

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL 3318 FOREST HILL BLVD., C-306 WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33406 (561) 434-7335 FAX: (561) 434-8652 www.palmbeachschools.org Hotline: 855-561-1010 TERESA MICHAEL, CIG, CIGI, CFE INSPECTOR GENERAL SCHOOL BOARD FRANK BARBIERI, JR., CHAIR KAREN M. BRILL, VICE CHAIR MARCIA ANDREWS ALEXANDRIA AYALA BARBARA McQUINN DEBRA L. ROBINSON, M.D. ERICA WHITFIELD

DONALD E. FENNOY II, Ed.D., SUPERINTENDENT

#### 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

DATE:

2/11/2021

SUBJECT:

Transmittal of Final Investigative Report:

Case # 21-0001-I

Title: Abuse of Authority

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

The report addresses the following allegation:

Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald violated School District Policy 3.02 (5)(i) Professional Conduct by securing employment and/or advancement with the School District for three District employees with who he had alleged personal relationships. The OIG determined the allegation was *Unfounded*.

The report is finalized and will be posted on the Inspector General's website; <a href="https://www.palmbeachschools.org/about\_us/reports">https://www.palmbeachschools.org/about\_us/reports</a> and publications/inspector\_general\_reports.



# OIG CASE NUMBER 21-0001-I Abuse of Authority

TYPE OF REPORT: FINAL

DATE OF REPORT: February 11, 2021





Teresa Michael

Teresa Michael, Inspector General Office of Inspector General School District of Palm Beach County

# Office of Inspector General Report of Investigation #21-0001-I

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

From June 24, 2020 to September 28, 2020, Office of Inspector General (OIG) staff conducted interviews and reviewed pertinent documentation and records as they related to the allegation. As a result of the investigation, OIG staff determined that Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald did not violate School District Policy 3.02 (5) (i) Professional Conduct. Therefore, the allegation that Oswald abused his authority by securing employment and/or advancement with the School District for three District employees whom he had alleged personal relationships with was Unfounded.

On October 20, 2020, OIG staff forwarded a copy of the draft report to Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald for a response. The OIG received a response from Mr. Oswald on February 8, 2021. His response has been attached in its entirety as Exhibit #1. A review of the response shows that Mr. Oswald agreed with the OIG's finding.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

No further action is recommended.

#### INVESTIGATIVE PREDICATE

On June 22, 2020, the School District of Palm Beach County, Office of Inspector General (OIG) received a complaint from a former employee named Dr. Terrence Narinesingh who alleged misconduct on the part of Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald. On July 9, 2020, OIG Director of Investigations Oscar Restrepo was assigned this complaint for investigation. Dr. Narinesingh alleged that Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald abused his authority by securing employment and/or advancement with the School District for three District Employees he was involved in personal relationships with.

Specifically, Dr. Narinesingh alleged that Mr. Oswald secured employment for the following employees:

- Instructional Superintendent Craig Sommer
- Vice Principal Cornelius Hagans
- Manager Instructional Materials & Library Media Services Nolan Rowell

Dr. Narinesingh made an additional allegation involving an alleged assault taking place at Mr. Oswald's home in which Dr. Narinesingh was the alleged victim.

The OIG obtained and reviewed the police report. The OIG determined that the police report was made on June 19, 2020. According to the police report, Detective Sergeant R. Cohen wrote, "I advised we can not go any further due to the lack of collected evidence at the time of the occurance and the lack of confessions by both Oswald and Concepcion admitting to a sexual battery against you without your consent. (Not to mention that the statute of limitation expired two years after the alleged incident) [sic].

The OIG investigation concluded that the Allegation was unfounded.

# BACKGROUND

According to PeopleSoft, Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald was hired by the School District on August 16, 1993. On July 1, 2009, Mr. Oswald was promoted to Principal of Boynton Beach High School. On July 1, 2011, Mr. Oswald was promoted to Assistant Superintendent. On November 1, 2014, he was promoted to Chief Academic Officer. On March 15, 2018, Mr. Oswald was promoted to his current position as Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools.

Instructional Superintendent Craig Sommer was hired by the School District on August 4. 2004. On July 19, 2008, Mr. Oswald promoted him to Assistant Principal at Boynton Beach High School. On July 24, 2014, Mr. Sommer was promoted to Principal at Pine Jog Elementary by Mr. Oswald. He moved to Principal at West Boca High School on August 11, 2015. On June 10, 2019, Mr. Oswald promoted him to his current position as Instructional Superintendent.

Assistant Principal Cornelius Hagans was hired by the School District on September 16. 2011 as a Case Manager. On August 14, 2012, he was promoted to the position of Teacher by Principal Dr. Anthony Hamlett. On July 28, 2014, Principal Jesus Armas promoted Mr. Hagans to his current position of Assistant Principal at Royal Palm Beach High school.

Manager - Instructional Materials & Library Media Services Nolan Rowell was hired by the School District on January 7, 2013, as a Resource Teacher. On January 22, 2018, he was promoted to Multimedia Specialist and was promoted to his current position on November 15, 2018. Dianna Fedderman promoted Mr. Rowell both times.

Dr. Terrence Narinesingh was hired by the School District August 9, 2006. On June 8, 2009, he moved into the position of Instructional Specialist. Dr. Narinesingh was promoted by Principal Voncia Haywood to Assistant Principal at South Intensive on July 26, 2012. He moved to BAK Middle School as an Assistant Principal on July 1, 2016. Dr. Narinesingh left the School District on June 9, 2017, to take a position as a Principal in Miami-Dade County and at the time of his allegation was a Principal in Broward County.

# ALLEGATION

It is alleged that Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald violated School District Policy 3.02 (5)(i) Professional Conduct by securing employment and/or advancement with the School District for three District employees with who he had alleged personal relationships. Specifically, School District Policy 3.02 (5) (i) states "Professional Conduct- We are committed to ensuring that our power and authority are used in an appropriate, positive manner that enhances the public interest and trust. Employees should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards. Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the ability to function professionally in his or her employment position or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare or discipline of students or the workplace."

# COMPLAINANT INTERVIEW

On June 22 and July 23, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of Dr. Terrence Narinesingh, was conducted at Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach. FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Narinesingh" as it relates to the Allegation:

Narinesingh reported that he was hired by the School District in 2006 as a science teacher. In 2009, he was promoted to the position of Instructional Specialist for Science. As part of his duties in the new position, he was tasked with conducting a Science Meet and Greet at Boynton Beach High School in 2009. Narinesingh said Keith Oswald was the Principal at Boynton Beach High School when he did the meet and greet. Narinesingh said that after the meet and greet Mr. Oswald asked him to come to his office. Narinesingh met with Mr. Oswald in his office at which time Mr. Oswald allegedly tried to kiss him. Dr. Narinesingh said he pulled away and did not allow Mr. Oswald to kiss him.

Dr. Narinesingh said that he worked directly for Mr. Oswald for a few months in 2012 and he and Mr. Oswald remained friends during this time. Their friendship ended in 2016 and they have had no contact for approximately four years. Dr. Narinesingh said he waited four years to come forward because he recently learned Mr. Oswald was a candidate for a Superintendent's position and he felt Mr. Oswald should not be a Superintendent or be around children.

Narinesingh made the following allegations:

- 1. Mr. Oswald told him that he was involved in a relationship with Instructional Superintendent Craig Sommer and that because of the relationship, Mr. Sommer was promoted.
- 2. He heard a rumor that Assistant Principal Cornelius Hagans was involved in a relationship with Mr. Oswald. Mr. Oswald allowed Mr. Hagans to live in his second home so they could continue the relationship. Mr. Oswald eventually pressured Principal Jesus Armas to hire Mr. Hagans.
- 3. He heard a rumor that Mr. Oswald had a relationship with someone named "Nolan" (He did not know the surname) that Mr. Oswald helped get a job at the School District. (The OIG later identified "Nolan" as Nolan Rowell.)

