**Department of Education**
*Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor*

February 17, 2012

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Many of you have seen reports about three incidents of sexual misconduct in our schools on the news and we are all extremely concerned for the safety of our children. While these separate incidents were alleged to occur in just three of our 1,700 schools, this is three incidents too many.

I am writing to convey to you how seriously I am taking these allegations and to inform you of the steps we are taking as a Department to support affected school communities and to ensure the safety of our children in all of our schools.

I am in regular contact with the principals at these schools, and have visited the schools several times to meet with staff, parents, and students. We continue to have crisis teams at each school to support students, families and staff during this difficult time. In addition, we have shared resources with parents at these schools about how they can have age-appropriate conversations with their children, and have advised them on actions they should take if they have concerns that their children may have been affected directly by these incidents. If you would like to view these resources, they are available online at http://schools.nyc.gov/ParentsFamilies.

Going forward, my staff will take the following actions:

Investigative reports with substantiated findings and disciplinary action will be entered into our system in such a way that pertinent information will be visible to schools for consideration when making hiring decisions.

But, as recent incidents highlight, thinking prospectively is not enough. That is why my staff will look back at substantiated cases of misconduct and take appropriate action where necessary to ensure the safety of our students.

While I cannot discuss the details of each case due to ongoing criminal investigations, I want you to know that the Department is cooperating fully with the investigations of the FBI, NYPD, and the United States Attorney and District Attorney's offices. In all cases, investigators may contact parents if they suspect that their children may have been involved either as witnesses or victims.

As Chancellor—and, indeed, as a parent and grandparent—nothing is more important to me than our students' safety. I know that you likely have questions in the wake of these allegations. I want to reassure you that our schools have supports in place to promote a safe and secure learning environment in every one of our schools, including age-appropriate curricula around social and emotional health as well as school staff trained to address these needs. We will continue to look for additional ways to support our schools in this effort.

If you ever feel that your child has been subjected to inappropriate treatment at school, you or your child should contact your school's principal or guidance counselor immediately.

Again, we take matters like these very seriously. The Department will continue to offer support and maintain regular contact with the school and parent leadership at affected schools to provide answers to other questions that may arise.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor