

# CONFIDENTIAL

## INVESTIGATION REPORT

Allegation/Complaint: Misuse of Position and Government Resources, Violation of Ethics, School Board Policy 6.270  
Violation of Technology Policy, School Board Policy 8.601 Section (E), Rule 6A-10.081, Florida Administrative Code

Date of Allegations: 2016 - 2020

Complainant: Marion County School District

Alleged Accused:  
(Respondent) Jonathan Grantham, Deputy Superintendent  
Marion County School District

Witnesses:

- (1) Kelly Gassman, Program Specialist
- (2) Ronda Ennis, Administrative Assistant
- (3) John Kerley, Principal  
Madison Street Elementary
- (4) Joseph Didomizio, Hospitality Manager  
Marion Technical College
- (5) Mike Kelly, Principal  
Marion Technical College
- (6) Robert Knight, Director  
Facilities
- (7) Carey Savage, Secretary  
Facilities
- (8) Barbara Dobbins, Executive Director  
Human Resources Services
- (9) Denise Vitale, Supervisor  
Employment Services
- (10) William McAteer, Director  
Secondary Education
- (11) Kari Reece, Secretary
- (12) Benjamin Whitehouse, Area Director

## Summary

On June 8, 2020, the Marion County School District was notified of a complaint that alleged the Deputy Superintendent had misused his position to receive benefits. The alleged accused was identified as Dr. Jonathan Grantham. On June 8, 2020, the District opened an internal administrative investigation and assigned Ms. Dawana Gary, director and Mr. Tyson Collins, special investigator as the District's investigators.

A review of emails sent from Dr. Jonathan Grantham revealed that he had solicited employees via his Marion County School Board email account. Dr. Jonathan Grantham had requested assistance in moving from his residence and had requested assistance with cleaning up his property in preparation of his wedding. [See Attached Emails] These solicitations occurred on May 8, 2019 and June 12, 2019.

According to allegations, Dr. Jonathan Grantham also solicited Ms. Kelly Gassman to put on a baby shower for him and his wife, Curriculum and Instruction Coordinator, Ms. Diana Grantham [Invitation Attached]. On Friday, January 10, 2020, Ms. Kelly Gassman held a baby shower for the Grantham's at Marion Technical College (MTC) from three o'clock until five o'clock.

On June 15, 2020, Investigators met with **Ms. Kelly Gassman**, a program specialist. Investigator asked Gassman how she became involved in the planning of Dr. Grantham's baby shower. Gassman explained that Dr. Grantham had told her that he and his wife "respect and trust her" and were hoping that she could throw the baby shower for them. Investigator asked

Gassman if she was friends with the Grantham's outside of work, which Gassman replied, "Not really, I don't socialize with them [Jonathan and Diana Grantham]." Investigator asked Gassman if she felt like she had to assist with the baby shower due to Dr. Grantham being the deputy superintendent. Gassman indicated that Dr. Grantham was ultimately her boss. Gassman said she felt "flattered" and thought she had been selected due to her "work ethic." Investigator asked Gassman who helped her with the baby shower, which Gassman replied, "I really did everything myself. I spent my entire winter break doing a lot of the planning." Investigator asked Gassman if Dr. Grantham's Administrative Assistant, Ms. Ronda Ennis had helped with the baby shower. Gassman reported that she had initial contact with Ennis regarding how many people would be coming to the shower. Investigator asked Gassman why Ennis had not organized the shower herself, which Gassman replied, "She [Ennis] said that she didn't want to do it. That it wasn't in her realm of comfort." Gassman said she wanted to have the shower at Marion Technical Institute (MTI) but when she found out how many people were invited, she decided to have the shower at Marion Technical College (MTC). Investigator asked Gassman if there was a rental agreement completed to use the facility, which Gassman replied, "No, I didn't know that I had to do that." Gassman said that she reached out to MTC Hospitality Manager, Joseph Didomizio who secured the banquet hall for the shower. Investigator asked Gassman who paid for the food at the shower, which Gassman replied, "I did." Gassman estimated that the food cost a couple hundred dollars and directors in the district had donated the cake. Investigator asked Gassman what the cost of the shower was, which Gassman replied, "A little over five hundred." (Cost Spreadsheet Attached) Gassman said she was offered to be reimbursed by Dr. Grantham but had not received any reimbursement. Gassman said many things happened since the shower and

she felt “optimistic” that Dr. Grantham would reimburse her for the shower. Investigator asked Gassman if she used the Marion County School Board’s (MCSB) resources to put the shower together. Gassman said she used the District’s paper to print off some invitations but had replaced the paper the next day because she “felt bad.” Gassman said she received an emailed list of invitees of approximately two hundred people. Investigator asked Gassman who had cleaned up Brewster Hall after the shower was over, which Gassman replied, “I recruited my parents.” Investigator asked Gassman if she was promised anything for throwing the baby shower for Dr. Grantham, which Gassman replied, “No.”

On June 17, 2020, Investigators met with Administrative Assistant to Dr. Jonathan Grantham, **Ms. Ronda Ennis**. According to Ennis, Dr. Grantham had asked her to throw a baby shower for him. Investigator asked Ennis what her response to Dr. Grantham’s request was, which Ennis replied, “My initial response was that I was not going to send any emails inviting anyone to a baby shower.” Investigator asked Ennis what was Dr. Grantham’s response, which Ennis replied, “He said, why?” Ennis continued, “I said because it’s against our technology policy.” Ennis reported that she had contacted Supervisor of Technology Edward Beers, who confirmed the use of email for “those types of things” would be a violation of the technology policy. Ennis reported that Dr. Grantham had asked Gassman to throw the baby shower instead. Ennis said she assisted Gassman with the list of people that Dr. Grantham wanted to invite because Gassman did not know who they were. Ennis said she also had a conversation with Gassman and informed her that it was a violation of the technology policy to send emails related to the baby shower. Investigator asked Ennis if any of the baby shower planning had been completed during contract work hours, which Ennis replied, “Yes.” Investigator asked Ennis if

any of the baby shower invitees had been invited via MCPS email, which Ennis replied, “I do not know.” Ennis explained that her understanding was that the invitations had been sent via the courier.

