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**TWO SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDERS  
EMBEZZLED OVER \$80,000 FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION THROUGH FRAUDULENT BILLING PRACTICES**

Today, Special Commissioner of Investigation Anastasia Coleman released two reports detailing separate schemes to defraud the Department of Education (“DOE”) by two independent special education service providers. Combined, the two providers billed the DOE in excess of \$86,000 for individualized special education services that were never provided to 15 students with special needs.

Independent Special Education Teacher Hilary Schornstein swindled approximately \$80,000 during the 2016-2017 school year when she billed the DOE for more than 1,900 hours, at a rate of \$41.98 per hour, for special education services that she never provided to 14 students. Schornstein repeatedly submitted invoices for days when school was not in session including Thanksgiving, Christmas Break, Rosh Hashanah, Pesach, Labor Day, and Memorial Day.

Related Service Provider Jaclyn Petrov received more than \$6,200 from the DOE for therapeutic services for which she billed, but never provided. During the 2016-2017 school year, Petrov fraudulently billed the DOE for 57.5 hours, at a billing rate of \$108 per hour, for services that she did not provide to the 11-year-old student to whom she was assigned.

Both Schornstien and Petrov stole thousands of dollars in public funds and deprived students of required and necessary services. Special Commissioner Coleman emphasized that “it is a priority to investigate and hold accountable individuals who abuse their position as special education service providers in order to enrich themselves while they deprive students of essential mandated services. There is no place in the system for those who do not put the students’ best interest first.”

Both of these matters are currently pending with the Manhattan District Attorney’s office.