

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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October 2, 2013
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HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: ROBERT JACKSON
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Fernando Cabrera
Margaret Chin
Albert Vann
Ruben Wills
Lewis A. Fidler
G. Oliver Koppell
Jessica S. Lappin
Karen Koslowitz
Eric Ulrich
Stephen Levin
James Vacca
Jumaane D. Williams
Daniel R. Garodnick
Daniel Dromm
Domenic M. Recchia, Jr.
Gale A. Brewer

David G. Greenfield
Deborah Rose

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

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Natasha Capers
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District 17

Samantha Bernadine
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Brooklyn Community Board 8

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Dr. Burchell M. Marcus
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Community Advocate Development
Organization

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [gavel] Good afternoon, everyone and welcome to today's Education Committee hearing. We are going to be discussing several items today. One is an oversight of the Department of Education's significant school changes, closures, reconfigurations and community notification. Also, we will be discussing several resolutions, but before I read my opening statement... [off mic] Hi, Dennis. How are you? Good. Before I read my opening statement, let me introduce my colleagues that are present this afternoon. All the way to my right is our colleague, Fernando Cabrera of the Bronx, Margaret Chin of Manhattan, Al Vann of Brooklyn and to my left Ruben Wills of Queens and Lew Fidler of Brooklyn and also arriving our colleague in front of us to the right is Oliver Koppell from the Bronx.

So good afternoon and welcome to the Education Committee's oversight hearing on DOE's significant school changes, closures, reconfigurations and community notification. We will also hear testimony on three resolutions today, Resolution number 1263 co-sponsored by our

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2 colleague, Al Vann and myself; proposed Resolution
3 number 1395-A co-sponsored by Debbie Rose and
4 myself and Resolution number 1906 sponsored by
5 Ruben Wills. I'll talk about these three
6 resolutions shortly after some opening remarks, and
7 then we'll move on to hear statements from other
8 primary sponsors of these resolutions.

9 The 2009 State Mayoral Control Law
10 mandates public hearings and other procedures to
11 increase opportunities for public input and
12 decisions involving any proposed school closing or
13 other significant change in school utilization,
14 including the phase out grade reconfiguration, re-
15 siting or co-location of schools. These provisions
16 in law were prompted by criticisms that the
17 Department of Education had excluded parent and
18 community voices in decisions about school closings
19 and co-locations, among the most controversial
20 elements of Mayor Bloomberg's school reform
21 efforts. Since the Mayor gained control of the
22 city school system in 2002, the Department of
23 Education has closed or is in the process of
24 phasing out 164 schools and opened a total 656 new
25 district and charter schools. Most new schools are

1 co-located with other schools in existing public
2 school buildings. The large number of school
3 closings and co-locations have affected
4 neighborhoods throughout the city, often generating
5 tremendous community opposition. In recent months,
6 criticism has escalated as the Bloomberg
7 Administration proposed more than 50 school siting
8 plans that would not take effect until 2014, 2015
9 School Year or beyond well into a new mayor's term.
10 In the past, however, a majority of the proposals
11 for change in school utilization have been made
12 less than a year before they were to take effect,
13 not more than one or two years in advance. Nearly
14 half of these new plans were already approved by
15 the Panel for Educational Policy last spring, while
16 the rest are due to be voted on at two October
17 Panel for Educational Policy meetings.

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19 When it comes to school closings, a
20 2010 lawsuit succeeded in overturning the closure
21 of some schools based on problems with the
22 Department of Education's process, including
23 inadequate notice, lack of information and
24 transparency in the public hearing process and
25 inadequate education impact statements.

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Questions have also been raised about progress reports based primarily on state test scores for evaluating school performance and for making high staked decisions such as school closures. To me, here's the most important question we should ask. Is closing schools sound educational policy? Should we do everything we can to help struggling schools first and only close schools as a last resort? Mayor Bloomberg set closing the lowest performing 10 percent of all city schools as a goal of his administration, and he has pretty much accomplished that goal by closing 164 schools, and this adds to the perception that public participation in the process is meaningless because school closures are a foregone conclusion. Some critics charge that the real agenda behind closing schools is to free up space for charter schools. They claim that rather than try to help struggling schools, the chancellor and the Department of Education have abandoned them in favor of charters run by private operators. They ask why is it that the Mayor and the Chancellor take credit for school successes, but take no responsibility for school failures.

