

**TESTIMONY OF AUSTIN A. ANDERSEN**  
**INTERIM INSPECTOR GENERAL**  
**BEFORE THE D.C. COUNCIL COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY AND**  
**EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND RECREATION**  
**MARCH 29, 2004**

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GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIRPERSONS PATTERSON AND CHAVOUS, I APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO APPEAR BEFORE THE COMMITTEES ON THE JUDICIARY AND EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND RECREATION TO TESTIFY CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL'S (OIG) REVIEW OF SELECTED ASPECTS OF SECURITY AT THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (DCPS). SEATED WITH ME ARE WILLIAM J. DIVELLO, ASSISTANT IG FOR AUDITS, AND GREGORY SPENCER, SENIOR AUDITOR-IN-CHARGE.

THE PURPOSE OF MY PREPARED TESTIMONY FOR TODAY'S HEARING IS TWO-FOLD: FIRST, TO PROVIDE INFORMATION TO THE COMMITTEES RELATIVE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS CONCERNING BILL 15-725, THE "METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2004" AND SECOND, TO ADVISE THE COMMITTEES ON TIME-SENSITIVE SECURITY ISSUES IDENTIFIED DURING OUR AUDITS AT DCPS. WITH YOUR PERMISSION, A LONGER VERSION OF MY TESTIMONY WILL BE SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD.

BEFORE DISCUSSING OUR AUDIT EFFORTS RELATIVE TO DCPS SECURITY, I MUST EMPHASIZE THAT MUCH OF THE AUDIT WORK IS CURRENTLY ONGOING AND NOT YET COMPLETE. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SECURITY ISSUES FACING DCPS, I BELIEVE THAT IT IS NECESSARY FOR ME TO IDENTIFY, EVEN THOUGH NOT FULLY DEVELOPED, APPARENT SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS THAT SHOULD AND COULD BE ADDRESSED WHILE THE AUDIT IS ONGOING. I NOTE THAT THE CURRENT DCPS ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN MOST RECEPTIVE TO OUR AUDIT EFFORTS AND HAS ALREADY TAKEN ACTIONS TO ADDRESS CERTAIN DEFICIENCIES, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREA OF PROCUREMENT.

OUR AUDIT EFFORTS ARE FOCUSED ON EIGHT PRIMARY AREAS: (1) HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDS; (2) SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES PROCUREMENT; (3) SECURITY GUARD ATTENDANCE AND BILLING; (4) SOLICITATION AND AWARD OF A NEW SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT; (5) SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTING; (6) PHYSICAL SECURITY AT SELECTED SCHOOLS; (7) SECURITY FORCE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS AND TRAINING; AND (8) BENCH MARKING INTERNALLY AND WITH OTHER COMPARABLE JURISDICTIONS.

### **HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDS**

THIS REPORT, ISSUED IN FINAL ON SEPTEMBER 30, 2003, DISCLOSED THAT DCPS HAD LOST THE USE OF APPROXIMATELY \$4.5 MILLION IN HOMELAND SECURITY

FUNDS BECAUSE DCPS FAILED TO IDENTIFY A USE FOR AND OBLIGATE THESE MONIES BY THE END OF THE FISCAL YEAR.

**SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES PROCUREMENT**

ISSUED IN DRAFT ON MARCH 9, 2004, THIS REPORT INCLUDES TWO FINDINGS. THE FIRST CONCERNS DCPS'S EXPENDITURE OF APPROXIMATELY \$11.4 MILLION MORE THAN MAY HAVE BEEN NECESSARY FOR SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES FROM OCTOBER 1, 2001, TO JULY 31, 2003. WE ALSO DISCUSS DCPS'S QUESTIONABLE USE OF LETTER CONTRACTS. OUR SECOND FINDING ADDRESSES THE DCPS AWARD OF CONTRACTS GREATER THAN \$1 MILLION WITHOUT OBTAINING THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE D.C. COUNCIL.

