



Jason E. Mumpower, Comptroller of the Treasury

December 1, 2021

Nearly \$400,000 Stolen from Memphis Area Charter School *Three Former Memphis Academy of Health Sciences Leaders Indicted*

An investigation by the Tennessee Comptroller's Office, working in conjunction with the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, has resulted in the indictments of Corey Johnson, Robert Williams, and Michael Jones. All three men held leadership positions at the Memphis Academy of Health Sciences (MAHS) charter school within the jurisdiction of the Shelby County School System. MAHS serves students in grades 6 through 12.



Investigators determined the three former leaders misappropriated a combined \$398,365.27 from the school between July 2015 and February 2021. This amount includes the following:

1. Former Executive Director Corey Johnson stole a total of at least \$337,955.13 from the school. Johnson used school debit cards, checks, wire transfers, and cash withdrawals to benefit himself. His \$253,863.33 in personal purchases included Las Vegas trips, NBA tickets, a hot tub for his home, and a variety of personal items and services. Johnson also received \$84,091.80 in unauthorized compensation including stipends, bonuses, duplicate and additional payroll payments, and salary payments that exceeded his contracted amount. His employment was terminated on December 3, 2019.
2. Former Finance Director Robert Williams received improper payroll payments totaling at least \$35,295.95. Williams collected duplicate salary payments, excessive stipends, and a questionable buy-back vacation payment. His employment was terminated on February 12, 2021.
3. Former Nutritional Services Director Michael Jones stole at least \$25,114.19 from the school. This included \$21,586.05 in unauthorized food purchases for himself. Jones bought food including shrimp, crab legs, ribeye steaks, salmon, catfish, and lobsters – food that is typically not served to students. He also used school funds to pay \$3,528.14 for auto repairs on his and another school employee's vehicles. His employment was terminated on September 28, 2020.

Comptroller investigators have also questioned another \$400,521.45 in disbursements that were authorized by Johnson and Williams. These disbursements are further detailed in the investigative report.

In November 2021, the Shelby County Grand Jury indicted Corey Johnson on one count of theft over \$250,000 and one count of theft over \$10,000; Robert Williams on one count of theft over \$250,000; and Michael Jones on one count of theft over \$10,000 and one count of theft over \$2,500.

“These thefts were carried out over a period of four and-a-half years without scrutiny by the MAHS Board of Directors,” said Comptroller Jason Mumpower. “Board members have a duty to uphold the integrity and ethics of the organization under their oversight. Each board member has a fiduciary responsibility to ask tough questions, perform due diligence, and establish clear policies and internal controls related to financial activities.”

To view the investigative report, go to: <https://comptroller.tn.gov/office-functions/investigations/find.html>

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Media contact: John Dunn, Director of Communications, 615.401.7755 or john.dunn@cot.tn.gov

