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Office of the Inspector General for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Releases 2011-2012 Annual Report

The Office of the Inspector General for Miami-Dade County Public Schools announces the release of its Annual Report for the fiscal year 2011-2012. The report summarizes several key activities and investigations conducted in fiscal year 2011-2012. The report also notes that the Office has recovered and/or saved \$2.16 million, and its investigations have resulted in seven arrests and the prosecution of an M-DCPS vendor.

In 2008, the OIG, which is a State of Florida Commission for Law Enforcement Accredited Agency, assumed the role of Inspector General for the Miami-Dade Public School District, the fourth largest in the country. Under the Inter-local Agreement (ILA) between the School Board and Miami-Dade County, the School Board Office of the Inspector General (SB OIG) is required to submit an annual report covering its activities for the previous fiscal year. Background information about the OIG and its functions, including its historical development at the School Board, can be accessed by reviewing previous annual reports that are available for viewing on its website at www.miamidadeig.org.

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To: The Honorable Chairperson, Ms. Perla Tabares Hantman
And Members, Miami-Dade School Board

Mr. Alberto Carvalho
Superintendent of Schools

From:  Christopher Mazzella
Inspector General

Subject: 2011-2012 Annual Report

Date: September 13, 2012

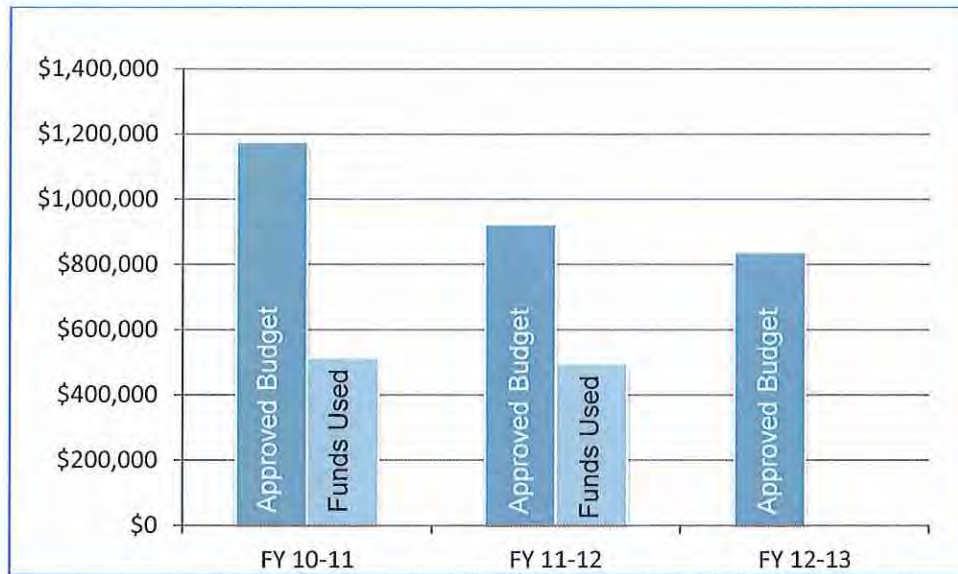
The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the School Board with the OIG's Annual Report for fiscal year 2011-2012. As you may be aware, under the Inter-local Agreement (ILA) between the School Board and Miami-Dade County, the School Board Office of the Inspector General (SB OIG) is required to submit an annual report covering its activities for the previous fiscal year. Background information about the OIG and its functions, including its historical development at the School Board, can be accessed by reviewing previous annual reports that are available for viewing on our website at www.miamidadeig.org.

BUDGET

To fund its activities for fiscal year 2011- 2012, the School Board approved a budget of \$923,874.00. This amount represents a decrease of 21.5% from the OIG's budget of \$1,174,930.00 for fiscal year 2010-2011. The approved budget for fiscal year 2011-2012 provided for a staff of four full-time employees and two part-time employees. Additionally, this budget supported Miami-Dade County resources used on a reimbursable basis to assist the SB OIG in its oversight of School Board operations. For the fiscal year 2011-2012, the OIG only expended \$496,204.82 (or 62.6%) of its \$923,874 budget.

