

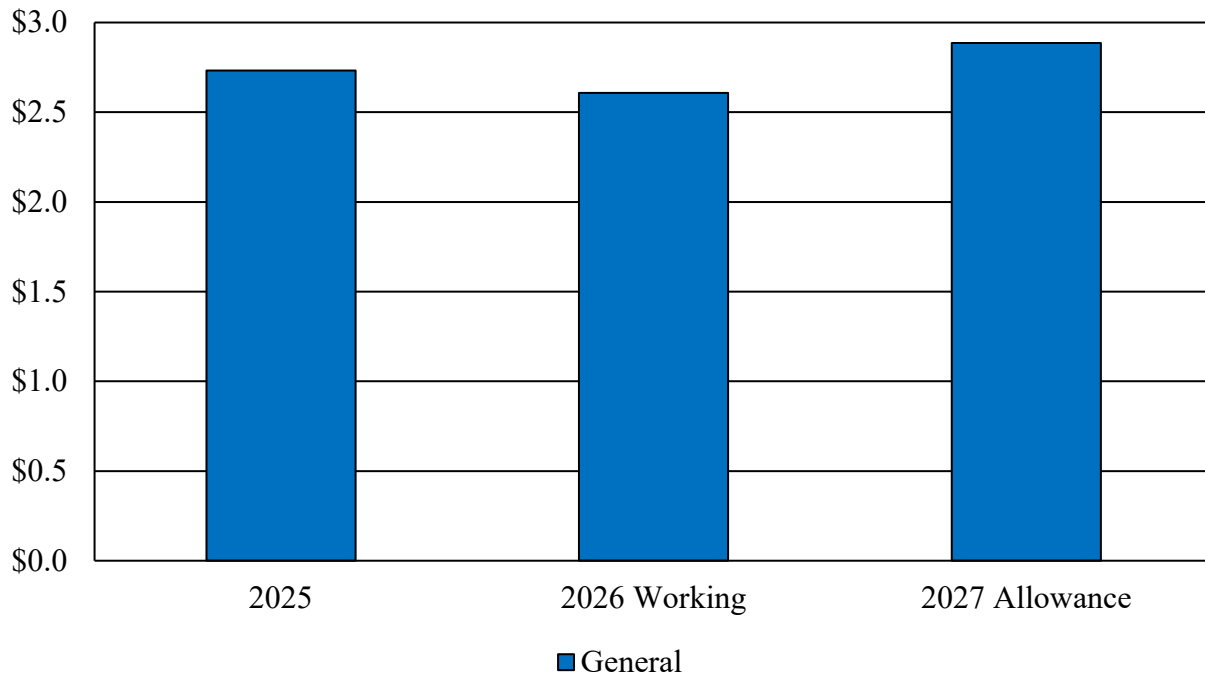
D73
Office of the Inspector General of Education

Program Description

The Maryland Office of the Inspector General for Education (OIGE) is an independent unit of State government established by Chapter 771 of 2019. The office promotes accountability and transparency in the use of public education funds by examining and investigating matters related to county boards of education, local education agencies (LEA), public schools, and nonpublic schools that receive State funding, as well as the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Interagency Commission on School Construction. OIGE receives and investigates complaints involving alleged civil rights violations, compliance with laws governing the prevention and reporting of child abuse and neglect, and potential instances of fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds or property.

