



Memorandum



1501 NE 2nd Avenue, Suite 343, Miami, Florida 33132

Phone: (305) 523-0623 Fax: (305) 523-0613

To: The Honorable Mari Tere Rojas, Chairwoman
and Members, Miami-Dade County School Board

Dr. Jose L. Dotres, Superintendent, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

From: Felix Jimenez, Inspector General 

Date: December 6, 2023

Subject: Last of Former M-DCPS Employees Arrested in Organized Scheme to Sell
GED Certificates Pleads Guilty and is Sentenced; Ref. 16-0008-SI

Roxanne Insignares, a former Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) employee, one of three defendants, charged in a scheme to sell General Education Development (GED) certificates pled guilty and was sentenced yesterday. Ms. Insignares was sentenced to 364 days jail followed by a period of four (4) years' probation. Antonio Bouzan, also a former M-DCPS employee and Marta Avalos, not a school employee, previously pled guilty to charges stemming from the same joint investigation by the M-DCPS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and the State Attorney's Office Public Corruption Task Force. All three were involved in a scheme to sell GED certificates to individuals.

Ms. Insignares, the former Test Chair at Miami Lakes Educational Center and Technical College (MLTC) was responsible for the GED testing at that location. Mr. Bouzan was the GED Registrar at MLTC under Ms. Insignares. The pair charged from \$150 to \$2,800 in exchange for issuing GED certificates. The investigation identified 19 individuals who fraudulently received their GEDs. Of those individuals, 18 admitted to paying for their GED certificates, 1 individual denied paying, all 19 admitted not taking the test and receiving a GED certificate.

Ms. Insignares falsified records and submitted false information to the Department of Education, M-DCPS, and the GED Testing Service LLC/Pearson VUE (the testing company) to obtain those certificates. Mr. Bouzan, acted as a broker—soliciting individuals who needed GEDs, completing their registrations for the test, and collecting the money. Marta Avalos, who worked for the Redlands Christian Migrant Association and drove individuals to various appointments including to obtain their GEDs, also acted as a broker. Ms. Avalos connected individuals seeking GEDs with Mr. Bouzan, shuttling the money and required paperwork, for a cut of the cash.

In January 2019, Ms. Insignares, Mr. Bouzan, and Ms. Avalos were arrested and charged with multiple counts of Organized Scheme to Defraud, and Cheating. Ms. Insignares and Mr. Bouzan, who were public servants as employees of M-DCPS, were charged with

Unlawful Compensation for Official Behavior. As a public servant, Ms. Insignares was also charged with Official Misconduct for her falsification of documents.

Ms. Avalos was sentenced in March of last year, to 3 years of probation, 100 hours of community service, assessed fines, and costs of investigation. This January, Mr. Bouzan was adjudicated guilty and sentenced to 2 years of house arrest followed by 3 years of probation, assessed fines, costs of investigation, and ordered to complete 100 hours of community service. Ms. Insignares plead guilty to the following charges: One (1) count of Organized Fraud; One (1) count of Cheating, one (1) count of Official Misconduct, and one (1) count of Unlawful Compensation and was sentenced to 364 days jail followed by a period of four (4) years' probation. She was also assessed fines, costs of investigation, and ordered to complete 100 hours of community service as a condition of probation.

Ms. Insignares' guilty plea and sentence closes this chapter that tarnished a process providing a practicable option for people who have not obtained a high school diploma. The OIG will remain vigilant in exposing behavior that is detrimental to preserving the integrity and public trust in M-DCPS.

cc: Ivan E. Silva, Chief, Miami-Dade Schools Police
Walter T. Harvey, School Board Attorney
Jon Goodman, Chief Auditor, Office of Management Compliance Audits