



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

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INSPECTOR GENERAL

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Chair and Members of the School Board
Dr. Donald E. Fennoy, Superintendent
Chair and Members of the Audit Committee

FROM: Teresa Michael, Inspector General *TM*

DATE: September 16, 2020

SUBJECT: Transmittal of Final Investigative Report: *Turning Points Academy Case #20-0011-1 Falsification/Alteration of Documentation*

In accordance with School Board Policy 1.092 we hereby transmit the above-referenced final report.

The report address allegation(s):

1. Turning Points Academy Assistant Principal Terence Hart told teachers to change student attendance to indicate that those students that were not present during a class period were at school. *Unsubstantiated.*
2. Administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records. *Unsubstantiated.*

The report is finalized and will be posted on the Inspector General's website;
https://www.palmbeachschools.org/about_us/reports_and_publications/inspector_general_reports.

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INTRODUCTION & SYNOPSIS

On December 8, 2019, the OIG received an anonymous complaint regarding Turning Points Academy (TPA). The complaint alleged that during the December 3, 5, and 6, 2019, faculty meetings, Assistant Principal Terence Hart instructed teachers to change student attendance. On June 18, 2020, the OIG received an additional allegation alleging that administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records.

1. Turning Points Academy Assistant Principal Terence Hart told teachers to change student attendance to indicate that those students that were not present during a class period were at school.

Per School Board Policy 5.09(5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv) Responsibility of School Centers and School Employees:

- a. *"Principals Responsibility. The Principal shall:*
 - i. *"Be responsible for the administration and implementation of all Florida laws, State Board of Education Rules, and Board policies pertaining to the checking, recording, and reporting of student attendance. Each principal must make the necessary provisions to ensure that all school attendance reports are accurate, timely, and maintained so as to show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year, in accordance with Fla. Stat. 10003.23 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-01.044.F.A.C."*
 - ii. *"Ensure that all classroom teachers and other necessary school employees are trained and instructed in the proper recording of attendance and may periodically determine whether instructions are being followed."*
 - iii. *"Inspect and determine the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of all school attendance records contained in the record keeping system for students."*
 - iv. *"At the end of each year, certify the completeness and accuracy of attendance records indicating such records have been kept in accordance with state laws and rules, as required by Rule 6A-1.044, F.A.C..."*

2. Administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records.

Per School Board Policy 5.09(5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv) Responsibility of School Centers and School Employees:

- a. *"Principals Responsibility. The Principal shall:*

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- i. *“Be responsible for the administration and implementation of all Florida laws, State Board of Education Rules, and Board policies pertaining to the checking, recording, and reporting of student attendance. Each principal must make the necessary provisions to ensure that all school attendance reports are accurate, timely, and maintained so as to show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year, in accordance with Fla. Stat. 10003.23 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-01.044, F.A.C.”*
- ii. *“Ensure that all classroom teachers and other necessary school employees are trained and instructed in the proper recording of attendance and may periodically determine whether instructions are being followed.”*
- iii. *“Inspect and determine the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of all school attendance records contained in the record keeping system for students.”*
- iv. *“At the end of each year, certify the completeness and accuracy of attendance records indicating such records have been kept in accordance with state laws and rules, as required by Rule 6A-1.044, F.A.C...”*

The OIG investigation determined that the Allegations 1 and 2 were unsubstantiated. The investigative conclusions to the allegations will be discussed in detail later in this report.

OIG JURISDICTIONAL AUTHORITY

School Board Policy 1.092 provides for the Inspector General to receive and consider complaints, and conduct, supervise, or coordinate such inquiries, investigations, or reviews, as the Inspector General deems appropriate.

BACKGROUND: INDIVIDUALS & ENTITIES COVERED IN THIS REPORT¹

Turning Points Academy (TPA)

Turning Points Academy is a District Alternative School located at 1950 Benoist Farms Road, West Palm Beach, FL 33411. “The school provides educational opportunities to all students that lead to academic progress for at-risk students with behavioral challenges, while simultaneously helping students develop productive social skills that empower them to make better behavioral choices so that they may successfully transition back to a comprehensive school campus.” The total enrollment is 88, with a 5:1 student-Teacher-Ratio. The school serves middle/high school students for grades 6-12.

¹ Source of information: Palm Beach County School District

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The OIG interviewed the following District Staff members during the investigation:

Dr. Kevin Gatlin, Principal, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 27-years. Principal at Turning Points Academy since 2017.

Terence Hart, Assistant Principal, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 11-years. Assistant Principal at Turning Points Academy since 2017.

Cynthia Andrews, Family Guidance Counselor, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 35-years. Guidance Counselor at Turning Points Academy since 2017.

Brett Braner, Science Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 3-years. Biology Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2017.

Roderick Carter, Behavior Intervention Associate (BIA), Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 1-year. Behavior Intervention Associate (BIA) at Turning Points Academy since 2019.

Gary Greenfield, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 14-years. History Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2018.

Ashley Jean-Francois, English Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 6-years. English Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2019.

Jennifer Jones, Guidance Counselor, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 19-years. Guidance Counselor at Turning Points Academy since 2016.

Cynthia Kysor, Math Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 22-years. Math Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2019.

Kristal Lacue, Reading Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 7-years. Reading Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2018.

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Jeanrobert Negri, Math Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 6-years. Substitute Teacher from 2014-18. Math Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2018.

Jason Smith, Manager-Department of FTE & Student Reporting, District Office

Employed by the District for 19-years. District FTE Manager since 2012.

Colleen Sullivan, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Coordinator, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 5-years. ESE Coordinator at Turning Points Academy since 2018.

Rhonie Walker, Vocation Business Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 23-years. Vocational Business Education Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2019.

Stacey Watt, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 15-years. Science Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2008.

Bryan Wilkins, Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 7-years. Math Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2019.

Edward Zamora, English Teacher, Turning Points Academy

Employed by the District for 12-years. English Teacher at Turning Points Academy since 2017

RELEVANT GOVERNING AUTHORITIES

- Florida Statue 1003.23, Attendance Records and Reports
- State Board of Education Rule 6A-01.044. F.A.C.
- School Board Policy 2.34, Records and Reports
- School Board Policy 2.61, Fraud School Board Policy 3.02, Code of Ethics
- School Board Policy 5.09 Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy
- School Board Policy 5.50, Student Education Records
- 2019-20 K-12 Student Progression Plan (pg.34-38)
- 2018-20 Interagency Agreement between Palm Beach County School District and the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice

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DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

- The PeopleSoft employee records of individuals covered in this report
- Turning Points Academy Student Registration Check-Off Sheet
- Turning Points Academy Faculty Meeting Agenda for August 5 and, 9, 2019
- Student Information System (SIS)
- Emails from August 14, 2019 through September 30, 2019, between Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin, Assistant Principal Terence Hart, Data Processor Kathleen Spaight, Transportation Customer Support Manager Geoff McKee, and Turning Points Academy teachers
- Interagency Agreement with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and the School Board of Palm Beach County, Florida 2018-2020

CASE INITIATION & INVESTIGATIVE METHODOLOGY

The investigation was based on an anonymous complaint alleging that Assistant Principal Terence Hart instructed teachers to change student attendance records.

This investigation was conducted in compliance with the *Quality Standards for Investigations, Principles, and Standards for Offices of Inspector General*, promulgated by the Association of Inspectors General.