# WITNESS INTERVIEWS

On August 19, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of Instructional Superintendent Craig Sommer was conducted at the Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Sommer" as it relates to the Allegation:

Sommer stated that he met Mr. Oswald in 2008 as Mr. Oswald was transitioning to Principal at Boynton Beach High School. Sommer said his relationship with Mr. Oswald is a professional relationship. He speaks to Mr. Oswald only during work hours unless an issue arises that requires immediate attention then he would call Mr. Oswald after normal business hours. Sommer said he never sees Mr. Oswald outside of work or in a social manner. Sommer said he considers their relationship as "professional cordial" and he has never been to Mr. Oswald's residence. Sommer reiterated that he has never seen Mr. Oswald in a social manner. Sommer categorically denied any personal relationship with Mr. Oswald.

Sommer said that in the seventeen years he has worked for the School District he has never heard any rumors or talk of Mr. Oswald getting jobs for friends. Sommer added that he has always known Mr. Oswald as someone who wants to keep ethics in the hiring process with a diverse group of individuals in the interview process and is someone who resents the "Good Old Boy Network." Sommer said that Mr. Oswald has always been

professional in his dealings with him and has never seen or heard otherwise with any other employees.

Sommer speculated that Dr. Narinesingh may have made this allegation because he may have received false information or was frustrated with his professional situation. Sommer said he worked with Dr. Narinesingh over five years ago in a professional development program to prepare to become principals and believes he and Dr. Narinesingh were candidates for the position of Principal at South Intensive. Sommer said he was hired as the Principal at Pine Jog Elementary and someone else got the position at South Intensive. Sommer could only speculate that Dr. Narinesingh may have made this allegation because he was unhappy with his career situation.

On August 19, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of Royal Palm Beach High School Principal Jesus Armas conducted at the Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Armas" as it relates to the Allegation:

Armas stated that he met Keith Oswald when Mr. Oswald was the Principal at Boynton Beach High School, but he could not recall the year. Armas confirmed that he has an Assistant Principal named Cornelius Hagans. Armas hired Mr. Hagans about six years ago. Armas said Mr. Oswald was not involved in the hiring or decision-making process on the hiring of Mr. Hagans. Armas denied that Mr. Oswald put any pressure on him to hire Mr. Hagans in any "way, shape, or form." Armas recalled that Mr. Oswald mentioned Mr. Hagans to him in what he considered an "innocuous benign recommendation." Armas said he had no information concerning a personal relationship between Mr. Hagans and Mr. Oswald. He described Mr. Hagans and Mr. Oswald as very professional in their jobs. Armas said he has issues1 with Mr. Oswald, but he did not in any way try to pressure him to hire Mr. Hagans. Armas added that he has never heard or seen anything about Mr. Oswald that would lead him to believe Mr. Oswald would do anything unethical concerning allowing his personal life to interfere with any decision making in his professional life or his job.

On August 19, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of a Royal Palm Beach High School Assistant Principal Cornelius Hagans at the Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach, FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Hagans" as it relates to the Allegation:

Hagans stated that he rented a home from Mr. Oswald for two years starting in late 2011 or early 2012 and paid \$1,500 per month. He rented the home after meeting Mr. Oswald in 2010 while playing in a softball league. He and Mr. Oswald became friends while playing on the same softball team and remain friends today. Mr. Hagans said their friendship has been just that and their relationship has never been more than just friends who play on the same softball team. Hagans said he knows Dr. Narinesingh and met him through softball because after softball games the team would go out and have a few drinks

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Armas said he believes Mr. Oswald has lied to him in the past, but did not specify when or what the lie(s) were.

together. Hagans said Dr. Narinesingh did not play on the team, but he would go out for drinks with them. Hagans said they play softball every Sunday and were all friends who hung out together because of softball. Hagans said he has never asked Mr. Oswald for help obtaining employment and Mr. Oswald has not helped him obtain employment Hagans said Dr. Narinesingh wanted Mr. Oswald to help him get a better job and help him with some problems he was having at South Intensive. Hagans said Dr. Narinesingh wanted Mr. Oswald to step in and help him, but Mr. Oswald refused to do so. Hagans said Dr. Narinesingh was very angry because Mr. Oswald would not step in and help him. Hagans opined that this is the reason for this complaint.

