

South Carolina School Board Association

2023 Annual Convention
Hilton Head, South Carolina

Office of the State Inspector General
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February 17, 2023

OFFICE OF THE STATE INSPECTOR GENERAL: What should we expect?

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State Inspector General (§1-6-10 et seq)

- "... responsible for investigating and addressing allegations of fraud, waste, abuse, mismanagement, misconduct, violations of state and federal law, and wrongdoing in agencies." (§1-6-20)
 - Agencies = state executive branch and school districts+
 - Not the legislative or judicial branches, counties, municipalities, or private entities.
 - No arrest authority



State Inspector General (§1-6-35)



- State Inspector General may initiate an investigation of:
 - public schools;
 - public school districts;
 - public charter schools;
 - public charter school authorizers; and
 - voluntary associations that establish rules for interscholastic sports in secondary schools
- only upon the request of:
 - the Governor;
 - the Superintendent of Education; or
 - a weighted majority of the legislative delegation



State Inspector General (§1-6-10 et seq)

- If an individual discloses information alleging waste, fraud, abuse ... in good faith, the individual's identity is confidential and must not be disclosed ... [except in limited circumstances]. (§1-6-100)



Governor's power to remove trustees (§59-19-60)

- ... school district trustees who wilfully commit or engage in an act of in office, malfeasance, misfeasance, chronic unexcused absenteeism, conflicts of interest, misconduct in office, or persistent neglect of duty or are deemed medically incompetent or medically incapacitated, are subject to removal by the Governor upon any of the foregoing causes being made to appear to the satisfaction of the Governor.

Section 5, Article VI, South Carolina Constitution

- Requires this oath:
 - I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am duly qualified, according to the Constitution of this State, to exercise the duties of the office to which I have been elected (or appointed), and that I will, to the best of my ability, discharge the duties thereof, and preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of this State and of the United States. So help me God.

How we typically approach investigations of Boards and Districts

- The effectiveness and efficiency of:
 - Board
 - Governance
 - District
 - Operations (academics)
 - Fiscal matters, including procurements
 - Human capital management

What should you expect in our investigation?

- We measure your actions and processes against standards:
 - Is there an applicable law?
 - Is there an applicable regulation?
 - Is there an applicable policy?
- Are you complying with the standard?
 - If there is not a policy, why?

Internal controls

- Processes designed to ensure the integrity of financial and accounting information
 - Segregation of duties
 - Authorization
 - Recording
 - Payment
 - Verification
 - Limiting physical access to equipment, cash, and other assets
 - Reconciliation
 - Internal audits
 - External audits

Due Process

- Quasi-judicial body
 - Student discipline
 - Employee discipline
- Investigation
 - Documentation
- Adjudication
 - Legal review

Our reports are ...

- Never a surprise to you
- We make findings and recommendations
- Per statute, confidential for not more than ten days after the report is finalized and published
- Per statute, sent to
 - the State Superintendent of Education,
 - the legislative delegation, and
 - the chair of the local board.
- Provided to the Governor and the legislative oversight and finance committees
- Published on the Inspector General website



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