



## MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR EDUCATION

### INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY | 21-0013-I

#### **Findings Regarding Undue Influence or Collusion Was Applied in the Review and Awarding of a Contract by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).**

The Maryland Office of the Inspector General for Education (OIGE) initiated an investigation after receiving information alleging that possible undue influence or collusion was applied in the awarding of the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Division of Early Childhood (DEC) - Child Care Scholarship Case Management and Payment Processing contract (R00R1600082).

The OIGE investigation revealed that during early January of 2021, the contract in question was presented before the Maryland Board of Public Works (BPW) for discussion and vote to award. At the time of the BPW review, MSDE was represented members of their Business Services Division and DEC. In addition to MSDE representatives, a representative from an interested private vendor presented testimony concerning the announced contract. The transcripts of this meeting indicate only one vendor had submitted a bid. Without the submission of a bid, the interested private vendor would forfeit their opportunity to file a bid protest or appeal the disputed award to the Maryland State Board of Contract Appeals.

After a review of all documents, transcripts, and interview statements, the OIGE investigation could not substantiate the allegation and did not find any evidence that MSDE staff influenced or improperly colluded in the awarding of the Division of Early Childhood, Child Care Scholarship Case Management and Payment Processing contract.

The OIGE has completed its investigation and provided its report to MSDE for its information.

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