

CITY OF NEW YORK
**THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER OF INVESTIGATION
FOR THE NEW YORK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

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Edward F. Stancik
Special Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE
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PRESS CONFERENCE AT 11 AM, 25 BROADWAY, 8th FLOOR

Edward F. Stancik, Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District, will hold a press conference today to announce the release of his latest investigative report, “DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCES: Officials at Brooklyn Technical High School Fail to Report Armed Robberies to the Police.”

The 32-page report analyzes two armed robberies committed by separate groups of students in one of the City’s most prestigious high schools on March 21, 2000. School officials failed to report the robberies to the Police, with the result that many of the robbers were never caught, and continued to attend classes at Brooklyn Tech. Only two robbers were arrested, the result of Police fortuitously learning of one of the robberies; school staff did little to help the police investigation, and much to hurt it.

This case is one of many cases the Special Commissioner has done focusing on the failure of school officials to report crimes to the Police, often in order to protect a school’s reputation.

Two school deans who were alerted to the robberies conducted their own internal investigation, purportedly motivated by the need to bring student disciplinary proceedings. They bungled the investigation badly, showing attitudes toward Police ranging from indifference to outright hostility. They withheld the identities of critical eyewitnesses from the Police, but revealed them to the identified robbers as part of the disciplinary proceedings. Twice, the deans alerted one suspect that the Police were coming to arrest him, causing him to flee the school. He was not apprehended.

The case raises serious questions about conducting disciplinary investigations while Police are conducting investigations of serious crimes. The Special Commissioner recognizes that the student disciplinary process requires the balancing of many legitimate interests, and urges the Board of Education and other government agencies to review the application of disciplinary investigations when serious crimes are involved. He argues that disciplinary proceedings should be secondary to a successful criminal prosecution of crimes like the armed robberies that occurred at Brooklyn Tech. Schools should have the ability to remove students arrested in such cases from the school without a full-blown adversary hearing. Measures should be taken to protect victims and witnesses from being revealed to the suspects.