On August 19, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of Manager Library Media Support Nolan Rowell was conducted at the Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach. FL. The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Rowell" as it relates to the Allegation:

Mr. Rowell stated that he met Mr. Oswald through playing on a softball team in 2012. He and Mr. Oswald played on the same softball team. Mr. Rowell described his relationship with Mr. Oswald as "just friends" and denied any type of personal relationship with Mr. Oswald. Mr. Rowell said the softball team would go out after games for some drinks. Mr. Rowell said he has never asked Mr. Oswald to intervene on his behalf when applying for jobs. Mr. Rowell added that he would be disappointed if Mr. Oswald would have ever intervened on his behalf when applying for a job because Mr. Rowell works hard for everything he earns.

Mr. Rowell said he knows of Dr. Narinesingh. He met him through Mr. Oswald because he was a friend of Mr. Oswald. Mr. Rowell said that he heard Dr. Narinesingh and Mr. Oswald had a falling out, but he did not know why they had the falling out. Mr. Rowell said he has never heard of Mr. Oswald being involved with any School District employees, Mr. Rowell added that Dr. Narinesingh was usually with his partner whenever they got together after games for drinks.

# SUBJECT INTERVIEW

On August 28, 2020, a sworn recorded interview of Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald was conducted at the Office of Inspector General in West Palm Beach, FL The following represents actual and paraphrased statements made by "Oswald" as it relates to the Allegation:

Mr. Oswald said he met Dr. Narinesingh when Dr. Narinesingh was providing development to schools while Mr. Oswald was principal at Boynton Beach High School somewhere around 2008. Mr. Oswald assisted Dr. Narinesingh with mentoring because Dr. Narinesingh asked for advice on how to move his career forward.

Mr. Oswald said his relationship with Craig Sommer is a professional relationship. He and Mr. Sommer have never socialized outside of work. Mr. Sommer does not play softball with Mr. Oswald. Mr. Oswald said he promoted Mr. Sommer to Vice Principal at Boynton

Beach High School because he was the best person for the job and was involved in hiring Mr. Sommer as an Instructional Superintendent again because he was the best person for the job.

Mr. Oswald confirmed that Mr. Hagans rented his second home for a period of time. Mr. Hagans paid him rent. Mr. Oswald said he met Mr. Hagans through playing on a softball team maybe 10 years ago. Mr. Hagans was looking for a place to live so he rented his second home to Mr. Hagans. Mr. Oswald explained that his relationship with Mr. Hagans was a friendship because they played softball together and would go out for drinks after the games. Mr. Oswald denied he had a personal relationship with Mr. Hagans, as they were just friends. Mr. Oswald said the allegation that he pressured Dr. Armas to hire Mr. Hagans was also fabricated. Mr. Oswald denied pressuring Dr. Armas to hire Mr. Hagans. Mr. Oswald explained that he was not Dr. Armas' supervisor at the time he hired Mr. Hagans. He would never pressure anyone to hire an employee.

Mr. Oswald said he met Mr. Rowell through playing softball about 10 years ago. Mr. Oswald explained that his relationship with Mr. Rowell was a friendship because they played softball together and would go out for drinks after the games. Mr. Oswald said he was not involved in hiring Mr. Rowell for any of the positions he has held at the School District.

Mr. Oswald said that Dr. Narinesingh kept telling Mr. Oswald he needed to help him become a principal because he wanted to fast track his career. Mr. Oswald refused and told him he needed to prepare himself and apply for open positions like everybody else. He does not just make people principals. Mr. Oswald said Dr. Narinesingh repeatedly asked for this so Mr. Oswald stopped talking to Dr. Narinesingh because he felt exploited and that Dr. Narinesingh was abusing their acquaintance to gain professional advantage. Mr. Oswald opined that Dr. Narinesingh made these allegations because Mr. Oswald would not promote or fast track Dr. Narinesingh to a position as a principal.

