



Department of  
Education

## FOR THE RECORD

### TESTIMONY OF NYC SCHOOLS CHANCELLOR DENNIS M. WALCOTT ON SIGNIFICANT SCHOOL CHANGES: CLOSURES, RECONFIGURATIONS & COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION

#### BEFORE THE NYC COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

October 2, 2013

Good afternoon Chairman Jackson and all the members of the City Council's Education Committee here today. I am Schools Chancellor Dennis Walcott and I am joined by Sara Kaufman, Chief Portfolio Officer for the New York City Department of Education's Office of Portfolio Management.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify on a hallmark of this mayoral administration's education reforms: our portfolio strategy, the DOE's long-range blueprint to create better school options.

We are well aware that our strategy of phasing out low-performing schools and replacing them with new, smaller schools has been controversial, and I am glad to be here to discuss the details.

We did not embark upon this strategy lightly. Our schools were in a terrible crisis when the Mayor took office in 2002, and something serious needed to be done for the sake of our students' futures.

Nearly a quarter of our students were dropping out of school each year—and that masked a far more dire situation at the city's large high school campuses.

The graduation rate at Wingate High School in Brooklyn in 2002 was an alarming 29 percent. That meant 71 percent of students weren't graduating!

At Park West, the graduation rate was 31 percent. At Erasmus, it was 32 percent. At Evander Childs, it was 31 percent. At Seward Park, it was 36 percent. At Prospect Heights High School, it was 34 percent. These were disastrous situations, and I could cite a dozen more.

Crime at these large schools was rampant. Gang fights inside Adlai Stevenson High School in the Bronx were so common that teachers regularly pulled down iron gates from the hallway ceilings to contain rioting. Teachers at some schools carried Mace to protect themselves.

At many of these schools, the dysfunction had persisted for years—and often decades. Countless efforts to turn them around had come and gone, but the culture of failure never changed. Something needed to be done.

There is often a common refrain: Give the failing school more time. Give its leaders a few more years to turn it around. The school will improve.



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GOVERNMENT REPORT

But when a school continues to fail its students after receiving additional support, we can not continue to kick the can down the road. Allowing our students to fall further and further behind is NOT an option. Students only have one shot, and if a school is not delivering we have a moral obligation to pursue different approaches, ones that we have seen repeatedly succeeding.

That brings me to our portfolio strategy.

Schools are dynamic places with many, many moving parts. At most schools, those parts move perfectly in sync; in some, small adjustments need to be made. But in rare cases, the moving parts are operating so poorly that no amount of professional development or additional dollars will help. In those cases, we have learned that the best way to transform a deeply dysfunctional school is sometimes to re-conceptualize it entirely.

Our approach is to conduct an exhaustive review of data, initiate conversations with families and schools during our early engagement process, and communicate with the public in joint public hearings.

It is a painful process to phase out a school. It is a tough and emotional experience for school communities, and a difficult one for us as well. We know that hearings will be contentious. We know families are passionate—and we celebrate their connection to their schools.

But what you often don't see at these hearings are the people those schools did not serve well: the young adult struggling to make ends meet because he or she doesn't have a high school diploma; the teacher who left the profession altogether out of frustration over working at a failing school. These are also people we are listening to.

Over the course of this administration, we have replaced 164 of our lowest-performing schools with better options and opened 654 new schools. Those new, small schools often serve the same student populations, in the same buildings. With a fresh school culture, a clear mission, and moving parts working in unison, they achieve results.

From single-sex schools, to career and technical education schools, to 9-14 schools—which offer a high school and Associate's degree in six years—we have created extraordinary new offerings. They are unlike any that New York State, or even the country, have seen in the past. Across the city, new schools are serving tens of thousands of students, giving parents high-quality choices they never had before.

By housing two or more small schools inside a single building, we have been able to create more options than ever before—new, small schools that are large enough to tailor themes to students' interests, and nimble enough to adapt to individual students. We now have schools for architecture...for television production...for computer technology...even zoology.

Students in small schools get more personalized instruction in environments where their unique learning styles are understood and nurtured. Teachers benefit from close partnerships and



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individualized professional development. Principals themselves can focus more on professional development, and less on day-to-day operations.

Instead of focusing on—for example—3,000 students, a principal can now focus on 300. Instead of hundreds of staff members, school leaders can develop dozens. There is extraordinary instructional value in this approach.

And here are the results:

Since 2002, the graduation rate at the former Wingate High School has risen from 29 percent to 74 percent.

At Erasmus, it has risen from 32 to 75 percent.

At Park West, the graduation rate has risen from 31 percent to 74 percent.

At Evander Childs, the graduation rate has risen from 31 percent to 70 percent.

At Seward Park, it has risen from 36 percent to 76 percent.

At Prospect Heights High School, the graduation rate has increased from 34 percent to 70 percent.

City wide, the drop-out rate has plummeted by half. And crime in our schools has been slashed by almost 50 percent!

This is a sea change for education in New York City.

In every borough, our new schools have higher graduation rates than the borough-wide average. Across New York City, the new schools have higher graduation rates than the citywide average.

These accomplishments are in large part due to our portfolio strategy—the total transformation of our schools.

The landscape is dramatically different today than it once was. We have become a nationally-recognized model for urban school systems, and our portfolio philosophy is a major reason why.

“College and career readiness” is now permanently a part of the lexicon in all of our schools. The Common Core Learning standards, designed to develop critical-thinking skills, are preparing students for the future like never before. And while we undoubtedly have a long way to go, we have doubled college readiness.

This summer, MDRC, a widely respected national non-profit group, analyzed the effect of the new schools we have created since 2002. The findings show that many of our new schools created since 2002 graduate 10 percent more students a year on average than others throughout the city.



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We have proved that it is indeed possible to achieve resounding results—over a relatively short period of time—in an urban school system.

Across the city, families are clamoring for additional school options. To realize that for them, we have taken a bold, new approach to a precious resource in New York City: space.

It is a commodity that all New Yorkers wish they had more of; so do we. But resources are finite—and we have to maximize them. That is why our strategy involves an innovative way of thinking about the classrooms and buildings we have.

As we work to provide new buildings, additions, and leased sites across the city—164 of them since 2002, with 35 more buildings or gut-rehabs currently under construction—we have made every square foot count. We have done that through co-locations.

Co-locations are an integral part of the success we have achieved through more personalized learning environments.

The co-location process is often driven by parents themselves, who vote with their feet, removing their children from large, struggling schools and sending them to better schools elsewhere.

This frees up space that we can use to introduce new, high-quality options that excite students. This is another creative way in which we are expanding access to excellent schools and it contributes to the positive trajectory of the entire building.

These are approaches never tried before in a large city. But when you consider the system we inherited—32 separate, unequal school districts that yielded dismal performance—that is just what our schools and our students needed.

Our engagement process is essential to this work.

When we propose changes for school utilization, we mobilize an elaborate communications mechanism. It includes backpacking notices home to every single family, posting information to our website, and releasing details to the general public. Those notices are followed by hearings, a feedback period, and an intensive review process on our end.

It is a complex task to communicate to such an extraordinary cross-section of parents, across so many schools, across so many neighborhoods. It is work we have built upon, refined, and improved over time. This is not something we take lightly in any sense.

In a system of one million students, and *millions* of stakeholders, not every decision will achieve uniform agreement. But in the end, this administration has stood up for our families and students, leveling the playing field wherever we could.



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We have worked to ensure that geographic boundaries and socioeconomic status do not determine the quality of the schools children have access to.

Our portfolio strategy has helped to reverse a deplorable situation, one that prevented generations of children in New York City from succeeding. It has changed the lives of hundreds of thousands of students for the better.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify, and I can now take your questions.

TESTIMONY OF  
THE UNITED FEDERATION OF TEACHERS  
MICHAEL MULGREW, PRESIDENT

BEFORE THE  
NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

OVERSIGHT HEARING - DOE'S SIGNIFICANT SCHOOL CHANGES:  
CLOSURES, RECONFIGURATIONS AND COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION"

OCTOBER 2, 2013

Good afternoon Chairman Jackson and members of this distinguished committee. My name is Michael Mulgrew and I am the President of the United Federation of Teachers. Thank you for this opportunity to testify at this oversight hearing.

The issue of co-locations is one of the most contentious issues facing our schools today, and with good reason. The Bloomberg administration has pursued a scorched-earth strategy on co-locations. Across the city, it has crammed new schools into the buildings of established schools without regard to the effect on students or educators in the existing school community.

As practiced by the Department of Education under Bloomberg, co-locations have created inequities and sowed conflict within our school buildings. They have hurt students and undermined schools. Forget the out-of-touch rhetoric that you hear from the administration, and consider the realities that our teachers, students and families face on the ground:

In the hurricane-ravaged neighborhood of Midland Beach on Staten Island, local families are still facing uncertainty over whether they will be able to rebuild their homes, and the school community at IS 2 is still struggling to make needed repairs, replace lost materials and cope with a broken boiler system due to Sandy. The Department of Education has inexplicably ignored the plight of this school and community, disrupting what little semblance of normalcy they have achieved since the storm, by its insistence on squeezing another school into the IS 2 building. To add insult to injury, while IS 2 waits for additional funding to pay for repairs and restore lost programs, the DOE has set aside nearly \$200,000 in assistance for the new school.

Over in Brooklyn, overcrowding and a lack of usable space at PS 302 have relegated generations of students to classrooms in trailers out in the school yard. These so-called temporary trailers are now more than two decades old, years past their expiration, and

are riddled with physical and environmental hazards including water damage and mold. Yet, when the DOE miraculously determined that the main school building contained underutilized space, it decided to dole out that space to a charter school rather than to remove the moldy trailers and move those students back into the main building.

In another story that is all too familiar across this city, students at Washington Irving High School in Manhattan this fall lost almost an entire floor of their building, including their music room, computer room, English and language classrooms and their college guidance office. The DOE took that space to put a new charter school in the building.

And, over in Queens, the overcrowded and under-supported Flushing High School is just beginning to stabilize after major budget cuts and a revolving door of school leadership. The DOE showed no concern about how co-locating two other schools in the building would affect Flushing. Teachers and administrators at the three schools are admirably trying to make the co-location work, but they face huge logistical obstacles. Right now, with the school building in operation for 11 periods a day, lunch starts in second period, at 8:51 a.m.

The bottom-line is that the co-locations that have multiplied across our city over the past 12 years have been disruptive and destabilizing, often to schools that were already struggling with overcrowding and strained budgets. It is a failed strategy that has hurt our students most.

Co-location cheats students out of access to the space and resources necessary for a quality education, such as libraries, gyms, cafeterias and other shared areas, as it spurs competition and clashes over use of these resources. Art and music rooms, science labs and other programs are often entirely lost to co-location. And, students with special needs frequently find themselves displaced from their rooms, forced to receive services in hallways and converted closets.

At the same time that students and teachers lose space and programs, they have to watch helplessly as their well-funded new neighbors enjoy extensive renovations, new equipment and sometimes even gourmet meals trucked in from outside vendors. Some charter schools have both actually and figuratively erected walls between themselves and the district schools in their buildings, reinforcing divisions that are the antithesis of the spirit of collaboration and community we seek to build among our students.

It is for all these reasons that that the UFT and its partners have called for a moratorium on co-locations until the DOE has a decision process that takes into account the needs of the existing school and its school community.

The UFT has brought lawsuits against the DOE on this issue, the latest of which aims to block the Bloomberg administration and its rubber-stamp Panel for Education Policy from approving co-locations that would not begin until years after the mayor leaves office. No one can know years in advance what space or programs a school will need. In addition, for the city to approve a new co-location of a charter school before the state has approved the charter school's plan makes a mockery of the whole process.

The UFT also strongly supports legislation in Albany that would ensure that schools cannot be co-located, re-sited or reconfigured without the approval of the local Community Education Council. Likewise, we support the proposed Council Resolution 1263, which echoes the state bill, as well as the proposed Council Resolution 1395-A, which calls for a moratorium on school closings and "forced" co-locations. With Res. 1395, I want to note that we believe it should be amended to clarify what school closings and "forced" co-locations would mean without CEC approval.

I also urge the Council to take the proposed Resolution 1263 a step further and call for requiring charter schools and their management companies to disclose relevant and detailed information to the CECs so that the panels can make informed and proper decisions. Relevant information would include financial records such as all outside sources of income for the school, gifts, donations, executive compensation, legal fees and lobbying expenses. Relevant information would also include student enrollment data by race and gender; demographics such as percentages of students with special needs, English-language learners and students eligible for free lunch; academic results; student enrollment and disciplinary policies; retention and suspension rates; as well as teacher retention and turnover rates.

Only by an open and honest disclosure of information and a deeper understanding of the proposals being made can a CEC make informed decisions that work for all affected school communities. Not taking these steps risks creating even more chaotic situations that harm the very students these proposals are supposed to be helping.

Bottom-line: Co-location decisions should not be made in a vacuum or by bureaucrats behind computers. Our communities demand and deserve an open and transparent process in which fair and meaningful criteria guide decision-making. The criteria should include the requirement that a co-location will go forward only if all schools involved will be able to keep class sizes under agreed-upon limits, and all the educational, social and programming needs of students will be met. A co-location should not proceed if it would force a school to downsize or eliminate existing programs.

Co-locations also should go forward only if every school in the shared building will benefit equally from capital improvements. There's nothing worse for children than



seeing stark inequities right outside their classroom door. This issue was addressed in an important addition to the state law in 2009, and it must be enforced.

Only after a Community Education Council certifies that all of these criteria have been met should a co-location proposal go forward to the Panel for Education Policy for approval.

Co-locations strike at the heart of concerns about equity and fairness in New York City's public schools. They have probably been the single most divisive and destructive school practice under Mayor Bloomberg. The UFT will keep fighting until there is a complete transformation in how co-location decisions are made.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify today, and thank you all for your support on this important issue.

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# FOR THE RECORD



## COMMUNITY DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL 30

28-11 Queens Plaza North, Room 520

Long Island City, NY 11101

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Email: [CEC30@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:CEC30@schools.nyc.gov)

### RESOLUTION #95

## CALLING FOR A MORATORIUM ON ALL SCHOOL CLOSURES, PHASE-OUTS AND CHARTER SCHOOL CO-LOCATIONS

WHEREAS, the New York City Department of Education has issued Proposals for Significant Changes in School Utilization and Educational Impact Statements (EIS) for our schools that will, upon approval of the Panel for Educational Policy, dissolve schools, some with a proud history of achievements and neighborhood connections; and

WHEREAS, while the closing of a school may be necessary as a last resort, school closure has increasingly and improperly become the first and only policy employed by the DOE to address schools with large numbers of students with significant educational needs; and

WHEREAS, in hearings and meetings held subsequently, it has become clear that the Mayor's school improvement strategy may de-stabilize thousands of students in primarily large, comprehensive high schools, and - the replacement of teachers and principals according to rigid and fundamentally arbitrary criteria without offering ample professional development opportunities - penalize the very people who have made significant improvements in several schools; and

WHEREAS, the policy of school closures affects disproportionately students of color and communities affected by these policies in NYC have filed a Federal Title VI Civil Rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, citing the closing of schools and the criteria and methods for administering those actions as discriminatory toward low-income, minority communities ; and

WHEREAS, charter schools were originally intended as pedagogical laboratories for innovation in teaching to better meet the needs of all our students, but particularly those at-risk, and to improve public schools by collaborating with public schools and sharing best practices with public schools; and

WHEREAS, many charter schools in the City today are not pedagogical laboratories for educational innovation, do not serve students at-risk, and neither collaborates nor share best practices with public schools; and

WHEREAS, some charter schools have discharged struggling students to improve school-wide test scores; and

WHEREAS, some charter schools have impaired parent participation by blocking the formation of parent-teacher or parent associations; and

WHEREAS, resources available to students in NYC public schools should be used to address the educational needs of public school students, rather than supplement the budgets of the large charter management chains which have accumulated substantial assets through both public funds and their unrestricted ability to accept private funding; and

## RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, public school communities seeking to expand successful schools are routinely denied that opportunity by the DOE due to a purported lack of space for such expansion; and

WHEREAS, opposition to charter school co-locations is increasingly widespread amongst parents, teachers, elected officials, community leaders and members of the clergy as evidenced by demonstrations, petitions, public comment at hearings and litigation to block co-locations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Community District Education Council 30 supports a moratorium on all school closures, phase-outs and charter school co-locations and calls upon Chancellor Walcott to:

1. Withdraw all current proposals up for vote by the Panel for Educational Policy for Significant Changes in School Utilization.
2. Impose a moratorium on all school proposals until public presentations are made in every borough reflecting on how this method will raise student achievement in lieu of existing models.
3. Conduct school-by-school transparent reviews of current school improvement strategies to assess which measures and programs have been effective or are showing promise in raising student achievement, while improving the school environment; these transparent reviews should include all stakeholders.
4. Examine school intervention plans that maybe in place, bearing in mind those improvement strategies contemplate multiyear plans and that none of the schools may have exceeded the time allowed under the federal guidelines.
5. Ensure that all struggling schools, whether or not they are undergoing federally specified reform plans, are given adequate support so that the students will not only graduate but receive the quality of education that will make them college- or career- ready.
6. Provide a full accounting as well facilitate independent research of the educational outcomes of students remaining in previously phased out schools.
7. Fully cooperate with any investigation of Title VI civil rights complaints as filed with US DOE Office of Civil Rights.

**VOTED AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED: March 21, 2013**



## FOR THE RECORD

### Advocates for Children of New York Protecting every child's right to learn

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#### Testimony to be Delivered to the Education Committee of the New York City Council

**Re: Significant School Changes (Closures, Reconfigurations and Community  
Notification)  
and Res. No. 1263, Proposed Res. No. 1395-A, & Res. No. 1906**

**By: Kim Sweet, Advocates for Children of New York  
October 2, 2013**

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Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to submit feedback on these proposed resolutions.

