

OIG INVESTIGATIONS OF SEXUAL ALLEGATIONS

Presentation to the Board of Education of the City of Chicago

January 26, 2022



Chicago Board of Education • Office of Inspector General

What the OIG is

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) is the oversight body for Chicago's approximately 650 public, contract and charter schools. By state statute, the OIG is independent of the operations of the Board.

What the OIG does

The OIG investigates waste, fraud and financial mismanagement. As of October 2018, at the Board's request, the OIG began investigating all reports of sexual misconduct by CPS-affiliated adults where a CPS student may be the victim.

How the OIG works

The OIG conducts thorough, independent, and impartial investigations. An OIG investigation may include dozens of witness interviews and extensive information and documents from numerous sources.

The OIG is comprised of three units:

- General Investigations Unit
- Performance Analysis Unit
- Sexual Allegations Unit

Investigations by the General Investigations Unit typically involve limited or no visibility to CPS. In contrast, CPS has notice of all Sexual Allegations Unit investigations, and the OIG coordinates with OSP to ensure student safety and support throughout an investigation.

As a proactive measure, the OIG broadly construes possible sexual misconduct when it opens investigations

About 20% of the 1,288 investigations the OIG SAU opened October 2018 – December 2021 involved an allegation of unambiguous sexual misconduct (such as sexual abuse or sexual electronic communication).

About 80% of all OIG Sexual Allegations Unit (SAU) investigations involve a complaint that, on its face, does not allege sexual conduct but could indicate a failure to maintain appropriate boundaries or more serious misconduct, such as grooming:

- Coach allegedly texted with a student
- Security guard allegedly followed a student and stared at the student
- Teacher allegedly stood too close to students and touched students' backs
- Janitor allegedly gave a student candy often

TYPES OF ALLEGATIONS INVESTIGATED

Investigations Categorized by Initial Allegation Type

Cases opened October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021



*Generally, failures to report are uncovered during an investigation, rather than being alleged at the opening of an investigation.

Investigating allegations that are concerning, but not overtly sexual, accomplishes many goals, including:

1. Catching potential grooming activity early, before it escalates;
2. Helping ensure more serious misconduct is not occurring; and
3. Identifying complaints that can be referred to appropriate CPS offices, connecting students to supports and identifying staff who are in need of training and coaching in lieu of discipline.

Vigilant reporting protects students

Data shows that CPS stakeholders are reporting conduct that raises even potential concerns about an adult failing to maintain appropriate boundaries with a child. The OIG has closed 781 investigations since October 2018 and substantiated a violation of CPS policy or rules in about 30% of cases.

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE

How the OIG responds to allegations of sexual misconduct

Reporting

Complaints typically are made by students, parents, or staff, but the OIG also directly receives anonymous complaints, as well as complaints via CPD and DCFS. School staff are required to immediately report potential adult-to-student sexual misconduct to DCFS. A school administrator will also file an electronic report (via the Aspen student information system), which is automatically sent to OSP and the OIG.

DCFS/CPD collaboration

The OIG ensures that DCFS is notified in every case of potential alleged adult-to-student sexual misconduct. **Most allegations involve a potential violation of CPS policies, but not necessarily criminal conduct.**

If CPD or DCFS investigates, the OIG collaborates as much as practicable, and alerts them to new allegations and evidence implicating concerns about possible child abuse or criminal conduct.

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE

How the OIG responds to allegations of sexual misconduct

Review

The OIG automatically receives all adult-to-student sexual misconduct reports filed in Aspen, and OSP forwards any other relevant reports it receives to the OIG. The OIG immediately reviews allegations for potential threats to student safety.

Pull Staff

The OIG notifies CPS when an allegation indicates a potential threat to student safety so that CPS can decide whether the alleged perpetrator should be pulled pending investigation.

At the conclusion of the OIG's investigation, the OIG issues an investigative report to the Board that includes factual findings, policy findings, and recommendations.

KEEPING STUDENTS SAFE

How the OIG responds to allegations of sexual misconduct

Ongoing OSP collaboration

OSP and OIG SAU staff communicate extensively, both during standing weekly meetings and as circumstances require, to support students and ensure student safety throughout the course of an investigation.

Additional interim action

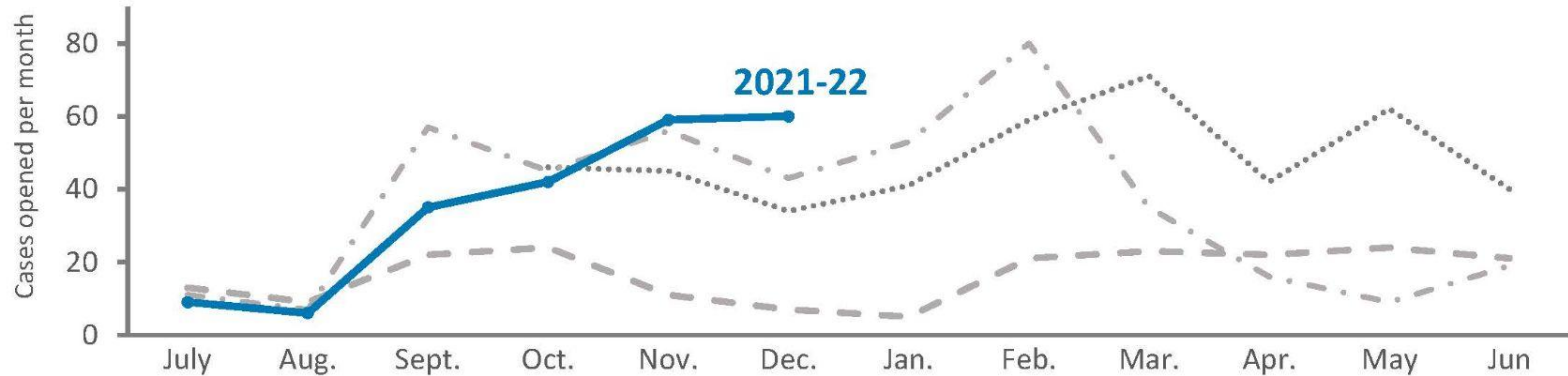
OSP and the OIG also collaborate to identify systemic concerns involving the handling of sexual misconduct allegations. Systemic concerns arise when evidence shows that school leadership knowingly failed to act or follow CPS procedures and may also be indicated by trends in the data.