# RECORDS ANALYSIS

The OIG requested hiring information for the positions held by Mr. Sommer, Mr. Hagans. and Mr. Rowell. The information requested was either no longer available due to age or had been archived in Miami. The OIG received the following information from Administrative & Non-Instructional Staffing Services Confidential Administrative Assistant to Director Gail Williams, Jennifer Velez:

Below is a summary of each of the employee's information:

#### 1. Craig Sommer

2008 - AP at Boynton Beach High - The hiring documents are no longer available. Keith Oswald was the hiring manager.

2014 - Principal at Pine Jog Elementary- The hiring manager was Keith Oswald. 2015- Principal at West Boca High School. Hired by Ian Saltzman and Dr. Robert Avossa.

- 2019 Instructional Superintendent The hiring manager was Keith Oswald.
- The interview committee was comprised of four scoring members that interviewed 12 applicants for the position of Instructional Superintendent.
- Mr. Sommer was scored higher than the other highest scoring applicant by two members.
- Mr. Sommer was scored the same as the other highest scoring applicant by one member.
- Mr. Sommer was scored lower than the other highest scoring applicant by one member.
- Mr. Sommer scored second highest with an overall score of 22. The highest scoring applicant scored a 23, but the highest scorer withdrew from consideration.

#### 1. Cornelius Hagans

2011 - Case Manager - The hiring documents are not available.

2014 -AP - Royal Palm Beach High - Hired by Dr. Armas, who testified he did not receive any pressure to hire Mr. Hagans from Mr. Oswald.

#### 2. Nolan Rowell

January 2018 - Specialist - Teaching & Learning - The hiring manager was Diana Fedderman.<sup>2</sup>

- The interview committee was comprised of four scoring members that interviewed four applicants for the position of Multimedia Specialist.
- Mr. Rowell tied for the highest score.

The other applicant that scored as high as Mr. Rowell was not a finalist due to not having a Master's Degree.

November 2018 - Manager - Library Media Support - The hiring manager was Diana Fedderman.

- The interview committee was comprised of three scoring members that interviewed four applicants for the position of Manager - Library Media Support.
- The "Consensus Tabulation Sheet" was not available so the OIG could not determine the final scores for the candidates; However, Ms. Fedderman said that nobody pressured her to select Mr. Rowell for this position.

# CONCLUSION

It is alleged that Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald violated School District Policy 3.02 (5)(i) Professional Conduct by securing employment with the School District for three friends with whom he was involved personally. Specifically, School District Policy 3.02 (5) (i) states, "Professional Conduct-We are committed to ensuring

The OIG contacted Ms. Fedderman and asked if any District personnel pressured her to hire Mr. Rowell to either position. Ms. Fedderman said that nobody pressured her to select Mr. Rowell for either position

that our power and authority are used in an appropriate, positive manner that enhances the public interest and trust. Employees should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards. Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the ability to function professionally in his or her employment position or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare or discipline of students or the workplace."

Based on the testimony obtained where all persons interviewed denied that there was any truth to the allegations, Mr. Narinesingh's inability to provide any evidence or the names of any persons that could corroborate the allegations, the records reviewed, and Mr. Oswald's denial, the OIG concluded that the allegation that Deputy Superintendent/Chief of Schools Keith Oswald violated School District Policy 3.02 (5)(i) Professional Conduct by securing employment with the School District for three friends he was involved in personal relationships with was **Unfounded**.

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.

# **ATTESTATION**

I, the undersigned, do hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, to the best of my personal knowledge, information, and belief, the contents of this report are true and accurate; and I have not knowingly or willfully deprived or allowed another to deprive, the subject of the investigation of any rights contained in Sections 112.532 and 112.533, Florida Statutes. This investigation was conducted pursuant to School District Policy 1.092, Inspector General, and in accordance with applicable Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspectors General as published by the Association of respectors General.

