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Press Release: PGCPS Strengthens Procurement Oversight and Accountability Following Inspector General Report

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For Immediate Release

CONTACT:
Office of Communications
301-952-6001
communications@pgcps.org

UPPER MARLBORO, MD — Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) has implemented corrective measures to strengthen procurement oversight, address weaknesses in internal controls, and reinforce accountability following an investigation by the Maryland Office of the Inspector General of Education (OIGE).

The investigation identified an undisclosed conflict of interest involving a former employee and roofing project contracts totaling approximately $16.8 million directed to a single subcontractor between 2023 and 2024. The report states that the contracted work was completed and that no funds were misappropriated or unaccounted for. Those findings do not diminish the seriousness of the conflict of interest or the district's responsibility to safeguard public trust.

After receiving the preliminary findings, PGCPS leadership met directly with OIGE and initiated corrective action. Under the leadership of Superintendent Shawn Joseph, Ed.D., the district has strengthened procurement procedures, supervisory review, and compliance oversight.

Actions taken include:

- **Stronger contracting requirements.** Introduced standard operating procedures requiring market research, price and best-value analyses, independent quality reviews, and auditable documentation before cooperative or rider contracts are awarded.
- **Expanded compliance monitoring.** Launched a digital request system, established a dedicated procurement compliance team, and introduced tracking tools to strengthen supervisory oversight.
- **Additional capital project oversight.** Created a Deputy Director position within the Department of Capital Programs to oversee project management and retained legal counsel from Husch Blackwell to support procurement improvements.
- **New purchasing leadership.** Appointed a new Director of Purchasing and strengthened departmental oversight to improve compliance, accountability, and supervisory review.

The district has also developed revisions to Administrative Procedure 3323. Those revisions are undergoing legal and executive review before final approval.

"Public trust requires clear standards, effective oversight, and accountability when those standards are breached," said Shawn Joseph, Ed.D., Superintendent of PGCPS. "We take these findings seriously. We have acted to address the weaknesses identified and strengthen the controls that protect resources intended for our students and schools. Our responsibility is to ensure these safeguards are consistently followed."

PGCPS plans to refer the investigative report to the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office for review and determination of any appropriate next steps.

The district will continue reviewing procurement practices and monitoring compliance with its strengthened procedures. Responsible stewardship of public funds is essential to delivering the education students deserve and maintaining the confidence of families, employees, and taxpayers.

CONTACT

Prince George's County Public Schools
Sasscer Administration Building
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301-952-6000

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