

District spent nearly \$100k on salaries, legal fees during Chiapetti's leave

Written by By Chrissy Largo Sun Correspondent
Thursday, 07 January 2016 13:12



After several efforts requesting documentation regarding the investigation of Gallup-McKinley County Schools Superintendent Frank Chiapetti, and the cost of such an investigation, Custodian of Records and Superintendent Secretary Joan Nez, disclosed some financial information to the Gallup Sun in a response letter dated Jan. 4.

According to the letter, Chiapetti was paid \$42,690.87 while on leave; Acting Superintendent Carmen Moffett was paid \$12,058.48; and legal fees added up to \$45,248.09. A grand total of \$99,997.44.

The response letter also states that, "On November 12th Central Office received confidential documentation from the GMCS School Boards lawyer regarding the investigation of Mr. Chiapetti. These documents are sealed and are in Mr. Chiapetti's personnel file and are not considered public information. Central Office is not aware of the allegations or results of the investigation. We are only aware that the Board of Education reinstated Mr. Chiapetti into his position as Superintendent on November 13th, 2015."

The Gallup Sun turned to the watchdog group, New Mexico Foundation for Open Government for input on the letter, and Executive Director, Susan Boe, said the reason the district gives for denying public access to the investigative report lacks detail.

"The school district and the school board need to explain why the documents have been withheld," Boe said. "They can't make a statement that it is a sealed confidential document."

On Aug.17, Chiapetti was placed on administrative leave; however, the details of his absence and investigation have yet to surface. On Nov.12, after a lengthy three-hour executive session, the Board voted 3-2 to retain Chiapetti as superintendent. Special Education Director, Carmen

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Moffett, had taken his place for nearly three months.