

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

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**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

September 10, 2025

Hon. Melissa Aviles-Ramos  
Chancellor  
New York City Public Schools  
Department of Education  
52 Chambers Street, Room 314  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Kadeem Thomas  
SCI Case #: 2025-01085

Dear Chancellor Aviles-Ramos:

An investigation conducted by this office has substantiated that Community Based Organization (“CBO”) University Settlement (“University”) Afterschool Group Leader Kadeem Thomas (“Thomas”), engaged in unprofessional and reckless behavior during an afterschool program at Public School 219 (“P.S. 219”) in Brooklyn.<sup>1</sup> The investigation uncovered that Thomas deliberately put his foot out, causing a six-year-old male student (“Student A”) to trip and fall. As a result of Thomas’s actions, the child sustained a laceration above his left eye that required three stitches.

**I. Investigation and Findings:**

The investigation began in January 2025, when the office of the Special Commissioner of Investigation for the New York City School District (“SCI”) received an online complaint of misconduct against Thomas from [REDACTED]. In her complaint, [REDACTED] reported that during an afterschool program, Thomas stuck his foot out and intentionally tripped Student A causing him to sustain an injury over his left eyebrow. Emergency Medical Services (“EMS”) responded to the school and Student A subsequently went to the hospital where he received stitches for his injury.

In an interview with SCI investigators, [REDACTED] stated that the afterschool program at P.S. 219 was supervised by University – a CBO that provided staffing and oversight for the program. [REDACTED] told investigators that on January 24<sup>th</sup>, Student A was tripped by Thomas and he sustained a

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas was terminated by University on January 27, 2025.



- NYC DYCD Incident Report Forms – 4 pages;
  - A review of this document completed by ██████ revealed that she reported that Thomas initially claimed that as Student A was transitioning from the auditorium to the gym with the basketball club, he attempted to “go around Thomas,” and he tripped over Thomas’s foot. Student A then fell and hit the middle beam of the doorway. ██████ subsequently amended and added to the report documenting that Thomas’s original statement was not truthful. ██████ noted that in an attempt to “play” with Student A, Thomas “deliberately put his foot out to trip him.” ██████ added that Thomas wrote a second statement accounting for the true events that led to the child’s injury.<sup>4</sup>
  
- Two statements written by Thomas;
  - Initial statement was on January 24<sup>th</sup>.
    - “I was walking back to the auditorium the basketball club was heading out the door the student [Student A] was walking and trip over my foot leading him to fall into the door. I lifted him up and he began to cry, he was walked to the nurse then his forehead started to bleed.”
  - Second statement was on January 27<sup>th</sup>.
    - “I returned a student to the office and made my way back to the auditorium, as I was walking through the door the basketball club was exiting and I stuck my foot out and trip [Student A] as he was walking with the line, he fell over and hit his head on the door.”

SCI investigators interviewed Thomas via Zoom. Thomas stated that he had worked with University as a group leader since November 2024. Thomas said that on January 24<sup>th</sup>, he dropped off a student at the afterschool office and proceeded to walk through the main lobby when he observed Student A walking by him. While Thomas admitted that he purposely stuck his foot out, he claimed that he did so because he thought Student A would see it and stop to say hello. Thomas noted, however, that Student A did not see his foot and consequently tripped over it. Student A then fell into the center pole that separated the two doors in the main lobby. Thomas recounted that he immediately attended to Student A – who was bleeding from his head – and brought him to the school nurse. Thomas told investigators that he never had any problems with Student A, he was friendly with him, and they “got along well.” Thomas added that he was terminated from his position, and he emailed the assigned SCI investigator his termination document.

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<sup>4</sup> ██████ explained to SCI investigators that on January 24<sup>th</sup>, when Thomas wrote his initial statement describing how Student A was purportedly injured, she had not viewed the video footage of the event. After she did so on January 25<sup>th</sup>, Thomas then wrote another statement acknowledging his actions.

## II. Conclusion and Recommendation:

Upon review of the above facts, SCI substantiated that Kadeem Thomas deliberately stuck out his foot, causing Student A – a six-year-old child – to abruptly fall and sustain a serious laceration to his head that required three stitches. Thomas’s conduct was not only unprofessional and an exercise of extremely poor judgement – it was dangerous and had the potential to cause significant injury. Despite Thomas’s thinly veiled excuse that he was “playing” with Student A, the video footage of the incident clearly depicted his reckless behavior. Although Thomas is not a DOE employee and has been terminated from his CBO position, it is the recommendation of this office that a problem code be assigned to his personnel file to serve as a reminder should Thomas seek future employment with the DOE or any of its vendors.

Please respond in writing within 30 days of receipt of this letter as to what, if any, action has been taken or is contemplated regarding Kadeem Thomas or the recommendation made herein. We are forwarding a copy of this letter to the Office of Legal Services.

Should you have any inquiries regarding the above, please contact Special Counsel Valerie A. Batista, the attorney assigned to the case. She can be reached at (212) 510-1417 or [vbatista@nycsci.org](mailto:vbatista@nycsci.org). Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

ANASTASIA COLEMAN  
Special Commissioner of Investigation  
for the New York City School District

By: /s/ Daniel I. Schlachet  
Daniel I. Schlachet  
First Deputy Commissioner

AC:DS:VB:lr

c: Elizabeth Vladeck, Esq.  
Karen Antoine, Esq.  
Katherine Rodi, Esq.  
Monica Davis-Thorne, Director