Investigator asked Ennis if she was aware that Dr. Grantham had sent out an email to MCSB employees requesting help to move. (Emails Attached) According to Ennis, she became aware of the email after Dr. Grantham had asked her to log on to his email account and respond to emails on his behalf. Investigator asked Ennis how many times Dr. Grantham had requested help from MCSB employees for personal reasons. Ennis said she was not sure but was aware of two emails that Dr. Grantham had sent out requesting help. Investigator asked Ennis if she was aware if Dr. Grantham had kept track of the employees who had assisted him, which Ennis replied, “I do not know.”

Investigator asked Ennis if Dr. Grantham had asked her to do anything personally for him during her contract hours, which Ennis replied, “Yes.” Ennis explained that Dr. Grantham had asked her to pick up his children from school and had her pay his extended day fees with his credit card. Ennis reported Dr. Grantham had asked her to have Director of Facilities Robert Knight print out Dr. Grantham’s house plans on a MCSB large-scale printer. Investigator asked Ennis if she had been asked by Dr. Grantham to do anything in which she felt uncomfortable doing. Ennis said she felt uncomfortable when Dr. Grantham asked her to put on the baby shower. Ennis recalled on “several occasions” Dr. Grantham could tell that she was “not thrilled” about having to pick up his children and would get someone else to pick them up. Investigator asked Ennis how many times Dr. Grantham had asked her to pick up his children, which Ennis replied, “I couldn’t begin to count.”

Investigator asked Ennis if Dr. Grantham had asked her to work on his National Louis University classes during her contract time, which Ennis replied, “Yes.” According to Ennis, Dr. Grantham sent each class instruction outline to the copier in their office and Ennis would compile the papers in a binder. Ennis explained Dr. Grantham had multiple classes in which she had prepared binders. Investigator asked Ennis how much time it would take to prepare Dr. Grantham’s National Louis University work. Ennis explained that it would depend on the class, but it would take “sometimes an hour, sometimes two hours.” Ennis said she worked on Dr. Grantham’s National Louis University paperwork in between her other duties. Investigator asked Ennis if she assisted with the National Louis University work during the duration in which she had worked for Dr. Grantham, Ennis replied, “Yeah.” Investigator asked Ennis how much MCSB paper she had used for Dr. Grantham’s National Louis University classes, which Ennis replied, “A lot. Sometimes two, three reams of paper.”

Investigator asked Ennis if Dr. Grantham had paid Marion Technical College (MTC) to cater his wedding, which Ennis replied, “I know that there was a check that Joe [Didomizio] came over to pick up and he [Dr. Grantham] handed it to me to give to Joseph.” Ennis explained that she never asked Dr. Grantham any questions about the wedding.

On July 8, 2020, Investigator met with Marion Technical College (MTC) Hospitality Manager, **Mr. Joseph Didomizio**. Investigator asked Didomizio what he knew about Dr. Grantham’s baby shower at MTC. Didomizio explained that Gassman had “sponsored” the shower and most of the money came out of her pocket. Investigator asked Didomizio if MTC had a contract

with Dr. Grantham for the use of the banquet hall, which Didomizio replied, “No.” Investigator asked Didomizio who contacted him about using the facility for the baby shower, which Didomizio replied, “I think it was Kelly [Gassman].” Investigator asked Didomizio what was the normal cost for the use of the banquet hall, which Didomizio replied, “It would have been two hundred ninety-five for three hours and sixty-five dollars an hour after that.” Investigator asked Didomizio if MTC had provided any food or other services for the baby shower, which Didomizio replied, “I think we supplied like paper products and cups for drinks.”

Investigator asked Didomizio if he had catered Dr. Grantham’s wedding. Didomizio explained that he and his wife had been catering for twenty years and they had catered Dr. Grantham’s wedding. Investigator asked Didomizio if there had been any other employees who had assisted with the wedding. Didomizio replied, “There were culinary students there. We paid them.” Investigator asked Didomizio who provided the food for Dr. Grantham’s wedding, which Didomizio replied, “Dr. Grantham paid for the food.” Investigator asked Didomizio if Dr. Grantham had paid him for the catering services, which Didomizio replied, “My wife and I paid the students.” Investigator asked Didomizio if he paid the students out of his own money, which Didomizio replied, “Correct.” Investigator asked Didomizio if Dr. Grantham was going to reimburse him for the students’ pay, which Didomizio replied, “We would normally include that in the cost.” Didomizio said he gave Dr. Grantham a price of one thousand dollars to cover the food and catering. Didomizio explained that due to the amount of food they had for the wedding he had lost money catering the wedding. Investigator asked Didomizio what he charged to cater a wedding, which Didomizio replied, “That normally would have been a twenty-three dollar a plate” event.

Didomizio estimated that over a hundred people attended Dr. Grantham's wedding, which would have normally cost twenty-three hundred dollars. Investigator asked Didomizio if he was aware of the cost prior to the wedding and had given Dr. Grantham a lower cost because of Dr. Grantham's position, which Didomizio replied, "Probably a little bit of both. We knew going in it was Dr. Grantham, you know he's your boss." Investigator asked Didomizio if Dr. Grantham had pressured or asked him for a lower cost on the catering, which Didomizio replied, "No."

