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'MOMMA HAWK' SQUAWKS ABOUT CHECK FRAUD RAP

ENTERTAINMENT

Page 15



by Ferman Mentrell Beckless
staff reporter

The law firm of Cochran, Cherry, Givens, Smith, Montgomery said Wednesday a lawsuit was filed in Cook County on behalf of Dr. Corla "Momma Hawk" Hawkins, who was terminated from employment with the Chicago Board of Education for "financial improprieties" and alleged acts of retaliation against staff last June.

The suit seeks unspecified damages, according to Beverly Spearman, an attorney representing Hawkins, who was principal of Paderewski Elementary School on the city's West Side.

A renowned public educator, "Hawk" was terminated by the Board of Education based on false allegations of payroll fraud, fraudulent paycheck stubs and unlawful retaliation against employees," said Spearman.

The complaint alleges civil rights violations based on disparaging remarks made by Chicago Public Schools CEO Arne Duncan and Mike Vaughn.

In a *Chicago Sun-Times* newspaper article, Duncan claimed that Hawkins had been "dishonest" and had "mismanaged money" at Paderewski.

Vaughn, who serves as spokesman for the Board of Education, publicly accused Hawkins of "financial

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