



January 1, 2026

# Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2025

Office of Inspector General  
Chicago Board of Education



## **January 1, 2026**

To the people of Chicago and Illinois, CPS families, the Chicago Board of Education, the Mayor of Chicago, the Illinois General Assembly and other elected officials:

The following Annual Report of the Office of Inspector General for the Chicago Board of Education includes a summary of investigations and other matters reported to the Board of Education by the Office of Inspector General in Fiscal Year 2025, the period between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, and is filed pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1(e).

In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG remained committed to its independent oversight mission by continuing to root out fraud, waste and corruption from our district. The following are some notable examples of the OIG's cases discussed in this report:

- A Network Chief who engaged in a multiyear phony billing scheme with a vendor that defrauded the district of nearly \$90,000;
- A program manager who falsified federal grant applications year after year with inflated program enrollment numbers, leading the U.S. Department of Education to ultimately require that CPS pay more than \$1,000,000 back to the federal government;
- An IT employee who defrauded CPS of at least tens of thousands of dollars by reporting false work hours for contracted services through an IT vendor; and
- Principals who defrauded pandemic relief programs, including the Paycheck Protection Program, as well as State of Illinois pandemic-related rental-assistance programs.

Also, as previously reported, the OIG conducted a major initiative to examine millions of dollars in rising costs on travel expenditures in the district. The OIG found excessive spending, various abuses, and a travel-expense process in need of major reform.

The OIG also maintained its commitment to independent investigations of adult-on-student sexual misconduct matters. Dozens of those investigations are discussed in this report.

Significantly, the OIG found many instances of adult-on-student sexual misconduct on one high school campus. In one of those cases, an employee began grooming a student for sexual activity when she was 15 years old and began engaging in sexual acts with the student during the summer before her junior year. That employee has since been convicted of aggravated criminal sexual assault and other charges, and he has been sentenced to 22 years in prison.

The OIG also found that several other employees on that same campus engaged in sexual misconduct toward students and/or targeted former students for sex. The incidents investigated by the OIG on this campus occurred years earlier, mostly during the 2010s. Much of the conduct came to light years later when victims and witnesses reported these matters to the OIG and others. These cases demonstrate that it is never too late to make a report about sexual misconduct in schools.

On a personal note, last year, in January 2025, I was honored to be appointed the inspector general by Mayor Brandon Johnson. Of course, many of the cases discussed in this report were investigated under the leadership of Inspector General Will Fletcher, who left the office in August 2024, and Interim Inspector General Amber Nesbitt, who led the office following Inspector General Fletcher's departure. My team and I at the OIG are very grateful for their leadership and dedication to the work of the office.

It is a privilege to serve the community in this government oversight role and we at the OIG will remain committed to diligent, independent investigative work and public reporting. Please share any information you may have about fraud, theft, waste, or sexual misconduct occurring in Chicago Public Schools and do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about this report.

Sincerely,

*Philip Wagenknecht*

Philip Wagenknecht  
Inspector General

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## A. MISSION AND BUDGET

The mission of the Office of Inspector General is to ensure integrity and public trust in Chicago Public Schools operations, and to promote the wellbeing and safety of CPS students, by conducting independent, accurate and impactful investigations. The OIG was created in 1996 by Illinois General Assembly statute 105 ILCS 5/34-13.1 (the Illinois School Code) and its authority is further established in Board Rule 3-8.

In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG's budget was \$6.97 million. This is a reduction from previous years and includes the loss of four employees and several contracted positions due to budgetary constraints.

## B. STAFF TRAINING AND INVESTIGATION STANDARDS

Many OIG employees are members of the Association of Inspectors General. The AIG annually offers government oversight training and certification courses for investigators, auditors, and managers. Many OIG employees hold the designation of Certified Inspector General, Certified Inspector General Investigator, or Certified Inspector General Inspector/Evaluator.

In addition, OIG employees across all three of the office's units — the General Investigations Unit, the Performance Analysis Unit and the Sexual Allegations Unit — participate in a variety of training programs throughout the year, including on a variety of investigative tools and skills, leadership, trauma-informed interviews and investigations, child development and interview best practices, and Title IX procedures and compliance.

The OIG conducts its investigations in accordance with generally accepted principles, quality standards, and best practices applicable to federal, state, and local offices of inspectors general. In addition, the OIG exercises due professional care and independent, impartial judgment in conducting its investigations and issuing its reports and recommendations. The threshold for substantiated findings is based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.



## C. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN FISCAL YEAR 2025 AND OPENED INVESTIGATIONS

In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG received 1,278 complaints of misconduct, waste, fraud, financial mismanagement, and adult-on-student sexual misconduct.

Of the 1,278 total complaints received, the OIG opened investigations into a total of 345 cases (27%). Several factors restrict the number of cases the OIG can open and investigate, including a continuing focus on significant and complex issues in pending investigations and time consumed by post-investigation activities (e.g., preparation and testimony for hearings, trials, and labor arbitrations).

Significantly, the OIG has been historically underfunded in relation to the OIG's total oversight responsibility. Every year, the OIG receives more credible allegations than it has the resources to investigate, so the investigations that are opened are the result of an assessment of the severity of the allegations and the potential impact or deterrent effect of investigating certain subject matter.

The OIG received 381 anonymous complaints, 29.8 percent of the total complaints received during the reporting year. Although the OIG assesses allegations received by anonymous complaints as it would any other complaint, investigating allegations based on anonymous complaints is more challenging.

The table below reflects the various allegation types contained in the 1,278 complaints received by the OIG in Fiscal Year 2025.

**Type of Complaint Received Fiscal Year 2025**

Complaint Type	Quantity	Percentage
Sexual Allegations (Total) <sup>1</sup>	246	9.86%
Touching - Less than Sexual Abuse	47	1.88%
Concerning: Making Student(s) Uncomfortable/Other	36	1.44%
Concerning: Undue Attention/Overly Familiar Behavior	36	1.44%
Concerning: Electronic Communication	24	0.96%
Sexual Abuse	20	0.80%
Concerning: Boundary-Crossing Comment(s)	17	0.68%
Grooming	13	0.52%
Concerning: Viewing/Sharing Sexual Media	10	0.40%
Sexual Comment - In Person	9	0.36%

<sup>1</sup> These complaints were handled by the OIG's Sexual Allegations Unit and do not include matters that were referred to other investigative bodies at intake, such as student-on-student sexual misconduct complaints that were referred to CPS's Office of Student Protections.



**Type of Complaint Received Fiscal Year 2025**

Complaint Type	Quantity	Percentage
Concerning: Individual Gift Giving	6	0.24%
Concerning: Staring/Leering	6	0.24%
Sexual Act	6	0.24%
Outcry About Past Conduct	5	0.20%
Sexual Electronic Communication	5	0.20%
Concerning: Unauthorized Transporting Student(s)	3	0.12%
Failure to Report	2	0.08%
Retaliation	1	0.04%
Student Instruction and Management	256	10.26%
Ethics	159	6.38%
Discourteous Treatment	152	6.09%
Negligence	123	4.93%
School Safety and Security	119	4.77%
Aggressive or Verbally Abusive Language	112	4.49%
Harassment (Non-EEO)	98	3.93%
Residency Fraud (Employee)	84	3.37%
Mismanagement (Non-Financial)	75	3.01%
IDEA/504 Plan Violations	72	2.89%
LSC Violations	71	2.85%
Fraud	68	2.73%
Mismanagement / Waste of Funds	62	2.49%
Bullying/Inadequate Response to Bullying	50	2.00%
Corporal Punishment / Physical Contact	49	1.96%
EEO Violations	44	1.76%
Student: Enrollment Fraud	44	1.76%
Employee Time Falsification	42	1.68%
Conduct Unbecoming	39	1.56%
Off-Duty Criminal Conduct	36	1.44%



**Type of Complaint Received Fiscal Year 2025**

Complaint Type	Quantity	Percentage
Athletics Violations	28	1.12%
Drugs or Alcohol	22	0.88%
Contractor Violations	21	0.84%
Student: Attendance Fraud	16	0.64%
Preferential Treatment	15	0.60%
Student: Record Falsification (Other)	15	0.60%
Theft	14	0.56%
Licensure Issues	13	0.52%
Student: Academic Fraud	13	0.52%
Leave of Absence Violations	10	0.40%
Student: Code of Conduct Violation	9	0.36%
Wrongful Termination	9	0.36%
Improper Adult Sexual/Romantic Relationship (Non-EEO)	8	0.32%
Acceptable Use Violation	7	0.28%
DCFS Related Violations	6	0.24%
Fitness for Duty	4	0.16%
Transportation Issues	3	0.12%
Campaign Misconduct	2	0.08%
On-Duty Criminal Conduct	2	0.08%
Pandemic Relief	2	0.08%
Violence in the Workplace	2	0.08%
Criminal Background	1	0.04%
Retaliation	1	0.04%
Student-on-Staff Inappropriate Conduct	1	0.04%
Other	269	10.49
	<b>2,494</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



# Pandemic Relief Oversight



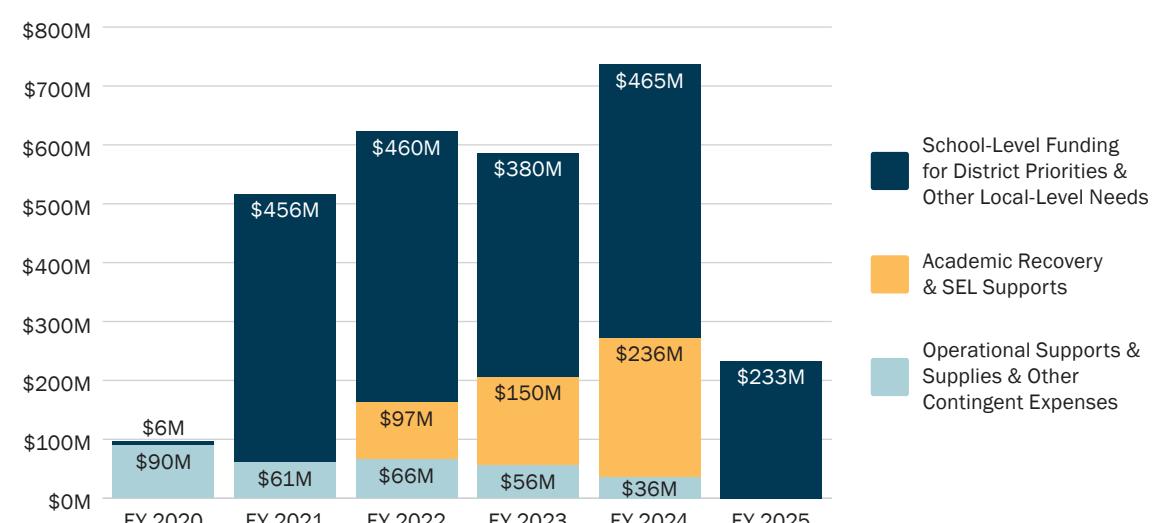
In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG continued to track the District's spending of pandemic relief funds and investigate fraud, waste and abuse with respect to pandemic era programs. Below is a summary of the District's spending of pandemic relief funds, followed by a discussion of the OIG's pandemic relief-related investigations completed in Fiscal Year 2025.

## A. CPS'S SPENDING OF PANDEMIC RELIEF FUNDS AND OIG OVERSIGHT

In Fiscal Year 2025, CPS exhausted its remaining federal pandemic relief funds, spending the last \$233 million of the \$2.8 billion allocated to it under the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER).

In its Fiscal Year 2025 budget, CPS provided the following breakdown of its past and expected federal pandemic relief expenditures by category:

### CPS's Spending of Pandemic Relief Funds Across Six Years



Source: CPS FY 2025 Budget Book

When the OIG first addressed the issue of pandemic relief funding oversight in its FY 2021 Annual Report, it noted that this unprecedented infusion of public funding would require



heightened oversight from the OIG and other stakeholders, as well as a commitment to transparency from the District regarding its use of these public funds.

Over the previous five fiscal years, the OIG completed numerous investigations of questionable spending and pandemic relief fraud, conducted performance reviews into pandemic relief-related programs and expenditures, and advocated for increased transparency and accountability in the use of ESSER funding.

The OIG immediately began reviewing pandemic-related expenditures with the onset of the pandemic and the Board's issuance of an emergency spending authorization in March 2020. During the following five fiscal years, the OIG identified several areas of questionable district spending tied to the influx of federal funds. The OIG's work included investigations and performance reviews of the following spending:

- \$28.5 million in “good-faith” payments to bus vendors who performed no services during the suspension of in-person learning and failed to pass on the funds to workers idled by the pandemic as intended (20-01078);
- 74% increase in overtime and other forms of “extra pay” between 2017 and 2021, the first year after CPS began receiving federal pandemic relief funds (20-01040);
- 77,505 laptops and other technology devices with a total original purchase price of over \$23 million reported as lost or stolen in the first year after the return to in-person learning (22-01569); and
- Overnight travel spending more than doubling between 2019 and 2024, including widespread excessive spending and policy violations (23-00134); (23-01025); (24-00309).

The OIG has also focused on the receipt of fraudulent or otherwise questionable pandemic relief aid by CPS employees, vendors, and charter schools. The OIG's work in this area includes, to date:

- Over 20 completed investigations into CPS employees who defrauded the federal Paycheck Protection Program, Economic Injury Disaster Loan program, or other federal, state, or local pandemic relief programs; and

## What Are ESSER Funds?

On March 27, 2020, Congress set aside approximately \$13.2 billion of the \$30.75 billion allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the Coronavirus Aid Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) Fund. The Department awarded these grants . . . to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the Nation.

-OESE.ed.gov



- CPS charter schools' receipt of over \$43 million in forgivable PPP loans in addition to their full CPS funding (20-01055).

The OIG remains committed to ensuring that individuals and entities affiliated with CPS who abused the public trust during the pandemic are held accountable.

Even though these programs have concluded, the OIG's work in this area is continuing and the OIG remains committed to ensuring that individuals and entities affiliated with CPS who abused the public trust during the pandemic are held accountable.

Toward this end, the OIG has continued to coordinate with law enforcement on these matters, and a former administrator whom the OIG previously found to have fraudulently obtained a PPP loan was recently charged in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois with wire fraud for making false representations to obtain the loan. The OIG's investigation (22-00653) was previously discussed in the OIG's Fiscal Year 2023 [Annual Report](#).

In addition to its investigations and reviews, the OIG has also emphasized the need for transparency in the District's use of pandemic relief funds. In previous reports, the OIG questioned the District's lack of clarity regarding its use of one-time ESSER funds for new full-time positions, choices which have been a cause of the significant budget deficits faced by CPS during the last two fiscal years.

## B. EXCESSIVE SPENDING ON STAFF AND STUDENT TRAVEL

On November 12, 2025, the OIG issued a [Significant Activity Report](#) detailing waste and abuse in the District's spending on staff and student travel that occurred after CPS began receiving federal pandemic relief funding. The report, which covered two investigations and a Districtwide review of travel spending procedures, explained how increased budgets combined with insufficient approval procedures and a lack of oversight led to a wide range of abuses, from excessive spending on lodging and airfare to questionable travel expenditures for conferences and staff retreats.

The OIG's Districtwide performance review of travel spending and procedures (24-00309) found that CPS spending on travel-related costs more than doubled between Fiscal Year 2019, the last full school year before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, and Fiscal Year 2024 – a time period in which school budgets had increased flexibility due in part to the District's receipt of \$2.8 billion in federal pandemic relief. During this period, the OIG found that inadequate policies, guidance, and training; a flawed approval process and deficient travel bookkeeping led to excessive and even, at times, exorbitant travel spending.

The report also covered two OIG investigations into questionable travel expenses. In one investigation into travel by hundreds of employees to a series of professional development



conferences in Las Vegas and other popular tourist destinations (23-01025), the OIG found that employees were frequently traveling without approval and spending far in excess of CPS's maximum allowable rates on lodging and airfare. In another investigation into international travel by employees for professional development tours (23-00134), the OIG again identified extensive policy violations as well as travel expenses that were arguably not permissible professional development.

In its reports, the OIG made a number of recommendations to improve accountability and efficiency in travel spending, and CPS has already instituted several changes, including an immediate freeze on most staff travel not tied to student activities. Since the publication of the OIG's Significant Activity Report, CPS has also issued discipline for two employees cited in the OIG's reports: A principal who misused CPS resources by staying with his spouse in a luxury suite beyond the dates of his professional development conference received a five-day unpaid suspension, and a clerk who submitted false information on a travel approval request form was required to pay restitution and received a performance improvement plan.

### C. EMPLOYEES DEFRAUDING PANDEMIC RELIEF PROGRAMS

In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG completed the following investigations involving CPS employees who defrauded pandemic relief programs. The first case discussed below involved a principal who obtained Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans by submitting false income information. The second case involved a principal who obtained pandemic-related rental assistance funds that she was not entitled to by falsely claiming that the tenants of a building she owned were delinquent on rent.

#### » *Principal Obtained Two Fraudulent PPP Loans (24-00305)*

An OIG investigation found that a principal defrauded the federal pandemic relief Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) by obtaining two fraudulent PPP loans totaling over \$41,000. At the time that the principal acquired the PPP loans, she was a principal at a different CPS school, and her salary was over \$140,000 per year.

The principal told the OIG that she did not remember applying for PPP loans; however, the OIG acquired evidence establishing that the principal had in fact applied for both loans. The

#### What Are PPP Loans?

The Paycheck Protection Program... provides small businesses with funds to pay up to 8 weeks of payroll costs including benefits. Funds can also be used to pay interest on mortgages, rent, and utilities.

- U.S. Department of the Treasury

lender who worked with the principal provided the OIG with audio recordings of phone calls in which the principal discussed her PPP loan applications with a loan officer. Loan and banking records also showed that the PPP loan proceeds totaling



over \$41,000 were deposited into the principal's personal bank account and then spent on various purchases and expenses.

On her PPP loan applications, the principal claimed to have been self-employed in 2019 and 2020 as a property manager earning over \$100,000 in net income each year. In 2019 and 2020, the principal was employed full-time as a CPS principal and did not disclose any secondary employment to CPS in either year. During her interview with the OIG, the principal admitted that she had no outside employment or side business during this period and that the information on the PPP loan applications was false.

Both PPP loans were ultimately forgiven in full by the federal government after the principal submitted fraudulent loan forgiveness applications.

The principal was also the subject of an investigation into her time and attendance. In that investigation, summarized in Section 4 below, the OIG concluded that the principal violated Board rules by not being present at her school as required and misusing teleworking privileges.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the principal's employment and place a Do Not Hire designation in her personnel file. The Board filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

#### » *Principal Defrauded State Rental Assistance Program (22-01698)*

An OIG investigation found that a principal collected at least \$23,000 in Covid-19-related rental assistance funds that she was not entitled to by falsely claiming to a state agency that the tenants of a building she owned were delinquent on rent.

The OIG found that the principal submitted fraudulent applications for relief funds to the Illinois Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERA) and Illinois Rental Payment Program (RPP). Both the ERA and RPP were programs established by the State of Illinois and administered by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) to assist struggling tenants and landlords with economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The principal submitted four applications for funding assistance to the IHDA. In each application, the principal claimed that she owned a multi-unit residential building and that one of her tenants was delinquent on rent payments. Each landlord assistance application was paired with a tenant rental assistance application, purportedly submitted by one of the principal's tenants.

The OIG determined that the principal owned the residential building in question but lied on at least three of the four landlord rental assistance applications by falsely claiming to be owed rent. Two of the principal's tenants denied that they were ever delinquent on rent, and the OIG acquired receipts and bank records which confirmed that both tenants paid their full rent on time. The principal also submitted a third application claiming that her spouse was one of the building's tenants and was delinquent on rent. However, the OIG found that



this application was fraudulent and that the spouse was never a tenant in the principal's building.

The OIG also established that the principal created false tenant rental assistance applications, leases, and receipts and submitted these fraudulent documents to the IHDA. Two of the principal's tenants who had tenant rental assistance applications submitted in their name denied that they ever submitted applications for assistance. In one case, the OIG acquired records from the IHDA which confirmed that the principal had actually submitted the tenant application without the tenant's knowledge or consent.

The OIG was unable to contact the claimed fourth tenant or determine whether the principal's fourth landlord rental assistance application was fraudulent. Nonetheless, there is a strong possibility that the fourth application was fraudulent as well, meaning that the principal may have stolen as much as \$28,000 in state rental assistance funds.

In a separate investigation, the OIG found that the principal was responsible for mismanagement of donations to her school from a local nonprofit organization and violations of related CPS policies. That investigation is summarized in Section 4, below.

The principal retired from CPS during the OIG's investigation and a Do Not Hire designation was placed in her personnel file as a result of unrelated conduct. Accordingly, the OIG did not recommend additional action by the Board.





At the OIG's recommendation, CPS has stopped using Family Income Information Forms (FIIFs) filled out annually by parents to determine school funding.

This change occurred this school year (SY 2025-26), following a June 2024 OIG report that found that more than 600 CPS employees had incomes listed on their SY 2023-24 FIIFs that appeared to falsely identify them as “low-income” — including more than 100 who were making at least \$100,000 a year at CPS. These low-income identifications qualified students for what can be highly beneficial student fee waivers and entitled their schools to extra funding.

The OIG recommended that CPS move away from using the information on the FIIF in any school funding allocations because that information was unreliable, unverified and unaudited. This followed more than a decade of OIG investigations about CPS employees who had falsified their incomes on these forms.

For this school year, low-income information from FIIFs was not used to distribute federal Title I funds to CPS schools. Instead, CPS officials said, federal Title I dollars were allocated based on the number of students directly certified by the State of Illinois as qualifying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or Medicaid benefits, or students in the care of the state or a child welfare agency.

Low-income status based on the FIIF also was excluded from any funding calculations in this school year's CPS Opportunity Index, which also is used to distribute resources to schools. Instead, the Opportunity Index identified low-income students based on the percentage uninsured and the percentage of students at 200 percent of the poverty level residing in a family's census tract.

CPS, however, has not yet updated its FIIF to reflect this change, and so the forms that were distributed at the beginning of the 2025-26 school year still stated that the purpose of the form was “for CPS to obtain information about families' incomes to determine school funding.”

The information on the forms was being used to some degree in other ways this school year. Those children who qualified as low-income (and deemed free or reduced-price meal eligible)



based on their 2025-26 forms will be identified as low-income during any state or federal tests that require the disaggregation of test scores by income status, as well as in any public reports about the percentage of low-income students in their school or district, CPS officials told the OIG.

In the wake of the OIG's June 2024 report, which was summarized in last year's OIG [Annual Report](#), a special Data and Analytics Governance Committee has been appointed to assess whether to keep, modify or replace the Family Income Information Form. That Committee also will decide who should oversee the CPS process for identifying low-income students.

Prior to the OIG's June 2024 report, CPS schools also had been using income information on FIIFs to determine which students could receive waivers from a multitude of different student fees, which can add up quickly. For example, officials at one CPS selective enrollment high school expressed concern that some apparently affluent families were seeking waivers from such items as college applications fees (typically around \$75 but up to \$125), fees for a second ACT test, and graduation fees.

This school year, the existing [Student Fee Waiver](#) policy still governed schools, CPS officials said. That policy allows principals to waive student fees of those families whose income qualifies them as free- and reduced-lunch eligible — something that can be calculated from a Family Income Information Form. In addition, a July 2025 bulletin to school leaders offered them a template to use for fee waiver applications until a CPS Student Fee Committee produces new student fee and fee waiver rules — probably by the start of the 2026-27 school year.

At least a decade ago, all parents who wanted their children to receive a free or reduced-price lunch had to fill out what was then-called a Free or Reduced Lunch Form. Since SY 2014-15, all CPS students have received free meals at school, and the Free or Reduced Lunch Form was replaced by the Family Income Information Form. Now that form, at the OIG's urging, also is undergoing changes, which may include the automation of the forms in SY 2026-27.

Due to the numerous income forms with false CPS employee income information that the OIG has examined over the years, the OIG has recommended that any future income form require households to list the names of all household members who are CPS employees, as well as their employee IDs and job titles, and to require the CPS employees who process the forms and determine free- or reduced-lunch statuses to print and sign their names, employee ID numbers and job titles on the form. According to CPS, the stakeholder who has yet to be appointed to oversee the FIIIF will determine the best format for any future FIIIF.

The OIG also recommended that CPS conduct random audits of the income information on such forms. According to CPS, a process will be established to sample and verify data on the forms.



Finally, because some schools are becoming increasingly reliant on student fees, the OIG recommended that schools be allowed to seek proof of income from families seeking fee waivers, although such proof could be waived for those students receiving SNAP, TANF or Medicaid benefits or for foster children or those in state custody.



# General Investigations Unit

The GIU is charged with the responsibility of investigating allegations of waste, fraud, financial mismanagement and other misconduct.



In addition to some of the cases discussed in Section 2 above, the OIG’s General Investigations Unit completed the following investigations in Fiscal Year 2025.

