

NEWS RELEASE
March 30, 1994

SPECIAL COMMISSIONER SUPPORTS CITY COUNCIL HEARINGS ON ELECTION REFORM

Today, in response to Councilwoman Juanita Watkins' call for hearings on the reform of the Community School Board election process, Special Commissioner Edward F. Stancik pledged his full cooperation. Commissioner Stancik said that he "welcomes the opportunity to explain his office's findings and recommendations at a public forum." He further commended Councilwoman Watkins for focusing public attention on an issue central to the integrity of the decentralized school system.

In December of 1993, after a ten month investigation, Commissioner Stancik issued a report entitled: "From Chaos to Corruption: An Investigation into the 1993 Community School Board Election." That report exposed widespread fraud and corruption as well as administrative mismanagement in many areas of the election process. Individual acts of wrongdoing were referred to the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the District Attorneys for New York, Kings and Bronx Counties for criminal prosecution.

In addition, the report made the following recommendations:

- Proportional voting should be eliminated;
- Votes should be cast on voting machines;
- The Community School Board Election should be moved to coincide with the general election;
- The Parent-Voter registration process should be completely overhauled after consultation with parent groups;
- All decisions made by the Board of Elections regarding candidates for Community School Boards must be made in public and on the record;
- Financial disclosure and residency requirements for Community School Board candidates should be tightened, clarified, and enforced. Candidates who fail to comply should not be sworn in as board members.