Investigator asked Didomizio if there was anything else related to the investigation that he needed to report, which Didomizio disclosed, "We [staff] did bring out tables and chairs to the house." Didomizio said he and two other MCSB employees had brought out twenty-four tables from MTC along with chairs from the warehouse to Dr. Grantham's house for the wedding. Investigator asked Didomizio if he had brought out the tables and chairs during normal contract work time, which Didomizio replied, "Yes." Investigator asked Didomizio what they used to transport the table and chairs to Dr. Grantham's residence, which Didomizio replied, "The school pick-up truck and trailer." Didomizio said they had also picked up the tables and chairs during regular contract work hours after the wedding using the same MCSB truck and trailer. Didomizio estimated that each trip had taken approximately three hours to complete. Didomizio reported MTC Principal Mike Kelly was aware that the tables were being used at Dr. Grantham's wedding.

On July 8, 2020, Investigator met with Marion Technical College Principal, **Mr. Mike Kelly**. Investigator asked Kelly if he had received emails from Dr. Grantham requesting help to move. Kelly said on two occasions Dr.

Grantham had sent out a distribution list asking employees to help move. Kelly said that he did not assist in either of Dr. Grantham's moves. Investigator asked Kelly if he received the email from a MCSB email account, which Kelly replied, "Yes."

Investigator asked Kelly what he knew about Dr. Grantham's baby shower at MTC. Kelly explained that he was aware the event took place at MTC and said that Gassman had asked to use the facility. Investigator asked Kelly if he was aware of any staff members working Dr. Grantham's baby shower, which Kelly replied, "Brewster Hall was used and Joseph [Didomizio] is our hospitality director there and I'm sure he helped out and organized things there." Investigator asked Kelly if MTC normally charges a rental fee for the use of the banquet hall, which Kelly replied, "We do not charge if it's an employee of the District." Investigator asked Kelly if Dr. Grantham's wedding had been catered through MTC, which Kelly replied, "No. It did not. Dr. Grantham asked us if we had tables and chairs, he could use, and we provided the tables and chairs for that." Investigator asked Kelly if it was common to allow an employee to use tables from MTC for a wedding, which Kelly replied, "I would say not for an employee but for the deputy superintendent, yes." Kelly reported Didomizio had arranged to cater Dr. Grantham's wedding outside of MTC's scope. Investigator asked Kelly if MTC students had been used to cater Dr. Grantham's wedding, which Kelly replied, "I do believe he [Didomizio] used student's for that event and to my recollection he paid those students himself to do that." Investigator asked Kelly if Didomizio had made any comments to him about the payment he received from Dr. Grantham for the wedding, which Kelly replied, "I have an assumption from things he [Didomizio] has said that he did not get paid or got paid minimally for it."

On July 8, 2020, Investigator met with the Director of Facilities, **Mr. Robert Knight**. According to Knight, Dr. Grantham had informed him that he needed to have some house plans printed. Knight said he had suggested several businesses in town who do “large scale printing.” Knight said Dr. Grantham told him, “No, I mean here [Facilities].” Knight said he told Dr. Grantham that it was the MCSB’s equipment for District use only. Knight said that Dr. Grantham said, “It’s a couple of pages. Are you going to help me or not?” Knight said he “felt compelled” to go ahead and follow through with the deputy superintendent’s request. Knight said he printed four pages of house plans one time. Knight said that he later learned that Dr. Grantham had Ennis direct Knight’s secretary, Ms. Carey Fox (Savage), to print out additional copies of Dr. Grantham’s house plans. Knight explained that he was aware of at least three other occasions that his secretary was directed by Ennis to print out more copies of house plans for Dr. Grantham. Investigator asked Knight to estimate the cost to print out house plans, which Knight replied, “If you would go to a private company it would cost about two dollars a sheet. Maybe three dollars a sheet.” Knight estimated that each time Dr. Grantham had the plans printed it would have cost about ten to twelve dollars for a set of plans. Knight estimated that if each set of plans was four sheets and Dr. Grantham had received multiple copies of each set of plans that the cost would have been between fifty dollars and one hundred dollars.

On July 8, 2020, Investigator met with the Facilities Secretary, **Ms. Carey Savage**. Investigator asked Savage if Dr. Grantham had asked her to print out a set of house plans, which Savage replied, “Yes.” Investigator asked Savage how many times she had been asked to print out house plans for Dr. Grantham, which Savage replied, “More than twice, less than five times.” Investigator

asked Savage if she knew how many house plans she had printed for Dr. Grantham, which Savage replied, “I’m not sure, the plans were multiple pages. I think at any given time I may have printed three sets.”

On July 7, 2020, Investigator met with Supervisor of Employment Services, **Ms. Denise Vitale**. Vitale reported being Dr. Grantham’s administrative assistant from 2017-2018. Investigator asked Vitale how often she picked Dr. Grantham’s children up during work hours, which Vitale replied, “On occasion I may have picked them up from school.” Investigator asked Vitale if she was aware of any other employees who had picked up Dr. Grantham’s children, which Vitale replied, “During work hours? Not that I’m aware of.” Investigator asked Vitale if she was aware that Kerley had watched Dr. Grantham’s children at the gymnasium at MTI during contract hours, which Vitale replied, “Yes, but I thought that was after hours.” Vitale said she was unsure when that occurred. Investigator asked Vitale if she was aware why Kerley had to watch Dr. Grantham’s children, which Vitale said she was not aware.

