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ANGELO SANTABARBARA
Assemblyman 111th District

November 10th, 2023

Dr. Betty A. Rosa
Commissioner of Education, New York State Education Department
New York State Education Building
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

Subject: Request for Investigation into Incident at Destine Preparatory Charter School

Dear Dr. Rosa:

I write to bring to your attention a matter of grave concern that requires immediate attention and thorough investigation by the New York State Board of Regents. As the Chair of the New York State Assembly Sub-Committee on Autism Spectrum Disorders, I am deeply committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all students, particularly those with special needs.

The incident in question, reported in the Daily Gazette on November 10th, 2023, involves a 7-year-old autistic child, who attends Destine Preparatory Charter School in Schenectady. The child's mother raised significant concerns when her son was dropped off unattended at a bus stop an hour earlier than scheduled. The incident occurred earlier this week, when the child was meant to attend an after-school African drumming and dancing class before returning home on the bus. However, he was left a block away from his home in Mont Pleasant at 4 p.m. that evening.

My primary concern is the safety and well-being of all students, especially those with special needs. It is of utmost importance that educational institutions prioritize student safety and maintain effective communication with parents to prevent such incidents from occurring. In light of the severity of this matter, I believe that a comprehensive investigation is necessary to ascertain the facts, evaluate the school's adherence to safety protocols, and address any shortcomings that may have contributed to this incident.

I urge the New York State Board of Regents to take prompt action in initiating this investigation to ensure the safety of all students attending Destine Preparatory Charter School. Your commitment to upholding the highest standards in education and ensuring a safe learning environment for all students is paramount.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your swift response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Angelo Santabarbara', written in a cursive style.

Angelo Santabarbara
Member of the New York State Assembly
111th District | Representing areas of Montgomery & Schenectady Counties

Cc: Dr. Lester W. Young, Jr. Chancellor of the NYS Board of Regents

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