




Memorandum

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

Dr. Jose L. Dotres, Superintendent
Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS)

From: Felix Jimenez, Inspector General 

Date: June 9, 2025

Subject: OIG Case Closure Report - *Consultant Agreements Review*
Ref: IG23-0001-SO

Attached please find the Office of the Inspector General's (OIG) Contract Oversight Case Closure Report regarding our review of M-DCPS consultant agreements. Our review was predicated on a request from former Chairwoman Tabares Hantman, who had expressed a concern over the growing number of consultants being engaged by the District, including the number of consultants that were former M-DCPS employees.

The OIG's review of consultants engaged by M-DCPS for the period 2019 – 2022 showed 17 engagements of former employees. Three of the contracts exceeded \$50,000 and were approved by the Board; the remaining 14 were approved by the Superintendent. While the OIG is closing this contract oversight review, we will continue to engage with Procurement Management Services as it provides training to the user departments on requesting waivers to the competitive bidding/solicitation requirements of Board Policy 6320.

Attachment

cc: Walter Harvey, General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
Jon Goodman, Chief Auditor, Office of Management and Compliance Audits
Jose Bueno, Chief of Staff, Office of the Superintendent, M-DCPS
Ron Y. Steiger, Chief Financial Officer, M-DCPS Financial Services
Charisma Monfort, Chief Procurement Officer, Procurement Management Services



OIG Contract Oversight Unit Case Closure Report

Case Number 23-0001-SO
Case Title Consultant Agreements Review
Date June 6, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) conducted a review of Miami-Dade County Public Schools' (M-DCPS) procurement process as it relates to professional service contracts. These contracts are awarded to individuals and/or companies for specified services that are beneficial to the operational effectiveness of M-DCPS. The school district's policy for the hiring of professional services is outlined in M-DCPS Board Policy 6320 – Purchases. The policy describes the procedures for the hiring of an individual or company through the competitive selection process. The policy also provides procedures for exceptions to the competitive selection process when it involves sole source contractors who have a specific expertise where non-competitive acquisition for those services is in the best interests of M-DCPS. This review was predicated on a request from former School Board Chair Perla Tabares Hantman.

BACKGROUND

In June 2022, the OIG received a request from the then School Board Chair Hantman to review a list of consultant agreements (also referred to as professional service contracts) within the school district. She expressed a concern over the growing number of consultants being engaged by the District, including consultants who were former M-DCPS employees. She provided the OIG with a list entitled *REVISED List of Consulting Agreements in M-DCPS (2019-2022)* (see Exhibit 1). Among the 80 entities¹ listed, seven were identified as former M-DCPS employees or belonging to former M-DCPS employees. The list also included law firms, technology firms, national and international architecture and engineering firms.²

The Board policy that governs the acquisition of these consultant service agreements is Policy 6320. This policy outlines the competitive solicitation process for awarding vendor contracts, consultant services agreements and the exceptions to the competitive solicitation process. Some of these exceptions include emergency purchases, purchases for OEM³ parts, contracts for legal services, and contracts for services coming from a

¹The entities included corporations and individuals as sole proprietors.

² The acquisition of architecture and engineering services, commonly referred to as “professional services” is governed by Florida Statutes Section 227.055, the Consultants’ Competitive Negotiation Act. School Board Policy 6330 sets forth the procedures for commissioning professional services in accordance with Florida Statutes Section 277.055.

³ Original Equipment Manufacturer parts are typically necessary to maintain warranty status.



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“sole source” or from a person or company that has provided a special expertise that was in the best interests of the district.

Notably, since at least 2008, Policy 6320 established a Professional Services Contract Committee (PSCC) comprised of various school officials to review and make recommendations on requests for exceptions from competitive solicitations. The PSCC was the informal stand-in for the evaluation committee. “The PSCC may grant exceptions for sole source contracts, contractors having specific expertise, or as otherwise determined by the PSCC to be in the best interest of the Board. The PSCC will be used in extenuating circumstances only. For contracts with an annual estimated cost of more than \$50,000, exceptions recommended by the PSCC must be approved by the Board.”

