



## **Statement from Montgomery County Board of Education President Ms. Karla Silvestre**

Montgomery County, MD - October 12, 2022

The Montgomery County Board of Education (Board) wants to assure MCPS staff and the Montgomery County community that the Board will hold everyone accountable who has been implicated in the systemic failures outlined in the fact-finding report the board commissioned for what they did or did not do.

At the Board's regular business meeting today, Oct. 12. Ms. Silvestre gave spoken introductory comments in which she further addressed investigation findings concerning the complaint and promotion process within the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) system.

*"This has been a difficult time for our staff and our school system as we grapple with the multiple lapses in judgment surrounding the complaint and promotion process in MCPS. The Board wants staff to know that we are reforming and rebuilding the infrastructure of both processes.*

*Speaking now, directly to our staff, we are deeply sorry that these processes, intended to provide employees with a way to have their complaints redressed, failed to ensure that all complaints were fully investigated and resolved.*

*We will rebuild that trust by ensuring that there is a robust system for managing and investigating complaints put into place and that there is an infrastructure within the Office of Human Resources to support an organization with over 25,000 employees.*

*The Board is responsible for approving appointments to leadership positions and we take that responsibility very seriously. It is evident that the appointments process did not work.*

*We are addressing this by increasing our oversight of the selection and promotion processes so that we can ensure that the candidates coming before the Board for appointment have been fully vetted.*

*We have always asked questions about credentials and about making good matches with communities, and we relied on the administration to fully vet any candidate recommended to the Board for approval. Going forward, the Board will have greater oversight of the totality of the process for Board appointees.*

*To our staff, students and community, the Board wants to reassure you that email communications sent to the BOE are not deleted. We retain these emails and they can be accessed. Although there is a general one-year retention policy in MCPS for emails that does not apply to the Board's email.*

*We are bound by the Maryland Public Information Act, which, while being a law intended to ensure public access to documents, explicitly excepts personnel records. That we will comply with what is expected of us under this law is a given, but we have also heard from our staff and our community that access to a copy of the Jackson Lewis report outlining the facts surrounding the promotion and appointment of Joel Beidleman is essential to restoring trust in our school system. We have tried to balance these interests and today, at the close of this meeting, we will release a heavily redacted report.*

*We believe that restoring trust with our staff and community is of utmost importance and it is our hope that by releasing this document, which is redacted to protect the rights of our employees, will be a step toward a renewed belief in the integrity of our public school system.*

*How we respond to what has happened will be an ongoing conversation. The Board understands that one act cannot magically repair the trust that was breached, but it is our hope that we can walk down this journey of recovery and restoration together in partnership. We cannot lose sight of our core mission—**educating over 162,000 students.***

At the close of this meeting, the redacted fact-finding report will be posted on the MCPS website.”

The redacted report can be found [here](#).

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