-Round and Seasonal Supplements, Page-15, 2 & 4 paragraphs state in part:

"The District pays many additional salary items to teachers for the second year as either recurring year-round supplement or a one-time payment. These supplements are negotiated and clearly defined in the CTA contract. They include activities such as team leaders, department grade chairs and club sponsors as well as coaching of district sports teams, which require various certifications including CPR and First Aid. A developed custom process is used for the payment of these items.

The district seasonal supplements are paid three times per year, basically after each sports season completes. They fall into one of the following: Fall, Winter, Spring/Summer. The program contains edits that will not allow entry if an employee does not meet the required qualifications. The schools have a deadline for data entry for the payment of each season. If data is entered by the deadline, the payment is loaded to payroll in a batch process. The schools can still enter after the deadline, and payrolls load any of these residual items during subsequent processing. Once payments have been loaded to payroll, they are not modifiable on the data entry screen."

Per the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and the Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association, Page-146, Appendix B-Supplements, subsection three, state.

1. *“Unless otherwise noted herein, supplements are paid for services/duties performed beyond the regular day. Therefore, employees, excluding High School Athletic Directors, receiving any supplements are to teach or carry a full instructional assignment.*

3. *The parties agree that should the District determine that no employee at a work site is qualified to perform the responsibilities of a particular supplement or if no employee at that worksite wishes to fill the supplement, the District may fill the position with an employee assigned to a different work site or with personnel not in the T-bargaining unit.”*

Per School District Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12C, Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplements.

In order to meet state and local requirements and to set a District-Wide standard of equity, each Principal and his/her designee must follow the guidelines below in evaluating their activity program.

1. *“Supplements are to be paid according to the duties and amounts specified in the Classroom Teacher Association contract. Supplements may not be traded off. However, high schools may trade off unused athletic coach supplements for the purpose of funding the high school assistant basketball and high school boys head lacrosse coach supplements. (Refer to Bulletin # HSP-1963 issued 10/22/2012 for additional information.)*
2. *To receive a supplement for coaching, all coaches are required to have:*
 - a. *Current certification in Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and automated External Defibrillators (AED)*
 - b. *Current certification in First Aid (FA)*
3. *In addition to the above, coaches outside the school system must complete the coach’s application packet, which can be downloaded from the School District Web page at www.palmbeachschools.org/curriculum/*
4. *An individual cannot collect two supplements for the same sport (i.e., cross-country, swimming, tennis, and golf) unless he/she conducts two separate practices and meets/matches are scheduled separately. Additional supplements are paid for additional duties, not for more participants.*

5. *To receive a junior varsity of 9th-grade supplement, the coach must hold practices for the team for a minimum of three weeks and coach the team for a minimum of ten scheduled games for all sports except wrestling, football, and weightlifting. The salary will be reduced by 10% for each game not coached unless there are extenuating circumstances.*
6. *Football and wrestling must have at least three weeks practice and six meets, games, or matches to qualify for a supplement. Weightlifting must have at least three weeks practice and compete in four meets that are sanctioned by the Florida High School Activities Association or the Palm Beach County Athletic Conference."*

WITNESS INTERVIEW[S]

On August 4, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Principal Esther Rivera was conducted at FHCHS in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Rivera" as it relates to the allegation:

Before Rivera's arrival to FHCHS, Athletic Director (AD) Ronald Kotouch provided documentation (athletic coaches list) to the recently retired confidential secretary Lisa Martin showing sports coached. Since Rivera's arrival in 2020, Kotouch provided the coaches list to the new confidential secretary Susana Segura, Segura provided the coaches list to Rivera. In the fall of 2020, Rivera said Kotouch was on personal leave, so she completed the coaches' supplement list for payments.

Kotouch provided Rivera copies of May 14, 2021, May 15, 2021, and May 21, 2021, text message exchanges between himself and math teacher and flag football coach Anjelica Blum. The text message exchanges showed Blum asking Kotouch about math teacher bowling and soccer coach Ryan Wells' status of receiving a supplement for flag football. The text message further shows Kotouch responding to Blum, indicating that Wells admitted that he did not coach flag football and would give the flag football supplement to Blum (**Exhibit 6**).

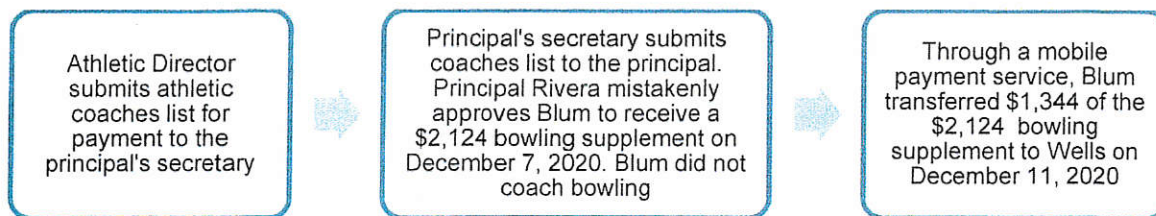
After reviewing the text messages, Rivera had concerns and contacted the District's Employee Labor Relations Office (ELR) and the Area Instructional Superintendent to relay her concerns about the text messages. ELR informed Rivera of two consequential options to address her concerns. Rivera opted to conduct a conference note meeting. On May 21, 2021, the conference note meeting occurred at FHCHS between Rivera, Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd, Kotouch, and Blum. Loyd did not know the particulars; he was only present because he oversees athletics. At the meeting, Rivera asked Blum to explain Wells' flag football coaching responsibilities. Blum said she went to Wells for advice and that Wells was an advisor. Rivera replied, "Only coaches who participated actively with the athletic sports/students and were hired for the season would be able to

receive supplements associated with that sport” (**Exhibit 7**). FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms Principal Rivera did not approve Wells to receive a flag football supplement.

Further, at the meeting, alongside the flag football discussions, Blum voluntarily admitted to Principal Rivera that she received a \$2,124 bowling supplement, did not assist the bowling team, and that she provided the bowling supplement to Wells on December 11, 2020, through a mobile payment service (**Exhibit 8**). Rivera said she is ultimately responsible for approving all supplements payable to athletic coaches and that she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the \$2,124 bowling supplement (**Exhibit 1**). Rivera said Wells assisted the bowling team and should have received the \$2,124 bowling supplement, not Blum.

Investigators Note *Blum attempted to collect a flag football supplement through Wells despite Wells not coaching flag football. In addition, alongside the flag football discussions about Wells, Blum admitted to Principal Rivera during a conference note meeting on May 21, 2021, that she inappropriately received a bowling supplement and did not participate as a bowling coach.*
Note, *Rivera who admitted that she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the Bowling supplement completed the athletic supplement list. Blum transferred the bowling supplement to Wells through a mobile payment service on December 11, 2020. Rivera said Wells should have received the bowling supplement. The FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list confirms that Wells did not receive a bowling supplement and that, per Rivera’s approval, Blum received the \$2,124 bowling supplement on December 7, 2020. See Figure 3, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells.*

Figure-3



Rivera said Wells received two athletic supplements in 2020-21, \$3,611 for the fall female sports supplement and \$3,611 for a head soccer coach supplement. Wells received the fall female sports supplement because he assisted in supervising fall female sports practices and games when several events were occurring on campus simultaneously. FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms Principal Rivera approved Wells to receive a fall female sports supplement and a head soccer coach supplement. (**Exhibit 3**).

On August 26, 2021, the OIG contacted Principal Rivera via email. OIG transcribed Principal Rivera August 26, 2020, email responses in their entirety below (**Exhibit 3**).

OIG, 2020-21 Hayden agreed to assist the soccer program. Shortly after agreeing to support the soccer program, she (Hayden) realized that she could not assist the program due to a conflict of schedule. Nonetheless, Hayden received a wrestling supplement and did not coach wrestling. Hayden said she paid the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to Burk because Burk did all of the paperwork for the soccer program. Did you (Rivera) approve, or were you aware that Hayden transferred the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to Burk for assisting the soccer program?

Principal Rivera, "I am completely unaware of this occurring. I will have to check to see if Ms. Hayden received a stipend for wrestling as the Wrestling Coach was Leslie Toussaint and not Ms. Hayden. I will speak with professional standards as well as my instructional Superintendent about this if this occurred."

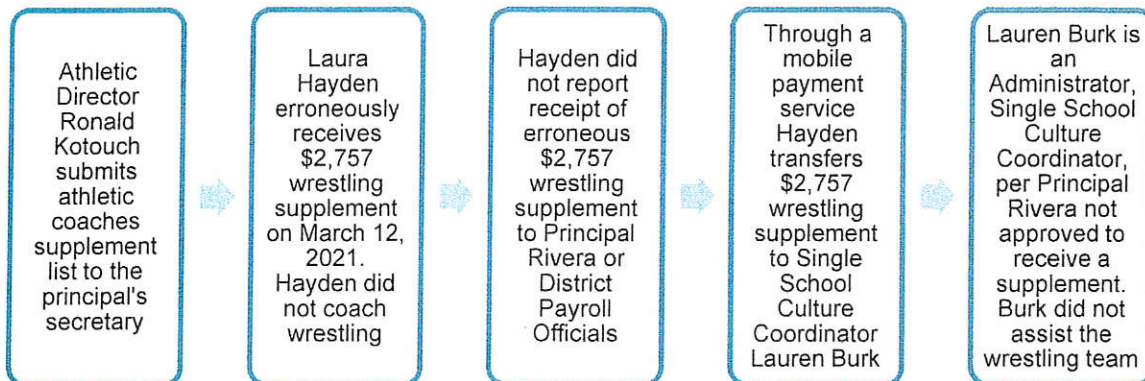
OIG, In addition, the 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement list shows Hayden received a \$2,757 supplement for wrestling.

Principal Rivera, "Thank you for bringing this to my attention. This was an error. I will inform professional standards and my instructional Superintendent of this error. Mr. Leslie Toussaint was the Coach for wrestling and not Ms. Hayden."

OIG, Were you aware that administrators can or cannot receive athletic supplements at the time of the 2020-21 Fall/Spring supplements disbursement to athletic coaches?

Principal Rivera, "I am aware that administrators cannot receive athletic supplements or any other stipend such as club stipends at the time of 2020-2021 fall/spring supplement." [sic] **Figure 4, an inappropriate wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk.**

Figure 4



Rivera said she had instituted new procedural directives to address athletic supplements. Coaches must now provide sign-in forms to demonstrate student participation.

On August 17, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of 11th & 12th Grade Dean and former Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by “Kotouch” as it relates to the allegation:

Kotouch said Math Teacher and flag football Coach Anjelica Blum emailed him in February 2021. Blum asked if it is okay for coach Ryan Wells to receive an assistant flag football coach’s supplement. Kotouch replied, yes, it is okay. Weeks later, he “jokingly” had a conversation with Wells and said, “you are receiving another supplement (flag football), in addition to your bowling and boys soccer stipends.” Wells replied, “No, I am just giving the flag football supplement to Blum and that he (Wells) did not assist the flag football program.”

Kotouch said he did not mention to Blum that Wells was not receiving a flag football supplement. In May 2021, athletic supplements were disbursed; he had a text message conversation with Blum (**Exhibit 6**). During the text message exchange, Blum inquired about the status of Wells receiving a flag football supplement. Kotouch told Blum that Wells was not receiving a flag football supplement because Wells said he did not help the flag football program. Blum said she should have had someone else do the paperwork, implying that Wells assisted with completing flag football paperwork, contrary to Wells’ statement to Kotouch that he did not assist the flag football program. Blum said she was paying for all these expenses (hotels, gas) for tournaments and that she was driving to an all-star flag-football tournament in Ocala, Florida, with female flag football players. Kotouch told Blum, “Okay, this is done. You tried to play the system and get an extra stipend. Not cool, but it’s gotta stop now.” Blum said, “I don’t know why you’re coming at me. If this was an issue, you should have told me before the season, not after” (**Exhibit 2**).

Kotouch said the flag football tournament in Ocala, Florida, was not a District sanctioned event and had nothing to do with FHCHS. Kotouch reported this information to Principal Rivera, and on May 21, 2021, Principal Rivera conducted a conference note meeting between himself, Blum, and Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd (**Exhibit 7**).

Aside from the Blum and Kotouch discussions regarding flag football, on September 8, 2021, the OIG contacted Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch via email regarding Spanish/Avid Teacher, cross-country/track & field coach Laura Hayden. OIG transcribed AD Kotouch’s September 8, 2021, email responses in their entirety below (**Exhibit 4**):

***OIG.** Did the AD submit the coach's names to the Principal for payment approval?*

***AD Kotouch.** Coach's names are submitted to the Principal's secretary prior to being put into the system for payment.*

***OIG**, Do head coaches submit agenda(s) or names of assistant coaches who assisted the sports program to your office?*

***AD Kotouch**, Coaches, notified me of who their assistant coaches would be and whether or not they would be a volunteer or paid. From there, we (AP over Athletics) would do our diligence to ensure that volunteer coaches were approved to be volunteers and paid coaches had fulfilled their requirements to coach and receive a stipend. I never micromanaged anyone from there. If the head coach of the program identified someone as an assistant, I went off their word that the person identified as an assistant coach was fulfilling their duties to best help that particular program.*

***OIG**, Did wrestling Coach Leslie Toussaint submit an agenda to your office that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team?*

***AD Kotouch**, There was not an agenda submitted from Coach Leslie Toussaint that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team. This was also never communicated by me to the principals secretary that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team. I will send a google sheet that was shared with the Principal's secretary identifying who should be getting a winter stipends for 2020-21. [sic]*

On September 9, 2021, Kotouch provided the OIG a spreadsheet showing coaches who coached a sport during the winter sports season, 2020 (**Exhibit 9**). The spreadsheet was submitted to the Principal's secretary for the Principal to review and approve. The spreadsheet did not show Laura Hayden as an assistant wrestling coach.

On September 10, 2021, Kotouch provided the OIG an email showing that Ryan Wells told him that Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk would assist the soccer program by handling paperwork and collecting athletic packets and insurance (**Exhibit 10**).

On August 17, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Loyd" as it relates to the allegation:

Loyd said he was not initially aware of the allegations regarding athletic supplements. At a conference note meeting on May 21, 2021, he became aware of the allegations between Principal Esther Rivera, Athletic Director (AD) Ronald Kotouch, and Math Teacher Anjelica Blum. The OIG provided Loyd a copy of a May 21, 2021 conference note meeting minutes. Loyd confirmed his presence during the conference note meeting (**Exhibit 7**).

At the meeting, Math Teacher Anjelica Blum alleged that coaches solicited other coaches who did not coach a seasonal athletic sport to be listed as a coach to receive an athletic

supplement. The coaches who did not coach a sport transferred the supplement to Math Teacher Ryan Wells and Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk.

Blum further said Laura Hayden had given Burk or Wells an inappropriate supplement. Blum also mentioned that Principal Rivera and AD Kotouch were aware and approved. In addition, Ryan Nani allegedly received supplement(s) for sports not coached.

Investigators Note *Blum's statement that the Principal and the AD knew and agreed with Hayden's decision to give Wells or Burk an inappropriate supplement contradicts the Principal's August 26, 2021 email response statement (Exhibit 3).*

Investigators Note *Principal Rivera; August 26, 2021 email further shows that Ryan Nani assisted all sports programs when AD Kotouch was away on personal leave (Exhibit 3). On October 25, 2021, OIG interviewed PE Teacher, Assistant Athletic Director (AAD), and 11th & 12th-grade Dean Ryan Nani. Nani said he had been the (AAD) at FHCHS since he arrived in 2017 and is currently the AAD. In 2020-21, he coached two seasonal sports. Junior varsity girls' basketball is a winter sport and tennis a spring sport; He said he has never received a supplement for a sport not coached.*

On September 9-10, 2021, Loyd provided the OIG a spreadsheet showing that the wrestling program had two vacant assistant wrestling coaches' positions open in the 2020-21 school year (Exhibit 11).

Investigators Note *Despite the spreadsheet provided by Loyd showing two vacant wrestling positions. Hayden erroneously received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement on March 12, 2021, and did not coach wrestling.*

On August 18, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Math Teacher Flag Football Coach Anjelica Blum was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Blum" as it relates to the allegation:

Blum said she received a bowling supplement and did not coach bowling. Math Teacher Ryan Wells and Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk requested Blum transfer the \$2,124 bowling supplement to Wells through a mobile payment service. Blum transferred \$1,344 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement through a mobile payment service to Wells on December 11, 2020 (Exhibit 8). Blum said \$780 of \$2,124 bowling supplement was paid in federal taxes (Exhibit 12).

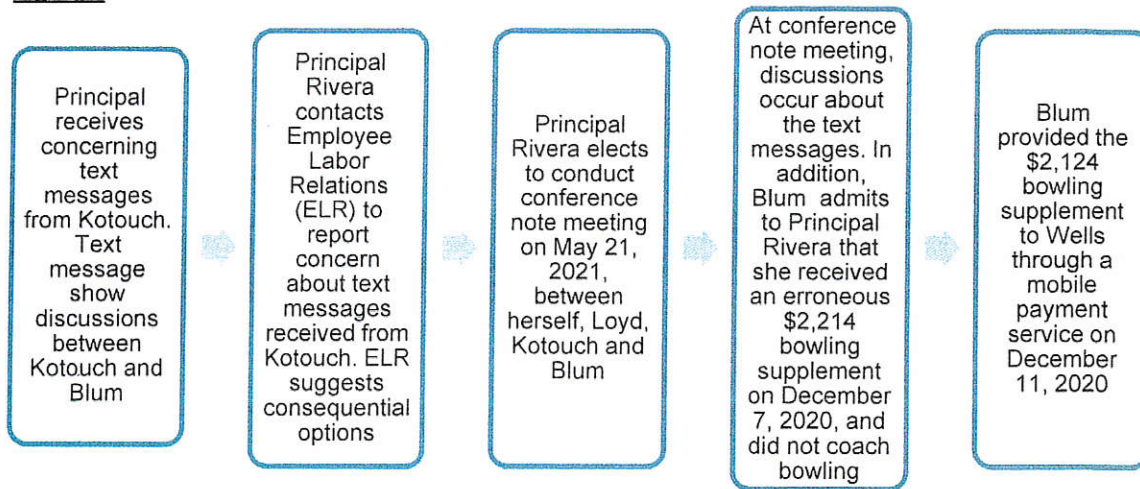
Investigators Note *Principal Rivera said she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the \$2,124 bowling supplement.*

Blum said that Wells requested the bowling supplement to provide to Burk. According to Blum the bowling program has two supplements payable to coaches. The OIG informed

and showed Blum the FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list showing that bowling had one supplement of \$2,124 and that she received it on December 7, 2020 (**Exhibit 1**). Blum said she assumed there were two bowling supplements as opposed to one bowling supplement.

