



September 23, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Dr. April Lopez

Chairperson for the State Council on Developmental Disabilities

SACRAMENTO, CA On behalf of the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities, I would like to express my deepest sympathies to the family of Hun Joon Lee, a 19-year-old non-verbal autistic young man who died tragically trapped inside a school bus parked in a Whittier School District parking lot on September 11, 2015.

Speaking as a parent of a child with developmental disabilities, the death of a child is one of the most devastating events a parent could experience. That unbearable grief is only intensified knowing there was little your child could do to protect himself or to warn others of the imminent danger of his situation. Our hearts ache for the Lee family as they endure a tragedy no family should have to suffer.

Taxpayers should expect their public schools provide for a positive, safe and quality environment for all students regardless of a student's abilities. Our special education teachers are without question amongst the best in the nation. They deserve support to do their best. People responsible for watching over our children must get the training they need to succeed.

This is a failure in our responsibility to our children. We must do everything we can to see that this unacceptable tragedy is remedied immediately to ensure our school children remain safe.

The State Council on developmental disabilities (SCDD) is established by state and federal law is an independent state agency to ensure that people with developmental disabilities and their families we receive the services and supports they need.

###

Contact

Nelly Nieblas

Nelly.Nieblas@scdd.ca.gov

916-708-5544