## A. PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTOR VIOLATIONS

### » *Former CPS Administrator and Vendor Engaged in Multiyear Phony Billing Scheme (22-002282)*

The OIG found that before he left CPS in March 2018, Brian Metcalf, a former CPS principal and network chief, engaged in a multiyear phony billing scheme with Kimberly Maddox, a CPS vendor, that defrauded CPS of at least \$88,500.

In December 2023, Metcalf, Maddox, and another defendant were indicted in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois on several counts of wire fraud relating to their scheme to defraud two entities Metcalf worked for after he left CPS: a nonprofit organization and a school system in a neighboring state. Metcalf subsequently entered into a plea agreement with federal prosecutors in which he admitted that between 2018 and 2022 he helped his co-conspirators generate fake invoices for goods and services they never actually provided to his employers, and that he ensured his employers paid the invoices. After they were paid, Metcalf admitted that he and his co-conspirators split the proceeds. Altogether, Metcalf admitted that he and his co-conspirators defrauded his two post-CPS employers of \$1,010,700.

Significantly, Metcalf also admitted that he and Maddox had engaged in a similar scheme when Metcalf worked for CPS. The scheme targeted the two schools Metcalf led as principal as well as the network he led as chief. Metcalf admitted that their scheme defrauded CPS of \$88,500 between approximately November 2012 and November 2017.

Former CPS principal and network chief engaged in a multiyear phony billing scheme with a CPS vendor that defrauded CPS of at least \$88,500.



Procurement records from Metcalf's former schools and network showed that CPS paid Maddox for purportedly providing professional development, grant writing training, and student financial aid counseling services. Copies of Maddox's resume obtained from emails in Metcalf's CPS email account, however, showed that she appeared to lack any professional experience with these topics.

Metcalf's CPS emails also illustrated his relationship with Maddox. The emails showed that he asked CPS employees to expedite payments to Maddox, repeatedly completed vendor sponsorships for her, and appeared to help her potentially apply for jobs within CPS. Other emails, including invitations to birthday parties, also showed that they appeared to have a personal relationship outside of CPS.

As part of his plea agreement, Metcalf has agreed to pay restitution to CPS and the other employers he defrauded according to a payment schedule that will be set at the time of his sentencing in April 2026.

Since the completion of the OIG's investigation, Maddox has also entered into a plea agreement with federal prosecutors in which she admitted to substantially the same facts and dollar amounts as Metcalf, including their scheme to defraud CPS. Maddox has also agreed to pay restitution to CPS.

Metcalf received a Do Not Hire designation in April 2018, just after he left the district, due to an unrelated CPS investigation. Accordingly, the OIG recommended that CPS add its findings in OIG Case No. 22-002282 as an additional reason for his continued Do Not Hire designation. CPS followed this recommendation. The OIG also recommended that CPS permanently debar both Metcalf and Maddox from conducting any future business with CPS, which CPS did in October 2025. Finally, CPS also gave Maddox a Do Not Hire designation.

» *[CPS Technology Device Vendors Engaged in Bid Stringing at a Dozen Schools \(23-000961\)](#)*

An OIG investigation revealed that during fiscal years 2019 through 2023, two CPS technology vendors, Vendor A and Vendor B, and their respective owners engaged in bid stringing at least 16 times across at least 12 CPS schools in violation of Illinois law, Board rules, and CPS policy.

Under Illinois law, stringing is defined as "knowingly structuring a contract or job order to avoid the contract or job order being subject to competitive bidding requirements." See 720 ILCS 5/33E-2(i-5) (eff. Aug. 25, 2017). Under the Illinois School Code, the current threshold for when competitive bidding is required for most types of purchases is \$35,000, but it was \$25,000 during the period at issue in this investigation.

In this investigation, CPS procurement records showed several instances where purchase orders were written to Vendors A and B by the same school, on the same day or a few days or weeks apart, for the same types and quantities of goods, at the same prices. Mostly,



the purchase orders were for large smartboard devices, but both companies also sold schools computers and other electronic equipment. In one instance, the purchase orders issued to the companies also included line-item charges for delivery and installation of the devices which were for the same dollar amounts. In another transaction, a purchase order was written to Vendor B but the associated invoice for the purchase was on Vendor A's letterhead.

The OIG found that each company's sales to individual schools often totaled dollar amounts just below the \$25,000 threshold in place at the time and would have easily exceeded it had they been made through a single vendor. Ultimately, the two companies' combined sales at individual schools exceeded \$25,000 at least 16 times, totaling \$677,773 in sales.

The vendors' bank records and interviews with school clerks where they did business further illuminated their stringing scheme. The bank records showed that between April 2020 and August 2023, there were 22 check payments between the companies totaling \$290,018. All but one of these payments were made from Vendor B to Vendor A, usually on the same day or a few days after Vendor B received a CPS payment. Additionally, multiple school clerks told the OIG that Vendor A's owner specifically directed them to Vendor B when they wanted to buy more goods than the \$25,000 limit would allow Vendor A to sell them.

When the OIG interviewed the owners of the two companies, they both admitted that they split purchases at CPS schools to avoid the \$25,000 competitive bidding threshold. Both told the OIG that Vendor A's owner took the lead in negotiating and coordinating with schools. He worked with suppliers to buy goods for his own company and for Vendor B, and if a sale would exceed \$25,000, he'd direct schools to buy from Vendor B.

The OIG recommended that Vendor A and Vendor B and their respective owners be debarred from future business with CPS. CPS has informed the OIG that it is pursuing the debarment of both vendors.

The OIG also recommended that relevant personnel at the 12 CPS schools where the vendors engaged in stringing receive additional training on CPS procurement rules, including on stringing specifically. CPS's procurement department informed the OIG that training was provided to administrators and office staff at the 12 schools in the summer of 2025, although training records showed that staff from one of the 12 schools appear to have skipped the training sessions they were invited to. The procurement department told the OIG that it does not plan on providing additional training sessions for the school staff who missed the training at this time.

» *District IT Employee Defrauded CPS of Tens of Thousands of Dollars by Simultaneously Working for and Reporting False Work Hours to CPS Technology Vendor (23-01256)*

An OIG investigation revealed that between August 2020 and September 2023, a now-former CPS Information & Technology Services ("ITS") employee ("Employee A") defrauded



CPS of between \$77,364 to \$135,386, but possibly more, by reporting false or grossly inflated work hours to a CPS technology services vendor (“Vendor”) that she was also working for during her CPS employment. Employee A’s time theft was enabled by the failure of her ITS managers, Employee B and Employee C, to adequately monitor and verify the work of the Vendor’s employees, including Employee A, who were deployed to their team.

Under its contract with CPS, the Vendor provided personnel to CPS to augment ITS’s workforce. Employee A began working for the Vendor in 2019 and was deployed to an ITS team under Employees B and C. In August 2020, she began working directly for CPS as a technology coordinator, but she continued working part time for the Vendor under Employee C. A few months later, Employee A told the Vendor that she was leaving the elementary school where she had been assigned in her capacity as a CPS employee and would resume working full-time for the Vendor. Employee A, however, actually continued to be employed by both employers even as she resumed reporting full-time hours to the Vendor.

The OIG subsequently initiated this investigation after ITS leadership discovered Employee A’s dual employment and potential time fraud and reported the matter to the OIG.

Employee A’s CPS and Vendor time records showed that from August 2020 to September 2023, she reported working a staggering number of hours – about 40 hours per week for each of her two employers. Employee A logged time on the same day for both employers 678 times, including 671 days on which she reported working a combined 12 or more hours for the Vendor and CPS and 569 days where she worked a combined 15 or more hours. Employee A also often claimed to have worked a combined 16 to 19 hours per day for days or weeks in a row.

According to the Vendor, after its employees submitted their work hours, the company used them to invoice CPS and, in turn, to pay the employees. The Vendor’s invoices to CPS showed that it billed the District \$293,539 for Employee A’s supposed work hours during the three years she was also employed by CPS, which would have translated to \$154,727.30 in gross pay from the Vendor for Employee A.

Although it was impossible to determine exactly how many of Employee A’s reported hours to the Vendor were fraudulent, the evidence (namely, Employee A’s and Employee C’s statements to the OIG) suggested that, at best, she worked 20 to 80 hours per month for the Vendor. Assuming this to be the case, the Vendor would have billed CPS for between \$146,769 and \$256,846, and paid Employee A between \$77,364 and \$135,386 for time she did not actually work.

When confronted with her inflated work hours, Employee A told the OIG that she did her work for the Vendor at night and on the weekends, an explanation the OIG did not find persuasive. First, Employee A herself estimated she worked about 20 to 25 evening hours per week plus additional hours on weekends. Her Vendor time records, however, showed she consistently



reported working 40 or more hours per week and rarely reported hours on Saturdays or Sundays while she was also employed by CPS.

Second, other Vendor employees who ostensibly worked with Employee A under Employee C told the OIG that they weren't aware of her working for the Vendor or of her being on their

team. Some of the employees said they thought she was simply a CPS employee, and all of them said they rarely interacted with her. Two Vendor employees as well as Employee C also said they doubted Employee A worked the number of hours she reported to the Vendor.

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Airline flight records showed that Employee A took several trips, including to international destinations, on dates she reported working full days for the Vendor and CPS.

Third, airline flight records showed that Employee A took several trips, including to international destinations, on dates she reported working full days for the Vendor and CPS. During her interview she claimed that she worked remotely during the trips, but the large number of hours

she reported working, coupled with the fact that some of her colleagues said remote work for their team was rare or impossible, made Employee A's explanation highly implausible.

Ultimately, the OIG found that Employee A's time fraud constituted theft under the Illinois Criminal Code and violated her fiduciary duty to CPS under the District's Code of Ethics.

Regarding Employees B and C, the OIG found that they failed to adequately monitor or verify the work Vendor employees like Employee A performed on their team, which enabled Employee A's fraud.

According to the Vendor, under its contract with CPS, Employee C was responsible for the day-to-day supervision of Vendor employees deployed to his team, not the Vendor's own managers. Interviews with Employee C and Vendor employees, however, revealed that Employee C worked, at least part of the time, at a different physical location than the Vendor employees, including Employee A.

Moreover, Employee C did not formally track his team's day-to-day work activities. In fact, Employees B and C intentionally avoided using ITS's ticketing system for technology services requests because they found it to be slow. Instead, schools simply contacted Employee C directly as a time-saving shortcut for service requests.

The OIG found that while Employee C was responsible for day-to-day supervision of his team of Vendor employees, Employee B was who approved the Vendor's invoices. This was the case even though Employee B appeared to have had limited contact with Employee C's team, and Employee C himself told the OIG that he did not even look at the invoices when they were sent to ITS for approval. Employee C told the OIG that he only ever approved one invoice and that he didn't think Employee B knew how many hours Employee A worked.



Employee B's and C's failure to track or monitor the Vendor employees' work meant that they had no way to accurately verify the hours the personnel, including Employee A, submitted to the Vendor. Put more simply, Employees B and C essentially rubberstamped the Vendor's invoices.

Employees A, B, and C all resigned or were laid off from CPS during this investigation. The OIG recommended that CPS maintain Employee A's Do Not Hire designation, which she received after she left CPS, and recommended that Employees B and C also receive Do Not Hire designations. CPS has since given Employees B and C Do Not Hire designations.

The OIG also recommended that ITS take all measures necessary to ensure that the Vendor and other contractors providing similar staff augmentation appropriately use CPS's service ticketing system to track their work. In response, ITS informed the OIG that its field support services vendor contracts already require vendor staff to use the ticketing system and that it is working to add similar language to staff augmentation vendor contracts that currently lack the requirement. ITS also reported that it implemented an automated work order approval procedure during the 2022-23 school year that requires vendors providing tech support at schools to submit work orders that reference a service ticket. Finally, ITS said that it has been reiterating the importance of using the ticketing system with ITS and vendor staff.

## **B. YEARS OF FALSIFIED FEDERAL GRANT APPLICATIONS IN A CPS PROGRAM**

An OIG investigation found that a program manager repeatedly falsified federal grant applications in a CPS program, even after the OIG recommended that CPS correct her misconduct as part of an earlier investigation that revealed falsified grant applications in the program. In this case (OIG 23-01260), the OIG determined that the manager of the CPS program caused CPS to submit false data on multiple federal grant applications between 2022 and 2024 in order to increase the amount of federal funding that the program received – the same type of misconduct that the OIG identified when investigating the program in 2021.

The CPS program at issue was primarily funded through an annual grant from the federal government, the amount of which was based on the number of qualified students with completed registration forms enrolled in the program. In 2021, an OIG investigation (OIG 19-02095) found that program staff had a longstanding practice of overstating the number of CPS students properly enrolled in the program on its grant applications. (The OIG's report on this investigation is included in the OIG's 2021 Annual Report.)

Between 2017 and 2020, the program reported to the federal government that between 682 and 700 students were enrolled in the program each year. However, during the OIG's investigation, staff members could only produce fewer than 300 total student registration forms for several years of programming, and many of the forms were incomplete or the information on the form could not be verified.



During the OIG's 2021 investigation, the program manager admitted to the OIG that she overstated the number of students that were properly registered and enrolled in the program but maintained that the enrollment totals listed on the grant applications were nonetheless an accurate estimate based on CPS data. The program manager's supervisor also admitted to knowing that the program had submitted inaccurate student counts in the past but told the OIG that he had instructed the manager to fix the problem and report accurate information.

The OIG found that the program manager had caused CPS to submit false information to the federal government and recommended discipline for both the program manager and supervisor. The OIG also recommended additional oversight of the program and that CPS correct the inaccurate submissions. CPS issued a Non-Disciplinary Memorandum of Understanding to both the program manager and the manager's supervisor, instructed them to comply with the grant regulations going forward, and added an additional layer of oversight of the program from the Office of Budget and Grants Management.

In 2023, the OIG opened a second investigation into CPS's management of this grant-funded program after becoming concerned that CPS was continuing to submit inflated program enrollment numbers in its grant applications.

The OIG's subsequent investigation found that the program was continuing to overstate the number of students enrolled in the program on its federal grant applications. The program's grant applications for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years both listed 300 enrolled students, while the 2024-25 application stated that 275 students were enrolled in the program. However, the OIG's investigation found enrollment records for less than 100 students during this period, and many of these records were incomplete or could not be verified.

The program manager acknowledged to the OIG that she was responsible for the enrollment data included on the grant applications but maintained that the information was accurate and that she had documentation to support the enrollment totals. Despite multiple requests, the program manager failed to provide the OIG with the supposed supporting documentation. During the investigation the program manager did, however, submit a revised grant application to the federal government claiming that the program's enrollment was actually 130 students, not 275 as originally stated on the 2024-25 grant application. (The OIG found that this revised count of 130 still significantly overstated the number of enrolled students in the program.)

Ultimately, the OIG found that the program manager engaged in grant fraud in violation of federal law by knowingly causing CPS to submit false information to the government and falsely certifying in writing that the information was accurate.

The OIG's investigation also identified significant oversight failures within the department that managed the program at issue. Despite the OIG's 2021 investigation finding that the



program was submitting false information to the federal government and the department head being instructed to “abide by all Federal Regulations, laws, and rules pertaining to grants you or members of your staff administer or oversee,” the OIG found no evidence that the department that oversaw the program conducted any meaningful review of the program’s enrollment data or its grant applications.

After the 2021 investigation concluded, CPS assigned additional oversight responsibility for the program’s grant applications to the Office of Budget and Grants Management. However, the OIG found that OBGM did not take part in the collection of enrollment data or attempt to independently verify the program’s enrollment count, which allowed the grant fraud to continue.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the program manager’s employment and enter a Do Not Hire designation in her personnel file. The Board followed the OIG’s recommendation.

The OIG would have recommended that the Board terminate the employment of the department head responsible for the program and enter a Do Not Hire designation in his employment file; however, he resigned from CPS prior to the start of the second investigation. As a result, the OIG only recommended the Do Not Hire designation for the former department head, which the Board entered in his employment file.

The OIG also recommended that CPS submit corrected grant applications to the federal government for the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 school years and ensure that future grant applications comply with the applicable regulations.

After the OIG issued its report on this matter, the U.S. Department of Education conducted a follow-up investigation into the program’s receipt of federal funding in which it requested that CPS provide documentation verifying student counts on grant applications dating back to the 2016-17 school year.

In July 2025, the Department of Education found that CPS received \$1,194,935 in federal funding under this program between 2016 and 2023 based on student data that CPS was unable to verify. CPS then agreed to pay back that amount to the federal government from non-federally sourced funds by October 26, 2026.

CPS informed the OIG that it declined to apply for the grant for the 2025-26 school year but intends to apply for the following year. CPS will replace the program manager role with a new position that will include training on grant management and be assigned specific responsibilities to ensure the grant data is reported accurately.



## C. TIME FRAUD, ETHICAL VIOLATIONS AND OTHER MISCONDUCT

### » *CPS Youth Intervention Specialist Engaged in Time Fraud with Help of School Principal, Violated CPS Employee and Student Residency Policies (23-01332)*

An OIG investigation found that a former CPS high school youth intervention specialist (“Employee A”) engaged in time fraud on at least 16 dates during the 2023-24 school year when she interned at a suburban middle school while she was on the clock at her CPS school or used sick time. The OIG also found that the principal of Employee A’s CPS school (“Employee B”) facilitated her time fraud and that the two were most likely engaged in an intimate relationship. Finally, the OIG found that Employee A and her daughter, who was a CPS student, moved out of Chicago to Calumet City, Illinois, in March or April 2023 and thus violated CPS’s employee and student residency rules.

Employee A, who resigned from CPS during this investigation and whose daughter no longer attends CPS schools, began her internship at the suburban middle school in September 2023 as part of a program she was enrolled in at a local university. The internship required her to complete at least 240 hours of service. Records from the middle school showed Employee A was present there on at least 41 dates during the 2023-24 school year and completed as many as 30 internship hours in some weeks.

A comparison of those records to Employee A’s CPS time records showed that on at least 16 dates, her internship days overlapped with days she was shown as present at her CPS school or used sick time. Additionally, geolocation data generated by Employee A’s CPS computer often showed that the device was active in the suburbs, either near her Calumet City home or near the middle school, and not at her CPS school.

The OIG found that Employee B facilitated Employee A’s time fraud by clocking her in at their CPS school when Employee A wasn’t present, editing her time records to show her as present, or allowing her to misuse sick time on her internship days.

Employee B’s own CPS time records and computer geolocation data also showed that on multiple occasions he was at Employee A’s home when he himself was supposedly sick or teleworking. This included one date on which both employees used sick time and Employee A signed in at her internship, suggesting that Employee B knew or should have known she was not actually sick.

Employee B’s device and time data also showed that on another date he supposedly teleworked while at a suburban hotel. When confronted with this, Employee B admitted that he spent four hours with Employee A at the hotel and did not actually telework, but claimed

A comparison of records showed that on at least 16 dates, Employee A’s internship days at a suburban middle school overlapped with days she was shown as present at her CPS school or used sick time.



they most likely went there just to talk and denied that they were romantically involved. The hotel's website, however, showed that its rooms are plainly geared towards romantic partners seeking an intimate getaway and can be booked overnight or in hourly blocks. The OIG thus found that, more likely than not, Employees A and B were romantically involved.

Although current Board rules prohibit romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and subordinates, the Board and CPS did not have a non-fraternization rule or policy in place between May 2019 and February 2024, which included the period at issue in this investigation. Accordingly, the OIG did not find that the employees' relationship violated Board rules or policy. It was, however, what most likely motivated Employee B to treat Employee A preferentially by helping her commit time fraud.

Finally, the OIG found that in or around March or April 2023, Employee A moved with her daughter from Chicago to Calumet City. Employee A's CPS personnel records and records for her daughter's enrollment at a CPS magnet school high school for the 2023-24 school year showed that Employee A reported living in Chicago throughout her time with CPS. Various property and utility records, however, showed that she moved to the Calumet City home in March or April 2023, and Employee A and her daughter were also observed departing from the home during OIG surveillances. The OIG thus found that Employee A violated CPS's residency rules and policies for both employees and students.

The OIG recommended that the Board place a Do Not Hire designation in Employee A's personnel file and that it attempt to recoup \$21,273 from her, the total non-resident tuition she owed for her daughter's enrollment and attendance at her CPS high school during the 2023-24 school year. The OIG also recommended that Employee B receive appropriate discipline. CPS gave Employee A a Do Not Hire designation in July 2025 and has informed the OIG that it is pursuing tuition recoupment. CPS also informed the OIG that Employee B resigned from CPS and has received a Do Not Hire designation.

» ***Principal Was Frequently Absent, Inattentive to Her School, and Misused Telework Privileges (24-00305)***

An OIG investigation found that a principal violated Board rules by failing to be present at her school as required and misusing teleworking privileges.

The principal was the subject of multiple complaints alleging that she was regularly missing and unreachable during school hours and that her inattentiveness had resulted in student abuse and neglect. The abuse allegations were referred to the Office of Student Protections, while the OIG investigated the principal's time and attendance.

The OIG interviewed the principal's coworkers and supervisors, including six staff members who had daily contact with the principal. The witnesses told the OIG that the principal had excessive absences, regularly left the school during the day without explanation, misled colleagues about her absences, was frequently tardy, and was generally inattentive to her duties as principal.



During an interview with the OIG, the principal was confronted with timekeeping records showing that she regularly swiped in well after she was expected to be at her school. The principal acknowledged that she was often late to work, which she blamed on the fact that she commuted a long distance as a new employee who was still permitted to live outside of Chicago while looking to move into the city.

In addition to the evidence that the principal was regularly tardy, timekeeping records, data from the principal's CPS-issued laptops, and other evidence corroborated the allegations that the principal was frequently absent from her school without explanation for extended periods during the school day.

The OIG also found that the principal misused teleworking privileges by falsely claiming to be teleworking on days when she was not working. The OIG conducted surveillance of the principal on two days when she represented in CPS's timekeeping records that she was working from home. On both days, the OIG observed the principal traveling to various businesses and other locations far from her home during the school day while she was supposed to be teleworking.

Separately, the OIG was informed that the Office of Student Protections and Title IX investigated the allegations of student mistreatment at the principal's school and substantiated the allegations that staff members (other than the principal) had used corporal punishment on students. The Office of Student Protections and Title IX also found that by not reporting the corporal punishment, the principal had failed to report child abuse as she was required to do under the law.

The principal was also the subject of an investigation into two Paycheck Protection Program loans totaling over \$41,000 that she received while employed as a CPS principal at another school in 2021. The OIG found that the principal had falsely claimed self-employment and defrauded the PPP program. A summary of the OIG's investigation is included in Section 2, above.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the principal's employment and place a Do Not Hire designation in her personnel file. The Board filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

» ***CPS Security Officer Filed Fraudulent Workers' Compensation Claim  
(23-00258)***

An OIG investigation found that a CPS security officer at a District administrative office filed a fraudulent workers' compensation claim in violation of the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act.

In her claim, the security officer said that she injured her left leg when she tripped over interoffice mail containers underneath her work area at the office's front security desk. Security camera footage of the security desk, however, called her claim into question. The



footage showed that on the morning of her alleged injury, the security officer did stumble slightly when her right leg – not her left – grazed one of two mail containers on the ground as she walked out from behind the security desk. The footage, however, showed that she did not fall or appear to limp afterward. In fact, the security officer immediately moved the two containers out of her work area and walked outside the building without a limp. After pacing back and forth outside, she reentered the building and appeared to begin walking with a limp on her right –not left – side. Only after sitting back down at the security desk did the officer eventually show her left leg to colleagues.

During her OIG interview, the security officer initially lied about nearly every aspect of her supposed injury, including when it occurred, how many mail containers she tripped over, whether she fell when she tripped, and what she did immediately after her alleged fall. The security camera footage described above as well as statements her supervisor and coworker made to the OIG plainly demonstrated that almost none of what the security officer told the OIG was true. When confronted with this evidence, the security officer eventually admitted that she had lied and that she filed a fraudulent workers' compensation claim.

The OIG recommended that the security officer receive appropriate discipline up to and including termination. According to CPS personnel records, the security officer was terminated from CPS and received a Do Not Hire designation. Finally, the security officer's worker's compensation claim was denied.

#### » *School Mismanaged Donations from Local Non-Profit Organization (22-01698)*

An OIG investigation found that an elementary school severely mismanaged its receipt of regular donations from a nonprofit organization that operated in the school's neighborhood. The school's staff failed to document or track the donations as required by CPS's Acceptance of All Grants, Gifts and Donations Policy, resulting in a situation where donations were likely lost or stolen, although the lack of recordkeeping prevented the OIG from determining the extent of any losses.

The OIG began investigating this matter in response to allegations that school staff members and others were systematically stealing donated items that were intended for use at the school.

The school kept virtually no records documenting its receipt of donations. However, the OIG reviewed hundreds of pages of records provided by the nonprofit organization showing that it had made large donations of school supplies and other items on more than two dozen occasions in 2021 and 2022. Records also showed that teachers from the school picked up donations from the nonprofit's warehouse at least 16 times between 2019 and 2022. The nonprofit also provided documents reflecting more than a dozen separate one-off donations of food and supplies including hand sanitizer and masks.



