




Memorandum

1501 NE 2nd Avenue, Suite 343, Miami, Florida 33132
Phone: (305) 523-0623 • Fax: (305) 523-0613



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

From: Felix Jimenez, Inspector General 

Date: December 19, 2023

Subject: Receipt of Status Report Re: *Report of Investigation - Master Schedule at Miami Carol City Senior High School*, Ref. IG19-0005-SI

On August 2, 2023, the Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) Office of the Inspector General (OIG) issued its Final Inspection Report regarding the above-captioned matter.¹ In that final report, the OIG made three recommendations and requested that your office provide a 90-day status report regarding M-DCPS' implementation of the recommendations. The OIG is in receipt of your status report, dated October 27, 2023 (attached). Thank you.

We have reviewed the status report and are pleased that M-DCPS has made some progress in implementing our recommendations; however, we note that portions of our recommendations were not addressed. As such, the OIG is requesting another status report in 60 days, to be received on or before February 20, 2024, that describes the additional progress made in implementing the recommendations.

Quoted below are our original recommendations and M-DCPS' response, followed by our requests for additional information.

OIG Recommendation 1:

"The OIG recommends that M-DCPS create a formal procedure on the use of placeholders and TBAs for vacant positions at the time of rolling over the schedule into DSIS. If a school uses long-term substitutes, classroom supervisors, and FLVS, teachers they should be included in DSIS to ensure parents and caregivers receive accurate information about who is teaching and supervising their children."

M-DCPS 90-Day Status Update

"The district's goal is to provide a master schedule to every student that meets their educational needs. For classes to be created, a teacher must be aligned with that class in the preliminary schedule. In cases where a vacancy may exist, the process may include the use of placeholders, who should be school site instructional

¹ [Report of Investigation - Master Schedule at Miami Carol City Senior High School, Ref. IG19-0005-SI](#)

personnel. When all available instructional personnel have been exhausted, the use of substitute teachers is permissible.

A meeting was held with the Budget Directors from each region to reiterate the procedures for the use of placeholders in the master schedule. It was determined that the use of placeholders was a necessity for the student schedules to be processed; therefore, the use of instructional staff would be utilized where possible and they would be charged with monitoring the instruction, usually provided by substitute teachers. When released instructional staff is not available, a long-term substitute could be utilized. In the case of Florida Virtual School (FLVS) teachers, the district must wait until the information is provided by FLVS; in those cases, the number of the employee that is physically with the students is utilized only until the information is transmitted for FLVS, but the classes are clearly reported as FLVS.

An out-of-field report is also generated after FTE and schools send home letters to parents indicating when their student is being taught by someone not certified in the field that they are teaching in. These are generated automatically for any student who has a long-term substitute assigned to their class.”

Additional Information Requested

It is not clear from the response whether a formal policy on the use of TBAs and placeholders will be drafted. Please advise whether a policy on the use of TBAs and placeholders will be drafted, and if so, please provide a copy to the OIG.

OIG Recommendation 2:

“The OIG recommends that if master schedules will be rolled over into DSIS prior to permanent instructors being assigned the regional office should approve the use of placeholders. “

M-DCPS 90-Day Status Update

“The Region Offices and Office of Academics and Transformation are actively included in the creation of master schedules and instructional personnel assignments throughout the process, including the utilization of placeholders. Throughout the planning process and opening of schools, the use of placeholders will be continuously monitored.”

Additional Information Requested

It is not clear from the response if the Region Offices will approve the use of placeholders. Please advise how the Region Offices will monitor the use of placeholders, including whether Region Offices will approve the use of placeholders before they are entered into the master schedule.

OIG Recommendation 3:

“The OIG recommends mandatory training for all M-DCPS staff who create, revise, or approve master schedules. Such training should include clear guidance that non-

instructional personnel should never be used on a master schedule as a placeholder or otherwise.”

M-DCPS 90-Day Status Update

“Training provided to staff involved in master schedule creation includes the information regarding the use of placeholders when finalizing the master schedule. School staff is reminded that under no circumstances should non-instructional personnel be used as placeholders. Additionally, a programmatic block was instituted in DSIS disallowing the inclusion of non-instructional personnel in the master schedule.”

Additional Information Requested

An OIG special agent attended the initial session of the updated master schedule training. The use of non-instructional staff is only noted in the presentation as a footnote on a page that discusses the Position Control List Report. The special agent attending the training verbally raised the issue, bringing it to the attention of the trainer. We understand that there will be several training opportunities in the near future, however, master schedule training is not mandatory—either for new schedulers or for those experienced with building the master schedule. One principal the OIG spoke to recently had been building the master schedule for sixteen years and had never taken the training course.