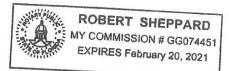
Oscar Restrepo, Director of Investigations

#### STATE OF FLORIDA COUNTY OF PALM BEACH

Sworn to (or affirmed) and subscribed before me this 11 day of February, 2021, by Oscar Restrepo, Director of Investigations for the School District of Palm Beach County, Office of Inspector General, who is personally known by me.

Signature of Notary Public

Notary Public or Law Enforcement Officer



This investigation was conducted by Oscar Restrepo, supervised and approved by Inspector General Teresa Michael. The investigation was conducted in accordance with guidance from the Association of Inspectors General handbook and within standards as prescribed by Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

Approved by:

Teresa Michael, Inspector General

Date: 2/16/2021

## **EXHIBIT LIST**

Response from Keith Oswald......Exhibit #1

### **DISTRIBUTION LIST**

#### **Action Official Distribution:**

None

#### Information Distribution:

Palm Beach County School Board Members Donald E. Fennoy II, Superintendent Audit Committee Members OIG File

Activity #: E 21-0001-I

OlG Staff: Oscar Pastripo

Date Rec'd: 2/8/21 Pages: 2

RESPONSE OF KEITH OSWALD TO REPORT ISSUED IN OIG CASE NUMBER 21- TB

0001-I Exhibit/Reference # /

The undersigned, KEITH OSWALD, hereby files this response to the report issued by the Office of the Inspector General in investigation number 21-0001-I. A draft of said report was furnished to me on October 20, 2020, and having reviewed the same, I respond as follows:

I would like to begin my response by commending the Office of the Inspector General, the Inspector General, Teresa Michel, and Investigator, Oscar Restrepo, for conducting a fair and thorough inquiry into this matter. At all times during their investigation, I have attempted to fully cooperate, as I knew that I had done nothing improper. I am pleased to see that they reached the conclusion that the allegations against me were unfounded.

The complaint in this matter was lodged by Terrance Narinesingh, who was a former school board employee. Sadly, this complaint is only one of numerous instances of Mr. Narinesingh's continued harassment and his ongoing efforts to harm both my personal and professional reputation. I believe that Mr. Narinesingh's persistent attempts to harm my reputation by making false allegations have been brought about by my unwillingness to show favoritism to Mr. Narinesingh in hiring and promotion decisions while he was employed with the Palm Beach County School Board. Mr. Narinesingh sought to have me violate my professional and ethical obligations to benefit his own professional advancement, and when I rightfully refused to do so, he retaliated by filing this complaint and other direct attacks on my reputation.

Mr. Narinesingh's efforts to harm my reputation are not confined to only this inquiry. He has also sought to make false allegations about me to law enforcement personnel, members of the media, and other educators and administrators. It appears that most who have received his communications have ultimately learned that they are without merit, however, he has persisted in

his efforts and I do not currently know the extent of the damage he has done to my reputation.

I want to make it clear in this response that I emphatically deny all of the allegations presented by Mr. Narinesingh in this complaint. They are patently false and are being made maliciously in an effort to harm me. Not only are his allegations false, but I believe them to be legally actionable. I have retained legal counsel and am seeking recourse for the harm that has been done to my reputation. All witnesses who were interviewed and all documents reviewed in this matter refute Mr. Narinesingh's complaints and Mr. Narinesingh has provided no supporting evidence that would establish that his claims are true. Again, I specifically deny those allegations as they are false, fabricated and defamatory.

I have been employed by the Palm Beach County School District since 1993, and during my decades of service I have never before been accused of any impropriety. I will allow my record to speak for itself when it comes to my professionalism, ethics and outcomes for student achievement.

Unfortunately, School Board guidelines dictate that even unfounded allegations become part of the public record at the close of an investigation. Accordingly, the false and spurious claims presented by Mr. Narinesingh will now be available for the public to view. I suspect that Mr. Narinesingh is aware of that fact and is using it to further propagate untruthful information about me. As such, I again wish to emphasize that his allegations are completely baseless and I commend the Inspector General for expeditiously finding them to be unfounded.

KEITH OSWALD