INVESTIGATIVE FINDINGS²

1. **Turning Points Academy Assistant Principal Terence Hart told teachers to change student attendance to indicate that those students that were not present during a class period were at school. Unsubstantiated.**

Per School Board Policy 5.09(5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv) Responsibility of School Centers and School Employees:

- a. *“Principals Responsibility. The Principal shall:*
 - i. *“Be responsible for the administration and implementation of all Florida laws, State Board of Education Rules, and Board policies pertaining to the checking, recording, and reporting of student attendance. Each principal must make the necessary provisions to ensure that all school attendance reports are accurate, timely, and maintained so as to show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year, in accordance with Fla. Stat. 10003.23 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-01.044.F.A.C.”*

² The OIG findings were determined using the standards that appear on the final page of this report.

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- ii. *“Ensure that all classroom teachers and other necessary school employees are trained and instructed in the proper recording of attendance and may periodically determine whether instructions are being followed.”*
- iii. *“Inspect and determine the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of all school attendance records contained in the record keeping system for students.”*
- iv. *“At the end of each year, certify the completeness and accuracy of attendance records indicating such records have been kept in accordance with state laws and rules, as required by Rule 6A-1.044, F.A.C...”*

The OIG investigation concluded the allegation that Turning Points Academy Assistant Principal Terence Hart instructed teachers to change student attendance records of students who did not report to school was unsubstantiated.

The following is a recap of the interview testimony provided by the witnesses as it relates to Allegation 1.

Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin: Teachers are responsible for documenting a student's daily attendance. The teachers update the District's Student Information System (SIS) daily to verify a student's attendance in their classes. Training was provided at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year to inform all teachers that as part of the daily school operational plan, student attendance is to be taken within the first five minutes after the start of class. This is done because transient students are often in-and-out of school to attend court.

Dr. Gatlin stated that the Data Processor Kathleen Spaight told him during the beginning of the 2019-20 school year that teachers were not appropriately entering student attendance into the SIS. Therefore, there was a need for a meeting to take place with the teachers to discuss and correct the student's attendance records. Assistant Principal Terence Hart was responsible for the corrective actions regarding student attendance and met with the teachers to allow them to make the appropriate attendance corrections. Dr. Gatlin said that he did not attend the training, but he was confident that Mr. Hart would not instruct teachers to change student attendance for students that were not present during a class if they were not present in school.

Data Processor, Kathleen Spaight: Ms. Spaight said teachers sometimes forget to take attendance during a class period(s). She contacts the teacher to remind them to update the student's attendance record. When a teacher is absent from school, the teacher generates a student roster from the SIS for the substitute teacher to take attendance on the day of the teacher's absence. At the end of the school day, the substitute teacher forwards the attendance roster to her (Ms. Spaight). Ms. Spaight enters the student attendance into the SIS. If a student comes to school late because of a legal matter or is sick, she indicates the reason(s) into the SIS as an excused absence.

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Ms. Spaight said she was present at the December 3, 5, and 6, 2019 meetings facilitated by Assistant Principal Terence Hart. The meetings were about student attendance. Teachers were told to ensure they press the SIS save-button after taking attendance. If teachers do not press the save-button, the student attendance data will not show the appropriate daily attendance record. Ms. Spaight explained that, as a backup for updating student attendance, the Behavior Intervention Associates (BIA) staff member maintains and documents the student's attendance once the student arrives on campus. If a teacher needs to verify or update a student's attendance, they can cross-reference their attendance records with the BIA attendance record. Ms. Spaight stated Mr. Hart did not instruct teachers to change the attendance records of those students who did not report to school.

Turning Points Academy Staff: The OIG interviewed ten teachers. All the teachers stated they were in attendance for the December 3, 5, and 6, 2019, training. Five teachers stated that Mr. Hart instructed them to change attendance records for students who did not report to classes and to show those students present at school. The five teachers stated if a student is not present inside a classroom after the start of class that student is considered absent, and should not be marked present even though the student is present at school.

The remaining five teachers stated that Mr. Hart did not instruct them to change the student's attendance records but to verify the student attendance records with the other daily school operational attendance practices used to document a student attendance.

Exceptional Student Education (ESE) Coordinator, Collen Sullivan: Ms. Sullivan said teachers are responsible for recording/monitoring a student's daily attendance. The process for recording a student's attendance is to update SIS five minutes after the start of a class period to indicate whether the student is absent, present, or at a school-related function. The Data Processor is responsible for monitoring the student's daily attendance. Generally, if a teacher forgets to take attendance, the Data Processor sends an email or contacts the teacher requesting an attendance correction.

Ms. Sullivan said she was present at the December 3, 5, and 6, 2019, attendance training meetings. Assistant Principal Terence Hart did not instruct teachers to change attendance for those students who did not report to school to show those students were present in school. The teacher's attendance rosters were cross-referenced with the Intake Attendance Record, and the BIA's attendance record. If a student's individual class attendance records showed a student was absent, but the Intake Attendance Record and the BIA's attendance records reflected the student was in school, the student attendance record was changed to reflect the same attendance record as the Intake and BIA's attendance records.

Guidance Counselor, Jennifer Jones: Ms. Jones stated she was present at two of the three December 2019 trainings. Mr. Hart stressed the importance of correctly entering student attendance because Juvenile Probation Officers (JPO) enter school grounds to verify student attendance. If the attendance record is not correct, then the JPO may report a non-compliance, and the student can receive punishment from the courts. She recalls from a prior experience that a JPO

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showed up on school grounds to verify a student's attendance. The attendance record showed the student was absent, but the student was present at the school.

In addition, the SIS attendance codes were discussed to show teachers the various attendance codes that can be used to document a student's attendance record. Some teachers were not aware of the multiple attendance codes that could be used to document student attendance. Ms. Jones said that Mr. Hart did not instruct teachers to change student's attendance for students that did not report to school and show that the student was in school.

Behavior Intervention Associate (BIA), Roderick Carter: Mr. Carter said he is the lead BIA. BIA's control discipline, and mentor students. Regarding student attendance, once a student enters the intake area, a teacher logs the student's attendance. Upon the student leaving the intake area, the student receives breakfast and reports to their assigned community pod. A BIA staff member is stationed inside the community pod to receive students and update the attendance roster indicating the time of the student's arrival.

When visitors such as JPOs or mental health counselors come to the school requesting to meet with a student, the front-desk contacts the BIA and ask them to remove the student from class. The BIA documents the call and escorts the student to the front office to meet with the JPO or counselor. If a teacher is unsure about a student's attendance, they can cross-reference their attendance records with the BIA attendance records.

Assistant Principal Terence Hart: Mr. Hart stated he facilitated training to teachers on December 3, 5, and 6, 2019. The training covered students transitioning from Turning Points Academy back to their home school and student attendance records. If a student has an excess of 15 days' absent, the student cannot successfully transition back to his/her assigned school. During the training, the entire student body population's (88-students) attendance records were reviewed and corrected if needed. The results of the student attendance review showed multiple errors made by the teachers. Mr. Hart explained that students have six class periods. If five of the six class periods show the student was absent; and one teacher did not take attendance the SIS data would show the student was present for the entire school day. If a crime were committed by the student, the school's attendance records would show the student was in school when in fact the student was absent for five class periods.