Investigators Note Rivera said she contacted the District's ELR Office to relay her concerns about text messages received from Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch (text message exchanges between Blum and Kotouch). Per Rivera, ELR provided consequential options. Riviera elected to conduct a conference note meeting on May 21, 2021, between herself, Loyd, Kotouch, and Blum. The conference meeting minutes show that Blum voluntarily admitted to Principal Rivera that she received the one bowling supplement, did not assist the bowling program and, gave the bowling supplement to Wells through a mobile payment service. At the time of the mobile transaction between Blum and Wells, Principal Rivera was not aware. **See Figure 5, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells.**

Figure 5



On October 25, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Dean, Physical Education Teacher, Assistant Athletic Director (AAD), basketball and tennis coach Ryan Nani was conducted at District's Headquarters Inspector General's Office (C-310) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Nani" as it relates to the allegation:

Nani said he had been the Assistant Athletic Director (AAD) since he arrived at FHCHS and before Principal Esther Rivera's arrival to FHCHS in 2019. Former Principal Mary Stratos assigned him as the AAD. He assists the athletic director in all work-related capacities such as supervising student-athletes, liaison between athletic director/teachers, field/sports set-up, and updating max-prep program (maintains student athlete statistics) of approved sports.

In 2020-21, along with his duties as the AAD, he coached two sports, a winter sport (basketball) and a spring sport (tennis). Nani said he did not receive any supplements for a sport that he did not coach and that no coach has ever asked him to receive a supplement for a sport that he did not coach and give that supplement to other coaches Ryan Wells Laura Burk, or Laura Hayden.

Nani said he did not review or provide the 2020-21 coaches' supplement list to the Principal for payment approval that is the responsibility of the athletic director.

SUBJECT INTERVIEWS

On August 17, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Spanish Teacher/Avid Coordinator/Cross Country Coach Laura Hayden was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Hayden" as it relates to the allegation:

Cross-country head coach Hayden said Ryan Wells asked her to complete fundraising paperwork, physicals, and athletic eligibility packets for the soccer program. At the time, she agreed to assist the soccer program. About a week later, she realized that the two sports seasons (cross-country/soccer) overlapped, and she could not help Wells with the soccer program. Wells suggested that Single School Culture Lauren Burk assists with the soccer program in her place. Hayden and Wells agreed that Burk would assist Wells with the soccer program because Burk completed the soccer program's paperwork for the 2019-20 soccer season.

Hayden admitted receiving a \$2,757 wrestling supplement but did not coach wrestling (**Exhibits 1 & 9**). FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplements List confirms that Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement on March 12, 2021, and not a soccer supplement (**Exhibit 1**). Hayden said that because Burk assisted the soccer team, she gave Burk the \$2,757 wrestling supplement.

***Investigators Note** Hayden did not confer with the Principal or District payroll officials to inform them about the inappropriate wrestling supplement.*

*Hayden then facilitated a mobile payment service transaction for \$1,800, a portion of the \$2,757 she received for the wrestling supplement, to Lauren Burk (**Exhibit 5**).*

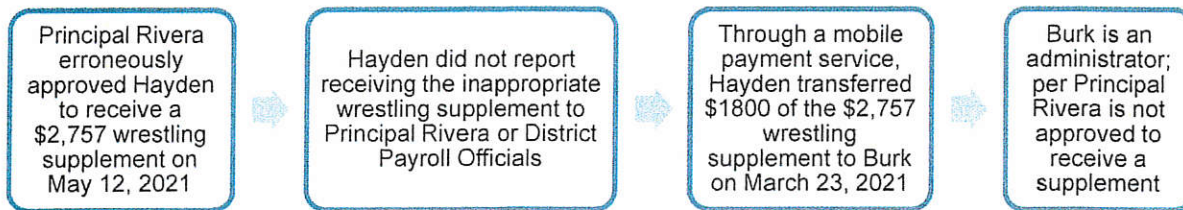
Hayden gave the wrestling supplement to Burk, unbeknownst that Burk was not eligible to receive a supplement. Per the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the Single School Culture Coordinator position is considered an administrator, and administrators cannot receive supplements. Hayden indicated that if she had known that administrators could not receive supplements, she would not have given the supplement to Burk. On August 17, 2021, Hayden provided the OIG a mobile payment receipt showing \$1,800

was sent to Burk on March 23, 2021. This payment was for the wrestling supplement (**Exhibit 5**).

Investigators Note Principal Rivera’s August 26, 2021, email response shows that administrators cannot receive a supplement (**Exhibit 3**). FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list confirms that Rivera disapproved of Burk receiving a supplement.

*Hayden erroneously received a wrestling supplement and did not coach wrestling. Moving forward, despite Burk not being approved to receive a supplement per Principal Rivera, Hayden gave the inappropriate wrestling supplement to Burk. Hayden did not report receiving an inappropriate wrestling supplement to Principal Rivera or District payroll officials (**Exhibit 5**). **See Figure 6, an inappropriate wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk.***

Figure-6



On August 17, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by “Burk” as it relates to the allegation:

Burk denied that she and math teacher Ryan Wells listed individuals who did not coach a sport to receive an assistant coaches’ supplement. Burk said she had coached multiple sports at FHCHS over the past ten years, such as tennis, soccer, and bowling, and that she has never had a problem with receiving a supplement.

In 2019-20, she was a teacher and co-coached bowling and soccer with math teacher/head soccer coach Ryan Wells (**Exhibit 13**). Burk said there was only one stipend for bowling; she coached the girls, and Wells coached the boys. They both agreed to share the one bowling stipend.

In 2019-20, soccer had more than one stipend; therefore, she received an assistant soccer coach stipend. She assisted the soccer program, completed athletic eligibility packets, insurance forms, student supervision, uniform inventory, and attended practices/games. After becoming the Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020, she was unsure if she would receive an athletic stipend moving forward.

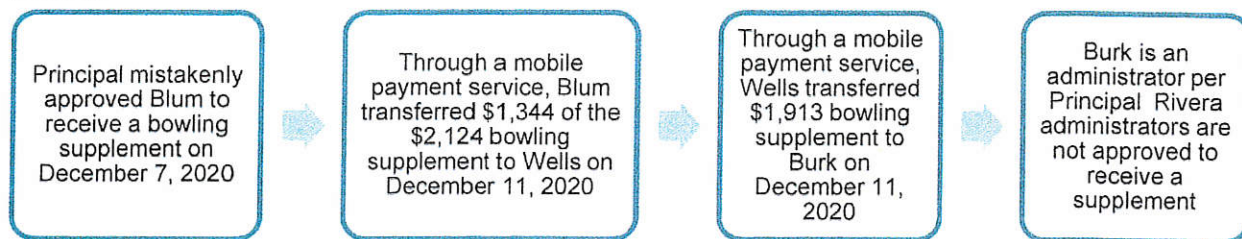
The following school year, in 2020-21, she again co-coached bowling with Wells and expected to share the bowling stipend they agreed for prior years.

Burk advised Wells that there might be an “additional bowling supplement,” they may not have to share the one bowling supplement.

Investigators Note FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List shows one bowling supplement received by Anjelica Blum (**Exhibit 1**). Blum admitted she provided a portion of the money she received for the bowling supplement to Ryan Wells through a mobile payment service on December 11, 2020 (**Exhibit 8**).

In turn, Wells provided Burk \$1,913 for the bowling supplement on December 11, 2020, ten months ago (**Exhibit 2**). District personnel records show that Burk was promoted from a teacher to the Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020, approximately six months before the official Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) bowling season began in August (**Exhibit 14**). Per the Principal's August 26, 2021 email reply, administrators are not eligible to receive a supplement (**Exhibit 3**). **See Figure 7, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells to Burk.**

Figure-7



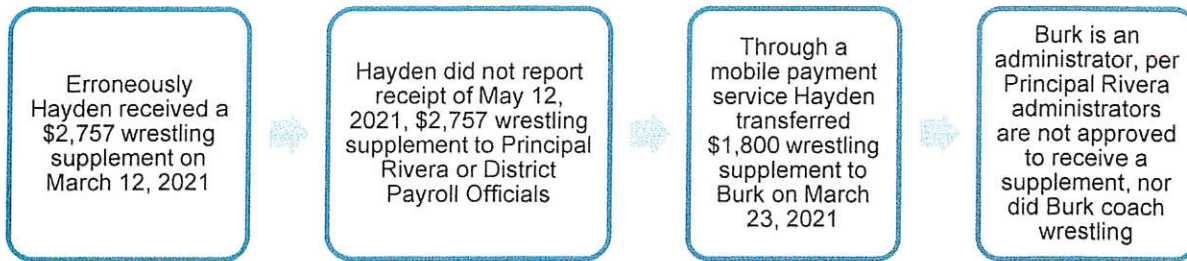
Regarding soccer in 2020-21, the arrangement for Burk to assist Wells.

Investigators Note Burk became the Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020, approximately eight months before the official FHSAA soccer season started in October (**Exhibit 14**).

Hayden said she received the supplement for soccer on March 12, 2021, and transferred the funds to her (Burk) through a mobile payment service on March 23, 2021. Thirteen months after, Burk became the Single School Culture Coordinator (**Exhibits 5 & 14**). The FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplements List shows Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement, **not** a soccer supplement (**Exhibit 1**).

Burk received two unofficial supplements from Hayden and Wells that were not approved by Principal Rivera **See Figure 8, an inappropriate-wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk.**

Figure-8



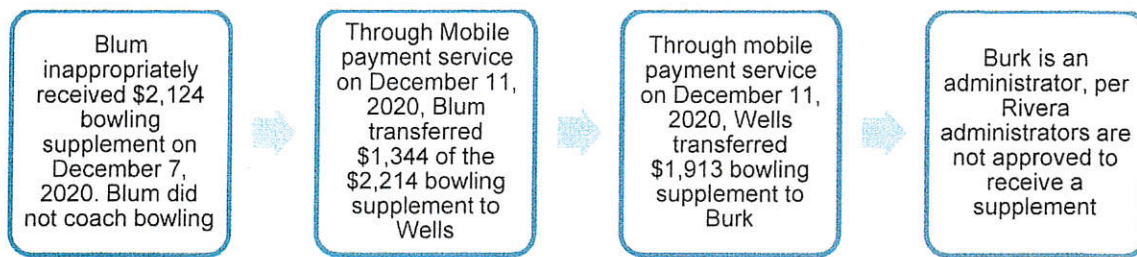
On August 18, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Math Teacher Bowling/Soccer Coach Ryan Wells was conducted at Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by “Wells” as it relates to the allegation:

In the school year 2019-20, he and Lauren Burk coached bowling. At the time, they were unaware that there was only one bowling supplement. The bowling supplement went to Burk. The Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Association (CTA) shows one high school bowling supplement. FHCHS 2019-20 Seasonal Supplements List shows one bowling supplement and Burk received it. **(Exhibit 13)**. He and Burk attended every bowling practice and game. Wells provided the OIG documentation to demonstrate participation, such as email exchanges with the District bowling officials, attending district-bowling meetings, signatures on bowling scorecards, credit card transactions from the bowling alleys, and completing fundraising forms **(Exhibit 15)**.

In 2020-21, Wells and Burk agreed to coach bowling, understanding that there was only one supplement. They decided to share it. The FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List shows one supplement for bowling. Anjelica Blum received the bowling supplement and did not coach bowling **(Exhibit 1)**. Blum provided \$1,344 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement to Wells through a mobile payment service on December 11, 2020 **(Exhibit 8)**. Wells forwarded the bowling supplement he received from Blum to his mother, a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). His mother determined that \$1,344 was the correct amount after federal taxes were taken.

Burk became an administrator Single School Culture Coordinator and attended all bowling practices and games.

Investigators Note Wells then transferred most of ((or) a portion of) the bowling supplement he received from Blum to Burk on December 11, 2020, ten months after Burk was promoted to Single School Culture Coordinator **(Exhibits 2 & 14)**. Principal Rivera said she knew Burk assisted the bowling program but was not aware of Wells transferring the bowling supplement he received from Blum through a mobile payment service and transferring the same supplement to Burk through a mobile payment service. Rivera completed the athletic supplements list and mistakenly approved Blum to receive the bowling supplement. However, Rivera said administrators are not eligible to receive supplements. **See Figure 9, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells to Burk.**

Figure 9

Wells confirmed he asked Spanish Teacher and cross-country coach Laura Hayden to be the assistant soccer coach, and she agreed. When Hayden realized cross-country overlapped with soccer, Hayden told Wells that she could not assist the soccer program because she conducts tutoring after school and the cross-country schedule. Therefore, Wells asked Burk to help, knowing that she would not be paid a soccer coach stipend.

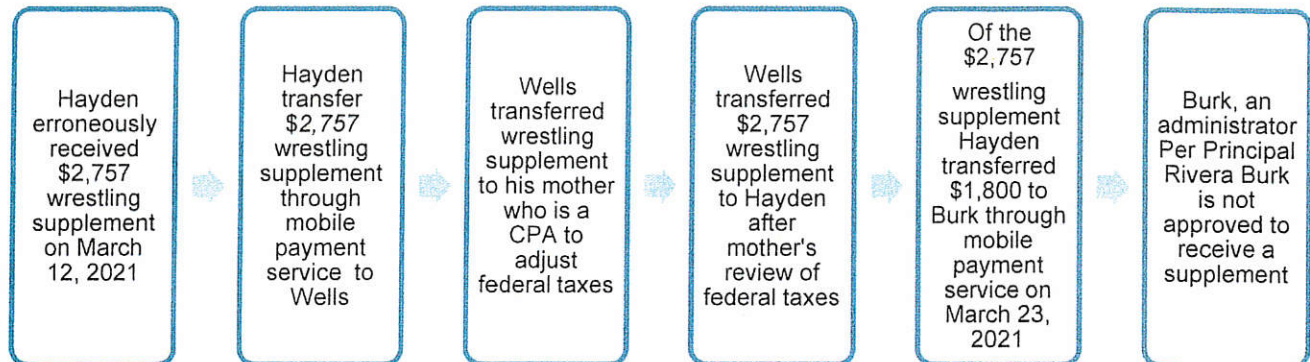
FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List shows that Principal Rivera did not approve Burk to receive supplements (**Exhibit 1**). Burk assisted the soccer team by completing the same duties (e.g., fundraising, senior night, bus forms, physicals, tracking students) that she performed as a teacher/assistant soccer coach in 2019-20. Kotouch said Wells informed him that Burk assisted the soccer program (**Exhibits 10 & 16**).

At year's end, Hayden was on record as the assistant wrestling coach, Hayden gave Burk the wrestling supplement through a mobile payment service (**Exhibit 5**). Hayden did not coach wrestling. Hayden erroneously received a wrestling supplement and did not coach wrestling. Wells said Hayden forwarded the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to him. In turn, he provided the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to his CPA mother to ensure that the appropriate federal taxes were taken. Afterward, Wells transferred \$1,913 of the \$2,757 wrestling supplement through a mobile payment service from Hayden to Burk.

Investigators Note: *Principal Rivera, August 26, 2021, email reply shows that she was unaware of Hayden receiving a wrestling supplement and transferring the wrestling supplement to Burk through a mobile payment service on March 23, 2021 (Exhibits 3 & 5). FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement, not a soccer supplement (Exhibit 1). See Figure 10, an inappropriate wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk.*

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Figure 10



RECORDS ANALYSIS

- Exhibit 1: FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List
- Exhibit 2: Payment transaction receipt between R. Wells & L. Burk
- Exhibit 3: Principal E. Rivera 08-26-21, email response
- Exhibit 4: Kotouch 09-08-21, email response
- Exhibit 5: Payment transaction receipt between L. Hayden & L. Burk
- Exhibit 6: Text Message between R. Kotouch & A. Blum (May 14-15-21, 2021)
- Exhibit 7: 05-21-21, Conference Notes Between Rivera, Loyd, Kotouch, Blum
- Exhibit 8: Payment transaction receipt between R. Wells & A. Blum
- Exhibit 9: Kotouch 09-09-21, email response
- Exhibit 10: Kotouch 09-10-21, email response
- Exhibit 11: Loyd September 9-10, 2021, email response
- Exhibit 12: Blum 10-21-21, email response
- Exhibit 13: FHCHS 2019-20 Seasonal Supplement List
- Exhibit 14: District PeopleSoft Personnel Record, L. Burk
- Exhibit 15: FHCHS Bowling Team
- Exhibit 16: R. Wells 08-30-21, email response
- Exhibit 17: R. Wells 01-11-22 email reply from 20-day letter
- Exhibit 18: L. Hayden 01-14-22 email reply from 20-day letter
- Exhibit 19: E. Rivera 01-14-22 email reply from 20-day letter
- Exhibit 20: L. Burk 01-14-22 email reply from 20-day letter

From August 5, 2021, through September 17, 2021, OIG staff reviewed the above-listed documents provided by witnesses. The review disclosed the following:

FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list shows various supplements received for Anjelica Blum, Ryan Wells, Laura Hayden, and other coaches (**See Tables 5-7**). Lauren Burk did not receive a supplement(s) in 2020-21 (**Exhibit 1**).

(Table 5) Anjelica Blum Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Bowling	12-07-20	\$2,124
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Female Sports 9 th Grade	03-01-21	\$2,124
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Flag-Football	05-10-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$7,859.00

The Principal confirmed that she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the bowling supplement on December 7, 2020.

(Table 6) Ryan Wells Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Ryan Wells	2020-21	Fall Girls Sport	12-07-20	\$3,611
Ryan Wells	2020-21	Soccer	03-01-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$7,222.00

The Principal confirmed that Wells should have received a bowling supplement, and not Blum, in addition to his two supplements received, fall girls sport and soccer. Principal Rivera said Wells received the fall girls sport supplement because he assisted in supervising fall female sports practices and games when several events were occurring on campus simultaneously.