In fact, the OIG, in 2008, obtained first-hand knowledge of the PSCC when we made a request to hire an outside consultant to provide subject matter expertise for an audit the OIG was conducting at that time. The OIG was required to submit a request, including the proposed contract amount, and supply a written justification for our need to retain the services of a particular consultant. The OIG was also required to attend the regularly scheduled PSCC meeting and present our request. In the end, our request was approved, and since the requested amount was under \$50,000, it was awarded by the Superintendent.

OIG REVIEW & ASSESSMENT

During this review, the OIG quickly learned that the Administration has not been using the PSCC since 2009. Even though Policy 6320 couches the PSCC as a permissive choice – “may consider requests” and “will be used in extenuating circumstances only” – the PSCC had been completely eliminated. Instead, the procurement authority for those contracts were delegated to Procurement Management Services and approved by the Superintendent. It is unclear as to why the PSCC was not used for the agreements that met the exception to the competitive bidding process. Some district officials speculated that it may have been due to the budgetary concerns of the previous superintendent or concerns over past contracts that were approved for exemptions by the PSCC.

The OIG’s review of the consultant list provided by the former Board Chair focused on those contracts awarded to former school employees and the use/non-use of the PSCC.

As mentioned above, the list provided by the former Board Chair (Exhibit 1A) identified seven entities as former M-DCPS employees or belonging to former M-DCPS employees. During our review, the OIG also obtained a list from Mr. Ron Steiger, the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), that also contained 80 entities, with slight variations (see Exhibit 1B). The CFO’s list, however, did not contain a date range nor did it identify which entities were associated with former M-DCPS employees.



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The OIG reviewed both lists and determined that there were 17 entities comprised of corporations or people contracting in their individual capacity involving former employees. There were nine (9) former employees hired as a Contractual Attendance Interventionist in the Truancy Program as part of the “Together for Children – H.E.R.O Initiative,” under M-DCPS’ Office of School Leadership and Performance (formerly School Operations). A review of the employees’ background for these positions revealed that a particular expertise and experience in school operations was required. All former employees were required to submit resumes, pass an interview process, and background check before it was determined they were qualified for the position. The agreements to hire the former employees for the Truancy Program were submitted to Procurement Management Services for review and then were forwarded to the Superintendent’s Office for approval as each contract was under the \$50,000 threshold.

Among the 17 agreements, the OIG also identified two consultant agreements that involved the hiring of former employees from Procurement Management Services. One of the former employees was a Procurement Director, whose contract was approved in 2019; the other was a former Chief Procurement Officer, whose contract was approved in 2021. Both former employees were hired as consultants based on their prior expertise in procurement services. The agreement with the former Chief Procurement Officer had a contract value over \$50,000 that was approved by the School Board, whereas the agreement with the former Procurement Director did not meet that threshold and was reviewed by Procurement Management Services and approved by the Superintendent.

The OIG also reviewed a consultant agreement that was established with a former M-DCPS Chief Strategy Officer, who was the owner of L.M. Genuine Solutions LLC. The agreement was to have the former Chief Strategy Officer negotiate and serve as the District’s liaison regarding redevelopment projects and public-private partnerships with the County and other public and private sector stakeholders. The former Chief Strategy Officer had sixteen years of prior school experience and expertise in school operations. Her contract was over \$50,000 and, as such, was approved by the Board.

Similar reviews were conducted of consultant agreements with the Office of Human Capital Management, Office of Academic Transformation, and the Office of Information Technology. There were four agreements involving the hiring of former employees who provided a specific expertise and/or experience in school district operations. Of these four, one was over \$50,000 and went to the Board for approval. The OIG also determined that none of these agreements were reviewed by the PSCC even though the PSCC was still a part of the Policy 6320 at the time those agreements were awarded in 2022. In total, we found 14 agreements that awarded by the Superintendent and three that were approved by the Board.



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The OIG's review of contracts awarded to former M-DCPS employees also involved determining the employee's date of separation and whether their contract with M-DCPS could trigger any FRS implications. We found none.