My name is Kim Sweet, and I am the Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York. For more than 40 years, Advocates for Children has been speaking out for the most vulnerable children in this city's school system -- children living in poverty, children with disabilities, children learning English, children involved in the foster care or juvenile justice systems, and children who are homeless.

We believe that all of New York City's children deserve excellent public schools. Too many of our city's schools continue to fail our students. We need ambitious and creative school reform strategies to raise the quality of education for all



children in the system, including those students who present the greatest challenges.

We have raised the question many times over the years as to whether the aggressive school closure policies of the Bloomberg Administration are benefiting students with disabilities, students who are homeless, and English Language Learners. We also have expressed concern about whether students left in schools that are closing receive the educational opportunities to which they are entitled. These questions and concerns have not yet been answered. For this reason, we support Proposed Res. No. 1395-A, calling for a one-year moratorium on school closings in order to study more thoroughly their impact on students of color, low-income students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who are homeless.

We also support Res. No. 1906, which calls for further specification of procedures in Chancellor's Regulation A-190 for providing notice to affected parents of significant changes in school utilization that are being proposed. Decisions to close, re-configure, or co-locate a school have profound consequences for all members of that school's community; we are in favor of making the provisions that ensure notice to all affected parties as strong as possible.



Finally, we are testifying in opposition to Res. No. 1263, to the extent that it calls upon the State Legislature to give the Community Education Councils a veto over proposed co-locations. When it comes to some of the most disadvantaged students in the school system, such as students who are overage and under-credited or students who are involved in the justice system, we desperately need more schools and programs that can meet their needs. As we have seen, siting these types of schools and programs tends to spark community concern and opposition. To give CEC's the power to block the co-location of these schools or programs would effectively prevent them from opening.

To be sure, the CEC's need more of a say in co-location decisions, and steps should be taken to ensure that communities share the distribution of specialized programs equitably. But if all the CEC's are able to reject a school they believe to be undesirable, there will be nowhere for that school – and the children within it – to go.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

## FOR THE RECORD

To Council member Jackson and the City Council's Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for this important hearing.

My name is Natacha Fernandez-Urena and I am a parent of a 7th grader, Danielle Urena at M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering -- a public school in Harlem. The school is highly diverse culturally and economically, with a majority Latino and African American.

Although my daughter attends CSS, we actually live in Queens. We commute daily 17 miles, in order to provide our daughter with the best education possible. Having been raised in NYC and having gone through the NYC public school system, my personal mission has been to both improve the system the best I can by being an active parent in both my children's education and the school they attend, and seek the best public education in NYC.

Columbia Secondary School is currently co-located in one building with KippSTAR charter school and PS125, as well as the superintendent's offices and a floor designated for community meetings. Again, being a student in the NYC public school system, where classrooms were so overcrowded that we often had lessons in the hallways, space continues to be an issue.

Although the following decision precedes our enrollment into CSS, I understand that seven years ago, the DOE promised the new CSS its own building. DOE has not delivered on its promised to provide CSS students with the adequate space needed for a school of its size that continues to grow.

Now that we've reached capacity, the DOE's original short-term plan can't contain us. Co-location has pitted our school communities against each other, forcing us all to duke out space and other resources. Even with the best relationships between co-located schools, it's still "Survivor meets NYC Education" – and in tandem with DOE neglect – all our kids lose.

Our administration has to spend valuable time negotiating enough cafeteria space, bathrooms, and auditorium usage, with little to no support from the DOE – time that should be freed in order to focus on our kids' educations.

As a result, our kids are affected every day by co-location-related space issues. Imagine not being able to eat because of inadequate cafeteria facilities, or having to "hold it in" all day because there are two bathroom stalls per 200 kids. That's what life is like for many of our kids at CSS. Our community has been dealt a triple-whammy by the DOE: forced co-location, having to negotiate all shared spaces, and unfulfilled promises that our City will alleviate an appalling situation in a timely way.

There are currently only 200 lockers for 700+ MS and HS students -- 3+ kids per locker. The DOE's suggestion is for our kids to use lockers located in the basement, an area shared by elementary school students.

Bathrooms the DOE promised still haven't materialized. The 5th floor has only 2 toilets per 200+ students. Often the toilets don't flush. Most of our kids avoid using the bathroom at all.

## COSMETIC PA

There's no working PA system to support our school, despite the DOE's insistence that we already have one. Not only is this illegal, it's potentially life-threatening. The PA system is facility-wide. Not CSS specific.

Our one, outdated cafeteria fits 149 little kids, in a "campus" that serve well over 1000 children K-12. Many of our kids choose to not eat at all. There's no place for our kids to change for gym. Although, DOE reps insist there's plenty of square footage. Despite all the work we need done to get the school building up to speed, a DOE rep says we're entitled to only one construction project a year, which will only happen on the DOE's timetable. No work's been done for years, and now, because continued lack of DOE oversight, our kids have to wait at least one more year for appropriate bathrooms.

CSS, one of the best schools in the city (with numbers to back it up), is the lowest funded public school in D-5. With only 87% funding, constant negotiations for space and scarce resources, it's a strong testament to our community that we're not only still standing, we're thriving -- thanks to our teachers and administration constantly pushing that rock uphill. Imagine what we could do for our kids if space and co-location were no longer issues.

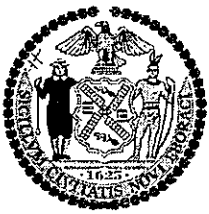
I call on the Board to end, and reverse the practice of co-location NOW in order to provide relief for tens of thousands of students and educators across New York City. Furthermore, I urge the City Council to help ensure that each and every school in the city has the basics that students need to focus on learning. \* \*An end to co-location means another step toward sanity for our school system -- and enables all different kinds of schools to coexist peacefully -- within our city.

Sincerely,

--

Natacha Fernandez-Urena  
Mom at CSS





# Community Education Council District 6

## FOR THE RECORD

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## Resolution of the Community District Education Council for District Six

### Re: Co-locating Schools in Existing District Six Buildings

**WHEREAS:** District Six is already the site of several co-located Charter and "Choice" Schools; and

**WHEREAS:** The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) continues to seek space in District Six Public Schools.

**WHEREAS:** The NYCDOE is proposing to co-locate a middle school in building M192, a building that already has houses two co-located elementary schools (PS 192 and PS 325) and currently educates 3 classes of children, including kindergarten children, in trailers, which are included in the NYCDOE's capacity calculation; and

**WHEREAS:** The NYCDOE is proposing to co-locate a 6-year Career and Technical Education (CTE) school in building M052, which already houses a middle school and a transfer/alternative high school; and

**WHEREAS:** Together these District Six Schools, upon complete enrollment, would be at or over capacity according to the NYCDOE's calculations; and

**WHEREAS:** A 2012 report from the Comptroller's Office finds that the DOE's capacity calculations are inaccurate and/or Principals do not provide accurate data to inform the calculations; and

**WHEREAS:** District Six schools' class sizes have risen steadily since 2007, with some second grade children sitting in classrooms with 28 other children (M187) and some kindergarten children sitting in classroom with 29 other children (M153); and

**WHEREAS:** Other District Six schools have dramatically inappropriate physical facilities (for example, Mott Hall); and many existing District Six Elementary Schools lack the cluster rooms, for example art and music rooms (not auditoriums); and

**WHEREAS:** In District Six schools where co-locations have occurred, the host school has lost space and programming associated with that space (for example, PS 153); further, in truly underutilized District Six schools where space for cluster rooms may exist, school leaders are constrained by lack of resources and or support from the DOE to create art, instrumental music, engineering, robotics and other spaces and programs that would increase student achievement;

(over)

District Six Community Education Council  
4360 Broadway, Room 430; New York, NY 10033  
Telephone: (917) 521-3793; ; fax: 917.521.3643  
email: CEC6@schools.nyc.gov

**WHEREAS:** Community Education Councils (CECs) are instructed to hold Public Hearings for the co-location of new schools; and

**WHEREAS:** These hearings have resulted in the pitting of District Six parent against parent in the "fight" for both resources and programs for District Six children, dividing and humiliating the parents of our school district; and

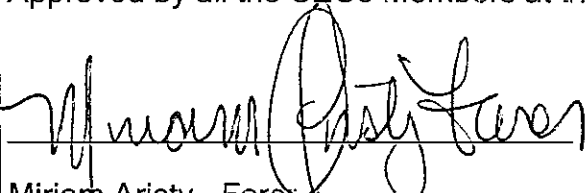
**WHEREAS:** A significant portion of the D6 parent population speaks English only and as of this date, the Office of Portfolio Management (OPM) has offered materials related to co-locations in English only; so be it

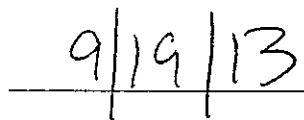
**RESOLVED:** The CEC of District 6 (CEC6) supports a process that brings excellent programs and the space and resources required to support them and our existing D6 schools and students, including a CTE high school and a grade expansion in building M192 to meet the needs of the students in the lower portion of our district; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** CEC6 opposes the placing of any new schools in District Six until CEC6 is fully supported in completing a comprehensive review of the current and future needs of all District Six Schools; and further

**RESOLVED:** The CEC of District Six will refuse to sponsor, co-sponsor, host, or co-host any Public Hearing as per NYS Education Law 2590, concerning the co-location of any new schools in District Six until this process is undertaken.

Approved by all the CEC6 Members at the CEC6 Public Meeting

  
Miriam Aristy - Farer

  
September 19, 2013



# Community Education Council District 6

Monday, September 30, 2013

**FOR THE RECORD**

Honorable: District 6 Community Parents, PA/PTA's, Principals, Parent Coordinators, and Officials Elected:

## OFFICERS

**Miriam Aristy-Farer,  
President & MBP**

**Anthony Kelso,  
Vice -President**

**Yuderka Valdez,  
Secretary**

**Fe Florimon,  
Treasurer & MBP**

## MEMBERS

**Mayra Compres**

**Rita Cortez**

**Shenell Evans**

**Victoria Frye**

**Angela Pagan**

**Maggie Velez**

As president of CEC6, I am reaching out to you because we have a co-location hearing at Public School Jacob H. Schiff (PS 192) on October 9, 2013, at the school located at 500 West 138 Street, NY 10031, (Between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue).

The school is currently co-located with P.S. 325. CEC6 has met with both principals as well as the parents and NONE are in support of an additional school, but do recognize and support a grade expansion of either school.

The community supports a middle school. Logistically and financially we question the DOE proposal to create a new school VS. expansion. We conclude this would create the least impact to the community, and primarily the children, meaning no more shared or divided spaces. We think this would be a better solution/proposal.

We are asking for your support in challenging the DOE in this proposal and asking for a new one grade expansion.

After attending a presentation from OPM for Manhattan CECs a few weeks ago, a re-sounding theme was engage the CECs' in proposal development. In 2 months we have a new chancellor, new mayor.

We need more time to plan this option, so we ask for your support in letting know de Department of Education no more co-locations in Community School District 6 for 2014-2015 school year decided now.

Below is a petition we started with well over 900 signatures against this. The parents will be collecting hand signed signatures next week. The CEC6 passed a resolution last week against anymore co-locations

The Community and families of P.S. 192 and P.S. 325 need your support on October 9, 2013

Many thanks,



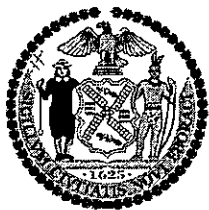
Miriam Aristy-Farer, CEC 6 President

<https://www.change.org/petitions/cec-6-community-education-council-district-6-calling-for-an-immediate-stop-on-all-co-location-proposals-in-d6>

<http://www.wnyc.org/story/316033-colocation-issues-rev-along-new-school-year/>

[http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130903/inwood/schools-should-not-be-forced-share-space-parents-say-at-rally?utm\\_content=vicnyc%40me.com&utm\\_source=VerticalResponse&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_term=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rally&utm\\_campaign=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rallycontent](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130903/inwood/schools-should-not-be-forced-share-space-parents-say-at-rally?utm_content=vicnyc%40me.com&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rally&utm_campaign=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rallycontent)

**District Six Community Education Council**  
4360 Broadway, Room 430; New York, NY 10033  
Telephone: (917) 521-3793; email: [CEC6@nycboe.net](mailto:CEC6@nycboe.net); fax: 917.521.3643



# Community Education Council District 6

Lunes, 30 de septiembre de 2013

Honorable: Padres de la Comunidad Escolar del Distrito 6, Asociación de Padres y Asociación de Padres y Maestros, Directores, Coordinadores de Padres, y funcionarios electos:

Como presidente del CEC6, estoy tratando de llegar a ustedes, porque tenemos una audiencia de co-ubicación en las Escuelas Públicas Jacob H. Schiff (PS 192), el 09 de octubre de 2013, en la escuela ubicada en el 500 oeste de la Calle 138, NY 10031, (entre las Avenidas Broadway y Ámsterdam).

La escuela está ubicada conjuntamente con la P.S. 325. El CEC6 se ha reunido con los dos directores, así como los padres y ninguno de ellos está a favor de una escuela adicional, pero si reconocen y apoyan la expansión de grados de una de las escuela.

La comunidad apoya a una escuela secundaria. Logísticamente y financieramente cuestionamos la propuesta del Departamento de Educación para crear una nueva escuela VS. expansión. Llegamos a la conclusión que esto crearía menor impacto a la comunidad, y sobre todo a los niños, es decir, no más espacios compartidos o divididos. Creemos que esto sería una solución mejor/ propuesta.

Estamos pidiendo su apoyo para desafiar el DOE en esta propuesta y pedir una nueva expansión de grado.

Después de asistir a una presentación de la Oficina de Portafolio para los CECs de Manhattan hace unas semanas, un tema resonante fue comprometer los CECs en propuesta procesos de propuestas. En dos meses tendremos nuevo canciller, nuevo alcalde.

Necesitamos más tiempo para planificar esta opción, por lo que le pedimos su apoyo para dejarle saber al Departamento de Educación no más co-ubicación en el Distrito Escolar Comunal 6 para 2014-2015 año escolar decidió por ahora.

A continuación hay una petición la cual comenzamos empezamos con más de 900 firmas en oposición a esto. Los padres estarán recolectando firmas la próxima semana. El CEC6 aprobó una resolución la semana pasada oponiéndose a no mas co-ubicación

La Comunidad y familias de la P.S. 192 y P.S. 325 necesita su apoyo para el 09 de octubre 2013.

Muchas gracias,

Miriam Aristy-Farer, Presidente del CEC6

<http://www.wnyc.org/story/316033-colocation-issues-rev-along-new-school-year/>

[http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130903/inwood/schools-should-not-be-forced-share-space-parents-say-at-rally?utm\\_content=vicnyc%](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130903/inwood/schools-should-not-be-forced-share-space-parents-say-at-rally?utm_content=vicnyc%40me.com&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rally&utm_campaign=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rallycontent)

[40me.com&utm\\_source=VerticalResponse&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_term=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rally&utm\\_campaign=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rallycontent](http://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20130903/inwood/schools-should-not-be-forced-share-space-parents-say-at-rally?utm_content=vicnyc%40me.com&utm_source=VerticalResponse&utm_medium=Email&utm_term=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rally&utm_campaign=Schools%20Should%20Not%20Be%20Forced%20to%20Share%20Space%2C%20Parents%20Say%20at%20Rallycontent)

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# TESTIMONY

**Oversight:DOE's Significant School Changes: Closures,  
Recommendations and Community Notification**

New York City Council, Committee on Education  
Hon. Robert Jackson, Chair

Wednesday, October 2, 2013



The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators  
Ernest Logan, President  
40 Rector Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10006  
[www.csa-nyc.org](http://www.csa-nyc.org)

Good afternoon, Chairman Robert Jackson and distinguished members of the New York City Council's Committee on Education. My name is Ernest Logan, and I am the President of the Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA). CSA represents more than 6,100 Principals, Assistant Principals, Supervisors, Education Administrators, Retirees and Early Childhood Education Supervisors. I want to thank you for this opportunity to speak to you.

On behalf of New York City's school leaders, I would like to thank the Council Members who have fought so consistently for our public school children. Over the past 12 years, we have fought many battles from fruitless school closures to unmanageable co-locations, which reflect what has come to be known as "A Tale of Two Cities". We have battled demoralizing budget cuts, forcing us to do more with less. We have been forced to take standardized testing to an extreme that has removed much of joy and true meaning from education. We have cut cultural programs and physical education programs to the bone in order to make ends meet. We have seen Superintendents lose most of their instructional authority and oversight responsibility. However, we have never abandoned hope that these conditions could be turned around again.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the current and future leaders of our city to acknowledge that good choices have been made by this administration, but also to think long and hard about some of the bad choices. These, of course, include using school closures as a remedy for academic underachievement, co-locations as a misguided economic measure, and the suppression of superintendents as a means of centralizing power at Tweed. These three "policies" from the current administration have demoralized entire school communities and haven't been effective.

### **School Closures**

Since 2003, the city has phased out or closed more than 140 schools, many of them large high schools, converting them into smaller high schools and charter schools. The DOE has always claimed that these schools were being eliminated because they were underperforming.

CSA embraces accountability and believes that schools should close if they are given intense support and still fail over a period of at least three years. But too often these closures occurred willy-nilly. There were obvious reasons in certain cases and obscure reasons in others. Not only has there been little rhyme or reason to the closures, there has been little parental input and almost no attempt to improve the schools before eradicating them.

Fortunately, thanks to public pressure, many public hearings and investigations were conducted and serious questions were raised as to whether the DOE provided the support needed to sustain these struggling schools. As a result, most of the public now wonders whether many of these schools could have remained open and thrived if the DOE had had the will to help them succeed. The role of the Office of Student Enrollment (OSE) has also been questioned in terms of fair enrollment practices. It has become fairly obvious that OSE was compelled to enroll the most challenged and challenging students in many of these schools.

