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## Bartow County School District to pay \$251,000 To Settle a Whistleblower Lawsuit

Bartow County School District, has paid \$ 251,000 to settle a whistleblower lawsuit filed by a former administrator, Dr. Elizabeth “Buffy” Williams, alleging that she was retaliated against after she reported sexual harassment within the school district. Attorney Kimberly Worth of Thrasher Worth LLC in Atlanta, Georgia, represented Dr. Williams in her whistleblower lawsuit. This is the second whistleblower lawsuit settled by Bartow County School District in relation to allegations of sexual harassment. The previous lawsuit filed by former administrator Stefany Howard against Bartow County School District was settled for \$ 185,000. The combined settlements to former administrators who alleged that they suffered retaliation after reporting sexual harassment within the school district has now cost the Bartow County School District \$ 436,000 in addition to legal fees paid by the School District to defend these lawsuits prior to settlement.

Statement from Dr. Elizabeth “Buffy” Williams:

I grew up in Bartow County and started my career in education with the Bartow County School District. Through three decades of service in Bartow County, I worked my way up from elementary school teacher to principal and finally to the role of Executive Director of Elementary Curriculum. It has always been my desire to serve the citizens of Bartow County and contribute to the development and well-being of the children in Bartow County schools. I was devastated when I was removed from my job as Elementary Curriculum Director and forced to leave Bartow County in 2015 in order to continue my career. However, despite the upheaval this has caused to my family, I still believe that I did the right thing by speaking out while I was employed at Bartow County School District and by filing this lawsuit. I stand by the allegations in my complaint filed in Bartow County Superior Court. I hope that the lawsuits filed against the Bartow County School District in recent years and the significant settlements paid to resolve them will force the Bartow County Board of Education to look seriously at the issues raised in the lawsuits. I also hope that my decision to stand up against retaliation will serve as a message to other educators that they will be protected by the law if they do the right thing and report wrongdoing when they see it in our public schools.

WBHF will try to get statements from Bartow County Schools.

By mikeg | March 30th, 2017 | General | Comments Off

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