The OIG inspected the school's facilities and found hundreds of donated items stored in the basement and throughout the school, including furniture, school supplies, boxes of coats and shoes, diapers, appliances, and personal hygiene items.

The OIG could not determine the precise value of all the donated goods that the school received given the school's poor recordkeeping, but based on the records and items observed, the total value of the donations was easily in the tens of thousands of dollars.

Despite the volume of donations that the school received, the school had no formal process for recording and tracking the donations. Staff members interviewed by the OIG said that after the nonprofit notified the school of an available donation, staff members would simply pick up the items from the nonprofit's warehouse and deposit the items somewhere in the school, usually in the basement. Staff members did not document the receipt or distribution of these items.

CPS's Acceptance of All Grants, Gifts and Donations policy in effect during the relevant period required that schools that receive gifts or donations must notify the District's Chief Financial Officer through CPS's financial management system. However, the OIG determined that staff members did not report the donations to CPS either through the financial management system or through any other means.

According to CPS guidance, principals are tasked with recording gifts and donations and ensuring compliance with the Gifts Policy. Consequently, the OIG found that the school's principal was ultimately responsible for the school's mismanagement of the donations and the policy violations.

Staff members told the OIG that donated items would be given out to community members for various reasons or occasionally used at the school by staff or students. Multiple staff members alleged that school staff or outside individuals regularly stole donated items. However, due to the poor accounting of the goods the school had received, the OIG was unable to conclude that any individuals had in fact stolen donated items. Still, the severe mismanagement at the school created an environment in which theft was highly possible, if not probable.

In addition, during the course of this investigation, the OIG found evidence that the principal of the school had received significant Covid-19 relief payments from the State of Illinois intended for struggling landlords and renters. The OIG subsequently investigated and found that the principal defrauded two state programs of at least \$23,000 through fraudulent applications for assistance. The OIG's summary of this investigation is included in Section 2 above.

The principal retired from CPS during the OIG's investigation and a Do Not Hire designation was placed in her personnel file due to unrelated conduct. As a result, the OIG did not make any recommendations regarding the principal.



The OIG recommended that CPS issue a memorandum to principals regarding compliance with the Gifts Policy and incorporate the Gifts Policy into its training for school administrators. The OIG also recommended that CPS review the non-profit organization's relationship with other CPS schools to ensure that schools are properly documenting and using donated goods.

In response to the OIG's recommendations, CPS informed the OIG that it provided training on donation acceptance for staff members of the school at issue in this matter and that it is developing Districtwide training for school administrators.

» *Elementary School Special Education Teacher Operated and Earned Money from Pornographic Website, Took Partially Nude Photos for the Site at Her School (24-00040)*

An OIG investigation revealed that an elementary school special education teacher operated and earned money from a pornographic OnlyFans<sup>2</sup> webpage which featured photos and videos of her nude and/or engaged in various sex acts, including two "selfie" photos the teacher took of herself with her breasts exposed in her school's bathroom. The OnlyFans page also included numerous posts with photos and videos that were not recorded on CPS property but which the teacher nevertheless published while on the clock at her school or on days she used FMLA leave.

OnlyFans account records and the teacher's bank records confirmed that the teacher created the webpage in November 2023 and had earned over \$8,000 from it by May 2024. The OnlyFans records also showed that more than 3,500 users had subscribed to her page for at least some amount of time. When the OIG attempted to interview the teacher about her OnlyFans activity, she refused to answer questions about the webpage and terminated her interview. Two days later, she resigned from CPS.

It should be noted that the posts on the teacher's OnlyFans page obtained by the OIG did not appear to show any CPS students, non-CPS minors, or other CPS employees, nor did any posts show the teacher engaged in sex acts at her school.

The OIG found that the teacher violated CPS's Code of Ethics, failed to cooperate with the OIG's investigation, and violated Board rules prohibiting secondary employment during FMLA leave. The OIG recommended that the teacher receive a Do Not Hire designation. The Board followed the OIG's recommendation.

» *Special Education Teacher Lied to the OIG During Investigation and Used His CPS Email Address on "Sugar Daddy" Dating Website (20-00830)*

The OIG found that a CPS high school special education teacher ("Employee") lied to the OIG during its investigation of several serious misconduct allegations against him involving non-

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<sup>2</sup> OnlyFans is a subscription-based website frequently used by explicit content creators to post pornographic images and videos. Content on the platform is user-generated and can be either free or monetized via monthly subscriptions, tips, and pay-per-view payments.



CPS adults. The investigation also found that the Employee used his CPS email address to register for and receive emails from an adult “sugar daddy” dating website.

The OIG initiated this investigation after it received allegations that the Employee appeared in explicit videos with a 19-year-old woman (“Individual A”) posted to her pornographic OnlyFans website, that he initially paid Individual A for sex before they began a dating relationship, and that Individual A used and sold drugs and engaged in prostitution while living with him in his home.

When the OIG subsequently interviewed the complainant as well as a former friend of Individual A’s (“Individual B”), both also alleged that the Employee raped Individual B at his home in February 2020 while Individual B was intoxicated.<sup>3</sup>

While the evidence obtained by the OIG corroborated some key aspects of the allegations against the Employee, it was ultimately insufficient to fully substantiate any of the most severe allegations, including that he raped Individual B. Nevertheless, the evidence did show that the Employee lied to the OIG during his interview about the duration of his relationship with Individual A and whether he ever had sex with Individual B.

The OIG also found that the Employee used his CPS email account to register for and receive emails from a “sugar dating” website geared towards wealthy, older men willing to provide younger women with gifts, dinners, travel, and “allowances” in exchange for a dating relationship. Although some publications have likened the website to prostitution, its model – “gifts” in exchange for “companionship” rather than money explicitly exchanged for sex – is generally not considered illegal. The site’s purpose as a “dating” service, however, is still very much sex oriented, and as such the OIG found that the Employee’s use of his CPS email address to enroll on the site violated the District’s Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline for the Employee, up to and including termination. The Employee was terminated in August 2025 and received a Do Not Hire designation.

» *Elementary School Lunchroom Attendant Stole Merchandise after a “Smash-and-Grab” Incident Committed by Others (24-01056)*

An elementary school lunchroom attendant took merchandise from a retail store that had been subject to a “smash-and-grab” incident committed by others. Video footage captured by a local news outlet showed

Video footage captured by a local news outlet showed the lunchroom attendant gathering merchandise from the store and walking away with the merchandise.

<sup>3</sup> CPD did not pursue the matter because Individual B did not wish to make a report. Additionally, the OIG reported this matter to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, who interviewed several people but was unable to identify any victims or minors at risk for abuse and ultimately closed its investigation as unfounded.



the lunchroom attendant gathering merchandise from the store and walking away with the merchandise. During her interview with the OIG, the lunchroom attendant admitted to carrying store merchandise away from the store and attempting to keep it, before she was stopped by an officer who asked her to drop the merchandise. The lunchroom attendant did as she was instructed. The OIG concluded that the employee's actions likely constituted retail theft under 720 ILCS 5/16-25(a)(1).

The OIG shared the information gathered in the investigation with the Chicago Police Department. However, to date, the employee has not been charged with any crime.

The OIG recommended that the Board give the lunchroom attendant appropriate discipline, and the Board initiated termination proceedings, which are currently pending.

» ***Elementary School Teacher Provided False Information During a School Investigation (24-00364)***

An elementary school teacher provided false information during a school investigation into an assault on a CPS student by a non-CPS affiliated police officer, which occurred on school grounds. The teacher had witnessed the incident and was asked to provide a statement during a school investigation into the matter. The OIG found that the adult involved in the incident was the teacher's boyfriend, and that the teacher provided false information regarding his identity. During her OIG interview, the teacher admitted that she had provided false information regarding her boyfriend's identity and provided the correct information when questioned by the school's principal.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline. The teacher received a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan.

#### **D. CPS'S RESPONSE TO OIG REPORT ON STUDENT ATHLETE ENROLLMENT FRAUD**

In last year's annual report, the OIG detailed its investigation of a multiyear enrollment fraud scheme involving varsity boys' basketball players and their coaches at one CPS high school (OIG Case No. 22-01172). The OIG found that the team's head coach at the time and some of his assistants helped fraudulently enroll numerous players at the school by providing their families with false residential addresses and, in some instances, phony "proof-of-residency" enrollment documentation. Significantly, nearly all the players at issue played for the head coach's private club basketball team before coming to the school.

The OIG also found that the players' fraudulent enrollment was enabled by significant oversight failures within the school's administration and CPS's Office of Sports Administration ("OSA"). The OIG found that the school failed to follow its own enrollment practices for varsity basketball players, while OSA's leadership at the time lacked systems for tracking athletics complaints and transfers, and they misunderstood or were unaware of key aspects of CPS's student athletics policy.



Ultimately, the OIG made multiple recommendations to CPS for improving student athletics oversight, including that the District create a new sports oversight officer position responsible for monitoring and enforcing Illinois High School Association and CPS sports rules and that CPS retain an outside auditor for the at-issue school's sports program. In response, CPS declined to follow either of these recommendations and instead informed the OIG that (a) the OSA Executive Director will be required to monitor compliance with CPS and IHSA rules across the District and will submit quarterly reports to the Board, and (b) CPS's Internal Audit and Advisory Services team would conduct an audit of high school student athlete enrollment processes across the District.

To date, CPS has not completed either of these steps. In December 2025, CPS's Internal Audit and Advisory Services team informed the OIG that its high school athletics audit remains ongoing.

Additionally, CPS's Office of College and Career Success ("OCCS"), which oversees OSA, told the OIG that the OSA Executive Director has not yet begun making quarterly reports to the Board. OCCS, however, told the OIG that it is developing procedures to regularly audit a certain number of CPS sports teams each year. OCCS said that it anticipates the OSA Executive Director will begin reporting to the Board on this new auditing effort in early 2026.

OCCS also informed the OIG that it is developing a new process for adjudicating disputes over student athlete eligibility, and that sports teams are now required to post their rosters in CPS's student information system.

## **E. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT RESIDENCY FRAUD**

Board Policy requires employees to live within the City of Chicago absent approved exemptions. Per the Board's residency policy, an employee who lies about his or her address in conjunction with a residency violation is subject to immediate dismissal. See Board Report 18-0627-P04.

The OIG also investigates cases where families living outside of Chicago send their children to CPS schools through fraudulent means. Not only are suburban students subject to disenrollment, but their families also owe CPS tuition for the years the students attended CPS schools as non-residents.

### **» *Two Varsity Boys' Basketball Players Attended Selective Enrollment High School While Living in the Suburbs (22-01781 and 22-01782)***

In separate investigations, the OIG found that two players on a CPS selective enrollment high school's varsity boys' basketball team lived outside of Chicago and that their parents reported false information to CPS during enrollment in violation of CPS's student residency rules and policies.



In the first investigation (OIG 22-01781) the OIG found that Student A lived in Norridge, Illinois, while he was enrolled at the school and played varsity basketball during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. During enrollment, Player A's parents reported that he lived at a house in Chicago. Public property records, however, showed that the Chicago home appeared to have been owned by Player A's grandparents and then another member of his extended family, while Player A's parents had owned his suspected Norridge home since December 2000. Vehicle registration records also showed that Player A's parents had multiple vehicles registered at the Norridge address, and student records for Player A's non-CPS elementary and middle schools showed that he lived at the Norridge home.

OIG surveillance further established that the Norridge address was Player A's true residence.

When the OIG spoke to Player A's father, he claimed that he and his son actually lived at a different Chicago address than the one listed in his enrollment records. The father, however, plainly lied about the second Chicago home, claiming that he'd owned it since 2002 or 2003 when deed records showed that he actually bought it in August 2022 — a month after Player A was enrolled at his CPS high school — and then later sold it in 2025, after Player A transferred out of CPS. Furthermore, there was no evidence that Player A or his family ever lived there.

In the second investigation, OIG Case No. 22-001782, the OIG found that Player B, who attended the same CPS high school as Player A during the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years and also played varsity boys' basketball, actually lived in Lake Forest, Illinois. During enrollment, Player B's mother reported that she and Player B lived at an apartment in Chicago that the OIG determined was owned by Player B's private basketball coach.

Public records showed that Player B's parents had in fact owned their Lake Forest home since January 2014 and had multiple vehicles registered there. OIG surveillance further confirmed that the boy and his mother were living in Lake Forest and not Chicago.

During their OIG interviews, both Player B's mother and his private basketball coach claimed that Player B and his mother moved into the coach's basement just before Player B's freshman year at his CPS school because Player B's parents were separating. The OIG, however, found that their stories were often inconsistent, contradictory, or simply not believable, and they failed to establish that Player B lived in Chicago.

Both Players A and B transferred out of their CPS school to non-CPS high schools during these investigations.

The OIG recommended that both players be permanently barred from attending CPS selective enrollment or magnet schools and that the Board attempt to recoup the amount of non-resident tuition each family owed for their children's CPS attendance while living outside of Chicago. For each family, this amount was \$18,954 for the 2022-23 school year and a prorated percentage of \$21,273.27 for the portion of the 2023-24 school year each student



completed before transferring out of CPS. In response, CPS has informed the OIG that it is pursuing tuition reimbursement and selective enrollment school bans for both families.

The OIG notes that its findings in these investigations follow its investigation of a major enrollment fraud scheme involving varsity basketball players at another CPS high school, OIG Case No. 22-001172, which was summarized in the OIG's 2024 Annual Report. Like the players in that investigation, both Players A and B are highly talented student athletes who played basketball at a CPS high school with a highly regarded athletics program. While the OIG did not obtain sufficient evidence to show a concerted scheme to recruit and fraudulently enroll Players A and B at their CPS high school, the OIG nevertheless could not exclude that possibility.

In its summary of OIG Case No. 22-01172 in last year's annual report, the OIG noted that it recommended that CPS strengthen its athletics oversight by creating a new athletics oversight officer position responsible for managing, investigating, and enforcing compliance with CPS and Illinois High School Association athletics rules across the District. CPS declined to create this new position and instead informed the OIG that the Executive Director of the CPS Office of Sports Administration will be required to monitor compliance with CPS and IHSA rules and make quarterly reports to the Board. As noted in the previous section, however, these reports have not yet started.

#### » *Manager Lived in Homewood and Matteson (24-00356)*

A manager in a Central Office department resided in Homewood, Illinois, and then in Matteson, Illinois, from 2015 until at least 2025. During his OIG interview, the employee admitted to residing in Homewood and then in Matteson while employed by CPS. The OIG also conducted surveillances that revealed the steps the employee took to conceal his suburban residency, which involved using the Chicago home of his in-laws as his CPS address-of-record. In addition, Cook County Clerk, Illinois Secretary of State, utility, and village records showed that the employee resided in both suburban locations.

The OIG recommended that the manager's employment be terminated and that a Do Not Hire designation be added to his personnel file. The Board followed the recommendation.

### **Fifteen Staff Members at One School Violated the CPS Residency Policy by Residing Outside of Chicago, Including Three Who Lived Outside of Illinois (22-01361)**

An OIG investigation found that 15 employees at a school violated the CPS residency policy. The OIG initiated this investigation after an assistant principal notified the OIG that data from their online school newsletter platform showed that an unusual number of staff were opening the newsletter from locations far outside of Chicago.

The OIG determined that the school's remote work policy allowed staff to circumvent CPS's residency requirements. Although the school in question allowed some staff to do much



of their work remotely, there was no exception in CPS's residency policy that applied to the school's staff. The OIG reviewed the school's handbooks, hiring records, and conferred with the principal, as well as Central Office and Network staff to further confirm that the school's staff had not been told that the residency requirement did not apply to them.

After reviewing public records, which indicated that several employees were tied to residences outside of Chicago, the OIG requested that each of the employees certify their residency. Some employees did not respond, others failed to meet the certification requirements, and one admitted that she did not reside at her claimed CPS address-of-record. Each employee was later interviewed. In addition, the OIG reviewed property, secretary of state, and voter registration records, and analyzed geolocation data from CPS devices issued to the employees.

» *SECA Resided in Florida*

The OIG found that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Haines City, Florida, with her family from October 2022 until at least May 2024. The evidence established that the SECA attempted to conceal her Florida residency from CPS and intentionally misled CPS about her residency status in order to evade the Residency Policy.

In accordance with the Residency Policy, the OIG recommended that the SECA's employment be terminated and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board advised the OIG that dismissal charges were filed and that discipline proceedings are ongoing.

» *SECA Resided in Maywood and Glen Ellyn*

The OIG established that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Maywood, Illinois, and then in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, from September 2018 until at least June 2024, while maintaining a Chicago address on file with CPS. During her OIG interview, the SECA claimed that she owned properties in Maywood and Glen Ellyn but did not live in them. However, the OIG found numerous records tying her to Maywood and Glen Ellyn, and geolocation data further confirmed that the SECA was residing in Maywood and Glen Ellyn.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The SECA later resigned from CPS, and the Board placed a Do Not Hire designation in her personnel file.

» *School Counselor Resided in Woodstock*

The OIG found that a counselor lived in Woodstock, Illinois, from November 2020 until at least May 2024. The counselor admitted to the OIG that her husband and children

The OIG found that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Haines City, Florida, with her family from October 2022 until at least May 2024.



lived in Woodstock and claimed that she commuted back and forth between Chicago and Woodstock but failed to produce any significant evidence supporting her assertions. The OIG did not find the counselor to be credible, and geolocation data acquired by the OIG firmly established that she was residing in Woodstock.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the counselor's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

#### » *Bilingual SECA Resided in Indiana*

The OIG's investigation found that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Dyer, Indiana, from August 2018 until at least June 2024. The evidence clearly showed that the SECA had been living in Indiana with her family in a home she owned since 2018.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board advised that dismissal charges were filed and that discipline proceedings are ongoing.

#### » *Bilingual SECA Resided in Oak Forest*

The OIG established that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by maintaining Chicago addresses on file with CPS when she in fact resided in Oak Forest, Illinois, with her family beginning in or around December 2018 until at least May 2024. While the SECA claimed that she lived in both Chicago and Oak Forest, she admitted that she primarily stayed in Oak Forest during the 12 months prior to her OIG interview. Documentary evidence and geolocation data showed that the SECA in fact resided in Oak Forest.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board advised that dismissal charges were filed and that discipline proceedings are ongoing.

#### » *Special Education Teacher Resided in Ohio*

A special education teacher violated the CPS Residency Policy by living in Lakewood, Ohio, and then in Bay Village, Ohio, while maintaining a Chicago address on file with CPS, from March 2020 until at least June 2024. The teacher admitted that she had lived in Ohio since March 2020 when she moved into a home owned by her family in Lakewood, Ohio, and later moved into her partner's home in Bay Village, Ohio, where the couple resided with their daughter.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the teacher's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.



#### » *Teacher Resided in Wilmette*

The OIG determined that a teacher used the Chicago address of an investment property he owned as his CPS address-of-record for several years when he in fact resided in Wilmette, Illinois, with his family from June 2019 until at least May 2023. The teacher claimed that he resided in Chicago and provided inconsistent statements and evidence to support this claim. The OIG did not find the teacher to be credible and documentary evidence and geolocation data clearly established that he resided in Wilmette with his family.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the teacher's employment and a Do Not Hire designation be placed in his personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and the teacher resigned. A Do Not Hire designation was added to his personnel file.

#### » *SECA Resided in Evergreen Park*

The OIG established that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by living in Evergreen Park, Illinois, while reporting Chicago addresses to CPS, from May 2019 until at least May 2023. The SECA claimed that she purchased an Evergreen Park home for her sibling, mother, and son, but that she did not reside at the home. However, records connected her to the Evergreen Park home from 2019 to 2024 and geolocation data for her CPS computer showed that in 2022, 2023, and 2024, her device was overwhelmingly located in Evergreen Park.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that discipline proceedings are ongoing.

#### » *Special Education Teacher Resided in Lake Barrington*

The OIG found that a special education teacher violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Lake Barrington, Illinois, with her son and husband from at least the start of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 until at least May 2023. The teacher provided a conflicting account of her residency while employed by CPS and acknowledged spending the vast majority of her time in Lake Barrington since at least the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The OIG did not find any credible evidence that she was actually residing in Chicago at any point between early 2020 and May 2023, and geolocation data further confirmed that the teacher was residing in Lake Barrington.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the teacher's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.



#### » *SECA Resided in Lyons and Downers Grove*

The OIG found that a SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Lyons, Illinois, and then Downers Grove, Illinois, from at least 2018 to May 2023. The SECA admitted that she was not living in Chicago, as she claimed to CPS, between 2018 and May 2023, while working as a full-time CPS employee subject to the CPS Residency Policy. The SECA admitted that after she became aware of the OIG's investigation, she became a part-time employee because she was not in compliance with the CPS employee residency requirement.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The SECA's employment was subsequently terminated and a Do Not Hire designation was placed in her personnel file.

#### » *Bilingual SECA Resided in Berwyn*

The OIG found that a bilingual SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Berwyn, Illinois, beginning in or around August 2016 until at least May 2023 while reporting Chicago addresses to CPS. The SECA claimed that she was temporarily living in Berwyn with her family. However, documentary evidence demonstrated that the SECA was living in Berwyn on a permanent basis and geolocation data showed that her CPS device was found in Berwyn on numerous occasions compared to none at her CPS address-of-record.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the SECA's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that discipline proceedings are ongoing.

#### » *Special Education Teacher Resided in Dolton*

A special education teacher violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Dolton, Illinois, beginning in or around January 2023 until at least May 2023. The OIG did not find the teacher's inconsistent account of her residency to be credible and geolocation data further established that she did not reside at her claimed Chicago address-of-record.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the teacher's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

#### » *SECA Resided in Streamwood and Bourbonnais*

A SECA violated the CPS Residency Policy by residing in Streamwood, Illinois, and then in Bourbonnais, Illinois, from in or around April 2020 to January 2025. The SECA admitted to the OIG that he stayed in Streamwood with his family for months at a time between 2019 and 2023, when he purchased a home in Bourbonnais. The evidence acquired by the OIG showed that the SECA did not live in Chicago and that he intentionally misled CPS by listing a false Chicago address as his address-of-record in order to evade the residency requirement.



During the course of the investigation, the SECA resigned his CPS employment. The OIG recommended that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in his personnel file. The Board followed the OIG's recommendation.

» *SECA Resided in Dolton*

The OIG found that a SECA reported Chicago addresses-of-record to CPS from at least August 2018 to in or around February 2023, when she in fact resided in Dolton, Illinois, during this period. After being confronted by the OIG, she admitted that she resided in Dolton.

During the course of the investigation, the SECA resigned her employment with CPS. The Board subsequently placed a Do Not Hire designation in her personnel file at the recommendation of the OIG.

» *Teacher Resided in Homewood and Flossmoor*

The OIG established that a teacher violated the CPS Residency Policy by living in Homewood, Illinois, and then in Flossmoor, Illinois, from February 2022 until at least May 2023. The evidence acquired by the OIG showed that the teacher did not reside in Chicago when hired by CPS and that she never moved into Chicago as required by the Residency Policy. During her OIG interview, she admitted that after being hired by CPS she did not move into Chicago and never obtained a residency waiver.

The OIG recommended that the Board terminate the teacher's employment and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in her personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges and notified the OIG that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

## F. ARRESTS AND CHARGES FOR OFF-DUTY CRIMINAL CONDUCT

» *Former School Aide Sentenced to Four Years in Prison (22-00749)*

A school aide was charged in the Circuit Court of Cook County with seven felony counts, including two Class X felonies, related to a home invasion. The school aide pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated unlawful restraint (720 ILCS 5/10-3.1(a)), a Class 3 felony, and the remaining charges were dropped. He was sentenced to four years imprisonment and received credit for time served.

While the criminal case was pending, the school aide's CPS employment was terminated and a Do Not Hire designation was placed in his personnel file in August 2023. The school aide has not been an active employee since that time.

The OIG's investigation was previously discussed in the OIG's FY 2023 Annual Report, before the conclusion of the school aide's criminal case.



» *Former Part-Time Elementary School Security Officer Charged with False Report to a Public Safety Agency (23-01606)*

A former police officer and part-time elementary school security officer was charged with one felony count of disorderly conduct for falsely reporting an offense to the police (720 ILCS 5.0/26-1-A-4), a Class 4 felony. The charge was later amended to false report to a public safety agency (720 ILCS 5/26-1(a)(5)), a Class A misdemeanor, to which the security officer pleaded guilty. She was sentenced to two years of probation with conditions. In addition, the State of Illinois law enforcement certificate previously issued to her was permanently revoked, and she was prohibited from serving as a law enforcement officer in the future.

The security officer resigned from CPS in December 2023, and a Do Not Hire designation was later placed in her personnel file.