(Table 7) Laura Hayden Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Cross Country (g)	12-07-21	\$2,410
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Wrestling (g)	03-12-21	\$2,757
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Track & field (g)	05-10-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$8,878.00

Hayden was not the wrestling coach and should not have received a wrestling supplement. The Principal admits that she completed the athletic supplements list and that it was an error that Hayden received the wrestling supplement. Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch said he did not approve Hayden to receive a wrestling supplement, nor did the wrestling coach request Hayden to coach the wrestling team.

On August 18, 2021, Wells provided the OIG a mobile payment receipt showing that Wells transferred \$1913 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement originally paid to Blum on December 7, 2020, to Burk on December 11, 2020 (**Exhibit 2**).

Principal Rivera's August 26, 2021 email response shows that teacher Ryan Nani assisted the FHCHS sports programs while Kotouch was away on personal leave. Anjelica Blum received a bowling supplement mistakenly and transferred part of the bowling supplement to Ryan Wells through a mobile payment service. Rivera's email further confirmed that Laura Hayden inappropriately received a wrestling supplement and transferred part of the supplement to Lauren Burk through a mobile payment service. Burk did not coach wrestling. Hayden said she gave Burk the wrestling

supplement because Burk assisted the soccer program with Wells (**Exhibit 3**).

Kotouch provided the OIG an email response on September 8, 2021, showing Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) process for reviewing and submitting athletic coaches' seasonal supplements for payment approval (**Exhibit 4**).

Hayden provided the OIG a mobile payment service receipt showing she transferred \$1,800 of the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to Burk on March 23, 2021 (**Exhibit 5**).

Principal Rivera provided the OIG text messages between Anjelica Blum and Athletic Director (AD) Ronald Kotouch, showing that Blum asked Kotouch about Wells receiving an assistant flag football supplement. Kotouch told Blum that Wells could not receive a flag football supplement because he did not participate in flag football (**Exhibit 6**). FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Wells did not receive a flag football supplement.

Rivera provided the OIG conference notes minutes between herself, Loyd, Kotouch, and Blum on June 8, 2021. The conference notes addressed Blum's inquiry about Wells receiving a flag football supplement and Blum stating she did not coach bowling and still received a bowling supplement. Blum gave the bowling supplement to Wells. (**Exhibit 7**).

Wells provided the OIG a mobile payment receipt showing that Blum transferred part of the bowling supplement to Wells, \$1,344, on December 11, 2020 (**Exhibit 8**).

Kotouch provided the OIG an email response on September 9, 2021, showing the FHCHS Winter coaches supplement spreadsheet, and confirmed Hayden was not a wrestling coach (**Exhibit 9**).

Kotouch provided the OIG an email response on September 10, 2021, demonstrating that Wells informed him that Burk assisted the soccer program (**Exhibit 10**).

Loyd provided the OIG an email response on September 9-10, 2021, containing a fall supplements spreadsheet showing two vacant wrestling coaches' positions in 2020-21 (**Exhibit 11**).

FHCHS 2019-20 seasonal supplement list shows total supplements received for teacher Lauren Burk. Burk received a \$2,124 bowling supplement on December 9, 2019, and a \$2,124 soccer supplement on March 16, 2020. The soccer supplement Burk received in March 2020 is

one month after her promotion to Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020. The total athletic supplement Burk received in 2019-20 was \$4,248 (**Exhibit 13**).

District PeopleSoft Personnel Records show that Burk was promoted to Single School Culture Coordinator on February 20, 2020 (**Exhibit 14**).

On August 5, 2021, Principal Rivera provided the OIG Bowling photos to demonstrate that FHCHS Bowling Team participated in District sanctioned events. Burk assisted the bowling team with fundraising, senior night, bus forms, physicals, and tracking of students (**Exhibit 15**).

Wells provided the OIG an email response on August 30, 2021, stating that Burk assisted FHCHS bowling and soccer programs (**Exhibit 16**).

Wells January 11, 2020, email reply from the 20-day letter emailed to him from OIG on December 7, 2021 (**Exhibit 17**).

CONCLUSION

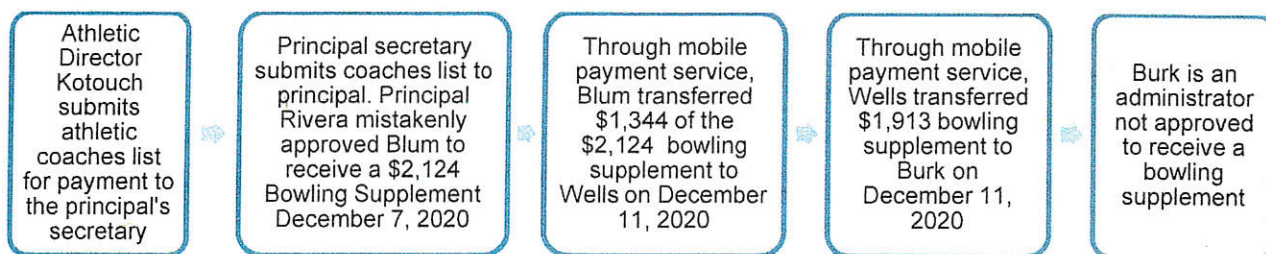
It is alleged that Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk, and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden violated 2.61.3.d.f Fraud, 3.02.5.c.f.i Code of Ethics, School Board Administrative Policies and Procedures Payroll/Accounting Services, Page-15, paragraphs 2 & 4, The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida, and the Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Associations, Appendix B-Supplements, subsection-3, and School Bulletin #P-14495-CLS/K12, Guides for Club Supplements. In that, staff that did not coach a sport collected and received 2020-21 annual athletic coaches' supplements. The staff who received a supplement despite not coaching did not return the supplement but instead transferred a portion of those funds through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as payment, despite Wells and Burk not being authorized as coaches.

During the course of the investigation, Senior Investigator Robert Sheppard discovered information indicating that Hayden, Burk, and Wells did violate, 2.61 Fraud, 3.02 Code of Ethics, School Board Administrative Policies and Procedures Payroll/Accounting Services, The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida, and the Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers Associations, Appendix B-Supplements, subsections (1)(2), and #P14495-CLS/K12 Guidelines for Club and Sports Supplements. In that, staff did not coach a sport collected and received 2020-21 annual athletic coaches' supplements. The staff who received a supplement despite not coaching did not return the supplement but instead transferred a portion of those funds through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as payment.

Principal Esther Rivera said Athletic Director (AD) Ronald Kotouch reported concerns regarding Anjelica Blum. Principal Rivera contacted the District's Employee Labor Relations (ELR) Offices and relayed the same reported concerns. Per ELR's consequential options, Principal Rivera conducted a conference meeting on May 21, 2021, with Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd, Kotouch, and Blum. At the conference meeting, Blum admitted that she received a bowling supplement and did not coach bowling (**Exhibit 7**). Blum further admitted that she transferred the bowling supplement to Wells on December 11, 2020. Principal Rivera admitted that she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the \$2,124 assistant coaches bowling supplement. Rivera said Ryan Wells should have received the bowling supplement, not Blum, and that she was unaware that Blum transferred the bowling supplement to Wells through a mobile payment service.

Wells said his mother Certified Public Accountant (CPA), calculated the federal taxes to be taken from the \$2,124 bowling supplement. Wells received \$1,344 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement from Blum via a mobile payment service on December 11, 2020, and transferred \$1,913 to Lauren Burk (bowling supplement) on the same day through a mobile payment service (**Exhibits 2 & 8**). Lauren Burk became an administrator Single School Culture Coordinator in February 2020, six months before the official bowling season, and was not eligible to receive a 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement under the terms of the CTA collective bargaining agreement per Principal Rivera. The 2020-21 FHCHS Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Principal Rivera disapproved of Burk receiving a bowling supplement (**Exhibit 1**). However, despite Burk not being approved by Principal Rivera to receive a bowling supplement, Wells provided Burk the supplement through a mobile payment service (**Exhibit 12**). See Figure 11, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Blum to Wells to Burk.

Figure 11



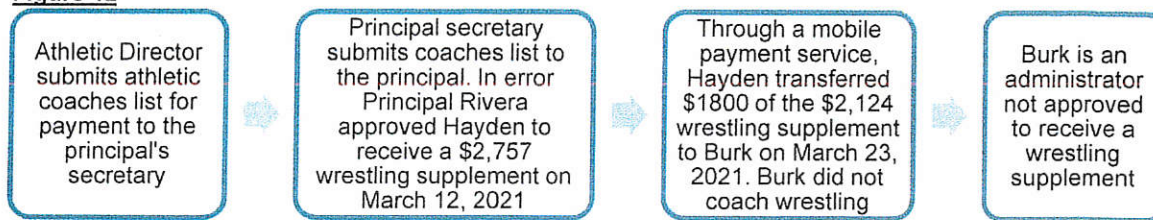
Hayden is the cross-country head coach. In error, Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement on March 12, 2021. Hayden was not the wrestling coach (**Exhibits 1 & 3**). Principal Rivera and Kotouch said Leslie Toussaint was the wrestling coach, and Toussaint did not submit documentation on behalf of Hayden as an assistant wrestling coach (**Exhibit 4**). FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Toussaint was the wrestling coach.

On March 23, 2021, Hayden facilitated a mobile payment transaction and transferred the wrestling supplement to Burk. Burk was not eligible for an assistant coach's supplement due to her position as an administrator, nor did Burk perform the duties of the wrestling

coach. The transaction receipt between Hayden and Burk shows a photo of Hayden and comments stating, "The best wrestling coach out there." (**Exhibit 5**).

Hayden said that if she were aware that Burk was an administrator, she would not have transferred the wrestling supplement to Burk. Hayden was not the approved wrestling coach, and the wrestling supplement she received was an error. Hayden did not inform the Principal or District payroll officials about the wrestling supplement. Hayden knowingly transferred the inappropriate wrestling supplement she received to Burk, who was not eligible to receive a supplement, nor did Burk coach wrestling (**Exhibit 5**). **See Figure 12, an inappropriate wrestling supplement from Hayden to Burk**

Figure 12



Burk is an administrator whom Principal Rivera did not approve to receive an athletic supplement. However, Burk assisted the bowling and soccer programs. The Collective Bargaining Agreement between the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida and The Teachers Association, Appendix-B states in part, "District may fill the position with an employee assigned to a different work site or with personnel not in the T-bargaining unit." Principal Rivera said she was aware of Burk assisting the bowling program but was not aware of Burk assisting the soccer program. FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list shows Principal Rivera did not approve Burk to receive a bowling or soccer supplement. However, despite Principal Rivera's disapproval of Burk receiving a bowling or soccer supplement, Burk received two unofficial supplement payments for bowling and soccer through a mobile payment service from Wells and Hayden.

Hayden and Wells did not inform Principal Rivera about the personal financial transactions to Burk, nor did they notify District officials of the inappropriate supplements received from the District payroll department. District personnel records further show that Hayden, Burk, and Wells reside at the same residence and that Burk and Wells are in a relationship. District Code of Ethics Policy 3.02.4.g, states in part, "each employee agrees and pledges to avoid conflicts of interest or any appearance of impropriety."

Based on the documentation reviewed and testimony obtained, OIG staff determined there was sufficient evidence to prove that Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Lauren Burk, and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden enlisted staff members that did not coach a sport to collect and receive the 2020-21 annual athletic coaches supplement. Staff members who received a supplement transferred a portion of those funds through a mobile payment service to Mr. Wells and Ms. Burk as a payment thus, the Allegation was **Substantiated**.

ALLEGATION 2

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Principal Esther Rivera violated Florida Statute 1012.28(1) and (3) Public School Personnel, Duties of School Principals, and School Board Policy, 1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals, by erroneously approving athletic assistant coaches' supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sports, thus unintentionally enabling staff to receive supplements.

Per Florida Statutes 1012.28(1) and (3), Public School Personnel; Duties of School Principals:

- "1. Public school principals shall supervise public school personnel as the District school board determines necessary.*
- 3. Each school principal is responsible for the performance of all personnel employed by the district school board and assigned to the school to which the Principal is assigned. The school principal faithfully and effectively apply the personnel evaluation system approved pursuant to s.1012.34."*

Per School Board Policy 1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals:

- "1. The Principals' responsibilities and duties are as stated in the appropriate federal laws and rules, Florida statutes, state board of education rules, and school board policies, and as delegated herein. The Principal shall be the administrative and supervisory instructional leaders of the school, and shall be responsible for the policies of the school board as directed by the superintendent.*
- 2. The Principal shall assume responsibility for the leadership of the school staff by providing guidance and assistance in the implementation of the District's curriculum. The management of the school plant and of the financial affairs of the school shall be among the prime responsibilities of the Principal."*

SUBJECT INTERVIEW

On August 4, 2021, a sworn recorded interview of Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Principal Esther Rivera was conducted at FHCHS in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Rivera" as it relates to the allegation:

Principal Rivera admitted that she completed and approved the 2020-21 athletic supplements list payable to athletic coaches. Rivera erroneously approved Math Teacher, flag football coach Anjelica Blum to receive a \$2,124 bowling supplement on December

7, 2020; Blum did not coach bowling. FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Blum received a bowling supplement on December 7, 2020 (**Exhibit 1**).

Blum did not initially inform Principal Rivera or District payroll officials about the inappropriate bowling supplement. She informed Principal Rivera approximately six months after, on May 21, 2021, during a conference note meeting between Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch and Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd regarding another supplements-related incident (**Exhibit 7**).

Moving forward, Blum transferred the \$1,344 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement to Math Teacher bowling and soccer coach Ryan Wells on December 11, 2020, through a mobile payment service (**Exhibit 8**). In turn, Wells transferred \$1,913 of the bowling supplement on December 11, 2020, through a mobile payment service to administrator Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk (**Exhibit 5**).

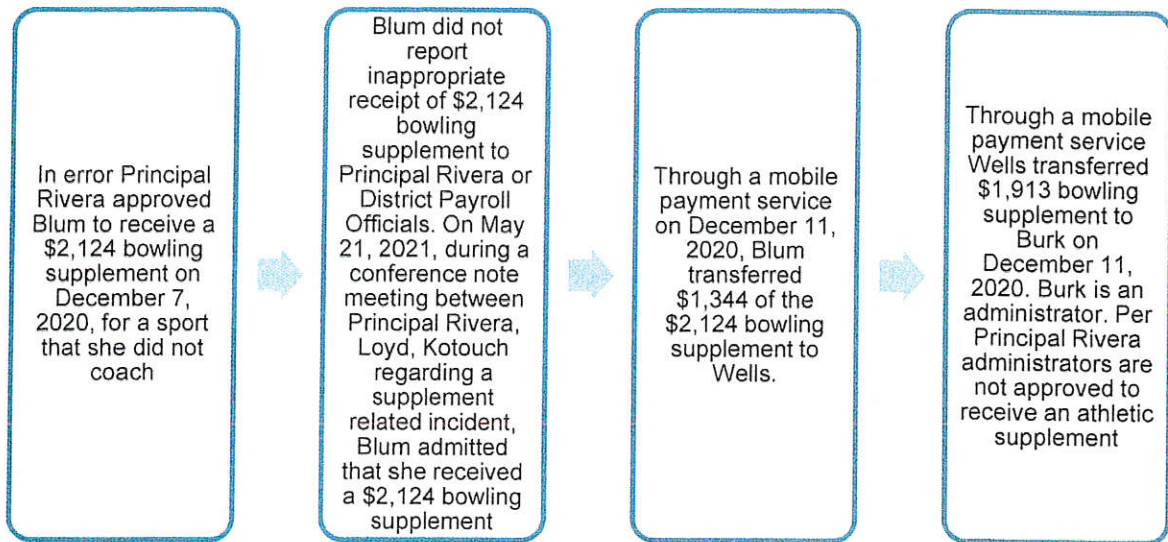
***Investigator Note** Burk has been an administrator, Single School Culture Coordinator since February 2020. Principal Rivera said administrators are not approved to receive an athletic supplement. (**Exhibit 3**).*

Principal Rivera said she was aware that Burk assisted the bowling program with Wells. FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List confirms that Principal Rivera did not approve Burk to receive a bowling supplement and that Blum received the bowling supplement on December 7, 2020. Blum did not coach bowling.

*Blum transferred the inappropriate bowling supplement to Wells on December 11, 2020, and Wells transferred the same inappropriate bowling supplement to Burk on December 11, 2020. **See Figure 13, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Rivera to Blum to Wells to Burk.***

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Figure 13



Burk ultimately received a bowling supplement through Principal Rivera's erroneous approval of Blum receiving a bowling supplement (Exhibit 1).

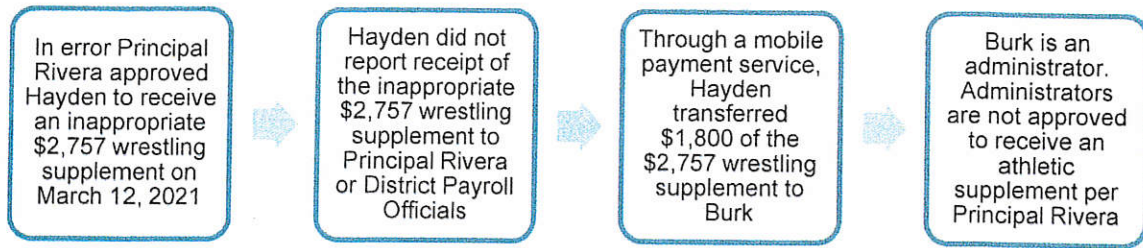
Spanish, Avid, Teacher cross-country, and track & field coach Laura Hayden received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement. Leslie Toussaint was the head wrestling coach. Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch said he did not receive any documentation or verbal requests from Toussaint to list Hayden as an assistant wrestling coach (**Exhibits 3 & 4**). Principal Rivera said she is responsible for approving athletic supplements payable to athletic coaches.

Investigator Note On March 12, 2021, Hayden erroneously received a \$2,757 wrestling supplement. The FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement Lists confirm that Hayden received an inappropriate wrestling supplement. Hayden did not coach wrestling.

Hayden did not inform Principal Rivera or District payroll officials about the inappropriate wrestling supplement. Hayden transferred the wrestling supplement through a mobile payment service to Burk on March 23, 2021. See Figure 14, an inappropriate bowling supplement from Principal Rivera to Hayden to Burk

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Figure 14



Burk did not coach wrestling; however, Burk ultimately received a wrestling supplement through Principal Rivera’s erroneous approval of Hayden receiving a wrestling supplement.