Operating Budget Summary

**Fiscal 2027 Budget Increases \$276,831, or 10.6%, to \$2.9 Million
(\$ in Millions)**

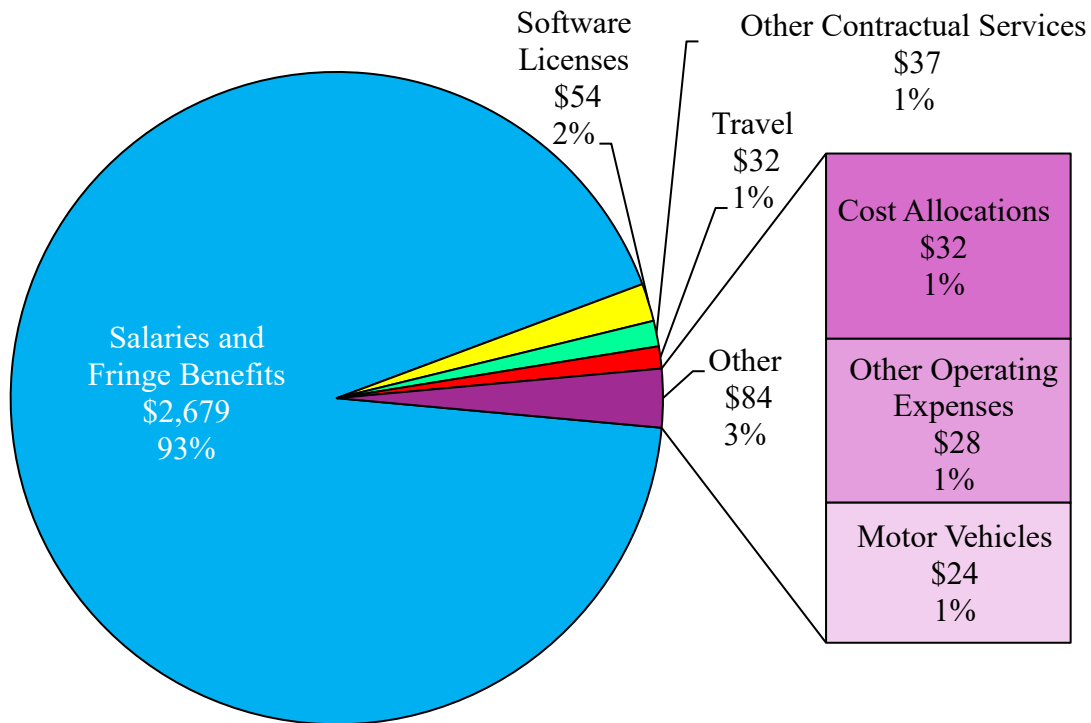


Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Fiscal 2027 Overview of Agency Spending

The fiscal 2027 allowance for OIGE totals \$2.9 million. **Exhibit 1** provides an overview of agency spending by object. Salaries and fringe benefits account for \$2.7 million, or approximately 93% of the total allowance. Software licenses total \$54,000, or 2%; other contractual services total \$36,632, or about 1%; and in-state travel expenses total \$31,600, or roughly 1%. The remaining \$83,573 is allocated to cost allocations, motor vehicles, and other operating expenses.

Exhibit 1
Overview of Agency Spending
Fiscal 2027 Allowance
(\$ in Thousands)



Note: The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Source: Governor's Fiscal 2027 Budget Books

Proposed Budget Change

The fiscal 2027 allowance increases by \$276,831, or 10.6%, compared to the fiscal 2026 working appropriation. As shown in **Exhibit 2**, the increase is primarily attributable to a net increase of \$292,382 in regular personnel costs, partially offset by a net decrease of \$15,551 in other operating expenses.

Exhibit 2
Proposed Budget
Office of the Inspector General for Education
(\$ in Thousands)

How Much It Grows:	General Fund	Total
Fiscal 2025 Actual	\$2,732	\$2,732
Fiscal 2026 Working	2,608	2,608
Fiscal 2027 Allowance	2,885	2,885
Fiscal 2026-2027 \$ Change	277	277
Fiscal 2026-2027 % Change	10.61%	10.61%

Where It Goes:	Change
Personnel Expenses	
Salary adjustments and associated fringe benefits	\$124
Fiscal 2026 DBM-efficiency reduction	102
Employee and retiree health insurance.....	84
Deferred compensation match due to change in budgeting	5
Turnover rate decreases from 1.7% to 1.64%	2
Reclassifications	-24
Other Changes	
Motor vehicle maintenance, repair, and insurance.....	\$5
Computer maintenance, software, licenses, and DoIT services	-6
Travel, conferences, and training	-11
Other routine operating expenses	-3
Total	\$277

DBM: Department of Budget and Management

DoIT: Department of Information Technology

Note: Numbers may not sum to total due to rounding. The fiscal 2027 statewide salary adjustments are centrally budgeted in the Department of Budget and Management and are not included in this agency's budget.

