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STATE OF NEW YORK



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**E-MAIL ADDRESS:**  
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November 27, 2012

James DeLorenzo  
Assistant Commissioner  
New York State Education Department  
Office of Special Education  
Special Education Policy/Program Development and Support Services  
89 Washington Avenue, Room 309 EB  
Albany, New York 12234

Dear Assistant Commissioner DeLorenzo:

Yesterday, the Office of Special Education initiated a temporary administrative suspension of the initial approval of applications for preschool special education programs, school-age private school programs, and applications for expansions of currently approved preschool special education programs and approved school-age private schools. For the Cantalician Center in Depew, New York, this suspension could cost them upwards of \$100,000 per month in program reimbursements and threatens to displace hundreds of students with severe disabilities in the middle of the school year. **I am writing to request that you grant them an exception to the suspension and allow the Office of Special Education to process the approval of their program changes and expansion as quickly as possible.**

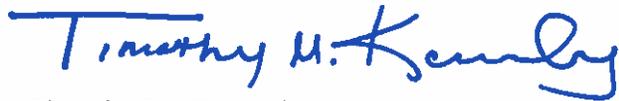
The Cantalician Center's project to consolidate two aging facilities into their new campus in Depew addressed serious challenges, such as lack of space, handicap accessibility issues and efficiency concerns. Their new campus offers state-of-the-art classrooms and dedicated physical therapy, occupational therapy and sensory rooms, along with new fitness, music and art facilities. In addition, the consolidation of resources is saving them \$300,000 annually – dollars that will be put back into student programming. In short, the new Cantalician Center has been a hugely successful undertaking for the students who need these services and the surrounding community. The project has garnered strong support from local, state and federal elected officials, as well as millions of dollars from foundations such as the Oishei Foundation.

The Cantalician Center has been working closely with NYSED's Western New York Regional Office on their application for program changes and expansion. They have fulfilled every request that NYSED has put before them in order to be able to serve more students in their facility. As you know, the process is very lengthy. While they were unable to complete the process by the

November 5th date, they are extremely close to approval. Halting this process now would be severely disruptive to the school and to the students who desperately need these services.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office at (716) 826-2683.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy M. Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent horizontal line at the beginning of the word "Timothy".

Timothy M. Kennedy  
New York State Senator, 58<sup>th</sup> District