RECORDS ANALYSIS

- Exhibit 1: FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List**
- Exhibit 3: Principal E. Rivera 08-26-21, email response**
- Exhibit 4: Kotouch 09-08-21, email response**
- Exhibit 5: Payment transaction receipt between L. Hayden & L. Burk**
- Exhibit 7: 05-21-21, Conference Notes Between Rivera, Loyd, Kotouch, Blum**
- Exhibit 8: Payment transaction receipt between R. Wells & A. Blum**

From August 5, 2021, through September 17, 2021, OIG staff reviewed the above-listed documents provided by witnesses. The review disclosed the following:

FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list shows various supplements received for Anjelica Blum, Ryan Wells, Laura Hayden, and other coaches (**See Tables 5-7**). Lauren Burk did not receive a supplement(s) in 2020-21 (**Exhibit 1**).

(Table 5) Anjelica Blum Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Bowling	12-07-20	\$2,124
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Female Sports 9 th Grade	03-01-21	\$2,124
Anjelica Blum	2020-21	Flag-Football	05-10-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$7,859.00

The Principal confirmed that she mistakenly approved Blum to receive the bowling supplement on December 7, 2020.

(Table 6) Ryan Wells Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Ryan Wells	2020-21	Fall Girls Sport	12-07-20	\$3,611
Ryan Wells	2020-21	Soccer	03-01-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$7,222.00

The Principal confirmed that Wells should have received a bowling supplement, and not Blum, in addition to his two supplements received, fall girls sport and soccer.

(Table 7) Laura Hayden Athletics Supplement(s) Received in 2020-21

Name	School Year	Sport Coached	Supplement Received	Supplement Amount
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Cross Country (g)	12-07-21	\$2,410
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Wrestling (g)	03-12-21	\$2,757
Laura Hayden	2020-21	Track & field (g)	05-10-21	\$3,611
Total:				\$8,878.00

Hayden was not the wrestling coach and should not have received a wrestling supplement. The Principal admits it was an error that Hayden received the wrestling supplement.

Principal Rivera’s August 26, 2021 email response shows that teacher Ryan Nani assisted the FHCHS sports programs while Kotouch was away on personal leave. Anjelica Blum received a bowling supplement mistakenly and transferred part of the bowling supplement to Ryan Wells through a mobile payment service. Rivera’s email further confirmed that Laura Hayden inappropriately received a wrestling supplement and transferred part of the supplement to Lauren Burk through a mobile payment service **(Exhibit 3)**.

Kotouch provided the OIG an email response on September 8, 2021, showing Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) process for reviewing and submitting athletic coaches’ seasonal supplements for payment approval **(Exhibit 4)**.

Hayden provided the OIG a mobile payment service receipt showing she transferred \$1,800 of the \$2,757 wrestling supplement to Burk on March 23, 2021 **(Exhibit 5)**.

Rivera provided the OIG conference notes minutes between herself, Loyd, Kotouch, and Blum on June 8, 2021. The conference notes addressed Blum's inquiry about Wells receiving a flag football supplement and Blum stating she did not coach bowling and still received a bowling supplement. Blum gave the bowling supplement to Wells. **(Exhibit 7)**.

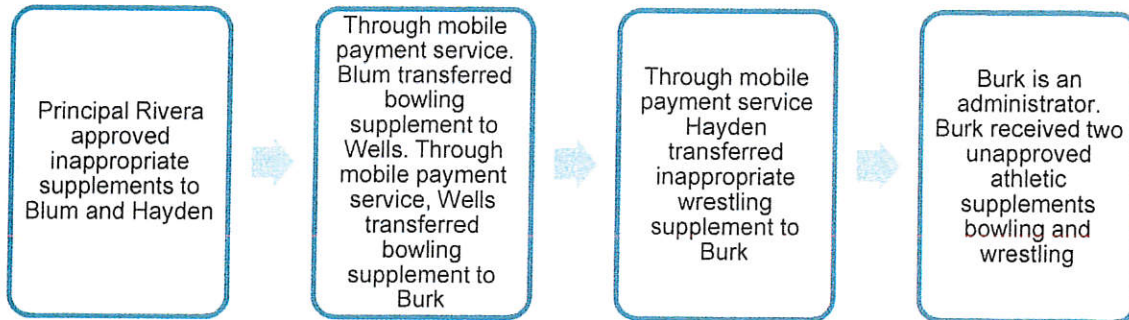
Wells provided the OIG a mobile payment receipt showing that Blum transferred part of the bowling supplement to Wells, \$1,344, on December 11, 2020 **(Exhibit 8)**.

CONCLUSION

It is alleged that Principal Esther Rivera, Math Teacher Ryan Wells, Single School Culture Coordinator Lauren Burk and Spanish Teacher Laura Hayden violated Florida Statute 1012.28(1) and (3) Public School Personnel, Duties of School Principals, and School Board Policy, 1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals, by erroneously approving staff to receive supplements.

Principal Rivera is responsible for monitoring and supervising all performances of school personnel. Because of Principal Rivera's erroneous approval of supplements, Burk received two unapproved athletic supplements, bowling, and soccer, from Wells and Hayden. **See Figure 15, Principal Rivera approved inappropriate supplements, bowling, and wrestling**

Figure 15



Based on the documentation reviewed and testimony obtained, OIG staff determined there was sufficient evidence to prove that Principal Rivera approved ineligible staff to receive athletic assistant coaches' supplements erroneously; thus, the Allegation was **Substantiated**. However, it should be noted that Principal Rivera immediately took action to rectify the situation and promptly report the matter. Principal Rivera has further indicated in her response that she has instituted a process to ensure the legitimacy of coaching supplements going forward.

The evidentiary standard used by the School District of Palm Beach County OIG in determining whether the facts and claims asserted in the complaint were proven or disproven is based upon the preponderance of the evidence. Preponderance of the evidence is contrasted with "beyond a reasonable doubt," which is the more severe test required to convict a criminal and "clear and convincing evidence," a standard describing proof of a matter established to be substantially more likely than not to be true. OIG investigative findings classified as "substantiated" means there was sufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions occurred and there was a violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to support the allegation. Investigative findings classified as "unfounded" means sufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions did not occur and there was no violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to substantiate the allegation. Investigative findings classified as "unsubstantiated" means there was insufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions did or did not occur and a violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to support the allegation could not be proven or disproven.

ATTESTATION

I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, the contents of this report are true and accurate; and I have not knowingly or willfully deprived or allowed another to deprive, the subject of the investigation of any rights contained in Sections 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes. This investigation was conducted pursuant to School District Policy 1.092, Inspector General, and in accordance with applicable Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General as published by the Association of Inspectors General.



Robert Sheppard, Senior Investigator

**STATE OF FLORIDA
COUNTY OF PALM BEACH**

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me this 21 day of March, 2022, by Robert Sheppard, Senior Investigator for the School District of Palm Beach County, Office of Inspector General, who is personally known by me.



Signature of Notary Public
 Notary Public or Law Enforcement Officer



This investigation was conducted by Senior Investigator Robert Sheppard, supervised by Director of Investigations Oscar Restrepo and approved by Inspector General Teresa Michael. The investigation was conducted in accordance with guidance from the Association of Inspectors General handbook and within standards as prescribed by Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

Reviewed by:  Date: 3/23/22
Oscar Restrepo, Director of Investigations

Approved by:  Date: 3/23/22
Teresa Michael, Inspector General

EXHIBIT LIST

FHCHS 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List.....	Exhibit 1
Payment transaction receipt between R.Wells & L.Burk	Exhibit 2
Principal E. Rivera 8-26-21, email response	Exhibit 3
AD. R. Kotouch 9-8-21, email response	Exhibit 4
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E. Rivera 01-14-22 email reply from 20-day letter.....	Exhibit 19
L. Burk 01-14-22 email reply from 20-day letter.....	Exhibit 20

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- OIG File

Exhibit 1

REDACTED

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS)

2020-21 Seasonal Supplement List

Activity #: 20-2014-I
OIG Staff: R. SHEPPARD
Date Rec'd: 3-5-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 1

2020-
2021

Seasonals	Year	Dept	ID	Name	Earn Code	Descr	Pay Freq	Descr	Amount Due	Process Date
01	2021	0581	1010863		SC3	SOCCER JV COACH BOYS (WIN) HS	I		2757.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			FB1	FOOTBALL HEADCOACH (FALL) HS	F		3534.96	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			BB1	BASEBALL HEAD COAC (SPRG) HS	P		3611.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			BK1	BASKETBALL HEAD COA BOYS HS	I		4532.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN - READI	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SI2	HS Science Club/Fair Coord-Fall	F		831.25	12/18/2020
	2021	0581			SI4	HS Science Club/Fair Coord-Wntr	I		831.25	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SI2	HS Science Club/Fair Coord-Fall	F		831.25	12/18/2020
	2021	0581			SI4	HS Science Club/Fair Coord-Wntr	I		831.25	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			SW1	SWIMMING HEAD COACH CO-ED HS	F		3611.00	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			BK5	BASKETBALL HEAD COA GIRLS HS	I		4532.00	5/24/2021
	2021	0581	1058173	Hayden, Laura F	CC2	CROSS COUNTRY GIRLS (FALL) HS	F		2410.00	12/7/2020
	2021	0581	1058173	Hayden, Laura F	TK4	TRACK HEAD COACH GIRLS HIGH	P		3611.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581	1058173	Hayden, Laura F	WR3	WRESTLING JV COACH (WINTER) HS	I		2757.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	1/4/2021
	2021	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SC5	SOCCER HEAD COA GIRLS (WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			TN3	TENNIS HEAD COACH GIRLS HS	P		2410.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			CL1	CHEERLEADER VARSITY (FALL) HS	F		1805.50	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			CL2	CHEERLEADER VARSITY (WIN) HS	I		1805.50	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			BK3	BASKETBALL 9TH GRD BOYS HS	I		2124.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	BLACK STUDENT UNION	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			WR1	WRESTLING HEAD COACH (WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			FB5	FOOTBALL JV COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			FB6	FOOTBALL JV COA (2/9 FIN) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN- CREDIT	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			F53	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS FALL	F	VOLLEYBALL	2124.00	1/15/2021
	2021	0581			VB1	VOLLEYBALL HEAD COACH BOYS HS	P		3611.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			VB5	VOLLEYBALL HEAD COACH GIRLS HS	F		3611.00	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	JROTC MARKSMANSHIP	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			FB3	FOOTBALL HEAD COA (2/9 FIN) HS	P		997.04	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SC2	SOCCER ASST COA BOYS (WIN) HS	I		2124.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN- GRADUAT	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			FB5	FOOTBALL JV COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
	2021	0581			TK2	TRACK ASST COACH BOYS HIGH	P		2124.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN - GRADU	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ART CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581	1102880	Blum, Anjelica L	BL1	BOWLING COACH CO ED (FALL) HS	F		2124.00	12/7/2020
	2021	0581	1102880	Blum, Anjelica L	F56	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS WIN	I	WINTER GENDER FRESHMAN	2124.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581	1102880	Blum, Anjelica L	F57	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBALL	3611.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581	1102880	Blum, Anjelica L	SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ALPHA CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
	2021	0581			BK2	BASKETBALL JV COACH BOYS HS	I		3325.00	3/1/2021
	2021	0581			F52	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS FALL	F	VOLLEYBALL	2757.00	1/15/2021

(1)

2021

2021 0581			F58	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBAL	2757.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			VB7	VOLLEYBALL JV COACH GIRLS HS	F		2757.00	12/7/2020
2021 0581			TK5	TRACK ASST COACH GIRLS HIGH	P		2124.00	5/24/2021
2021 0581			F59	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBALL	2124.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN-COMMUNIT	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	KEY CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			BB3	BASEBALL JV COACH (SPRG) HS	P		2757.00	6/7/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	FRESMAN BOARD	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	JROTC RAIDERS	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	STUDENTS AGAINST MELANOMA	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			BK9	Asst Basketball Coach Boys HS	I		2124.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
2021 0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SOPHOMORE BOARD	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SM5	SECME (PER SEMESTER) JUNE HS	P		1264.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SM6	SECME (PER SEMESTER) WIN HS	I		1264.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581	1121285	Wells,Ryan James	F51	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS FALL	F	ALL FALL GIRLS SPORTS	3611.00	12/7/2020
2021 0581	1121285	Wells,Ryan James	SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SENIOR SHAKEDOWN- MATHEMA	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581	1121285	Wells,Ryan James	SC1	SOCCER HEAD COA BOYS (WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	CAMPUS LIFE CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			CC1	CROSS COUNTRY BOYS (FALL) HS	F		2410.00	12/7/2020
2021 0581			TK1	TRACK HEAD COACH BOYS HIGH	P		3611.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			F55	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS WIN	I	WINTER GENDER JV COACH	2757.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			SC6	SOCCER ASST COA GIRLS (WIN)HS	I		2124.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			TN1	TENNIS HEAD COACH BOYS HS	P		2410.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			FB7	FOOTBALL 9 GRD COACH(FALL) HS	F		2593.50	1/4/2021
2021 0581			BK6	BASKETBALL JV COACH GIRLS HS	I		3325.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			TN2	TENNIS ASST COACH BOYS HS	P		2124.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			BW1	BOYS WEIGHTLIFT COACH-SP-HS	P		2124.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			F54	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS WIN	I	WINTER GENDER EQUITY HEAD	3611.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	FITNESS CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SC7	SOCCER JV COACH GIRLS(WIN) HS	I		2757.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/7/2020
2021 0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	P		731.50	5/10/2021
2021 0581			BK0	Asst Basketball Coach Girls HS	I		2124.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	JROTC DRILL COMPETITION	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	STRATEGY BOARD GAME CLUB	621.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			CL3	CHEERLEADER JV COACH(FALL) HS	F		1062.00	12/7/2020
2021 0581			CL4	CHEERLEADER JV COACH(WIN) HS	I		1062.00	3/1/2021
2021 0581			VB3	VOLLEYBALL JV COACH BOYS HS	P		2757.00	5/10/2021
2021 0581			VB6	VOLLEYBALL ASST COA GIRLS HS	F		2124.00	12/7/2020
2021 0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	JROTC DRUMLINE/SABOR	621.00	5/10/2021

(2)

Exhibit 2

REDACTED

December 11, 2021,

Mobile Payment Transaction

Between

Math Teacher Ryan Wells

Single School Culture Coordinator

Lauren Burk

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: G. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-18-21 Pages: 3
Rec'd: Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 2

Verizon 

10:27 AM

 78% 



Payment details


Lauren Cook



- \$1,913

Social activity



Status


Complete

Payment method



Bank ..

Transaction details

December 11, 2020, 10:47 AM ·  Private

Paid to

Type of transaction

Payments between friends

Transaction ID

Activity #: _____
OIG Staff: _____
Date Rec'd: _____ Pages: _____
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: __ Yes __ No __ N/A __ Req'd __ TBD
Exhibit/Reference # _____



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Documents Discussed-Ryan Wells FHCHS

5 messages

Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 11:03 AM

Morning!

Thank you for meeting with me today. I apologize for this whole situation and wish it was never an issue in the first place.

Please see below for documents we discussed:

- Conversation between Ron, Blum, and myself after I did not receive the Flag Stipend (multiple images).
- Venmo Transactions from Blum to myself then to Burk for the Bowling Stipend.
- I do not have any transactions for soccer as Ms. Hayden must have sent Burk the funds directly (not sure what dollar amount or percentage of the stipend).

- Screenshots of a few emails sent to the treasurer/AD showing duties I performed outside of normal soccer, bowling, and teaching responsibilities (Asst. AD work).

- Folders for the work I did with Coach Ron to earn a stipend: [Link to Ticket Reports](#) (you may have to electronically have Mr. Kotouch allow you access). My signature will be on forms other than just sports I coach as I was at many games and deposited and recorded funds.

Please let me know if there are any other documents that you may need and I can try to find them. I hope this issue can be resolved.

Thank You.

--

Mr. Ryan Wells
Mathematics Coach
Forest Hill Community High School
Office Number:
Twitter:

10 attachments



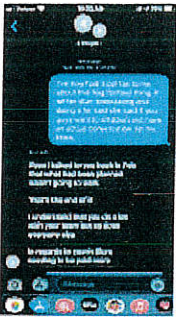
IMG_1422.jpg
90K



IMG_1419.jpg
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IMG_1421.jpg
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IMG_1417.jpg
161K



IMG_1418.jpg
205K



IMG_1420.jpg
141K

Ron Assistance_4.jpg
138K

Exhibit 3

REDACTED

Principal Esther Rivera August 26, 2021, Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-J
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-26-21 Pages: 4
Rec'd: Esther Rivera
Redacted: Yes N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 3



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Investigation

4 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 26, 2021 at 1:53 PM

Good afternoon Principal Rivera,

I'm wrapping up my investigative report, and I have a few uncertainties which respectfully require your clarification.

- What responsibilities (Sports) did Ryan Taylor Nani perform/conduct? Was he the official/unofficial Assistant Athletic Director??
- I'm aware and understand that Inadvertently Blum received the \$2124 bowling supplement...Did you approve Blum to transfer "cash-app" the bowling supplement she received to Wells?
- The FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list shows that on December 7, 2020, Wells received a \$3611 Female Sports Coach Supplement....**Question:** Did Wells receive the female sport supplement for Bowling? or???
- 2020-21 Hayden agreed to assist the soccer program, shortly after agreeing to support the soccer program she realized that she could not assist the program due to conflict of schedule...Nonetheless, Hayden received a wrestling supplement and did not coach wrestling....Hayden said she cash-app the wrestling supplement to Burk because Burk did all of the paperwork for the soccer program....did you approve or were you aware that Hayden transferred the wrestling supplement to Burk for assisting the soccer program?
- Were you aware that administrators can or cannot receive athletic supplements at the time of the 2020-21 fall/spring supplements disbursements to athletics coaches?