The District's non-use of the PSCC was an issue raised by School Board Chair Mari Tere Rojas during an August 30, 2023, School Board Committee Meeting for Fiscal Accountability & Government Relations. During that meeting, Chair Rojas expressed if the District isn't using the PSCC, then it should be eliminated. She referenced an upcoming Board agenda item and called for a review and clarification of this matter. On October 11, 2023, School Board members approved an amendment to revise Board Policy 6320 eliminating the PSCC provision to align the policy with current District practices.⁴

Given that the PSCC had not been utilized since 2009 – and now that it was officially eliminated – the OIG inquired from Chief Procurement Officer Charisma Montfort how her office reviews requests for exemptions to the competitive bidding/solicitation requirements. Ms. Montfort indicated that the exemptions that her office would authorize are the same exemptions currently being utilized by the district's Grant Administration office:

- Professional Services – artistic services, academic program reviews, lectures by individuals, auditing services, legal services, health services and procurements which render competitive bidding impractical.
- Copyright
- Single Source
- Piggyback Other Government Agency Contracts
- Grants
- Funds Reservation

Ms. Montfort explained for contracts less than \$50,000, the district department requesting the exemption must contact Procurement and provide a rationale for the exemption. They will be required to provide all supporting documentation to Procurement, and the Office of General Counsel will review for legal sufficiency, before presentation to the Superintendent for approval.

Ms. Montfort stated that for contracts over \$50,000, the same procedures for reviewing the exemption would be required by Procurement and the Office of General Counsel before presenting the proposed contract award to the School Board for approval.

Ms. Montfort indicated her office provides the School Board with a quarterly expenditure report of purchases (including contractual services) that were obtained via exemption to

⁴ October 11, 2023, Board Meeting, Agenda Item G-6.



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the competitive bidding/solicitation process and that exceeded \$100,000. This report is required to include the date of purchase, vendor, amount, funding source, and purchasing authority.

In order to ensure all school departments are familiar with the new procedures for the issuance of professional service contracts, Ms. Montfort advised that her office with the assistance of the Office of General Counsel will conduct training sessions for all school departments on the procedures for obtaining professional services contracts. She anticipates the training may begin in June or July 2025.

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION FOR CLOSURE

For unspecified reasons the PSCC was abandoned and ultimately eliminated by Board action. The responsibility for reviewing all requests to waive competitive bidding/solicitation requirements now falls on the Chief Procurement Officer. To establish new procedures for the acquisition of professional service contracts, Procurement Management Services and the Office of General Counsel are reportedly in the process of developing a training program for all departments on the proper procedures to follow in requesting professional service contracts.

We urge that, in conjunction with the anticipated training to roll out this summer, a uniform waiver form be developed. Fields on said form should include how long the firm has been in business, the basis for the requested contract dollar amount, exemption category, description of specialized service or justification of sole source, and whether the individual/firm is a former M-DCPS employee.

Even though this training is scheduled to take place this summer, it is recommended that this contract oversight assignment be closed. The OIG may wish to periodically monitor and/or attend a training session and inquire about the development of a form. From time-to-time, the OIG may wish to request a listing of all consultant agreements (below and above the \$50,000 threshold similar to that in Exhibits 1A and 1B). These reports would be useful tools benefitting the OIG's general contract oversight mission and can be done so without needing to keep this case open. Last, it is recommended that a copy of this closure report be provided to the Board and Administration.

Prepared by:	Archie Moore	Date Prepared	June 6, 2025
Routing for Approvals:			
Supervisor	Jose Gonzalez	Date Approved	June 6, 2025
Deputy Inspector General	Patra Liu	Date Approved	June 6, 2025
Inspector General	Felix Jimenez	Date Approved	June 6, 2025

Miami-Dade County Public Schools
Office of the Inspector General
IG-23-0001-SO

EXHIBIT 1A

REVISED List of Consulting Agreements in M-DCPS (2019-2022)
Provided by Former Board Chair Perla Tabares Hantman

EXHIBIT 1B

List of Consulting Agreements in M-DCPS
Provided by Chief Financial Officer Ron Steiger

REVISED List of Consulting Agreements in M-DCPS (2019-2022)

