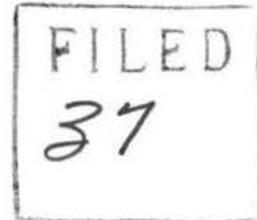


February 25, 1972

OPINION LETTER NO. 37
Answer by Letter - Klaffenbach

Mr. John C. Vaughn
Comptroller and Budget Director
State of Missouri
Post Office Box 809
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101



Dear Mr. Vaughn:

This letter is in response to your opinion request in which you ask whether a member of a county board of education could be reimbursed by the state for the purchase of office equipment such as file cabinets, typewriters and the like, under the provisions of Section 162.151, RSMo 1969.

You state that:

"A member of the Grundy County Board of Education purchased a file cabinet and requested this office to make reimbursement for same.

"Previous to this request this office made reimbursement only for meals and mileage to members of County Boards of Education.

"Section 2.150 of House Bill 2 of the 76th General Assembly appropriated \$2,500.00 as expenses for County Board of Education, which this office does not feel indicates they intended to pay for office equipment."

Section 162.151, RSMo 1969 to which you refer provides:

"Each member of the board shall be reimbursed for the actual expense incurred in the performance of his duties as a member of the

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board. All expenses shall be itemized and approved by the president of the board and certified by the secretary to the state comptroller. The reimbursement shall be paid from the state school moneys fund"

While we find no Missouri cases interpreting this section we take note of the fact that your office has given this section an administrative interpretation consistent with your views as expressed above and that, as you have noted, the legislature has appropriated a nominal amount for such expenses. Under these circumstances and in view of the strict construction always given to statutes dealing with officers' allowances or compensation, we conclude that the expenses encompassed by Section 162.151 are limited to strictly personal expenses and do not extend to office supplies or equipment.

Very truly yours,

JOHN C. DANFORTH
Attorney General