



CINDY BYRD RELEASES TALIHINA SCHOOLS AUDIT

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OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (November 16, 2023)

Oklahoma State Auditor & Inspector Cindy Byrd today publicly released her audit of Talihina Public Schools. This investigative audit was requested by the citizens of the school district.

The primary findings of interest are the credit card expenditures of the school superintendent. Superintendent Jason Lockhart failed to provide receipts for more than \$11,000 worth of purchases.

“Without receipts, we are unsure if any of those expenditures were for a lawful business purpose or if they were made for Lockhart’s personal expenses,” Auditor Cindy Byrd said.

Lockhart accrued a total of \$2,152 in personal expenses on a credit card designated to cover district-related expenses. Lockhart repaid \$539 yet \$1,613 remained unpaid for unauthorized purchases including \$704 for alcoholic beverages.

Lockhart also received \$1,541 for vehicle expenses which, per his contract with the district, were designated as his own responsibility. Lockhart had already been compensated with an \$800 monthly automobile allowance.

“This is a textbook example of what can happen when trust is given to one person who controls a multi-million dollar budget with a school board not paying attention,” said Auditor Byrd. “Oklahoma taxpayers appropriated this money for the purpose of providing an education for our children. Instead, an administrator abused that trust to make unauthorized purchases at taxpayer expense. Transparency, oversight, and accountability were disregarded. As a result, Oklahoma’s children have been cheated.”

The full audit report is now posted on the Oklahoma State Auditor & Inspector’s official website: <https://www.sai.ok.gov>.