



Christopher Marte

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Office location pending

March 17, 2022

STATEMENT FROM COUNCIL MEMBER CHRISTOPHER MARTE ON BATTERY PARK CITY DAY NURSERY

On March 6, 2022, our office was reached out to by a group of concerned parents whose children attend Battery Park City Day Nursery. We were informed that the school was sold to a new owner, who had hired an Executive Director, Rodion Babisakov. After an initial search online, parents screenshotted posts from the Director's Facebook which showed racist language against Asian and Black people. On a Zoom call with the Council Member, about 30 parents expressed concern about the presence of this type of person at the school, and around their children.

Our office immediately contacted the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure that the DOE was aware of these disturbing messages. We learned that the matter was referred to the Special Commissioner of Investigations for schools (SCI), which was launching an investigation into this matter. This investigation is ongoing, and we have not received a timeline as to when it might conclude.

In the past week, we have received dozens of emails from concerned parents. Our office has been in constant contact with the DOE to provide support to these families and answer any questions they might have. We will continue to be a resource to these families and work with the DOE, who have already assisted many of these parents.

The Facebook posts of this individual are disgusting, racist, and unacceptable, to such an extent that there was clear merit for such an investigation to begin. As we await the outcome, it is our ultimate goal to make sure children and families are safe, supported, and receiving an excellent quality program. We will continue to be here for these families and will answer any further questions brought to us by parents.

You can reach our office at 212-587-3159 or district1@council.nyc.gov