Despite growing public skepticism, Mayor Bloomberg, Chancellor Klein and, later, Chancellor Walcott continued to close schools and generally re-open smaller schools in their place. Instead

of questioning themselves for these repeated failures, the DOE congratulated itself in public reports and press releases. Test scores, graduation rates, attendance rates, and school safety statistics were never better, according to the DOE. If that was the case, why did so many schools continue to fail, including many that had been recently opened by the chancellor himself? Such blatant mismanagement of our schools in low SES communities has left those communities demoralized, with little hope of student success. It has created a vicious cycle which must be stopped.

## **Co-locations**

Our members often tell us that co-location can be successful when leadership teams from the shared campuses incorporate a collaborative approach to managing activities within the building. Principals have taken it upon themselves to initiate meetings to review and discuss the use of the building as a proactive means of tackling an often-sensitive situation. They do this despite the fact that there is little to no support or training for school administrators to address the challenges that may arise from co-locations,

In spite of the best efforts of administrators, co-location remains a grave challenge for many schools. Several buildings simply do not have enough space to house multiple schools. For example, several schools have "gymatoriums," which are combined gymnasium and auditorium space that cannot be used effectively because of scheduling conflicts. The auditorium often ceases to be used at all. Even the use of cafeterias have posed problems since many students are forced either to eat too early or too late in the day. Many parents are concerned about the discomfort and health problems their children suffer because of this arrangement. Not only are we concerned with the health and general well being of students, but we are concerned that the inadequate space limits their opportunity to attain the sort of varied, well-rounded education they deserve.

Furthermore, although the majority of co-located schools are district schools, some are charters and there are often significant inequalities between traditional public schools and charter schools housed in the same building. Often, public schools are on waiting lists for technology upgrades, and thus aren't able to use smartboards and other forms of technology, while charter schools are often better equipped and maintained by both the DOE and outside sources. CSA members have also noted that while state funding for afterschool programs has vanished, charter schools housed in the same building as public schools often have fully funded afterschool programs to which public school students are denied access. Even when it comes to removing toxic PCB's from public schools, co-located charter schools have been given preferential treatment. Early this year a charter school that shared space with a public school was able to have all traces of PCB lights removed from the school over the summer months while the public school was told to continue waiting. Such inequalities ought not exist in public institutions.

The DOE needs to work with all stakeholders prior to implementing co-locations. Currently, when the DOE decides to introduce new schools to an existing building, the DOE often seeks little community input. Although the DOE claims there is a process by which co-locations are

decided upon in a cooperative fashion, many in the community feel that the DOE simply announces co-locations and then merely gives lip service to collaborative dialogue.

It is important to note that the PEP has become a “rubber stamp” that automatically endorses all policies espoused by the administration. This was as a result of the mayor’s heavy-handedness when he discharged PEP members who had independent views that differed from his. As a result, parents have unfortunately, been effectively removed from these important decisions that impact their communities.

### **Superintendents**

Above and beyond poor decisions on school closures and co-locations, is the issue of community superintendents. Without superintendents, budgetary and instructional decisions, as well as those about sound use of space, are unlikely to become the norm. Under the current administration, superintendents’ roles are little more than ceremonial. Until superintendents recover the authority vested in them by state law, we will continue to have a fragmented school system in which it is almost impossible to figure out where responsibility and accountability reside. When school leaders are in a bind, they need one consistent source of guidance and not a potpourri of cluster leaders, network leaders and other DOE functionaries. The law that allowed for mayoral control was never intended to strip authority from local superintendents.

### **Conclusion**

CSA applauds the Council’s Education Committee for understanding the importance of public input on these important issues and by inviting our testimony at today’s oversight hearing. We hope that collectively we can continue to work to make sure the mistakes of the past are not repeated. We are grateful for the opportunity to speak today, and would be pleased to provide whatever additional information you may require.

Respectfully submitted,

Ernest Logan, President, CSA



## CSA Supports City Council Resolutions 1263, 1395-A and 1906

### **Res. No. 1263**

The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) strongly support the concept of community control and participation in local decisions that impact the school community. Therefore, we believe that because the local community has a great stake in these decisions, it makes sense that the Community Education Council approve a co-location or school closure/phase-out proposal before it may be presented for a vote by the Panel for Educational Policy. For too long, these decisions have eliminated the local community from the decision process and have effectively made parents feel that their voice is irrelevant and that others outside the community “know better.” As a result, if the CEC plays a greater role, this will positively impact parent involvement by re-energizing parents to be active participants in the important decisions that critically impact their neighborhood.

### **Proposed Res. No. 1395-A**

The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) strongly agree that the Department of Education should institute a moratorium on school closings and forced “co-locations” in existing schools for a period of at least one year, effective July 1, 2013, in order to study the impact of these policies on all New York City communities, and in particular whether such policies are having a disparate impact on low-income communities, communities of color, disabled students and homeless students.

For too long, the DOE has been making shortsighted decisions, without studying the vast impact of its decisions on local communities. It is now time to fully evaluate the best course of action, without victimizing host schools that have worked to accommodate the DOE’s goals of creating more schools, by not taking a look at how this policy has negatively impacted so many local school communities. Given the fact that these schools are led by our members, we have heard countless complaints about the process and how it has undermined the host school and had resulted in creating unnecessary tension as a result.

An impact study should have been done BEFORE such decisions were made in the past. If this impact study is done now, with a moratorium for at least one year, the next Mayor/Chancellor will have sufficient data to make responsible and responsive decisions that don’t create “winners” and “losers.”

### **Res. No. 1906**

The Council of School Supervisors and Administrators (CSA) strongly support this resolution calling upon the NYC Department of Education to amend Chancellor’s Regulation A-190, in order to specify procedures for notifying parents of any proposed school closure or significant change in school utilization. Again, for too long, parents have felt left out of the process and virtually ignored. It is imperative to treat parents with respect by giving them ample notice before their child’s school is closed or significantly changed in terms of utilization. We are confident that the next administration recognizes parents’ feelings and will be more responsive to local communities that have felt left behind for the past 12 years.

## Op-Ed: Let Districts Decide on School Co-locations

*Jim Devor, president of Brooklyn's Community Education Council for District 15 (CEC-15) testified before the New York City Council Education Committee hearing on co-locations held on April 19 and explained why CECs should be given the authority to approve or disapprove co-location proposals in their respective districts. Here is his testimony:*

I don't want to burden this hearing with yet another generic diatribe in opposition to all co-locations. In fact, my CEC has a record of support for specific co-location proposals in our district.

Unlike some, we at CEC-15 have not been unalterably opposed to charter schools. Likewise we are very engaged with space utilization matters in our district. Hence, as described in an article by Mark Morales in [the April 18 edition of the] Daily News, we have repeatedly called out the DOE and the School Construction Authority over their continuing neglect of overcrowded, impoverished areas like Sunset Park.

At the same time, we have also been acutely sensitive to underutilization issues in the northern part of our district — even to the point of being open to co-locations in general and temporary co-locations of charter schools in particular. Thus, most of us conditionally supported the co-location of a new high school in a school building in Park Slope. Likewise, we offered no opposition to the temporary co-location of a secondary charter school in another school building in Red Hook. Still further, we actively lobbied for the temporary housing of yet another secondary charter school in public school space. To our astonishment, that offer was summarily rejected by the DOE (at a cost of tremendous community upheaval throughout our district). It was only much later that we discovered, as outlined below, the true reason for the rejection of our proposal.

It is in that context then, that I want to spend my remaining time discussing an example of a truly terrible co-location that has befallen our district and the unfettered mendacity upon which it was successfully implemented.

Our Council was cognizant of the potential availability of “underutilized” space in a Cobble Hill school building currently housing two secondary schools and a District 75 program. As such, we were certainly open to proposals for co-locations of other programs in the facility. Those possibilities included the “incubation” of a locally created and supported and newly approved charter middle school (Brooklyn Urban Garden School — aka “BUGS”) or better yet, an early childhood center proposed by former Deputy Chancellor Carmen Farina.

Instead of listening to our suggestions and taking them seriously, we learned of the DOE's plan to co-locate a Success Academy in our district from a New York Times blog. Further, we have heard constantly shifting (and often contradictory) rationales for that co-location.

First, the DOE claimed, it was going to co-locate the charter school in Cobble Hill in order to reduce the overcrowding of two of our nearby elementary schools. We responded that there was no interest in such a “choice” for parents zoned for those schools and more importantly, to actively recruit such children to the detriment of ELLs (English language learners) and those zoned to attend “failing schools,” violated the terms of the charter that Success Academy had obtained from the state.

After the co-location was approved by those “profiles in courage,” the PEP (Panel for Educational Policy), we adduced further evidence that the imminent severe “overcrowding” of the nearby schools was a myth. For instance, the DOE has just announced that the local Cobble Hill elementary school (P.S. 29) has a kindergarten wait list of three and the Carroll Gardens school (P.S. 58) has a wait list of four. As such, their combined wait list of seven was actually less than that of our Gowanus elementary school (P.S. 32), which the DOE claimed was so “underutilized” that it (unsuccessfully) proposed a charter school co-location there just the year before!

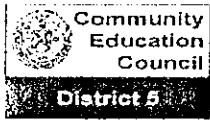
The DOE then argued, the co-location was actually intended to focus on the overcrowding in Sunset Park many miles away. How that Charter School was going to entice a predominantly immigrant population to freely bus their little ones, however, was never actually addressed. Furthermore, I have yet to see any advertising brochures put out by Success Academy in District 15 printed in Spanish or Chinese — even though those languages predominate in Sunset Park.

Then, those other courageous characters, the SUNY Board of Trustees, thoughtfully responded to our concerns on behalf of children zoned to attend failing schools and ELLs. Accordingly, they summarily approved lifting of those “at-risk” factors in all Success Academy lottery admissions preferences and replacing them with a temporary, phony ELL “set aside” which, in the case of District 15, was actually lower than the K-8 ELL population!

As this sad history shows, the real message unambiguously sent by the DOE was that powerful people get what they want no matter how deep, broad or reasoned a community’s opposition might be. That course of conduct must be contained. Therefore, both for that reason and because our CEC has a record of supporting co-locations — when they are appropriate — we enthusiastically back the bill introduced by Assembly Member Wright which grants CECs the authority to approve or disapprove co-location proposals in their respective districts.

Published:

Apr. 27, 2012



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Members

Ardis Alim-Carlos  
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Ronnie Goss  
Hope Scott  
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Borough Appointee

Sonja Jones  
Deborah Yates

Student Member

Vacant

Administrative Assistant

Lisa Kinsey

**Testimony Delivered at the City Council Education Committee Public Hearing on (1) Department of Education's Significant School Changes: Closures, Reconfigurations and Community Notifications; and (2) Res. No. 1263, Proposed Res. No. 1395-A and Res. No. 1906 on Wednesday, October 2, 2013 by Community Education Council 5 President Sonja Jones**

Community School District 5 families have been overwrought by the New York City Department of Education's policy on Significant School Changes and our schools, parents and children have suffered tremendously. No longer can we allow a policy to continue to destroy and privatize our educational system. The destruction must end now, with the hopes of a new administration to implement and infuse effective change.

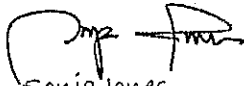
District public schools are the nucleus of our communities; however, the current policy relating to phase-out, grade reconfiguration, re-siting and/or co-location within existing public school facilities is proven to be destructive in nature and resulted in embittered conflicts between parents in our respective communities. This policy further exacerbates increases in class size as schools are faced with the loss of critical cluster and/or specialty space, and in some instances students with disabilities are forced to receive mandated services in hallways, or even more insultingly, in closets.

An end must come to the current implementation of a policy that does not value and is irrespective of the views and input of parents, students, teachers, and members of the community at large. An end must come to the policy by which divisive co-locations severely undermine the quality of education our district public school students receive; thereby creating "separate and unequal" environments within their own schools and buildings.

Community Education Council 5 (CEC 5) reiterates our numerous demands that the New York State legislature amend the school governance laws so that all proposals to close, phase, truncate or co-locate New York City district public schools must be approved by the district Community Education Council in which the school resides prior to it being presented for a vote by the Panel for Educational Policy (Res. No. 1263).

We reiterate our call upon the New York City Department of Education to institute a moratorium on school closings and forced co-locations in existing schools pending a study to determine the impact of these policies on our community, and in particular whether such policies are having a disparate impact on low-income communities, communities of color, disabled students and homeless students. (Proposed Res. No. 1395-A)

Finally, we stand in unity with the City Council and demand that the New York City Department of Education amend their current policy in order to ensure that parents affected by proposed school closures or significant change in school utilization be notified in a more meaning and effective manner. (Res. No. 1906)



Sonja Jones

President  
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Distinguished Committee Members,

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak. My name is Arthur Samuels, and I am the Executive Director of MESA Charter High School, a new charter high school that opened in Bushwick this year. We are one of the very few stand-alone charter high schools in New York City. There are over 180 charter schools here, but only 16 of them are high schools, and in fact MESA is the only independent, 9-12 charter high school to open in New York City this year. We opened on August 19, with 132 9<sup>th</sup> graders. 90% of our students receive free-or-reduced lunch, 15% of them are diagnosed with learning disabilities, and 25% are English Language Learners, all numbers higher than the district average.

While we have only been open for six weeks, we can claim some modest success so far. Our average daily attendance has been 96%, significantly higher than the 80% that most of the other high schools in District 32 average. More significantly, our punctuality rate has been 95%—we only have 3-4 late students per day, and they generally arrive no more than 5 minutes late. Our kids want to be at MESA. We have a hands-on STEM class and a four-year College Bound program. We are co-located, but have a collaborative relationship with the other two schools in our building, and we generally have the support of the community—the CEC President's son is a freshman at MESA.

So here we are, an independent school collaborating with the community, providing a rigorous college prep education in a community where the high school graduation rate is 56%. But if the resolutions being considered today were adopted as binding law, we never would have come into existence.

We are not a charter network with multiple schools, nor do we have aspirations to become one. Our board of trustees is focused on

governance and educational excellence, not fundraising. We simply do not have the capacity to pay for private space. We have been praised by our Committee on Special Education for constructing individualized programs responsive to our students' needs, including a literacy program for our students who read at a first grade level, and bilingual literacy program for our ELLs who struggle with reading in both English and Spanish. If we had to pay for faculties, both of these would disappear. The three weeks of additional school that helped develop our culture—the one that gets 96% of our students to school on time every day—would also vanish.

I understand the challenges of colocation—my students live them every day. But the administrators of our building have been able to work together, and my students and the Bushwick community as a whole is indisputably better off for having MESA present. Small, independent, community-minded charters don't get the same press as the bigger networks, but we will be the ones most impacted by changes in space utilization. As you consider these resolutions, I ask you to think of MESA as well.

Arthur Samuels  
Executive Director  
MESA Charter High School



**Testimony of Jaelyn Leffel, NYC Collaborates**  
*October 2, 2013*

Distinguished Committee Members:

I represent NYC Collaborates, an initiative that creates opportunities for educators to join together to share ideas and inspiration as we work together to improve public education for all New York City students. NYC Collaborates is a program born out of New York City's District-Charter Compact. The Compact is a national initiative, spearheaded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to highlight new ways that traditional public schools and public charter schools are working together to provide high-quality education for all students.

Last year alone over 500 educators from across NYC attended one of our School Study Tours, policy discussions and best practice workshops. Our District-Charter Collaboration Council, comprised of 20 educators from large district schools, small high schools, charter schools, specialized schools, charter management organizations, and networks, comes together regularly to clear up misinformation and talk about the many different topics that affect all public educators, regardless of school structure.

Of course, co-location was at the top of that list as 60% of our public schools in New York City are co-located. As at least one of these resolutions would affect co-located schools and the potential for new schools to be co-located, I would like to share with you the side of co-location that you do not hear about in the media: the positive work that happen every day, when collaboration and good-will are prioritized for the benefit of the students.

Our Council members understand that sharing a building is a "fact of life" when educating students in the largest district in the country. In fact, many of our Council members and principals citywide have used co-location to their advantage. They have chosen to work together and learn from one another; rather than tear each other down.



Here are some examples I know of first-hand:

- More than 200 students, teachers, administrators, families, friends and volunteers worked together to build a shared playground on the campus in Brooklyn that houses La Cima Elementary Charter School, M.S. 267 Math, Science and Technology and Bedford-Stuyvesant Collegiate Charter School. They turned a desolate blacktop behind the school building into a bright, new playground for all three schools to share. Now over 900 students in Bedford-Stuyvesant have a safe, fun place to play.
- At P.S. 55 in the Bronx, Principal Luis Torres had been working to create a new healthcare facility for his students for over 3 years. With a new charter school moving in, he saw an opportunity to work together to gain more resources. With the help of the facilities matching funds his school received, Principal Torres was able to not only finish his healthcare facility but he was also able to purchase new smart boards and put in a computer lab for his school. He then decided to offer the health care services to the new school. Besides these capital improvements, the principals and teachers have also begun to work together, touring each other's classrooms and sharing professional development opportunities.
- On the John F. Kennedy Campus in the Bronx, where two charters and six district schools share a campus, they have chosen to use co-location to their advantage, not disadvantage. Last year they worked together to renovate their campus's library and create a media center. This year they are all planning to chip in to hire a campus librarian who will work for all the schools on the campus. They have also worked together to fund the PSAL sports programs that both the charter and district schools students participate in. And if that wasn't enough they also continue to jointly plan events such as a campus-wide open house and student recruitment fair for the families in District 10. When principals come together and support each other, all of the students and families benefit.

A district principal on the Collaboration Council said it best; "While other schools are closing their doors to co-locating, I recognized the potential for collaboration and shared learning. We know that the other school's doors are always open to us and the same holds true for our school. I'm looking forward to a year full of sharing best practices and resources to the benefit of all of our students."