Investigator asked Vitale if she had been asked by Dr. Grantham to assist in moving. Vitale said she had assisted Dr. Grantham when he moved to his lake home property. Investigator asked Vitale if she was asked by Dr. Grantham to review his emails and respond on his behalf, which Vitale replied, “Yes, I have done that.” Vitale explained that Dr. Grantham had asked her to “clean up and filter through the emails.” Vitale said Dr. Grantham would tell her how to respond to the emails on his behalf. Investigator asked Vitale to talk about Dr. Grantham’s work with National Louis University, which Vitale replied, “He [Dr. Grantham] taught classes and there were times that I made copies for him for that class.” Investigator asked Vitale how often she had to

make copies for him, which Vitale replied, “My memory tells me that it wasn’t that many.” Vitale explained that she had made sets of copies for the classes that Dr. Grantham had instructed. Investigator asked Vitale if she made the copies for National Louis University during her contract hours, which Vitale replied, “Yes.” Investigator asked Vitale if Dr. Grantham had asked her to do anything else that was personal for him during her contract hours, which Vitale replied, “I may have picked up laundry.” Vitale recalled that she “may have” picked up Dr. Grantham’s laundry during her lunchtime while she was picking up her own laundry.

On June 23, 2020, Investigators met with Principal **John Kerley**. Kerley informed Investigators at the start of the interview that he was concerned of “possible retribution for saying things” by Dr. Grantham or Superintendent Heidi Maier. Investigators reassured Kerley that any retribution for his statements would be handled appropriately. Investigator asked Kerley if he had been asked to help Dr. Grantham move. Kerley said he had assisted Dr. Grantham move on two separate occasions and had received the request via Dr. Grantham MCSB email account. Investigator asked Kerley if he felt like he had to assist Dr. Grantham because he was his superior, which Kerley replied, “No, I didn’t feel pressure specifically because he was my superior, however it certainly did come into play.” Kerley also disclosed that he was involved in Dr. Grantham’s move in 2018.

Investigator asked Kerley if he was aware of any misconduct by Dr. Grantham. According to Kerley, Dr. Grantham had asked him to watch his children at the gymnasium at Marion Technical Institute (MTI) while Dr. Grantham left the campus. Kerley said he watched Dr. Grantham’s children until Dr. Grantham’s wife, at the time, was able to get off work and pick them

up. Investigator asked Kerley where Dr. Grantham had gone, which Kerley replied, "He told me that he went to St. Augustine." Investigator asked Kerley if Dr. Grantham went for school business, which Kerley replied, "No." Investigator asked Kerley if this was during contract hours, which Kerley replied, "He [Dr. Grantham] left before three o'clock." Kerley explained the incident occurred during the summer on the last day of the workweek. Investigator asked Kerley whom Dr. Grantham had went to St. Augustine with, which Kerley replied, "Diana Greene [Diana Grantham]." Kerley said Barbra Dobbins and Denise Vitale had also been aware because Kerley had communicated with them regarding what happened. Kerley said Dr. Grantham told him to inform his wife at the time that he was in a meeting. Kerley explained that he stayed with Dr. Grantham's children from three o'clock until six o'clock at MTI. Kerley said he felt Dr. Grantham had taken advantage of their friendship and put him in a situation to have to lie to Dr. Grantham's wife at the time.

Investigator asked Kerley if he had witnessed any retaliation, which Kerley replied, "Yeah, against me." Kerley explained that he was the first of three area directors with an "impeccable" record of school performance. Kerley said that he was recommended and approved by the Marion County School Board to continue serving as an area director. According to Kerley, without cause or explanation he was transferred to Madison Street Elementary as the principal. Investigator informed Kerley that according to the press release he had requested the transfer, which Kerley replied, "That's not true." Kerley explained that he had asked Dr. Maier and Dr. Grantham together why he was being moved but received no answer. Kerley explained that Dr. Grantham told him that the superintendent was going to move him and that he needed to accept it, handle it appropriately, and he would be "taken care of." Kerley

said that being “taken care of” meant his area director salary would be frozen. Kerley reported that “many people” expressed to him that Dr. Grantham had told them that he (Kerley) was having an affair with several employees. According to Kerley, Dr. Grantham told Ronda Ennis, Benjamin Whitehouse, William McAteer, and Kari Reece. Investigator asked Kerley if Dr. Grantham had used the alleged affairs as the reason why he was moved from the area director position, which Kerley replied, “I believe so.” Kerley denied having an affair with any of the women that had been named.

On July 27, 2020, Investigators met with Area Director Secretary, **Ms. Kari Reece**. Reece was the former secretary for Kerley during his time as an area director. Investigator asked Reece if Dr. Grantham had told her the reason why Kerley had been moved from an area director position to a principal. According to Reece, Kerley had been going through a divorce and said there were rumors of Kerley being involved with another employee. Reece reported that Dr. Grantham had met with her in his office regarding Kerley’s transfer and Reece’s next position assignment. Reece said Dr. Grantham asked her if she wanted to go to Madison Street Elementary or wanted to stay on as the area director’s secretary. During this meeting, Reece said Dr. Grantham had made several comments indicating Kerley had allegedly had inappropriate relationships. Reece said Dr. Grantham told her that there had been rumors about Kerley and her. Reece said she told Dr. Grantham that rumor was “absolutely not true.” Reece explained that Dr. Grantham had told her that if she moved to Madison Street Elementary with Kerley the rumors were going to follow her there. Reece said Ennis had informed her that Dr. Grantham had started the rumor about her and Kerley. Reece described the meeting with Dr. Grantham as being “very uncomfortable.”

