

October 23, 2023

Two months ago, MCPS announced that it had hired an anti-union law firm to investigate the horrific sexual harassment accusations against Farquhar Middle School Principal Joel Beidelman, complaints that MCEA had raised with MCPS's attention for years, while MCPS refused to take action.

Concerned that the report would not be fair and unbiased, MCEA demanded that a competent, thorough independent entity investigate the harassment. As a result of member pressure, MCPS limited its own investigation to how it was possible for Joel Beidelman to be promoted despite his outrageous and illegal behavior. That report has now been released, and although it is highly redacted, it is damning. You may read it here: [report](#).

Now the investigation of the sexual harassment allegations has begun in earnest under Sha Brown, the newly appointed Chief of the Educational Oversight Division within the Montgomery County Department of the Inspector General. Here are points for consideration:

- Unless stated otherwise, interviewees are questioned as witnesses, not suspects, so there is no need for alarm.
- Unless you are subpoenaed, your participation is voluntary; however, we encourage you to participate so that the truth can come fully to light.
- Several employees are represented by a law firm in a potential class-action suit. If you have an attorney, please inform your attorney before you participate in an interview with the Inspector General's office.
- McGillivray Steele Elkin, LLP, a law firm that specializes in representing public sector employees in labor and employment issues, including harassment in the workplace, is very interested in hearing from those who filed anonymous complaints of sexual harassment with MCPS. The suit will demonstrate that half-hearted investigations and administrative impunity are not limited to just one or two schools. If you filed an anonymous complaint, please contact McGillivray Steele and Elkin through this [site](#). A successful class action suit is a highly effective way of forcing MCPS to change its ways. The firm also offers free consultations to employees and representation at no cost to

the client. Finally, please consider the following information about private remedies for sexual harassment by MCPS, available [here](#).

- If you are contacted about an interview with the inspector general and would like support, please contact MCEA at [helpdesk@mceanea.org](mailto:helpdesk@mceanea.org). We are always here for our members.

Because all of us at MCEA are working hard to ensure that the egregious sexual harassment employees have endured never is repeated, we encourage you to step up and speak out.