Mr. Hart said the school keeps daily attendance records using multiple daily operational practices. The first practice is that, student attendance is taken during student intake when the students arrives on campus. This Intake occurs when the student exits the school bus and enter the school. Teachers are present to observe students that exit the school bus. The second practice is that, after the student leaves the intake area, the student receives breakfast and enters their assigned community pod. Upon entry into the community pod, the student signs-in (date/time) with the BIA staff member that is housed inside the community pod. The third practice is that when, the student enters the classroom, the teacher takes student attendance.

Mr. Hart added that student attendance must be accurate because some students have committed crime(s) in their community and have been referred by the courts to be supervised by a Juvenile

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Probation Officer (JPO). For example, if a JPO reports to the school and requests to review a student's attendance record, and the attendance records show multiple absences, that student's probation can be violated for non-compliance that will cause the student to receive punishment from the courts. Juvenile Probation Officers, Case Managers, and Mental Health Counselors do remove students from class. When a JPO or counselor reports to the school and requests to meet with a student, the data processor contacts the BIA staff member housed in the community pod and the BIA staff member records the JPO/counselor's request (time/date) and reason for the visit. The BIA removes the student from the class and escorts the student to meet with the JPO/counselor. Mr. Hart said teachers were told not to mark the student absent because the student is on campus. Teachers were told to update the SIS with the student attendance code "S," which means school related.

Therefore, to ensure that student attendance records were accurate, student attendance records were cross-referenced with the student Intake logs and the BIA attendance rosters. If the student intake log or the BIA attendance roster showed the student present or absent, which was contrary to the teacher's attendance record, the student attendance was changed to ensure the teacher's attendance record, the student intake logs and BIA attendance rosters matched.

Mr. Hart stated he did not instruct teachers to change those students who did not report to school to show that student as present in school. The teachers were told not to mark a student absent if the BIA's and Intake logs showed the student was present.

ADDITIONAL INVESTIGATIVE ACTIVITY

On March 6, 2019, the OIG visited Turning Points Academy to observe how staff members record daily student attendance. The attendance practices stated by Assistant Principal Terrence Hart were observed. Additional attendance practices were identified and listed below:

1. After a student exits the school bus, a staff member receives and directs the students to enter the school through the west entry doors. Two teachers document the student's attendance on an intake log (**Exhibit 1**). The Intake log verifies the student's attendance.
2. The teachers provide the student a 4x4-index card with the student's name listed and a plastic bag. The 4x4-index card and personal items (cash, cellphones, headphones, etc.) are placed inside the plastic bag (**Exhibit 2**).
3. The student enters through the west entry doors and is physically searched for contraband by teachers and they place their plastic bag inside an alphabetized bin located on a table. After the search for contraband, the student enters through a metal detector (**Exhibit 3**).

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4. After the student has entered through the metal detector, teachers and a food service staff member are located at the end of the hallway to observe and provide the student breakfast. Once the student receives breakfast, the student is directed to enter into a community pod. There are six community pods, three of the six community pods are used for teacher-student-instructions, and one community pod is used for In-School-Suspension (ISS). Each community pod has a total five classrooms located inside. Upon entry to the community pod, a BIA staff member is stationed at a desk to document the student's attendance (**Exhibit 4**). The BIA verifies student attendance.
5. After the bell rings for the start of school, the students enter the classrooms. Teachers are required to take attendance five minutes after the start of class by updating the SIS to show either present, absent, tardy, or S-School related. Teachers updating the SIS verify student attendance.
6. School Police Officer Kevin Kenny maintains a student log to familiarize himself with the students on campus. Officer Kenny is stationed at a desk in the middle of the main hallway to observe students entering the downstairs community pods and students going upstairs to the community pods. A staff member upstairs and a teacher observe the students enter the community pod.

Dr. Gatlin provided the OIG with a copy of agenda meeting minutes for training meetings that occurred on August 5, 2019, August 9, 2019, and a September 30, 2019, and an email that verifies that he instructed teachers to take attendance every class period (**Exhibit 5**). Additionally, Dr. Gatlin provided five emails from August 14, 2019 through September 23, 2019, which indicate student attendance was not correctly submitted by teachers and needed to be updated to reflect corrected student attendance records (**Exhibit 6**).

CONCLUSION

Staff members that attended the December 3, 5, and 6, 2019, trainings stated that Mr. Hart did not instruct teachers to change student attendance to reflect students were present when in fact they were not. Attendance adjustments were made by the teachers to ensure that the student attendance records were accurate thus preventing the student from receiving any disciplinary actions from the courts and to ensure compliance with the School Board Policies 2.34 (Records and Reports), 5.09 (Attendance, Absenteeism, and Truancy), and 2019-20, K-12 Student Progression Plan. While student records were changed, the OIG investigation determined the changes were done to correct student attendance records not to show students were present when they were not.

Based on the documents reviewed (intake logs and BIAs student logs) and the testimony obtained, the OIG determined that the allegation that Turning Points Academy Assistant Principal Terence

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Hart told teachers to change student attendance to indicate that those students that were not present during a class period were at school was **unsubstantiated**.

2. Administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records.

Per School Board Policy 5.09(5(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv) Responsibility of School Centers and School Employees:

- a. *“Principals Responsibility. The Principal shall:*
 - i. *“Be responsible for the administration and implementation of all Florida laws, State Board of Education Rules, and Board policies pertaining to the checking, recording, and reporting of student attendance. Each principal must make the necessary provisions to ensure that all school attendance reports are accurate, timely, and maintained so as to show the absence or attendance of each student enrolled for each school day of the year, in accordance with Fla. Stat. 10003.23 and State Board of Education Rule 6A-01.044.F.A.C.”*
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 - iv. *“At the end of each year, certify the completeness and accuracy of attendance records indicating such records have been kept in accordance with state laws and rules, as required by Rule 6A-1.044, F.A.C...”*

The OIG investigation concluded that the allegation that administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records was unsubstantiated.

The following is a recap of the interview testimonies provided by the witnesses as it relates to Allegation 2.

The complainant alleged that administrative staff members that have access to student attendance records changed student attendance.

Assistant Principal, Terence Hart: Due to the pandemic crisis, the OIG was not able to make physical contact with Mr. Hart to obtain a recorded statement. On July 6, 2020, OIG received an email statement from Mr. Hart, which is transcribed in its entirety.

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Good Afternoon Mr. Sheppard,

We received your email. After further investigation we did not find any teacher's attendance was changed by administration or data processor. However, we did discover an email exchange between our data processor and district personnel in regards to senior attendance (Exhibit 7). Please see attached (Exhibit 8). [sic]

Data Processor, Kathleen Spaight: Due to the pandemic crisis, the OIG was not able to make physical contact with Ms. Spaight to obtain a recorded statement. On July 10, 2020, OIG received an email statement from Ms. Spaight, which is transcribed in its entirety.

"In regards to the complaint of the attendance being done by administration after a teacher has marked it I am unaware of anytime I would need to change any attendance after it was taken by the teachers. I would remind the teachers to take their attendance via emails and I would enter attendance that was taken by substitutes when the teacher of record was not available to take their own.