On July 15, 2020, Investigator met with Executive Director of Human Resources, **Ms. Barbra Dobbins**. Investigator asked Dobbins if she had received emails from Dr. Grantham requesting help to move residences. Dobbins reported that in 2016 she had received an email from Dr. Grantham requesting help to move. According to Dobbins, Dr. Grantham had asked for assistance to move on another occasion and had asked for assistance with his wedding.

Investigator asked Dobbins if she was asked by Dr. Grantham to watch his children during contract work hours, which Dobbins replied, “Yes.” Dobbins explained that there were “frequent times” over the 2017 summer that Dr. Grantham would bring his children to work and have them sit in his office. Dobbins explained that if Dr. Grantham had to leave his office for a meeting, he would ask Vitale or herself to watch his children. Dobbins reported that Dr. Grantham would also leave his children in the MTI gymnasium unsupervised. Dobbins said she would get a text from Dr. Grantham asking her to check on his children in the gymnasium. Investigator asked Dobbins if she was aware that Kerley had watched Dr. Grantham’s children in the MTI gymnasium, which Dobbins replied, “Yes.” Dobbins explained that Kerley had watched Dr. Grantham’s children during contract work hours, sometime during the summer. Investigator asked Dobbins if she knew why Dr. Grantham had asked Kerley to watch his children in the gymnasium, which Dobbins replied, “I don’t know why.”

Investigator asked Dobbins if she was aware of Dr. Grantham’s National Louis University work, which Dobbins replied, “Yes, I knew he was a

professor and I knew he conducted classes in the classroom over at MTI.” Investigator asked Dobbins if she was aware if any MCSB resources had been used for National Louis University classes. Dobbins said she worked closely with Vitale and explained that Vitale had made “packets” for the students that Dr. Grantham had taught for National Louis University. Dobbins recalled that Vitale had used Dr. Grantham’s conference table to prepare the packets for his classes. Dobbins said she could not recall how frequently the classes had met but recalled that Vitale constantly had to prepare materials.

Investigator asked Dobbins if she was aware of any misconduct by Dr. Grantham that we had not discussed, which Dobbins replied, “Yes.” Dobbins explained that she was currently involved in an open investigation being conducted by the Department of Education Inspector General’s Office regarding Dr. Grantham’s hiring practices. Dobbins was unable to provide any further information regarding the alleged misconduct due to the ongoing investigation.

Investigator asked Dobbins if Dr. Grantham had told her why Kerley was moved from an area director’s position to the principal’s position at Madison Street Elementary. According to Dobbins, Dr. Grantham informed her that Kerley had been moved because of an “inappropriate relationship” with another school board employee.

On July 27, 2020, Investigators met with Secondary Education Director, **Mr. William McAteer**. Investigator asked McAteer if he received an email from Dr. Grantham requesting help to move, which McAteer replied, “I may have. I know I received a verbal, even if I didn’t receive an email.” McAteer recalled being asked by Dr. Grantham in 2017 and 2019 for assistance in

moving. Investigator asked McAteer if he felt like he needed to help Dr. Grantham move because he was the deputy superintendent, which McAteer replied, “No.” Investigator asked McAteer if any of the moves that he had assisted with had been done during contract work times. McAteer replied that it was on a Saturday when he assisted Dr. Grantham move.

Investigator asked McAteer if Dr. Grantham had told him why Kerley had been moved from an area director position to a principal position. According to McAteer, Dr. Grantham never gave a “specific” reason for Kerley’s move. McAteer said from his own experience, principals were unhappy with the visits they received from Kerley compared to the other area directors. Investigator asked McAteer if Dr. Grantham had told him the reason for Kerley’s move was because of relationships with other employees, which McAteer replied, “No.” McAteer concluded by saying that when Dr. Grantham asked for help to move, he had asked him as his friend. McAteer said he considered Dr. Grantham a friend just as he considers Kerley a friend.

On July 28, 2020, Investigator met with Area Director, **Mr. Benjamin Whitehouse**. Investigator asked Whitehouse if he had received an email from Dr. Grantham requesting help to move. Whitehouse reported that he had received a request for assistance from Dr. Grantham. Investigator asked Whitehouse if he felt obligated to fulfill Grantham’s request for assistance due to him being the deputy superintendent. Whitehouse explained that Dr. Grantham’s first request for assistance to move happened when Whitehouse had just transitioned into his district position. Whitehouse said he “may have felt a little more obligated at that point” because he did not know Dr. Grantham at all. Whitehouse said the second time Dr. Grantham requested assistance to move he took as “a friend asking a friend to move.” Investigator

asked Whitehouse if Dr. Grantham's move occurred during contract work time, which Whitehouse replied, "Both the moves I did were Saturday moves." Investigator asked Whitehouse if Dr. Grantham had told him why Kerley had been moved from an area director position to a principal. Whitehouse explained that Dr. Grantham had concerns on the quality of work that Kerley was providing to his schools. Investigator asked Whitehouse if there were any underlying factors that Dr. Grantham had relayed to him, which Whitehouse replied, "Outside of performance issues, no." Investigator asked Whitehouse if he had been told that Kerley had been moved due to an affair with another employee, which Whitehouse replied, "I'm sure he [Grantham] was aware of it, but he never brought it up to me as a concern."