On behalf of the many educators who have pledged through NYC Collaborates - or simply through their daily positive interactions with their colleagues - to prioritize collaboration and their students, I encourage you to focus on creating policies that support and empower school leaders as they strive to make their co-locations work, rather than creating more roadblocks and perpetuating the negative stereotypes and rhetoric.

Thank you

Testimony for the Public Hearing against school closings and co-location

October 2, 2013

To: Councilmember Jackson and the City Council's Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for this important hearing. My name is **Mary Escalante** and I am a parent of a 7<sup>th</sup> grader, **Carla Escalante** at **M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering -- a public school in Harlem**. A highly diverse culturally and economically school with a big majority of Latino and African American students from above 96th Street in Manhattan. **Columbia Secondary School** is currently **co-located** in one building with **KippSTAR** charter school and **PS125**, as well as the superintendent's offices on a floor designated for community meetings. Seven years ago, the **DOE promised the new CSS its own building**. Instead, and without any long-term plan, the DOE began warehousing our kids at PS125 on the Ralph Bunch "campus," later, the DOE added the KippSTAR charter school to another part of the building. CSS has reached full capacity this 2013-14 school year; the DOE's original short-term plan can't contain us. Co-location has pitted our school communities against each other, forcing us all to duke out space and other resources. Even with the best relationships between co-located schools, it's still "Survivor meets NYC Education" – and in tandem with DOE neglect – all our kids lose. Common space negotiating (cafeteria, bathrooms, library and auditorium usage) with little to no support from the DOE, has been time consuming and unsuccessful overall. As a result, every kid is affected every day by co-location-related space issues. **In terms of bathroom usage: only 2 stalls per 200 kids** I hear stories from my child and classmates that often, they end up "holding it in" all day as there are not enough, adequate and functional bathrooms available (**often there's no toilette paper and this greatly affects the female student population and their particular physiological needs**

**once a month). About Gym:** no appropriate changing rooms are available. **In terms of cafeteria:** Our one, outdated cafeteria fits **149 little kids**, in a “campus” that serves well over **1000 children K-12**. Many of our kids end up with not enough time to eat or they don’t eat at all due to the little time left for this important part of the school day having to eat in a rush at odd times designated for lunch in order to accommodate all three schools in two small cafeterias.

**Regarding lockers:** only **200 lockers for 700+ MS and HS students -- 3+ kids per locker**. The DOE's suggestion is for our kids to use lockers located in the basement, an area shared by elementary school students.

**There’s no working PA system** to support our school, despite the DOE’s insistence that we already have one. **Not only is this illegal, it’s potentially life-threatening.**

Some of the **DOE suggestions** to all of our school needs are like this:

***"Accept fewer students and you won't have a space problem."***

DOE reps claim that the school is entitle to one construction project a year (but nothing has been done at CSS in recent years).

**CSS, one of the best schools in the city** (with numbers to back it up), **is the lowest funded public school in D-5. With only 87% funding,**

I call on the Board to end, and reverse the practice of co-location NOW in order to provide relief for tens of thousands of students and educators across New York City. Furthermore, I urge the City Council to help ensure that each and every school in the city has the basics that students need to focus on learning.

An end to co-location means another step toward sanity for our school system – and enables all different kinds of schools to coexist peacefully – within our city.

**NYC is the greatest city in the world so it should be its school system!!!** That can only happen if we all work hard and make it happen together. Our children are doing their best under these limited conditions but this cannot continue any longer. We need you to do your part.

Thank you.

Mary Escalante (7<sup>th</sup> grade parent)



Working to give kids the education they deserve

# Students**First**NY

**Tenicka Boyd, Director of Organizing, StudentsFirstNY  
Testimony before the City Council Committee on Education  
October 2, 2013**

Thank you Chairman Jackson. I'm Tenicka Boyd, StudentsFirstNY Organizing Director.

Informed both by my organizing work talking with hundreds of thousands of parents and personal experience as a New York City public school parent, I wanted to share my views on the policies at the heart of our discussion – namely providing parents with high quality charter school options and replacing failing schools with better options.

My concern is that the efforts contemplated by the Committee would undermine the progress our City's schools have been making over the past decade.

The systematic effort to close the City's giant failing high schools and replace them with new, smaller high schools has arguably done more to improve education outcomes for more kids in New York City over the past decade than any other policy.

In 2006, all phasing-out high schools had a combined graduation rate of 38%. In 2011, all new high schools had nearly doubled that combined graduation rate to 70%. As the *Daily News* recently editorialized, "to halt closures is to halt one of the most effective tools of raising student achievement."

Similarly, charter schools have delivered for our kids. A recent study concluded that, "On average, students in New York City charter schools learned significantly more than their virtual counterparts in reading and mathematics." Why would you deny parents this powerful choice? Why would you deny black and brown students a chance at this quality education?

I'm the mother of a second grader attending a high-performing city district school. She is fortunate. But what about the students whose parents can't afford to pay our rent? Are they doomed to the whims of geography? There is something horribly wrong with that.

As we all talk about having our kids career- and college-ready, there are schools in Brownsville, East New York, and Bushwick where only 4% of Black and Latino students are proficient in reading. Tolerating persistently failing schools and

denying parents high quality school choice won't help a single one of these kids read. Instead, it significantly undermines the role of parents and the educational outcomes for black and brown students across this city.

These resolutions play into the divisiveness that is far too prevalent in this debate. Delay is not a solution. Stall tactics are not what our kids desperately need. The Committee could really put students first by adopting resolutions asserting that we will never accept persistently failing schools and demanding that we provide all kids regardless of their race, income or neighborhood access to a quality school.

As parents, we all, regardless of our zip code, skin color, or earning potential, want to choose what is best for our own children. For far too long we have accepted and even sanctioned academic failure and in doing so we have failed those parents. They and their kids deserve better.

Thank you.



**Nathalie Elivert, Director of Educator Outreach, StudentsFirstNY  
Testimony before the City Council Committee on Education  
October 2, 2013**

Thank you Chairman Jackson and thank you to the Committee for giving me a chance to speak today. My name is Nathalie Elivert and I am the Director of Educator Outreach for StudentsFirstNY.

As a former New York City traditional public school teacher who was in the classroom up until last year, I have experienced first hand both school closure and co-location. And I can say that these resolutions unfortunately send an ambiguous message to parents and students; particularly those in underserved communities.

I see a quality public education as a critical component to a fair and just society. I think we can all agree on that. Where our views may diverge is in the how.

I do not believe that we can tolerate or ignore the level of dysfunction that I witnessed first hand at a failing school. To me, these instances do call for aggressive and immediate intervention. Delay is not an option.

Replacing a failing school is by no means easy and can cause confusion in the affected community. However, conditions exist that warrant proposals to phase out schools. In the time between a proposal to phase out a failing school and the decision to close a school, there are opportunities to make needed changes. If communities do not make progress in their efforts to address students' needs in that time, the only alternative should not be to force kids into what we know is a failing environment. That is something I cannot abide.

In 2012 I spent time in a school that was phasing out. The experience was unexpected but in some ways was a blessing in disguise – giving me a renewed appreciation for and faith in what is possible when educators, parents and students are all invested in making things work.

For four months in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy my school building was unusable. Our students and staff were split between two different schools in two

different districts. School administrators had the challenging task of creating programs and schedules under these incredibly difficult circumstances. Students and parents saw their routines completely upended. Educators faced massive challenges as well but everyone did their part; demonstrating a level of resilience that none of us was sure was in us. Granted, all we did was follow through on our commitment – make sure that we show up and that our students learn because we are invested in their greater good.

Unfortunately I was also forced to confront another, more disturbing side of our school system. It didn't take long for me to see why the school with which we were temporarily co-located had been identified for closure. I saw unmotivated kids, ignored by administrators and educators, left to roam the halls aimlessly. I saw violent incidents go unaddressed because neither the principal nor anyone with appropriate youth development training was available to diffuse the situation or work with the students afterwards.

It was clear that these students were being failed. And any thoughtful adult who observed the situation would agree. I know how difficult it is to acknowledge and accept when something is not working. But allowing it to continue and not replacing it with something better would be a travesty. That is exactly what would happen if we do not make the difficult but right call on this occasion.

Thank you.



Testimony for the Public Hearing against school closings and co-location

October 2, 2013

To Councilmember Jackson and the City Councils Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for this important hearing.

My name is Alison Loeb and I am a parent of an 11th grader at M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering -- a public school in Harlem. The school is highly diverse culturally and economically, with a majority of Latino and African American students. Most of us live above 96th Street in Manhattan.

Columbia Secondary School is currently co-located in one building with KippSTAR charter school and PS125, as well as the superintendent's offices and a floor designated for community meetings

Seven years ago, the DOE promised the new CSS its own building. Instead, and without any long-term plan, the DOE began warehousing our kids at PS125 on the Ralph Bunch "campus," where the elementary school there understandably saw us only as threats, interlopers. Before we reached full capacity (at the time, we still had five grades, or 500 more students, to go), the DOE added the KippSTAR charter school to another part of the building.

Now that we've reached capacity, the DOE's original short-term plan can't contain us. Co-location has pitted our school communities against each other, forcing us all to duke out space and other resources. Even with the best relationships between co-located schools, it's still Survivor meets NYC Education -- and in tandem with DOE neglect, all our kids lose.

Our administration has to spend valuable time negotiating enough cafeteria space, bathrooms, and auditorium usage with little to no support from the DOE -- time that should be freed in order to be able to focus on our kids' educations.

As a result, our kids are affected every day by co-location-related space issues. Imagine not being able to eat because of inadequate cafeteria facilities, or having to "hold it in" all day because there are two bathroom stalls per 200 kids. That's what life is like for many of our kids at CSS. Our community has been dealt a triple-whammy by the DOE: forced co-location, having to negotiate all shared spaces, and unfulfilled promises that the DOE will alleviate an appalling situation in a timely way.

There are currently only 200 lockers for 700+ MS and HS students -- 3+ kids per locker. The DOE's suggestion is for our kids use lockers located in the basement, an area shared by elementary school students.

Bathrooms the DOE promised still haven't materialized. The 5th floor has only 2 toilets

per 200+ students. Often the toilets don't flush. Most of our kids avoid using the bathroom at all.

There's no working PA system to support our school, despite the DOE's insistence that we already have one. Not only is this illegal, it's potentially life-threatening.

Our one, outdated cafeteria fits 149 little kids, in a campus that serves well over 1000 children K-12. Many of our kids choose to not eat at all.

There's no place for our kids to change for gym. Illegal, I believe. There are not enough classrooms for high school.

Contrary to all rational thought, DOE reps insist there's plenty of square footage. At a recent parent meeting, however, a DOE representative asked: "You want bathrooms or classrooms or a cafeteria?" And, "We gave you 200 lockers [for 700 students], now you want more?" Another rep stated (about a 700-student combined middle- and high school, in a neighborhood clamoring for more challenging STEM schools like ours), "Accept fewer students and you won't have a space problem."

Despite all the work we need done to get the school building up to speed, a DOE rep says we're entitled to only one construction project a year, which will only happen on the DOE's timetable. But no significant work's been done for years, and now, because continued lack of DOE oversight, our kids have to wait at least one more year for decent bathrooms.

CSS, one of the best schools in the city (with numbers to back it up), is also the lowest funded public school in D-5. With only 87% funding, and constant negotiations for space and scarce resources, it's a strong testament to our community that we're not only still standing, we're thriving -- thanks to our teachers and administration constantly pushing that rock uphill. Imagine what we could do for our kids if space and co-location were no longer issues.

I call on the Board to end, and reverse, the practice of co-location NOW in order to provide relief for tens of thousands of students and educators across New York City. Furthermore, I urge the City Council to help ensure that each and every school in the city has the basics students need so they can focus on learning.

An end to co-location means another step toward sanity for our school system and enables all different kinds of schools to coexist peacefully within our city.

Thank you.

Alison Loeb  
Parent, Columbia Secondary School (M362)  
730 Ft. Washington Avenue  
NYC 10040

# FOR THE RECORD

October 2, 2013

To Councilmember Jackson and the City Council's Education Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony at this hearing about school closings and co-location. My name is Amy Gillman and I am a parent of a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering, a public school in Harlem. We were attracted to CSS because of its highly economically and culturally diverse student population, high quality STEM curriculum, excellent academic performance, and 7-year middle school/high school combination. As one of the vast majority of families from the school community who live above 96<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan, we found no other school available to my child that could offer the same.

When my daughter started at Columbia Secondary School last year we learned that it is co-located in a single school building with a KippSTAR charter school and PS 125, and also houses the district superintendent's offices and a floor for community meetings. I also learned that when CSS was moved into this building it was supposed to be a temporary move that could accommodate our growing school, which was adding a grade each year, until we had an eighth grade. This was supposed to be enough time to build our own building that was promised by the Department of Education (DOE). Now we have reached our full capacity – serving students from 6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, with 184 more children than the DOE thought could originally fit in the space temporarily assigned to our school.

Whether or not CSS is ever provided with its own building, we and the other schools at 425 W. 123<sup>rd</sup> Street deserve a school environment that accommodates the needs of our students, teachers, administration and parents. We don't have that. Instead, we are forced to constantly negotiate with two other schools, spending substantial time and energy to try to fairly allocate insufficient and sometimes inappropriate space and resources across three sets of students spanning grades from elementary through high school. Everyone loses under this scenario, and most important, our children suffer from a poor learning environment and too much time and attention taken up by constantly trying to address our space constraints.

In the spring of 2013 representatives from the DOE's Office of Space Planning (OSP) attended a meeting to hear CSS parents' concerns about the inadequacy of our space. At that meeting, which was packed with parents, there were promises made and what I thought at the time were good faith intentions expressed by the DOE. But our pressing needs, many of which involve the safety of our children, have gone unmet:

- **BATHROOMS:** We were given a guarantee that evening that the bathrooms that so desperately need renovation to safely accommodate our growing student body would be newly renovated and expanded when the students returned to school in September. This did not happen and I understand that this promised project will be delayed for at least a year. The situation remains unmanageable, with only two bathroom stalls for every 200 students on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor. My daughter told me that she is afraid to go into the girl's bathroom on that floor because it is so cramped that you can't open the entry door and the door to the nearest stall at the same time.

- **PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM:** We were assured that the DOE believes that every school should have a working Public Address system. But our building's system is operated by the main office of PS 125. The DOE appears to believe that any functional Public Address system in a school building meets their requirements, but how can that be when CSS can't access it, and is left without an efficient way to reach all students and teachers in the case of emergency?
- **CAFETERIA:** We have a campus building that holds 1,200 students with lunchroom space for about 200. While the three principals have done an admirable job figuring out a schedule for sharing the limited space without having children eating lunch at 9:30 am, my daughter has a shortened lunch period all the way in the basement of the annex building where KIPP Star is located. Given the distance to the lunch room and the brief slots created to support numerous eating shifts, my daughter's lunch food returns home uneaten much of the time.
- **CLASSROOMS:** We are literally bursting at the seams for classroom space. The DOE has allocated classroom space to CSS based on the assumption that there will be three groups of students in each grade level. This is true for a middle school, but is not appropriate for a high school. We now have 4 full high school grades which require a more flexible model to allow for high school-level electives. We agreed to give up our library space to create two classrooms starting in the 2013-2014 year to help address the shortage, but no work has been done by the DOE to convert the space and our understanding is that the work could be delayed for a year or more.

In light of the issues I've highlighted above I was honestly shocked when I heard an official from the Office of Space Planning suggest that evening that if we want more space we should enroll fewer students. Parents at the meeting felt that we were being asked to choose among such basics as bathrooms, cafeteria space and classrooms.

Sharing space is not in and of itself a problem, and I believe that all three schools would agree that all students deserve a safe, appropriate and adequate physical plant to support their educational and safety needs. But when co-location is used as a stop-gap or cost-cutting strategy without appropriate planning and capital improvements, it does a tremendous disservice to all involved – offering cramped, inappropriate and unsafe spaces for students, teachers and staff; and draining substantial amounts of time from already busy school leaders who have to carry out well-intentioned but impossible negotiations that can only yield imperfect results for everyone involved.

I strongly urge the City Council to think carefully about the negative implications of co-locating schools and forcing principals, students and parents to compete for the basics that every school student in the city needs to support a quality educational experience.

Sincerely,

Amy Gillman, parent of M362-CSS 7<sup>th</sup> Grader  
900 W. 190<sup>th</sup> Street, Apt. 12G  
New York, NY 10040



October 2, 2013

**CB9M**

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**COMMUNITY BOARD #9, MANHATTAN**

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**Testimony Delivered at the City Council Education Committee Public Hearing on (1) Department of Education's Significant School Changes: Closures, Reconfigurations and Community Notifications; and (2) Res. No. 1263, Proposed Res. No. 1395-A and Res. No. 1906 on Wednesday, October 2, 2013 by Manhattan Community Board 9 Chairperson Reverend Georgiette Morgan-Thomas**

Manhattan Community Board 9 has been entrenched with cries from the community as it relates to the New York City Department of Education's policy on significant school changes. As a result, in April 2012 we adopted a resolution calling for New York City Chancellor of Education, the New York City Mayor, the New York State Commissioner of Education, and the Chancellor of the New York State Board of Regents to place an immediate moratorium on all school co-locations within our community. We called upon these agencies to review the manner in which the Department of Education implements the New York State requirements regarding phase-out, grade reconfiguration, re-siting or co-locations of schools in existing public school facilities.

The policy, as currently written and implemented by the New York City Department of Education is divisive in nature, and does nothing short of silencing the voices of those that have the greatest to contribute and the most to lose – the children and parents served by our educational system. It has directly negatively affected the tone, temperament and environment of our school system. Our class sizes have increased dramatically in recent years, and the Blue Book often underestimates the extent of overcrowding in New York City public schools. Multiple schools sharing a building makes necessary coordinating and scheduling of shared spaces and starting and ending time of school days and is highly challenging and time consuming for the administrators, teachers and students.

