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Report Released Today
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Today, Special Commissioner of Investigation Richard J. Condon released a report detailing an investigation which substantiated that Department of Education (DOE) Office of Public Affairs Executive Director Lenny Speiller caused DOE parent coordinators to promote a partisan political position through language in a petition seeking the political support of students, parents, and community members to repeal the New York State Education Law seniority layoff provisions relating to teachers. The investigation found that Speiller wrote additions to a "benign" petition to be used by parent coordinators during "Lobby Week" in March 2011. Speiller's edits promoted the policy of "Last In, First Out," known as LIFO. Speiller's version of the petition was not authorized by the Mayor or the Chancellor.

The investigation began when the Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation received correspondence from United Federation of Teachers (UFT) President Michael Mulgrew, forwarded by UFT Special Counsel Adam Ross. Mulgrew alleged that the DOE improperly directed parent coordinators to solicit political support for the repeal the New York State Education Law seniority layoff provisions relating to teachers and, in doing so, violated article VII § 8 (1) of the Constitution of New York State which "expressly prohibit[ed] the use of public resources for such private political purposes."

The Special Commissioner referred his findings to Chancellor Walcott for his review and appropriate action.

The Office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation is part of the New York City Department of Investigation and Special Commissioner Condon reports to Commissioner Rose Gill Hearn.