On July 27, 2020, Investigators conducted a follow-up interview with Administrative Assistant Ronda Ennis. Investigator asked Ennis if she had to watch Dr. Grantham's children while she was on contract time, which Ennis replied, "I would not say that I had to watch them [Dr. Grantham's children] but they were left sometimes in his office." Investigator asked Ennis if Dr. Grantham had told her that Kerley had an affair with Reece. Ennis said Dr. Grantham had told her that he thought Kerley was having an affair with Reece. Ennis said she told Dr. Grantham that Reece was not having an affair with Kerley. Investigator asked Ennis if she had told Reece that Dr. Grantham had started the rumor about Kerley and her, which Ennis replied, "I don't know that I told her [Reece] that I thought he [Dr. Grantham] started the rumor but I did tell her that he said that."

Investigator asked Ennis if Dr. Grantham had instructed her to have more house plans made, which Ennis replied, "Initially, I was told to go to Robert [Knight] and in Roberts's absence, I had to go to Carey." Investigator asked

Ennis how many times she had to go to Savage to request copies of house plans for Dr. Grantham, which Ennis replied, “I would be guessing if I said a number. I mean it was more than once and less than ten.”

On July 29, 2020, Investigators met with the alleged accused, **Dr. Jonathan Grantham**, former deputy superintendent. Investigator explained the allegations and asked Dr. Grantham how Gassman became involved with his baby shower. Dr. Grantham said Gassman had talked about how she had thrown a baby shower for her brother and wanted to do something for them. Dr. Grantham said while he was sitting in the superintendent’s office Gassman had walked in and he asked her if she would organize the baby shower. Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had asked anyone else if they would throw a baby shower, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham who paid for the baby shower, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I have no idea.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if the space at MTC was rented out, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t know. Ya’ll both know we [Dr. Jonathan Grantham and Diana Grantham] didn’t even go. I did not even know where it was. I had no idea. I didn’t know anything about it, period.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if Gassman told him how much money she had paid for the food, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I have no idea.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham who determined the time and location of the baby shower, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Kelly [Gassman] did every bit of that.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he was aware that the baby shower had taken place during contract work hours, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham how it was determined who was invited to the baby shower. Dr. Grantham said he told Diana Grantham to invite everyone because he did not want to “make anyone mad.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he was aware of how many people were invited, which

Dr. Grantham replied, “No idea.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he knew the value of the gifts he had received from the baby shower, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t know. It was mostly diapers.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he received any gifts from employees valued over fifty dollars for his wedding, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t know.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had used any MCSB resources for his wedding, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No, we paid for everything.” Dr. Grantham explained that Didomizio’s “side business” had catered his wedding. Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if MTC students had been used to cater the wedding, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I think they were graduates of MTC.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he thought Didomizio had given him a lower cost to cater the wedding because he was the deputy superintendent. Dr. Grantham replied by stating, “No, we told him [Didomizio] what we were going to spend on it [wedding] and gave him a flat fee and said here’s what you got.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham how many people the flat fee was for, which Dr. Grantham replied, “A hundred people maybe is what we told him [Didomizio].” Dr. Grantham continued, “We just gave him [Didomizio] a flat dollar amount and said go with it. If that means hotdogs or whatever that means, here’s your money.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had used any MCSB resources for the wedding, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Tables from MTC that I asked the superintendent if we could use and she said absolutely. And then I asked Mike Kelly and he said yeah we could use them.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if the tables and chairs had been delivered to his house during contract work time, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No, it was on a Saturday.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if the tables and chairs had been picked up during contract work hours, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t know if we brought them back or they picked them up.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had employees assist him with moving

residences, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I sure have.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if that occurred during work contract time, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had solicited MCSB employees during work contract time to help him move, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I probably sent something to everybody just because I knew they were at work.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham how many times he had sent an email requesting personal help from employees, which Dr. Grantham replied, “When I first moved, the superintendent told me to do that because I didn’t have any friends when I first came.” Dr. Grantham said when he moved into his current house, he had requested help via email from the same group of employees. Dr. Grantham said he had emailed employees that he called his friends to help.

Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if his secretaries had access to his username and password, which Dr. Grantham replied, “All three of my secretaries had it.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham what his secretaries did with his username and password, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Nothing, I mean they just logged in for me or they might go through and see junk mail or stuff like that. They [secretaries] didn’t really go through my email.”

Investigator asked Dr. Grantham what position he held with National Louis University, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Just a professor.” Dr. Grantham explained that he had taught at MTI and had classes in Orlando and Tampa. Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if any of the MCSB resources like paperwork had been used for his National Louis University classes. Dr. Grantham explained that he had “directly” asked the superintendent if it was appropriate when he first arrived at the district. Dr. Grantham said that the superintendent told him “she did not care and that it was not a big deal because

it was furthering Marion County.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if the superintendent’s permission to use MCSB resources were for the classes at MTI or the classes in Orlando and Tampa, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I did ask for permission for that. She [Dr. Maier] said absolutely.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he knew how much paper or copies, he had used for his National Louis classes. Dr. Grantham said he did not know how much paper he had used but said at times he had brought in his own paper and other times he had printed copies for the district at his house with his paper. Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had made the copies himself or had someone else assisted him, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Ronda [Ennis] would help me. My secretaries would help me.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if there was any incentive that he received from National Louis University for having the classes at MTI, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No you get a flat fee for adjunct professor.”

Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had personal house plans printed out on MCSB equipment, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Yeah that did happen. Robert Knight offered that to me. Again, I asked Heidi [Dr. Maier] is it appropriate and she said she didn’t care.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he knew how many sets of house plans, he had printed out, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Not hardly anything.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham why he didn’t use an outside company to print his personal house plans, which Dr. Grantham replied, “The speed of it and I asked her [Dr. Maier] upfront.”

Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had asked employees to pick up his children during contract work time, which Dr. Grantham replied, “Not during contract time. Well I say contract time is four o’clock I mean it was after four there was some of that, yeah.” Dr. Grantham said Vitale and Ennis had picked

up his children at times when he was in a “pinch.” Dr. Grantham explained that he did not solicit employees to pick up his children but said employees would say, “Hey, can I grab your kids.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if Kerley had watched his children in the MTI gymnasium during contract work time, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t know what he’s [Kerley] referring to.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if there was a time when Kerley was directed to watch his children while he left to go to St. Augustine, which Dr. Grantham replied, “I don’t recall that at all.”

Investigator asked Dr. Grantham why Kerley had been transferred from an area director to a principal position, which Dr. Grantham replied, “She [superintendent] wanted him moved back.” Dr. Grantham explained that Kerley had been going through some personal problems and the other area directors had been complaining about him. Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had told Ken McAteer, Ben Whitehouse, Kari Reece and Ronda Ennis that Kerley had been having affairs with other employees, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No.” At the conclusion of the interview, Dr. Grantham said that he thought the investigation was an “absolute witch hunt” and expressed that the former superintendent had given him permission to do everything he had done.

On August 5, 2020, Investigators attempted to contact Dr. Heidi Maier, former superintendent of Marion County School District. Investigator left a voicemail message for Dr. Maier to provide a statement regarding the investigation.

### **Findings/Conclusion**

According to Marion County School Board policy 7.341, the definition of gift includes tangible or intangible personal property or other personal services for which a fee is normally charged by the person providing the service or a preferential rate or term on a debt, loan goods or services.

The investigative findings revealed multiple instances that Dr. Jonathan Grantham had solicited and accepted benefits of value from Marion County School Board employees. According to Dr. Jonathan Grantham, he solicited Ms. Kelly Gassman to put on a baby shower after she had shown interest in doing so. On at least two separate occasions, Dr. Jonathan Grantham admitted to soliciting multiple employees via his Marion County School Board email account for assistance with moving his residences.

Mr. Joseph Didomizio reported that he had catered Dr. Jonathan Grantham's wedding privately and had personally paid students from MTC to assist. Mr. Joseph Didomizio reported Dr. Jonathan Grantham gave him one thousand dollars to cover the catering cost and disclosed the wedding would have normally cost twenty-three hundred dollars. When Investigator asked Mr. Joseph Didomizio if he gave Dr. Jonathan Grantham a lower cost because of his position as deputy superintendent, Mr. Joseph Didomizio acknowledged that it had been a factor. Dr. Jonathan Grantham admitted that he gave Mr. Joseph Didomizio a flat fee to cater his wedding. Mr. Joseph Didomizio said he delivered twenty-four tables from MTC along with chairs from the warehouse to Dr. Jonathan Grantham's house at his request. Mr. Joseph Didomizio said two employees and himself had used the District's truck and trailer to transport the tables and chairs during normal MCSB work hours. Mr. Joseph Didomizio reported that the same employees returned the tables and chairs to MTC after the wedding using the same truck and trailer during work

hours. Mr. Joseph Didomizio estimated that a total of six hours of MCSB work hours had been used to deliver and pick-up the tables and chairs for Dr. Jonathan Grantham's wedding. Dr. Jonathan Grantham reported that he had received permission from the superintendent to use the tables and chairs for his wedding.

Ms. Ronda Ennis and Ms. Denise Vitale reported on multiple occasions that they had been asked by Dr. Jonathan Grantham to pick up his children from school during their work hours. Dr. Jonathan Grantham said Ms. Denise Vitale and Ms. Ronda Ennis had picked up his children at times when he was in a "pinch." Dr. John Kerley also reported that Dr. Jonathan Grantham had him watch his children in the MTI gymnasium while Dr. Jonathan Grantham left to go to St. Augustine during work hours. Dr. John Kerley said he was told to lie to Dr. Jonathan Grantham's wife at the time and say that Dr. Jonathan Grantham was in a meeting. Dr. Jonathan Grantham failed to recall that Dr. John Kerley had watched his children in the MTI gymnasium. Both Ms. Barbara Dobbins and Ms. Denise Vitale corroborated that Dr. John Kerley had watched Dr. Jonathan Grantham's children in the MTI gymnasium although the reason was not corroborated.

Ms. Ronda Ennis reported that she prepared Dr. Jonathan Grantham's National Louis University paperwork by printing out the coursework for the classes during work hours. Ms. Ronda Ennis estimated that she used "multiple reams" of Marion County School Board paper to prepare Dr. Jonathan Grantham's coursework. Ms. Denise Vitale also reported that she had prepared National Louis University coursework for Dr. Jonathan Grantham when she served as his administrative assistant. Ms. Barbara Dobbins reported seeing Ms. Denise Vitale prepare "packets" for Dr. Jonathan Grantham's

National Louis University classes during her work hours. Dr. Jonathan Grantham said his secretaries helped make copies for his National Louis University courses and the superintendent had given him permission to use Marion County School Board resources for the courses.

Both Ms. Ronda Ennis and Ms. Denise Vitale said Dr. Jonathan Grantham had them access his Marion County School Board email account to answer emails and respond on his behalf. Dr. Jonathan Grantham confirmed his administrative assistants both had access to his username and password.