» *Former Payroll Specialist Charged with Several Felonies Related to a Home Invasion (23-01094)*

A former payroll specialist was arrested for a home invasion incident in Indiana and charged in the Superior Court of Lake County, Indiana, with four felonies including robbery (35-42-5-1(a)(1)); criminal confinement (35-42-3-3(a)); residential breaking and entering (35-43-2-1.5); and battery (35-42-2-1(c)(1)); as well as two misdemeanors including theft (35-43-4-2(a)) and criminal mischief (35-43-1-2(a)). A seventh misdemeanor count of criminal trespass (35-43-2-2(b)(1)) was later added, to which the former payroll specialist pleaded guilty, and the remaining charges were dropped. He was sentenced to one year in the Lake County Jail, which was suspended and to be served on probation.

The payroll specialist resigned his CPS employment in January 2024. A Do Not Hire pending investigation designation was placed in his personnel file after his arrest, which was later lifted. CPS informed the OIG that no further action was taken regarding the former payroll specialist.

» *Former Teacher and Charter School Employee Charged in Two Separate Cases with Methamphetamine Delivery and Online Sale of Stolen Property (24-00726)*

A charter school teacher was arrested and later charged with methamphetamine delivery (720 ILCS 646/55(a)(1)), a Class X felony and an enumerated offense that would make him ineligible for CPS employment. The teacher was arrested a second time and was later charged with online sale of stolen property (720 ILCS 5/16-40(a)), a Class 2 felony.

The teacher pleaded guilty to an amended charge of possession of methamphetamine (720 ILCS 646/60(a)), a Class 3 felony, in the first case, as well as the online sale of stolen property charge in the second case. He was sentenced to 30 months of Treatment Alternatives for Safer Communities probation in each case, to run concurrently.



His employment with the charter school was terminated in April 2024. The Board informed the OIG that it took no further action regarding the former charter school teacher.

» ***SECA was Sentenced in Two Separate Criminal Cases to Two Years Imprisonment (24-01055)***

A SECA was arrested twice while employed by CPS and had been on probation for a two-year period shortly before he started working for CPS.

Prior to his CPS employment, the SECA was arrested and charged in the Circuit Court of Cook County with aggravated unlawful use of a weapon (720 ILCS 5/24-1.6(a)(1)) and obstruction of justice (720 ILCS 5/31-4(a)), Class 4 felonies. The SECA eventually pleaded guilty to obstruction of justice and the aggravated unlawful use of a weapon charge was dismissed. He was sentenced to two years of probation, which was satisfactorily terminated in June 2024.

In August 2024, the SECA was stopped by police for a traffic violation, which led to police discovering a cannabis like substance and a firearm for which the SECA did not have a valid firearm owner's identification (FOID) card. He was later charged in the Circuit Court of Cook County with possession of a firearm without a FOID card (430 ILCS 65/2(a)(1)), a Class 3 felony, and three counts of aggravated unlawful use of a weapon (720 ILCS 5/24-1.6(a)(1)), Class 4 felonies.

Months later, the SECA was again stopped by police for a traffic related offense, during which police observed suspected cannabis and eventually discovered that the SECA was in possession of a stolen firearm. He was later charged with possession of a firearm without a FOID card (430 ILCS 65/2(a)(1)), a Class 3 felony; resisting or obstructing causing injury (720 ILCS 5/31-1(a-7)), a Class 4 felony; and three counts of aggravated unlawful use of a weapon (720 ILCS 5/24-1.6(a)(1)), Class 4 felonies.

The SECA pleaded guilty to one count of possession of a firearm without a valid FOID card in both cases. He was sentenced to two years in prison in each case, to run concurrently, and he received credit for time served.

The SECA received a five-day suspension, to be issued when he returns to work.



# Sexual Allegations Unit

The SAU investigates allegations of sexual misconduct by a CPS-affiliated adult, including CPS and charter school employees, contractors and volunteers, where the victim is a student.



## A. OVERVIEW

Since it was formed in 2018, the OIG's Sexual Allegations Unit has conducted thorough, independent, and impartial investigations of adult-on-student sexual misconduct matters while ensuring effective coordination with law enforcement and transparency with the public.

With respect to public reporting, the OIG gives public presentations at Board meetings multiple times a year and also reports on its findings and recommendations in all its substantiated cases. Summaries of all the substantiated SAU cases completed in Fiscal Year 2025 are set forth below.

The OIG's investigations in this area are critical because they are often the only avenue through which the offender may be held responsible for their conduct. While the OIG coordinates with law enforcement – and several of the cases discussed below involve criminal charges and convictions – criminal prosecutions can be hindered by various factors, including a higher burden of proof and the reluctance of some victims and witnesses to participate in criminal proceedings. Further, the OIG is often the sole investigating body because many cases involve sexual misconduct that does not rise to the level of a criminal offense, even though that conduct is nevertheless very serious. For example, the OIG investigates all adult-on-student cases involving sex acts, but those acts generally are not criminal offenses if the student is 18 years old or older. Similarly, the criminal grooming statute does not apply when the victim is 17 or older.

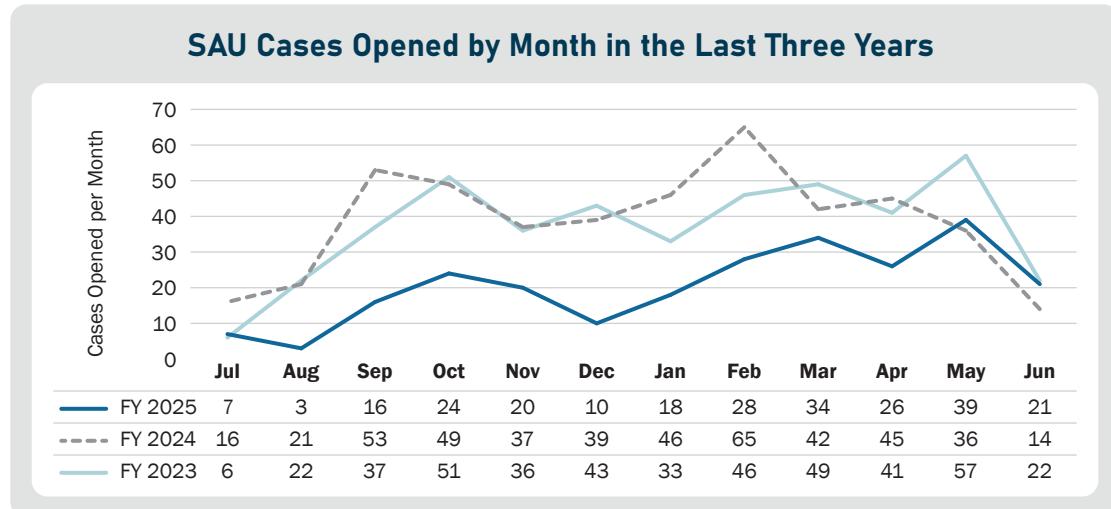
Beyond sexual assault, sexual abuse, and grooming, the OIG also investigates non-criminal misconduct where it nevertheless constitutes sexual misconduct or harassment under CPS policy.

In addition, prior to 2025, the OIG opened numerous non-sexual misconduct cases where it was alleged that other policies had been violated, such as policies or guidelines covering electronic communications, transportation of students, or gift giving. At the beginning of the 2024-25 school year, the OIG stopped taking many of those cases when it was clear that the alleged conduct was not sexual misconduct. The OIG made this change to ensure sufficient resources were devoted to the more serious cases the OIG's SAU was formed to investigate – grooming, sexual abuse and assault, sexual harassment, and other types of sexual misconduct. Importantly, the OIG still investigates cases where sexual misconduct was not

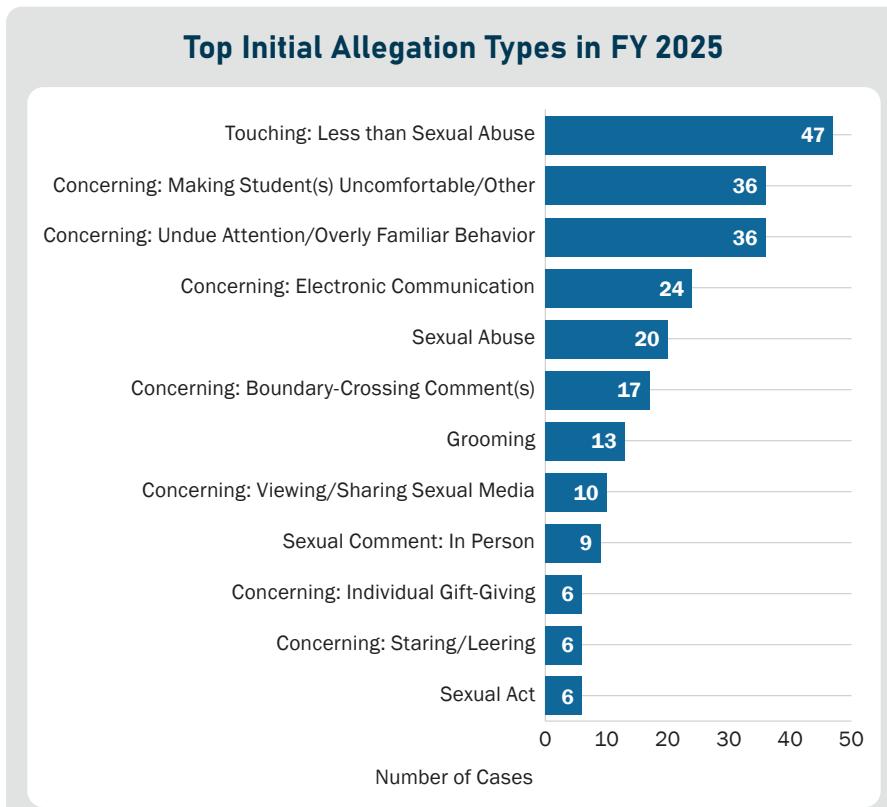


alleged, but where the alleged conduct raises concerns that sexual misconduct or grooming may be occurring, such as a staff member texting a student late at night about personal matters or giving candy to a particular student over and over.

During Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG SAU opened 246 cases and closed 335 cases.



As discussed above, the SAU adjusted its case allocation criteria to focus its resources on allegations of adult-on-student sexual misconduct and other misconduct that raises grooming concerns.

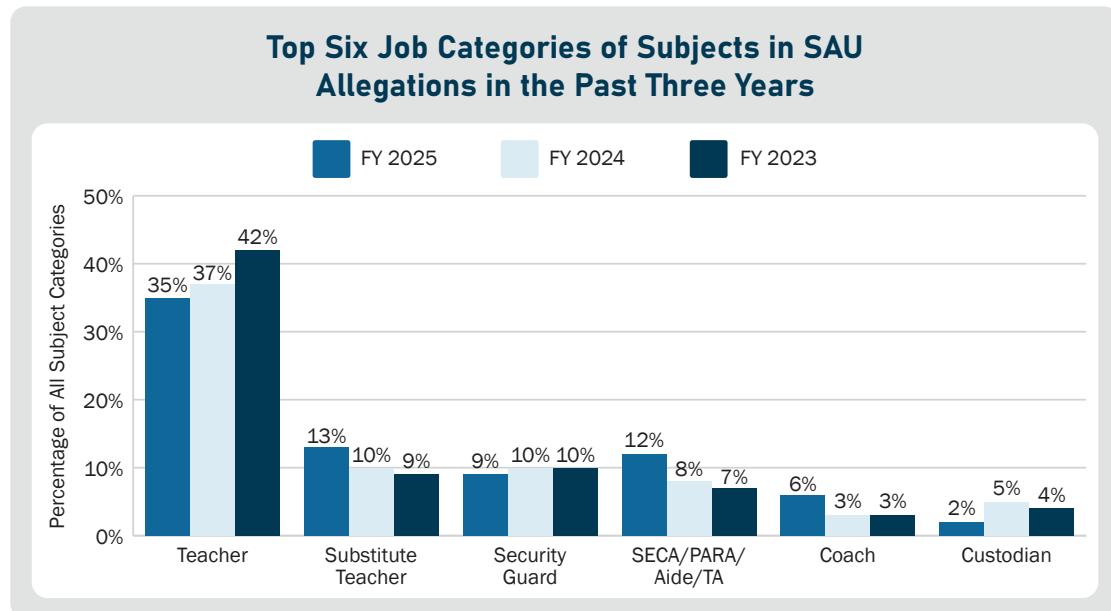


The following chart shows the nature of the allegations in the cases the SAU opened in Fiscal Year 2025.

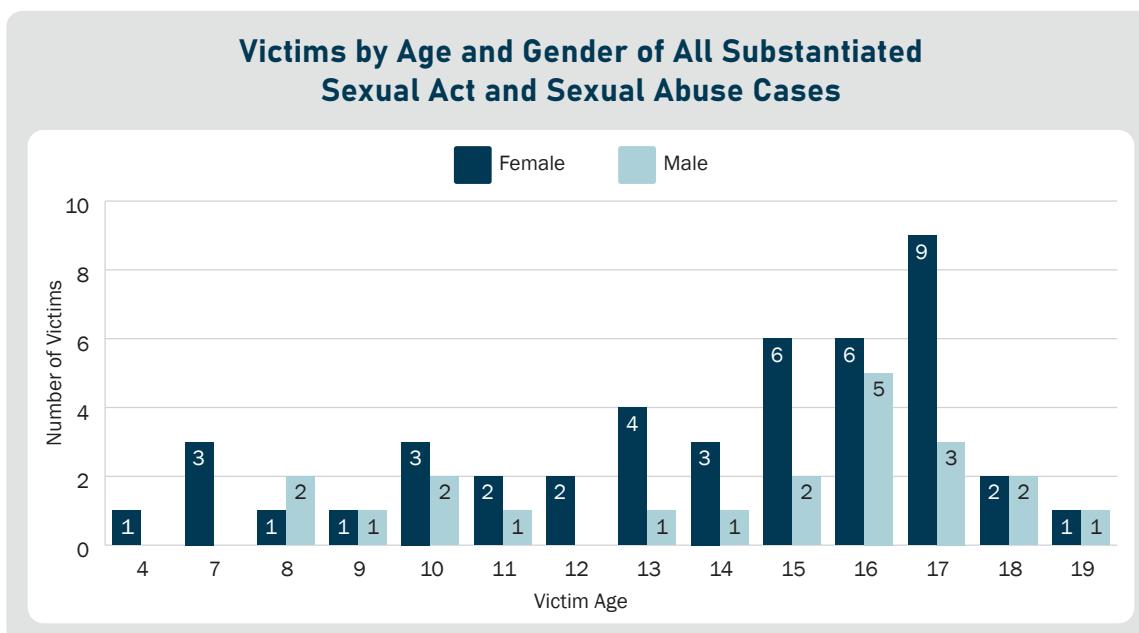
The SAU continues to compile data relating to its complaints and investigation outcomes. This data not only helps improve the SAU's efficiency and operations but has allowed the SAU to identify and track noteworthy trends and shifts across its investigations.



The following chart reflects the top six job categories that were the subject of SAU allegations for the last three years. By regularly tracking this information and sharing it with the Office of Student Protections and Title IX, the SAU hopes to support the District's proactive prevention and training initiatives.



The following is a breakdown of victim gender and age information in the cases since 2018 where the OIG substantiated the most severe types of misconduct: Sexual Act (penetration) or Sexual Abuse (physical conduct for sexual gratification, such as groping, fondling, and other physical sexual acts). The OIG's investigations have identified 44 female students and 21 male students who have been victims of this misconduct, with their ages ranging from four to 19.



Of the 335 SAU cases closed in Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG issued 55 reports with substantiated findings of misconduct and issued 23 reports discussing completed investigations where the conduct at issue was not substantiated. Additionally, after conducting an initial investigation, the OIG referred 139 matters to other CPS departments and closed 118 matters because the conduct at issue did not warrant further investigation.

Each substantiated case is discussed below in more detail. The first section details a series of sexual misconduct matters on one campus and provides a summary of the OIG's broader concerns and recommendations, as well as CPS's response to those recommendations. The next section summarizes the OIG's other cases involving physical sexual acts, followed by a section summarizing other sexual misconduct cases and a section summarizing cases involving non-sexual policy and guideline violations.

## Types of SAU Cases



### B. MANY CASES OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT ON A HIGH SCHOOL CAMPUS

In Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG completed several investigations of staff members at two high schools ("School A" and "School B"), ultimately determining that seven staff members across these two schools engaged in sexual misconduct toward students and/or targeted former students for sex, mostly during the 2010s. Schools A and B, along with other high schools, are located on the same campus (the "Shared Campus"). Students who attend high schools on the Shared Campus play on athletic teams together and share certain facilities.

The victims and witnesses who made the initial reports ... exhibited enormous bravery and potentially prevented more students from being victimized.

In addition to the investigations completed in Fiscal Year 2025, the OIG previously found that at least one other staff member at the Shared Campus engaged in sexual misconduct toward a student during the same general timeframe.

Eight staff members (who are referred to below as Employees 1 through 8) engaging in this type of behavior suggests a systemic problem. It appeared to peak in 2015 and 2016, when seven of the eight staff



members engaged in misconduct. The OIG did not uncover an obvious root cause for this, but there were indications that staff on the Shared Campus routinely crossed boundaries with students and created an environment where grooming behaviors might have seemed like normal interactions.

The investigations also confirmed the following general points:

- **Speaking out for someone else can make the difference:** It can be very difficult for victims of adult-on-student sexual misconduct to report their experiences, and not everyone is in a position to do this. For that reason, it is crucial that community members look out for each other. Some of the affected students made the first report in these investigations, but in many cases, the OIG's investigation was triggered by a concerned classmate or friend who contacted a trusted staff member about what they knew. The victims and witnesses who made the initial reports or who agreed to participate in the resulting investigations exhibited enormous bravery and potentially prevented more students from being victimized. The OIG also commends the staff members who followed reporting protocols and made sure the reports from students and alumni made their way through the proper channels.
- **It is never too late to make a report:** The majority of the allegations in these investigations were delayed outcry allegations, meaning that a significant amount of time passed before the allegation was reported. While delayed outcry cases can be harder to prove and may take longer to investigate, the OIG has pursued and substantiated many of these cases over the years.
- **Training and awareness are key:** Most of the misconduct found in these investigations occurred before the 2018-19 school year, when CPS adopted guidelines regarding staff-student boundaries and overhauled its policies for staff-student electronic communications and the reporting of sexual misconduct allegations. These investigations have confirmed that CPS must remain vigilant in training staff on these policies going forward. It is also important to ensure that students, parents, and guardians are aware of these policies so that staff members who violate them for a nefarious purpose (such as messaging students on social media to groom them for sexual activity) are quickly identified and less likely to gain a student's trust.

Each of the investigations on this campus are discussed below, followed by the OIG's systemic concerns and recommendations and CPS's responses.

### **School A Dean Sexually Abused a Student, Resulting in a 22-Year Prison Sentence (21-00718)**

A School A staff member who held the title of "dean" (**"Employee 1"**) began grooming a student for sexual activity when she was a 15-year-old sophomore. Employee 1 approached



the student at school and requested her Snapchat username, then began to exchange messages with her. Employee 1 began engaging in sexual acts with the student when she was 15 or 16 years old, during the summer before her junior year.

The abuse continued throughout the student's junior and senior years, and the student became pregnant twice during this period of time. Employee 1 took the student to obtain an abortion both times, and he posed as the student's stepfather to circumvent state law, which required minors to obtain parental consent for the procedure.

Employee 1 continued to engage in sexual acts with the student after the student left CPS. After they stopped engaging in sexual acts and Employee 1 learned that the student was in a new relationship, he sent the student multiple messages with implied threats. The student reported Employee 1 to the police and also informed the police that Employee 1 had sexually abused her when she was a CPS student. This triggered the OIG's investigation. The student provided ample proof of her past communications with Employee 1, and CPD and the OIG obtained additional corroborating evidence.

A preponderance of the evidence established that Employee 1 committed numerous criminal offenses, including criminal sexual assault, grooming, and stalking. Needless to say, he also violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Policy in place at the time.

DCFS declined to investigate because the student was an adult at the time the allegations were reported.

CPD investigated the allegations, and Employee 1 was charged and went to trial in the Circuit Court of Cook County on two counts of aggravated criminal sexual assault, four counts of criminal sexual assault, and one count of aggravated criminal sexual abuse. A jury found Employee 1 guilty as to one count of aggravated criminal sexual assault, two counts of criminal sexual assault, and one count of aggravated criminal sexual abuse. Employee 1 was acquitted of the remaining three charges. The court sentenced Employee 1 to 22 years in prison.

CPS pulled Employee 1 from active duty upon receipt of the allegations, and he resigned shortly thereafter. A Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was placed in his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in Employee 1's personnel file. Because Employee 1 still had family ties to CPS, the OIG also recommended out of an abundance of caution that CPS permanently block him from all CPS campuses. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.



## **School A Teacher Groomed a Student for Sexual Abuse and Had Romantic Interactions with the Student (23-01037)**

A School A teacher (“Employee 2”) groomed a 17-year-old student for sexual abuse when the student was a junior and rising senior. Employee 2 was the student’s teacher and athletic coach.

The OIG began investigating approximately seven years after the conduct occurred, based on a report from the student’s classmate. The classmate felt compelled to report what she knew about this matter after being interviewed in connection with two OIG investigations of other staff members at the Shared Campus.

The student agreed to cooperate with the OIG’s investigation. She said that she and the teacher communicated electronically and met alone outside of school. They discussed personal topics, such as the student’s problems at home and their respective dating relationships. On multiple occasions, Employee 2 told the student that she had romantic feelings for her. The student told the OIG that she and Employee 2 kissed, but the student was not comfortable discussing the extent of their physical interactions.

Phone records corroborated the student’s account and the classmate’s timeline of events. They showed that Employee 2 and the student exchanged over 18,000 text messages over the course of three-and-a-half months and had many lengthy phone calls, often late at night.

Employee 2’s conduct violated CPS’s Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual Harassment policy in effect at the time, which strictly prohibited any romantic or sexual conduct between staff and students.

There was insufficient evidence that Employee 2 violated any criminal laws. The Illinois grooming statute, 720 ILCS 5/11-25, applies only where the victim is 16 or younger, and here the student was 17 years old when the conduct began. Further, because the student did not specify the extent of the physical contact beyond kissing, there was insufficient evidence that Employee 2’s conduct constituted aggravated criminal sexual abuse under 720 ILCS 5/11-1.60(f). The statute prohibits an individual from engaging in an act of “sexual conduct” with a 17-year-old victim, where the individual is in a position of trust, authority, or supervision with respect to the victim. However, “sexual conduct” is defined narrowly under 720 ILCS 5/11-0.1 as “touching or fondling” the “sex organs, anus, or breast” of the victim or the accused, and here the student did not disclose any physical contact beyond kissing, though such sexual conduct may have occurred.

DCFS was not contacted because the student was an adult when the allegation was received.

The student chose not to pursue a police investigation.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a Do Not Hire designation in Employee 2’s personnel file and take all additional appropriate steps to prevent her from working for, or volunteering



in, the District in the future. The OIG further recommended that CPS specifically notify administrators on the Shared Campus that Employee 2 is not permitted to coach students on a volunteer basis or otherwise. Finally, the OIG recommended that CPS notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings.

The Board added a Do Not Hire designation to Employee 2's personnel file, sent an email to the School A principal specifying that Employee 2 is not permitted to coach students under any circumstances, and notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings.

### **Investigation of Multiple Staff Members at School B (21-01183)**

The OIG completed a far-reaching investigation involving allegations of sexual misconduct at School B. What began with a single allegation of sexual misconduct against a teacher, Employee 3, quickly grew in scope and complexity as the OIG began receiving additional sexual misconduct complaints about Employee 3 and three other School B staff members: Employee 4, Employee 5, and Employee 6. The OIG also received and investigated complaints about other staff members, but these allegations were not substantiated.

Employee 3 and Employee 4 were active employees when the OIG began investigating. Employee 5 and Employee 6 had resigned from CPS years earlier.

The numerous allegations regarding these School B staff members were investigated together because of the significant overlap in staff and student witnesses, allegations, and evidence.

The OIG was the only investigating body. Nearly all of the allegations were made by students who had already graduated, and many of the allegations concerned conduct that occurred after they had graduated. The most serious allegations relate to conduct that took place between 2011 and 2019. DCFS did not investigate any of the allegations because all of the alleged victims were adults when the conduct at issue came to light.

Most of the alleged conduct was not criminal in nature, often due to the student's age at the time of the conduct.<sup>4</sup> Some of the students who made allegations against Employee 3 filed police reports, but CPD deemed the conduct non-criminal. The allegations against Employee 6 involved potentially criminal conduct, but the alleged victims either did not participate in the investigation or told the OIG that they were unwilling to discuss their experiences with Employee 6.

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<sup>4</sup> The Illinois sexual assault and sexual abuse statutes generally do not apply where the victim is 18 or older at the time of the conduct, even if the perpetrator is a teacher or someone else in a position of trust, authority, or supervision in relation to the victim. The Illinois criminal grooming statute does not apply where the victim is 17 or older. See 720 ILCS 5/11-1.20, -1.60, -25.



