

News Release
November 12, 1992

REPORT REGARDING MISCONDUCT AND FRAUD
IN THE SCHOOL CUSTODIAL SYSTEM RELEASED TODAY

Ed Stancik, The Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District, will release a report today entitled A System Like No Other: Fraud and Misconduct by New York City School Custodians. There will be a press conference in the library of the Special Commissioner's office today, Thursday November 12, at 10:45 a.m. The report can be picked up at the office after 9:00 a.m.

The report details a 12-month investigation into the public school custodial system. The investigation found significant misconduct by custodians and serious flaws in the system that allow misconduct to occur, including:

- *pursuing second careers on Board of Education time
- *paying off personal loans and bills by putting ghost employees on the payroll
- *paying girlfriends as secretaries for time when they were not on the job
- *commingling public funds in their personal accounts
- *hiring staff with serious criminal records without informing the Board of Education
- *firing a shotgun and other weapons in a target range set up in the basement of an elementary school
- *purchasing and using marijuana during the school day
- *other forms of misconduct and fraud

The report recommends not only that the offending custodians be dismissed, but also that major changes be made in the system to help prevent such abuses from happening in the future.

The office of Elizabeth Holtzman, Comptroller of the City of New York, has issued a Comptroller's memorandum that prohibits the commingling of public funds in personal accounts, a practice engaged in by many custodians.

Allegations of criminal violations have been referred to the offices of Robert M. Morgenthau, District Attorney of New York County; Charles Hynes, District Attorney of Kings County; and Robert T. Johnson, District Attorney of Bronx County.

The Special Commissioner of Investigation thanks for their cooperation Michael Cherkasky, Chief of the Investigations Division of the New York County District Attorney's Office; Sarah McShea, Chief of the Public Corruption Bureau of the Kings County District Attorney's Office; and First Deputy Comptroller Brian Baxter and Executive Deputy Comptroller Rhea Dignam.