I have attached an email from myself to Amy Gurdak at the FTE office in reference to the graduating seniors and their attendance code for this last May. Jason Smith from the district office had directed Data Processors in an end of year meeting to adjust graduating Seniors' attendance to the S code from their last official school day through the last day of the school year. I had emailed to verify that and I made the adjustment as directed for the applicable seniors. See below for that email (Exhibit 8). The senior student IDs are as follows:

██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████

Please let me know if I can provide more information for you or if you have any other questions (Exhibit 9)." [sic]

Principal, Dr. Kevin Gatlin: Due to the pandemic crisis, the OIG was not able to make physical contact with Dr. Gatlin to obtain a recorded statement. On July 14, 2020, OIG received an email statement from Dr. Gatlin, which is transcribed in its entirety.

"Mr. Sheppard,

In response to the complaint noted below, I found no evidence as I met with and discussed at length with my assistant principal and data processor the details of the complaint. I directed my data processor to forward the memo and email

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received from her district level contact directing data processors to adjust the attendance of 12th grade attendance, which she responded to in her statement (Exhibit 10).” [sic]

Manager –Department of FTE & Student Reporting, Jason Smith: Due to the pandemic crisis, the OIG was not able to make physical contact with Mr. Smith to obtain a recorded statement. On July 21, 2020, OIG received an email statement from Mr. Smith, which is transcribed in its entirety.

“Good morning Robert,

Every year, seniors have a last day of school that is earlier than the rest of the students. Those days are counted as "School Related Absences" and seniors will typically have events on different days during that window between the two dates (Senior picnic, cap and gown pickup, senior checkout, etc.) instead of classes. Because seniors are not in class and are instead doing school related activities, schools are to mark senior absences from class those days as "S - School Related Absence".

Please let me know if you have any further questions (Exhibit 11).” [sic]

CONCLUSION

Data Processor Kathleen Spaight provided the OIG an email that showed five seniors whose attendance records were changed per the District’s FTE Office. Assistant Principal Terence Hart said he found no evidence of administrators changing student attendance records, and that an email was received by Ms. Spaight from the District’s FTE Office regarding senior attendance adjustments. Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin confirmed that an email was received from the District FTE Office regarding attendance adjustment for graduating seniors. District Department Manager of FTE Student Reporting Jason Smith corroborated all statements provided by the Turning Points Academy Administrative staff members by stating that seniors attend graduating events throughout the day, and that teachers are to make attendance adjustments as applicable (Exhibit 11). The OIG did not identify any other students whose attendance records were inappropriately changed by the Turning Points Academy Administrators. Based on the documents reviewed and the testimony obtained, the OIG determined that the allegation that administrative staff members inappropriately changed student attendance records is **unsubstantiated**.

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AFFECTED PARTY NOTICE

In accordance with *School Board Policy 1.092 (8)(b)(iv)*, on September 09, 2020, Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin, Assistant Principal Terence Hart and Data Processor Kathleen Spaight were notified of the investigative conclusions and provided with an opportunity to submit a written response to these conclusions. On September 9, 2020, Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin responded via email. His response is attached to this report as **(Exhibit 12)**. Dr. Gatlin wrote, "Concur with the findings." On September 10, 2020, Data Processor Kathleen Spaight responded via email. Her response is attached to this report as **(Exhibit 13)**. Ms. Spaight wrote, "I received the attachments and I concur." On September 11, 2020, Assistant Principal Terence Hart responded via email. His response is attached to this report as **(Exhibit 14)**. Mr. Hart wrote, "received, thank you, I concur with your findings."

DISTRIBUTION

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Donald E. Fennoy II, Superintendent
Audit Committee Members
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SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL
OIG DRAFT REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
Falsification/Improper Alteration of Documentation

Investigation Conducted by:

Robert Sheppard, CIGI, Senior Investigator


Date 9/16/20

Investigation Supervised by:

Oscar Restrepo, CIG, CIGI, Director of Investigations


Date 9/16/20

Investigation Approved by:

Teresa Michael, CIG, CIGI, CFE, Inspector General


Date 9/16/2020

The evidentiary standard used by the School District of Palm Beach County OIG in determining whether the facts and claims asserted in the complaint were proven or disproven is based upon the preponderance of the evidence. Preponderance of the evidence is contrasted with “beyond a reasonable doubt,” which is the more severe test required to convict a criminal and “clear and convincing evidence,” a standard describing proof of a matter established to be substantially more likely than not to be true. OIG investigative findings classified as “substantiated” means there was sufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions occurred and there was a violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to support the allegation. Investigative findings classified as “unfounded” means sufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions did not occur and there was no violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to substantiate the allegation. Investigative findings classified as “unsubstantiated” means there was insufficient evidence to justify a reasonable conclusion that the actions did or did not occur and a violation of law, policy, rule, or contract to support the allegation could not be proven or disproven.

Exhibit #1

(REDACTED)

Intake Students Attendance Logs

From

March 2, 2020, thru March 6, 2020

Exhibit #2
Student Index Cards
and
Plastic Bags





Exhibit #3
Alphabetized Bins
and
Staff Observation of Students





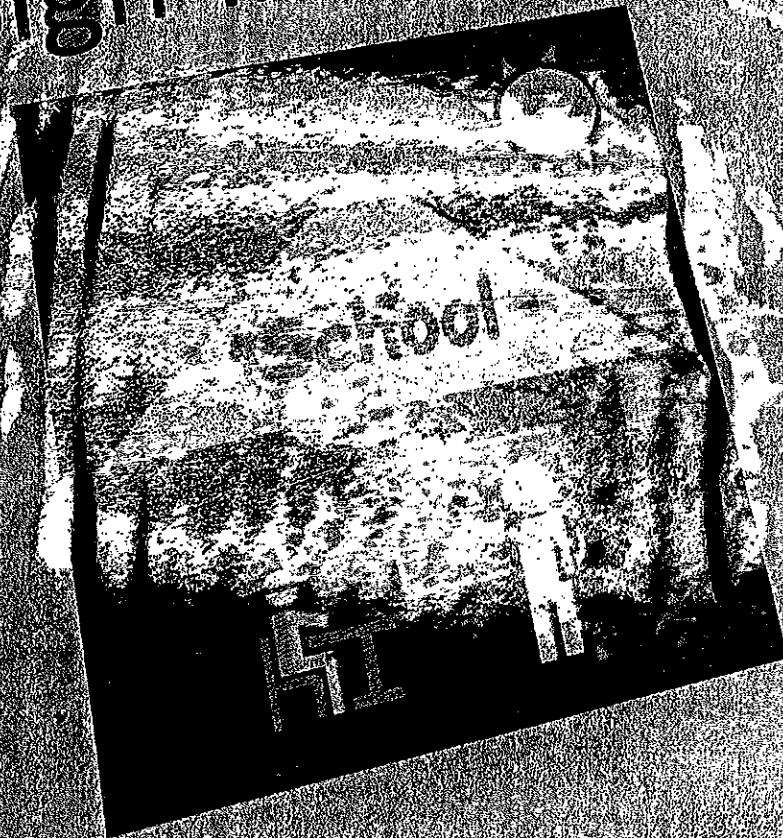
Exhibit #4

(REDACTED)

Behavior Intervention (BIA)

Student Sign-In Rosters

Community 3 Sign-In Sheets



COMMUNITY 3 DAILY SIGN-IN SHEET

DATE: March 6

NAME	STUDENT #	GRADE	SIGNATURE
		9	
		8	
		11	
		08	
		10	
		11	<i>JF</i>
		8	
		10	
		9	
		10	
		10	
		8	
		10	
		8	
		12	
		9	
		10	
		8	

DATE: _____

Community Sign-Out Log for

Student Name	Time Out	Destination	Time In
	11:28	Home	1:30
	1:00	Dr. Z.	2:20
	1:36		
	10:15	Front office	10:50
	11:07	Walk w/ Mr. Carter	11:29
	11:20		12:30
	"	"	12:30
	"	Girls Group	12:30
	"	"	12:30
	1:00	Dr. Saraphin	1:58
	1:40	Dr. Saraphin	2:00
	9:40	ISS	
	11:27	Home	11:27
	10:45	Therapist	12:12
	1:12	Andrews	
	1:27	ISS (dismissed)	
	11:00	Dr. Wilkins / from	
	11:00	Dr. Wilkins / from	
	9:25	Front office	9:40
	9:35	Front office	
	9:40	Community 5	
	12:00	Home	
	12:00	Home	12:00
	9:30	Testing	12:00
	9:30	Testing	12:00
	9:30	Testing	12:00
	10:30	Walked out	12:00
	11:20	Dr. Z.	
	11:30	Home	11:48
	11:20	Office	10:52
	10:25	Office	11:00
	10:38	Nurse	11:00
	10:38	"	11:00
	10:38	"	11:00

Student's Sheet
 No Points Earned
 2022
 MISSISSAUGA
 Credit

Exhibit #5

August 5, 2020 & August 9, 2020

Agenda Meeting Minutes

Turning Points Academy



AGENDA

August 5, 2019

8:30 – 11:30

Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Gatlin

I. Introduction of new staff

Dr. Gatlin

- A. Ashley Jean-Francois - ELA Teacher
- B. Dr. Bryan Wilkins – Math Teacher
- C. Shafina Rahman – ESE/ ELA Teacher
- D. Cynthia Kysor – Math Teacher
- E. Sharisse Lawson- ISS

II. New at TPA

- A. Youth Court in Community 1
- B. Behavior Mental Health Counselor – Dr. Abel St. Amour
- C. DATA Counselor – Ms. Linda Seraphin

III. Data review (Ppt)

- A. School District Mission
- B. TPA Mission
- C. School Rating: Maintaining
- D. SEQ (Handout)
- E. OSS (Handout)

IV. Expectations around Protocols and Procedures

- A. Faculty Handbook
- B. Work Hours, Attendance (must be taken every period), Parking, Community 1
- C. Safety & Security, Doors must be locked at **ALL TIMES**

VI. Kognito (PPt)

- Step 1. Introduction to Mental Health Process at TPA (TPA Flow Chart)**
- Step 2. Individual Workshop online (florida.kognito.com)**
- Step 3. Group Session on Thursday, August 8th @9:00 Community 6**

V. Daily Procedures

Ms. Zabel

- TDEs, TCD, Raptor, Update Personal Info, Referendum Money (8/23 – 22pays)
- Work Orders, ID Badges, Teacher Lead Money, Worker's Comp. Injuries,
- Student Incident Rpt, Stay Current on Trainings

Meeting Purpose: Pre School Mtg
 Date: 8/5/19

Turning Points Academy
 SY 2019 - 2020

ADMINISTRATIVE	SIGNATURE	ADMINISTRATIVE	SIGNATURE
Gatlin, Kevin		Buchanan, Sharon	
Hart, Terence		Zabel, Doris	
INSTRUCTIONAL		INSTRUCTIONAL	
Andrews, Cynthia		Carter, Ronald	
Antoine, Dume		Cooper, Tyresha	
Braner, Brett		DuPont, Lisaite	
Greenfield, Gary		Gomez, Monica	
Jean Francois, Ashley		Hardemon, Jamarla	
Jones, Jaquedia		Hayes, Gregory	
Jones, Jennifer		Regis, Micanor	
Kysor, Cynthia		St. Amour, Abel	
Lacue-Patterson, Kristal		Graves, Terry	Behavior Mental Health Coun:
Negri, Jeanrobert		German, Terri	D.A.T.A.
Rahman, Shafina		Seraphin, Linda	Nurse
Sullivan, Colleen			D.A.T.A.
Walker, Rhonie		CONFIDENTIAL	
Watt, Stacey Ann		Bussey, Annette	
Zamora, Edwardo		Dean, Kentwon	
Wilkins, Bryan		Jones, Harold	
SUBS		Molina, Martha	
Lawson, Sharisse - ISS		RESOURCES	
		Kenny, Kevin	SRO
		Lathan, Denise	Police Aide

Turning Points Academy



Pre-School AGENDA

August 9, 2019

- | | | |
|------|--|-------------------|
| | Pledge of Allegiance | Dr. Gatlin |
| I. | First day Procedures | Mr. Hart |
| | a. Daily schedule – Breakfast/Lunch | |
| | b. Students in correct class | |
| | c. Attendance rosters left for subs | |
| | d. 5 assignments for subs/ISS – Due to BIA/ISS August 23, 2019 | |
| | e. Duties – see duty roster form | |
| II. | Master board | Mr. Hart |
| III. | Bell Schedule – 6 period day | Mr. Hart |
| IV. | Leaving Campus – Sign out every time | Mr. Hart |
| V. | Planning Days – No children on campus | Mr. Hart |
| VI. | Expectations | Mr. Hart |
| | a. Meeting expectations | |
| | 1. Be on time | |
| | 2. Be prepared | |
| | 3. Be positive | |
| | b. Teaching expectations | |
| | 1. Work hours 8:00 – 3:30 | |
| | 2. Be on time – Call Mr. Hart if you are going to be late and see him when you arrive. TDE must be completed after the 15 minutes. | |
| | 3. Take attendance each period – No Exceptions <i>after 25 mins - Ready</i> | |
| | 4. Hold students accountable for their behavior/work | |
| | 5. Homework – remember students will not have access to TBs | |
| | c. Class room management expectations/removals | |
| | 1. Control your environment | |
| | 2. Be consistent | |
| | 3. Be the adult at ALL times | |
| | 4. Know who's in your class | |
| | 5. Follow all guidelines/procedures before removing a student | |
| | 6. Yellow form must be completed before student can be removed | |
| | 7. Referral must be documented with intervention and parent contact | |
| | d. Intake expectations (duty start time is 8:45) – NO CELL PHONES | |
| | 1. Duty Roster | |
| | 2. Be proactive | |
| | 3. Be careful of your conversations | |
| | 4. Don't agitate/aggravate students | |
| | e. Dismissal expectations – students will remain in class until bus is called | |

