



Justin P. Wilson, Comptroller

November 3, 2017

Parents Steal From Lafollette Elementary School PTO

The Tennessee Comptroller's Office has released an investigation which has resulted in the indictment of Matthew and Heather Brooks. Investigators determined the couple misappropriated at least \$8,286 from the Lafollette Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization.

The Comptroller's Office began the investigation after Campbell County Schools reported questionable transactions in the PTO bank records.

Investigators determined that Matthew Brooks, the former PTO events coordinator, and his wife Heather Brooks, the former PTO president, used the PTO's debit card to withdraw cash and make personal purchases.

These purchases included buying service for personal cell phones, games for Google Play, personal meals at local restaurants, and entertainment in Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge.



Heather Brooks also manipulated or withheld the PTO's financial reports to conceal this activity from the board.

The Brooks' admitted to investigators that they misused PTO funds and assisted Comptroller investigators with identifying their personal transactions. After the discovery of these discrepancies, PTO operations were suspended. The organization was administratively dissolved in March 2017.

In October 2017, Matthew and Heather Brooks were each indicted by the Campbell County Grand Jury on one count of theft over \$2,500.

"It's important that PTO organizations follow state law requiring funds to be safeguarded," said Comptroller Justin P. Wilson. "PTO's should take precautions such as requiring more than one signature on checks, maintaining documentation for all purchases, and having multiple people review bank statements."

To view the investigative report online, go to: <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

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