

# Staten Island Advance

JUNE 3, 2000

## Island educator tapped to lead city agency

■ Jerry Cammarata to head Dept. of Youth and Community Development

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Staten Island's representative to the Board of Education will soon be doing double duty as commissioner of the city's Department of Youth and Community Development.

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Sources say Rosebank resident Jerry Cammarata will be tapped to head the agency, which was created in 1996 when the city's Department of Youth Services was merged with the Community Development Agency.

Cammarata will replace Violet Mitchell, who has been serving as acting commissioner of the department since March 1999. Ms. Mitchell is expected to assume the currently vacant post of deputy commissioner of youth services.

Sources say Mayor Rudolph Giuliani is likely to announce Cammarata's appointment sometime within the next week.

They also note the mayor has given Cammarata clearance to occupy both city posts concurrently.

The commissioner's salary is \$133,000 annually. Cammarata currently earns \$15,000 a year as a member of the Board of Education.

Government sources say Cammarata is being rewarded for being a good political soldier and supporting the mayor's interests at the Board of Education.

If the appointment is made, as expected, Cammarata would be the second Staten Islander Giuliani has tapped to address youth services at the city level. Earlier in his administration, he appointed New Springville resident Alfred Curtis Jr. to head the Department of Youth Services. Curtis served from Aug. 1, 1994 until Dec. 7, 1995.

Cammarata would not confirm the pending announcement yesterday, initially saying he couldn't say anything and would defer questions to Borough President Guy V. Molinari.

But he added, "It would be a pleasure to serve Mayor Giuliani in any capacity, and if I was asked to be a member of his administration I'd be most pleased to help him continue to achieve the goals of making New York City the greatest metropolis in the nation."

Of his job at the Board of Education, Cammarata said, "I hope my role here will never end. I love it."

The Department of Youth and Community Development is charged with supporting a variety of youth service programs and administering the city's Community Action Block grants as well as the non-public assistance components of the city's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program.

The department also funds the popular school-based Beacon recreation programs and special projects like the adult literacy initiative.

In 1999, the agency served nearly 1 million youngsters city-wide.



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Jerry Cammarata in a 1999 photo.