Personnel Data

	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27	FY 26-27
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Working</u>	<u>Allowance</u>	<u>Change</u>
Regular Positions	16.00	16.00	16.00	0.00
Contractual FTEs	<u>0.50</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
Total Personnel	16.50	16.00	16.00	0.00

Vacancy Data: Regular Positions

Turnover and Necessary Vacancies, Excluding New Positions	0.26	1.64%
Positions and Percentage Vacant as of 12/31/2025	1.00	6.25%
 Vacancies Above Turnover	 0.74	

- OIGE is authorized 16.0 regular positions in the fiscal 2027 allowance. Regular positions consist of 1 inspector general, 1 deputy inspector general, 1 administrative officer, 1 assistant Attorney General, 1 education services analyst, 1 audit supervisor, 1 investigations supervisor, 6 senior investigators, and 3 auditors.

Key Observations

1. OIGE Investigations Highlight Operational and Compliance Concerns

In OIGE’s calendar 2025 annual report, the agency reported the completion of three administrative investigations and one audit. These reviews addressed procurement practices, grading decisions, staffing and student safety concerns, and the management of Concentration of Poverty Grant funds. The investigations and the audit resulted in findings identifying noncompliance with applicable laws, policies, or guidance. There was one additional investigation that was referred for further review by the appropriate LEA. **Exhibit 3** provides a summary of these investigations and OIGE’s concerns and findings. **OIGE should comment on the status of its recommendations and actions taken by MSDE and LEAs to address the issues identified in the investigations.**

Exhibit 3 Summary of Office of the Inspector General for Education Investigations Calendar 2025

<u>Agency and Type</u>	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Findings</u>
LEA – Administrative	Violation of State law and board policies in the procurement of legal services	OIGE found that the Somerset County Board of Education violated State law and local board policies in procuring legal services. During the investigation, the board refused to cooperate, which limited OIGE’s ability to fully document the procurement process, but available documentation supported a finding of noncompliance.
LEA – Administrative	Allegations of unfair grade-changing practices at Suitland High School in Prince George’s County	OIGE determined that staff did not follow administrative procedures related to grading and instructional requirements. Limited supervision and extended staff absences contributed to inconsistent application of grading practices, resulting in students receiving grades for a course without documented instruction.

<u>Agency and Type</u>	<u>Concern</u>	<u>Findings</u>
LEA – Administrative	Staffing and student safety concerns at Cedar Lane School in Howard County	The investigation found that classrooms operated for extended periods without assigned certified special education teachers, which did not fully align with instructional standards. While safety procedures were in place, staffing shortages and limited behavioral support resources contributed to ongoing operational challenges.
MSDE – Audit	Management of CPG funds in Montgomery and Somerset counties	OIGE found no instances of noncompliance in Montgomery County. In Somerset County, OIGE identified the use of grant funds for purposes not permitted under revised MSDE spending guidance, including the purchase of gift cards. OIGE recommended updates to local policies, inventory controls, and reporting practices to improve oversight of grant expenditures.

