

Monday June 16, 2008

Live TV (call in) broadcast "Open Mic" with Superintendent Dennis Thompson and Moderator Jeff Lytle (Naples Daily News), Education Channel 20. Call in number: 239-377-1020.

Question by Cathy of North Naples: Has the ESE Dept. and the Legal Dept. completed the compliance negotiations with the Office of Civil Rights regarding the Section 504 violations that were recently determined by OCR, and if not, when would you anticipate conclusion?

Thompson: We have no findings from OCR and we have not been held in, in fact in the last 6 cases that been brought to OCR, the district has prevailed in each of those cases. So there are no pending OCR complaints against the district so therefore we are not in any type of discussion with them.

Moderator: Cathy what kind of violations are we talking about?

Cathy: Procedural due process rights under 504.

Moderator: Due process rights of whom?

Cathy: This is in regards to a Class Discrimination Complaint that was filed with the Office of Civil Rights months ago, and as the complainants we were informed that the district was found in violation and that the district initially had refused negotiations with the Office of Civil Rights, but then my understanding now is they are now in, I believe currently in negotiations revising the 504 policies of the district.

Moderator: Are the complainants teachers, or janitors?

Thompson: No, those complainants would generally be parents of students who are ESE students. I've been over this with our school board attorney, we have had 6 cases in the last few years and we have no current cases pending that I am aware of, so, and we have no finding by OCR, so I am not sure what she is referring to.

Moderator: Where can she get more information?

Thompson: Well she's telling me we are, we are not. If they filed a class action suit with OCR in reference to ESE, it is still at OCR, they have not informed us of any violations whatsoever.