**SECURITY GUARD ATTENDANCE AND BILLING**

WE EVALUATED SECURITY GUARD ATTENDANCE AND CONTRACTOR BILLINGS FOR THE PREVIOUS SECURITY SERVICE CONTRACT. PRELIMINARY RESULTS SHOW THAT THE SECURITY SERVICE CONTRACTOR DID NOT ALWAYS REPLACE ABSENT SECURITY GUARDS, THEREBY REQUIRING SCHOOL OFFICIALS TO MAN UNGUARDED SECURITY POSITIONS. THE LIQUATED DAMAGES CLAUSE OF THE CONTRACT SPECIFIES THAT THE DISTRICT IS ENTITLED TO ASSESS LIQUIDATED DAMAGES.

**SOLICITATION AND AWARD OF NEW SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT**

BASED ON OUR PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF THE SOLICITATION AND AWARD PROCESS FOR THE NEW \$45.6 MILLION SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT, WE HAVE CONCERNS OVER WHETHER THE MOST TECHNICALLY COMPETENT BIDDER AND MOST ECONOMICAL BIDDER WAS AWARDED THIS CONTRACT.

IN ADDITION, THE NEW \$45.6 MILLION CONTRACT WAS NOT SUBMITTED TO THE D.C. COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL PRIOR TO THE CONTRACT AWARD, AS REQUIRED BY LAW.

**SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTING**

WE ARE REVIEWING THE DCPS PROCESS FOR COMPLETING, REPORTING, TRACKING, AND USING SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTS. WE FOUND THAT FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2003, THE DCPS SECURITY CONTRACTOR REPORTED 2,543 INCIDENTS, 1,709 OF WHICH WERE DEFINED AS “SERIOUS INCIDENTS.” THERE ARE 20 DISTINCT CATEGORIES OF SERIOUS INCIDENTS. WHILE OUR WORK CONTINUES ON THE INCIDENT REPORTING PROCESS, WE HAVE FORMED SOME PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS. FOREMOST AMONG THESE IS THE FACT THAT DCPS HAS NOT DEVELOPED A COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY INCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM. SUCH A SYSTEM WOULD AFFORD DCPS MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATORS, SCHOOL OFFICIALS, AND SECURITY PERSONNEL THE ABILITY TO MONITOR AND TRACK SCHOOL INCIDENTS FOR SEVERAL IMPORTANT PURPOSES, SUCH AS TIMELY RESOLUTION OF INCIDENTS,

REDUCTION OF TEACHER ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE, DOCUMENTATION OF THE EVENT UP TO FINAL DISPOSITION, AND A MEANS TO MONITOR BEHAVIOR AND PREVENT RECURRENCES, ESPECIALLY BY THE SAME STUDENT. WE ALSO CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS AN APPARENT DISREGARD FOR ENFORCING MANY OF THE GUIDELINES SET FORTH IN THE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULES (TITLE 5 DCMR, CHAPTER 25). FOR EXAMPLE, INFRACTIONS REGARDING NUMEROUS ABSENCES, USE OF CELL PHONES, AND NO STUDENT IDENTIFICATION CARDS WERE NOT ADDRESSED.

### **PHYSICAL SECURITY AT SELECTED SCHOOLS**

THE OIG HAS PERFORMED SITE VISITS AT 14 LOCATIONS. OUR REVIEW OF PHYSICAL SECURITY PROBLEMS IS STILL ONGOING AND WE HAVE NOT FORMED DEFINITIVE CONCLUSIONS. HOWEVER, WE HAVE IDENTIFIED CERTAIN TRENDS THAT WE FEEL ARE CONTRIBUTING TO SCHOOL SECURITY PROBLEMS.

ESSENTIALLY, WE SEE THREE ISSUES THAT WARRANT MANAGEMENT ATTENTION: DOORS, SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT, AND INADEQUACY OF THE SECURITY FORCE. RESOLUTION OF THESE ISSUES MAY INVOLVE CHANGES TO THE D.C. MUNICIPAL REGULATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE FIRE CODE.