	VENDOR
1	ABTSOLUTIONS
2	AGNES BIEN-AIME GOODMAN
3	AMI RISK CONSULTANTS INC
4	AON HEWITT
5	ARIANA ROBAYO
6	ASHLENIE RIVERO
7	ASHLEY GONZALEZ
8	BALLARD PARTNERS, INC
9	BARBARA D. JONES
10	BEACON SYSTEMS, INC.
11	BECKER & POLIAKOFF PA
12	BISCAYNE RESEARCH GROUP INC
13	CAP GOVERNMENT INC
14	CARLOS PILDAIN
15	CARRIE MANIGAT
16	CASIMIR CONSULTING, LLC
17	CEROMAT CORP*
18	CHRISTOPHER CUTRONA*
19	COGENT INFOTECH CORP
20	DEBORAH C. KARCHER*
21	DEBRA KERR LLC
22	DESIGN2FORM
23	DIANA DIEUVEILLE
24	DIGNITY CONSULTING
25	DUDE SOLUTIONS, INC.
26	EDUCATION ELEMENTS INC
27	ELISA CALABRESE
28	FLORIDA SCHOOL SERVICES INC*
29	FOLLETT SCHOOL SOLUTIONS INC
30	FRANCINE MURPHY
31	GREENBERG TRAURIG P.A.
32	IBM
33	INSPIRED PRACTICES IN
34	INTEGRA REALTY RESOURCES
35	IVANTI, INC
36	JACQUELINE GONZALEZ
37	JEFFREY A EWALDT
38	JSA GROUP INC
39	KASSANDRA TARRIDE
40	L.M.GENUINESOLUTIONSLLC*

	VENDOR
41	LCT-E LEARNING
42	LEWIS E. BROWN
43	LOIS PATRICE JACKSON
44	LUWANNA RILES
45	MAKESSIA EALEY
46	MARIA C. WOOD
47	MARIA I PANIZO
48	MCCANN LEARNING SOLUTIONS
49	MERIDIAN PARTNERS LLC
50	MIAMI SUNSHINE SER. INC
51	MILLER3 CONSULTING INC.
52	PHOENIX BUSINESS CONSULTI
53	PINNACUS LLC
54	PRISMATIC SERVICES, INCORPORATED
55	RMC RESEARCH CORPORATION
56	RONALD L BOOK PA
57	ROZALYN H PASCHAL MD
58	SABRINA WLLIAMS
59	SEANDRA PENNIE
60	SHIRLY BARBE
61	SIVER INSURANCE MNGMT
62	SLACK JOHNSTON & MAGENHEIMER INC
63	SOFTWARE INTEGRATION SVCS INC*
64	SOFTWARE PEOPLE INC
65	SOFTWARE RESOURCES INC
66	SOLOMONS INTERNATIONAL, LLC
67	SOLVENT ANALYTICS LLC
68	STEVEN WISE*
69	STRONGE AND ASSOCIATES
70	SUN CITY STRATEGIES LLC
71	TAMMY FARNHAM
72	TERRICA JOHNSON
73	THREE CLOUD
74	TRANETTE TALLEY
75	UNITED DATA TECHNOLOGIES
76	VITAYER STAFFING
77	WOOLPERT INC
78	WSP USA, INC.
79	YOLANDA FLETCHER
80	ZAYDA AMADOR