Thank you Principal Rivera for your timely response...If further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact me at (561) 649-6877/PX#46877

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Activity #: 21-0014-T
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-26-21 Pages: 4
Rec'd: Esther Rivera
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 4

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 26, 2021 at 2:04 PM

- What responsibilities (Sports) did Ryan Taylor Nani perform/conduct? Was he the official/unofficial Assistant Athletic Director?? *There isn't a supplement that states Assistant AD. Mr. Nani assisted all the sports since Mr. Kouch was on leave due to having a newborn.*
- I'm aware and understand that Inadvertently Blum received the \$2124 bowling supplement...Did you approve Blum to transfer "cash-app" the bowling supplement she received to Wells? *I learned that this occurred in May when I started I made the error of paying Blum the bowling stipend.*
- The FHCHS 2020-21 seasonal supplement list shows that on December 7, 2020, Wells received a \$3611 Female Sports Coach Supplement....**Question:** Did Wells receive the female sport supplement for Bowling? or???. *There is no female sport supplement for bowling. Mr. Wells received the Fall Female Sports stipend.*
- 2020-21 Hayden agreed to assist the soccer program, shortly after agreeing to support the soccer program she realized that she could not assist the program due to conflict of schedule...Nonetheless, Hayden received a wrestling supplement and did not coach wrestling....Hayden said she cash-app the wrestling supplement to Burk because Burk did all of the paperwork for the soccer program....did you approve or were you aware that Hayden transferred the wrestling supplement to Burk for assisting the soccer program? *I am completely unaware of this occurring. I will have to check to see if Mrs. Hayden received a stipend for Wrestling as the Wrestling Coach.*

8/30/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Investigation

was Leslie Toussaint and not Ms. Hayden. I will speak with professional standards as well as my instructional superintendent about this if this occurred.

- Were you aware that administrators can or cannot receive athletic supplements at the time of the 2020-21 fall/spring supplements disbursements to athletics coaches? I am aware that administrators can not receive athletic supplements or any other stipend such as club stipends at the time of 2020-2021 fall/spring supplement.



Esther M. Rivera

Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
A Title One, IB World School
6901 Parker Avenue, WPB, FL 33405
P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter:
Follow our School: @FHH_FalconFury

Ad

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 26, 2021 at 2:16 PM

Esther,

Why did Wells receive the Fall Female Sports Stipend? What did he do?...he received \$3611 in the fall season..

Also the 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement shows Hayden received a supplement for wrestling?

Please call if further information is needed...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 26, 2021 at 2:36 PM

Why did Wells receive the Fall Female Sports Stipend? What did he do?...he received \$3611 in the fall season..

Mr. Wells received the Fall Female Sports Stipend because he assisted in supervising Fall Female Sports practices and games when there were several events occurring simultaneously on campus.

- Also the 2020-21 Seasonal Supplement shows Hayden received a supplement for wrestling?
Thank you for bringing this to my attention. This was an error. I will inform professional standards and my instructional superintendent of this error. Mr. Leslie Toussiant was the Coach for Wrestling not Ms. Hayden.





Esther M. Rivera

Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
A Title One, IB World School
6901 Parker Avenue, WPB, Fl. 33405
P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter:
Follow our School: @FHH_FalconFury

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 8:11 AM

Good morning Principal Rivera,

Did you approve for Blum to receive the \$2124 bowling supplement....Did you approve for Blum to cash-app the bowling supplement to Wells or Burk?

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 8:19 AM

Good morning Mr. Sheppard. No, I did not approve for Blum to receive the bowling stipend. No, I did not approve Ms. Blum to cash app the bowling stipend to Mr. Wells nor Ms. Burk.

[Quoted text hidden]

--



Esther M. Rivera

Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
A Title One, IB World School
6901 Parker Avenue, WPB, Fl. 33405
P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter:
Follow our School: @FHH_FalconFury

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 9:42 AM

Thank you.....Were you aware that Wells cash app Burk the Bowling supplement he received from Blum...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406

8/30/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Investigation

Phone: (561) 649-6877

PX# 46877

Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 9:49 AM

No, I was not aware that Mr. Wells cash append Ms. Burk the bowling supplement he received from Ms. Blum.



Esther M. Rivera

Principal

Forest Hill Community High School

A Title One, IB World School

6901 Parker Avenue, WPB, FL 33405

P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter:

Follow our School: @FHH_FalconFury

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 4
Ronald Kotouch
September 8, 2021,
Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-8-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ronald Kotouch
Redacted: Yes NO N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 4



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Investigation

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 8, 2021 at 9:47 AM

Good morning sir,

Please explain (FHCHS) process for approving athletic supplements payable to athletic coaches...

- Do you submit coaches' names to the Principal for payment approval?
- Do head coaches submit agenda(s) or names of assistant coaches who assisted the sports program to your office?
- Did wrestling coach Leslie Tousaint submit an agenda to your office that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team?

Please contact my office at your earliest convenience

(561) 649-6877/PX#46877

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
 Senior Investigator (SRI)
 Office of Inspector General
 3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
 West Palm Bch, FL 33406
 Phone: (561) 649-6877
 PX# 46877
 Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Activity #: 21-0014-T
 OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 9-8-21 Pages: 2
 Rec'd: Ronald Kotouch
 Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
 Exhibit/Reference # 6

Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 8, 2021 at 1:23 PM

Good afternoon, Mr. Shepard,

- Do you submit coaches' names to the Principal for payment approval?

Coaches names are submitted to the principals secretary prior to being put into the system for payment.

- Do head coaches submit agenda(s) or names of assistant coaches who assisted the sports program to your office?

Coaches notified me of who their assistant coaches would be and whether or not they would be volunteer or paid. From there, we (AP over Athletics) would do our diligence to ensure that volunteer coaches were approved to be volunteers and paid coaches had fulfilled their requirements to coach and receive a stipend. I never micromanaged anyone from there. If the head coach of the program identified someone as an assistant, I went off of their word that the person identified as an assistant coach was fulfilling their duties to best help that particular program.



- Did wrestling coach Leslie Tousaint submit an agenda to your office that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team?

There was not an agenda submitted from coach Leslie Toussaint that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team. This was also never communicated by me to the principals secretary that Laura Hayden assisted the wrestling team. I will send a Google sheet that was shared with the principals secretary identifying who should be getting a winter stipends for 2020-2021.

L

9/8/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Investigation

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 8, 2021, at 9:48 AM, Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 5
REDACTED
March 23, 2021,
Mobile Payment Transaction
Between
Spanish/Avid Teacher Laura Hayden
&
Single School Culture Coordinator
Lauren Burk

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-17-21 Pages: 4
Rec'd: LAURA HAYDEN
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 5



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

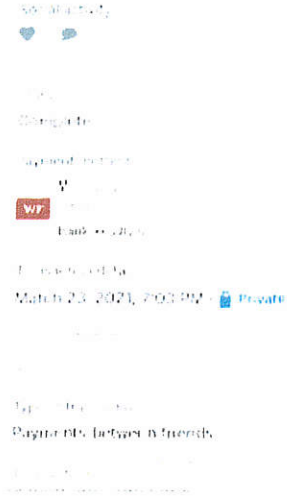
Receipt of Funds Transferred

4 messages

Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Aug 17, 2021 at 4:01 PM

\$1,800



--
Laura Hayden

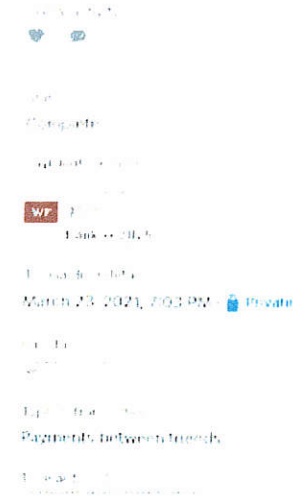
Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Aug 17, 2021 at 8:21 PM

Got it... Thank you

On Tue, Aug 17, 2021 at 4:02 PM Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

\$1,800






Laurita Hayden



Feed

Between You



Laurita Hayden paid you + \$1,800.00
Mar 23 

The best wrestling coach out there.



[Quoted text hidden]

Lauren Burk
SSCC/12th Grade Administrator
561-540-3089
Follow me on twitter!





Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Receipts/IG Investigation

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 9:08 AM

Good morning Lauren,

If possible, can you please screenshot a copy of the **receipt of funds** received from L. Hayden...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 9:17 AM

Good morning, Mr. Sheppard:

Attached please find a screenshot of the Venmo transaction between Ms. Hayden and myself.

The comment is in regards to Ms. Hayden explaining that it appeared on her paycheck as wrestling instead of Asst. Soccer.

With appreciation,

Lauren

--
Laura Hayden

--
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Aug 31, 2021 at 1:28 PM

Hi Ms. Hayden,

I'm wrapping up the investigation and I have a few uncertainties that require your attention.....**Question**, Did you coach wrestling?

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Aug 31, 2021 at 1:41 PM

Good afternoon,

No, I did not coach wrestling, however this was what appeared on my paycheck under 'Hours and Earnings':

WRESTLING IV COACH (WINTER)HS	2.757.00	2.757.00
-------------------------------	----------	----------

Ms. Laura Hayden, M.Ed.

Forest Hill Community High School
11th & 12th Grade AVID Elective Teacher
World Language Teacher



Activity #: 21-0014-T
OIG Staff: _____
Date Rec'd: _____ Pages: _____
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: _____

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 6
May 14-15-21, 2021, Text Messages
Between
Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch
&
Math Teacher Anjelica Blum

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-5-21 Pages: 7
Rec'd: Esther Rivera + Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 6

< 124



Anjelica Blum >

Fri, May 14, 2:12 PM

Wells never got the flag assistant pay

No, he didn't

Will it be on the next one?

He's not getting it

Why not?

He didn't do anything

I talked to him about it at the beginning of the season

So did I the other day

Yea he's not getting one

I emailed you at the beginning of season about it

Yes, I talked to him directly at the end of February

He wasn't getting it anymore

Which you would have told me I



Activity #: 21-0014-2
CIG Staff: R Shppard
Date Rec'd: 3-5-18 Total Pages: 7
Rec'd: Esther Rivera
Re-factored: Yes (No) N/A Req'd: TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 2

2:58

5G E

124



Anjelica Blum >

He wasn't getting it anymore

I wish you would have told me. I would have gotten someone else to handle all the paperwork side of it.

He told me a different story

He was just going to give it to you

It goes towards all the tournaments. Like I'm driving to Ocala now and paying out of pocket for hotels for all star game

That's what happened with Cook and bowling

Sat, May 15, 4:51 PM

I'm driving home from the all star game and have the girls in the car

Okay, this is done. You tried to play the system and get an extra stipend. Not cool, but it's gotta stop now.

I don't know why you're coming at me. If this was an issue, you should have told me before season, not after.





Anjelica Blum >

I don't know why you're coming at me. If this was an issue, you should have told me before season, not after.

It wouldn't be an issue if Ryan did what you told me he was doing

But he didn't do anything

And legit told me he was just giving you a stipend

I don't know why he would say anything at all. But I literally brought the issues to him. I think he did more than he realized he would be.

Fri, May 21, 2:43 PM

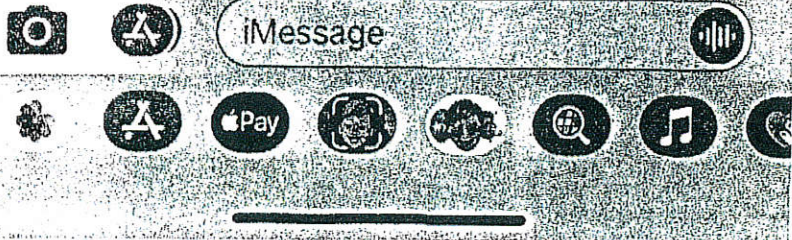
Have a problem with the game next week.

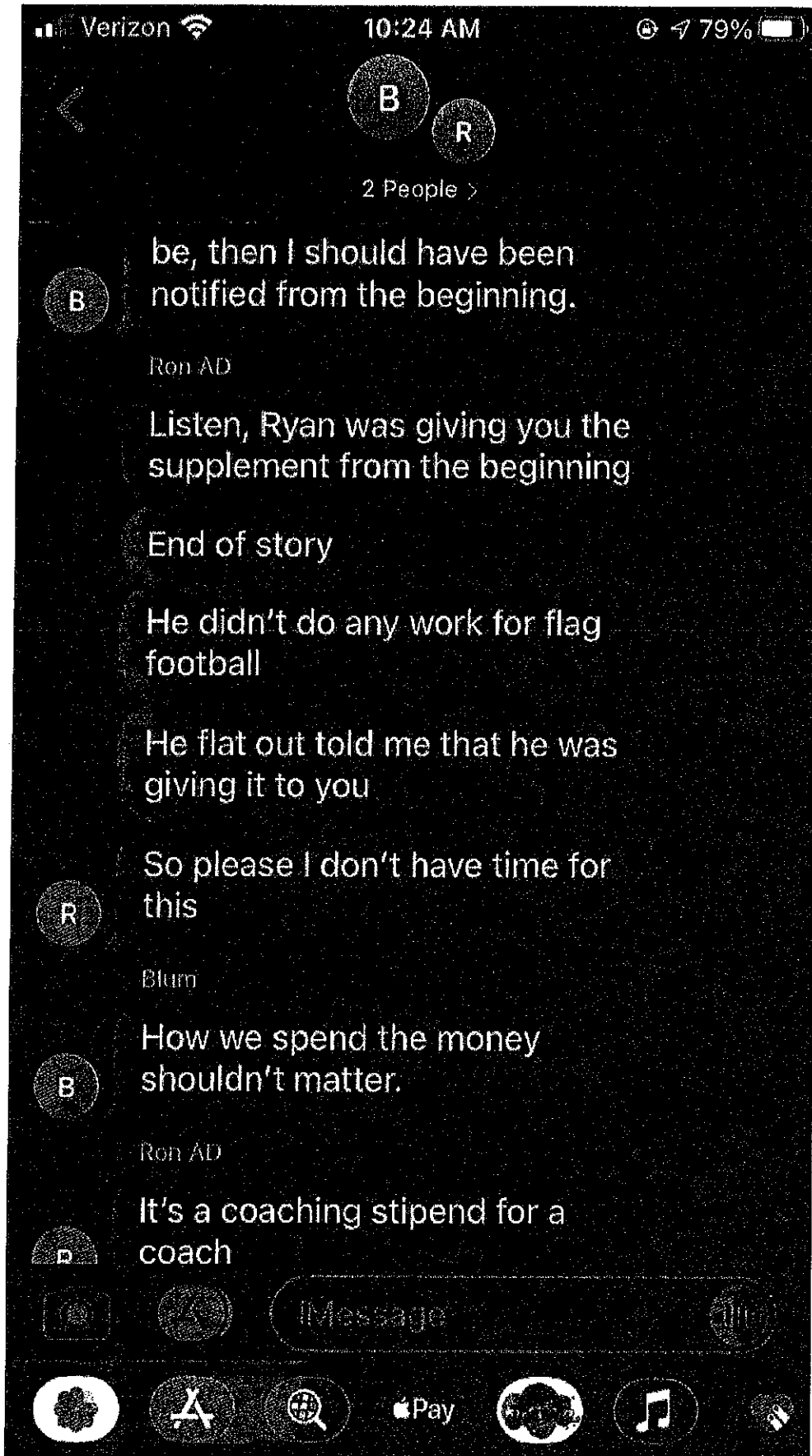
District didn't know about it

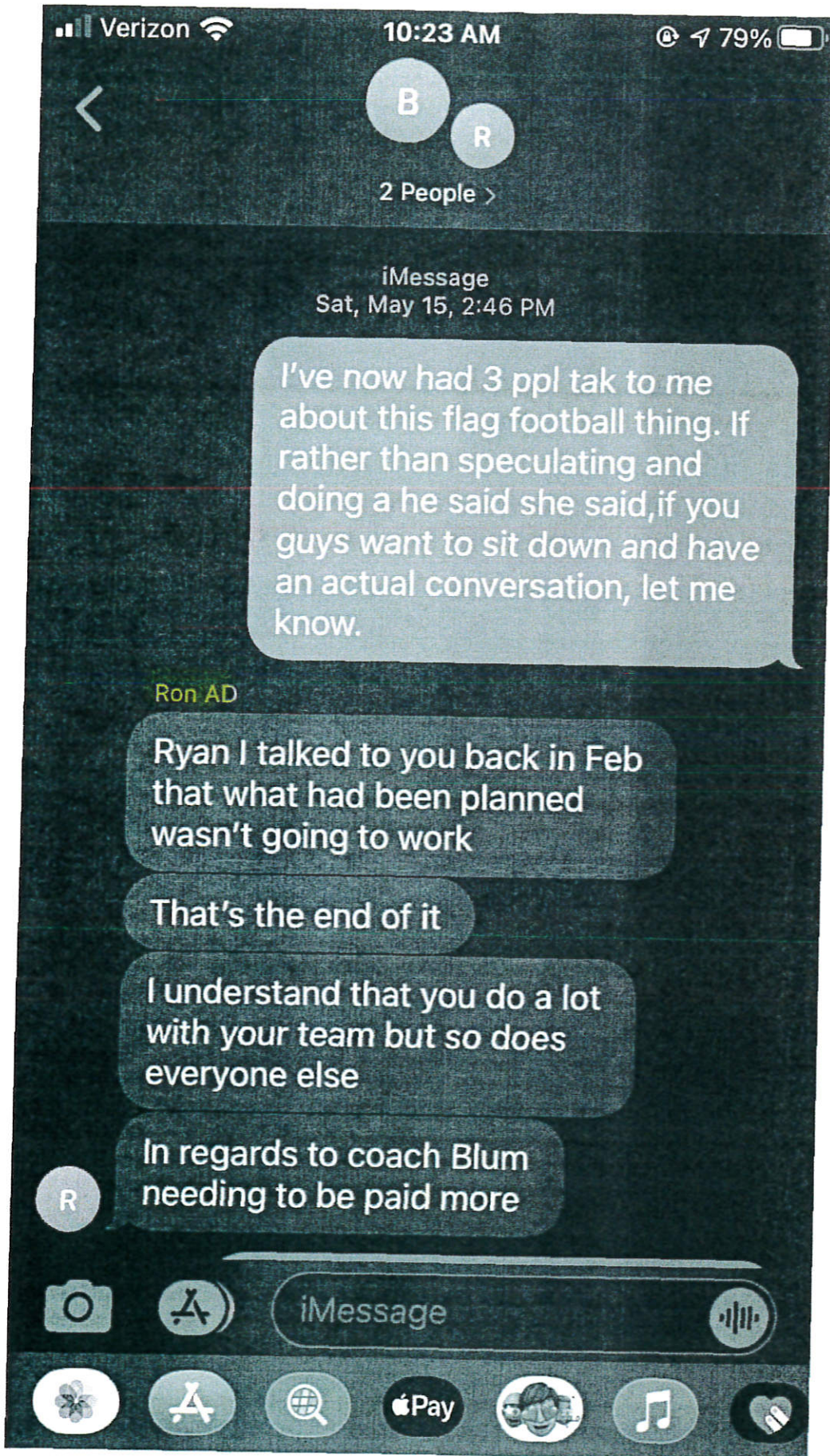
How was it approved in the past?

