

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY COUNCIL

## COMMITTEE REPORT

2023 Legislative Session

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**Reference No.:** LTR 02132023

**Draft No.:** 1

**Committee:** Education & Workforce Development

**Date:** February 13, 2023

**Action:** FAVORABLE

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**REPORT:** Favorable 4-0-1: Burroughs, Oriadha, Olson and Watson. Abstain: Fisher

The Education and Workforce Development Committee met on February 13, 2023, to consider the proposed draft correspondence to the Maryland Office of the Inspector General for Education, regarding the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) – School Construction Program.

Arian Albear, Legislative Budget & Policy Analyst, provided an overview indicating that the request for the letter was a result of the Council's Retreat where two (2) presenters provided their findings/concerns relative to PGCPS – School Construction Program.

The two presenters were a former Prince George's County Public Schools Supervisor of Capital Program, and a former private sector school building and former Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC) Senior Regional Facilities Manager.

The letter outlines the concerns presented at the retreat from both parties, with their PowerPoint presentation attached and a link provided to the Council Retreat.

The EWD Chair recapped the concerns expressed by the presenters at the Council Retreat, noting that this type of investigation falls under the purview of the Office of the Inspector General for Education and that it would be negligent not to further investigate. The Office of the Inspector General for Education, in their mission statement, investigates allegations of improper activities by local school systems employees, contractors and other entities. Chair Burroughs indicated that around 60% of the County budget is allocated to the PGCPS. As such, referring these matters to the proper agency entrusted to investigate these matters ensure oversight and accountability and will benefit the health and welfare of our students.

Council Member Watson asked if the Council would be in receipt of a response from the Inspector General prior to the budget process. It was noted that it would take a while for a response, maybe up to a year.

Council Member Oriadha spoke in support of the investigation indicating this is a very important issue, making sure that we are accountable to the public for the resources that have been entrusted to us. The Council Member further stated that we were all surprised with the numbers that were discussed at the retreat and how much the County is paying compared to other

jurisdictions.

Council Member Fisher indicated that other than the presentation at the Retreat, she hasn't been briefed by anyone from the School System. She requested a meeting be scheduled with the School's CEO. The EWD Chair asked the Committee Director to schedule an oversight hearing with the School's CEO prior to the budget work session.

After discussion, a motion was made to move favorably, authorizing the Chair's signature.