» *School B Teacher Targeted More Than a Dozen Female Students for Sexual Communications or Physical Sex After They Graduated, Engaged in Flirtatious Interactions with At Least One Enrolled Student*

The OIG initiated this investigation after two School B graduates contacted a School B staff member and reported that their former teacher (**“Employee 3”**) had engaged in a sexual relationship with a recent graduate several years earlier. The reporting graduates expressed their concern that Employee 3 may have groomed students while they were still in high school and could still be doing so.

Employee 3 worked at three CPS high schools, spending the longest stretch of his career at School B. He was a popular teacher who was known to hold strong influence over his students, especially his female students. He is also an attorney and founded a legal clinic that provided services at School B and later expanded to other CPS schools.

The investigation established that Employee 3 engaged in a pattern of forming close relationships with female students, knowing that he would pursue some of them sexually after they graduated. His typical pattern of behavior was as follows: After a student graduated, Employee 3 would message them on Facebook Messenger, sometimes continuing an existing conversation that Employee 3 had initially established for academic purposes. At first, Employee 3 would check in with the former student, sometimes providing support as they adjusted to college. Then, Employee 3 would initiate flirtatious and/or sexual conversations. The content of his messages ranged from suggestive and ambiguous to explicitly sexual, depending on which former student he was speaking with. He would make suggestive comments, ask the former student about their sex life, talk about his own sexual preferences, send nude images to the former student, and/or attempt to set up in-person meetings with the former student.

More than a dozen former students who graduated during the 2010s told the OIG that they had this type of experience with Employee 3, or a similar experience. In at least four cases, Employee 3 met with the former student in person and had sex with them.

Employee 3 admitted that he pursued sexual relationships with certain former students, and had sexual conversations with others, but he claimed that it was entirely appropriate to do so because CPS never told him not to. Regardless, this investigation established that Employee 3 laid the groundwork for these interactions by forming close relationships with female students and gaining their trust. Employee 3 engaged in various behaviors that made female students view him as trustworthy and safe, including the following:

- Employee 3’s curricula were largely focused on sex-related topics and social issues that affect girls and women (even, in at least one case, when he was supposed to be teaching a different curriculum). While these are legitimate academic topics, Employee 3 talked about sex with students in a manner that exceeded his teaching responsibilities, such as by repeatedly endorsing open relationships.



- Employee 3 urged students to seek assistance from his legal clinic, which led students to open up to him about their past sexual trauma and other personal problems.
- Employee 3 told stories in class about how he had rescued past students from abusive relationships and other dangerous situations.

Employee 3's interactions with students at school resulted in a situation where it would not necessarily have seemed strange for him to check in with recently graduated students on Facebook Messenger, or even to bring up sexual topics during these conversations, given his academic interests. However, his communications with the affected former students quickly escalated and became flirtatious or explicitly sexual.

Witnesses indicated that some of Employee 3's behaviors at school — such as presenting himself as a feminist and champion of women, training students on how to recognize grooming and sexual harassment, and going out of his way to avoid physical contact with students — were the opposite of what one might expect of a teacher who was grooming students. Multiple staff members said they were initially surprised by the allegations but then began to view some of Employee 3's other behaviors through a different lens (such as the way he presented sexual topics in class, or his hypothetical question to colleagues about the ethics of having sex with recent graduates).

Taken together, the evidence showed that Employee 3 intentionally ingratiated himself with female students, with full awareness that he would pursue some of them sexually after they graduated.

There was also sufficient evidence that Employee 3 engaged with at least one student in a flirtatious manner when she was still in high school. On the student's 17th birthday, Employee 3 told the student that she was "legal." Midway through the student's senior year, after she posted a picture of herself on Facebook, Employee 3 commented on her post and said, "Stop trying to post pictures to be on my screen... It's getting creepy..." Employee 3 later sent a flirtatious email to the student on the night of her graduation, teasing her for not hugging him at the ceremony. Employee 3 reconnected with the student the year after she graduated and had a multi-year sexual and romantic relationship with her.

A different former student alleged that Employee 3 talked with her on Facebook Messenger about sexual matters while she was still in high school. However, there was insufficient evidence to establish that the sexual conversations began before graduation and not afterwards.

Employee 3's flirtatious conduct toward at least one enrolled student violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual Harassment policy in effect at the time, which strictly prohibited staff members from engaging in romantic or sexual conduct with students.



Employee 3's conduct toward students at school also raised significant grooming concerns. CPS did not define "grooming" in its policies until 2018, after most of the affected students had graduated. For that reason, the OIG looked to the original and current definitions for guidance, finding that the teacher's conduct did not qualify as grooming under the original definition for technical reasons, but his conduct toward at least some of the students would qualify as grooming under the current definition. Regardless, the concept of grooming was commonly known prior to 2018, and it would always have been misconduct for a teacher to build relationships with students for a sexual purpose, regardless of whether the term was specifically mentioned in a policy.

Some of Employee 3's non-sexual conduct toward students eventually began to violate CPS policy. Starting in 2018, CPS strictly limited staff-student electronic communications and enacted guidelines for staff-student boundaries. Employee 3 violated the Staff Acceptable Use Policy by continuing to communicate with students on Facebook Messenger until approximately 2020 or 2021.

Employee 3 also violated the Standards for Maintaining Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students, which prohibit staff from going by nicknames, because he strongly encouraged students to call him by a movie character-related nickname until he left CPS in 2022. The movie character in question was a charismatic leader and teacher. When a student would address him by name in an email, Employee 3 would tease the student for failing to call him by the nickname.

The evidence also showed that Employee 3 made unprofessional jokes and boundary-crossing comments in class and on his student-facing social media, repeatedly referring to himself as "sexy" and making non-explicit but gratuitous sexual references. This conduct would have violated the Standards or their predecessor, the Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Appropriate Staff/Student Boundaries, but there was insufficient evidence that Employee 3 engaged in such conduct after the Guidelines were adopted in 2018.

Although Employee 3's sexual conduct toward former students did not violate any specific CPS policy, it was unbecoming of a Board employee. Employee 3 misused his position as a CPS teacher by exploiting relationships that he built with children in the classroom to advance his personal and sexual interests after they finished school. He was not looking out for his students. To the contrary, he was abusing his position of trust.

To be clear, this was not a case where a teacher and a former student organically developed a romantic relationship years later through happenstance. Here, Employee 3 engaged in a pattern of intentionally targeting his students shortly after they graduated.

Some of the former students said that Employee 3 knew they were vulnerable because of prior conversations about their personal or legal problems.



Any well-intentioned educator would understand that targeting recent graduates for sex could result in emotional harm and destroy a former student's memories of high school. Employee 3 was uniquely positioned to understand this danger, given his academic interest in topics such as sexual consent and grooming. Some of the former students said that Employee 3 knew they were vulnerable because of prior conversations about their personal or legal problems.

Employee 3 was also well aware that his conduct with former students would create a strong appearance of impropriety and could have affected his interactions with students at school. There was evidence that Employee 3 asked at least three former students to keep the sexual relationship or conversations secret, citing concerns about his job, and asked others to use "encrypted mode" on Facebook Messenger so the messages would disappear after a period of time. He told a former student that if students learned about his sexual preferences, they would sit in his classroom and imagine those activities or judge him. In fact, the evidence showed that at least two enrolled students heard about Employee 3 messaging recent female graduates.

Many of the former students told the OIG about the emotional harm they faced as a result of their interactions with Employee 3. Some of them said they find it difficult to trust people and form healthy relationships. One former student noted that she enjoyed talking to Employee 3 in school because he seemed to think she was smart and was willing to have deep conversations with her. After she learned of the extent of his conduct, she began to doubt herself.

Employee 3 was pulled from active duty during the investigation. He resigned the following month, and a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was added to his personnel file. Employee 3 permanently shut down his legal clinic during the investigation.

The OIG recommended that CPS add a permanent Do Not Hire designation to Employee 3's personnel file and notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.

» *[Administrator at School B Had Sex with a Student Shortly After She Graduated, Engaged in Flirtatious Conduct with Multiple Enrolled Students](#)*

This investigation established that, several years ago, an administrator at School B (**“Employee 4”**) pursued an 18-year-old former student (the “Former Student”) for sexual activity shortly after she graduated from School B. Employee 4 then met with the Former Student and had sex with her on two occasions that summer. He engaged in this conduct even though the Former Student’s parent had previously told him that the Former Student was vulnerable with respect to romantic or sexual relationships.

The OIG received this allegation while investigating Employee 3. A School B staff member sent the OIG screenshots of a text conversation she had with a School B graduate. Their conversation initially concerned the allegations against Employee 3 but then turned to



misconduct by other School B staff members. The graduate told the staff member that Employee 4 had sex with the Former Student soon after graduation, noting that the Former Student had confided in her about this a “long time ago.” The graduate also told the staff member that Employee 4 was rumored to have been a “creep” with female students.

The Former Student agreed to participate in the investigation and gave a detailed account of her interactions with Employee 4, telling the OIG that Employee 4 asked for her phone number when she visited School B to pick up her diploma a few days after her graduation. The Former Student said they began texting shortly thereafter, and the conversations soon became sexual. They met for sex twice after that.

The Former Student’s allegations were sufficiently corroborated by phone records and other evidence.

Although Employee 4 did not violate any specific CPS policy by having sex with the Former Student after she graduated, his conduct was unbecoming of a Board employee, especially given his status as an administrator and his knowledge that the Former Student was vulnerable.

The investigation also established that Employee 4 engaged in a pattern of flirtatious conduct toward certain female students. Three students who attended schools on the Shared Campus (“Students 4A, 4B, and 4C”) all independently complained about Employee 4 to School B staff when they were seniors. Student 4C was several class years behind the others.

Student 4A’s complaint resulted in a CPS Law Department investigation during the mid-2010s, before the OIG’s Sexual Allegations Unit existed. Student 4A told the Law Department that Employee 4 winked at her, tried to dance with her at the homecoming dance, and made suggestive comments to her, such as saying that they should get to know each other and asking when she would turn 18.

Staff members told the OIG that they also remembered Student 4B and Student 4C expressing discomfort with Employee 4. However, these students’ complaints were never documented.

The Law Department did not find credible evidence to substantiate Student 4A’s allegations at the time. However, all three students were willing to go on the record with the OIG years later, and their accounts were bolstered by the Former Student and other female graduates. They described similar behaviors by Employee 4, which included summoning them for one-on-one conversations in the hallways, complimenting their personal appearance, staring or winking at them, and asking them about their weekend plans and making jokes about the student joining him somewhere.

Some of the students’ specific allegations against Employee 4 could not be corroborated. The conduct that the OIG was able to substantiate was flirtatious and suggestive, but it was



not explicitly sexual. A considerable number of students and staff members said they never saw Employee 4 act inappropriately, which indicates that his conduct was not especially flagrant or otherwise apparent to third parties. Regardless, the evidence established that Employee 4 made certain female students feel like he was sexually attracted to them.

Employee 4's flirtatious conduct toward female students violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual Harassment policy. Employee 4's conduct toward Student 4C also violated CPS's guidelines for staff-student boundaries, which CPS had adopted by the time Student 4C experienced the conduct.

This investigation also found that Employee 4 provided false information when he applied for employment at a different Illinois school district in August of 2023, after he had resigned from CPS and while this investigation was pending. As part of Faith's Law in Illinois, individuals who are applying for student-facing employment at a school are required to disclose their previous employers and answer questions regarding whether they have been accused of sexual misconduct toward students. See 105 ILCS 5/22-94(c)(3)(C), (d). On his Faith's Law self-disclosure form, Employee 4 incorrectly stated that he was not the subject of a pending or substantiated sexual misconduct allegation, and that he had never resigned from employment while being investigated for sexual misconduct.<sup>5</sup>

The investigation of Employee 4 also uncovered reporting failures by School B staff members. Employee 3 (who was discussed in the previous section) and another teacher ("Teacher X") heard the rumor about Employee 4 having sex with the Former Student after her graduation. This information would have given Employee 3 and Teacher X reasonable cause to suspect that Employee 4 had groomed or sexually abused the Former Student while she was still in high school. Even though Employee 3 and Teacher X purportedly called DCFS, they failed to report the allegation to anyone at CPS, as required by CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy.

Additionally, when Student 4C complained to Employee 3 about Employee 4's conduct toward her, Employee 3 failed to report Student 4C's allegations to anyone at CPS. According to Student 4C, Employee 3 dissuaded her from taking the matter any further, pointing out that she would graduate soon, and that an investigation would take a long time.

There were also concerns that other staff members mishandled or failed to report earlier misconduct by Employee 4 (such as by failing to report or document Student 4B's complaint), but these staff members' actions did not violate CPS policy at the time because the reporting requirements were not as stringent then.

Employee 4 was pulled from active duty during the investigation. He resigned a few months later, and a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was added to his personnel file.

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<sup>5</sup> The school district where Employee 4 applied for employment (and where he was ultimately hired) also told the OIG that it sent CPS a Faith's Law request for information about Employee 4 and that CPS failed to respond to the request. CPS told the OIG that it has no record of receiving this request. The OIG opened a separate investigation into this matter, which is pending.



The OIG recommended that CPS add a permanent Do Not Hire designation to Employee 4's personnel file and notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.

Regarding the reporting failures by Employee 3 and Teacher X:

- As discussed above, Employee 3 is no longer eligible for hire at CPS based on his own misconduct with students and former students.
- The OIG recommended that CPS consider additional training for Teacher X regarding his duty to report allegations of sexual misconduct, including (1) the proper procedures for reporting the allegation within CPS, and (2) the importance of not relying on other staff members to report the information accurately. The Board placed Teacher X on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan and referred him for additional training regarding his reporting duties.

» ***School B Teacher Engaged in Flirtatious and Sexual Conversations with a Twelfth-Grade Student, Had a Sexualized Physical Encounter with Her Shortly After Graduation***

This investigation established that a teacher at School B ("Employee 5") engaged in flirtatious and sexual electronic communications with one of his students. The student made the allegations against Employee 5 while being interviewed about Employee 3.

The communications began when the student was a senior and either 17 or 18 years old. Employee 5 acknowledged that he called the student attractive in the messages and made statements to the effect of, "If I was not with my wife, I would be with you." The messages continued and became more sexual after the student graduated.

Less than a month after the student graduated, Employee 5 and the student attended a non-school-related event together. As they were leaving the event or during the car ride home, they briefly engaged in some sort of sexualized physical contact that involved kissing and/or groping. After this encounter, Employee 5 and the student continued to message each other for years. At times, the student stopped responding to Employee 5 or blocked him, but he continued to reach out to her.

During his OIG interview, Employee 5 was generally forthcoming about his conduct and expressed shame and remorse. At other times, Employee 5 appeared to make excuses for his conduct, saying that he had been influenced by Employee 3's approach to interacting with students and that the student had instigated certain events. He also repeatedly stated that he never intended to have in-person sexual contact with the student and that they never had sex.

Employee 5's sexual electronic communications with the student prior to the student's graduation violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual



Harassment policy in effect at the time, which strictly prohibited staff members from engaging in romantic or sexual conduct with students.

Employee 5 engaged in classic grooming behaviors with the student while she was in high school (such as private Facebook messaging, spending time with her at school, and lending her books), but his conduct did not constitute criminal grooming under Illinois law because two elements of the crime were not met: (1) the student was not under age 17 at the time; and (2) there was insufficient evidence that Employee 5 engaged in these behaviors to commit a sex offense (in other words, the investigation did not establish that Employee 5 ever intended to engage in physical sexual contact with the student when she was still in high school).

Employee 5 had resigned from CPS before the OIG began investigating. During the investigation, a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was added to his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS add a permanent Do Not Hire designation to Employee 5's personnel file and notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.

» *School B Teacher Exchanged Sexual Electronic Communications with a Twelfth-Grade Student*

The investigation established that a teacher at School B (**“Employee 6”**) exchanged sexual electronic communications with one of his students (“Student 6A”) when she was a senior.

The OIG began investigating Employee 6 after a School B graduate, while being interviewed about Employee 3, told the OIG that Employee 6 was rumored to have had sex with a different student (“Student 6B,” discussed below). The OIG then located records from mid-2010s, showing that Employee 6 had previously been investigated by the CPS Law Department regarding his interactions with Student 6A.

The Law Department investigation began with a report from Student 6A’s friend, shortly after Student 6A graduated. The friend alleged that Employee 6 had formed an inappropriate relationship with Student 6A during her senior year and sent her sexual text messages. Although their messages initially related to school, Employee 6 began telling Student 6A that she was attractive. The friend also said that she personally saw a message in which Employee 6 and Student 6A discussed kissing.

Student 6A denied the allegation when questioned by the Law Department. Employee 6 appeared for an interview with the Law Department but refused to answer questions about the allegation. The Law Department did not substantiate the sexual allegation but determined that Employee 6 failed to cooperate with the investigation. Employee 6 resigned while disciplinary proceedings against him were pending.



The OIG re-investigated and found evidence sufficient to establish that Employee 6 had sexual communications with Student 6A during her senior year. It is possible that Employee 6 engaged in physical sexual contact with Student 6A, but the evidence did not clearly establish that such contact occurred prior to Student 6A's graduation date.

Employee 6's conduct toward Student 6A violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual Harassment policy in effect at the time, which strictly prohibited staff members from engaging in romantic or sexual conduct with students.

Employee 6's conduct toward Student 6A did not constitute criminal grooming under Illinois law because the statute applies only where the victim is 16 or younger, which was not the case here. Even setting aside the age element, this investigation did not establish whether Employee 6 ever intended to (or did) have sex with Student 6A when she was a student. Thus, there is insufficient evidence that he messaged Student 6A with the intention of committing a sex offense, which is another element of the crime.

The OIG also investigated allegations that Employee 6 engaged in physical sexual contact with Student 6B, who was one class year behind Student 6A. The alleged sexual activity would have taken place a few months before Employee 6 resigned from CPS after being investigated in relation to his interactions with Student 6A. Student 6B did not participate in the investigation, but there was evidence that she told at least five people that she and Employee 6 had sex. Some of these individuals specified that the sexual activity reportedly began during Student 6B's senior year, and that some of it took place on school property. Ultimately, however, there was insufficient evidence to establish that Employee 6 engaged in sexual activity with Student 6B while he was employed by CPS or while she was a student.

Employee 6 already had a Do Not Hire designation in his personnel file due to his failure to cooperate in the Law Department investigation of the allegations relating to Student 6A. The OIG recommended that the Do Not Hire designation remain in place and that the Board take all additional appropriate steps to prevent Employee 6 from working or volunteering for the District in the future. The OIG further recommended that the District notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings. The Board notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings and informed the OIG that the Do Not Hire designation would remain in Employee 6's personnel file.

## **School B Teacher Groomed an Eleventh-Grade Student for Sexual Abuse (21-00138)**

A teacher at School B (**“Employee 7”**) groomed a student for sexual abuse, starting when she was a junior and continuing into her senior year. Employee 7's conduct is the most recent of the substantiated sexual misconduct by Shared Campus staff members. It occurred after CPS adopted guidelines for staff-student boundaries and revised its policies to strictly prohibit communicating with students via cell phone or personal social media. Notably, Employee 7 used a CPS-approved application, Google Chat, to groom the student.



The OIG opened the case after the student reported feeling uncomfortable with some of the comments and emojis Employee 7 had left on her and other students' social media posts. The student reported the full extent of her interactions with Employee 7 during her OIG interview and provided screenshots. The OIG then obtained Employee 7's CPS Google Chat communications with the student.

The Google Chat messages showed that Employee 7 messaged the student frequently, including late at night. He hinted at making plans with the student, commented on her physical appearance, and spoke about the effect she had on him. He sent her a TikTok video that contained an acronym understood to mean "I love you so much but I don't know how to tell you because I know you don't love me back."

After the student told him she was dressing up as a particular movie character for Halloween, Employee 7 told her that he would dress up as that character's husband. He included a screenshot from the movie that showed the husband character kissing the wife character's wrist. On another occasion, Employee 7 sent the student a GIF that said, "Goodnight kisses." He also chatted with the student's close friend and told the friend that he "longed" for someone.

The student said that she eventually decided to stop messaging with Employee 7, and there was no allegation or evidence that Employee 7 and the student ever engaged in physical sexual contact.

Employee 7 crossed boundaries with other students by commenting on their Instagram posts and having non-school-related conversations with them on Google Chat. However, none of these messages contained any express or implied statements of romantic interest as his messages with the first student did.

Neither DCFS nor CPD investigated the allegations against Teacher 7.

Employee 7's conduct violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy, which prohibits grooming and any other sexual or romantic conduct between a staff member and student. Employee 7 also violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy and CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff-Student Boundaries.

Employee 7 was pulled from active duty due to the allegations and resigned shortly thereafter. CPS placed a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation in his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in Employee 7's personnel file and notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.



## Shared Campus Investigations Completed Prior to Fiscal Year 2025

### » *School A Teacher Drunkenly Groped or Attempted to Grope an Eleventh-Grade Student at a School Event (20-01530)*

As discussed in the OIG's Fiscal Year 2023 Annual Report, the OIG found that a School A teacher (**“Employee 8”**) entered a School A event while intoxicated and groped, or attempted to grope, an eleventh-grade student on the buttocks. He also gave this student and another student at least one ride in his personal vehicle without parental consent. The groping incident occurred in 2016, around the same time that multiple other staff members on the Shared Campus were engaging in sexual misconduct with students.

The student disclosed the groping incident to a staff member, who notified DCFS and the school's then-principal. DCFS and CPD investigated at the time. DCFS closed the case as unfounded, and CPD closed the case after the student (who had turned 18 years old by the time she spoke with police) chose not to pursue charges. However, the principal (who has since retired) failed to report the allegation to the CPS Law Department as required by CPS policy at the time. The OIG received the allegation several years later, after the new principal heard about it.

The teacher's conduct at the School A event constituted sexual harassment under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Title IX, Sexual Harassment, and Retaliation Policy in effect at the time. The teacher also violated CPS's Student Travel Policy by transporting students in his car without the required written consent.

The OIG's investigation resulted in termination of the teacher's employment and placement of a Do Not Hire designation in his personnel file.

### » *Investigations of a School B SECA*

During the investigation of multiple School B staff members (21-01183), the OIG reviewed previous allegations regarding a SECA who had worked at School B during the mid-2010s, during the same timeframe when several other Shared Campus staff members were engaging in sexual misconduct. The SECA was accused of touching or massaging a female student's injured ankle/foot at an athletic event, making a lewd comment to another female student, and staring at female students in an inappropriate manner. The Law Department investigated at the time and found that credible evidence did not exist to support the allegations.

The SECA then transferred to a different District school outside of the Shared Campus and groomed and sexually abused a student there. This led to a substantiated OIG investigation (OIG 18-01172, summarized in the OIG's Fiscal Year 2020 Annual Report) and a Do Not Hire designation for the SECA. As a result of his interactions with the student at the second District school, the SECA was charged in the Circuit Court of Cook County with three counts of grooming, two counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, and one count of child



exploitation. The SECA later pled guilty to one count of grooming and was sentenced to 30 months' probation.

Given that the SECA went on to groom and sexually abuse a student after leaving School B, it is certainly possible that the SECA committed the lower-level misconduct at School B, even though the Law Department did not have enough evidence to substantiate those allegations at the time. The OIG highlights this matter as yet another instance where a staff member may have engaged in prohibited and concerning interactions with students on the Shared Campus.

## **Systemic Concerns**

During the investigation of OIG Case No. 21-01183, the OIG reviewed all of the allegations against the Shared Campus staff members across the OIG investigations. Eight staff members engaging in sexual misconduct with students or targeting former students during a similar timeframe suggests a systemic problem. It appeared to peak in 2015 and 2016, when seven of the eight staff members (Employee 1, Employee 2, Employee 3, Employee 4, Employee 5, Employee 6, and Employee 8) engaged in misconduct.

It was so pervasive that one student was targeted by three School B teachers: Employee 5 during her junior and senior years, Employee 6 during her senior year, and Employee 3 after she graduated. Many other students and alumni were failed in similar ways.

Although the OIG's investigation did not uncover an obvious root cause or significant links between all of these bad actors, some witnesses pointed to a general lack of boundaries at Schools A and B that may have made it easier for bad actors to form personal relationships with students (and recent graduates) outside of school. These boundary issues are relevant to the entire Shared Campus, given that some of the affected students attended other Shared Campus schools.

Employee 5, who admittedly engaged in flirtatious and sexual conversations with a student as discussed above, worked at School B for several years in the mid-2010s. He told the OIG that the culture at School B was very familial compared to other schools, and he found himself engaging with students like a peer or a friend rather than an authority figure. For example, he and students would discuss their personal lives and exchange sex jokes.

A counselor at School B said that School B allowed staff members to engage with students on social media before CPS changed its policies to prohibit such communications. The counselor noted that she has worked at many other CPS schools, and all of them discouraged the use of social media even before CPS changed its policies.