Meeting Purpose: Faculty Meeting
 Date: Thurs 8/8/19

Turning Points Academy
 SY 2019 - 2020

ADMINISTRATION	SIGNATURE	SECRETARIAL	SIGNATURE
Gatlin, Kevin		Buchanan, Sharon	
Hart, Terence		Zabel, Doris	
		NON-INSTRUCTIONAL	
INSTRUCTIONAL		Carter, Ronald <i>Roderick</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>
Andrews, Cynthia		Cooper, Tyresha	
Antoine, Dume	<i>[Signature]</i>	DuPont, Lisaite	
Braner, Brett	<i>[Signature]</i>	Gomez, Monica	<i>[Signature]</i>
Greenfield, Gary	<i>[Signature]</i>	Hardemon, Jamarla	<i>[Signature]</i>
Jean-Francois, Ashley	<i>Ashley Jean Francois</i>	Hayes, Gregory	<i>[Signature]</i>
Jones, Jaquedia	<i>[Signature]</i>	Regis, Micanor	<i>[Signature]</i>
Jones, Jennifer	<i>[Signature]</i>		
Kysor, Cynthia	<i>[Signature]</i>	St. Amour, Abel <i>[Signature]</i>	Behavior Mental Health Couns
Lacue-Patterson, Kristal	<i>[Signature]</i>	Graves, Terry	D.A.T.A.
Negri, Jeanrobert	<i>[Signature]</i>	German, Terri	Nurse
Rahman, Shafina		Seraphin, Linda <i>[Signature]</i>	D.A.T.A.
Sullivan, Colleen	<i>[Signature]</i>		
Walker, Rhonie	<i>[Signature]</i>	CUSTODIAL	
Watt, Stacey Ann	<i>[Signature]</i>	Bussey, Annette	
Zamora, Edwardo	<i>[Signature]</i>	Dean, Kentwon	
Wilkins, Bryan	<i>[Signature]</i>	Jones, Harold	
SUBS		Molina, Martha	
Lawson, Sharisse - ISS		RESOURCE OFFICERS	
		Kenny, Kevin	SRO
		Lathan, Denise	Police Aide

Exhibit #6

(REDACTED)

Emails August 14, 2020 – September 30, 2020

Between

Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin

Transportation Staff Geoff McKee

And

Turning Points Academy Staff Members



Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>

Re: sent on behalf of Dr. Gatlin

1 message

Jeanrobert Negri <jeanrobert.negri@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Aug 21, 2019 at 12:24 PM

To: Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>, Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

I caught the error! I have two identical 5th Period sections, and took attendance in one, and not the other.

The image shows two identical screenshots of an attendance tracking spreadsheet. The top spreadsheet is for a 5th period section, with columns for dates from Aug 19, 2019 to Aug 26, 2019. It includes columns for 'Today's Attendance', 'Student', 'Grade', 'Days Present', 'Days Absent', 'Days Excused', 'Days Tardy', 'Days Late', 'Days Out', 'Days Sick', and 'Days Other'. The bottom spreadsheet is an identical copy of the top one.

Seems the same thing occurred during 6th period. Apologies, problem fixed, thanks again for understanding -- I'll keep a close eye on that in the future (Thumbs up)

The image shows two identical screenshots of an attendance tracking spreadsheet for a 6th period section. The columns and structure are identical to the 5th period sheets shown above, covering dates from Aug 19, 2019 to Aug 26, 2019.

Kind regards,
Mr. Negri
Turning Points Academy
Secondary Mathematics Teacher

2

On Tue, Aug 20, 2019 at 11:28 AM Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:

Good Morning Mr. Negri,

Attached is notification regarding your attendance for 8/19/19.

Please resolve this attendance issue.

Respectfully,
Dr. Gatlin

Doris Zabel
School Administrative Assistant to
Dr. Kevin L. Gatlin, Principal
Turning Points Academy
1950 Benoist Farms Road
West Palm Beach, FL 33411
(561)681-3714 / PX 43714 - Office
(561)681-3750 / PX 43750 - Fax

----- Forwarded message -----

From: scanner@palmbeachschools.org <scanner@palmbeachschools.org>
Date: Tue, Aug 20, 2019 at 11:23 AM
Subject: Scanned image from TURNING POINTS ACADEMY
To: <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>

Reply to: Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>
Device Name: TURNING POINTS ACADEMY
Device Model: MX-M565N
Location: MAIN OFFICE 1-103

File Format: PDF MMR(G4)
Resolution: 200dpi x 200dpi

Attached file is scanned image in PDF format.

Use Acrobat(R)Reader(R) or Adobe(R)Reader(R) of Adobe Systems Incorporated to view the document.

Adobe(R)Reader(R) can be downloaded from the following URL:

Adobe, the Adobe logo, Acrobat, the Adobe PDF logo, and Reader are registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and other countries.

<http://www.adobe.com/>



Kevin Gattlin <kevin.gattlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Attd

1 message

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

To: Brett Braner <brett.braner@palmbeachschools.org>

Cc: Kevin Gattlin <kevin.gattlin@palmbeachschools.org>, Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 18, 2019 at 1:27 PM

Hello

Mr Braner

SIS records indicate missing attendance for dates

9/6-period 1

9/17-period 1,4,6

Thank you

Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II

Turning Points Academy

1950 Benoit Farms Rd

West Palm Beach, FL 33411

561-681-3700

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas Edison

3



Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Attendance

1 message

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 18, 2019 at 11:16 AM

To: Dume Antoine <dume.antoine@palmbeachschools.org>

Cc: Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>, Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>

Hello

Mr Antoine

SIS records indicate missing attendance for the following dates:

09/06

09/07

09/11

09/12

9/17

Please note that this may include one or more periods for the date in question.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II

Turning Points Academy

1950 Benoit Farms Rd

West Palm Beach, FL 33411

561-681-3700

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas Edison

3



Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>

Attendance

1 message

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org> Mon, Sep 23, 2019 at 11:46 AM
To: Gary Greenfield <gary.greenfield@palmbeachschools.org>, Rhonie Walker <rhonie.walker@palmbeachschools.org>, Edward Zamora <edward.zamora@palmbeachschools.org>, Dume Antoine <dume.antoine@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>, Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>

Hello

Per Dr Gatlin please see him concerning missing dates of attendance.

--

Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II

Turning Points Academy

1950 Benoist Farms Rd

West Palm Beach, FL 33411

561-681-3700

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas Edison

4



Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>

Attendance

1 message

Doris Zabel <doris.zabel@palmbeachschools.org>
To: 0842Mail <0842mail@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Mon, Sep 30, 2019 at 1:23 PM

Good Afternoon Teachers,

Please make sure you review the following email sent on behalf of Ms. Spaight:

Doris

Hello

As FTE is upon us a few reminders are listed below:

- Please take a moment to make sure the 'inactive student' box in GRADEBOOK is UNCHECKED. This will ensure attendance records for FTE show only our active students
- Per Dr Gatlin use the A or P letters for attendance. Please *do not use S *for testing students. Though it can be used and some schools do use it, Dr Gatlin prefers to have the testing coordinators keep attendance for those students. I can adjust the attendance on my end in SIS for those testing students. Therefore any student not in your period and you believe is testing please mark A.
- Per the SDPBC STUDENT PUPIL PROGRESSION PLAN (Page 35) ; When a secondary student misses 50 percent or more of the identified instructional class period due to late arrival, tardiness or early dismissal, the student shall be considered ABSENT. Therefore a student should be considered absent after 26 minutes to class. Remember as well Dr Gatlin directs that attendance is to be taken within the first 10 minutes of class. —

Thank you for help

--
Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II
Turning Points Academy
1950 Benoist Farms Rd
West Palm Beach, FL 33411
561-681-3700

