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AUDITOR GENERAL

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News for Immediate Release

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Auditor General DePasquale Statement on Deplorable Mailer Associated with Innovative Arts Academy Charter School, Northampton County

Referred matter to U.S. Department of Education; urges investigation by other state, federal officials

HARRISBURG – Auditor General Eugene DePasquale today issued the following statement on a recent mailer regarding Innovative Arts Academy Charter School in Catasauqua, Northampton County, which disparages a local public high school:

“Unfortunately we have become accustomed to dirtball mailers and tactics like this in political campaigns. But when it spills over into our education system and one public school appears to have attacked another it becomes downright deplorable.

“Charter schools are public schools supported by tax dollars. We cannot, and should not have to, tolerate such disgraceful tactics as those employed in this mailer. This despicable practice sends a horrible message to the students in our public school system, both traditional public schools and charter schools.

“While we cannot audit a charter school that has not yet opened, I plan to monitor this matter closely. In fact, we have already contacted the U.S. Department of Education Office of Inspector General to urge a full investigation into the origin and content of the advertising.

“I will also refer this matter for investigation by the Internal Revenue Service, which has strict guidelines for charter school advertising; the U.S. Postal Inspection Service; U.S. Department of Justice; U.S. Department of Education; Pennsylvania Department of Education; and the state Office of Attorney General.

“I stand with the students and taxpayers in Northampton County eager to find out who paid for this advertising and what they are trying to accomplish with this unwarranted attack.”

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