### **DOORS**

THE OVERARCHING PHYSICAL SECURITY PROBLEM IDENTIFIED, BASED ON OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, IS THE INABILITY TO SECURE THE NUMEROUS DOORS IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS. SOME SCHOOLS HAVE AS MANY

AS 22 ENTRANCES WITH UP TO 100 OR MORE DOORS ON THE GROUND FLOOR AND BASEMENT LEVELS.

### **SURVEILLANCE EQUIPMENT**

WE OBSERVED THAT SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS AND MONITORS WERE BROKEN AND HAVE REMAINED BROKEN FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME. WE ALSO OBSERVED THAT MEANS OF ENTRANCE/EXIT DO NOT HAVE SENSORS OR ALARMS TO ALERT SECURITY OR DCPS PERSONNEL WHEN THEY ARE OPENED. THERE ARE NUMEROUS DEAD SPOTS IN HALLWAYS AND STAIRWELLS WHERE THERE IS NO, OR INSUFFICIENT, CAMERA COVERAGE.

### **ADEQUACY OF THE SECURITY FORCE**

IN VIRTUALLY EVERY SCHOOL WE VISITED, PRINCIPALS, ADMINISTRATORS, AND SECURITY PERSONNEL WERE UNANIMOUS IN VOICING THEIR NEED FOR MORE SECURITY OFFICERS. THE REASONS WERE UNIFORMLY THE SAME – THE NUMBER OF GUARDS ASSIGNED WERE INSUFFICIENT BASED ON BUILDING SIZE, STUDENT POPULATION, FLOORS TO BE COVERED, DOORS TO BE WATCHED, STAIRWELLS TO BE CHECKED, LEVEL OF DISCIPLINE ENFORCED, THE NEED TO HANDLE VISITORS, AND THE REQUIREMENT TO BE ALERT FOR UNAUTHORIZED ENTRY.

## **OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN NOTED DURING OUR AUDIT**

- DISSATISFACTION WITH SECURITY GUARDS
- SECURITY PERSONNEL ATTENDANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON PHYSICAL SECURITY
- SECURITY PERSONNEL PROFESSIONALISM
- SECURITY WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

## **SECURITY FORCE BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION AND TRAINING**

THE DCPS SECURITY SERVICE CONTRACT REQUIRES THAT THE SECURITY CONTRACTOR: (1) PROVIDE QUALIFIED AND PROFESSIONAL SECURITY OFFICERS; (2) CONDUCT BACKGROUND CLEARANCE CHECKS ON ALL EMPLOYEES PRIOR TO EMPLOYMENT EMPLOYEES; (3) CONDUCT DRUG SCREENING PROCEDURES AS REQUIRED BY FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, AND DCPS REGULATIONS; AND (4) PROVIDE EMPLOYEES WHO MEET SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION TRAINING REQUIREMENTS. WE PLAN TO REVIEW THE CONTRACTOR'S COMPLIANCE WITH THESE CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS.

## **BENCH MARKING INTERNALLY AND WITH OTHER COMPARABLE JURISDICTIONS**

OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO CONDUCT A BENCHMARK STUDY INTERNALLY AND WITH OTHER COMPARABLE JURISDICTIONS TO DETERMINE BEST PRACTICES IN PROVIDING SCHOOL SECURITY. WE PLAN TO BENCHMARK FIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS (ST. LOUIS, DETROIT, BALTIMORE, ATLANTA, AND PHILADELPHIA) AND TO INCLUDE SOME DCPS MODEL SCHOOLS, COMPLETE DATA-GATHERING

SURVEYS, AND TO CONDUCT ON-SITE INTERVIEWS WITH THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

OF PARTICULAR NOTE ARE AUTOMATED SYSTEMS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED BY SEVERAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS. ONE SYSTEM, CURRENTLY USED BY WILSON HIGH SCHOOL, HAS APPARENTLY BEEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE IN IMPROVING SCHOOL SECURITY. THIS SYSTEM HAS SUCCESSFULLY BEEN USED BY PHILADELPHIA AND BALTIMORE SCHOOLS, AND IS REPORTED TO HAVE IMPROVED SAFETY AND ATTENDANCE, AND SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED CLASS CUTTING BY UP TO 75 PERCENT IN THOSE SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

