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## Lively principal facing accusations from family member

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*Another Leon County whistle-blower has come forward, this time to report alleged misdeeds by a family member.*



Another whistleblower has come forward accusing Lively Technical Center Principal Woody Hildebrandt of a variety of misdeeds — and this time, the allegations are coming from a member of his own family.

Keith Moore, Hildebrandt's brother-in-law and a carpentry and solar-energy instructor at Lively, filed a whistle-blower letter Friday with Leon County Schools accusing Hildebrandt of "mifeasance and malfeasance" involving the theft of school board-owned property and other illegal acts.

Moore's allegations are similar to those leveled by Floyd "Mann" Roberts, a welding instructor at Lively who filed a whistleblower letter Oct. 23. Hildebrandt himself became a whistleblower in May as part of a federal criminal investigation into allegations of wrongdoing in the school district's construction department.

Tallahassee attorney Tim Jansen said Hildebrandt denies all of the allegations against him. He said the accusations are coming after a federal grand-jury issued a subpoena for thousands of pages of documents from the school district.

"We understand that a whistleblower is a target for powerful people, including the people they whistleblow against," Jansen said. "And it's not surprising that after a federal grand jury subpoena was issued that Mr. Hildebrandt would become the focus of a school board investigation to undermine his credibility."

Hildebrandt has been placed on administrative leave with pay pending the outcome of an investigation being conducted by the district, said Barbara Wills, assistant superintendent for professional and community services. He earns just over \$100,000 a year.

State Attorney Willie Meggs said Wednesday he has assigned someone from his office to look into the matter. The Florida Department of Law Enforcement recently said it was reviewing an allegation against Hildebrandt but had not opened an official investigation.

"From our indications, FDLE was not moving on it," Meggs said. "The Sheriff's Office was not moving on it. It seemed to me that it's something that needed to be moved on, so we are moving on it."

In his whistleblower letter, Moore also accused Hildebrandt of using metal panels from Lively for a "massive gate" at Hildebrandt's property. He wrote that Hildebrandt told him the panels had been stolen from Lively.

Moore also wrote that Hildebrandt instructed him and two other Lively instructors, including Roberts, to pad their hours so they could pay relatives of Hildebrandt. A similar accusation was made by Roberts, who said he was forced to pay out of his school paycheck money to Hildebrandt's family members for lawn care.

Moore wrote that Hildebrandt removed a chain hoist owned by the school district and had it installed at his home on U.S. Highway 90 east by two Lively instructors. He said Hildebrandt also used racks that were built during school hours at the welding shop at Lively as part of a Tervis tumbler side business.

He also accused Hildebrandt of stealing pine straw and half a truck load of sod for use at his house, and that family members of Hildebrandt's would bring their boats and cars to Lively to be repaired using school board materials and employees during working hours.

Hildebrandt came forward as a whistleblower in late May, giving a letter to Superintendent Jackie Pons saying district money had been misspent and the competitive-bidding process violated.

A federal grand jury working with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Tallahassee and the FBI is conducting a criminal investigation into school-construction projects dating back to 2007 at 17 schools, according to documents obtained by the Tallahassee Democrat.

An anonymous, self-described group of school employees and concerned citizens sent a notebook of information to the FBI, other law-enforcement agencies and media outlets alleging favoritism in the awarding of school-construction projects. The notebook alleged that Pons handed construction contracts to vendors in exchange for

campaign contributions, which Pons has denied.

Jacksonville attorney Hank Coxe, hired by the school board to represent the district in the federal investigation, delivered a report Monday saying there was no direct correlation between campaign contributions to Pons and the awarding of construction contracts to vendors.

*Democrat senior writer Jennifer Portman contributed to this article.*

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