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."
Thomas Edison

5

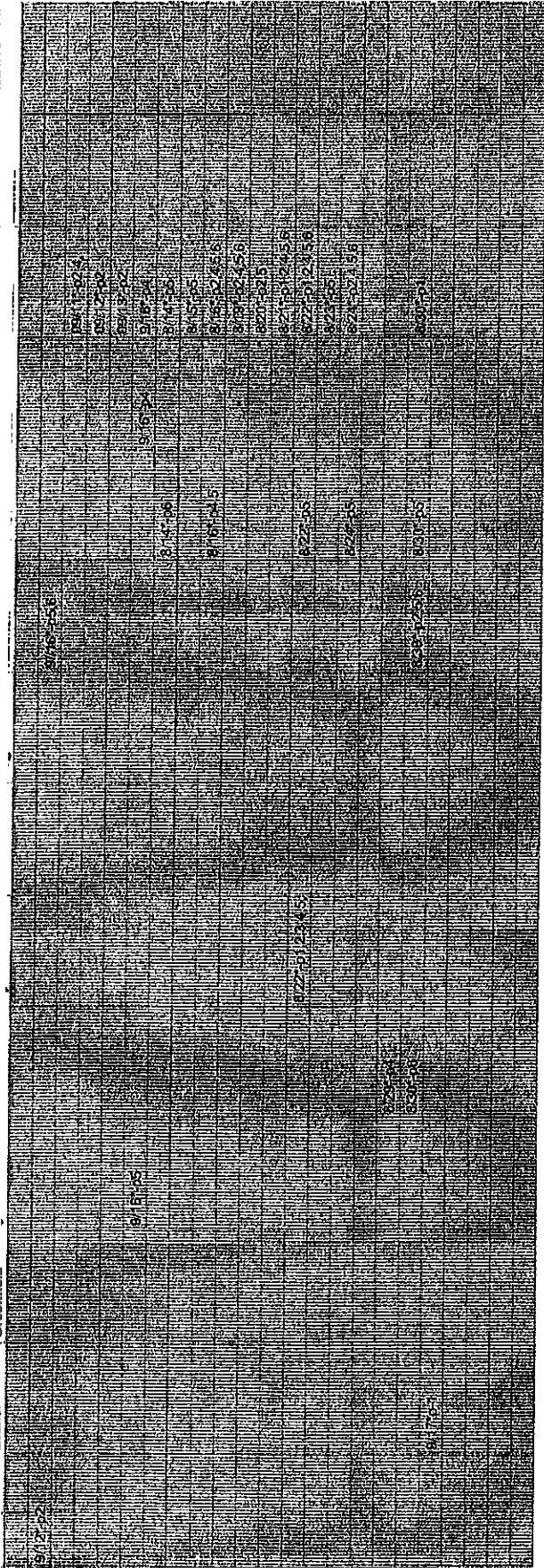


Exhibit #7
July 7, 2020, Email response
from
Assistant Principal Terrence Hart



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

I.G. Investigation 20-0011 Turning Points Academy

5 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 12:53 PM
To: Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>, Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Good Afternoon Sirs,

Below is a copy of an alleged complaint that my office received regarding student attendance at Turning Points Academy. Due to the pandemic crisis, I am not able to make physical contact with you to obtain a recorded statement about the complaint.

Respectfully, please review the alleged complaint and provide a written response. I will attach your responses to the ongoing investigation

If further information is needed you may contact me at my cell# (561) 633-8922

Alleged Complaint

"Keep changing attendance but it is being done by administration not teachers. Instead of teachers being told to change their attendance it is being changed by someone with access to the attendance. I marked the attendance and then it is changed by someone else".

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org> Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 2:32 PM
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
Cc: Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Good afternoon Mr. Sheppard,

We received your email. After further investigation we did not find any teacher's attendance was changed by administration or data processor. However, we did discover an email exchange between our data processor and district personnel in regards to senior attendance. Please see attached.

Thanks

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Terence X. Hart
Assistant Principal
Turning Points Academy

 **Senior Attendance (1).pdf**
108K

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 2:37 PM
To: Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>

Exhibit #8

May 19, 2020, Email response to Turning Points
Academy Data Processor

Kathleen Spaight

From

District FTE & Student Reporting Specialist

Amy Gurdak



Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Turning Points

6 messages

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 4:41 PM

Hi Amy

Just a clarification as well about the attendance for the seniors.

I use the S attendance code for the seniors starting with May 18-May29th-correct?

--

[Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II](#)

[Turning Points Academy](#)

[1950 Benoist Farms Rd](#)

[West Palm Beach, FL 33411](#)

[561-681-3700-phone](#)

[561-681-3750-fax](#)

[PX 43701](#)

["Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."](#)

[Thomas Edison](#)

Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 4:47 PM

yes

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Amy Gurdak,

Specialist

FTE & Student Reporting

School District of Palm Beach County

(561) 432-6301

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:14 PM

OK-so I have seniors marked P since yesterday-do I leave that?

[Quoted text hidden]

Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:20 PM

Nope. Update with the S

[Quoted text hidden]

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:24 PM

Thank you for clarifying that.

[Quoted text hidden]

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, May 19, 2020 at 5:25 PM

My 4 retained seniors leave alone their attendance as they are still working on credits?

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit #9

(REDACTED)

July 9, 2020, Email Response

From

Data Processor Kathleen Spaight



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

I.G. Investigation (20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy)

3 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
 To: Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Jul 9, 2020 at 3:21 PM

Good Afternoon Ms. Spaight

Below is a copy of an alleged complaint that my office received regarding student attendance at Turning Points Academy. Due to the pandemic crisis, I am not able to make physical contact with you to obtain a recorded statement about the complaint.

Respectfully, please review the alleged complaint and provide a written response. I will attach your responses to the ongoing investigation.....In addition I've prepared a few questions for your response

Alleged Complaint

"Keep changing attendance but it is being done by administration not teachers. Instead of teachers being told to change their attendance it is being changed by someone with access to the attendance. I marked the attendance and then it is changed by someone else"

Questions:

1. Have you ever contacted the District Office to request a student attendance to be changed? If yes when?
2. If you contacted the District Office to have a student attendance changed, who did you speak with? Did the District Office honor your request and make the student attendance change?
3. Do you recall which students' attendance was changed?

If further information is needed you may contact me at my cell# (561) 633-8922

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
 Auditor/Investigator SRI
 Office of Inspector General
 3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
 West Palm Bch, FL 33406
 Phone: (561) 649-6877
 PX# 46877
 Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
 To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Hello Mr Sheppard

I will answer the questions you included first:

1. To my knowledge I have not contacted the District Office to request student attendance to be changed.

The answer above has covered questions 2 and 3. I have checked my emails to look for any outgoing emails that would have indicated that request.

In regards to the complaint of the attendance being done by administration after a teacher has marked it I am unaware of anytime I would need to change any attendance after it was taken by attendance via emails and I would enter attendance that was taken by substitutes when the teacher of record was not available to take their own.

I have attached an email from myself to Amy Gurdak at the FTE office in reference to the graduating seniors and their attendance code for this last May. Jason Smith from the district office had to adjust graduating Seniors' attendance to the S code from their last official school day through the last day of the school year. I had emailed to verify that and I made the adjustment as directed. The senior student IDs are as follows:

Please let me know if I can provide more information for you or if you have any other questions.

Best Regards,

Kathleen Spaight

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

to Amy

Hi Amy

Just a clarification as well about the attendance for the seniors.

I use the S attendance code for the seniors starting with May 18-May29th-correct?