Far too many co-locations throughout the city have resulted in bitter battles between parents, as well as further increases in class size, the loss of critical cluster and/or specialty spaces, and students with disabilities receiving their mandated services in hallways or in closets. Additionally, the challenges of sharing a building are often exacerbated when one school has more resources than the other.

Community Board 9 unequivocally opposes the proposed co-locations and any future charter schools that do not intend to obtain its own building outside existing overcrowded public school infrastructures.

Manhattan Community Board Nine implores the New York State legislature to amend the State Education Law, in relation to mayoral control of the New York City public school system, by requiring that the respective Community Education Council approve a co-location or school closure/phase-out proposal before it may be presented for a vote by the Panel for Educational Policy (Res. No. 1263). In so doing, allowing for appropriate stakeholders to have a voice in the process that directly affect the communities in which they were elected and/or appointed to serve.

Today Community Board 9 reiterates our call and support the City Council in calling upon the New York City Department of Education to institute a moratorium on school closings and forced "co-locations" in existing schools for a period of at least one year in order to study the impact of these policies on all New York City communities, and in particular whether such policies are having a disparate impact on low-income communities, communities of color, disabled students and homeless students. (Proposed Res. No. 1395-A)

Finally, we stand firm in demanding that the New York City Department of Education amend their current policy in order to ensure that parents affected by proposed school closures or significant change in school utilization be notified in a more meaning and effective manner. (Res. No. 1906)

Sincerely,



Rev. Georgette Morgan-Thomas  
Chair

Testimony of Legal Services NYC

on

Oversight - DOE's Significant School Changes: Closures,  
Reconfigurations and Community Notification.

Presented before:

The New York City Council  
Committee on Education

Presented by:

Nelson Mar  
Senior Staff Attorney  
Education Law Specialist

October 2, 2013

## **Introduction**

Legal Services NYC is the largest non-profit provider of free civil legal services in New York City. We are dedicated to expanding the rights of low-income New Yorkers in areas such as housing, family, consumer, domestic violence, foreclosure, immigration, disability and education. With offices in all five boroughs, our work is designed to improve the lives of our diverse client populations through a holistic combination of individual legal advocacy and social work support, group action, policy work and community outreach.

Through our local offices, Legal Services NYC assists hundreds of families every year with disability and education matters. Over 80% of our student clients are children of color and/or immigrants, ranging in age from 3 to 21. Our advocates assist New York City school students and their families in a range of areas including disability accommodations, special education services, student discipline, transportation, school transfers, and academic intervention issues. We also mentor and partner with students in various law schools programs including the Suspension Representation Project. We train and assist community-based organizations, pro bono attorneys and elected officials regarding the education rights of parents and students. Lastly we participate in a number of coalitions including the Dignity in Schools Campaign that address systemic educational issues.

We thank the Council for holding this hearing and providing the public an opportunity to testify about the important issue of significant school changes in New York City Department of Education (DOE) public schools. LSNYC believes that education is the single most salient tool to uplift children and families from poverty. However for many of our clients, their ability to access this anti-poverty tool is hampered by significant school changes such as school closings or co-locations. These actions or the mere specter of them, impose serious disruptions to the school community. Therefore LSNYC supports the Council's efforts under the proposed Resolutions: No. 1262, No. 1906 and No. 1395-A, to provide greater accountability, public input and transparency into the process of significant school changes.

## **Greater Accountability and Input**

Since Mayor Bloomberg assumed mayoral control, the New York City public school system has closed over 100 public schools over the last 10 years. Many of those schools were located in the Bronx, the borough where I work. In fact, except for one of the large high schools in the Bronx, all have undergone significant school changes (either a closing or co-location) during this time. In our experience, the closure of a school generally causes significant disruptions to the school community.

Over the last fifteen years, I have worked with staff and parents at a number of schools in the Bronx who were attempting to stop the DOE from closing their school. Parents and staff consistently raised concerns about the process through which the DOE came to the decision to close their school. In one situation where the DOE proposed to close IS 166, the staff and parents noted that despite continued low academic scores, their school's scores were in fact improving from the scores of previous years. Parents and staff often felt disempowered by the current school closing and co-location process. Many voiced their concerns at community hearings and through their elected representatives on the Community Education Councils, but ultimately the significant school changes were approved by the Panel on Educational Policy despite



overwhelming opposition to these changes at times. Out of all of the school closings over the past ten years, I can only recall but one case where the DOE rescinded their proposal due to community opposition and that was at Alfred E. Smith High School.

The importance of greater parental input and accountability in the significant school change process cannot be understated and for these reasons LSNYC supports Resolutions 1263 and 1906. The DOE should have specific procedures for notifying affected parents and community members of any proposed school closure or significant change in school utilization. Direct mail, electronic mail and telephone calls are all inexpensive methods to ensure every parent affected by the proposed changes will be properly informed. Once the school community has information about the proposed changes, it should also have the ability to provide meaningful input to the process. Resolution 1263 would provide the school community a true voice in the decision making process.

Additionally, LSNYC supports Resolution 1395-a calling on the DOE to institute a one year moratorium on school closures and forced co-locations. For many of the reasons stated above, school closure and co-locations seriously disrupt the school environment creating additional unnecessary anxiety in a highly stressed environment.

Furthermore, the students most affected by significant school changes are students with disabilities. They are disproportionately affected by co-locations and school closures. Many students with disabilities need access to smaller class ratios and on-site related services. Co-locations severely diminish the available physical space for these programs and services. A majority of my clients come from school districts that have a disproportionately high number of students with disabilities. (See Table 1). These co-locations often lead to diminished capacity of the school campus to enroll students with disabilities, as some of the newly co-located schools do not offer any special education services at all, like most charter schools.

[Table 1\*]

School District	Total Student Population	With Disabilities	% With Disabilities
#5	6273	1714	27.32%
#7	8467	2360	27.87%
#8	14402	3832	26.61%
#9	17747	4084	23.01%
Total	46,889	11,990	25.57%

\*Information gathered from NYS Accountability Reports  
(<https://reportcards.nysed.gov/counties.php?year=2012>)

A moratorium, whether a year or longer, would provide a sensible moment to assess the results of the current approach to school closures and co-locations. Unlike in previous years,, there now exists sufficient data to review the impact of the current process and determine if there may be a more efficient approach to address underperforming and failing schools.

**Conclusion**

In the low income communities that Legal Services NYC serve, the school community would be better served with a meaningful process for significant school utilization decisions. Resolutions 1263, 1395-A and 1906 will provide greater parental accountability and input into this process and for those reasons LSNYC supports these resolutions.

Thank you.

# FOR THE RECORD

To Councilmember Jackson and the City Council's Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for this important hearing.

My name is Debbie Taylor-Kerman and my son Eli is in 9th grade at M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering -- a public school in Harlem. The school is highly diverse culturally and economically, with a majority Latino and African American. Most of us live above 96th Street in Manhattan.

Columbia Secondary School is currently co-located in one building with KippSTAR charter school and PS125, as well as the superintendent's offices and a floor designated for community meetings.

We have a very strong and committed parent body at CSS and I'm sure you've heard from many parents about the lack of space, funding and the many problems our kids have to face on a daily basis - and there are many.

My son came home yesterday at 3:30 absolutely ravenous. Because of scheduling difficulties with 3 schools sharing the same lunch room, he had waited 20 of his 25 minutes of lunch break on line to get lunch, and eventually had to give up to rush back to class. Anyone can clearly see that for a growing 14 year old, to go through a whole day of intense classes without eating is pretty absurd and wrong. He had a headache and could barely talk scavenging through our fridge when he got home.

Eli has been at CSS since the beginning of 7th Grade. Before that he attended one of the most elite private schools in NYC. Due to the recession, we had to leave and he was fortunate enough to have gotten into CSS. I have to tell you, that this school is an incredible gem. The level of commitment and standard of our teaching staff is incredible. I'm in awe of what they've been able to accomplish and I know that it could be so much more if the school was allowed to flourish with more adequate space and funding. I don't believe there is any school like this, where they achieve such high academic standards of excellence with a student body that is authentically diverse in every way. I can tell you in all honesty, that I love this school and community so much better than our last one. I implore you to take a close look at our situation and help build this unique, wonderful school into the amazing place that it deserves to be.

Below is a brief history of the school:

Seven years ago, the DOE promised the new CSS its own building. Instead, and without any long-term plan, the DOE began warehousing our kids at PS125 on the Ralph Bunch "campus," where the elementary school there understandably saw us only as threats, interlopers. Before we reached full capacity (at the time, we still had five grades -- 500 more students -- to go), the DOE added the KippSTAR charter school to another part of the building.

Now that we've reached capacity, the DOE's original short-term plan can't contain us. Co-location has pitted our school communities against each other, forcing us all to duke out space and other resources. Even with the best relationships between co-located schools, it's still "Survivor meets NYC Education" -- and in tandem with DOE neglect -- all our kids lose.

Our administration has to spend valuable time negotiating enough cafeteria space, bathrooms, and auditorium usage, with little to no support from the DOE -- time that should be freed in order to focus on our kids' educations.

As a result, our kids are affected every day by co-location-related space issues. Imagine not being able to eat because of inadequate cafeteria facilities, or having to "hold it in" all day because there are two bathroom stalls per 200 kids. That's what life is like for many of our kids at CSS. Our community has been

## CONCERN

dealt a triple-whammy by the DOE: forced co-location, having to negotiate all shared spaces, and unfulfilled promises that our City will alleviate an appalling situation in a timely way.

There are currently only 200 lockers for 700+ MS and HS students -- 3+ kids per locker. The DOE's suggestion is for our kids use lockers located in the basement, an area shared by elementary school students.

Bathrooms the DOE promised still haven't materialized. The 5th floor has only 2 toilets per 200+ students. Often the toilets don't flush. Most of our kids avoid using the bathroom at all.

There's no working PA system to support our school, despite the DOE's insistence that we already have one. Not only is this illegal, it's potentially life-threatening.

Our one, outdated cafeteria fits 149 little kids, in a "campus" that serves well over 1000 children K-12. Many of our kids choose to not eat at all.

There's no place for our kids to change for gym. There are not enough classrooms for high school. Illegal, I believe, on both counts.

Contrary to all rational thought, DOE reps insist there's plenty of square footage. At a recent parent meeting, however, a DOE representative asked: "You want bathrooms or classrooms or a cafeteria?." And, "We gave you 200 lockers [for 700 students], now you want more?" Another rep stated (in a 700-student combined middle- and high school, in a neighborhood clamoring for more challenging STEM schools like ours), "Accept fewer students and you won't have a space problem."

Despite all the work we need done to get the school building up to speed, a DOE rep says we're entitled to only one construction project a year, which will only happen on the DOE's timetable. No work's been done for years, and now, because continued lack of DOE oversight, our kids have to wait at least one more year for appropriate bathrooms.

CSS, one of the best schools in the city (with numbers to back it up), is the lowest funded public school in D-5. With only 87% funding, constant negotiations for space and scarce resources, it's a strong testament to our community that we're not only still standing, we're thriving -- thanks to our teachers and administration constantly pushing that rock uphill. Imagine what we could do for our kids if space and co-location were no longer issues.

I call on the Board to end, and reverse the practice of co-location NOW in order to provide relief for tens of thousands of students and educators across New York City. Furthermore, I urge the City Council to help ensure that each and every school in the city has the basics that students need to focus on learning.

An end to co-location means another step toward sanity for our school system -- and enables all different kinds of schools to coexist peacefully -- within our city.

Thank you for your attention,

Yours sincerely,

Debbie Taylor-Kerman

JOHN DEWEY ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
POSITION PAPER

Issue: Department of Education proposal to co-locate a new open-enrollment high school at  
John Dewey H.S. (K540, District 21, 50 Avenue X, Brooklyn)

1. **There is no legitimate basis for co-location: John Dewey High School is NOT underutilized**
  - a. The figures cited in the Department of Education's Educational Impact Statement (EIS) are inaccurate. Dewey is listed as having a current year enrollment of 1,630 when it is actually 1,928, approximately 80% of capacity (not the 68% represented by the EIS). Enrollment figures have been underreported by the Department for two years now, and no proposal should be based on what are essentially erroneous data.
  - b. The EIS analysis is also based on a stated capacity of 2,434 students, but the Department of Education intentionally *reduced* enrollment targets prior to this school year, effectively lowering the overall "capacity" of the school from its original numbers.
  
2. **Any "underutilization" is not the result of community choice but DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION/media actions.**
  - a. Students did not decline to apply to Dewey; they were not given a choice.
  - b. Dewey was previously slated for closure. Despite defeating that proposal on its merits, Dewey was excluded from the high school handbook. Neither students nor guidance counselors from the feeder schools knew John Dewey High School was an option.
  - c. At the time 8<sup>th</sup> grade applications were being made, the media had reported Dewey already defunct because of a Department of Education ruling.
  - d. Following Superstorm Sandy, the media had reported Dewey defunct because of storm damage.
  - e. The Department of Education previously reduced Dewey's enrollment targets, then reported the school unavailable for applicants, and now deems it underutilized using

inaccurate figures. This is simply not a valid basis for installing a separate school on the premises.

3. **If underutilization is actually the issue, then utilize, energize, fund, and advertise the school that is already in place instead of creating a new and separate one.**

- a. Co-location sidesteps the problem; it does not resolve it. Put effort into advocating for the school.
- b. If there are 100 students who have been projected/identified to attend some "new high school" at 50 Avenue X next year, enroll them in John Dewey High School.  
[Underutilization problem solved.]
- c. Placing an additional school in the same premises doubles all logistical, administrative, staffing, budgetary, security, and coordination needs. [Unnecessary overlap and expense.]
- d. Dewey is already underfunded because the Department of Education figures are erroneous. It received a budget for 1600+ when it serves 1900+. Co-location will only exacerbate the underfunding but allocating money away from John Dewey High School to a separate school on Dewey's own premises.
- e. Resources should be concentrated, not divided. Dispersal is not effective.

4. **Co-location inherently creates divisiveness.**

- a. Students in the school will be divided into us/them (for students) and ours/yours (for faculty).
- b. Faculty will be similarly split (rather than functioning as a team).
- c. Resources will be dispersed (rather than focused).
- d. There will be more than one standard of performance, more than one code of behavior, more than one model of organization, more than one operational practice, more than one ultimate authority, etc.

- e. The goal should be cohesion and unity, not division.

5. **Co-location undermines Dewey's ongoing revitalization efforts.**

- a. Dewey went from being slated for closure to earning a B grade. Ignoring that success (by sidestepping the school and interposing a new one on the premises) demonstrates the Department of Education's indifference to school improvement and student achievement.
- b. Dewey students, teachers, and alumni rallied to the defense and improvement of the school. Failing to reward those efforts – and instead dedicating resources to a *different* school on the *same* premises – destroys community spirit.
- c. Co-location sends this message to John Dewey High School from the Department of Education: We don't care what you want; we don't care what you've done; we don't care what you *can* do. We have our own agenda and we are taking your space and resources to achieve it.
- d. Dewey rejects that message. Dewey renews its declaration: Let Dewey be Dewey!
- e. Dewey renews the motto it has had from inception: "An adventure in education." Education! Not politics. Not re-organization. Not maneuvering pieces on a chess board. Let us focus on keeping Dewey – not Dewey and some other spontaneously proposed and ill-planned competitor school – in its rightful place as an educational institution.

6. **The co-location proposal is ill-timed, ill-conceived, and ill-planned.**

- a. **Ill-timed.** The proposal was made during the summer, when the people most affected by it (students, parents, teachers, community) were not in a position to evaluate it and respond appropriately.
- b. There seems to be a rush to judgment, with a decisive meeting to take place before a new City administration is elected. This is a matter for the *next* administration to resolve, as it involves the *next* school year and the years following it.
- c. The Department of Education has already invested time, effort and resources in sustaining and rehabilitating Dewey, and that investment is paying off. The school

should be allowed to maintain its momentum; it must be given time and resources to build on its documented achievements.

- d. This is not a matter to be decided based on what has happened at *other* schools in *other* communities. This is about Dewey: its physical plant, its current & future student populations, its faculty, its resources, and its future.
  - e. **Ill-conceived.** There is absolutely no purpose to putting one open-admission (non-specialty) school in the same building as another open-admission (non-specialty) school with separate administrations and division of resources.
  - f. If targeted populations or programs are actually the goal, Dewey already has the resources to accommodate those programs. It has many successful "Institutes" (Law, Science, Language, Health Occupations, etc.) that attract quality students with specific interests and career focuses. It has built-in Resource Centers that can be allocated for such programs.
  - g. **Ill-planned.** There is no school utilization plan in place.
  - h. The 105-115 students who are projected to attend the "new" school can be effectively incorporated into the existing school with much less planning, less oversight, less logistical maneuvering, and less trouble.
7. **Dewey already has "Quality Seats" to offer the proposed incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade class of the undesignated new school.**
- a. Dewey is not a failing school. It has both a history of excellence and an increasing trend of success and achievement.
  - b. It has an above-average graduation rate, and its alumni are accepted at schools such as Columbia, Barnard, Princeton, Yale, MIT, NYU and other prestigious academic institutions. Its college preparation rate is also above average for New York State and New York City.
  - c. It has college preparatory programs including Advanced Placement classes in a dozen subjects (English, American History, European History, World History, Art History, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Calculus, Computer Science, Statistics, and Spanish)



- d. It has professional development Institutes in Computer Science, Law, Finance, Health Occupations, Culinary Arts, Publications, Dance, Music & Art.
  - i. Dewey's Finance Academy has been recognized by the National Academy Foundation as a Top 100 school for Financial Planning professions.
  - ii. Its Health Occupations Students compete in city, state and national competitions and have won multiple New York State championships.
  - iii. Its Law Institute offers collaborative Saturday classes with NYU's School of Law.
  - iv. Its Space Science Academy partners with NASA and other organizations in promoting the study of astronomy, astrobiology, planetology, remote sensing, and other courses not typically found at the high school level.
  - v. Princeton University sponsors Dewey's Model Congress and invites Dewey's student Senators and Representatives to its annual debates for practical experience in the legislative process.
- e. John Dewey High School is recognized as a "Best High School" by *US News and World Report*, which called it a "Silver" high school ranked 127 in New York State and 1,401 in the nation. (<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/new-york/districts/new-york-city-public-schools/john-dewey-high-school-13461>)
- f. It is one of only three schools in the city which offers a Co-Op program where seniors gain real-world job experience while still in high school with employers such as Moody's Investors, Bank of New York, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Department of Environmental Protection and many others.
- g. Dewey offers bilingual education, including English as a Second Language, as well as Special Needs education for students overcoming disabilities.
- h. It has an experienced faculty, established curricula, wide-ranging electives, laboratories, and other facilities that cannot be matched by a newer, smaller school.