**“THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT SCHOOL SAFETY AND SECURITY ACT OF 2004” - BILL 15-725**

WITHOUT OPINING ON THE INDIVIDUAL MERITS OF BILL 15-725, WE OFFER THE COUNCIL CERTAIN MEASURES IT MAY WISH TO CONSIDER IN ITS DELIBERATIONS OF SCHOOL SECURITY. DRAWING ON THE BENEFITS OF OUR AUDIT OBSERVATIONS AT DISTRICT SCHOOLS, OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CURRENT AND PAST DCPS SUPERINTENDENT AND PRINCIPALS; ADMINISTRATORS AND TEACHERS; THE SECURITY GUARD WORKFORCE; THE SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT; AND MEMBERS FROM THE PTA, WE PRESENT THE FOLLOWING ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION.

- I. DEFINITIVE IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED IN PHYSICAL SECURITY, ESPECIALLY AT HIGH-RISK SCHOOLS. NOTWITHSTANDING THE USE OF

METAL DETECTORS, SCANNING DEVICES, CAMERAS AND SCORES OF SECURITY PERSONNEL, THE PREPONDERANCE OF DOORS AT SOME SCHOOLS OFTEN SERVES TO NEGATE EVEN THE BEST SECURITY MEASURES. ELIMINATING EXCESS DOORS, IN CONCERT WITH THE PROPER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS, WOULD REDUCE THE SECURITY COVERAGE REQUIREMENT AND PRESENT A MORE MANAGEABLE SECURITY ENVIRONMENT.

- II. THERE IS A NEED FOR EMPLOYING A STATE-OF-THE-ART STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM. A STATE-OF-THE-ART IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM WILL ENABLE DCPS TO CONTROL INDIVIDUAL ENTRANCE AND EXIT INTO THE SCHOOL BUILDING.
- III. THE DCPS NEEDS TO CONTRACT WITH A SECURITY FIRM THAT CAN PROVIDE A PROFESSIONAL, WELL-TRAINED GUARD FORCE IN PROVIDING SCHOOL SECURITY. THE NUMBER AND DEPLOYMENT OF SECURITY PERSONNEL MUST BE BASED ON NEEDS IDENTIFIED VIA A RISK ASSESSMENT, RATHER THAN A MERE PROPORTIONAL DISTRIBUTION. IN ADDITION, THE SECURITY CONTRACTOR'S PERFORMANCE MUST BE CONTINUALLY MONITORED, WITH CONTRACT INCENTIVES AND PAYMENTS TIED TO IMPROVEMENTS IN SCHOOL SECURITY.
- IV. A SCHOOL SECURITY OVERSIGHT MECHANISM IS NEEDED TO CONTINUALLY EVALUATE SECURITY AT THE SCHOOLS, FOCUSING AND

INTENSIFYING EFFORTS, AS NEEDED, TO INTRODUCE NEW OR UPDATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN DCPS COMPLIANCE WITH CHAPTER 25 REQUIREMENTS AND WITH OTHER REQUIREMENTS, INCLUDING FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS SUCH AS THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND LAW.

- V. THE DCPS, WORKING WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD AND LOCAL COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION THROUGH THE PTA, NEEDS TO MONITOR THE SCHOOL SYSTEMS' SECURITY, ESPECIALLY AS TO HOW DCPS BENCHMARKS WHEN COMPARED TO OTHER LOCAL JURISDICTIONS.

IN CONCLUSION, FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE BREAKDOWN IN DCPS SECURITY INCLUDE DEFICIENCIES IN THE SECURITY GUARD FORCE, THE NEED FOR BETTER MONITORING AND OVERSIGHT BY DCPS OFFICIALS, OUTDATED TECHNOLOGY, THE NEED FOR AN IMPROVED PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE, FAILURE TO ADHERE TO POLICIES AND PROCEDURES, OUTDATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.

THIS CONCLUDES MY TESTIMONY; I AM PREPARED TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS THAT YOU MAY HAVE.