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Special Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE
December 7, 1999

PRESS CONFERENCE: 10:30 AM, 25 BROADWAY, 8TH FLOOR

Widespread Educator Misconduct Reported On Standardized Tests

Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District Edward F. Stancik today released a report detailing how educators throughout the City manipulated student performance on City and State examinations by cheating in a variety of ways. The report, entitled *Cheating The Children: Educator Misconduct On Standardized Tests* describes how SCI investigators uncovered that educators frequently instructed students to place their answers on scrap paper which was subsequently corrected by proctors before the final responses were transferred onto the official bubble sheets. Others physically altered answer sheets, prompted students to change incorrect responses or provided students with practice exams which contained actual test questions. The report identifies cheating at 32 elementary and middle schools in all five boroughs and cites 52 school employees for misconduct.

The report also evaluates the Board of Education's handling of allegations of testing irregularities. In reviewing over twenty cases brought to the attention of the Chancellor's office, investigators found that numerous instances of impropriety during test administration were mishandled or completely disregarded by Board of Education officials. Educators responsible for corrupting the testing process went largely unpunished and in many cases unduly influenced the status of their respective schools. In addition, students whose performances were affected by misconduct often had their scores invalidated and deleted from official records, thus, hindering an accurate assessment of their educational abilities and needs.