* = Former Employee

	VENDOR	CONSULTING	BUREAU
1	ABTSOLUTIONS	Yes	ITS
2	AGNES BIEN-AIME GOODMAN	Yes	School Operations
3	AMI RISK CONSULTANTS INC	Yes	Finance
4	AON HEWITT	Yes	Finance
5	ARIANA ROBAYO	Yes	School Operations
6	ASHLENIE RIVERO	Yes	School Operations
7	ASHLEY GONZALEZ	Yes	School Operations
8	BALLARD PARTNERS, INC	Yes	Intergov. Affairs
9	BARBARA D. JONES	Yes	Finance
10	BECKER & POLIAKOFF PA	Yes	Intergov. Affairs
11	BISCAYNE RESEARCH GROUP INC	Yes	OAT
12	CAP GOVERNMENT INC	Yes	Facilities
13	CARLOS PILDAIN	Yes	School Operations
14	CARRIE MANIGAT	Yes	School Operations
15	CASIMIR CONSULTING, LLC	Yes	School Operations
16	CDW GOVERNMENT INC	Yes	OAT
17	CEROMAT CORP	Yes	Human Capital
18	CHRISTOPHER CUTRONA	Yes	OAT
19	DADE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS	Yes	ITS
20	DEBORAH C. KARCHER	Yes	ITS
21	DEBRA KERR LLC	Yes	MDSPD
22	DELL FINANCIAL SRVS, LLC	Yes	OAT
23	DELL MARKETING LP	Yes	OAT
24	DESIGN2FORM	Yes	Facilities
25	DIANA DIEUVEILLE	Yes	School Operations
26	DIGITAL DRAFTING SYSTEMS	Yes	Facilities
27	DIGITALERA GROUP	Yes	ITS
28	DIGNITY CONSULTING	Yes	Human Capital
29	EDUCATION ELEMENTS INC	Yes	Human Capital
30	ELISA CALABRESE	Yes	Human Capital
31	FLORIDA SCHOOL SERVICES INC	Yes	Intergov. Affairs
32	FOLLETT SCHOOL SOLUTIONS INC	Yes	OAT
33	FRANCINE MURPHY	Yes	School Operations
34	GREENBERG TRAURIG P.A.	Yes	Facilities
35	IBM	Yes	OAT
36	INFO-TECH RESEARCH GROUP	Yes	ITS
37	INSPIRED PRACTICES IN	Yes	OAT
38	INTEGRA REALTY RESOURCES	Yes	Facilities
39	IVANTI, INC	Yes	OAT
40	JACQUELINE GONZALEZ	Yes	School Operations
41	JEFFREY A EWALDT	Yes	Finance
42	JSA GROUP INC	Yes	Facilities
43	KASSANDRA TARRIDE	Yes	School Operations
44	L.M.GENUINESOLUTIONSLLC	Yes	Facilities
45	LCT-E LEARNING	Yes	Human Capital
46	LEWIS E. BROWN	Yes	School Operations

47	LOIS PATRICE JACKSON	Yes	School Operations
48	LUWANNA RILES	Yes	School Operations
49	MAKESSIA EALEY	Yes	School Operations
50	MARIA C. WOOD	Yes	School Operations
51	MARIA I PANIZO	Yes	Human Capital
52	MCCANN LEARNING SOLUTIONS	Yes	School Operations
53	MERIDIAN PARTNERS LLC	Yes	ITS/Finance
54	MIAMI SUNSHINE SER. INC	Yes	School Operations
55	MILLER3 CONSULTING INC.	Yes	OEO
56	PHOENIX BUSINESS CONSULTI	Yes	Maintenance/Human Capital
57	Pluralsight LLC	Yes	OAT
58	PRECISION POWER SERVICES INC	Yes	OAT
59	PRISMATIC SERVICES, INCORPORATED	Yes	OAT
60	RMC RESEARCH CORPORATION	Yes	Human Capital
61	RONALD L BOOK PA	Yes	Intergov. Affairs
62	ROZALYN H PASCHAL MD	Yes	School Operations
63	SABRINA WLLIAMS	Yes	School Operations
64	SAP AMERICA INC	Yes	ITS
65	SEANDRA PENNIE	Yes	School Operations
66	SHIRLY BARBE	Yes	School Operations
67	SIVER INSURANCE MNGMT	Yes	Finance
68	SLACK JOHNSTON & MAGENHEIMER INC	Yes	Facilities
69	STEVEN WISE	Yes	OAT
70	STRONGE AND ASSOCIATES	Yes	Human Capital
71	SUN CITY STRATEGIES LLC	Yes	Intergov. Affairs
72	TAMMY FARNHAM	Yes	MDSPD
73	TERRICA JOHNSON	Yes	School Operations
74	TOWER PEST CONTROL INC	Yes	OAT
75	TRANETTE TALLEY	Yes	School Operations
76	UNITED DATA TECHNOLOGIES	Yes	ITS
77	WOOLPERT INC	Yes	Facilities
78	WSP USA, INC.	Yes	Facilities
79	YOLANDA FLETCHER	Yes	School Operations
80	ZAYDA AMADOR	Yes	School Operations