Mr. Robert Knight said Dr. Jonathan Grantham had solicited him to print personal house plans on Marion County School Board equipment. Mr. Robert Knight said he informed Dr. Jonathan Grantham that using MCSB equipment was for district use only. Mr. Robert Knight said he felt “compelled” to fulfill the request and printed out four copies of house plan for Dr. Jonathan Grantham. Dr. Jonathan Grantham said Mr. Robert Knight had “offered” to print out the house plans and he had received permission from the superintendent. Ms. Carey Savage said she was asked multiple times by Ms. Ronda Ennis on behalf of Dr. Jonathan Grantham to produce copies of his house plans. Mr. Robert Knight estimated the total cost to print the house plans to be between fifty and one hundred dollars.

At the conclusion, the investigation found Dr. Jonathan Grantham’s actions to be in violation of School Board Policy 6.270 Professional Ethics and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, Rule 6A-10.081(2)(b)4, shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantage that might influence professional judgement when Dr. Jonathan

Grantham solicited a subordinate to throw a baby shower for him and his wife for free.

Furthermore, the investigation found Dr. Jonathan Grantham's actions to be in violation of School Board Policy 6.270 and the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, Rule 6A-10.081(2)(b)4, shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantage that might influence professional judgement when Dr. Jonathan Grantham solicited his subordinates multiple times through his Marion County School Board email account for a personal favor to assist him with moving twice and cleaning up his property for his wedding.

Additionally, the investigation found Dr. Jonathan Grantham's actions to be in violation of the Marion County School Board Technology Policy 8.601 (E) Inappropriate Use, which states email accounts are only to be used by the registered user. Dr. Jonathan Grantham requested his administrative assistants to access his Marion County School Board email account by using his username and password. According to Marion County School Board Policy 8.601 (E) this is an inappropriate use and therefore strictly prohibited.

Moreover, the investigation found Dr. Jonathan Grantham's actions to be in violation of School Board Policy 6.270 Professional Ethics and of the Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, Rule 6A-10.081(2)(b)4, shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantage that might influence professional judgement when Dr. Jonathan Grantham solicited employees to watch and/or pick up his children from school during contract hours. In addition, when Dr. Jonathan Grantham solicited the use of Marion County School Board tables and chairs for his

wedding. In addition, when Dr. Jonathan Grantham solicited the use of Marion County School Board equipment to print out multiple copies of personal home plans. Lastly, when Dr. Jonathan Grantham had both his administrative assistants prepare National Louis University coursework during MCSB work hours while using MCSB resources.

Investigators concluded finding probable cause that Dr. Jonathan Grantham used his position and authority to obtain favors, gifts, and services for which a fee would normally be charged. Investigative findings revealed Dr. Jonathan Grantham took advantage of his subordinates for his own personal gain.

Florida Statute 112.313 (6) MISUSE OF PUBLIC POSITION - explicitly states that no public officer, employee of an agency, or local government attorney shall corruptly use or attempt to use his or her official position or any property or resource which may be within his or her trust, or perform his or her official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption for himself, herself, or others.

On August 3, 2020, Investigator met with State Attorney Mark Simpson regarding findings of misuse of public position. Mr. Mark Simpson has requested all documents related to this investigation for review.

Completed by: Dawana Gary, Director  
Tyson Collins, Special Investigator  
Equity and Ethics  
August 5, 2020

## ADDENDUM

On August 13, 2020, Investigators conducted a follow-up phone interview with Dr. Jonathan Grantham. Investigator told Dr. Jonathan Grantham that during the July 29, 2020 investigative interview, he had stated that Dr. Heidi Maier had given him permission to do everything we discussed. Investigator asked Dr. Jonathan Grantham if he was able to provide documentation that Dr. Heidi Maier had given him permission. Dr. Jonathan Grantham referenced the National Louis University questions that investigator had asked and explained that Dr. Daniel Buckman had been in the room during the first conversation. Dr. Jonathan Grantham said Dr. Daniel Buckman heard Dr. Heidi Maier give them permission to use the Marion County School Board resources for the program. Dr. Jonathan Grantham reported that Dr. Heidi Maier said they could use their district email, “print stuff,” and do whatever they needed for National Louis University. Dr. Jonathan Grantham said that there was nothing in writing from Dr. Heidi Maier. Investigator asked Dr. Jonathan Grantham if Dr. Heidi Maier had given him permission to use Marion County School Board paper for the Orlando classes as well, which Dr. Jonathan Grantham replied, “Yes, she did. She knew about that as well.” Investigator asked Dr. Jonathan Grantham if he had any documentation showing he had received permission from Dr. Heidi Maier to use the table and chairs for his wedding. Dr. Jonathan Grantham stated that he didn’t recall having a conversation with anybody about having the chairs delivered to his house for his wedding. Investigator asked Dr. Jonathan Grantham if Dr. Heidi Maier had given him permission to have employees help him move, which Dr. Jonathan Grantham replied, “She recommended that.” Investigator asked Dr. Grantham if he had documentation that Dr. Heidi Maier had given him permission to make house plan copies, which Dr. Grantham replied, “No.”

On August 13, 2020, Investigator spoke with consultant, Dr. Daniel Buckman. Investigator asked Dr. Daniel Buckman if he recalled being present with Dr. Jonathan Grantham and Dr. Heidi Maier regarding a meeting about National Louis University's doctoral program at Marion Technical Institute, which Dr. Daniel Buckman acknowledged he had been present. Investigator asked Dr. Daniel Buckman if he was present during a conversation in which Dr. Heidi Maier had given Dr. Jonathan Grantham permission to use Marion County Public school resources, specifically paper copies for his classes that he taught unrelated to the Marion County School Board in Orlando and Tampa. Dr. Daniel Buckman replied, "I was not in any conversation in reference to that."