



## INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY | CASE 24-0005-I

### **Findings Regarding the Prince George's County Public Schools Alleged Improper Student Suspension, Documentation, and Parental Notification Requirement of a Student.**

The Maryland Office of the Inspector General for Education (OIGE) initiated an investigation following an anonymous complaint regarding an improperly documented suspension at High Bridge Elementary School in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS). The complaint alleged that the suspension document of a student who was present at school on the day listed for suspension was fraudulently added to the student's record. Furthermore, it was claimed that the student's parent was not informed of the suspension, nor did the required readmit conference occur as mandated.

In Maryland, local educational agencies (LEAs) must adhere to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) guidelines and procedures regarding disciplinary responses to all school student behavior. COMAR guidelines provide steps and requirements that are followed when a student who receives special education services commits an infraction in school. Students who qualify for special education have an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) designed to provide educational benefits to the student, including goals, objectives, services, progress monitoring, and more.

In addition to their state rights, special education students are also afforded additional protections and rights under IDEA. Part of these protections is providing each family with a copy of the Procedural Safeguards outlining student and parent/guardian rights in special education in Maryland, which have been adopted by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and published in The Maryland Procedural Safeguards Handbook.

The OIGE substantiated the complaint. This investigation underscores the need for stringent adherence to procedural and regulatory requirements in student disciplinary actions to ensure fairness, transparency, and legal compliance.

The OIGE has completed its investigation.

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Unless otherwise noted, the OIGE applies the preponderance of the evidence standard in determining whether local school agency personnel have committed misconduct.