### Conclusion

There is nothing that a separate school can offer that cannot be better found at Dewey.

If the Department of Education wants quality education for NYC's students and increased utilization of the school building located at 50 Avenue X, it should foster the school that already exists there, showcasing its achievements and funding its success.

Co-location offers nothing better (and nothing even equal to) what is already on offer at John Dewey High School.

For more information about this Position Paper, please contact Bunji Fromartz by email at [info@johndeweyalumni.org](mailto:info@johndeweyalumni.org) or Elsie Chan by telephone at 718-522-3937.

For more information about John Dewey High School, its programs, and applications for enrollment, please contact the school at 718-373-6400.

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**TESTIMONY OF LOCAL 372 PRESIDENT SANTOS CRESPO, JR.,  
BEFORE THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION**

**HONORABLE ROBERT JACKSON  
CHAIRMAN**

**WEDNESDAY, October 2, 2013**

My name is Santos Crespo, Jr.; I am president of Local 372, District Council 37. Our union represents the nearly 25,000 non-teaching employees of the New York City public school system. Our members are the Parent Coordinators, School Aides, Crossing Guards, and Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (SAPIS) counselors.

Our members are the frontline between the Department of Education and the people and communities we serve. We are responsible for providing the safe, efficient and orderly environment for the proper education of New York City's 1.1 million students.

I am here in support of Resolutions No. 1263 and No. 1906 and proposed resolution No. 1395-A. If enacted these resolutions will be the first step toward restoring the community's voice to our schools.

Our City just went through a long primary election to choose the next Mayor. Based on the results of one of those races one message resonated with the voters: New York has become a "Tale of Two Cities".

And, nowhere is this tale being told more vividly than in our co-located charter and public schools.

People will come before this Council and speak about charter schools as if they are "a shining city on a hill." However, to quote the former Governor, Mario Cuomo, "there is another part to the shining city," the part where the "glitter doesn't show and there is despair."

As a policy, co-locations have exacerbated the great injustice that is inequality. We have co-located facilities where the students of the charter school walk around with the latest iPads while public school students in that same building are working from outdated textbooks and their teachers and parents are forced to dig into their own pockets to buy basic school supplies.

What message does that send to those public school children?

"You're not good enough?" "Better luck next time?"

Just as importantly, what does it say about us; that we would subject our children to this level of inequity? Co-location flies in the face of the whole idea of public school being an environment of equality and encouragement and the so-called "Fair Student Funding."

The resolutions which the Committee is considering are just the beginning of revolutionizing our schools by re-engaging parents and the community. The Bloomberg administration has used school closures and reconfigurations as a means toward shoving their ideology into our collective throats. These school closures and

reconfigurations have clearly been designed as a means for the Bloomberg Department of Education to break down the school unions.

Unfortunately, the sad legacy of Bloomberg's Department of Education is that it has silenced the parents of students and ignored the community. Under Bloomberg the DOE has taken an "us" versus "them" approach toward running our schools as opposed to the "we're all in this together" approach that our children so richly deserve.

We must repudiate the Bloomberg education policy for all of its failures including de-emphasizing the role of school support staff. Local 372 members ensure that children arrive to school safely, on time and are properly fed so that they are ready for our teachers and principals to educate them. They listen to our students and help them cope with the stresses at home so they are focused and able to learn. Local 372 members are the friendly voices that prevent school children from bullying each other and help those very children build the confidence they need to move forward.

My membership is made up of people from the community. We have a vested interest in seeing that our children succeed in the classroom and in life. Under the Bloomberg DOE our members have endured 12 years of layoffs with constant threats of future layoffs, attrition, and stagnant wages instead of embracing the important role that Local 372 members provide our schools. Unfortunately, the members of Local 372 can tell that tale of two cities first hand, we live it every day.

Our City is at a point in time where we simply do not have enough school aides, SAPIS workers, parent coordinators and other support staff to provide the level of service that our children deserve. We have been sounding the alarm for years and have been ignored.

We can no longer ignore the fact that the achievement gap Bloomberg promised to close is as wide as ever, our students are scoring poorly on standardized tests, drug abuse continues to pose a threat, and bullying is occurring at alarming rates.

For too long our members have been looked at as fodder for the budget ax. It's high time we are recognized as part of the solution. We know we can help turn the tide. As part of the community, who better understands what our children need to succeed.

It is no longer a matter of wanting to change things; we have no choice but to change them. Calling upon our State legislature to provide the community a greater voice in their schools is an important first step.

I want to thank all of the members of this Committee for convening this hearing and providing me an opportunity to testify before it.



**CORO NEW YORK LEADERSHIP CENTER**  
**BROOKLYN YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**Exchange Program Between Schools on Campus**

We recommend that schools create an opportunity for students who fit certain academic requirements and standards to participate in an exchange program with other schools on campus. We realize that sharing classes may impact the results of DOE accountability measures. However, offering a campus exchange program would help develop well rounded students while maximizing the resources and expertise each school brings to the campus.

**Shared Activities Between Schools on Campus**

We recommend that schools create shared extracurricular activities, programs, and events in which students from all schools on campus can participate. An overwhelming majority of students identified schools being able to open their activities to other schools on campus as the most valuable advantage to attending a school on a shared campus.

**Student Representation in Existing Campus Governance Structures**

We recommend that the DOE mandates student representation on the current campus governance structures. Upon our review of the current governance structures in place, which are the Building Council, Shared Space Committee, and the School Leadership Team, we found that there was no formal role for students. We believe that student voice is important and mandating student representation will provide a formal way for students to be involved in discussions around campus issues and be involved in campus-wide decisions.

**Campus Youth Council**

We recommend that schools create a Campus Youth Council. We found that some schools on campus had their own student councils, but none of the campuses had a youth council that brought together students from all schools on campus. The Council could be responsible for creating a yearly schedule of campus-wide events and students would have the opportunity to discuss issues that impact the entire campus.

**Regular Collection of Student Voice & Opinion**

We recommend that the collection of student voice and opinion continue to occur on a regular basis. While the information we've gathered through our project work is revealing and important, we realize the scope of our work. Our work only represents the voice of students from 7 campuses out of about 300 co-located campuses throughout the city. The opportunity to engage our peers as members on the Brooklyn Youth Advisory Council is one that should be offered to students throughout NYC.

In addition to the recommendations above, we'd like to make two recommendations from last year.

**Open Additional Entry/Exit Points on Campus**

We recommend that additional entry and exit points are opened at campuses. Students continue to face challenges associated with the current security measures that are implemented at co-located campuses. As students enter school every morning, they face delays and long lines at scanning, which ultimately affect timely arrival to their morning classes.

**Youth Court/Justice Board and Restorative Justice Process**

Lastly, we recommend that co-located campuses establish a Youth Justice Board or Youth Court that functions as part of the campus council that will handle incidents where students do not follow co-located campus policies and rules, such as travelling to a different floor. This provides a way for students to be accountable to their campus and participate in keeping their peers accountable to the campus community. Instead of receiving a summons for trespassing as students reported last year, students will face consequences decided by the Youth Court. This will:

- Prevent students from being put into unnecessary positions with the law because of summons
- Ensure that campus issues are addressed by and within the campus community

# FOR THE RECORD

October 2, 2013

To Councilmember Jackson and the City Council's Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify for this important hearing.

My name is Hannah Wolfe and I am a parent of an 8th grader, Pedro Lahoz Wolfe, at M362-CSS, the Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and Engineering -- a public school in Harlem. The school is highly diverse culturally and economically, with a majority Latino and African American. Most of us live above 96th Street in Manhattan.

Columbia Secondary School is currently co-located in one building with KippSTAR charter school and PS125, as well as the superintendent's offices and a floor designated for community meetings.

Seven years ago, the DOE promised the new CSS its own building. Instead, and without any long-term plan, the DOE began warehousing our kids at PS125 on the Ralph Bunch "campus," where the elementary school there understandably saw us only as threats, interlopers. Before we reached full capacity (at the time, we still had five grades -- 500 more students -- to go), the DOE added the KippSTAR charter school to another part of the building.

My son's father, Samuel Lahoz, toured and photographed CSS three months ago and witnessed what were inexcusable conditions for a NYC school in the 21st century. One power outlet per classroom (so there are extension cords running throughout). No closets or shelves in many classrooms (so there are stacks of boxes with supplies in classrooms).

Dry erase boards that no longer work. Broken projection screens. Outdated computers. An outdated library with elementary school books. A cafeteria with small tables for 5-8 year olds. Bathrooms with non-working sinks, toilets and other fixtures. No lockers or even a coat rack in the gym. Storage carts in the hallway because there is no other place for them. Conditions are CRAMPED and HAZARDOUS.

Our current mayor has more than doubled his personal wealth during his tenure in office to over 13 billion, while parents, children, and teachers are told there is "not enough money" to make schools even safe, let alone conducive to learning. The message children, parents, and teachers in NYC public schools get loud and clear is: you do not matter. Our children's future does not matter. If you do not have money to send your child to private school or live in a wealthy suburb, EVEN IF your child is able to do well on tests and get into a "magnet" school like CSS, they will suffer substandard, dehumanizing conditions and classrooms with too little space and too many children per teacher.

Co-location is a strategy that serves to pit schools, parents, neighbors against one another in a fight for "scarce" space. We are here united with our two co-located schools to send the message: we stand together with ALL parents, teacher, and children in NYC public schools to say: it is INEXCUSABLE and UNNECESSARY for our children to face these conditions, which, we well know, are even worse in many other schools.

Thank you;

Hannah Wolfe, PhD  
Director, Behavioral Health Research  
Spencer Cox Center for Health  
St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital Center  
Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychology Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons



**The New York City Charter School Center**

**David Golovner, Vice President for Policy & Advocacy**

**Testimony Presented to The New York City Council Education Committee**

**Oversight Hearing on New York City Department of Education's Significant School Changes:  
Closures, Reconfigurations and Community Notification including Resolutions 1263-2012, 1395-  
2012 and 1906-2013**

**Wednesday, October 2, 2013**

Good afternoon, Chairman Jackson and members of the New York City Council Committee on Education. My name is David Golovner and I am the Vice President for Policy & Advocacy at the New York City Charter School Center. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today.

The New York City Charter School Center is an independent<sup>1</sup> not-for-profit organization established in 2004 to help new charter schools get started, support existing schools, build community support, and train new leaders so that highly effective public charter schools can flourish.

We felt it was important to testify this afternoon about Department of Education (NYC DOE) facilities, as experience has taught the charter school community to be wary of proposals that, while not mentioning us by name, would result in tens of thousands of children being denied the education their parents have sought out and chosen.

While charters make up less than 1/12<sup>th</sup> of all colocations, ending those colocations, which is what the enactment of these resolutions by the NYS legislature would do, would cripple the movement that has benefited thousands of NYC school children and has the potential to help tens of thousands more. And, for what purpose? After all, most school leaders, from both district and charter schools, will tell you that once the microphones and cameras are turned off on the relatively few number of co-locations that are initially controversial, they simply make it work for the benefit of their students.

Of the over 50,000<sup>2</sup> children currently on charter school waiting lists, close to 18,000 of them are represented by members of this Education Committee; that is more than 2.5 times the number of students in charters in said districts.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to the by-laws of the NYC Charter School Center, the Chancellor of the Department of Education, Dennis Walcott, sits on the Center's board as does one other staff member of the Department. The board consists of nine seats and, as a result, the Department does not have formal or effective control.





While I don't think anyone would argue that the existing system cannot be improved (what system cannot after all), we believe the proposed resolutions are too flawed to merit your support. However well-meaning they may be, all three of these resolutions prioritize the parents of children who attend existing district schools over yet to be created schools including in some instances charter school students, children who are either not yet old enough to attend school or those who want a choice of district or charter schools. All NYC families deserve your consideration. Passage of these resolutions would send a clear message that some kids matter more than others. As to the particulars of each resolution we note the following:

#1263

- Resolution 1263 calls for granting CECs veto power over school utilization decisions: colocations and school closures/phase-outs. While the City has a great history of harnessing community input to inform the decision making process of elected officials, I can think of no other instance where the City abdicates its legislative authority in such a manner. For example, while community boards are asked for their input in land use decisions, the Council ultimately decides zoning resolutions.
- In addition, the resolution would affect both district and charter schools, yet only district school parents are allowed on CECs. In Harlem today, 40% of kindergartners are students of charter schools yet their families are barred by law from having representation on the CECs. Do we really want to emulate our Congress which has refused to give residents of Washington D.C. representation, because this is precisely by analogy what you are proposing?
- The CECs also suffer from a broken, opaque election process; they are poorly funded and largely dysfunctional. This summer, for example, the Charter Center was not able to access lists of committee vacancies despite repeated attempts. It was unclear when elections were held, who participated, and how members were actually elected. The DOE did not even have the list of CEC chairs as late as August.

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<sup>2</sup> Out of the 158 New York City charter schools currently enrolling students for 2012-13, 130 (82%) responded to the NYC Charter School Center's survey about their lottery application rates. Based on survey data, the Charter Center estimates that New York City charter schools received a total of 133,000 applications for 14,600 new seats. Discounting for families who apply to more than one school, this represents an estimated 67,500 applicants for 14,600 seats—creating a citywide charter school “waiting list” of an estimated 52,900.



- In 2011, four of the Borough Presidents and the Public Advocate commissioned a study of the CECs, in response to what they saw as "mismanagement and neglect around training, support and elections." In the 2011 CEC elections, only 5,036 votes were cast, and when the elections were re-held because of "questions over ballot flaws" the number of votes went down to 2,782 votes—"an appalling figure in a system with 1.1 million school children."<sup>3</sup>

Transferring the control that the state legislature granted to the Mayor to an unaccountable body is ill advised even under the best of circumstances. To do so without even first addressing existing structural problems would only invite further confusion and dysfunction.

#1395

- Resolution #1395 calls for a moratorium in order to allow us to study the impacts of school closures and "forced" colocations. Both have been studied thoroughly.
- Colocation allows small schools to co-exist in a city with notoriously limited real estate. Small schools, whether district or charter, are consistently producing strong results, and no wonder: principals get to know children's names and are able to give them personalized attention. This is of course not to say that large comprehensive high schools also have their place in our portfolio of schools.
- The non-partisan think tank MDRC<sup>4</sup> studied small high schools in NYC for several years, and recently reconfirmed earlier findings.<sup>5</sup> To quote: "[Small schools of choice] in New York City continue to markedly increase high school graduation rates for large numbers of disadvantaged students of color, even as graduation rates are rising at the schools with which SSCs are compared."
- As measured by student achievement and/or parental demand, there is no question that charter schools have benefited the low income communities this moratorium purports to help. Stanford University's 2013 CREDO study found that 63% of New York City charter schools show significantly larger growth in math, and 22% in reading, than students in district schools. There

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/67304084?access\\_key=key-v0k05m20bbz5udvbx8](http://www.scribd.com/fullscreen/67304084?access_key=key-v0k05m20bbz5udvbx8)

<sup>4</sup> Created in 1974 by the Ford Foundation and a group of federal agencies, MDRC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization dedicated to learning what works to improve programs and policies that affect the poor. MDRC is best known for mounting large-scale demonstrations and evaluations of real-world policies and programs targeted to low-income people.

<sup>5</sup> [http://mdrc.org/sites/default/files/sustained\\_progress\\_FR\\_0.pdf](http://mdrc.org/sites/default/files/sustained_progress_FR_0.pdf)



are charter schools in the Bronx with as many as 2776 and 1937 applicants for 35 and 80 seats, respectively<sup>6</sup>. Do you believe any of those parents want to see fewer new seats?

- Lastly, but just as importantly, the focus on colocated schools is inherently misguided. Sharing space is a daily reality that people everywhere live with, especially in NYC. The least crowded schools in NYC are district schools colocated with a charter school (80% utilization). The most crowded schools are single school buildings (101% utilization).

#### #1906

- Resolution 1906 calls for the DOE to notify affected parents of any proposed school closure or significant change in school utilization. Let's think for a minute what that would actually entail: the average school in NYC has 600 students (1.1 million school children/1800 schools): that means that for each such action, several hundred notifications would have to go out per school. In a system with 1800 schools, even a small percentage of which may be up for consideration for a major change, the logistical undertaking for enforcing this resolution is enormous.
- Let's also consider the new schools, who do not yet have students enrolled. To whom will notifications be sent on their behalf? All potential applicants? Who are they? And if they are not notified, let's consider the unfairness of setting up the existing community against a new school before it is given a chance. Part of the government's role is to protect against the tyranny of the majority: an existing school already has a constituency; a new school, by definition, does not.

There is a sense of despair among NYC parents about the limited options available to their children. Many point to polls showing parental dissatisfaction with the state of the schools in NYC. This generally gets interpreted as a rejection of new schools, be they district or charter. Perhaps it is more reflective of the impatience of those parents who are desperate for good seats and don't have time to wait for the system to reform itself. They see options they like and are frustrated that a seat in a great school has 5 or 10 applicants for every spot. These resolutions, if enacted by the state would raise, not reduce that number, telling parents in Hunts Point, Brownsville, East Harlem, Jackson Heights, that their need to send their child to a great school will just have to wait.

