



LARRY HOGAN
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MARYLAND
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

June 25, 2017

Mr. Andrew Smarick, President
Maryland State Board of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Dear President Smarick:

As you know, elected members of the Prince George's County Board of Education, as well as legislators in the House and the Senate representing Prince George's County have all expressed serious concerns about alleged widespread systemic fraud and corruption in the Prince George's County Public Schools System.

There are specific allegations regarding the altering of student credit counts and the changing of student grades in order to fraudulently boost the high school graduation rate.

In addition to the Members of the Prince George's County Board of Education, other state and local officials have echoed these allegations. Maryland Senator Anthony Muse raised the same concerns in an interview with Fox 5 on June 20, 2017, claiming that teachers and guidance counselors have recently testified about alleged fraudulent practices and stating his belief that whistleblowers are afraid to come forward on this matter.

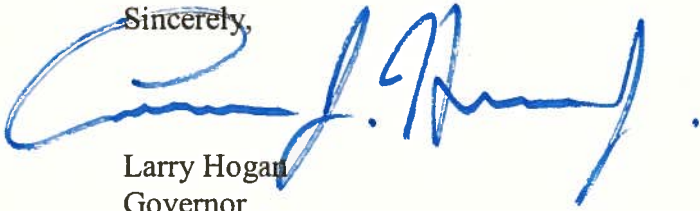
Most recently, in a letter to Superintendent Karen Salmon dated June 22, 2017, Delegate Jay Walker, Chair, on behalf of the entire Prince George's County House Delegation, raised additional concerns about a prior investigation of similar allegations by the Maryland State Department of Education, asking that a thorough, impartial investigation take place now to bring closure to the matter.

Ensuring that all Maryland children have access to a world-class education is a top priority of my administration, and I am deeply troubled by these allegations regarding one of our school systems, which have now been brought to my attention by multiple sources.

Any instances of fraud and corruption in the Maryland public school system certainly presents a state interest. Your board is charged with the responsibility for general control and supervision over public schools and the educational interests of the state. I am hereby requesting that the State Board of Education take immediate steps to begin a complete, thorough, and exhaustive investigation into these allegations.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. My administration will support all efforts to seek out the truth of this situation in Prince George's County Public Schools and to ensure that any and all whistleblowers receive the full protections under the law.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Larry Hogan", with a large, stylized initial "L" and a trailing flourish.

Larry Hogan
Governor

cc: Andrew Smarick, President, Maryland State Board of Education
Karen Salmon, PhD, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools
Boyd Rutherford, Maryland Lieutenant Governor
Brian Frosh, Maryland Attorney General