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2 Schools targeted for closure serve disproportionate
3 numbers of high needs students, including students
4 with special needs, English language learners, low-
5 income and overage students. These high need
6 students are displaced when a school closes
7 creating a domino effect of school closings leading
8 to surrounding schools becoming overcrowded with
9 greater concentration of high needs students and
10 then being targeted for closure themselves.

11 [Pause]

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The costs
13 associated with closing schools are also high.
14 Phase out schools are more expensive on a per
15 student basis. The phase out also shifts teachers
16 into very costly Absent Teacher Reserve pools,
17 which is called ATR. There are also start up costs
18 for new schools and when it comes to co-locations,
19 concerns center on difficulties created for the
20 receiving or host school, which must often give up
21 some of its regular classrooms, as well as
22 libraries, science labs, music and art rooms for
23 use by the new co-located school. Each school also
24 needs its own rooms for administration, student
25 support and other services resulting in an overall

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2 loss of instruction or space. When multiple
3 schools share a building, problems such as
4 overcrowding, unsafe hallways, inadequate
5 resources, friction over shared space and a climate
6 of mistrust and conflict can arise. Schools have
7 been... have to compete for use of common areas
8 such as cafeterias, gyms, auditoriums, playgrounds
9 and hallways. Scheduling becomes a nightmare with
10 lunch period that may start as early as 9:30 or
11 10:00 and end up after 2:00 p.m. Charter school
12 co-locations seem to generate the most controversy.
13 Resources... inequities often exist between co-
14 located charter schools and their host district
15 schools, fueling charges of separate and unequal
16 education, as well as the accusation that charters
17 are favored by the administration and the
18 Department of Education. Sometimes students in
19 host schools are made to feel like second class
20 citizens such as when co-located charter schools
21 have smaller class size or new computers or ipads
22 or segregate their students from those in the host
23 school through use of separate entrances,
24 staircases and bathrooms.

1
2 Finally, despite changes in state law
3 intended to increase parent and community input in
4 decisions about changes and the school utilization,
5 critics charge that DOE continues to resist and
6 ignore community voices as the Panel for
7 Educational Policy just rubberstamps proposals.

8 At today's hearing, the committee will
9 examine the Department of Education's policies and
10 procedures regarding significant school changes,
11 including school closings and co-locations and look
12 forward to hearing testimony from parents,
13 students, educators, advocates, unions, CEC members
14 and others on this issue. As I stated earlier, we
15 will also be considering Resolution number 1263,
16 proposed Resolution number 1395-A and Resolution
17 number 1906 today. Resolution number 1263 calls on
18 the New York State Legislature to amend the State
19 Education law in relation to mayoral control of the
20 New York City Public School System by requiring
21 that the respective Community Educational Council
22 approve a co-location or school closure, phase out
23 all proposed... or phase out proposal before it may
24 be presented for a vote by the Panel for
25 Educational Policy.

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2 Proposed Resolution 1395-A calls on the
3 New York City Department of Education to institute
4 a moratorium on school closings and force co-
5 locations in existing schools for a period of at
6 least one year effective July 1, 2014 in order to
7 study the impact of these policies on all New York
8 City communities and in particular, whether such
9 policies are having a disparate impact on low-
10 income communities, communities of color, disabled
11 students and homeless students.

12 Resolution number 1906 called on the
13 New York City Department of Education to amend
14 Chancellor's Regulation A-190 in order to specify
15 procedures for notifying affected parents of any
16 proposed school closure or significant change in
17 school utilization.

18 Everyone who wishes to testify today,
19 you must fill out a witness slip, which is located
20 at the desk of the Sergeant-at-Arms near the
21 entrance to this room. Please indicate on the
22 witness slip whether you are here to testify about
23 significant school changes or one or more of the
24 three resolutions and whether you are in favor or
25 in opposition to the resolutions. Please note that

1 all witnesses will be sworn in before testifying.

2 I also wanted to point out that we will not be
3 voting on resolutions today, as this is just a
4 first hearing. To allow as many as possible to
5 testify, testimony will be limited to three minutes
6 per person, so if you have any written testimony,
7 please, we ask you to summarize it and submit the
8 written one into the record. And now I would like
9 to turn the floor over to my colleague, Al Vann,
10 for his remarks regarding Resolution 1263.