--

Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II
 Turning Points Academy
 1950 Benoit Farms Rd
 West Palm Beach, FL 33411
 561-681-3700-phone
 561-681-3750-fax
 PX 43701

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas Edison



Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>

9/10/2020

School District of Palm Beach County Mail - I.G. Investigation (20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy)

to me

yes

--

*Amy Gurdak,
Specialist
FTE & Student Reporting
School District of Palm Beach County
(561) 432-6301*

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II
Turning Points Academy
1950 Benoist Farms Rd
West Palm Beach, FL 33411
561-681-3700-phone
561-681-3750-fax
PX 43701

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."
Thomas Edison

robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org, kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org

Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 10:52 AM

Your message

To: kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org
Subject: Re: I.G. Investigation (20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy)
Sent: 7/9/20, 4:13:49 PM AST

was read on 7/21/20, 10:52:03 AM AST

Exhibit #10
July 14, 2020, Email response
from
Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin

Mr. Hart,

Thank you for your response...
[Quoted text hidden]

--
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 648-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Jul 14, 2020 at 7:06 PM

Mr. Sheppard,

In response to the complaint noted below, I found no evidence as I met with and discussed at length with my assistant principal and data processor the details of the complaint. I directed my data processor to forward the memo and email received from her district level contact directing data processors to adjust the attendance of 12th grade attendance which she responded to in her statement.

Alleged Complaint

"Keep changing attendance but it is being done by administration not teachers. Instead of teachers being told to change their attendance it is being changed by someone with access to the attendance. I marked the attendance and then it is changed by someone else".

Kevin L Gatlin, Ed.D. Principal

Turning Points Academy
1950 Benoist Farms Rd
West Palm Beach , FL ,33411
EMAIL: kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org
Office: 561.681-3714 PX: 43714
FAX: 561.681-3750 PX: 43750



"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."
--Frederick Douglass

On Tue, Jul 7, 2020 at 12:52 PM Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org> wrote:
[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Jul 14, 2020 at 7:49 PM

Thank you Dr. Gatlin
[Quoted text hidden]

--
Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit #11
July 21, 2020, Email response
from
Manager Department
of
FTE & Student Reporting
Jason Smith



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Turning Points Academy

4 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: "Jason Smith (FTE)" <jason.smith@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 9:47 AM

Good morning Mr. Smith,

My name is Robert Sheppard with the District's Office of the Inspector General. Respectfully, at your earliest convenience would you please contact my cell# (561) 633-8922...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

Jason Smith <jason.smith@palmbeachschools.org>

Tue, Jul 21, 2020 at 10:55 AM

To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>, Amy Gurdak <amy.gurdak@palmbeachschools.org>, PJ D'Aoust <pj.d'aoust@palmbeachschools.org>

Good morning Robert,

Every year, seniors have a last day of school that is earlier than the rest of the students. Those days are counted as "School Related Absences" and seniors will typically have events on different days during that window between the two dates (Senior picnic, cap and gown pickup, senior checkout, etc) instead of classes. Because seniors are not in class and are instead doing school related activities, schools are to mark senior absences from class those days as "S - School Related Absence".

Please let me know if you have any further questions.

Jason

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Jason Smith

Manager - Department of FTE & Student Reporting
School District of Palm Beach County
(561) 594-1003
[SIS Training & Resource Center](#)

"Failure to take action is not a data error." - Pierre Jacques



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Jason Smith <jason.smith@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Aug 28, 2020 at 12:23 PM

Good afternoon Jason,

I'm wrapping up the investigation at Turning Points Academy, however, I need information regarding your tenure with the District...The information I'm requesting is standard..

How long have you been employed by the District?
How long have you worked in the FTE department?

If further information is requested you may contact my cell# at (561) 633-8922...

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

[Quoted text hidden]

Jason Smith <jason.smith@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Aug 28, 2020 at 12:30 PM

I have worked for the School District since December of 2001 and started in the FTE Department in February of 2012.

[Quoted text hidden]

Exhibit #12
September 9, 2020,
Principal Dr. Kevin Gatlin
Email response to
20-day affected letter



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

I.G. Investigative Report No 20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy

3 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 9, 2020 at 1:43 PM

Hello Sir,

Attached is a draft copy of the Turning Points Academy Investigative report regarding Falsification/Alterations of Documentations. Please review the report in its entirety and note that you have 20-work days to respond. The 20-work day is October 9, 2020.

If further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact my email at Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org or (561) 649-6877.

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

2 attachments **K. Gatlin 20 Day letter.pdf**
326K **20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy.docx**
72K

Kevin Gatlin <kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 9, 2020 at 1:54 PM

Concur with the findings.**Kevin L Gatlin, Ed.D. Principal**

Turning Points Academy
1950 Benoist Farms Rd
West Palm Beach, FL, 33411
EMAIL: kevin.gatlin@palmbeachschools.org
Office: 561.681-3714 PX: 43714
FAX: 561.681-3750 PX: 43750



*"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."
--Frederick Douglass*

[Quoted text hidden]

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 10, 2020 at 2:20 PM

Exhibit #13

September 10, 2020,

Data Processor Kathleen Spaight

Email response to

20-day affected letter



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

I.G. Investigative Report No 20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 9, 2020 at 1:45 PM

Hello Ma'am,

Attached is a draft copy of the Turning Points Academy Investigative report regarding Falsification/Alterations of Documentations. Please review the report in its entirety and note that you have 20-work days to respond. The 20-work day is October 9, 2020.

If further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact my email at Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org or (561) 649-6877.

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.

Auditor/Investigator SRI

Office of Inspector General

3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306West Palm Bch, FL 33406Phone: (561) 649-6877

PX# 46877

Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

2 attachments **K. Spaight 20 day letter.pdf**
329K **20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy.docx**
72K

Kathleen Spaight <kathleen.spaight@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Thu, Sep 10, 2020 at 7:37 PM

Hello Mr Sheppard

I received the attachments and I concur.

Best regards

[Quoted text hidden]

--

[Kathleen Spaight - Data Processor II](#)[Turning Points Academy](#)

1950 Benoist Farms Rd

West Palm Beach, FL 33411

561-681-3700-phone

561-681-3750-fax

PX 43701

"Opportunity is missed because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."

Thomas Edison

Exhibit #14

September 11, 2020,

Assistant Principal Terence Hart

Email response to

20-day affected letter



Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Investigative Case No. 20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy

2 messages

Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Wed, Sep 9, 2020 at 1:40 PM

To: Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>

Hello Sir,

Attached is a draft copy of the Turning Points Academy Investigative report regarding Falsification/Alterations of Documentations. Please review the report in its entirety and note that you have 20-work days to respond. The 20-work day is October 9, 2020.

If further information is needed please do not hesitate to contact my email at Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschols.org or (561) 649-6877.

Robert L. Sheppard, Jr.
Auditor/Investigator SRI
Office of Inspector General
3138 Forest Hill Blvd., Suite C-306
West Palm Bch, FL 33406
Phone: (561) 649-6877
PX# 46877
Email: Robert.Sheppard@palmbeachschools.org

2 attachments

 **T. Hart 20 Day letter.pdf**
323K

 **20-0011-1 Turning Points Academy.docx**
72K

Terence Hart <terence.hart@palmbeachschools.org>
To: Robert Sheppard <robert.sheppard@palmbeachschools.org>

Fri, Sep 11, 2020 at 6:40 PM

Received, thank you. I concur with your findings.

Thank you

Terence X. Hart

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Terence X. Hart

Assistant Principal

Turning Points Academy