Witnesses confirmed that it was common for staff members at School B to use their personal social media accounts to communicate with students. As seen in the case of Employee 3, the use of these platforms ranged from discussing class assignments to making



humorous posts and bantering with students in the comments. Sometimes, as seen in the cases of Employees 5 and 6, the conversations became personal and romantic or sexual.

In the investigation of Employee 2, the OIG received credible evidence that Employee 2, who worked at School A, felt comfortable confiding in a student about the “relationship” she’d had with a different student. The fact that Employee 2 felt comfortable confiding in a student about her sexual misconduct with another student points to a significant cultural problem.

As discussed above, the OIG also found that multiple School B staff members learned about allegations of sexual misconduct against Employee 4 (an administrator) and failed to report the information to anyone within CPS. Some of these omissions did not violate CPS policy because the reporting requirements were not as stringent at the time, but it is nevertheless concerning that staff members never escalated these complaints.

These investigations have confirmed the importance of robust policies regarding staff-student boundaries and the reporting of sexual misconduct allegations. CPS recognized this and made significant changes to its policies in 2018, such as defining “grooming” in its policies, strictly limiting electronic communications with students, adopting staff-student boundaries guidelines, and expanding reporting requirements. Most of the substantiated conduct in these investigations took place before these reforms.

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Policies will never stop bad actors completely. Employee 7, for instance, used CPS Google Chat, an approved platform controlled by CPS, to groom a student. However, enforcing these policies makes it more difficult for bad actors to hide in plain sight, as they seemed to do on the Shared Campus.

### **OIG's Additional Recommendations and CPS's Responses**

As discussed above, all of the former staff members who were found to have committed sexual misconduct have received Do Not Hire designations. With respect to those former staff members who have professional licenses with the Illinois State Board of Education, CPS notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG’s findings.

Given the high number of substantiated sexual misconduct cases involving staff members at the Shared Campus, the OIG also made broader policy, training and outreach recommendations. These recommendations, and CPS’s response to each recommendation, are listed below.



- 1. That CPS adopt a policy that prohibits staff members from engaging in certain interactions with recently graduated and disenrolled students.** At a minimum, the policy should apply to any former CPS student whom the staff member knew in a professional capacity when they were a CPS student and who left CPS (whether through graduation or disenrollment) less than a year ago, even if they have turned 18 years old.

At a minimum, staff members should be prohibited from engaging in the following types of interactions with these former students:

- Engaging in any romantic or sexual conduct with the former student (construed broadly to include flirtatious or sexual communications of any type).
- Engaging in any behaviors in order to groom the former student for sexual activity, even if the staff member does not intend to engage in the sexual activity until the one-year period expires or until the former student turns 18.

**CPS Response:** CPS amended its policies to prohibit a broader set of interactions with recent graduates (not just romantic/sexual conduct and grooming behaviors). CPS began setting these changes into motion as the OIG was completing its investigation of this matter but before the OIG issued its report.

While completing a scheduled update of the CPS Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations with Students Policy, CPS proposed an amendment to the section of the policy that governs professional boundaries with students (the “Boundary Standards”). The Boundary Standards require staff to maintain a strictly professional relationship with students. In addition to prohibiting sexual interactions with students, the Boundary Standards also prohibit certain non-sexual conduct, such as:

- Targeting a student for friendship
- Meeting a student outside of school for a non-educational purpose
- Being alone with a student out of the view of others
- Driving a student in the staff member’s personal vehicle without written consent from the student’s parent and the principal
- Taking a photo with a student or keeping a photo of the student for personal use
- Exchanging electronic communications with a student via cell phone, personal email address, or personal social media account
- Exchanging electronic communications with a student (even via the CPS network) for a non-educational purpose



CPS's proposed amendment extended the Boundary Standards in their entirety to recent graduates, defined as former students who graduated within the past year. This amendment was approved by the Board on August 28, 2025.

On October 23, 2025, the Board approved corresponding amendments to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy, which specifically addresses how staff members may communicate with students electronically. The Staff Acceptable Use Policy specifies that students will maintain access to their CPS email account for two years after graduation and are required to use their CPS account for communicating with adults who work in the District for one year after graduation.

- 2. That CPS modify its training materials on grooming** to emphasize the point that CPS policy prohibits a staff member from building an emotional connection with a student to gain their trust and break down their inhibitions for any sexual purpose, *even if the staff member does not intend to have sexual interactions with the student until after they graduate.*

CPS Response: CPS informed the OIG that it has taken this recommendation under advisement for trainings for the 2026-27 school year.

- 3. That CPS provide additional training to all Shared Campus staff members regarding their duty to report allegations of potential sexual misconduct**, including (1) the importance of reporting and documenting instances of inappropriately intimate interactions and other boundary violations; (2) the proper procedures for reporting the allegation within CPS; and (3) the importance of not relying on other staff members to report the information accurately.

Even though all CPS staff members have undergone additional training on their reporting duties since the events of this case, the OIG determined that additional training was essential given the widespread misconduct and previous deficiencies in reporting.

CPS Response: CPS informed the OIG that it provided additional training to all Shared Campus staff regarding CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations between Adults and Students Policy in August of 2025.

- 4. That the Office of Student Protections and Title IX evaluate the Shared Campus's compliance with and enforcement of CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students.**

CPS Response: CPS informed the OIG that the District is considering how to practically implement this recommendation and will be conducting cross-departmental meetings to determine the best approach.



The Office of Student Protections and Title IX further informed the OIG that it provided additional training to all Shared Campus staff regarding the standards for staff-student boundaries (which are incorporated within CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect and Inappropriate Relations between Adults and Students Policy); CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy; CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy; and CPS's Travel Policy. The Office of Student Protections and Title IX also informed the OIG that it is aware of the need to monitor incident reports from schools on the Shared Campus to determine how their rate of reporting compares to other school.

**5. That the Office of Student Protections and Title IX continue to conduct substantial outreach** to the Shared Campus community to ensure that the individuals in that community are properly supported.

CPS Response: In August of 2025, the Office of Student Protections and Title IX conducted outreach to administration to determine community needs. Given that most affected students had graduated, the school did not identify any need for student support or any need for the Office of Student Protections and Title IX to visit the school.

### **C. OTHER CASES INVOLVING PHYSICAL SEXUAL ACTS**

#### *» [Vendor Employee Sexually Abused Two High School Students \(22-02212\)](#)*

A vendor employee sexually abused two high school students ("Student 1" and "Student 2"). In addition to engaging in sex acts with the students, the vendor employee videotaped his abuse of Student 1, masturbated in front of Student 2, sent sexual text messages to Student 2, and showed both students videos of young people engaging in sex acts.

In addition to committing sexual assault and violating various other criminal laws, the vendor employee violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy; CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy; and CPS's Student Travel Policy.

DCFS investigated and determined there was credible evidence that the vendor employee committed exploitation and sexual penetration in relation to Student 1. DCFS also determined there was credible evidence of molestation and exploitation of Student 2.

CPD investigated, and the vendor employee was charged with three counts of criminal sexual assault, four counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, and 10 counts of possession of child pornography. He pled guilty to two counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse and was sentenced to 30 months' probation. The other charges were dropped in exchange for the guilty plea.

The vendor company terminated the vendor employee's employment as a result of the allegations, and he was blocked from the District.



The OIG recommended that CPS take whatever steps necessary to prevent the vendor employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***High School Security Guard Gave a 15-Year-Old Student Alcohol and Then Sexually Assaulted Her in Two of His Vehicles (23-00983)***

A high school security guard got a 15-year-old student intoxicated and then sexually assaulted her.

The student reported that on the night in question, she and the security guard drove around Chicago in the security guard's vehicle. Over the course of the night, the security guard provided the student with multiple alcoholic drinks. While they were out, the security guard made physical sexual advances and began to sexually abuse her. At the end of the night, the security guard took the student to his recreational vehicle ("R/V"). There, the security guard had sexual intercourse with the student. The student recalled telling him to stop and reported that she passed out multiple times due to being intoxicated.

The student disclosed the assault to another student and to a CPS counselor. Additionally, while executing a search warrant on the security guard's R/V, CPD found physical evidence showing that the student had been present in the R/V.

The student also disclosed that she and the security guard had previously communicated with each other on social media and had gone out together on multiple occasions prior to the assault. During those outings, the security guard expressed sexual and romantic interest in the student, kissed her once, and provided her with alcoholic beverages.

A preponderance of the evidence established that the security guard committed numerous criminal offenses, including criminal sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual abuse, grooming, and furnishing a minor with alcohol.

The security guard's behavior also constituted prohibited sexual misconduct under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. Further, his behavior leading up to the assault constituted grooming as defined by CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations between Adults and Student policy. The security guard also violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS investigated and found credible evidence of abuse.

CPD investigated, and the security guard was arrested and charged with 11 felonies: three counts of criminal sexual assault, five counts of aggravated criminal sexual abuse, and three counts of attempted criminal sexual abuse. He pled not guilty, and the criminal proceedings are ongoing.

CPS pulled the security guard from active duty upon receipt of the allegations.



The OIG recommended that the security guard's employment be terminated and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in his personnel file. The Board followed the OIG's recommendation.

» ***Vendor Bus Aide Sexually Abused a Student on the Bus (23-00172, 23-00605)***

A vendor bus aide fondled a fourth-grade student's vagina several times on two different days. The student reported the abuse to school staff and gave a credible statement when interviewed by law enforcement. The video footage from the bus was not conclusive due to the camera angle but strongly supported the student's account. Additionally, the bus driver contradicted important aspects of the vendor bus aide's account.

The vendor bus aide's conduct constituted predatory criminal sexual assault of a child and aggravated criminal sexual abuse.

The vendor bus aide's conduct also violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy.

The OIG had already been investigating the vendor bus aide for reportedly giving money to students on his bus route in violation of CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students. These allegations were substantiated.

Several months prior to the sexual abuse, the CPS Office of School Safety and Security informed the vendor company that the vendor bus aide was not cleared to work within any CPS facility because he had failed to provide certain information requested by the CPS Background Committee. Regardless, the vendor company allowed the vendor bus aide to interact with students.

DCFS investigated and found credible evidence that the vendor bus aide committed sexual penetration of the student.

CPD investigated, and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office approved felony charges of predatory criminal sexual assault. The vendor bus aide's criminal prosecution remains pending.

CPS blocked the vendor bus aide after the student's disclosure of sexual abuse. The vendor company terminated the vendor bus aide's employment shortly thereafter.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the vendor bus aide from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the vendor bus aide on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***Elementary School Employee Sexually Abused a CPS Student He Was Related to and Possessed Child Pornography (22-02423)***

An elementary school hourly employee sexually abused a child he was related to and possessed child pornography. The OIG received the case when the employee was arrested



by CPD and charged with one count of aggravated criminal sexual abuse and 35 counts of possession of child pornography.

CPD had begun investigating the employee after receiving a tip from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. CPD subpoenaed and recovered child pornography images that had been stored on the employee's Google account. The employee admitted to possessing the images.

During the investigation, additional allegations arose that the employee had sexually abused a child he was related to. The child was a CPS student, but the employee did not meet her in the course of his employment with CPS. The child disclosed that the employee touched her vagina while at a family member's home. While the employee denied this, the child's account was corroborated by other family members and by the fact that the employee possessed child pornography.

The OIG did not identify any allegations of sexual misconduct relating to the employee's employment with CPS.

In addition to violating criminal laws, the employee's conduct violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy.

DCFS investigated but unfounded the case because the employee did not meet the criteria for an alleged perpetrator under DCFS procedures: he was not the child's parent, immediate family member, or household member, and was not otherwise responsible for the child's welfare or in a position of trust.

After CPD's investigation and the employee's arrest, the employee pleaded guilty to one count of aggravated criminal sexual abuse and one count of possession of child pornography. He was sentenced to five years of incarceration, one year of mandatory supervised release, and lifetime registration as a sex offender.

The employee was pulled from active duty shortly after his arrest. His employment was subsequently terminated due to a layoff, and a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was placed in his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that a permanent Do Not Hire designation be placed in the employee's personnel file. The Board followed the OIG's recommendation.

» *High School Teacher Groomed and Engaged in Sexual Activity with a Student (19-00683)*

A high school teacher engaged in sexual activity with a student, likely while the student was under the age of 18. The allegations emerged three years after the student graduated, when the student was arrested for damaging the teacher's property.



Although the teacher admitted to having a sexual relationship with the student while he was in college, she denied having any sexual or otherwise improper contact with the student while he was still in high school. However, the student was largely consistent with his recollection of the first time that they had sexual intercourse, and the student's allegations were partially corroborated by his family and friends as well as by cell phone records and bank records. Despite this, the investigation was unable to corroborate any specific sexual or romantic encounter.

The teacher also exchanged at least 80 text messages with the student and drove him in her car on multiple occasions while he was in high school.

The teacher's sexual conduct with the student violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Policy in effect at the time. The teacher's conduct leading up to the sexual activity also constituted grooming, though the term was not specifically defined by CPS policy at the time. The teacher also probably violated CPS's Travel Policy because she gave the student rides and there was no evidence that she obtained the required written permission to do so.

DCFS declined to investigate because the student was an adult when the conduct was reported. CPD did not investigate.

CPS pulled the teacher from active duty upon receipt of the allegations. The teacher resigned during the investigation and a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was placed in her personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in the teacher's personnel file and forward the OIG's report to the Illinois State Board of Education. The Board subsequently placed a permanent Do Not Hire designation in the teacher's personnel file, and the CPS Law Department notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG's findings.

» *High School Military Instructor Groomed a Student for Sexual Activity, Had Sex with the Student Soon After She Graduated (20-01275)*

A high school military instructor engaged in a pattern of grooming behaviors toward a student in the JROTC program. This conduct culminated in a sexual relationship with the

student, which the military instructor pursued within a week of the student's graduation.

Sometimes, the student would be in the military instructor's office for the entire day.

While the student was still in school, the military instructor had one-on-one visits with her in his office, wrote passes to her teachers to prolong her visits, and left campus with the student to buy her lunch. Sometimes, the student would be in the military instructor's office for the entire day. The military instructor and student would discuss



personal matters, including the military instructor's dating life. Before the student graduated, the military instructor added her on Facebook.

Within a week of the student graduating, the military instructor sent her a Facebook message saying she was "beautiful" and invited her to visit him at the school. He made sexual advances toward the student, and after he began a sexual relationship with her, he urged the student not to tell anyone about their involvement and to claim that she initiated the relationship if she was ever questioned about it.

The military instructor's conduct while the student was in school amounted to grooming. While grooming was not specifically mentioned in any CPS policy at the time, CPS employees were never permitted to harm students by grooming them for sexual abuse. The military instructor's conduct also constituted sexual harassment in violation of CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment policy in effect at the time.

DCFS was notified but declined to investigate.

The military instructor was pulled from active duty due to the allegations, and he retired from his CPS employment during the investigation. A Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was added to his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in the military instructor's personnel file and provide a copy of the OIG's report to JROTC leadership. The Board followed the OIG's recommendations.

#### **D. CASES INVOLVING OTHER SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

##### *» [High School Vendor Employee Groomed a 16-Year-Old Student, Sent Her an Image of His Penis \(20-00543\)](#)*

A vendor employee who worked in a high school groomed a 16-year-old student for the purpose of sexual abuse. The vendor employee messaged the student on Facebook Messenger and Snapchat and consoled the student when she was going through a difficult time after a breakup. The vendor employee eventually expressed his romantic feelings for the student and began to send more flirtatious messages. The vendor employee eventually sent the student messages about her body and repeatedly told the student he wanted to have sex with her. On one occasion, he sent the student a picture of his penis on Snapchat.

After the student's friend reported the messages, the vendor employee told the student that his life was "in [her] hands," and he encouraged the student to lie and helped her make up a story to tell CPD. The student downplayed her relationship with the vendor employee when she spoke with CPD. However, she later reconsidered and participated in a follow-up interview with CPD in which she admitted the full extent of her communications with the vendor employee.



The vendor employee's messages to the student violated Illinois criminal laws that prohibit indecent solicitation of a child and distributing harmful materials to a minor.

Further, the vendor employee's initial messages to the student constituted grooming as defined by CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy. The vendor employee's grooming behaviors and his flirtatious and sexual messages to the student constituted prohibited sexual misconduct under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy.

The investigation established that the vendor employee also communicated with other CPS students via social media. His social media communications with students violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

There was no allegation or evidence that the vendor employee and the student engaged in physical sexual activity.

DCFS investigated but closed its case as unfounded.

CPD arrested the vendor employee for indecent solicitation of a child and distributing harmful materials to a minor. However, because the relevant social media communications were not preserved on Facebook or Snapchat, the Cook County State's Attorney's Office rejected charges, and the case was closed.

The vendor employee was blocked from returning to CPS pending the investigation, and the vendor company terminated his employment.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the vendor employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***Vendor Bus Aide Engaged in Sexual Communications with a 16-Year-Old Student and Made Plans to Meet with Her for Sex (23-00639)***

A vendor bus aide engaged in sexual communications with a 16-year-old student and made plans to engage in sexual activity with her. The vendor bus aide communicated with the student via social media and cell phone.

After he was arrested by CPD, the vendor bus aide denied having any physical sexual contact with the student, but he admitted to exchanging sexual messages with the student, talking with her on the phone, making plans to get a car and hotel room with her, telling her that she "look[ed] good as hell," and saying he missed her and could not wait to see her. He admitted that he knew she was 16 at the time.

The vendor bus aide's conduct toward the student constituted criminal grooming.

The vendor bus aide's sexual communications to the student also constituted sexual misconduct, as defined by CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual



Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. His conduct also violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS investigated and found credible evidence of sexual abuse.

CPD investigated the allegations and arrested the vendor bus aide. However, despite his admissions, CPD closed its case without charges due to a lack of corroboration based on the results of a social media subpoena.

The vendor company terminated the vendor bus aide's employment due to the allegations, and CPS placed him on a District-wide block.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to ensure that the vendor bus aide is permanently prevented from working for, or volunteering in, the District again. The Board subsequently placed him on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *[Charter High School Teacher Groomed a 15-Year-Old Student with Sexual Messages \(21-00932\)](#)*

A charter high school teacher used iMessage and Snapchat to send a student messages of a sexual nature, including messages asking the student to come spend the night with him and an explicit offer to engage in sexual acts. The student was 15 years old at the time. While the investigation found that the messages were intended to groom the student for sexual activity, there was insufficient evidence to establish that any sexual activity occurred, or that the two met up outside of school.

The investigation also established that the charter teacher engaged in non-sexual electronic communications with other students.

The charter teacher's sexual messages to the student constituted indecent solicitation of a minor under Illinois law.

If the charter teacher were a CPS employee, his sexual messages to the student would have constituted prohibited sexual misconduct under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. The OIG also found that the charter teacher engaged in grooming as defined by CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy. Additionally, all of his messages to students would have violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS investigated but closed its case as unfounded due to insufficient evidence.

CPD investigated and closed its case because the student's parent did not wish to pursue charges.

The charter teacher was pulled from active duty due to the allegations, and the charter school terminated his employment shortly thereafter.



The OIG recommended that the District take appropriate steps to prevent the charter teacher from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the charter teacher on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***CPS Hourly Employee Possessed and Exchanged Child Pornography (21-01294)***

A CPS hourly employee exchanged child pornography with unknown parties online and kept pornographic images of underage victims on his phone. CPD received three reports from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children regarding child pornography associated with an IP address in Cook County. Records obtained through a search warrant showed that the hourly employee used a PayPal account linked to his CPS email address to pay for two Google accounts that were used to upload or store the pornographic material. Additionally, IP addresses that were used to access the pornographic material were associated with his home address.

There was no evidence or allegation that the hourly employee engaged in misconduct directed at or involving CPS students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

CPD investigated, and the hourly employee was arrested and charged with 18 counts of child pornography. He pleaded guilty to one count and was sentenced to 30 months of probation.

CPS pulled the hourly employee from active duty upon receipt of the allegations. His employment was terminated during the investigation with a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation added to his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in the hourly employee's personnel file. The Board followed the OIG's recommendation.

» ***Charter High School Security Guard Engaged in Romantic and/or Sexual Interactions with a Twelfth-Grade Student (23-01022)***

A charter high school security guard engaged in romantic and/or sexual interactions with a twelfth-grade student. The charter security guard then resigned his employment mid-way through the school year and continued to have frequent phone communications with the student. Public records indicated that the two moved in together after the student graduated from CPS.

The allegation came to light less than a month after the charter security guard had resigned from his position. The charter school's principal overheard other unknown students discussing a conversation they had with the student, where the student had alluded to a sexual relationship with the charter security guard.

The student told the OIG that she barely knew the charter security guard and that he never did anything inappropriate. However, phone records showed that the two exchanged



hundreds of phone calls and text messages during the relevant period. After the OIG told the student about the phone records, she stopped cooperating with the investigation.

Due to the lack of cooperation from the student, the OIG was unable to establish the extent of the charter security guard's misconduct or whether the two had physical sexual contact while the charter security guard was employed at the charter school. Regardless, there was sufficient evidence to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the two had romantic and/or sexual interactions during the charter security guard's employment.

Had the charter security guard been a CPS employee, his conduct would have violated CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy and CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

There is insufficient evidence that the charter security guard committed a crime under Illinois law. Most of the phone communications took place after the student turned 17, and the criminal grooming statute applies only where the victim is 16 or younger. Further, the investigation did not establish whether the charter security guard and the student had physical sexual contact before the charter security guard's resignation date, which would have constituted aggravated criminal sexual abuse.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the charter security guard from working for, or volunteering in, the District again. The Board subsequently placed the charter security guard on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *[CPS Vendor Employee Approached Two Seventh-Grade Students and Made Comments About Sex Workers and Semen \(24-00217\)](#)*

A CPS vendor employee made sexually explicit comments to two seventh-grade students during recess. After one student picked up false eyelashes from the ground, the vendor employee asked the students if they wanted to learn a "fun fact" about the history of false eyelashes. He then explained that sex workers, or "sluts," historically used false eyelashes to prevent semen from getting into their eyes. He also used a lewd term when referencing false eyelashes and encouraged the students to Google it.

The "fun fact" about sex workers and false eyelashes was the subject of a debunked internet meme.

The vendor employee's conduct constituted prohibited sexual misconduct under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. His conduct also violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students.

In his OIG interview, the vendor employee also admitted to singling out a different student and purchasing them food as a reward. This was another violation of the Standards.



DCFS was notified but declined to investigate.

The vendor company terminated the vendor employee's employment following the false eyelashes incident. That same day, CPS blocked the vendor employee and added him to its non-employee Do Not Hire Pending Investigation list.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to permanently prevent the vendor employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *Elementary School Hourly Employee Made Inappropriate and Harassing Comments Toward Female Students While Making a TikTok Video in Class (23-00149)*

Less than a month after being hired by CPS, an elementary school hourly employee made several inappropriate and harassing comments directed toward female students while making a TikTok video with students during class time. He made demeaning comments about one student's breasts and said she smelled like menstrual blood every day. He also said that another student was going to fail the class, could not keep a boyfriend, and never had her hair done.

The hourly employee's behavior constituted sexual misconduct under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. The conduct also violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS declined to investigate.

At the time of the allegations, the hourly employee was employed with CPS on a probationary basis. CPS terminated the hourly employee's employment as a result of the allegations and added a Do Not Hire designation to his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that the Do Not Hire designation remain in the hourly employee's personnel file, and that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The CPS Law Department confirmed to the OIG that the Do Not Hire designation will remain in the hourly employee's personnel file.

» *Charter High School Employee Touched a Student Near Her Breast, Possibly While Tickling Her (22-01016)*

A charter high school employee touched a student near her breast, possibly as he tried to tickle her. The charter employee also opened the door to the girls' bathroom unannounced and did not close it when girls inside told him they were changing their clothes.

If the charter employee had been a CPS employee, his conduct would have constituted sexual misconduct as defined by CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. It also would have violated



CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS investigated and determined there was no credible evidence of sexual abuse. CPD investigated but suspended the investigation pending cooperation from the victim who was touched near the breast.

The charter employee was pulled from active duty due to the allegations, and his employment was terminated by the charter school the next day.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the charter employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District again. The Board subsequently placed the charter employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***Charter High School Teacher Engaged in a Persistent and Pervasive Pattern of Sexual Conduct Toward Students (20-00594)***

A charter high school teacher engaged in a persistent and pervasive pattern of sexual conduct toward students. He exchanged cell phone and social media communications with female students, and he routinely fraternized with female upperclassmen. The charter teacher also had sexually explicit conversations with female students during closed-door meetings in his classroom after school. In class, he discussed his personal sex life. In the presence of students, the charter teacher made sexual comments about the physical appearance of female coworkers, including remarks about their bodies. He also gave “bear hugs” to female students and appeared shirtless during a virtual meeting open to students.

The charter teacher’s behavior toward a particular female student was especially concerning. He gave her prolonged frontal hugs and sent her text messages that had no school-related purpose. He also made a comment to the student about seeing her socially after she graduated, and he allowed her to address him with terms of endearment and make explicitly flirtatious comments to him.