I can ask Boca. He's always hosted it.

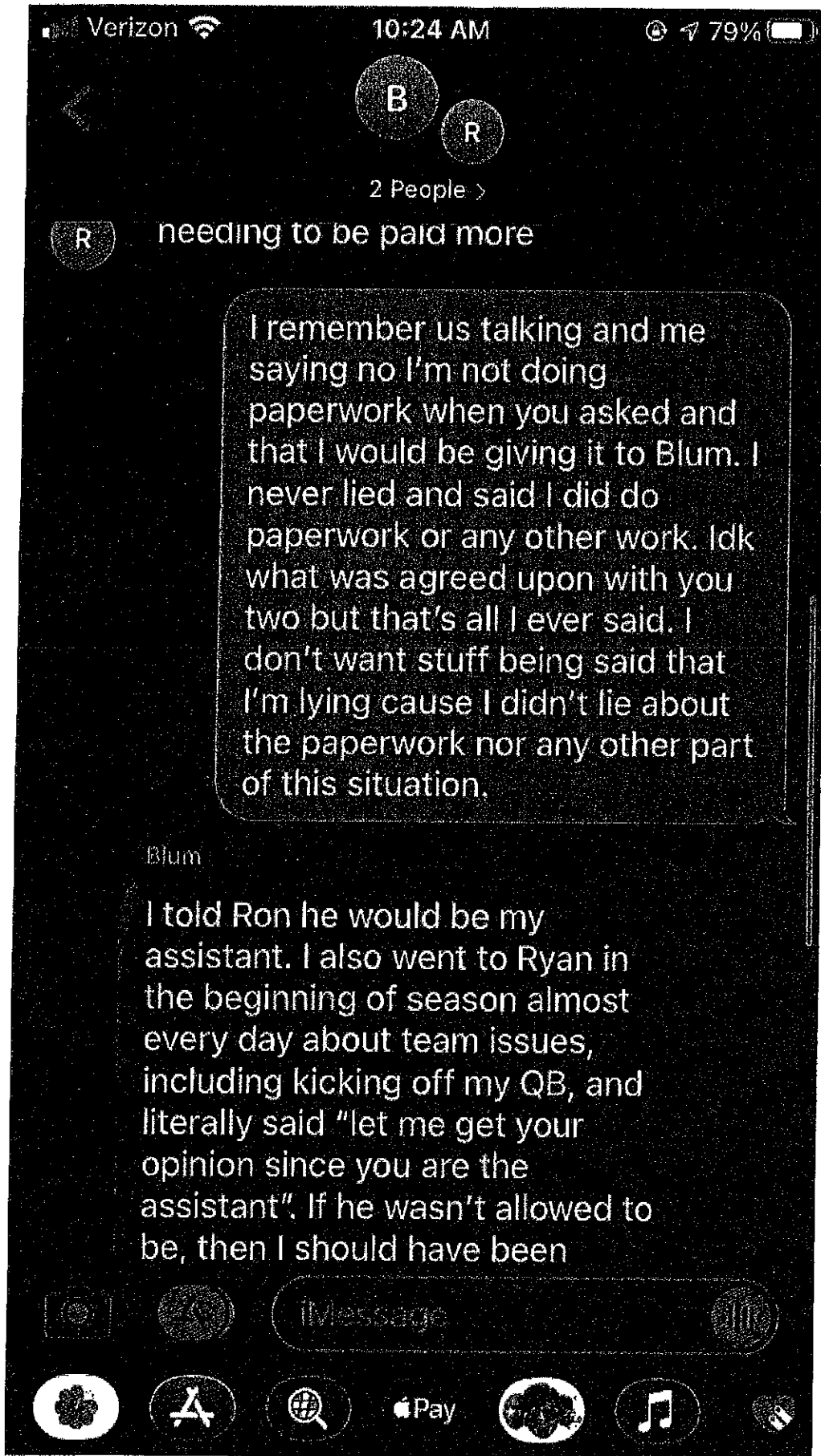
Okay, Valerie told me it needs to go through a 3rd party and they have







Activity #: 21-0019-I
 OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 8-18-21 Pages: 3
 Rec'd: Lynn Wells
 Redacted: Yes NO N/A Req'd: TBD
 Exhibit/Reference #: 2

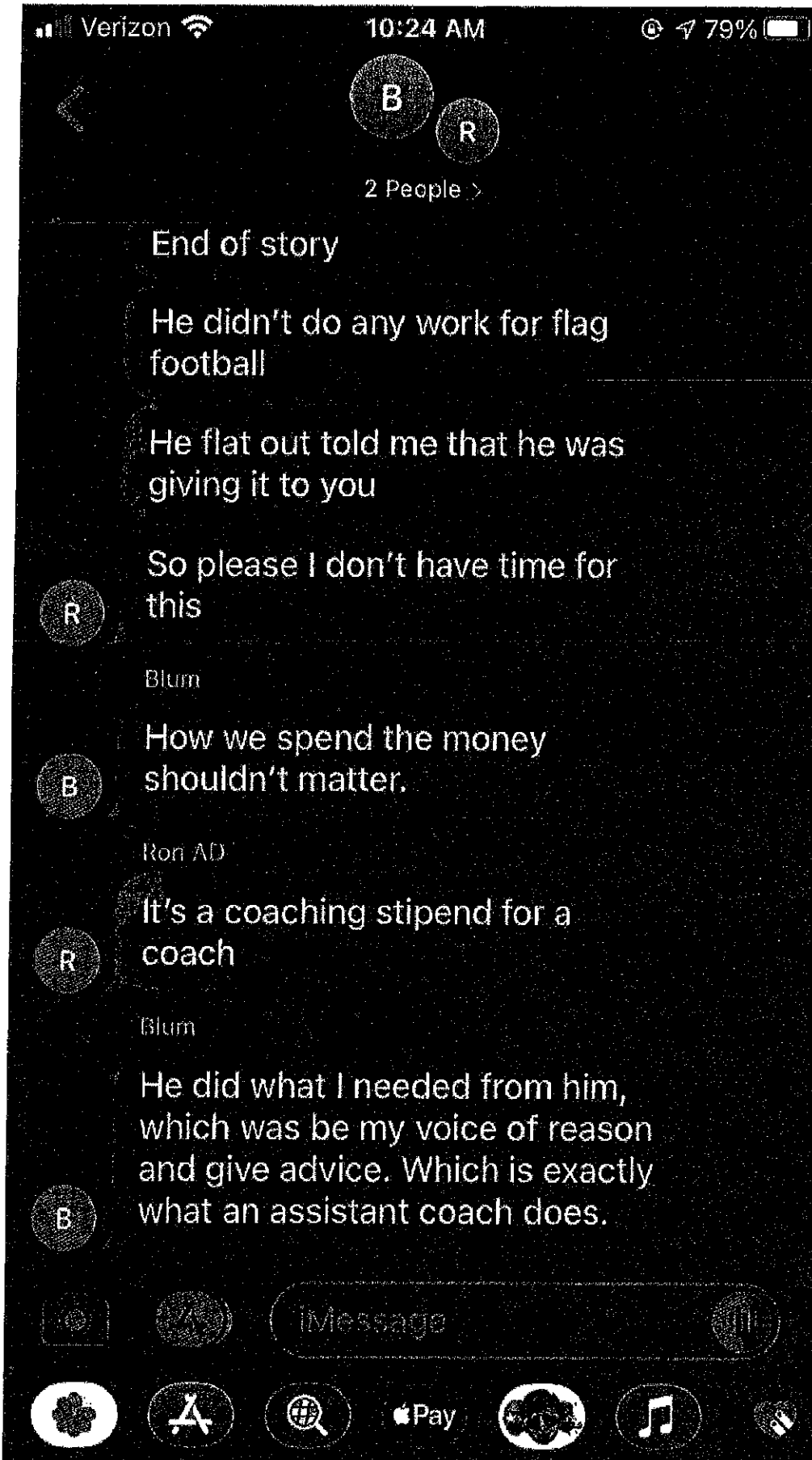


R needing to be paid more

I remember us talking and me saying no I'm not doing paperwork when you asked and that I would be giving it to Blum. I never lied and said I did do paperwork or any other work. Idk what was agreed upon with you two but that's all I ever said. I don't want stuff being said that I'm lying cause I didn't lie about the paperwork nor any other part of this situation.

Blum

I told Ron he would be my assistant. I also went to Ryan in the beginning of season almost every day about team issues, including kicking off my QB, and literally said "let me get your opinion since you are the assistant". If he wasn't allowed to be, then I should have been



End of story

He didn't do any work for flag football

He flat out told me that he was giving it to you

R: So please I don't have time for this

Blum

B: How we spend the money shouldn't matter.

Ron AD

R: It's a coaching stipend for a coach

Blum

B: He did what I needed from him, which was be my voice of reason and give advice. Which is exactly what an assistant coach does.

iMessage

Exhibit 7
May 21, 2021
Conference Note Meeting Minutes
Between
Principal Esther Rivera
Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd
Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch
Math Teacher Anjelica Blum

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-4-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Esther Rivera
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 7



Forest Hill Community High School

6901 Parker Avenue

West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Phone 561-540-2400 Fax 561-582-3026

Updated

2:53

CONFERENCE NOTES

TO: Anjelica Blum, Mathematics Teacher

FROM: Esther Rivera, Principal

DATE: June 8, 2021

RE: Policies/Procedures/Ethics

Activity #: 21-0014-T
 OIG Staff: Robert Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 8-5-21 Pages: 2
 Rec'd: Esther Rivera, Principal
 Selected: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
 Document Reference #: 3

The following conference took place at Forest Hill Community High School on 5/21/2021. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the assignment of stipends during the school year.

Present at the meeting were Anjelica Blum, (Mathematics Teacher), Ronald Kotouch (Athletic Director), Antonio Loyd (Asst. Principal) and Esther Rivera (Principal).

Facts, information and/or documents presented for consideration:

1. Mrs. Rivera made the following statements:

- a. On 5/21/2021, I spoke with Ms. Anjelica Blum regarding her request to the Athletic Director, Ronald Kotouch, inquiring about a Flag Football stipend for Ryan Wells.
- b. I asked Ms. Blum what were the coaching responsibilities of Ryan wells.
- c. I informed Ms. Blum that only coaches who participated actively with the athletic sport/students and were hired for the season would be able to receive supplements associated with that sport.

2. Ms. Blum made the following statements:

- a. "I went to Mr. Wells for advice. I thought coaches could get paid for advising the team."
- b. "I did everything for Flag Football. Ryan Wells helped out as an advisor. I thought coaching included completing paperwork."
- c. "I received the Bowling stipend for the fall and gave it to Mr. Wells."
- d. "I did not do anything for Bowling."
- e. "Ms. Cook was the mastermind."

3. Mr. Kotouch made the following statements:

- a. "I asked Mr. Wells in February if he was coaching Flag Football. He told me he was not."
- b. "I received a text from Coach Blum asking why Mr. Wells didn't get the Asst. Coach stipend for Flag Football."

4. Expectations/Directives

- a. Effective immediately, no supplemental salary will be issued outside of their assigned function(s). All functions designated for supplements have been delineated in the CTA Collective Bargaining Agreement and/or any other official School District communication.

- b. Effective for next season of sports, you are directed to keep documentation of all times of practices, games and attendance sheets for student and coach participation.

5. End of notes.

Should there be any questions, do not hesitate to contact/visit me for further discussion of this matter.

Employee Signature of Receipt: _____ Date: _____

Employee Refer to subject
Susana Segura
Jey
6/8/21

RECEIVED
AUG 04 2021
INSPECTOR GENERAL
(45)

Exhibit 8

REDACTED

December 11, 2020,

Mobile Payment

Transaction Between

Math Teacher Ryan Wells

&

Math Teacher Anjelica Blum

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-18-21 Pages: 3
Rec'd: Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 8



Payment details

AB

Anjelica Blum



+ \$1,344

Activity #: 21-0014-J
 OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 8-18-21 Pages: 3
 Rec'd: Rhac Wells
 Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
 Exhibit/Reference #: 4


Social activity



Status

Complete

Transaction details

December 11, 2020, 10:38 AM  Private

Received from

Type of transaction

Payments between friends

Transaction ID



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Documents Discussed-Ryan Wells FHCHS

5 messages

Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 11:03 AM

Morning!

Thank you for meeting with me today. I apologize for this whole situation and wish it was never an issue in the first place.

Please see below for documents we discussed:

-Conversation between Ron, Blum, and myself after I did not receive the Flag Stipend (multiple images).

-Venmo Transactions from Blum to myself then to Burk for the Bowling Stipend.

-I do not have any transactions for soccer as Ms. Hayden must have sent Burk the funds directly (not sure what dollar amount or percentage of the stipend).

-Screenshots of a few emails sent to the treasurer/AD showing duties I performed outside of normal soccer, bowling, and teaching responsibilities (Asst. AD work).

-Folders for the work I did with Coach Ron to earn a stipend: [Link to Ticket Reports](#) (you may have to electronically have Mr. Kotouch allow you access). My signature will be on forms other than just sports I coach as I was at many games and deposited and recorded funds.

Please let me know if there are any other documents that you may need and I can try to find them. I hope this issue can be resolved.

Thank You.

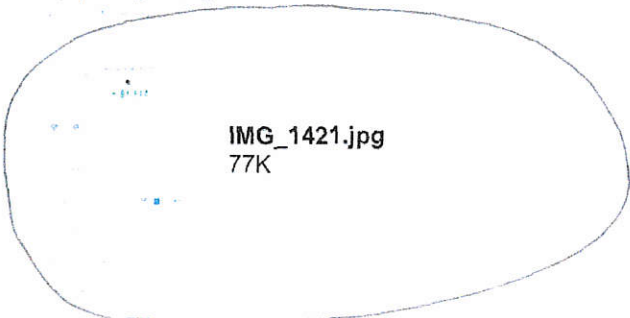
--
Mr. Ryan Wells
Mathematics Coach
Forest Hill Community High School
Office Number: 561-540-2435
Twitter:

10 attachments

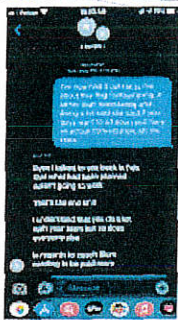


IMG_1422.jpg
90K

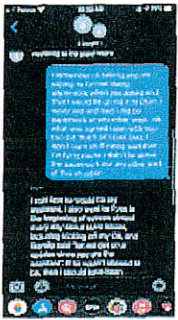
IMG_1419.jpg
139K



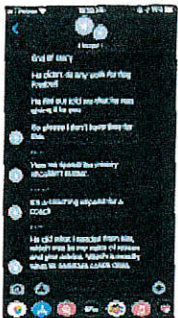
IMG_1421.jpg
77K



IMG_1417.jpg
161K



IMG_1418.jpg
205K



IMG_1420.jpg
141K

Ron Assistance_4.jpg
138K

Exhibit 9

REDACTED

Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch September 9, 2021, Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9.9.21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ronald Kotouch
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 9

<u>Cheerleading</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Head Coach			
JV Coach			
<u>Boys Soccer</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Head Varsity Coach	Ryan	Wells	R.Wells@palmbeachschools.org
Head JV Coach			
JV Assistant Coach			
<u>Girls Soccer</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Head Varsity Coach			
Assistant Varsity Coach			
Junior Varsity Head Coach			
<u>Wrestling</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Head Coach			
<u>Boys Basketball</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Boys Varsity Head Coach			
Assistant Varsity Coach			
9th Grade Coach			
Junior Varsity Head Coach			
<u>Girls Basketball</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Head Varsity Coach			
Assistant Varsity Coach			
JV Head Coach			
<u>Girls Weightlifting</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Email</u>
Winter Gender Equity Head Coach			
Winter Gender Equity JV Coach			
Winter Gender Equity Freshmen Coach	Anjelica	Blum	

Winter sports

Activity #: 21-0014-I
 OIG Staff: Robert Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 9-9-21 Pages: 1
 Rec'd: Donald Kotouch
 Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
 Exhibit/Reference #:



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Spreadsheet shared with you: "Winter Supplements "

2 messages

Ronald Kotouch (via Google Sheets) <drive-shares-dm-noreply@google.com>
Reply-To: Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>
To: robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 10:09 AM

ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org
shared a spreadsheet



ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org has invited you to **view** the following spreadsheet:



Open

Google LLC, 1600 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View, CA 94043, USA
You have received this email because ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org shared a spreadsheet with you from Google Sheets.

Google Workspace

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 10:24 AM

Thank you sir. for the winter supplement list...

I attempted to contact you via telephone to cancel our meeting (09/09/21 10:00 AM).....If possible do you have the Fall/Spring lists that you provided to the principal's secretary..

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877

9/9/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Spreadsheet shared with you: "Winter Supplements "

Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 10
Athletic Director Ronald Kotouch
September 10, 2021,
Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-10-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ronald Kotouch
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 10

9/13/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Spreadsheet shared with you: "Winter Supplements "

Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 10:45 AM

You're welcome. I'm looking for those lists now.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 9, 2021, at 10:25 AM, Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 2:12 PM

The fall supplements were emailed directly to Mrs. Segura from me twice. Once with my recommendations and then again after changes were made by Mrs. Rivera. I can't find the emails, but I'm sure they are out there in cyberspace somewhere.

The spring supplements were hand written by last year's AP over Athletics, Antonio Loyd, and handed to Mrs. Segura.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 9, 2021, at 10:45 AM, Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

You're welcome. I'm looking for those lists now.

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:16 PM

Thank you sir

[Quoted text hidden]

--

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: **Ronald Kotouch** <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 7:51 AM

Good morning Ronald,

Did Ryan Wells submit a request or agenda that Lauren Burk will be the assistant soccer coach in the 2020-21 school year....

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Activity #: 21-0014-T
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-10-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ronald Kotouch
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 8

9/13/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Spreadsheet shared with you: "Winter Supplements "

[Quoted text hidden]

Ronald Kotouch <ronald.kotouch@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 11:56 AM

He told me verbally that Lauren would be handling the paperwork collection (Athletics packets and insurance) and any administrative work for boys soccer.