REPORTING HAS RECENTLY INCREASED

Training and high-profile investigations likely impact reporting

OIG SAU Case Intake Per Month

Cases opened October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021



MARINE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

An overview of the OIG's investigation and findings

DCFS Contacted	The OIG contacted DCFS upon receiving allegations and to follow-up when new evidence arose. To the OIG's knowledge, DCFS opened 4 related investigations, none of which resulted in an indicated finding.
Staff Pulled	In the course of the OIG's investigation, the OIG recommended that staff members be pulled when allegations or evidence indicated a potential risk to student safety.
Substantiated sexual misconduct	<p>Three MLA staff engaged in sexual misconduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A teacher groomed a student and made sexual advances shortly after the student graduated in 2019.• A teacher engaged in sexual interactions with a student during the 2015-16 school year; the student was 18 years old when the interactions began.• A military instructor made several inappropriate comments to a student between the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years that, taken as a whole, constituted sexual harassment.

MARINE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

An overview of the OIG's investigation and findings

Multiple failures to report

Seven staff, including the principal, multiple security guards, and multiple teachers failed to timely report information regarding sexual misconduct by MLA staff. In some instances, reports had already been made, but new information was not reported. In other instances, staff incorrectly thought that rumors or second-hand information did not require a report.

Policy violations

13 individuals, including the principal, security guards, teachers, and other staff engaged in conduct that was not sexual misconduct, but violated CPS policies.

CPS policies protect students by limiting or outright prohibiting isolated interactions between adults and students. The OIG investigates alleged violations of such policies, even if the allegation on its face is not clearly sexual in nature, to proactively support student safety.

MARINE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

An overview of the OIG's investigation and findings

Updates to processes

School leadership has significant influence on whether staff members will report concerns regarding adult-student interactions. The OIG and OSP have instituted a standing dialogue regarding schools where systemic concerns exist about the handling of sexual misconduct allegations.

Additional action

Current CPS policy defines grooming as “behavior an adult uses ... for the purpose of sexual abuse.” This definition should be broadened to more clearly encompass situations when a student is 18 years old or has recently graduated: “behavior an adult uses ... for a sexual purpose.”

The OIG also recommends that CPS revise reporting requirements to make clear that an anonymous report does not satisfy a staff member's reporting obligations.

OIG CLOSED CASES

OIG cases closed October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021

Investigation Outcomes: Categorized by Initial Allegation

Cases closed October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021



The OIG substantiated a violation of CPS policies or rules in 25% of cases involving “Concerning: Other” allegations. In contrast, the OIG found a violation of CPS policies or rules in 58% of cases originally involving an allegation of potential grooming.

Additionally, the OIG administratively closed or issued informational reports in 41 other investigations. A case is “substantiated” when a preponderance of the evidence establishes a violation of CPS policies or standards of conduct.



OIG CLOSED CASES

OIG cases closed October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021

Substantiated Cases: Comparing Initial Allegations to Substantiated Findings

Cases closed October 1, 2018 – December 31, 2021

Allegation	Substantiated: Most Significant Factual Finding								Total Alleged
	Sexual Act	Sexual Abuse	Sexual Comment	Sexting	Grooming	Touching: Less Than Abuse	Concerning: Other	Failure to Report	
Sexual Act	12	1		1	2		3	1	20
Sexual Abuse	3	8			1	4	2		18
Sexual Comment			13	1		1	5		20
Sexting		1		2			3		6
Grooming			3		4		44		51
Touching: Less Than Abuse			1			13	14		28
Concerning: Other	1	1	2	2		6	83	5	100
Student-on-Staff Conduct				1			1		2
Failure to Report								1	1
Total Substantiated	16	11	19	7	7	24	155	7	



PERSONNEL ACTIONS

Pulled or Blocked

As of January 4, 2022, 52 CPS staff are pulled with pay in connection with an open OIG investigation, including 38 CPS teachers. From July 1, 2021, through January 4, 2022, 60 individuals were pulled or blocked following an OIG recommendation. In addition, 13 CPS staff remain pulled with pay subsequent to the closing or referral of an OIG SAU case, however certain of these individuals are currently under investigation for subsequent allegations. Additionally, 18 substitute teachers are currently blocked.

Reinstated

From July 1, 2021, through January 4, 2022, 8 individuals who were pulled or blocked were reinstated either based on the OIG's recommendation, or after the conclusion of the OIG's investigation.

Fired or resigned/retired

26 individuals who were subjects of an OIG investigation were fired or resigned/retired from July 1, 2021, through January 4, 2022.

CASE INVENTORY AND UPDATES

- The OIG continues to coordinate with law enforcement in its cases. Police are currently conducting an investigation in 11 of the OIG's cases.
- As of January 3, 2022, the OIG had 388 active investigations and had substantially completed investigating an additional 120 cases. This includes 18 Title IX sexual harassment investigations involving a formal complaint of adult-to-student sexual harassment under current Title IX regulations.
- From July 1, 2021, through December 31, 2021, the OIG opened 211 cases and closed 127 cases.

Office of Inspector General
(833) TELL-CPS
sexallegation@cpsoig.org