If the charter teacher had been a CPS employee, his conduct would have violated the Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy, CPS’s Staff Acceptable Use Policy, and the Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries.

There was insufficient evidence to substantiate allegations that the charter teacher engaged in sexual activity with female students. Though he was implicated in rumors involving sexual activity with at least six students, none of the students accused the charter teacher of engaging in sexual conduct with them, and the allegations were based mostly on hearsay.

DCFS investigated an allegation that the charter teacher had sex with a student and closed the case as unfounded. CPD investigated the same allegation and suspended the case because the student did not make a disclosure of sexual activity and declined to participate in a forensic interview.



The charter teacher was pulled from active duty during the investigation and his employment was terminated.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent him from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The OIG also recommended that the Illinois State Board of Education be notified of the findings.

The charter network subsequently added a “not eligible for rehire” designation to the charter teacher’s personnel file. Additionally, the Board placed the charter teacher on an internal Do Not Hire list. CPS informed the OIG that the charter school notified the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG’s findings.

» *Charter High School Teacher Directed a Student to Send Her a Video Knowing It Contained Nude Images of a Student (23-00809)*

A charter high school teacher directed a student to send a video to the charter teacher’s cell phone even though the charter teacher knew that the video contained nude images of another student. The video had been circulating around the school, and the charter teacher had previously discussed the video with the student shown in the video, whose images were being shared without her consent.

The charter teacher told the OIG that she asked for the video because she wanted to report the incident. She said she did not watch or save the video, the school administration was aware of the situation, and she called DCFS and CPD upon receiving the video. There was no evidence that the charter teacher obtained the video for an improper purpose, or that she continued communicating with the student who texted it to her.

Despite her apparent good intentions in attempting to resolve an issue for a student, the charter teacher caused the reproduction of material that contained nude images of a student who was under 18 years old at the time, likely in violation of Illinois law.

If the charter teacher had been a CPS employee, her conduct also would have constituted a violation of CPS’s Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The charter school placed the charter teacher on leave as a result of the allegations, and the charter school terminated her employment during the investigation.

The OIG recommended, in the event the charter teacher seeks employment with the District in the future, that the charter teacher receive training on responding to sexual misconduct complaints before she is permitted to interact with students. The Board subsequently flagged the charter teacher’s file so she will receive such training if she is hired by the District.



» *High School Teacher Sent Crude Messages and Memes to a Student and Allowed the Student to Live with Her (20-00919)*

A former CPS student who had graduated several years earlier came forward with various allegations against one of the student's high school teachers. The OIG's investigation found sufficient evidence that the teacher allowed the student to live with her when the student was in high school. The teacher also sent sexually explicit text messages and memes to the student. However, there was insufficient evidence to show that the teacher engaged in any of this conduct to groom the student for sexual activity. The messages that were made available to the OIG were crude and humorous in nature, but they did not allude to any attempted or actual sexual activity between the teacher and student. Other messages supported the teacher's claim that she and the student had a mother-child type of relationship.

The teacher's messages to the student violated the CPS Staff Acceptable Use and Sexual Harassment policies in place at the time. The teacher allowing the student to live with her created an appearance of impropriety but was not strictly prohibited at the time.

The student also made more serious allegations of sexual misconduct against the teacher, but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate those allegations.

The investigation separately established that, more recently, the teacher used her CPS email account to exchange sexually explicit messages and emails with her spouse. This conduct violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS initially declined to investigate but later opened a case, which was closed as unfounded.

CPD opened two cases, one for sexual assault and one for sexual exploitation of a child and child pornography. The sexual assault case was transferred to another police department because the alleged conduct occurred in a different jurisdiction. The police department investigated but closed the case due to insufficient evidence. Police could not pursue the sexual exploitation case because the statute of limitations had expired.

CPS pulled the teacher from active duty after receiving the allegations. The teacher's employment was terminated following a separate OIG investigation into residency fraud and other misconduct, and a Do Not Hire designation was placed in her personnel file.

In response to the OIG's report in this case, the Board added supplemental information to the teacher's Do Not Hire designation.

» *High School Teacher Engaged in Disturbing Online Conversations with a Person He Believed to be a Minor (22-02221)*

A high school teacher engaged in disturbing conversations on TikTok with an individual he believed was 16 years old but was actually an adult posing as a fictitious 16-year-old. He



asked the individual what she found “attractive” and told her that he “love[s] Latinas.” He also asked the individual to share a photo or video of herself. After telling the individual that he was 50 years old, he told her that there was “nothing wrong with [the individual] being 16.” At one point, he asked if the individual was catfishing him or if they were a “board investigator.”

The individual posted the conversations on an online blog. She claimed to be the high school teacher’s former student and said that she had become suspicious of him after realizing that he was following current students and other young girls on TikTok.

The investigation confirmed that the high school teacher followed multiple students on TikTok.

The teacher had previously been investigated by the CPS Law Department for making inappropriate remarks to a female student, and the allegations were substantiated.

The teacher’s interactions with someone he believed to be a minor were contrary to CPS’s commitment to protecting its students from sexual misconduct. He also violated CPS’s Staff Acceptable Use Policy by following current students on TikTok.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The teacher resigned from CPS a few weeks after the OIG opened the investigation. Following his resignation, a Do Not Hire Pending Investigation designation was placed in his personnel file.

The OIG recommended that CPS place a permanent Do Not Hire designation in the teacher’s personnel file and notify the Illinois State Board of Education of the OIG’s findings. The Board followed the OIG’s recommendations.

» *[High School SECA Made Sexist and Misogynistic Comments and Engaged in Overly Familiar Interactions with a Specific Student \(21-00944\)](#)*

A high school SECA and athletic coach engaged in a pattern of making sexist and misogynistic comments in front of students, to a degree that it disrupted the students’ educational environment. The SECA also engaged in a pattern of overly familiar and ambiguous interactions with a specific student during class that substantially detracted from his ability to provide one-on-one assistance to his assigned students.

There was insufficient evidence to establish that the SECA had a sexual relationship with the student or groomed her for sexual activity. While there was some evidence that the student made comments implying sexual involvement between herself and the SECA, there was no direct evidence that any sexual contact occurred between them. There was also no evidence that the SECA ever met the student outside of school or communicated with her electronically. Both the student and the SECA denied any romantic or sexual involvement between them.



DCFS investigated and found that all allegations were unfounded.

CPD investigated and closed the case because the student denied the allegations and refused to participate in a forensic interview.

The SECA was pulled from active duty after the OIG received additional allegations against him and opened a second investigation (OIG Case No. 22-01029, discussed later in this report).

The OIG investigated this case under Title IX regulations and sent a report of its summary and assessment of the evidence to the Title IX decision-maker.<sup>6</sup> The decision-maker found that there was sufficient evidence that the SECA engaged in a pattern of unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that was severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive enough to effectively deny students access to CPS's education program in violation of CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation Policy. The decision-maker also found that the SECA's conduct violated various provisions of CPS's Standards for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

The decision-maker recommended that the SECA's employment be terminated and that a Do Not Hire designation be placed in his personnel file. The Board subsequently filed dismissal charges, and the SECA resigned during the dismissal proceedings. A Do Not Hire designation was added to the SECA's personnel file. The decision-maker also recommended that CPS notify the Illinois State Board of Education and the Illinois High School Association of the results of this investigation, and CPS followed these recommendations.

## **E. CASES INVOLVING NON-SEXUAL POLICY AND GUIDELINE VIOLATIONS**

The substantiated policy violations in the following OIG SAU investigations do not include findings of sexual misconduct. Instead, they identify violations of other adjacent policies that have been enacted or expanded by the District over the last several years to provide guidance for maintaining professional boundaries and to deter behavior that may lead to more serious misconduct. These include the following policies (and the predecessor policies):

- The [standards for appropriate staff-student boundaries](#) incorporated within CPS's Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy define appropriate and reasonable boundaries between staff

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<sup>6</sup> The Title IX regulations separate the fact-finding and ultimate decision-making functions. As such, the OIG's role is limited to the fact-finding investigator. At the conclusion of the investigation, the OIG issues an investigative report to the parties and to a Title IX decision-maker, who is appointed by the CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX. The OIG's investigative report contains an independent assessment of the evidence but no findings. The decision-maker reviews the evidence, fields any additional questions or requests from the parties, and issues a final written determination based on the evidence. Although the decision-maker considers the OIG's assessment of the evidence when deciding the matter, it is not binding on the decision-maker.



members and students. (CPS Policy Manual, Section 511.1, Board Report 25-0828-PO5 (August 28, 2025) at II.G.)

- The [Staff Acceptable Use Policy](#) concerns the proper use of CPS resources and the permitted scope of electronic communications with students. (CPS Policy Manual, Section 604.1, Board Report 19-0828-PO3 (August 28, 2019))
- The [Student Travel Policy](#) prohibits a staff member from driving a student in their personal vehicle without advance written consent from the principal and the student's parent/guardian. (CPS Policy Manual, Section 604.3, Board Report 210922-PO2 (September 22, 2021))
- The [Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy](#) governs the proper reporting of suspected abuse and neglect, and identifies potential grooming behaviors. The Policy also requires staff members to keep such allegations confidential and to cooperate with OIG investigations. (CPS Policy Manual, Section 511.1, Board Report 25-0828-PO5 (August 28, 2025))

The SAU initiated these investigations after receiving a complaint from students, colleagues, parents, anonymous individuals, or other witnesses. In some instances, the initial complaint received articulated a clear allegation of sexual misconduct that was not ultimately substantiated, but the investigation determined that the staff member violated one of these adjacent policies. In other instances, the initial allegation on its face may have presented concerns of grooming or other concerning misconduct, such that further investigation was appropriate.

Potential grooming behaviors do not automatically constitute a violation of CPS policies. In fact, one of the reasons grooming for sexual abuse is so insidious is that the conduct in question may resemble the genuine concern that staff members have for the development or well-being of their students. However, as demonstrated by many of the substantiated findings summarized below, the conduct may violate other CPS policies, such as the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students, the Staff Acceptable Use Policy, and/or the Student Travel Policy.

Finally, the substantiated findings summarized below also reflect SAU findings pertaining to staff members who fail to report suspected sexual misconduct in violation of their mandated reporter obligations and/or CPS policy. Staff members also occasionally violate the Board rules by failing to cooperate with an OIG investigation. The SAU investigates and

One of the reasons grooming for sexual abuse is so insidious is that the conduct ... may resemble the genuine concern that staff members have for the development or well-being of their students.



recommends consequences for these policy violations in order to deter such behavior and keep students safe.

» ***High School Teacher Engaged in Boundary-Crossing Behavior with Students; Insufficient Evidence to Corroborate More Serious Allegations of Sexual Misconduct (21-00341)***

A high school teacher engaged in boundary-crossing behavior with students over a period of at least eight years. This included making comments about female students' menstrual cycles, calling a student the "cleavage queen," and playing pranks on students that included taking students' phones and using them to take pictures and send messages. Female students consistently expressed that the teacher's general conduct made them uncomfortable.

Some of the teacher's conduct violated CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students (which replaced the Guidelines). However, much of the teacher's boundary-crossing conduct (including the comments about students' menstrual cycles and cleavage) took place before these guidelines were in effect.

The teacher also texted with students, but there was insufficient evidence that he did so after CPS policies were revised to strictly prohibit such conduct.

Two former students (who had graduated several years earlier) made serious allegations of sexual misconduct against the teacher, with one of these students alleging that the teacher sexually abused her, but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate the allegations.

DCFS was contacted but declined to investigate. CPD investigated the former student's allegation that the teacher sexually abused her, but the case was suspended pending further investigative leads.

CPS pulled the teacher from active duty shortly after receiving the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the teacher receive appropriate discipline, up to and including termination. The CPS Law Department informed the OIG that the Board filed dismissal charges and that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

» ***High School Teacher Made Female Students Uncomfortable by Making Gratuitous Physical Contact and Commenting on Their Appearances (21-01248)***

A high school teacher engaged in a pattern of conduct that made female students uncomfortable. He made physical contact with certain students by hugging or attempting to hug them, pulling them towards him, and touching their faces so they would look at him. The teacher also regularly commented on female students' appearances by calling them "pretty" and commenting on their outfits. He also repeatedly tried to get a student to show him a picture of her mother. Additionally, multiple students complained that the teacher made



unprofessional jokes in class, such as joking about marrying a student and asking another student to never leave him, but there was insufficient evidence to substantiate any particular comment.

The teacher's behavior constituted gender harassment in violation of CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy. It also violated the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students. However, there was no evidence that the teacher engaged in misconduct for a sexual purpose.

The OIG noted that the teacher was the subject of gender harassment complaints previously, before the OIG established its Sexual Allegations Unit. Following a school-based investigation, the teacher agreed to be more mindful of his interactions with students, and no action was taken against him. Regardless, he continued to engage in this type of behavior.

DCFS investigated the allegations but closed its case as unfounded. CPD opened a simple battery investigation but suspended it due to lack of cooperation from the mother of two alleged victims.

CPS pulled the teacher from active duty shortly after receiving the allegations.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline for the teacher, including a determination of whether to reinstate him to active duty. In the event he is reinstated, the OIG recommended that he first receive additional training on maintaining appropriate boundaries with students.

The Board decided to place the teacher on a Level Three Performance Improvement Plan, but the teacher resigned prior to discipline being issued. The Board subsequently flagged the teacher's personnel file for issuance of discipline in the event that he returns to CPS.

#### » *High School Teacher Made Discriminatory Comments to Female Students (22-00181)*

A high school teacher made discriminatory comments about how female students should dress, which made multiple students uncomfortable. For example, during a discussion of "early bloomers" in a sexual education class, the teacher said that, to avoid unwanted attention from males, girls should not wear "sexy" or provocative clothing. Students reported that the teacher made similar comments on other occasions. There was no evidence that the teacher ever counseled male students as to their own responsibilities.

Additionally, while teaching the sexual education class, the teacher repeatedly made comments generally referencing his own status as a single, sexually active man. Although it may have been reasonable for the teacher to use himself as an example and connect with students, his comments were frequent and ambiguous enough to make some students uncomfortable.



The teacher's comments constituted prohibited gender discrimination under CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct and Retaliation Policy and violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS investigated and closed its investigation as unfounded. CPD opened four separate cases, each of which was closed as non-criminal.

The teacher was pulled from active duty due to the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the teacher receive appropriate discipline and additional training regarding appropriate staff-student boundaries prior to interacting with CPS students again. The CPS Law Department informed the OIG that the Board filed dismissal charges and that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

» ***Elementary School Teacher Frequently Touched Students' Shoulders in Class (22-00350)***

An elementary school teacher regularly touched students' shoulders while answering questions or assisting with classwork. The touching was generally brief, was not targeted at any specific student(s), and was not sexual in nature. However, it made one student so uncomfortable that she no longer wanted to be in the teacher's classroom. There was insufficient evidence that the teacher also touched that student on the small of her back, near her buttocks, as she alleged.

The teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate. The student's mother filed a police report for simple battery, but CPD classified the allegation as non-criminal and did not conduct further investigation.

The teacher resigned from CPS during the investigation.

The OIG recommended that a record of this investigation be placed in the teacher's personnel file for consideration of whether he should receive corrective action training if he applies for employment in the District in the future. The Board subsequently flagged the teacher's personnel file for issuance of discipline and training in the event that he returns to the District.

» ***High School Special Education Teacher Messaged Two Students About Non-School-Related Topics (22-00355)***

A high school special education teacher text messaged a student ("Student 1") on one occasion. The messages were sent outside of regular school hours to Student 1's personal cell phone and did not relate to school. The messages were initiated by the special education teacher and included an invitation for Student 1 to join him at a crystal shop after he had seen her wearing a particular type of crystal. Though Student 1 felt anxious and



avoided the special education teacher after this conversation, there was no evidence that the special education teacher contacted Student 1 with a sexual or romantic purpose. The conversation appeared to be an isolated incident, and the messages did not contain any sexual or romantic innuendos.

The investigation also established that the special education teacher communicated about non-academic matters with another student (“Student 2”) via Google Chat, a district-approved application. These messages contained no sexual or romantic language. Although the special education teacher told Student 2 that he was “missing” him while he was absent from school, another teacher explained that she and the special education teacher were supporting Student 2 during this time, following a death in Student 2’s family.

The special education teacher’s conduct violated CPS’s Staff Acceptable Use Policy and CPS’s Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The special education teacher was pulled from active duty in connection with the investigation and was later reinstated under the condition that he complete training, which he did.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline for the special education teacher and noted that he had already completed corrective action training. The Board subsequently placed the special education teacher on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan and required him to complete additional training on proper staff-student boundaries. The special education teacher completed the additional training.

» ***High School Teacher Briefly Touched a Student’s Chest Area When Redirecting Her and Made a Rude Comment about Her Eyes (22-02384)***

A high school teacher briefly touched a ninth-grade student’s chest area as he tried to redirect her in the hallway. He also made an unprofessional, rude comment about her eye color on a different occasion.

Neither the touch nor the comment was sexual in nature. Regardless, the teacher’s conduct violated CPS’s standards for staff/student boundaries incorporated within CPS’s Reporting of Child Abuse, Neglect, and Inappropriate Relations Between Adults and Students Policy.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The teacher was pulled from active duty in response to the allegations, and he was reinstated the following school year. His reinstatement was conditioned on his completion of corrective action training. The OIG was unable to find a record of the teacher completing the training.



Provided that the teacher had completed the corrective action training, the OIG recommended no further discipline. The Board subsequently placed the teacher on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan.

» ***Vendor Employee Drove and Messaged with Middle School Students, Which Raised Grooming Concerns (22-02438)***

An employee of a vendor community organization gave middle school students rides in his car, engaged in extensive and frequent phone and social media contact with students both before and after his termination from the vendor organization, met with students outside of school, and visited a student's home while several other students were there. The vendor employee continued driving and messaging with students after the vendor organization, CPS, and CPD directed him to stop doing this. After his termination from the vendor organization, the vendor employee entered the students' school without authorization.

Though the vendor employee's behavior raised grooming concerns, the investigation found no evidence that the vendor employee engaged in any sexual misconduct with a student or acted with a sexual purpose.

The vendor employee's conduct violated CPS's Student Travel Policy, CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy, and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate. CPD investigated the allegation that the vendor employee entered a CPS school without proper authorization. CPD advised him to stay away from all activities of the vendor organization.

The vendor organization terminated the vendor employee's employment due to him violating the vendor organization's transportation policies.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the vendor employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» ***Elementary School Substitute Teacher Viewed Sexually Explicit Content on His Cell Phone While Students Were Nearby (23-01207)***

An elementary school substitute teacher viewed sexually explicit content on his phone while substituting on two separate occasions. Two students consistently described observing the substitute looking at images of naked men and women while he sat at their lunchroom table. A week later, one of the students approached the substitute teacher in a classroom to ask a question and again saw him watching a video of naked people on his phone.

The substitute teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.



CPS pulled the substitute teacher from active duty shortly after receiving the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the substitute teacher receive appropriate discipline, up to and including termination. The substitute teacher's employment was subsequently terminated and a Do Not Hire designation was added to his personnel file.

» *[Charter School Employee Asked a Student Her Age, Said She Was Too Young, and Then Asked if She Had a Sibling \(23-01386\)](#)*

A charter school employee asked a student her age, and after she responded that she was 18, he told the student she was too young and asked if she had a sister. The charter employee then communicated with the student's sister, who was in her late 20s, via cell phone and social media.

The investigation did not corroborate allegations that the charter employee and student communicated via cell phone or social media, or that they engaged in physical sexual activity.

The charter employee admitted that he used social media and a group text message chat to communicate with other charter school students about sports.

Had the charter employee been a CPS employee, his conduct would have violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students as well as CPS's Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The charter school placed the charter employee on administrative leave upon receipt of the allegations, and the charter school did not renew his contract for the following school year.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider whether to take appropriate steps to prevent the charter employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the charter employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *[High School Military Instructor Touched Female Students' Legs \(19-01819\)](#)*

A high school military instructor engaged in a pattern of touching female students' legs in a manner that made them uncomfortable. Based on witness statements, this generally occurred during lighthearted conversations or when the military instructor was trying to express sympathy. The military instructor also called female students "pretty" and "beautiful," called one female student his "daughter," and treated female students more favorably than male students. There was no evidence that the military instructor acted with a sexual purpose.

The military instructor's conduct violated CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries.



The investigation also established that the military instructor reached out to female students by cell phone and social media after they graduated. Although this made the former students uncomfortable, there was no evidence that the content of the messages was inappropriate or that the military instructor ever engaged in electronic communications with enrolled students.

There was also no evidence to corroborate a secondhand allegation that the military instructor had sex with a student.

DCFS was contacted three times but declined to investigate any of the allegations.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline and/or training for the military instructor. The CPS Law Department advised the OIG that the military instructor was given a written reprimand.

» *High School Intervention Specialist Failed to Properly Report an Incident Involving a Teacher and Student and Asked the Student to Keep the Incident Secret (22-02417)*

A high school intervention specialist failed to report an incident that raised the specter of staff-on-student sexual misconduct. On the occasion in question, the intervention specialist opened a teacher's locked classroom door with a key and entered the room with a student. The intervention specialist and student witnessed the teacher with his pants undone, with his back to them. Although the student could not see what the teacher was doing, she inferred based on his undone pants and movements that he had been masturbating.

The teacher told the OIG that his pants were undone at the time of the incident because he had been adjusting a compression stocking on his thigh, and he gave the same explanation to the intervention specialist after the incident. The intervention specialist further corroborated the teacher's account by telling the school principal and the OIG that the teacher appeared to be adjusting his pants. Regardless, at the time of the incident, the intervention specialist knew that the student believed the teacher may have been masturbating in the classroom, even though the intervention specialist did not believe the teacher had done anything wrong.

Though there was insufficient evidence that the teacher was masturbating, the investigation established that the intervention specialist told the student not to tell anyone about the incident and failed to report the incident properly. The intervention specialist's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate the allegation that the teacher was masturbating inside the classroom.

The teacher was pulled from active duty and then reinstated during the investigation because it was clear there was insufficient evidence that he engaged in misconduct.



The intervention specialist resigned his employment during the investigation.

Because the intervention specialist had resigned his employment, the OIG recommended that his file be flagged for review and consideration of this matter in the event he applies for a CPS position or otherwise undergoes a CPS background check. In the event the intervention specialist returns to CPS, the OIG recommended that he receive training on the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries Between Staff and Students and CPS's reporting requirements before interacting with students. The Board subsequently flagged the intervention specialist's personnel file for issuance of a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan and additional training on proper staff-student boundaries and reporting responsibilities in the event he returns to the District.

» ***Staff Member Made Gratuitous Physical Contact with Several Students and Messaged Another on Social Media, Calling Her "Cute" (19-00930)***

A staff member patted a seventh-grade student on her midsection while assuring her that she was not overweight and then gave the student a hug. The staff member also touched female students' shoulders in a way that made at least one student uncomfortable. These allegations were similar to allegations that students at a different school made against the same staff member five years earlier. Those allegations were substantiated by the CPS Law Department.

The staff member also communicated with an eighth-grade student via Facebook Messenger. The communications were not school-related, and although the topics discussed were relatively benign, the staff member referred to the student as "cute" and "cutie" in some of the messages. The staff member admitted that the messages were inappropriate. However, the messages were not explicitly sexual in nature.

The staff member's physical contact with students did not violate CPS's Comprehensive Non-Discrimination Title IX and Sexual Harassment Policy in effect at the time because there was insufficient evidence that the conduct was sexual in nature, interfered with any student's access to education, or otherwise created a hostile learning environment. The physical contact would have violated CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries if the Guidelines were in effect at the time, but there was insufficient evidence to establish that the conduct took place after the Guidelines took effect.

However, the staff member's social media communications with the eighth-grade student violated the Guidelines, as they occurred after the Guidelines took effect.

DCFS investigated the allegation that the staff member touched the seventh-grade student's midsection and closed the case as unfounded because there was not enough evidence to corroborate the allegations and because the conduct, as alleged, did not constitute sexual abuse.



CPD investigated and closed the case without charges because the alleged physical conduct was not criminal in nature.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline for the staff member, and a determination of whether he should receive additional training on maintaining appropriate boundaries with students. The Board subsequently placed the staff member on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan.

» *Elementary School Teacher Engaged in a Pattern of Gratuitous Physical Contact with Students, Which Made Students Uncomfortable (22-01775)*

An elementary school teacher engaged in a pattern of gratuitous physical contact with students, which made many students uncomfortable. This primarily involved rubbing students' arms, backs, and shoulders, or placing his hand on top of their thighs and knees. The OIG interviewed 15 current and former students, 12 of whom reported that the teacher touched them or others in this manner. These student interviews demonstrated that the conduct occurred over at least a 15-year period. A previous CPS Law Department investigation revealed similar allegations dating back even further.

