

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Office of the Inspector General

Inspector General



August 14, 2007

The Honorable Adrian M. Fenty
Mayor
District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mayor's Correspondence Unit, Suite 316
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITY REPORT

Dear Mayor Fenty:

This report is to inform you of the results of an investigation that was conducted by Special Agent Bernadette Todd-Atwater, District of Columbia Office of the Inspector General (OIG), concerning allegations of embezzlement committed against the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) by Brenda L. Belton, a former employee of DCPS.

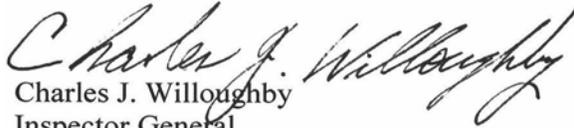
This investigation revealed that between March 2003 and May 2006, Belton schemed to defraud the District and Federal education programs of nearly \$800,000. Belton used her position as Executive Director of the Office of Charter School Oversight, DCPS, to divert funds belonging to the District of Columbia and the federal *No Child Left Behind* program to various bank accounts over which she had control. As part of her scheme, Belton submitted false and fraudulent invoices to steal more than \$200,000 in public funds, received more than \$180,000 in kickbacks, and issued over \$400,000 in no-bid contracts.

On August 9, 2007, Belton pled guilty before the Honorable Ricardo M. Urbina, United States District Court for the District of Columbia, to two felony counts of Theft from a Program Receiving Federal Funds (18 U.S.C § 666), one count of Federal Tax Evasion (26 U.S.C. §7201), and one count of District of Columbia Tax Evasion (D.C. Code § 47-4101(a)). Belton is scheduled for sentencing on November 29, 2007.

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If you need any additional information, please call me or Leonard C. Odom, Assistant Inspector General for Investigations, on (202) 727-2540. When calling, please reference OIG Control Number 2006-0179.

Sincerely,


Charles J. Willoughby
Inspector General

CJW/bta