CPG: Concentration of Poverty Grant

LEA: local education agency

MSDE: Maryland State Department of Education

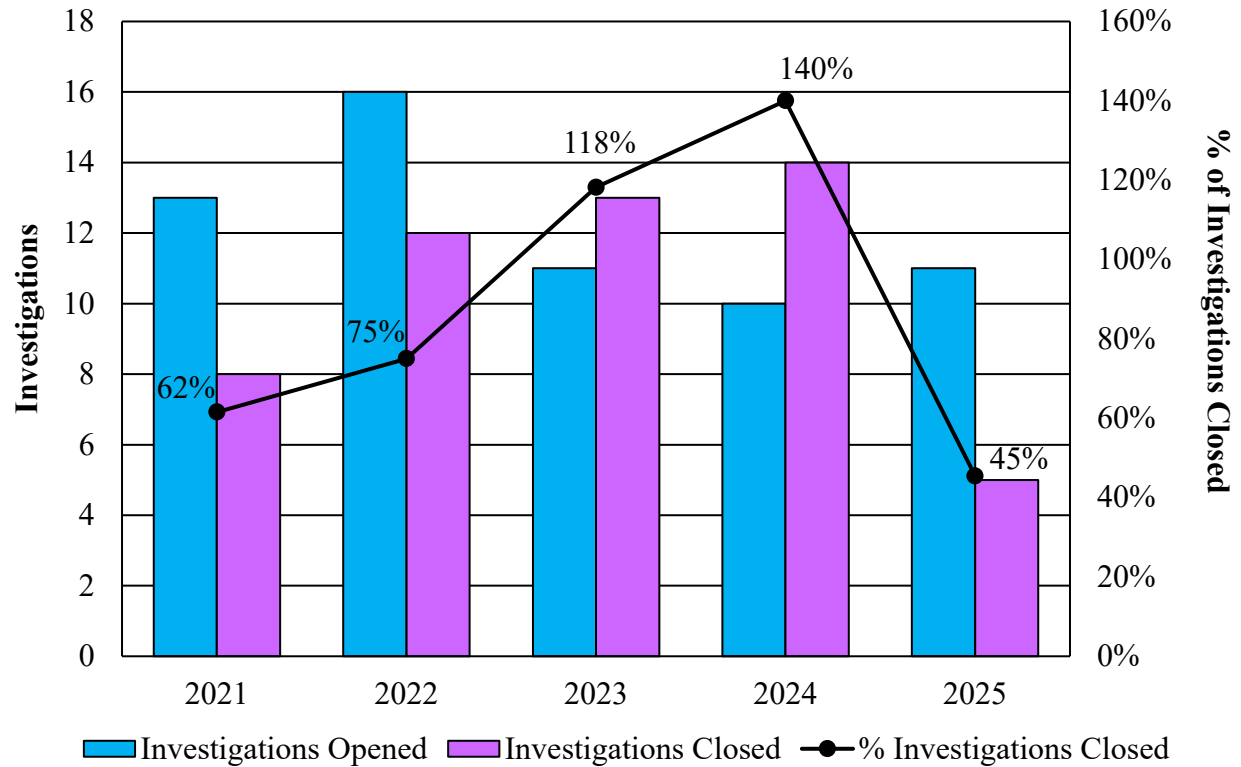
OIGE: Office of the Inspector General for Education

Source: Office of the Inspector General for Education

2. OIGE Investigation Activity and Case Closures

Exhibit 4 shows the number of investigations opened and closed by OIGE and the percentage closed from calendar 2021 through 2025. Investigations may take more than 12 months to complete and may be closed in a subsequent year. In calendar 2023 and 2024, OIGE closed more investigations than it opened, resulting in closure rates of 118% and 140%, respectively, as the agency worked through cases initiated in prior years. In calendar 2025, OIGE opened 11 investigations and closed 5, resulting in a closure percentage of 45%. **OIGE should comment on the factors contributing to the decline in investigations closed in calendar 2025 and provide a status update on the current backlog of open investigations.**

Exhibit 4
Investigations Opened and Closed
Calendar 2021-2025 Year to Date



Note: Calendar 2025 reflects measures through August 2025.

Source: Office of the Inspector General for Education

Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Concur with Governor's allowance.

Appendix 1 Object/Fund Difference Report

<u>Object/Fund</u>	<u>FY 25 Actual</u>	<u>FY 26 Work Approp.</u>	<u>FY 27 Allowance</u>	<u>FY 26-27 \$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Positions					
01 Regular	16.00	16.00	16.00	0.00	0.0%
02 Contractual	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	N/A
Total Positions	16.50	16.00	16.00	0.00	0.0%
Objects					
01 Salaries, Wages, and Fringe Benefits	\$2,510,207	\$2,387,023	\$2,679,405	\$292,382	12.2%
02 Technical and Special Fees	36,358	0	0	0	N/A
03 Communications	9,293	10,500	10,500	0	0.0%
04 Travel	28,693	42,481	31,600	-10,881	-25.6%
07 Motor Vehicle Operation and Maintenance	8,858	19,376	23,927	4,551	23.5%
08 Contractual Services	66,635	121,763	118,414	-3,349	-2.8%
09 Supplies and Materials	33,930	5,000	4,500	-500	-10.0%
10 Equipment - Replacement	0	12,500	9,500	-3,000	-24.0%
11 Equipment - Additional	23,576	5,852	3,500	-2,352	-40.2%
13 Fixed Charges	5,416	3,884	3,864	-20	-0.5%
14 Land and Structures	9,275	0	0	0	N/A
Total Objects	\$2,732,241	\$2,608,379	\$2,885,210	\$276,831	10.6%
Funds					
01 General Funds	\$2,732,241	\$2,608,379	\$2,885,210	\$276,831	10.6%
Total Funds	\$2,732,241	\$2,608,379	\$2,885,210	\$276,831	10.6%

Note: The fiscal 2027 allowance does not include statewide salary adjustments budgeted within the Department of Budget and Management.