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Special Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

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Cheating Continues in City Schools

Today, in a letter to Chancellor Levy, Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District Edward F. Stancik revealed the latest findings in his ongoing investigation into cheating during the administration of City and State examinations. In December 1999, he released a report entitled *Cheating The Children: Educator Misconduct On Standardized Tests*, which described a variety of methods whereby teachers and other school personnel improperly assisted students. That report detailed wrongdoing on the part of 52 educators at 32 elementary and middle schools. Commissioner Stancik's latest report identifies another nine educators at eight different schools, who willingly helped students cheat on tests given in 1999 and 2000.

New information received after the December report led to an additional four substantiated cases of misconduct on the spring 1999 Citywide math and reading tests. Once again, proctors helped students cheat through various methods, including providing students with answers, encouraging students to "check" wrong answers, and changing students' incorrect responses after the tests were collected.

Recent investigations also uncovered cheating on the State English Language Assessment (ELA) examination given in February 2000, as well as on the Citywide Performance Assessment Mathematics (PAM) and Performance Assessment Language (PAL) tests, both administered in March 2000. Again, investigators identified proctors who gave answers to students and alerted them to incorrect responses. In addition, in at least one case, a teacher "prepped" students for the final day of the ELA examination by using the actual material in the exam booklet.

In his letter, Commissioner Stancik recommends disciplinary action against nine individuals and recommends several systemic changes for more accurate and effective testing procedures, including preventing proctors from viewing testing materials before students are given the examinations.