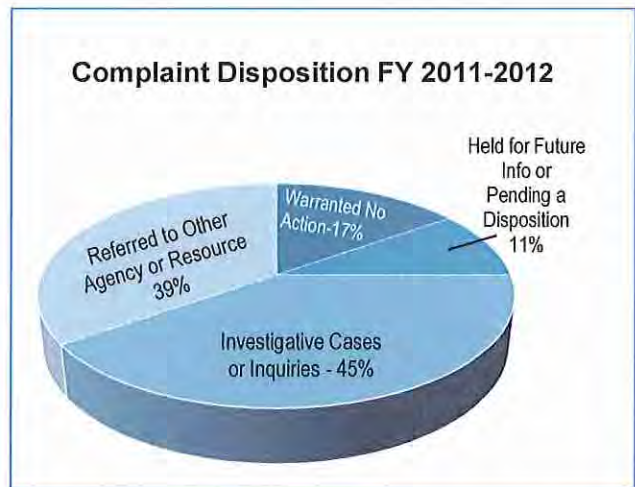
The budget for fiscal year 2012- 2013 is \$837,963.00, a decrease of 9.3% from fiscal year 2011- 2012.

BUDGETS



The ILA designates the SB OIG as the principal clearinghouse to receive and investigate Florida Whistleblower Act disclosures made by employees of the school district, as well as by members of the public. For the most part, complaints involve allegations of fraud, waste and mismanagement. Since its inception in December 2007, the SB OIG has received 482 complaints. During the 2011-2012 fiscal year complainants registered 101 complaints. Of these, 53 were made on our website, 18 through our fraud hotline, and 30 were by mail or fax.

Referrals were made on 39% of the complaints to the school district administration for resolution. Some complaints remain under review or are pending additional information and/or resources (11%). Leads from 45% of the complaints resulted in the initiation of inquiries or investigations. The remaining 17% of the complaints received warranted no action due to various reasons, such as lack of sufficient detail provided or that the matter was not within the OIG's jurisdiction.



ACTIVITIES

Through the end of fiscal year 2011- 2012, OIG audits and investigations have resulted in over \$2.16 million in recoveries and/or savings, seven arrests and the prosecution of an M-DCPS vendor. During this past fiscal year, the OIG has concluded several investigations in which we detected instances of employee abuse and criminal misconduct by district employees and vendors. Reports concerning these cases can be found on our website.

The OIG has been working with the District's School Police Department in their efforts to become an accredited police agency with the Commission on Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA). The School Police Department has rewritten many of their policies and procedures and has begun the accreditation process. The OIG has reviewed many of the School Police Department's completed accreditation files and found them to be up to the stringent standards set by the CFA. While there is more work to be done, the School Police Department is closer than ever to completing the process and receiving this prestigious recognition.

In relation to fraud fighting activities, investigations by the SB OIG Office culminated in several arrests this fiscal year. One investigation resulted in the arrest of an operator of an M-DCPS Supplemental Education Services (SES) program provider. The principal of Divine Sports, Inc. (Divine Sports), a Florida not-for-profit corporation, was charged with 47 felonies relating to fraudulent billing schemes involving the afterschool SES tutoring programs at Miami Central High School, Miami Northwestern Senior High School, and Golden Glades Elementary. The company, Divine Sports, was also charged with the same 47 felonies.

Divine Sports received almost \$1 million from M-DCPS for SES tutoring during the 2009-2010 school year. Qualified students are eligible to receive free school tutoring in reading and math. The SES program is federally-funded and those funds are administered at the local level by M-DCPS. In 2010-2011, Divine Sports billed M-DCPS over \$470,000 for SES tutoring. However, payment was withheld due to the pending criminal investigation.

Another recent investigation this year led to the arrest of a former employee who worked as a secretary at the Registrar's Office of the Miami Adult Education Center (NMAEC) from October 2007 until her lay-off due to personnel cuts in August 2011. The subject was charged with Fraudulent Use of Personal Identification. The OIG investigation determined that the subject used a student's name and driver's license to obtain Florida Power & Light (FPL) service for her home. The subject sent FPL a couple of facsimiles using the student's name and driver's license to open the account. The subject then failed to pay FPL \$1,046 for the service.

Additionally, the OIG has other reviews and investigations underway and will report their results when appropriate. And, of course, we continue to make our services available to School Board administration and School Board members as appropriate. I hope this report assists you in assessing our performance and I appreciate the support the School Board has provided to the Office of the Inspector General.