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## Ex-JCPS central office lawyer withdraws alternate teaching certification request

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By Antoinette Konz **CONNECT**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (WDRB) -- An ex-central office lawyer whose job was eliminated by Jefferson County Public Schools and then had a new \$84,000 teaching job created for her withdrew her "extensive application" seeking alternate certification on Monday, the same day the district submitted the request to the state.

Rebecca Blessing, a spokeswoman for the Kentucky Department of Education, told WDRB News on Tuesday that Stephanie Malone's application was received from JCPS and then withdrawn by the applicant via email.

"I am withdrawing my application for alternative certification," Malone wrote in a email to Walter Logan, a personnel specialist with JCPS that was copied to Joe Morgan, a director in the Office of Career and Technical Education with state department of education.

Malone also asked if she could have the application and documents returned to her so she may "utilize the original transcript for other purposes."

The move comes a week after WDRB News first [reported that JCPS created a teaching position at Central High School for Malone](#) -- double the salary of a starting educator -- despite not yet having teaching credentials. The job was was neither advertised nor requested.

A JCPS spokeswoman said Tuesday she wasn't aware that Malone had withdrawn her application and was looking into the issue. Malone could not be reached for comment.

On Thursday, JCPS [defended creating the \\$84,000-job for Malone](#), saying she was a valued employee and had "no where else for her to go."

"It was authorized by the superintendent and done after consulting with human resources," Michael Raisor, chief operations officer for JCPS, told WDRB News last week. "We created this position because there was no other place for her to go and because Central High School had expressed the desire to expand their law program."

However, Central High's budget for the upcoming academic year makes no request for an expanded program, and the school's former principal -- who retired June 30 -- said the school did not ask the district to fund a third law magnet teaching position. No additional students are entering the law magnet program and no additional classes were added to the schedule for this fall, he said.

JCPS officials told WDRB News that Malone had completed an "extensive application" and pursue certification through the state's career and technical education program, which allows potential educators an alternate route to becoming a teacher.

It is not clear if JCPS still plans on expanding the law magnet or if the district will create another job for her.

Meanwhile, one of three lawmakers who sent a letter to Superintendent Donna Hargens on Monday questioning how the hiring happened, said Tuesday he'd still like to how the move "fits in with the concept of local (site-based decision making council) control."

"First and foremost, this is a taxpayer transparency issue," said Rep. Jerry Miller, R-Louisville. " I don't want to get involved with the hiring of district personnel, but it's the taxpayer's right to know how this happened."

Miller, who **co-wrote the letter with state Reps. Kevin Bratcher and Phil Moffett**, said he also now questions whether he would support a JCPS legislative wish list item that asked for Hargens to **have the authority to select principals at the district's lowest performing schools.**

"Up until this happened, I had been in favor of giving superintendent more authority to name a principal at a school, but this has shaken by confidence in that," Miller said. "I'm going to carefully listen to both sides of the issue now."

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