It is not clear from the response whether training in master schedule creation will become mandatory. The OIG requests M-DCPS advise 1) whether the training will be mandatory, 2) how the information on the use of placeholders will be incorporated into the training materials, and 3) how the instructional responsibilities of the staff used as placeholders on the schedule will be communicated to the placeholders.

Last, we acknowledge the programmatic block instituted in DSIS, but, to our understanding, this won't prevent non-instructional personnel being included in Aspen master schedule. How are school staff being reminded that under no circumstances may a non-instructional staffer be used as a placeholder?

The OIG looks forward to receiving an additional update from your office, on or before February 20, 2024, that addresses the above-noted comments and observations.

Attachment

cc: Jon Goodman, Chief Auditor, Office of Management & Compliance Audits
Mr. Jose Bueno, Chief of Staff, Office of the Superintendent
Dr. John D. Pace, III, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Yesenia Aponte, Region Superintendent



Miami-Dade County Public Schools

giving our students the world

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Jose L. Dotres

Miami-Dade County School Board

*Mari Tere Rojas, Chair
Danny Espino, Vice Chair*

*Roberto J. Alonso
Lucia Baez-Geller*

Dr. Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall

Mary Blanco

Monica Colucci

Dr. Steve Gallon III

Luisa Santos

October 27, 2023

Mr. Felix Jimenez
Office of Inspector General, Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1501 NW 2 Ave, Suite 343
Miami, Florida 33132

RE: REPORT OF INVESTIGATION: MASTER SCHEDULE AT MIAMI CAROL CITY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL REF: IF19-0005-SI

Dear Mr. Jimenez,

Please allow this letter to serve as a response to the report of investigation: Master Schedule at Miami Carol City Senior High School Ref: IF19-0005-SI.

The allegations that precipitated the report were determined to be unfounded, but as a result of your investigation, some recommendations were made regarding the use of placeholders in the master schedule. The following is a status report on the implementation of those recommendations.

Recommendation 1: The OIG recommends that M-DCPS create a formal procedure on the use of placeholders and TBAs for vacant positions at the time of rolling over the schedule into DSIS. If a school uses long-term substitutes, classroom supervisors, and FLVS teachers they should be included in DSIS to ensure parents and caregivers receive accurate information about who is teaching and supervising their children.

The district's goal is to provide a master schedule to every student that meets their educational needs. For classes to be created, a teacher must be aligned with that class in the preliminary schedule. In cases where a vacancy may exist, the process may include the use of placeholders, who should be school site instructional personnel. When all available instructional personnel have been exhausted, the use of substitute teachers is permissible.

A meeting was held with the Budget Directors from each region to reiterate the procedures for the use of placeholders in the master schedule. It was determined that the use of placeholders was a necessity for the student schedules to be processed; therefore, the use of instructional staff would be utilized where possible and they would be charged with

monitoring the instruction, usually provided by substitute teachers. When released instructional staff is not available, a long-term substitute could be utilized. In the case of Florida Virtual School (FLVS) teachers, the district must wait until the information is provided by FLVS; in those cases, the number of the employee that is physically with the students is utilized only until the information is transmitted for FLVS, but the classes are clearly reported as FLVS.

An out-of-field report is also generated after FTE and schools send home letters to parents indicating when their student is being taught by someone not certified in the field that they are teaching in. These are generated automatically for any student who has a long-term substitute assigned to their class.

Recommendation 2: The OIG recommends that if master schedules will be rolled over into DSIS prior to permanent instructors being assigned the regional office should approve the use of placeholders.

The Region Offices and the Office of Academics and Transformation are actively included in the creation of master schedules and instructional personnel assignments throughout the process, including the utilization of placeholders. Throughout the planning process and opening of schools, the use of placeholders will be continuously monitored.

Recommendation 3: The OIG recommends mandatory training for all M-DCPS staff who create, revise, or approve master schedules. Such training should include clear guidance that non-instructional personnel should never be used on a master schedule as a placeholder or otherwise.

Training provided to staff involved in master schedule creation includes the information regarding the use of placeholders when finalizing the master schedule. School staff is reminded that under no circumstances should non-instructional personnel be used as placeholders. Additionally, a programmatic block was instituted in DSIS disallowing the inclusion of non-instructional personnel in the master schedule.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Dr. John D. Pace, III, Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Leadership and Performance at (305) 995-2938 or Mr. Jose Bueno, Chief of Staff, Office of the Superintendent at (305) 995-1450.

Sincerely,



Dr. Jose L. Dotres
Superintendent of Schools

JLD:ga
L0328

Attachment

cc: Chief Auditor
Mr. Jose Bueno, Chief of Staff
Dr. John D. Pace, III, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Yesenia Aponte, Region Superintendent.