



COMPTROLLER'S INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Melrose High School Band Director

August 17, 2020

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury



DIVISION OF INVESTIGATIONS



JUSTIN P. WILSON
Comptroller

JASON E. MUMPOWER
Deputy Comptroller

August 17, 2020

Shelby County School Board Officials
160 S. Hollywood St.
Memphis, TN 38112

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury conducted an investigation of selected records of the Melrose High School Band Director, and the results are presented herein.

Copies of this report are being forwarded to Governor Bill Lee, the State Attorney General, the District Attorney General of the 30th Judicial District, certain state legislators, and various other interested parties. A copy of the report is available for public inspection in our office and may be viewed at <http://www.comptroller.tn.gov/ia/>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin P. Wilson".

Justin P. Wilson
Comptroller of the Treasury

JPW/MLC

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Melrose High School Band Director

The Office of the Comptroller of the Treasury investigated allegations of financial improprieties by Melrose High School Band Director, Jimmie Wilson. This investigation was limited to selected records for the period September 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. The results of the investigation were communicated with the Office of the District Attorney General of the 30th Judicial District.

BACKGROUND



Melrose High School is a public high school in Memphis, Tennessee, serving students in grades 9–12. Their curriculum is designed to meet the needs of students who are college-bound, planning to enter the workforce, and/or needing specialized instruction.

In December 2018 after a story aired on the local news, Shelby County officials became aware that Jimmie Wilson previously had worked as the band director/cheer coach at Fayette-Ware High School in Fayette County, Tennessee. As a result of a previous Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury investigation, Wilson had been indicted in November 2018 by the Fayette County Grand Jury on Theft of Property (\$2,500-\$10,000) and Official Misconduct and Tampering with Government Records. The Fayette-Ware High School investigation revealed Wilson had misappropriated student funds. Wilson left Fayette-Ware High School in May 2018, and in August 2018 began working as the band director at Melrose High School in Shelby County. Investigators reviewed Wilson's Shelby County Schools Employment Application and determined that Wilson misrepresented his prior employment in Fayette County.

Once Shelby County School officials learned of the Fayette County indictment, Wilson was placed on administrative leave on December 4, 2018; however, Wilson resigned effectively immediately on December 6, 2018.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

- **BAND DIRECTOR JIMMIE WILSON MISAPPROPRIATED STUDENT FEES TOTALING AT LEAST \$1,175**

Upon his resignation, Wilson left his personal belongings in his classroom including a journal detailing amounts collected from students, purportedly for band fees. The Melrose High School principal stated band directors were not authorized to collect band fees from students. Investigators determined that Wilson collected \$1,175 between September and October 2018 from eight students for band fees and did not remit these fees to the school.

- **BAND DIRECTOR JIMMIE WILSON FAILED TO GET APPROVAL PRIOR TO SCHEDULING A CANDY SALE**

Wilson placed an order on November 8, 2018 for a fundraising candy sale requesting 30 cases of candy bars, with 50 candy bars per case, totaling \$1,657.92. Wilson did not obtain approval for this fundraiser from the director of schools, as required by Section 49-2-604, *Tennessee Code Annotated*. The candy bars had already been delivered to the school when the principal learned of the order and fundraiser, so he allowed Wilson to proceed with the fundraiser. Investigators determined from interviews that Wilson collected approximately \$100 from the candy bar fundraiser that he failed to turn in to the school for deposit; however, investigators could not locate any candy bar fundraising documentation indicating how much was sold and collected from the fundraiser. The remaining unsold candy bars were disposed of by the school after December 2018.

On July 28, 2020, the Shelby County Grand Jury indicted Jimmie Wilson on one count of Theft over \$1,000 and one count of Official Misconduct.

[Melrose High School Band Director Investigation Exhibit](#)