

## News...

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... From Dolton School District 149

Calumet City, Illinois

For Immediate Release

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# Dolton 149 Board Majority Refutes Member's False Statements

(Calumet City, IL) – Six members of the seven-member south suburban Dolton School District 149 board of education have criticized as “false” statements attributed to a lone, freelancing board member, Wilbur Tillman, during a recent media interview in which Tillman falsely blamed the school district’s COVID-19 crisis management for the delay in the delivery to students of 3,090 Chromebook computers coming from China.

[In a September 17 Chicago Fox 32 TV report](#), Tillman is quoted by the reporter as saying that “the district didn’t immediately budget for those Chromebooks and that it’s waiting on federal funds from the CARES Act” to explain the delivery delay.

Originally ordered on March 30, the district will take possession of the computers on September 25.

Dolton 149’s spokesperson, David Ormsby, authorized by the board of education’s six-member majority, said Tillman’s information to Fox 32 was “false” and said that the other board members felt “blindsided,” “ambushed,” and “hurt” that he would “mislead” the district’s parents. The parents have been working hard to support the district in educating the children, so the board majority was shocked by the falsehoods provide by Tillman in the surprise press conference that he orchestrated.

Mr. Tillman portrayed himself as a three-year long champion for pursuing Chromebooks when, in reality, his main focus since his election to the board of education was centered around textbooks, not Chromebooks.

*“Regarding the Chromebook delivery delay, Mr. Tillman’s information provided to Fox 32 is false,” said Ormsby. “First, as far as we know, no school district in the United States budgeted for student laptops to respond to a global pandemic for the 2019-2020 school year.*

*“Second, on March 17, one day after the March 16 statewide school’s shutdown, Dolton 149’s board president instructed the district superintendent to acquire 3,000 Chromebooks, and the first purchase order was subsequently submitted on March 30 and the second on April 23. President Trump signed the CARES Act on March 27. There was no link between board*

*budgeting or CARES money and delivery of computers. In fact, payment is required only after delivery.*

*“Had Mr. Tillman bothered to consult the information provided by the administration about the purchase order history, he would have had an accurate transaction record. Instead, he chose to provide false information to Fox 32.*

*“Moreover, six months ago, Dolton 149 was competing simultaneously and frantically with tens of thousands of other school districts across the United States to obtain Chromebooks from the same, single manufacturing source: China. Dolton 149 got caught up in the same turbulence of disrupted, global supply chains as other districts. This information was explained to Mr. Tillman during the board’s August 6 board meeting. Yet, Mr. Tillman still provided false information to Fox 32 several weeks later.*

*“The six other members of the Dolton 149 Board of Education felt blindsided, ambushed, and hurt that he would mislead the district’s parents by providing false information to Fox 32 during his surprise press conference.*

*“The truth is that, under the direction of Board President Darlene Gray Everett, the district acted within 24-hours of the school closures to obtain the 3,090 computers in order to provide a high-quality, remote learning option that our students deserve.”*

The 3,090 Chromebooks in question will be received by the district on September 25 and will be in the process of being prepared for immediately utilization by students for distribution the week of October 5.