The teacher's conduct violated the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students. However, there was insufficient evidence that the teacher touched students for a sexual purpose. Most of the students reported that he touched them during class while helping them with their work, and the investigation did not establish that he targeted specific students or those of a certain gender.

During the investigation, concerns arose about the teacher's close relationship with a former student. Interviews with that student and the student's mother established that the student and the teacher socialized outside of school (with parental permission), communicated by phone, and were connected on social media. The teacher also took the student on an overnight trip with his family three years after the student graduated from high school. However, there was no evidence that the teacher interacted with the student for a sexual purpose. Some of the teacher's behavior toward the student would have violated the Standards and the current Staff Acceptable Use Policy, but the policies were not in effect at the time.

The OIG investigated a series of other allegations against the teacher, but for each of them, the OIG found either insufficient evidence that the conduct occurred or insufficient evidence that the alleged conduct violated CPS policy.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The teacher was pulled from active duty shortly after the allegations were reported.

The OIG recommended that CPS determine whether to reinstate the teacher. The OIG further recommended that, if reinstated, the teacher receive additional training regarding appropriate staff-student boundaries prior to interacting with students again, as well as



appropriate discipline. The CPS Law Department informed the OIG that the Board filed dismissal charges and that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

» ***Charter High School Teacher Communicated with Students by Cell Phone (23-00807)***

A charter high school teacher communicated with students via cell phone. The charter teacher told the OIG that he provided his phone number on his class syllabus, and he admitted to texting with students to help them with homework or offer encouragement.

If the charter teacher had been a CPS employee, his communications with students would have violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

There was insufficient evidence to corroborate one student's allegations of more serious misconduct, including that the charter teacher touched the student's leg, discussed his sexuality with the student, talked to the student about the possibility of kissing him, followed the student on Instagram, or asked the student if he would report their conversations.

DCFS investigated the student's allegations but closed its case as unfounded.

CPD opened a case regarding the student's allegations, but the investigation determined that no sexual element existed, and the alleged offense was reclassified as simple assault. The case was closed due to the expiration of the statute of limitations.

The charter teacher left the charter school before the OIG began investigating. He subsequently worked at two other charter schools. At the time of his OIG interview, the charter teacher worked for a high school outside of Chicago.

Given that the charter teacher no longer worked for a CPS-affiliated school, the OIG recommended that he participate in training regarding the Staff Acceptable Use Policy should he seek employment with the District. The Board subsequently flagged the charter teacher's file so that he will receive such training if he is hired by the District. Additionally, following the investigation, the charter school informed CPS that the charter teacher is no longer eligible for employment at the charter school.

» ***High School Security Guard Engaged with Students in an Unprofessional Manner (20-00591)***

A high school security guard engaged with students in an overly familiar and unprofessional manner, acting as a friend or "uncle" figure rather than a staff member. This included having long conversations with certain students about personal issues and occasionally mentioning his own sexual experiences in a general, non-explicit way. There was insufficient evidence that the security guard engaged in sexual misconduct with any student or groomed any student for sexual abuse.



The security guard's conduct violated CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries.

Although the security guard gave snacks to one student and gave other students money to purchase small items at the store, there was insufficient evidence that this conduct occurred after the Guidelines were in effect.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX pulled the security guard from active duty in connection with unrelated allegations of corporal punishment.

The OIG recommended that, if reinstated, the security guard receive appropriate discipline, including additional training regarding appropriate staff-student interactions. The security guard's employment was subsequently terminated and a Do Not Hire designation was added to his personnel file.

» ***High School Teacher Engaged in Boundary-Crossing Behavior with Students During Class (22-01778)***

A high school teacher engaged in various boundary-crossing behaviors with students during class. The teacher asked a female student about her choice of menstrual products in front of other students, repeatedly referred to his vehicle as a "kidnapping van," and frequently hugged students. There was no evidence that he engaged in any of these behaviors for a sexual purpose.

The teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

During the OIG investigation, the CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX pulled the teacher from active duty in connection with unrelated allegations of racial discrimination.

During the OIG investigation, the teacher completed interim corrective action training regarding appropriate staff-student boundaries. In the event the teacher is reinstated, the OIG recommended that CPS consider whether additional discipline for the teacher is appropriate. The CPS Law Department informed the OIG that the Board filed dismissal charges and that a termination hearing is pending with the Illinois State Board of Education.

» ***High School SECA/Coach Communicated with Students Via Cell Phone and Social Media and Transported Students in His Car Without Proper Consent (21-00057)***

A high school SECA and coach texted and talked with students on the phone, connected with students on social media, and transported students in his car without written consent. There was insufficient evidence to corroborate a more serious allegation that the coach groomed or sexually abused a student, or that he engaged in other prohibited behaviors.



The coach's conduct violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy, CPS's Student Travel Policy, and CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The coach was pulled from active duty due to the allegations, and he resigned from CPS before the investigation concluded.

The OIG recommended that these findings be considered in the event the coach seeks employment with the District in the future. Should he be hired, the OIG recommended that he receive training on maintaining appropriate boundaries between staff and students prior to interacting with students. The Board subsequently added a Do Not Hire designation to the coach's personnel file.

» *Elementary School Vendor Employee Communicated with Three Students via Cell Phone and Social Media (23-01007)*

An elementary school vendor employee communicated via cell phone and social media with three CPS students. The vendor employee texted the students individually and as a group and exchanged direct messages with them on TikTok.

Cell phone records revealed hundreds of text messages between the vendor employee and one of the students, and screenshots shared with the OIG documented the vendor employee's use of unprofessional language and discussion of nonacademic topics. However, there was no evidence of sexual misconduct or sexual intent.

The vendor employee's conduct violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The vendor employee was no longer employed by the vendor organization as of the date of the OIG's report.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider these findings in the event the vendor employee seeks employment with the District in the future. Should she be hired, the OIG recommended that she receive training on maintaining appropriate boundaries between staff and students prior to interacting with students. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *Charter Security Guard Communicated with a Twelfth-Grade Student on Social Media and Asked for a Manicure (23-01246)*

A security guard at a charter high school communicated with a twelfth-grade student via social media over a three-month period. The charter security guard reacted to photos the student posted on Instagram with heart-eye emojis and other similar comments and emojis. Additionally, after the student posted that she was starting a nail business, the charter



security guard direct messaged her several times asking her to give him a manicure. All messages were sent to the student's personal Instagram account, even though she had a separate account for her nail business. Screenshots corroborated the allegations, and the charter security guard admitted that he connected and communicated with the student, and other students, on social media.

If the charter security guard had been a CPS employee, his conduct would have violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The charter school placed the security guard on leave after receiving the allegations and later terminated his employment.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider these findings in the event the charter security guard seeks employment with the District in the future. Should he be hired, the OIG recommended that he receive training on maintaining appropriate boundaries between staff and students before he is permitted to interact with students. The Board subsequently flagged the charter security guard's file so that (1) the Board will consider the OIG's findings if the charter security guard applies for District employment, and (2) the charter security guard will receive the recommended training if he is hired.

» *Elementary School Vendor Employee Made Inappropriate Comments to a Seventh-Grade Student (24-00017)*

An elementary school vendor employee made inappropriate comments to a seventh-grade student during a dance class the vendor employee was teaching. The vendor employee asked the student if she was a "stud," called the student either "cute" or "pretty," and said that she would date the student if they were the same age. There was insufficient evidence to corroborate more serious allegations that the vendor employee made an explicitly sexual remark to the student and touched students inappropriately during class.

The vendor employee's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The vendor company terminated the vendor employee's employment due to the allegations.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider these findings in the event the vendor employee seeks employment with the District in the future. Should she be hired, the OIG recommended that she receive training on maintaining appropriate boundaries between staff and students prior to interacting with students. The Board subsequently placed the vendor employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.



» *Vendor Substitute Teacher at a Charter High School Made Two Students Uncomfortable by Giving Them Romantic Song Lyrics to Read; The Charter School Failed to Conduct a Proper Background Check (22-00068)*

A vendor substitute teacher at a charter high school made two students uncomfortable by presenting them with romantic song lyrics for them to read, staring at them, and sitting close to them for long periods of time. The vendor substitute teacher presented the lyrics to the students separately, during different class periods. One of the students recalled the vendor substitute teacher saying that he wrote the lyrics — which included phrases such as, “You have my heart,” “My love for you runs deep,” and “The way that I caressed your soft skin” — and that he wished he could sing the song to her. The other student similarly recalled that the vendor substitute teacher showed her lyrics such as “Love always finds a way” and told her that he wrote the lyrics.

The vendor substitute teacher’s conduct violated CPS’s Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students. There was insufficient evidence that he acted with a sexual purpose.

Additionally, the charter school failed to conduct a CPS background check on the vendor substitute teacher as required by their Background Checks and Adjudication Process Agreement with CPS. As a result, the charter school was not made aware that the vendor substitute teacher had been previously investigated by the OIG for similar conduct at a different charter school, and that he was on CPS’s internal Do Not Hire list.

DCFS initially declined to investigate but subsequently opened a sexual exploitation investigation. The case was closed as unfounded.

The vendor company (which is also a District vendor) terminated the vendor substitute teacher’s employment shortly after receipt of the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the vendor substitute teacher continue to be blocked from working at and entering all CPS schools and that he remain on the internal Do Not Hire list. The CPS Law Department confirmed to the OIG that the vendor substitute teacher would remain on the internal Do Not Hire list.

When the complaint was received, the Law Department told the OIG that the CPS Office of Innovation and Incubation would be discussing the background check failure with the charter school. The OIG recommended that this be done, if it was not already done. The Law Department subsequently informed the OIG that the Office of Innovation and Incubation discussed the OIG’s report with the charter school.

» *Elementary School Teacher Allowed a First-Grade Student to Sit/Bounce on Her Lap on Multiple Occasions (22-02326)*

An elementary school teacher let a first-grade, six-year-old student sit and/or bounce on her lap. While it was impossible for the OIG to quantify the exact number of times the



teacher allowed the student to sit on her lap, the evidence established that it happened with sufficient frequency for the teacher's colleagues to have witnessed it at least a few other times. The investigation also established that the student once touched the teacher's breasts when hugging the teacher from behind.

There was no evidence that the student touched the teacher's breasts intentionally. There was also no indication that the teacher had any sexual intent when allowing the student to sit in her lap or that she did anything to suggest or encourage the student to touch her breasts. Regardless, the teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The teacher retired from CPS before the investigation concluded.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider these findings in the event the teacher seeks employment with the District in the future. Should she be hired, the OIG recommended that she receive training on maintaining appropriate boundaries between staff and students prior to interacting with students. The Board subsequently added a Do Not Hire designation to the teacher's personnel file.

» ***Vendor Coach Communicated with Students via Cell Phone and Social Media, Engaged in Other Boundary-Crossing Behaviors (23-01670)***

A vendor coach working at an elementary school communicated with students via cell phone and TikTok. She also engaged in other boundary-crossing behaviors, including throwing a pizza party for certain students and driving two siblings in her vehicle. The vendor coach continued to engage in the conduct even after the school administration directed her to stop. The vendor coach's phone and social media contact with students allegedly continued after her termination, as students reported that she informed them of her termination via TikTok group chat.

The vendor coach's conduct violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy, CPS's Student Travel Policy, and CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The vendor company terminated the vendor coach's employment, and she was placed under a District-wide block.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the vendor coach from working in the District again. The Board subsequently placed the vendor coach on an internal Do Not Hire list.



» *High School Gym Teacher Made an Improper Remark to a Student (21-01226)*

A high school gym teacher made an improper remark to a student (“Student 1”). Student 1 spilled a beverage during P.E. class and asked for paper towels to clean up the mess. The gym teacher then told Student 1, “Take off your shirt and wipe it off.” The gym teacher admitted to making the comment, explaining that he overreacted because the students were “running all over the place” and spilling water on the floor.

Student 1 made additional allegations against the gym teacher, including that he stared at her chest, improperly hugged and “groped” the breast of a classmate, and watched pornography in his office, but these allegations were not sufficiently corroborated. The OIG interviewed six randomly selected students, five of whom reported having no knowledge of the gym teacher engaging in any misconduct.

One of the randomly selected students (“Student 2”) raised allegations of misconduct against the gym teacher. Student 2 described an occasion where the gym teacher brushed up against her from behind while they were in the gym storage closet retrieving equipment. Student 2 stated she could feel the gym teacher’s erect penis when he made contact. However, no other students corroborated the allegations, and Student 2’s description of the incident raised a substantial possibility that the alleged physical contact was unintentional. There was insufficient evidence to corroborate Student 2’s other allegations of physical, verbal, and gender-based misconduct against the gym teacher.

The gym teacher’s comment to Student 1 violated CPS’s Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS was initially notified of the gym teacher’s comment to Student 1 but declined to investigate. DCFS was later notified of Student 1’s allegation that the gym teacher had side-hugged and groped a classmate’s breasts. DCFS investigated and closed the case as unfounded.

CPD investigated a criminal complaint made by Student 1, which alleged that the gym teacher side-hugged and groped a classmate’s breasts. CPD determined that the allegation was not supported by credible evidence.

The gym teacher was pulled from active duty shortly after the OIG investigation began. He was later reinstated subject to corrective action training, which he completed.

Because the gym teacher was reinstated subject to corrective action training, which he completed, the OIG recommended no further action.

» *High School Staff Members Acted Unprofessionally and Crossed Physical Boundaries with a Student (22-01029)*

A high school SECA and a high school teacher acted unprofessionally and crossed physical boundaries during an interaction with a ninth-grade student. The SECA, teacher, and student



all gave markedly different accounts of the incident during their OIG interviews, and there was no eyewitness corroboration. However, based on statements from the high school's principal and partial admissions from the teacher, there was sufficient evidence to establish that the SECA and the teacher teased the student about the student's short stature, asked the student about his clothing size, and then grabbed the student to check a tag inside the student's clothing.

The SECA and the teacher violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students. However, there was insufficient evidence that either of them pulled the student's pants down or otherwise acted with sexual intent toward the student.

There was insufficient evidence to corroborate other allegations, including an allegation that the SECA showed the student pornographic images on the SECA's phone.

DCFS investigated the allegation that the SECA showed the student pornographic images and closed the case as unfounded.

CPD investigated the SECA for the allegation involving pornographic images. The investigation began as an obscenity investigation and later became a child pornography investigation based on statements from the student. The investigation was suspended pending further investigative leads.

CPS pulled the SECA from active duty shortly after receiving the allegation that he had shown pornographic images to the student.

The OIG noted that, based solely on the conduct substantiated in this case, it would have recommended the SECA be reinstated and receive additional training regarding appropriate staff-student boundaries. However, the OIG recommended that the issue of the SECA's possible reinstatement be deferred pending the outcome of another case he was involved in, OIG Case No. 21-00944. As noted in the summary for OIG Case No. 21-00944, the Board subsequently filed dismissal charges in connection with that case, and the SECA resigned during the dismissal proceedings. A Do Not Hire designation was added to the SECA's personnel file.

The teacher resigned from his District employment during the investigation and began working for a charter school. The OIG recommended that the teacher receive additional training regarding staff-student boundaries if he returns to the District in the future. The Board subsequently added a Do Not Hire designation to the teacher's personnel file and advised the OIG that the teacher no longer worked at the charter school.

» *Charter High School Employee Engaged in Boundary-Crossing Behaviors with a Tenth-Grade Student (23-00204)*

A charter high school employee engaged in various boundary-crossing behaviors with a tenth-grade student. The charter employee frequently asked the student for hugs and pulled



her out of class for check-in meetings, which included discussions about the student's personal life. During one of these check-ins, the charter employee told the student that he loved her and would always support her, touched the student's lap or thigh, and asked for her phone number and social media information. The charter employee subsequently added the student on Snapchat.

Had the charter employee been a CPS employee, his actions would have violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students and CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

Though the charter employee's conduct raised serious grooming concerns and made the student uncomfortable, there was insufficient evidence that the charter employee acted for a sexual purpose. The charter employee told the OIG that he was trying to support the student through a difficult time, and that he connected with her on Snapchat so she could always reach him if she needed help. There was some evidence indicating that the charter employee sincerely wanted to help the student.

DCFS investigated and closed the case as unfounded.

CPD investigated and closed the case due to the absence of injuries and the matter being a misdemeanor battery offense. CPD notified the student's parents that they had the option to pursue battery charges by obtaining an arrest warrant, but the parents chose not to pursue further legal action.

The charter employee was pulled from active duty and blocked from CPS properties at the initiation of the case. The charter school terminated his employment shortly thereafter.

The OIG recommended that CPS take appropriate steps to prevent the charter employee from working for, or volunteering in, the District in the future. The Board subsequently placed the charter employee on an internal Do Not Hire list.

» *[Elementary School Teacher Engaged in Physical Contact that Made Students Uncomfortable \(23-00378\)](#)*

An elementary school teacher engaged in a pattern of making physical contact with students' shoulders, arms, elbows, and hands, which occurred across a span of several years and made multiple female students uncomfortable.

The teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

There was insufficient evidence to substantiate more serious allegations against the teacher, including that he hugged two students and touched/grabbed their buttocks when doing so.

DCFS investigated and closed the case as unfounded.



CPD investigated a student's allegation that the teacher grabbed her buttocks. CPD suspended the investigation due to lack of corroboration and issues regarding the student's credibility.

CPS pulled the teacher from active duty upon receipt of the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the teacher receive appropriate discipline, including a determination of whether to reinstate him to active duty. In the event the teacher is reinstated, the OIG recommended he receive training regarding maintaining appropriate boundaries with students. The Board subsequently reinstated the teacher and placed him on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan. The teacher also completed the training as recommended.

» ***Three Charter High School Teachers Crossed Professional Boundaries with Students; Charter Principal Failed to Properly Report Concerns (22-00067)***

This investigation involved various allegations against multiple staff members at a charter high school. The OIG began investigating after students, while gathered at a school assembly, made allegations of sexual abuse against three teachers ("Teacher 1," "Teacher 2," and "Teacher 3"). Each teacher allegedly abused one student ("Student 1," "Student 2," and "Student 3").

The OIG investigation determined there was insufficient evidence to conclude that Teacher 1, Teacher 2, or Teacher 3 engaged in any romantic or sexual conduct with these students. However, the investigation determined that all three teachers engaged in conduct that would have violated CPS policies, had they been CPS employees.

Teacher 1 communicated with Student 1 by cell phone and generally crossed professional boundaries with Student 1. Though the OIG was unable to substantiate any particular

The charter principal failed to report potential staff-on-student sexual misconduct allegations to the OIG or CPS ... in direct violation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Handling of Sexual Misconduct Allegations between CPS and the charter school.

conduct, it was reported that Teacher 1 socialized with Student 1 outside of school, became involved in Student 1's dating relationship with another student, and hugged Student 1 tightly. Teacher 1's conduct, had they been a CPS employee, would have violated CPS's Guidelines Regarding Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries as well as CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

Teacher 2 communicated with Student 2 on social media and by cell phone. However, there was insufficient evidence to corroborate an allegation that students, including Student 2, went to Teacher 2's house to smoke marijuana.



Teacher 3 communicated with Student 3 by cell phone. Both Teacher 2 and Teacher 3's conduct would have violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

Additionally, the charter high school's principal, as well as other staff members, failed to properly document and report concerns related to Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 3. The charter principal failed to report potential staff-on-student sexual misconduct allegations to the OIG or the CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX in direct violation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Handling of Sexual Misconduct Allegations between CPS and the charter school.

The charter school also engaged in practices that were contradictory to CPS policies and procedures, as well as the established best practices for handling potential adult-on-student misconduct. The charter school had a practice of conducting "peace circles," which created a situation where Student 1's classmate/dating partner was forced to directly confront Teacher 1 about allegations that Teacher 1 was having sexual and romantic interactions with Student 1. The charter school also encouraged staff members to communicate with students via cell phone and social media in direct contradiction to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

DCFS was notified but declined to investigate.

CPD opened three separate investigations into the three teachers. All three investigations were suspended because the students denied having any sexual interactions with the teachers.

All three teachers were pulled from active duty at the initiation of the case. The principal was pulled from active duty approximately 10 days later. Teacher 1 resigned a few days after being pulled from active duty. The charter principal resigned five months later. Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 were both laid off the following year.

Had Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 3 been CPS employees, the OIG would have recommended appropriate discipline. The OIG also recommended that CPS review whether the charter school's policies and procedures regarding staff-student interactions and the reporting of sexual misconduct allegations align with CPS policies and procedures.

The charter school informed the OIG that it has adopted CPS's Staff Acceptable Use policy, and CPS confirmed that the charter school's policies are now in alignment with CPS policies.

» ***High School SECA Engaged in Non-Sexual but Gratuitous Physical Contact with Students (23-00618)***

A high school SECA engaged in a persistent pattern of non-sexual but gratuitous physical contact with students. Staff members who were interviewed consistently reported that the SECA was "touchy-feely" and overly friendly with female students. He hugged female students and touched them on their hair, shoulders, and backs in a playful or affectionate manner.



In particular, the SECA routinely engaged in frontal hugs with a specific student, and two staff members felt compelled to contact the student's family in an attempt to discourage the hugs. The SECA also called the student by a nickname.

There was insufficient evidence that the SECA engaged in any of the conduct for a sexual purpose. However, the SECA engaged in the above conduct even though he had been disciplined for similar behavior following a previous OIG investigation.

The SECA's conduct toward students violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

There was insufficient evidence to corroborate other allegations that the SECA made sexual comments about other staff members in front of students, or that he touched a student in a sexual manner while helping the student move from a car to their mobility device.

The OIG referred to CPS an admission from the SECA that he failed to report staff-on-student physical abuse to DCFS. The OIG reported these allegations to DCFS during the investigation and referred the matter to the CPS Office of Student Protections and Title IX.

Reports that the SECA engaged in inappropriate behavior toward female staff members were investigated by the CPS Equal Opportunity Compliance Office ("EOCO").

DCFS declined to investigate.

The SECA was pulled from active duty in connection with the investigation.

The OIG recommended appropriate discipline for the SECA, including a determination of whether to reinstate him, considering the SECA's disciplinary history and the findings of EOCO's separate investigation. The Board subsequently terminated the SECA's employment and added a Do Not Hire designation to his personnel file.

» ***High School Teacher Touched Female Students' Chests as Part of a "Trick"***  
***(22-00329)***

A high school teacher touched the chests of at least two female students above their breasts, but there was insufficient evidence that the contact was sexual in nature. One student stated that the contact was part of a "flicking trick" that the teacher performed on multiple students. The teacher confirmed this, though he claimed that he did not touch the students while performing the "trick." The trick involved the teacher telling the student that they had something on their shirt and then flicking his finger upward when they looked down.

The investigation also established that the teacher engaged in other overfamiliar behavior with students, including complimenting students on their personal appearance, addressing students by unique nicknames or pet names, and initiating frontal hugs with students to console them. There was insufficient evidence that the teacher engaged in any of this conduct for a sexual purpose.



Other allegations of boundary-crossing conduct, such as inviting two students off campus for lunch, could not be corroborated.

The teacher's conduct violated CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

DCFS declined to investigate.

The teacher was pulled from active duty during the investigation.

The OIG recommended that CPS consider whether to reinstate the teacher. Should he be reinstated, the OIG recommended that he receive appropriate discipline and training on CPS's Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

The Board subsequently reinstated the teacher, placed him on a Level Two Performance Improvement Plan, and referred him for additional training regarding proper staff-student boundaries.

» ***Elementary School Teacher Made Boundary-Crossing Comments and Inadvertently Showed Sexually Suggestive Content to Students (23-01702)***

Over the course of two school years, an elementary school teacher inadvertently showed sexually suggestive content to sixth- and seventh-grade students on a few occasions. This included images of women who were at least partially nude. On one occasion, the teacher connected his personal cell phone to the classroom projector to show students a YouTube video. When he connected the device, the projector displayed a social media post of a partially nude woman. Students reported that a similar incident happened on a different occasion. Each time, the teacher quickly removed the image.

On one or two other occasions, the teacher showed students an episode of a documentary series that involved sexual themes and contained nudity. The teacher quickly turned it off and said he had selected the wrong episode.

The teacher also made a few general sexual references and boundary-crossing comments to students, such as comparing the mathematical concept of "augmentation" to breast augmentation and telling a student that she did not need to wear false eyelashes because she was pretty without them.

The teacher's conduct violated CPS's Staff Acceptable Use Policy as well as the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

The teacher's conduct was unprofessional, and he was reckless when using technology in the classroom. However, there was insufficient evidence that he acted for a sexual purpose or with sexual intent toward any student.

DCFS declined to investigate.



CPS pulled the teacher from active duty upon receipt of the allegations.

The OIG recommended that the teacher's employment be reinstated and that he be given appropriate discipline, including mandatory training on the Staff Acceptable Use Policy and the Standards of Conduct for Maintaining Professional Boundaries between Staff and Students.

The Board subsequently placed the teacher on a Level Three Performance Improvement Plan and referred him for additional training on proper staff-student boundaries. The teacher completed the training and was reinstated.

