

PUTNAM SCHOOLS HR DIRECTOR SUSPENDED



The director of Human Resources for the Putnam County School District has recently been suspended without pay. Back in August, Werner Hollaway, the Human Resources Director, was put on paid leave. However, the school board for Putnam County recently voted 3-2 to suspend Hollaway and because of that, he will no longer receive pay. The reason for his suspension was due to allegations made against Hollaway in which he was accused of sending out a number of inappropriate e-mail messages to staff members. In one e-mail message, there were pictures of two naked men enclosed. The superintendent for the school district, Tom Townsend, has said, "We had an email from an anonymous source dated 2010. We received that in February. There was no complaint about the email. We had no evidence it had been forwarded. In June a citizen wanted to appeal my decision not to terminate Mr. Hollaway. They [the school board] granted him that hearing. They launched an investigation. I received the results on July 31st, and within hours I made a decision he could not be in a supervisory role or director of Human Resources." The board continued to investigate the e-mail messages and found that some of the message contained a series of jokes about how the Detroit school chose to update testing for certain subjects, particularly math. One excerpt from the e-mail message said, "Lajames has an AK-47 with a 200-round clip. He usually misses 6 of every 10 shots and he uses 13 rounds per drive-by shootin. How many *** can Lajames ice on a drive-by before he gotta reload?" Four different staff members testified that Hollaway did, in fact, provide them with that document. These women even swore under oath about the entire ordeal. Each of the four women claims that Hollaway showed them this document while he was at work, directly during work hours. It is for this very reason that the school board members decided to suspend Hollaway from his position without receiving pay up until the end of his contract, which comes to an end in June of 2013. Even though he has been suspended, the board has allowed him to keep his sick days and the vacation days that he has accrued. One board member, Nikki Cumming, felt that Hollaway should actually be terminated because of his inappropriate behavior but says that she did end up making a notion for his suspension. Cumming said, "I felt that would be a compromise. I felt he should be terminated for his actions. I really feel strongly about consequences, and I looked at the facts and the law was broken and there is a consequence to pay, but there were a lot of emotions because he's been in the district so long and he had a lot of friends."