

# School board accusations denied

BY JO NAPOLITANO

jo.napolitano@newsday.com

A volunteer lawyer representing two candidates the night of the Hempstead school board election in May did nothing wrong, attorney Frederick K. Brewington told the state education commissioner this week.

Keith Corbett, an attorney with the Uniondale law firm Harris Beech, had been accused by the school district's attorneys of lying to them about having a state Supreme Court justice on the phone who was to order that ballot counting stop election night, May 19. Corbett has said he never made such a statement.

The accusations against Corbett are among a slew of others by district officials claiming electioneering, voter intimidation,



STEVE PFOST

**Attorney Frederick Brewington, above, supports lawyer.**

fraud and misrepresentation by several people, including the two winning candidates or their representatives. Last month, the school board asked the education commissioner to order a new election for the two board

seats being filled, with oversight from the state attorney general.

Brewington's memorandum, received by the state Monday, is a response to some of these accusations.

Brewington said Corbett was unfairly targeted by the school district's lawyers as a way to distract from their own shortcomings.

"Mr. Corbett did not mislead, misinterpret or falsely present himself or the desired outcome of his mission," Brewington said in the filing. "There is no proof to substantiate that there was an impact, no less a negative impact on the process or the outcome of the election, because in fact there was none."

Incumbent Maribel Touré and newcomer Gwendolyn Jackson were the top two vote-

getters in a seven-person race.

Earlier this month, the state rejected the district's request to delay their swearing in; the pair was seated July 7.

Education Commissioner MaryEllen Elia will make a determination on the matter in the coming months.

Also in this latest filing, Touré said the district's attorneys gave board members inconsistent information on election night as to why the vote count was halted.

Austin Graff, an attorney for the school district, had not yet read Brewington's latest filing and had no comment.

He said the district has until Aug. 3 to submit additional information to the state, marking the end of the back and forth filings — unless Elia asks for additional information.