Sent from my iPhone

On Sep 10, 2021, at 7:51 AM, Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 11

REDACTED

Assistant Principal Antonio Loyd

September 10, 2021,

Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I ---
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard ---
Date Rec'd: 9-9-21 Pages: 4
Rec'd: Antonio Loyd
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 11



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Investigation

5 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Antonio Loyd <antonio.loyd@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:16 PM

Evening sir,

This is Mr. Sheppard from the IG's Office... Respectfully when you have a moment, if available can you provide a copy of the Fall/Spring 2021 supplement list created by Mr. Kotouch. The list shows Coaches who were submitted for pay. Kotouch inferred that you might have copies... If not available please advise.

If further clarification is needed please contact me at (561) 649-6877/PX#46877

Have a great day..

--
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Antonio Loyd <antonio.loyd@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:26 PM

Good Evening,

Supplement lists did not go through me. The list of coaches to be paid were kept between Ms. Rivera and Mr. Kotouch. The only list I was privy to were the coaches list that's attached.

2021-2022 Coaches

Regards,

[Quoted text hidden]

--
With sincere gratitude and appreciation,

Antonio Loyd
Assistant Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
FALCONS S.O.A.R.

Activity #: 21-9014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-9-21 Pages: 4
Rec'd: Antonio Loyd
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 9

"We must be like the Falcon with superhuman acuity and wings that dig through the air." - Self

9/13/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Investigation

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

On Thu, Sep 9, 2021 at 4:16 PM Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]

Antonio Loyd <antonio.loyd@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 11:18 AM

Try again. I have changed your access.

[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Antonio Loyd <antonio.loyd@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 2:29 PM

Thank you!
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

9th Grade Coach

Girls Weightlifting.
 Head Coach
 Assistant Coach (Female JV Sports Supplement)

Boys Weightlifting
 Head Coach
 Assistant Coach (Assistant Tennis Stipend)

Baseball
 Head Coach
 Assistant Varsity Coach
 Head JV Coach

Softball
 Head Varsity Coach
 Assistant Varsity Coach
 Junior Varsity Coach

Track and Field
 Head Boys Coach
 Head Girls Coach
 Assistant Coach
 Assistant Coach

Tennis
 Head Girls Coach
 Head Boys Coach
 Assistant Coach

Boys Volleyball.
 Head Varsity Coach
 JV Head Coach
 Assistant Coach

Girls Flag Football
 Head Varsity Coach (Head Varsity Female Sports Coach Supplement)
 JV Head Coach (JV Female Sports Coach Supplement)
 9th Grade Coach
 (9th Grade Sports Coach Supplement)

OPEN		OPEN	Email
First Name	Last Name		
Caitlin	Schubiger	Caitlin.Schubiger@palmbeachschools.org	
Kim	Piraino	Kimberly.Piraino@palmbeachschools.org	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Caitlin	Schubiger	Caitlin.Schubiger@palmbeachschools.org	
Marcus	Emerson	Marcus.I.Emerson@palmbeachschools.org	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Russ	Milliken	Russ.Milliken@palmbeachschools.org	
OPEN		OPEN	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Josue	Gutierrez	josue.gutierrez@palmbeachschools.org	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Stephanie	Aurogenma	Stephaniej827@yahoo.com	
OPEN		OPEN	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Justin	Boruch	Justin.Boruch@palmbeachschools.org	
Laura	Hayden	Laura.Hayden@palmbeachschools.org	
Evan	Williams	Evan.Williams@palmbeachschools.org	
Maura	Whittington	Maura.Whittington@palmbeachschools.org	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Liliana	Sanchez	Liliana.Sanchez@palmbeachschools.org	
Juan	Gomez	Jagalve2000@gmail.com	
OPEN		OPEN	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Kim	Piraino	Kimberly.Piraino@palmbeachschools.org	
Ashley	O'Brien	Ashley.O'Brien@palmbeachschools.org	
OPEN		OPEN	
First Name	Last Name	Email	
Anjelica	Blum	Anjelica.Blum@palmbeachschools.org	
Emma	Kaputsa	Emma.Bottenfeld@palmbeachschools.org	
Angelica	Ecchevaria	Angelica.Ecchevaria@palmbeachschools.org	

Status	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						
Teacher						
Teacher						
Teacher						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Of campus						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						
Teacher						
Teacher						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						
Teacher	CPR	COVID	HEAT	CARDIAC	CONCUSSION	RECRUITING
Teacher						

Open Gender Equity Stipends
 Fall - Head Female Sports Coach
 Winter - Head Female Sports Coach
 Winter - 9th Grade Female Sports Coach

Activity #: 21-0014-I
 OIG Staff: M. Sheppard
 Date Rec'd: 9-9-21 Pages: 4
 Rec'd: Rafaelo Lopez
 Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
 Exhibit/Reference # 9

Exhibit 12
Math Teacher Anjelica Blum
October 21, 2021,
Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: B. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 10-21-21 Pages: 1
Rec'd: Anjelica Blum
Redacted: ___ Yes No ___ N/A ___ Req'd ___ TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 12



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

I.G. investigation

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Anjelica Blum <anjelica.blum@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Oct 21, 2021 at 1:41 PM

Hi Anjelica,

Reviewing the cash app receipt, bowling supplement you transferred to Wells on December 11, 2020, why did you only transfer a portion \$1,344 of the \$2,124 bowling supplement...

If further information is needed please contact my office at (561) 649-6877 or px#46877

--

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

anjelica.blum@palmbeachschools.org <anjelica.blum@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Oct 21, 2021 at 4:53 PM

Hello Mr. Sheppard,

Money was taken out to account for taxes. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Anjelica Blum

On Oct 21, 2021, at 1:41 PM, Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

Hi Anjelica,
[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 13

REDACTED

**Forest Hill Community High School
(FHCHS)
2019-20 Seasonal Supplement List**

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-5-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 11

2019-2020

Seasons 99											
Year	Dept	ID	Name	Earn Code	Descr	Pay Freq	Descr	Amount Due	Process Date		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SOCIAL STUDIES PLC	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			FS6	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS WIN	I	GIRLS SOCCER	2124.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			SO1	SPECIAL OLYMPIC (1/2)(FALL)HS	F		1205.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			SO2	SPECIAL OLYMPIC (1/2)(SPRG)HS	P		1205.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			FB1	FOOTBALL HEADCOACH (FALL) HS	F		3534.96	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FB3	FOOTBALL HEAD COA (2/9 FIN)HS	U		997.04	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			FB8	FOOTBALL 9TH GRD COACH HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			SW2	SWIMMING ASST COACH (FALL)HS	F		2124.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			BB1	BASEBALL HEAD COACH (SPRG) HS	P		3611.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	BEST BUDDIES	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			BK1	BASKETBALL HEAD COA BOYS HS	I		4532.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	READING PLC	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	RECYCLING	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SI2	HS Science Club/Fair Coor-Fall	F		831.25	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			SI4	HS Science Club/Fair Coor-Wntr	I		831.25	4/13/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	MATH PLC	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ENVIROMENTAL CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SI2	HS Science Club/Fair Coor-Fall	F		831.25	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			SI4	HS Science Club/Fair Coor-Wntr	I		831.25	4/13/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	TOURISM CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	HOTEL CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ROBOTICS	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			SW1	SWIMMING HEAD COACH CO-ED HS	F		3611.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581		Hayden,Laura F	CC2	CROSS COUNTRY GIRLS (FALL) HS	F		2410.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581		Hayden,Laura F	TK4	TRACK HEAD COACH GIRLS HIGH	P		3611.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FB6	FOOTBALL JV COA (2/9 FIN) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			DOC	DOCUMENT CUSTODIAN - AESOP	P	AESOP	400.00	6/18/2020		
2020	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			SC5	SOCCER HEAD COA GIRLS(WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			TN1	TENNIS HEAD COACH BOYS HS	P		2410.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			CL1	CHEERLEADER VARSITY (FALL) HS	F		1805.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			CL2	CHEERLEADER VARSITY (WIN) HS	I		1805.50	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	CULINARY CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581			DT1	DANCE/DRILLTEAM (FALL) HS	F		2124.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			WR1	WRESTLING HEAD COACH (WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			BK2	BASKETBALL JV COACH BOYS HS	I		3325.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	BLACK STUDENT UNION	621.00	5/22/2020		
2020	0581		Burk,Lauren	BL1	BOWLING COACH CO-ED (FALL) HS	F		2124.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581		Burk,Lauren	SC2	SOCCER ASST COA BOYS (WIN) HS	I		2124.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			VB1	VOLLEYBALL HEAD COACH BOYS HS	P		3611.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			VB5	VOLLEYBALL HEAD COAC GIRLS HS	F		3611.00	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			SC3	SOCCER JV COACH BOYS (WIN) HS	I		2757.00	3/16/2020		
2020	0581			FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			FB5	FOOTBALL JV COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			TK2	TRACK ASST COACH BOYS HIGH	P		2124.00	5/11/2020		
2020	0581			FB7	FOOTBALL 9 GRD COACH(FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019		
2020	0581			FS2	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS FALL	F	VOLLEYBALL	2757.00	12/9/2019		

2020 0581		VB3	VOLLEYBALL JV COACH BOYS HS	P		2757.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581	Blum,Anjelica L	SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ART CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581	Blum,Anjelica L	VB6	VOLLEYBALL ASST COA GIRLS HS	F		2124.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581	Blum,Anjelica L	FS7	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBALL	3611.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SOPHOMORE	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ALPHA CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		FS8	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBALL	2757.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	STUDENTS ACTIVITIES	621.00	6/18/2020
2020 0581		TK5	TRACK ASST COACH GIRLS HIGH	P	GIRLS TRACK	2124.00	6/18/2020
2020 0581		VB7	VOLLEYBALL JV COACH GIRLS HS	F		2757.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581		FS9	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS SPR	P	FLAG FOOTBALL	2124.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	FRESHMAN CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	GAY STRAIGHT ALLIANCE	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SB3	SOFTBALL JV COACH (SPRG) HS	P		2757.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	KEY CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	SCIENCE PLC	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	HOSA CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	STUDENTS AGAINST MEL.	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		GFG	GOLF HEAD COACH GIRLS(FALL)HS	F		2124.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ACE MENTORSHIP	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		BK9	Asst Basketball Coach Boys HS	I		2124.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019
2020 0581		SM5	SECME (PER SEMESTER) JUNE HS	U		1264.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SM6	SECME (PER SEMESTER) WIN HS	I		1264.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581	Wells,Ryan James	FS1	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS FALL	F	BOWLING	3611.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581	Wells,Ryan	SC1	SOCCER HEAD COA BOYS (WIN) HS	I		3611.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	CAMPUS LIFE CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		CC1	CROSS COUNTRY BOYS (FALL) HS	F		2410.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581		FS5	FEMALE SPORTS COACH JV HS WIN	I	GIRLS WEIGHTLIFTING	2757.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		TK1	TRACK HEAD COACH BOYS HIGH	P		3611.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		SC6	SOCCER ASST COA GIRLS (WIN)HS	I		2124.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		TN3	TENNIS HEAD COACH GIRLS HS	P		2410.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		FB2	FOOTBALL ASST COACH (FALL) HS	F		2593.50	12/9/2019
2020 0581		FB6	FOOTBALL JV COA (2/9 FIN) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020
2020 0581		TN2	TENNIS ASST COACH BOYS HS	U		2124.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		SB1	SOFTBALL HEAD COACH (SPRG) HS	P		3611.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		BW1	BOYS WEIGHTLIFT COACH-SP-HS	P		2124.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		FS4	FEMALE SPORTS COA VAR HS WIN	I	GIRLS WEIGHTLIFTING	3611.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		SC7	SOCCER JV COACH GIRLS(WIN) HS	I		2757.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		FB4	FOOTBALL ASST COA (2/9) HS	U		731.50	5/11/2020
2020 0581		FB7	FOOTBALL 9 GRD COACH(FALL) HS	F		2593.50	4/13/2020
2020 0581		BK6	BASKETBALL JV COACH GIRLS HS	I		3325.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		FS3	FEMALE SPORTS COA GR9 HS FALL	F	VOLLEYBALL	2124.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581		VB2	VOLLEYBALL ASST COA BOYS HS	P		2124.00	5/11/2020
2020 0581		BK0	Asst Basketball Coach Girls HS	I		2124.00	3/16/2020
2020 0581		SA1	SPECIAL ACTIVIT (1 @ 75) HS	P	ASIAN CULTURE CLUB	621.00	5/22/2020
2020 0581		CL3	CHEERLEADER JV COACH(FALL) HS	F		1062.00	12/9/2019
2020 0581		CL4	CHEERLEADER JV COACH(WIN) HS	I		1062.00	3/16/2020

Exhibit 14
District PeopleSoft
Personnel Record,
Lauren Burk

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: M. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-13-21 Pages: (1)
Rec'd: PeopleSoft - District
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 14

Work Location Job Information Job Labor Payroll Salary Plan Compensation PB Job Data

Burk, Lauren
Employee

Empl ID
Empl Record 0

Work Location

Find First 1 of 1 Last
Go To Row

Effective Date 07/02/2020
Effective Sequence 0
HR Status Active
Payroll Status Active

Action Data Change
Reason End of Probation
Job Indicator Primary Job

Current

Position Number 10105481

Coordinator Single Sch Culture

Override Position Data

Add Pay

Position Entry Date 02/20/2020

Position Management Record

Regulatory Region USA United States
Company PBC School Dist of Palm Beach Co
Business Unit SDPBC School Dist of Palm Beach Co
Department 0581 Forest Hill High
Department Entry Date 08/22/2011
Location 0581 Forest Hill High
Establishment ID SDPBC School Dist Of Palm Beach Co

Date Created 07/01/2020

Last Start Date 08/22/2011
Expected Job End Date

End Job Automatically

Job Data

Employment Data

Earnings Distribution

Benefits Program Participation

Save Return to Search Previous in List Next in List Notify Refresh Update/Display Include History Correct History

Work Location | Job Information | Job Labor | Payroll | Salary Plan | Compensation | PB Job Data

Activity #: 21-0514-T
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 9-13-21 Pages: (1)
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference # 13



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Athletic Supplements

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Nancy Samuels <nancy.samuels@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Feb 1, 2022 at 11:56 AM

Good morning Ms. Samuels,

My name is Robert Sheppard with the District's Inspector General Office and I'm currently conducting an investigation at Forest Hill Community High School, the investigation involves athletic supplements. Respectfully, would you please review the below questions and advise.

- Are Single School Culture Coordinators identified as administrators?
- Are Single School Culture Coordinator eligible to receive athletic supplements?

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Nancy Samuels <nancy.samuels@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Bertha Beltran <bertha.beltran@palmbeachschools.org>, TERI JENSEN <teri.jensen@palmbeachschools.org>, Barbara Colombrita <barbara.colombrita@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Feb 2, 2022 at 12:09 PM

Mr. Sheppard,

Sorry I was out of the office yesterday. If no teachers are willing to perform the duties at the school, the principal is permitted to have other employees fulfill the job. Otherwise, the student body would suffer (programs would not be available to them).

I believe HR reviews cases that are out of the ordinary.

Nancy

[Quoted text hidden]

1/31/22, 10:39 AM

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Question-athletic supplements

--

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Yetta Greene <yetta.greene@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 11:54 AM

Ms. Miyares,

Reference your response to my initial question posed to you in September 2021 regarding administrators (Single School Culture Coordinators) receiving an athletic supplement.....**Question**, is there a District policy, a school operating procedure, or any guidelines that supports Single School Culture Coordinators receiving a supplement(s) the same as instructional-line employees?

If further clarity is needed, respectfully, please contact me at (561) 649-6877 or PX#46877

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

On Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 10:56 AM Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]

Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Yetta Greene <yetta.greene@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 2:10 PM

Single School Culture Coordinators are an "S2" on the pay scale and fall under the administrative level. It's my understanding that personnel who are considered administrators are not eligible for supplement pay. I would have to check in with Accounting on the District policy. I can be back to you in a bit.

[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 2:47 PM

ok

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Yetta Greene <yetta.greene@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 2:48 PM

I have confirmed with Compensation that the Single School Culture Coordinator position is not eligible for supplement pay since they are not an instructional position.

[Quoted text hidden]
[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 3:31 PM

Again thank you!!!!.....**Question**, could you please define what is the supplement "winter-sport & fall/sport female"..

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877

1/31/22, 10:39 AM

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Question-athletic supplements

PX# 46877

Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 3:37 PM

Athletic supplements are the one time, seasonal assigned dollar amount for coaching a sport.

"Head Varsity Boys Basketball Coach"

"Female Sports Varsity Coach"

[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 3:40 PM

Thank you!!

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Question-athletic supplements

11 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: TERI Jensen <teri.jensen@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 16, 2021 at 10:51 AM

Good morning Terri,

This is Robert from the IG's Office.....Are administrators (Single School Culture Coordinators) eligible/allowed to receive an athletic supplement??

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

TERI Jensen <teri.jensen@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 16, 2021 at 11:49 AM

To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>, Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>, Yetta Greene <yetta.greene@palmbeachschools.org>

Mr. Sheppard, I am including Valerie Miyares and Yetta Greene in this email as they oversee athletic programs.

Valerie and Yetta, can you please answer Mr. Sheppard's question?

Thank you--Teri

[Quoted text hidden]

--
Teri Jensen
Payroll Manager
Accounting Services/Payroll
561-434-8944
teri.jensen@palmbeachschools.org

Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 10:56 AM

To: TERI Jensen <teri.jensen@palmbeachschools.org>

Cc: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>, Yetta Greene <yetta.greene@palmbeachschools.org>

Only administrative level personnel are ineligible for supplements. These positions usually fall on the instructional line and would be eligible for supplement pay.

Valerie Miyares, MS, CAA

Manager - District Athletics
Palm Beach County School District

Office: (561) 434-7341

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Sep 20, 2021 at 10:57 AM

To: Valerie Miyares <valerie.miyares@palmbeachschools.org>

Thank you for the clarification..

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 15

REDACTED

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Bowling Team

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-5-21 Pages: 8
Rec'd: ESTHER RIVERA
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 15

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
 ① ② ③ ④ ① ② ③ ④ ① ② P.B.C.
HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE
CENTRAL DIVISION
2020 SCHEDULE

Alex
 Leonard
 Grant
 Connor



MATCHES
 PRACTICE

\$2.00 PER PERSON PER GAME
 \$ 1.00 PER PERSON PER GAME

Practice starts at 3:30 promptly! Please be on time!

