

Office of the
Inspector General
Chicago Board of Education
Nicholas Schuler, Inspector General

June 5, 2018

Via Email

President Frank Clark
Chicago Board of Education
1 North Dearborn, Suite 950
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: OIG Should Investigate Allegations of CPS Sex Crimes

Dear President Clark:

It is clear from the *Chicago Tribune's* recent "Betrayal" investigation that CPS needs an independent team to investigate CPS sexual abuse allegations.

I am recommending that the Chicago Board of Education adopt the New York City practice cited in the *Tribune*, in which that school district's inspector general — rather than its law department — conducts sex crime investigations. This eliminates the inherent conflict-of-interest problems posed under the current CPS system.

The CPS law department simply cannot get to the bottom of all sexual misconduct allegations against CPS employees while simultaneously having the job of defending CPS against lawsuits by victims of those very same crimes. That morass of competing interests makes it impossible to tell whether the law department is working for student victims or trying to limit the district's legal exposure.

The *Tribune* report is rife with instances of CPS's competing interests and lack of follow-through in sex abuse cases — situations that would be eliminated by the OIG assuming investigative responsibility for such cases. For example:

- At one high school, the CPS law department both investigated a sexual assault allegation against a coach and then drew on those investigative files to defend the district against a civil suit by the coach's victim, according to the *Tribune*.
- If the OIG had the responsibility for investigating sex crimes at CPS, it may well have recommended disciplinary action against the elementary magnet school principal who grilled a sex victim's mother instead of, apparently, calling the police. Indeed, any CPS school administrators who muddy the

integrity of OIG or law enforcement sex investigations by trying to conduct their own probes likely would be recommended for discipline by the OIG.

- The *Tribune* found no evidence that CPS employees who kept quiet about sex abuse allegations were ever criminally charged. If sex crime allegations were reported to and investigated by the OIG, the office would recommend action against employees who ignored their duties as mandated reporters.
- The *Tribune* found that the CPS law department sometimes “cuts confidential deals with problem educators to get them to resign.” Making the OIG the primary investigator of sex crime allegations at CPS would ensure that, at a minimum, the OIG would sensitively — but publicly — report on such cases as appropriate.

In short, placing sex abuse allegations under the investigative purview of the CPS OIG would assure the public that such allegations would be investigated without favor or prejudice, by a factfinder with a record of independence and transparency.

CPS children, parents and employees deserve no less.

I stand ready to discuss this recommendation at your convenience.

Regards,



Nicholas Schuler
Inspector General

cc: Maggie Hickey