

Dress-code suit costs couple \$40,931

by UPI

INDIANAPOLIS -- An Indianapolis couple who acted as their own attorneys in a school dress-code lawsuit got an unexpected bill after missing court deadlines: \$40,931. "What in the hell are we supposed to do? It's flat ridiculous," Laura Bell told the Indianapolis Star, noting that the bill exceeds the family's annual income. Experts told the Star the case underscores the danger of acting as your own legal counsel. Laura and Scott Bell sued in July on behalf of their five children over a new Anderson Community Schools dress code that mandates solid-colored collared shirts, belts and blue, navy or khaki-colored pants or long skirts. The district requested a change of venue to federal court, prompting a flurry of deadlines for filing paperwork, which overwhelmed the couple, the Star said. A U.S. District Court judge ruled in the schools' favor because of the unmet deadlines and ordered the couple to pay the district's legal fees. The judge also said the couple couldn't represent the children because they weren't lawyers.

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