



MARYLAND OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR EDUCATION

INVESTIGATIVE SUMMARY | CASE 22-0006-I

Findings Regarding Potential Policy or Procedural Violations Governing a Teacher's Ability to Continue Teaching While Under Internal Investigation Involving a Student(s).

The Maryland Office of the Inspector General for Education (OIGE) initiated an investigation after receiving a complaint alleging a teacher was arrested for sexual solicitation of a minor. Upon receiving this information, the OIGE investigated potential policy or procedural violations that allowed such an individual to go undetected and continue to be around minor children. The investigation focused on whether school administrators failed to report Mark Planamente's alleged sexual misconduct with students on Employment History Review Child Abuse and Sexual Misconduct Forms.

Mark Planamente is a former teacher who had a history of allegations involving inappropriate communications with students at various Maryland schools, including Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS), the Catholic High School of Baltimore (Catholic), and Sisters Academy of Baltimore (Sisters). The OIGE's investigative authority for these schools is found in MD Education Article §9.10-104.

The OIGE could not substantiate that administrators willfully failed to report Planamente's inappropriate behavior as sexual misconduct on the Form. The investigation found that administrators from these institutions had differing interpretations of grooming behaviors, resulting in varied initial responses on the Form.

The investigation revealed the lack of understanding of what constitutes grooming behaviors by school administrators, which has resulted in inconsistent responses from educational institutions regarding allegations of sexual misconduct. The situation emphasizes the urgent need for better guidelines, enhanced inter-institutional communication, and standardized training to complete employment-related documents to uphold the safety and integrity of educational settings.

The OIGE has completed its investigation.

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