Thank you. I am happy to take any questions from the Committee.

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<sup>6</sup> Icahn Charter School 2 and Bronx Charter School for Excellence.

# **New York City Charter Schools: 2012-13 Enrollment Lottery Trends**

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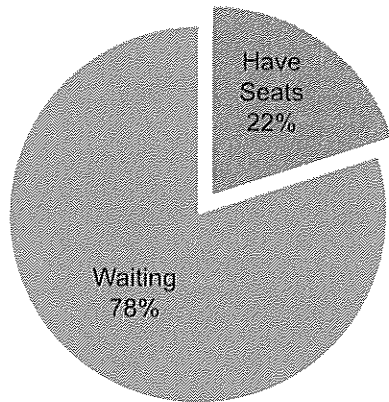
*May 2012*

## New York City Charter Schools: 2012-13 Enrollment Lottery Trends

Out of the 158 New York City charter schools currently enrolling students for 2012-13, 130 (82%) responded to the NYC Charter School Center's survey about their lottery application rates. Based on survey data, the Charter Center estimates that New York City charter schools received a total of 133,000 applications for 14,600 new seats. Discounting for families who apply to more than one school, this represents an estimated 67,500 applicants for 14,600 seats—creating a citywide charter school “waiting list” of an estimated 52,900.

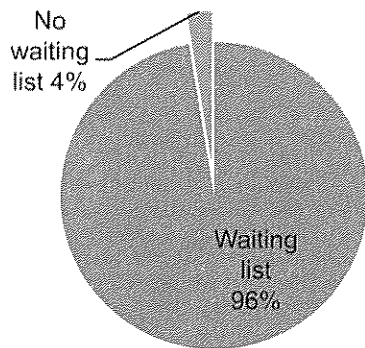
**Approximately 4.62 applicants are competing for each charter school seat.**

*NYC charter school applicants by enrollment status (2012-13, estimated)<sup>1</sup>*



**Almost every charter school has a waiting list for enrollment.**

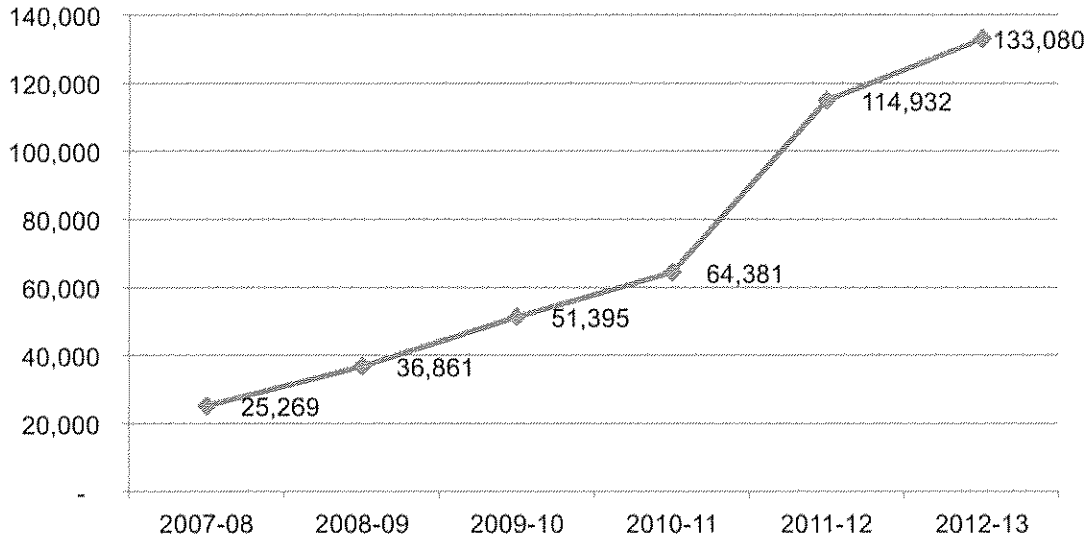
*Reporting charter schools by waiting list status (2012-13, n=130)<sup>1</sup>*



<sup>1</sup> Source: NYC Charter School Center Survey, April 2012

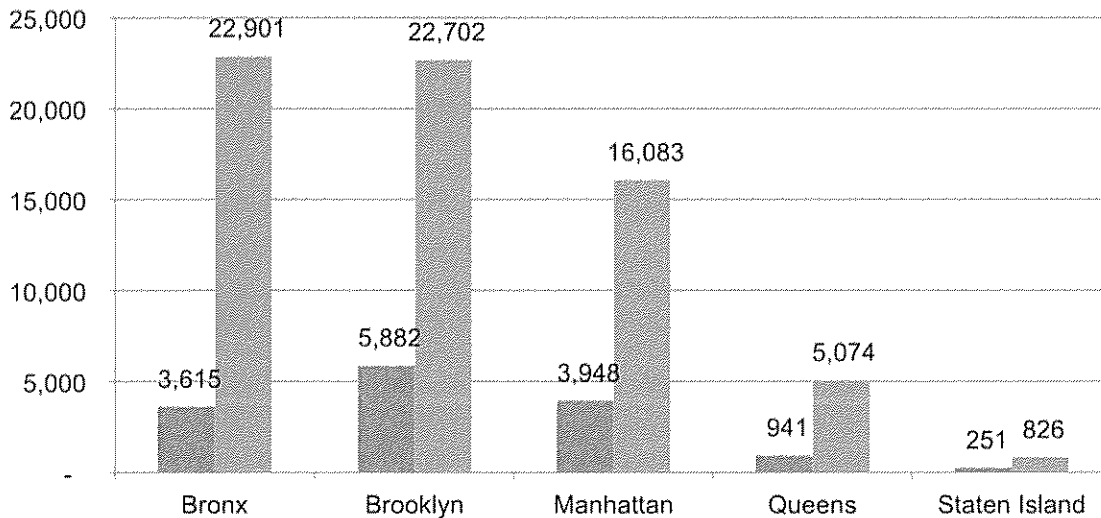
**Charter school applications have risen dramatically, as more students apply and the average applicant applies to more schools.**

*Total applications to NYC charter schools, historical and estimated (estimated, 2007-2013)<sup>2</sup>*



**Applicants exceed available seats in every borough.**

*NYC charter school applicants and seats, by borough (2012-13 estimated)<sup>3</sup>*

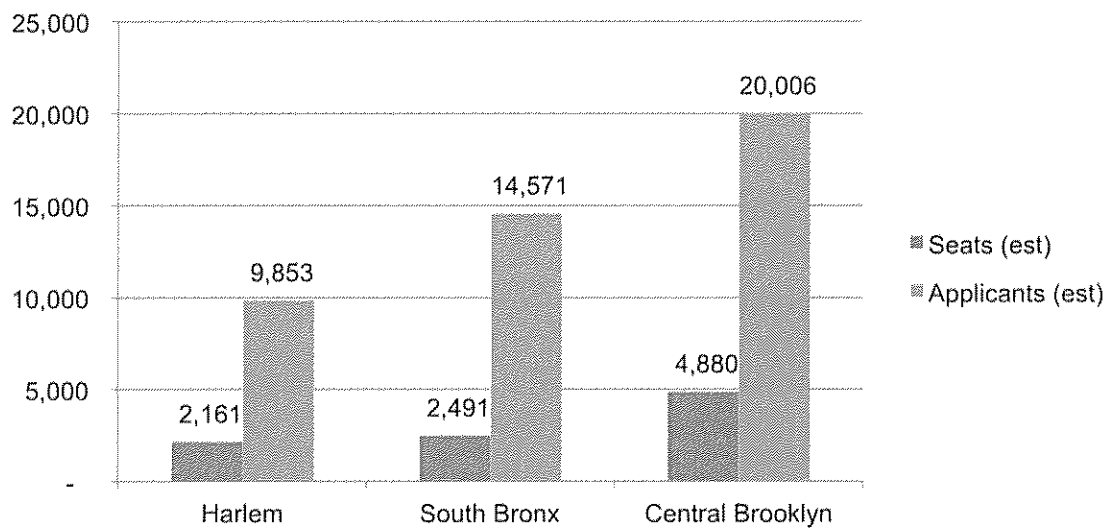


**A majority of applicants apply in Harlem, the South Bronx, or Central Brooklyn.**

<sup>2</sup> Sources: NY BEDS data via GothamSchools.org (<http://bit.ly/cehgk>), Charter Center surveys, April 2010, 2011, 2012

<sup>3</sup> Source: NYC Charter School Center Survey, April 2012

NYC charter school applicants and seats, by neighborhood (2012-13 estimated)<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> Harlem is defined as Community School District 4, 5; South Bronx 7, 8, 9; Central Brooklyn 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 32.

# Co-Location: How Public Schools Share Space in New York City

2012  
2013

## What is school co-location?

New York City's public schools are mostly small, but its public school *buildings* are mostly large. As a result, most public schools – including charter schools – are “co-located” with at least one other in a shared building. Each school is assigned a segment of classrooms and hallways to use as its own space, while major amenities such as gyms and libraries are shared.

## Is co-location a “charter school thing”?

No. It's a New York City thing. Over 900 (58%) of all NYC public schools are co-located (district and charter), and only 8% of co-located schools are charter schools.

## Why do charter schools need co-location?

Charter schools are public schools, but unlike district schools they do not receive public funding for facilities. This poses a severe challenge in the costly real estate market of New York City, so the NYC Department of Education allows charter schools to use space in under-utilized buildings. Co-location is one way to provide it. It's important to note, charter schools students are public school students and deserve a publicly funded facility as much as any student.

## When did co-location begin in New York City?

Co-location is old: an 1898 book about NYC schools noted “in many cases two or even three district school organizations or departments, each having its own principal, in one building.” Co-location became more common under Chancellor Joel Klein, who pushed for smaller schools and more school choices.

## Does co-location cause overcrowding?

No. City data show that school buildings with co-locations tend to be less crowded than single-school buildings. Overcrowding is an important issue, but co-location is not its primary cause. Are there special rules for charter school co-location? Yes. When a charter school is considered for co-location, additional plans and public hearings are required. Once a charter school moves in, a “Shared Space Committee” is formed with a principal, teacher and parent from each school in the building.

## Does co-location cause unfair disparities?

No. City data show that charter schools tend to be located in the more crowded portions of a co-located building. In addition, if a co-located charter school makes building improvements of at least \$5,000 in value, a matching amount is provided to each school in the same building.

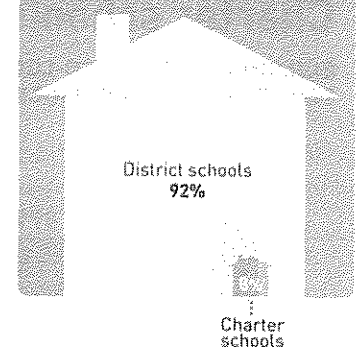
## Does co-location work?

Co-location works every day in buildings across New York City, but always differently. Some co-located schools achieve joint victories, for example by working together to build a new playground or hosting a building-wide art show. Other co-locations, including those between district schools, grapple with issues that sharing space can cause. All schools might prefer to have more room, but by and large they find ways to share, compromise and stay focused on students' learning.

### Collaboration initiatives

New initiatives such as NYC Collaborates — launched as a result of New York City's District-Charter Collaboration Compact — seek to define and facilitate opportunities for charter and district schools to come together to dispel myths, share information and collaborate. NYC Collaborates documents active collaborations between district and charter schools and organizes school tours and other events to engage educators to share their work and best practices.

**MOST NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CO-LOCATED**





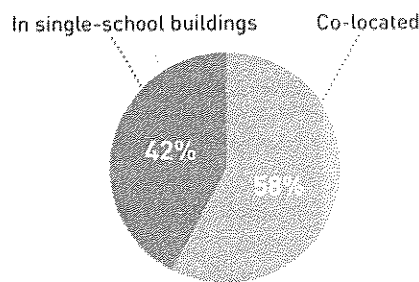
# Co-Location by the Numbers

2012  
2013

When it comes to co-location, charter schools are a very small piece of the pie.

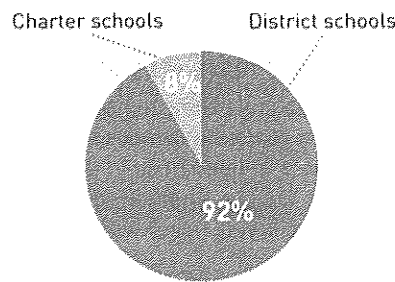
All figures reflect the 2011-12 school year.

**MOST NYC PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE CO-LOCATED.**



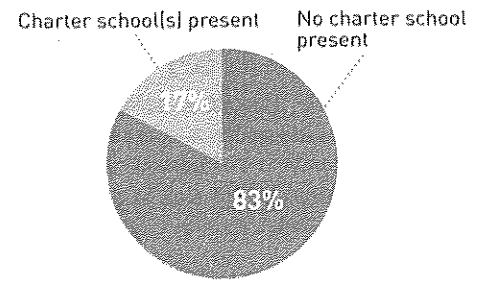
All public schools in NYC

**MOST CO-LOCATED SCHOOLS ARE NOT CHARTER SCHOOLS.**



All co-located public schools in NYC

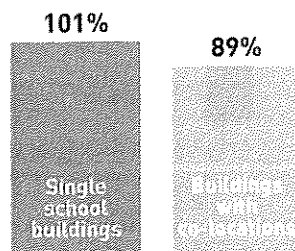
**AT MOST BUILDINGS WITH CO-LOCATIONS, THERE IS NO CHARTER SCHOOL PRESENT.**



All co-locations

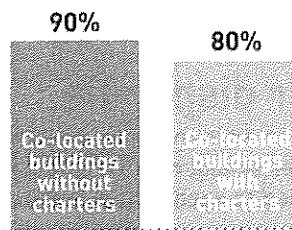
Charter schools don't cause overcrowding at district schools.

**BUILDINGS WITHOUT CO-LOCATIONS TEND TO BE MORE CROWDED.**



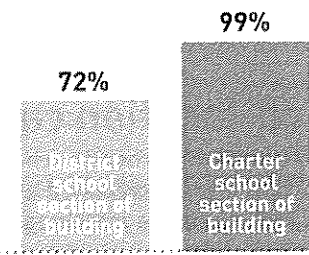
Total building usage

**CO-LOCATIONS WITHOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS TEND TO BE MORE CROWDED.**



Building usage with co-locations

**IN CO-LOCATIONS WITH A CHARTER SCHOOL, THE CHARTER SECTION OF THE BUILDING TENDS TO BE MORE CROWDED.**



Building usage housing charter school co-locations

Source: NYC Department of Education building utilization data, Charter Center analysis

## City Council Testimony

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Good afternoon, Chairman Jackson and members of the New York City Council Committee on Education. My name is Barbara Martinez and I am the Chief External Officer of Uncommon Schools. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today.

We are a high performing charter school management organization that operates in three states, including New York. We have 20 schools in New York City—all of them in Brooklyn. We have over 5,000 students and over 500 teachers and more than 100 support staff members.

We are in neighborhoods in Central Brooklyn, mostly in Bed Stuy, Brownsville, Crown Heights and Ocean Hill. We have one school in Williamsburg and now a couple of schools in Canarsie. Perhaps most relevant to the subject today is the number of families who have applied for seats at our schools, who we could not accommodate.

Whether it is working hard to have positive colocations, making an impact on our community or sharing best teaching practices, Uncommon Schools takes our responsibility to the neighborhood and the public school system as a whole very seriously.

Of course, our first mission is to educate our students. We are particularly proud of our ability to catch students up and propel them forward. Our first 12<sup>th</sup> grade class graduated in June and 100% of them enrolled in college and are currently in college. Many of them came to us in 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading and doing math on a 1<sup>st</sup> grade level and not even thinking that college was in their future.

How did we turn that around for them?

Longer school day and year. If you want to get better at something, no matter what that is, the more time you have to work on it the better you will be.

As important, though we support our teachers. Uncommon is known as one of the best places in the country for a teacher to get really good at teaching. Why? Every teacher gets a coach that spends time in his or her classroom and the coach and the teacher work together on how to get better—how to reach all kids and help all kids learn. This is why last year we had over 6,000 teachers apply for only 378 teacher spots. Teachers across the country know that our schools support them.

For our kids to do well in college, we must provide rigorous lessons that are also joyful. So if and when you come to any of our schools, which we hope you will, you're going to see a lot of happy faces. Here's a for instance—March 14—Pi day—3.14. We have a school wide game that the

students who learn the most digits of pi get to throw a pie in their teachers face. You wouldn't believe how many kids try to win this award. This year's winner memorized over 100 digits of pi and it was covered on TV.

We do all this, by the way on the public dollar. It is Uncommon's mission to operate mature school solely on the per pupil amount. So, we take donations for schools that are growing or are new, because it's so costly to open a new school. But once our schools have all of their grades, we take zero philanthropic funds. Our point in doing that is this: providing a high quality education to low-income students is doable on the funds that are currently available.

I know that the purpose here today is to talk about resolutions involving co-location. So I want to spend a moment talking about our co-locations. I want you to know that our school leaders—every single one of them—work really hard to have positive co-location relationships with their district partners. And I can tell you that in almost every single one of our co-locations, we do have a positive relationship, and I encourage each of you, before you make huge decisions about co-locations, that you come see where it's working really well. We would love to show you.

Take for example, Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School. Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders are “homework buddies” to PS 16 students. On many occasions, PS 16 has invited our students to perform in their schoolwide performances and vice versa. Recently, our school leader and PS 16's principal got together and said, let's make nice signs for our schools—so they collaborated on these signs together that just went up.