ALL MATCHES AND PRACTICES MUST BE HELD AT THIS CENTER

Match #	Date	Bowling Center	LANES #											
			1-2	5-6	9-10	13-14	17-18	21-22	25-26	29-30	33-34	37-38	41-42	45-46
1	10/15 THUR	Jupiter	1-2	21-22	3-4	23-24	5-6	25-26	7-8	27-28	9-10	29-30	11-12	31-32
2	10/22 THUR	Jupiter	10-8	30-28	6-2	26-22	12-3	32-23	9-11	29-31	1-7	21-27	4-5	24-25
3	10/29 THUR	Jupiter	9-3	29-23	1-10	21-30	11-4	31-24	5-12	25-32	8-2	28-22	6-7	26-27
4	11/5 THUR	Jupiter	12-7	32-27	5-8	25-28	9-2	29-22	10-4	30-24	11-6	31-26	1-3	21-23
5	11/12 THUR	Jupiter	11-8	31-28	9-7	29-27	1-5	21-25	6-3	26-23	10-12	30-32	2-4	22-24

November 16 - County Championship
 November 30 - Tri-County Championship

Team #

1	Wellington - Boys	21	Wellington - Girls
2	Pahokee - Boys	22	Pahokee - Girls
3	Royal Palm Beach - Boys	23	Royal Palm Beach - Girls
4	Palm Beach Central - Boys	24	Palm Beach Central - Girls
5	Lake Worth - Boys	25	Lake Worth - Girls
*	6 Riveria Bch Prep- Boys	26	Riveria Beach Prep - Girls *
7	John I. Leonard - Boys	27	John I. Leonard - Girls
*	8 Somerset Canyons -Boys	28	Somerset Canyons -Girls *
9	Forest Hill - Boys	29	Forest Hill - Girls
10	Glades Central - Boys	30	Glades Central - Girls
*	11 King's Academy - Boys	31	King's Academy - Girls *
*	12 Greenacres Christian - Boys	32	Greenacres Christian - Girls *

District Tournaments- NONE THIS YEAR STATE FINALS - NOV 3RD AND 4TH

Each school should have their own awards presentation !

*** Teams not eligible for Division Championship**

POWERING LEAGUE RECORD

CIRCLE ALL ABSENT SCORES
CHECK HANDICAPS - COMPLETE

DATE OF RECORD: **10/15/14**
WEEK NO. **14**

LEAGUE CODE **15**

LEAGUE **FULLY...**

AM **4 WINS Central**

HOUR	BOWLER NAME

LANE **15**

TEAM	
AVG.	HDC

LANE **16**

GAME 2	GAME 3	GAME 4
57	57	7
62	62	6
63	63	6
64	64	6
65	65	6
66	66	6
67	67	6
68	68	6
69	69	6
70	70	6
71	71	6
72	72	6
73	73	6
74	74	6
75	75	6
76	76	6
77	77	6
78	78	6
79	79	6
80	80	6

TOTAL TEAM AVERAGE **75.74**

WON
LOST

HANDICAP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TOTAL INCLUDING HANDICAP										
INDICATE GAMES WON BY 'X'										

LOST

OPPOSING TEAM CAPTAIN'S SIGNATURE

HANDICAP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
TOTAL INCLUDING HANDICAP										
INDICATE GAMES WON BY 'X'										

WINNING TEAM CAPTAIN'S SIGNATURE

8/6/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Fwd: Bowling Pics



----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Lauren Cook** <lauren.cook@palmbeachschools.org>
Date: Sat, Nov 14, 2020 at 7:00 AM
Subject: Bowling Pics
To: <lauren.cook@palmbeachschools.org>

13 attachments



IMG-5208.jpg
2065K

IMG-5210.jpg
2038K

IMG-5211.jpg
1832K

IMG-5215.jpg
1848K

8/6/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Fwd: Bowling Plcs

IMG-5218.jpg
1601K

IMG-5298.jpg
2217K

IMG-5299.jpg
2253K

IMG-5300.jpg
2171K

IMG-5302.jpg
1690K

8/8/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Fwd: Bowling Pics

IMG-5304.jpg
1800K

IMG-5306.jpg
1973K

IMG-5311.jpg
1871K

IMG-5312.jpg
1851K



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fwd: Bowling Pics

1 message

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 5, 2021 at 1:36 PM

Here are some pics of our bowling team.



Esther M. Rivera

Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
A Title One, IB World School
6901 Perker Avenue, WPB, FL 33405
P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter. Follow our School:

Home of the Mighty Falcons! #ThisIsTheHill

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>
Date: Thu, Aug 5, 2021 at 1:21 PM
Subject: Fwd: Bowling Pics
To: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Bowling pics!

I'm not sure if I have any of Wells or I bowling though lol

Lauren Burk
Single School Culture Coordinator
561-540-3089
Follow me on twitter! @_LoCook



----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lauren Cook <lauren.cook@palmbeachschools.org>
Date: Wed, Dec 2, 2020 at 2:21 PM
Subject: Fwd: Bowling Pics
To: Sergio-Manuel Martinez <s26417170@stu.palmbeachschools.org>

Lauren Cook
Single School Culture Coordinator
AVID Coordinator

Follow me on twitter!

Exhibit 16
Ryan Wells August 30, 2021,
Email Response

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 8-30-21 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 16

9/13/2021

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - Documents Discussed-Ryan Wells FHCHS



Ron Assistance_3.png
589K



Ron Assistance_2.jpg
159K



Ron Assistance.jpg
204K

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Aug 19, 2021 at 7:38 AM

Thank you Sir....

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 2:50 PM

Hi Ryan,

Afternoon sir,

I'm wrapping up this investigation, and I have a few uncertainties which require your attention.....**Question** - Did Burk actively participate (2019-20 & 2020-21) as the assistant coach for Soccer & Bowling?

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

On Wed, Aug 18, 2021 at 11:03 AM Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]

Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Aug 30, 2021 at 3:41 PM

Mr. Sheppard,

Nice to hear from you.

She did indeed participate in both sports for both years.

FY20: Her and I took over bowling as the past coaches did not want to do it. This is when we assumed there were 2 stipends as there were two coaches before us (Williams and Myles). There was only 1; so we shared it.

FY20: She did all the paperwork, fundraising, senior night etc. and attended a majority of the home games.

FY21: We both did bowling expecting to split the one stipend again.

FY21: She did soccer for me (same as listed above) after Ms. Hayden stated she was unable to do it for me.

If you need documents please let me know and I can definitely find them. Most likely they are at school so I would need to send them to you tomorrow as I have left for the day.

Sincerely,
Mr. Wells
[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Aug 31, 2021 at 6:48 AM

Good morning and thank you.....

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Activity #: _____
OIG Staff: _____
Date Rec'd: _____ Pages: _____
Rec'd: _____
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: _____

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit 17

**Ryan Wells January 11, 2022, email reply
from
20-day letter**

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: Robert Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 1-11-22 Pages: 2
Rec'd: Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 17

January 11, 2022

Response to case 21-0014-I

Please include this statement in the final report of the above mentioned investigation.

After reviewing this report in its entirety, I would like to state my involvement as it is not clearly stated in the report by the inspector general. I was the bowling coach in 2020 of which there is only one stipend. Ms. Blum received this stipend and then transferred it to me as I was the correct recipient of this stipend. In retrospect, we should have handled this situation differently by having Ms. Blum return the stipend to the district and then it being sent to me. I understand the way we did this was incorrect but the money did end up with the person who was the coach. Ms. Burk kindly volunteered with bowling. I decided that I would give her part of my deserved stipend (not a second stipend) as she helped at all the bowling matches. As the report states, this stipend was given to Ms. Blum by mistake so I am not sure how the findings can state this is a kickback scheme or that I enlisted others to receive an undeserved stipend..

In regard to the soccer stipend, the report correctly states that I told the athletic director that Ms. Hayden was going to be the assistant coach. When she was unable to fulfill this duty I told the athletic director that Ms. Burk would be taking Ms. Hayden's role as assistant coach. This is also stated in the report. As both of these statements are in the report, again, I am not sure how the inspector general is able to make the claim that there is evidence of a kickback scheme or that I enlisted others as I was not involved with stipend disbursement, did not receive any of this stipend, nor did I claim people were coaching that were not actually coaching.

Sincerely,

Ryan Wells

Activity #: 21-0014-IF
OIG Staff: R. Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 1-11-22 Pages: (2)
Rec'd: Ryan Wells
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 17



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

FH Case

2 messages

Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <Robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Oscar Restrepo <oscar.restrepo@palmbeachschools.org>


Wed, Jan 12, 2022 at 5:02 PM

Mr. Sheppard,

Please attach my official statement to the case 21-0014-I

Respectfully,
Ryan Wells

--
Mr. Ryan Wells
Single School Culture Coordinator: North Region
Secondary Mathematics
Twitter: @ThisisRyanWells

 **RW-Response to case 21-0014-I.pdf**
48K

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Ryan Wells <r.wells@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Jan 12, 2022 at 5:29 PM

Thank you Ryan,

I will attach your response to the FHCHS investigative report (IG#21-0014-I)...

Respectfully,
Robert Sheppard
[Quoted text hidden]

--
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Exhibit 18

**Laura Hayden January 14, 2022, email
reply
from
20-day letter**

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: Robert Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 1-14-22 Pages: (3)
Rec'd: Laura Hayden
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 18

Response to Draft Report for Office of Inspector General

Case No. 21-0014.I

Forest Hill Community High School Misappropriation/Athletic Supplements

After reviewing the draft report, I would like to address the following concerns, as I believe some findings by the Inspector General are inaccurate. There are discrepancies from the figures and exhibits, and the follow-up notes by the Inspector General.

I never approached the wrestling coach (Touissant), Athletic Director (Kotouch), or Principal (Rivera) to enlist myself as the wrestling coach. As the report states, when the stipend list was given to the principal, my name was not on the document. The report also states that Ms. Rivera gave the stipend by mistake. If I was not listed on this document and the principal admits to her error, this cannot be evidence of a kickback scheme or enlisting others.

At the start of soccer season I did agree with the head boys' soccer coach, Ryan Wells, to be his assistant coach. During this time, I was still in season as the girls' cross country coach. The season was extended to make up for the late start of the school year due to COVID-19. Therefore, the two sports (cross country, a fall sport, and soccer, a winter sport) overlapped and I could no longer commit to helping Ryan Wells. In turn, Lauren Burk stepped in and took over as the boys' assistant soccer coach.

I am not an employee with access to payroll or inputting stipends. If a closer look is taken at the exhibits that the Inspector General included in the draft report, the stipend I received was in my paycheck on March 12, 2021 while all other winter sport stipends were batched and received on March 1st, 2021. If the stipend I received was entered weeks later, it must have been done purposely by an administrator with access as all other winter stipends had already been dispersed.

When I received the stipend in my paycheck and its description read WRESTLING JV COACH (WINTER) HS, I mistakenly presumed athletic stipends could be allocated as needed by the principal based on her coaching needs. This has occurred multiple times in the past with coaches.



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

21-0014-I Forest Hill Community High School

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 2:55 PM

Ms. Hayden,

Attached below is a copy of investigative report 21-0014-I/FHCHS....Please review the report in its entirety and note that you have 20-work days to respond. The 20th workday ends January 14, 2022.

If further information is needed you may contact me at (561) 649-6877 or PX#46877

Thank You...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

L.Hayden 20-Memo - ROI.pdf
17708K

Laura Hayden <laura.hayden@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Jan 13, 2022 at 8:51 PM

Good evening,

Please see attached for my response to the report.

Ms. Laura Hayden, M.Ed.

Forest Hill Community High School

11th & 12th Grade AVID Elective Teacher

World Language Teacher



[Quoted text hidden]

IOG Draft Report Response.pdf
57K

Exhibit 19

Principal Esther Rivera

January 14, 2022,

email reply

from

20-day letter

Activity #: 21-0014-I
OIG Staff: Robert Sheppard
Date Rec'd: 1-14-22 Pages: 3
Rec'd: Esther Rivera
Redacted: Yes No N/A Req'd TBD
Exhibit/Reference #: 19



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fwd: Scanned image from Forest Hill High

1 message

Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Jan 14, 2022 at 3:17 PM

To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Cc: Jose Fred <jose.fred@palmbeachschools.org>, Karen Whetsell <karen.whetsell@palmbeachschools.org>

Please see attached response regarding OIG Gase No. 21-0014-I. Thank you.



Esther M. Rivera

Principal
Forest Hill Community High School
A Title One, IB World School
6901 Parker Avenue, WPB, FL 33405
P: 561-540-2400

Follow me on Twitter:

----- Forwarded message -----

From: scanner@palmbeachschools.org <scanner@palmbeachschools.org>

Date: Fri, Jan 14, 2022 at 3:09 PM

Subject: Scanned image from Forest Hill High

To: <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Reply to: Esther Rivera <esther.rivera@palmbeachschools.org>

Device Name: Forest Hill High

Device Model: MX-M565N

Location: Rm1-112A

File Format: PDF (Medium)

Resolution: 200dpi x 200dpi

Attached file is scanned image in PDF format.

Use Acrobat(R)Reader(R) or Adobe(R)Reader(R) of Adobe Systems Incorporated to view the document.

Adobe(R)Reader(R) can be downloaded from the following URL:

Adobe, the Adobe logo, Acrobat, the Adobe PDF logo, and Reader are registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and other countries.

<http://www.adobe.com/>

scanner@palmbeachschools.org_20220114_134546.pdf
380K



Forest Hill Community High School

6901 Parker Avenue

West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Phone 561-540-2400 Fax 561-582-3026

January 14, 2022

Re: 21-0014-I

To Whom It May Concern:

In Response to Investigative Report #21-0014-I from the Office of Inspector General in the School District of Palm Beach County regarding Allegation #2:

Forest Hill Community High School (FHCHS) Principal Esther Rivera violated Florida Statute 1012.28(1) and 3 Public School Personnel, Duties of School Principals, and School Board Policy, 1.014.1.2. Responsibilities of Principals, by erroneously approving athletic assistant coaches supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sports, thus enabling staff to ultimately to misappropriate monies.

I agree that I "erroneously" approved athletic supplements for employees that did not coach the pertinent sport. I **do not agree** that this action resulted in "enabling staff to misappropriate funds" through the use of cash-apps and other methods in exchanging monies not merited between other staff members. Additionally, it is imperative that this investigation provides a foundation for a universal systems-based approach to be created by the School District of Palm Beach County when School Principals are approving athletic stipends as currently there is none existing district-wide. Since I learned of my error, prior to this investigation commencing, I contacted the Department of Professional Standards and my instructional superintendent to make them aware of the mistake I made. Lastly, I created a school-based system in which coaches must acknowledge the responsibilities of their coaching positions, provide evidence of practices and games and maintain records of students/staff involved in order to receive a stipend.

Sincerely,

Esther M. Rivera
Principal

Exhibit 20

Single School Culture Coordinator

Lauren Burk

email reply

from

20-day letter



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

20-0014-I Forest Hill Community High School

4 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 2:50 PM

Good afternoon Ms. Burk

Attached is a copy of investigative report 21-0014-I/FHCHS.....Please review the report in its entirety and note that you have 20-workdays to respond. The 20th workday ends January 14, 2022.

If further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact me at (561) 649-6877 or PX# 46877

Thank you.
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Senior Investigator (SRI)
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

L.Burk 20-day Memo-ROI.pdf
17686K

Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 6:34 PM

Good evening,

I have had the opportunity to read the report and have several questions, as well as, items I would like to discuss.

Please let me know a good time to contact you.

With appreciation,
Lauren
[Quoted text hidden]
--

Lauren Burk
Single School Culture Coordinator



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 6:59 PM

I'm available at the office until 7:10 PM today- or you may contact me tomorrow after 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM

[Quoted text hidden]

--

[Quoted text hidden]

Lauren Burk <lauren.burk@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Jan 14, 2022 at 9:21 PM

To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>, Oscar Restrepo <oscar.restrepo@palmbeachschools.org>

Good evening,

Please include the below response in the 21-0014-I/FHCHS Report.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the draft of report 21-0014-I/FHCHS. Though I respect the findings of the Investigator, I would like to state a few items in this report that are incorrect and written in a negative connotation by the Investigator.

In multiple places within the report, the Investigator states that the stipend list my former Principal, Ms. Esther Rivera, submitted "disapproved" of me receiving any stipends as I was the Single School Culture Coordinator (SSCC) at the school at the time of this investigation. This stipend list is a list of coaches' names and what sport they are coaching. It is not a document of notes stating who is approved or not approved for stipends. This list does not state that I requested and was denied a stipend as the Investigator eluded. Also, at no point did I ask Ms. Rivera or anyone to provide me with a stipend for any sport while I was the Single School Culture Coordinator. It is also important to note that the IG states I was paid stipends in 2020 after becoming SSCC for work I had completed as a coach and sponsor prior to becoming SSCC within the same school year. Per Human Resources, it was appropriate for me to receive these stipends; however, the Investigator contacted the Manager of Athletics rather than Human Resources to confirm if the payments were acceptable.

In regard to the money that was sent to me for coaching both bowling and soccer: I told Mr. Ryan Wells that I would assist him with the Fall bowling team, as I had the previous year, and soccer when Ms. Laura Hayden found she could no longer do so. There is only one bowling stipend per school. Mr. Wells was kind enough to send me some of his stipend though I did not request or expect this money. Also, as stated above, I did not receive an additional stipend, but rather I was given some of Mr. Wells' as he saw fit. In regard to soccer, Ms. Hayden stated to me that she received a stipend that she believed was for soccer as she was initially the Assistant Coach for soccer before telling Mr. Wells she could not assist. Ms. Hayden knew that I had supported Mr. Wells with the soccer team throughout the entire season and she sent me her stipend though I did not request it from her. The Investigator states that I enlisted people to receive stipends. At no point did I ask for or expect any stipends for helping these two teams.

Additionally, in the ten years I worked at Forest Hill Community High School, I coached and sponsored various activities each year. Never have I received money for work that I did not complete or enlist others to provide me money.

With appreciation,

Lauren Burk

Lauren Burk
Single School Culture Coordinator



On Tue, Dec 7, 2021 at 2:51 PM Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]