The East Baton Rouge Parish school system has begun its own investigation of two employees who were booked with making 77 harassing and threatening phone calls to two McKinley High School teachers, the system's attorney said on Monday.

School officials still had not announced a decision Monday evening regarding the status of the two employees, who were not at school on Monday, officials said.

Superintendent of Schools Raymond Arveson said the situation is "a personnel matter" and that he had not made a decision.

Mercie Lee Jones, 45, of 1986 Curtis St., was booked with 51 counts of improper telephone communication, public intimidation and criminal conspiracy, records show.

Barbara Williams Marshall, 45, of 1955 Madison, was booked with 26 counts of improper telephone communication, public intimidation and criminal conspiracy, booking records show.

Both were released on bond.

Jones is listed in the school system personnel directory as a teacher aide in the school's gifted-talented program, and Marshall is listed as a nine-month school clerk at McKinley High.

School system attorney Robert Hammond said that the two are not covered by the tenure law, which would have given them the right to a hearing.

The office of District Attorney Bryan Bush issued warrants for the arrests.

Bush said that the pair were arrested after an investigation in which tracing equipment was placed on the home telephones of people who reported
receiving harassing phone calls.

Officer Jeff Wesley of the Baton Rouge Police Department said the calls were made to teachers who had accused another teacher at the school of improprieties and, “at times, the calls were more threatening than just harassing.”

Wesley added that the two “felt that the information given on a teacher accused of misconduct by these teachers was unjustified.”

He said the phone calls were made over a one-month period.

The calls allegedly began after the school system began investigating McKinley High School graphic arts teacher Leon Robinson Sr., who subsequently took sick leave and retired from his teaching post.

Robinson was being investigated for alleged misconduct involving a student, Bush said. An East Baton Rouge Parish grand jury also has been conducting an investigation of Robinson.

The school system has been investigating other alleged improprieties at McKinley High School.