At Bed-Sty-Collegiate, we partnered with PS 267 for a Kaboom project. If you don't know what that is, that's a one-day build of a playground in a previously distressed, empty lot. Both schools got together to organize the community to plan, design and build what is now a beautiful playground next to PS 267. That's a big project, and they worked on that together as partners, because that's what they are.

We also work hard to codify what we know works in classrooms so that we can disseminate it. In the past year we have provided free professional development to hundreds of district teachers and principals who have attended our workshops. Our number one partners in those efforts are our co-located schools.

Had the resolutions that are being considered today been in effect as state laws, little to any of this would have happened. We are concerned that requiring CEC approval of a co-location before presentation to the Panel for Education Policy and issuing a moratorium on co-locations could harm the future growth of great school options like ours. We believe that input from all stakeholders is critical to the establishment of a successful school, but we don't want to risk creating more barriers where they aren't needed.

I'm happy to take your questions.

# City Council Hearing

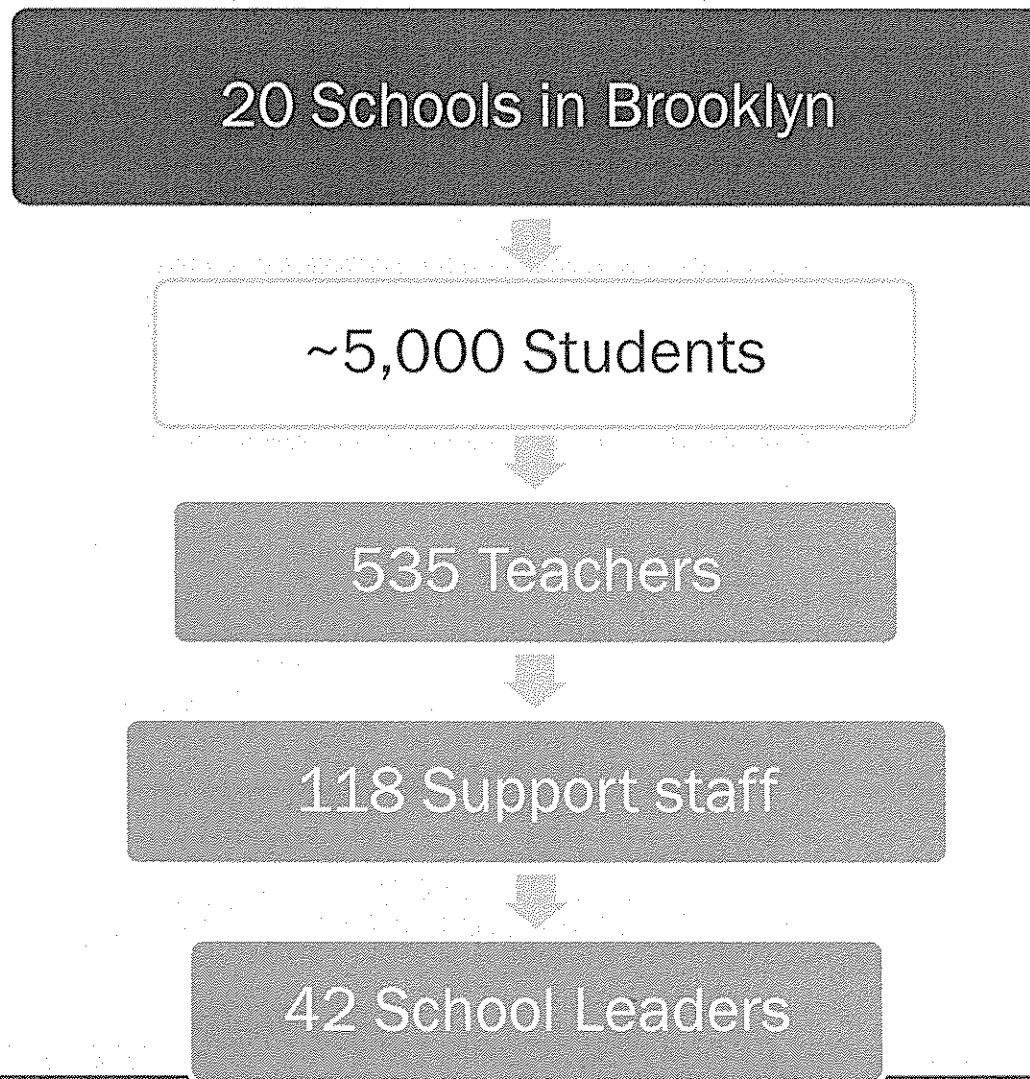
October 2, 2013

Barbara Martinez  
Chief External Officer

Uncommon  
Schools | Change History.

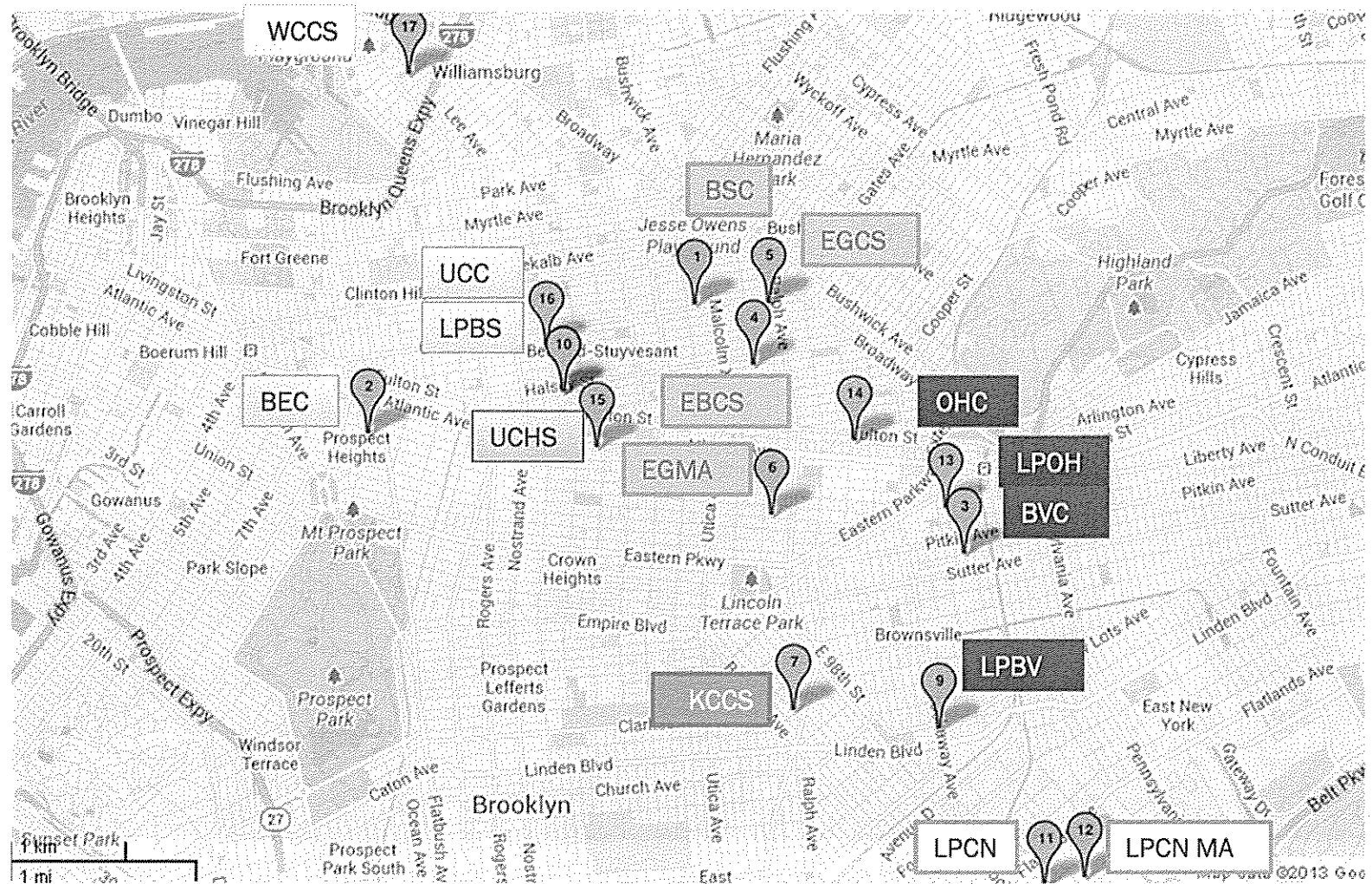
# Uncommon Schools New York City by the Numbers

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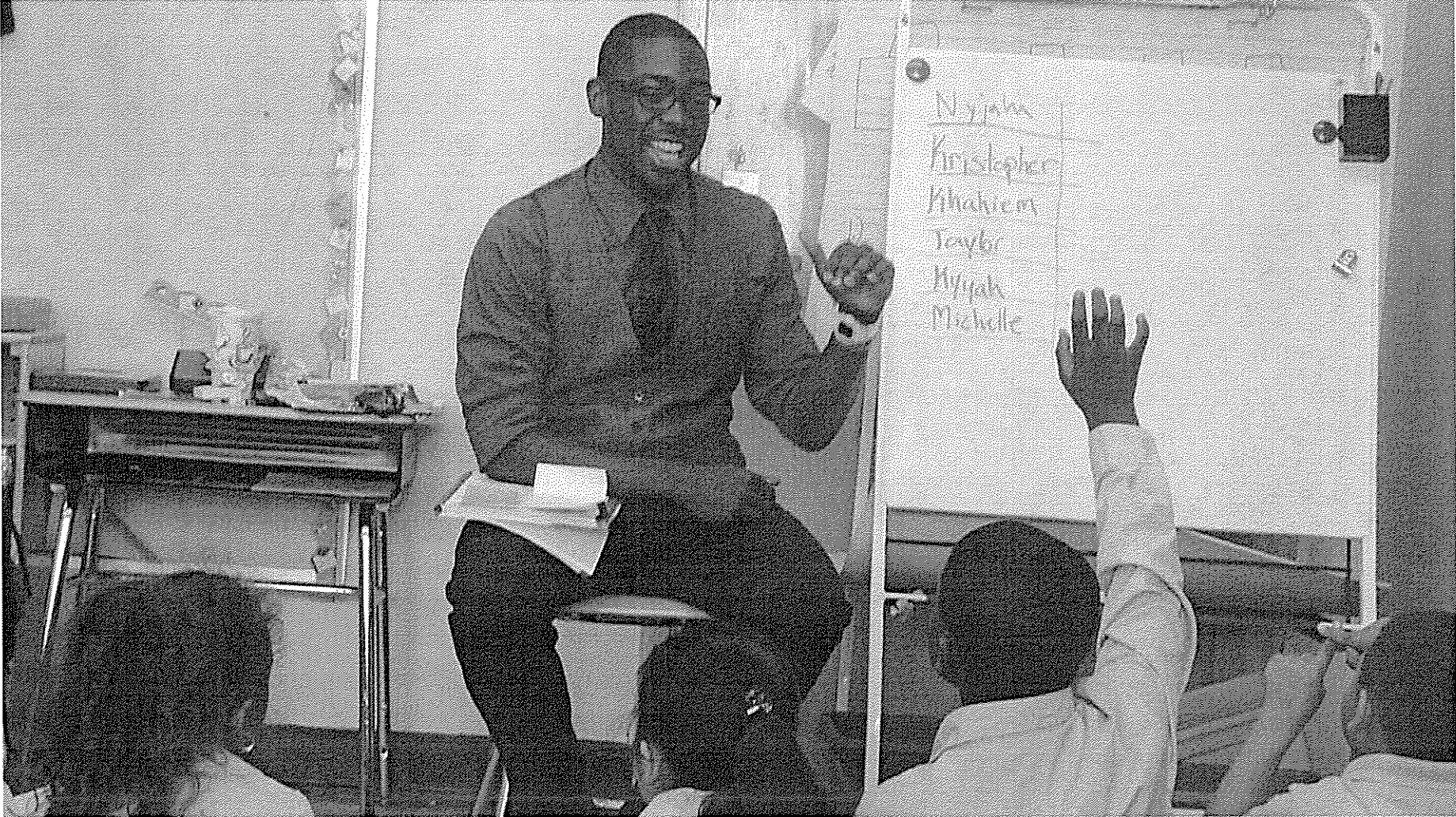


# Uncommon Schools

## New York City



# A place where teachers grow



# Pi Day!





We do all this on the public dollar

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\$0

philanthropy

for mature schools

# Successful Co-locations: WCCS



# KABOOM! PS 267, La Cima, Bed Stuy Collegiate



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Dennis Walcott

Address: Schools Chancellor

I represent: DOE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-2-13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ernest Logan, President

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC

I represent: Council of School Supervisors Admin. (CSA)

Address: 40 Rector St. NYC

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Michael Mulgan, President, UFT

Address: 52 B'way

I represent: United Federation of Teachers

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition  
1263; 1395A;    Date: 10/2/2013  
1906

Name: SONJA JONES

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: COMMUNITY BOARD NINE

Address: 110-18 OLD BROADWAY, NY NY 10027

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 1395A

in favor     in opposition  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: ELSIE CHAN

Address: 225 DEGRAU ST

I represent: JOHN DEWEY ALPARDI ASSN

Address: 50 Ave X

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 1395A

in favor     in opposition  
Date: 10/2/13    1906 1263

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Natasha Capers

Address: 80 Osborn St

I represent: District 23

Address: 80 Osborn St

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Khem Irby

Address: 471 D 49 Fulton ST, 7D

I represent: The Mothers' Agenda of NY

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sonia Jones

Address: 4

I represent: CECS President

Address: 425 W. 123rd St NYC, NY 10027

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mary Escalante

Address: 633 W 171st St Apt 3C

I represent: CSS Columbia Secondary

Address: 425 W 123rd St NY, NY School

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nolson Mar  
Address: 349 East 149<sup>th</sup> St, Bronx NY 10451  
I represent: Legal Services NYC - Bronx  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-2-13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Abdiel Cabral  
Address: 20 Essex St. Brooklyn NY 11208  
I represent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/2013

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shondel Nurse  
Address: 245 Marcus Garvey Blvd  
I represent: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: Valerie Babb  
Address: 111 Bway Ste 604 NYC 10006  
I represent: NYC Charter School Center  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: William McDonald  
Address: 182 FIBBERS AVE 505 W. 112th  
I represent: South East Queens Coalition  
Address: 131 LINDSEY ST. Rm 301 Bklyn 11211

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/02/13

(PLEASE PRINT)  
Name: DR. BURCHELL M. MARCUS  
Address: 5105 CHURCH AVE.  
I represent: COMMUNITY ADVOCATE + DEVELOPMENT  
Address: 5105 Church Ave. Bklyn. N.Y. 11203

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1906, 1595A Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Oct 2, 2013

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Modupe Gillis - Gomes

Address: 2236 Batchelder St. 4B

I represent: IS240K

Address: Nostrand Ave, Brooklyn

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: Oct/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JACQUELINE COLSON

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: NEW YORK PARENTS UNION

Address: Queens Chapter Leader

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Miriam Arista Farer

Address: CEC 6 Northern Manhattan

I represent: N. Manhattan

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alison Loeb

Address: 730 Ft. Washington Ave

I represent: Columbia Secondary School -

Address: 425 W 123rd Manhattan

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: SAMANTHA VALERIO

Address: 2703 42nd RD #18C

I represent: BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL FOR BETTER

Address: 3740 BAYCHESTER AVE - ANNEX LEARNING  
BX, NY 10460

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/2013

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Claudette Haard

Address: 1025 ST. Johns Place

I represent: District 17 Community

Address: 1025 ST. Johns Place  
Brooklyn NY 11213

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 1262 Res. No. 1906

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Gen Blake's L-372 Vice Pres  
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 125 BRADWAY

I represent: LOCAL 372

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Dard Golovne  
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 111 Broadway

I represent: The NYC Charter School Center

Address: 111 Broadway

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 9/2/13

Name: Samantha Bernardine  
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 648 Prospect Place

I represent: Parents of District #17

Address: (Same as above)

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Samantha Valero

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Brooklyer Leaning

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Barbara Martinez

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Uncommon Schools

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 10/2

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jaclyn KFU

Address: NYC Collaborates

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ARTHUR SAMUELS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: MESA Charter High School

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: Students For NY

Address: 15 York Ave NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

0

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. 95

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-2-13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kelly Blauvelt - Alday

Address: 59 Bruckner Blvd #2 Bronx NY

I represent: Success Academy Bronx Parent

Address: Morris Ave. Bronx NY

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jim Dvor

Address: 305 Bdwy - Suite 505, N.Y NY 10017

I represent: CEC - 15

Address: 131 Livingston St. Rm 301 Bklyn 11201

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/12

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jarellia Hinds

Address: 52 Blwy

I represent: UFT UP for High Schools

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10-2-13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kathleen Daniel  
Address: 965 Putnam Ave #2 Bklyn NY 11221  
I represent: CEC 16, parents in Bed-stuy in all <sup>public</sup> schools  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LISA Kinsey Administrative Assistant  
Address: 425 W. 123 Street + RM 205  
I represent: CEC 5  
Address: 425 W. 123 St NYC NY 10027 RM205

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/3/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nicole Job  
Address: 30 Linden Blvd #21 Bk, NY 11226  
I represent: CEC 17  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

◆ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◆

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

Name: Sarah Kaufman (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Chief Portfolio Officer

I represent: DOE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

Name: José Ruiz (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: Cluster Leader

I represent: DOE

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

[ ]

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

Name: Sonnie Muniz M.D. (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 71 Nassau Street #14A

I represent: LCCE District 2 + Lower

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Manhattan Community

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms



**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deborah Yates

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: CECS

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 10/2/13

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Shaki Wright

Address: 557 East 29<sup>th</sup> Brooklyn NY 11210

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHEYANNE SMITH

Address: 111 NOSTRAND AVE 11225

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

*Appearance Card*

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: John Moschetti

Address: 8 Vale Place Rye NY 10580

I represent: Public schools

Address: Same

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