11
12 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Yeah, good
13 afternoon. Thank you, Chairman. Reso 1263. Over
14 the past several years, we all know that the Panel
15 for Educational Policy is simply rubberstamped; the
16 Department of Education's co-location, closure and
17 school phase out proposals. Not one time; not nix;
18 not one; not ever; never has the PEP voted against
19 any DOE proposal, let alone co-location or school
20 closure, so no matter how strong the opposition or
21 how valid the issues raised by the community, time
22 and time again the panel has simply disregarded
23 community concerns and the interests parents you
24 know, for the children. Resolution 1263 aims to
25 provide a voice for the community by calling on the

1 state to amend State Mayoral Control Law to give
2 the local CEC the power to approve DOE co-
3 locations, closure and school phase out proposals
4 before they can be presented to the Panel for
5 Educational Policy. Community Education Councils
6 are parent led advisory groups that are intended to
7 help shape school district educational priorities.
8 Right now our local CECs have the power to approve
9 changes to school district lines. It doesn't
10 happen that often, but it's very important. It
11 only seems to follow that they should also have the
12 power to deal with the closure or not to close the
13 schools as well. I believe that empowering the
14 CECs to approve co-locations and school closures
15 will foster increased participation in schools by
16 community stakeholders and parents alike, and
17 ultimately will lead more thought for proposal on
18 behalf of DOE. It's a very simple resolution.
19 It's very obvious what its impact would be if we
20 were able... if the state moves on it and it would
21 have a tremendous, tremendous impact in empowering,
22 if you will, the parents in the community of our
23 community whose children is really what the schools
24 are all about. It's a straightforward resolution
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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

and I hope we'll get the support of our committee and indeed from the council as well. Thank you. Chair?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you and now we turn to the primary sponsor of Resolution number 1906, Council Member Ruben Wills of Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chair. This legislation assists parents with important insight into their children's education and the quality of the schools that they attend. It will also ensure that parents have the information that they need to make well informed choices for their children, more effectively share responsibility with their children's schools and help those schools develop effective and successful academic programs. Over three decades of research provide convincing evidence that parents are an important influence in helping their children achieve high academic standards. When schools collaborate with parents to help their children learn and when parents participate in school activities and decision making about their children's education, children achieve at higher levels no matter what the

1
2 parent's income. In short, when parents are
3 involved in education, children do better in school
4 and schools improve. What we have found is that
5 the parental notification that is now in place is
6 substandard. That's the word that I would use.
7 They are not notified in a timely fashion and the
8 parental community is really not... the
9 notifications are not pushed out the way they
10 should be. Right now, I have four co-locations
11 that are being pushed by the DOE in my district
12 alone, and the whole guise of this is parental
13 choice. No parent ever contacted the DOE asked for
14 more choices in these schools, and if that was the
15 case we'd never get the information back, but the
16 notification is never done. I have spoken to over
17 600 parents in my district alone over the last week
18 and a half and most of them had no idea about these
19 co-locations or the severe impact these co-
20 locations would have. This resolution would ask
21 the legislation to be passed that would improve
22 upon that notification, allowing parental input to
23 work as a partner with DOE and not just standing by
24 bystanders. Thank you.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. We've been joined by additional colleague, Jessica Lappin of Manhattan, who is here. Karen Koslowitz of Queens is in front to our right and Eric Ulrich from Queens is on this level to our left. With that, we have turned to the chancellor and the other DOE officials. Chancellor Dennis Walcott, Sonia Kaufman; Sara, I'm sorry, Chief Portfolio Officer and Jose Ruiz, the Cluster Leader of DOE. Chancellor, good afternoon.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And good afternoon to you, Mr. Chair. I hope you're well, and to the members of the Education Committee, it's a pleasure to be here today. As you indicated, I'm Dennis Walcott, School's Chancellor and I am joined by Sara Kaufman, Chief Portfolio Officer for the New York City Department of Education's Office of Portfolio Management.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Chancellor, before you begin...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Sure, sir.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Would you like to take the oath, please?

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Oh, yeah, whatever you want me to do, no problem.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Is Sara probably going to answer some questions also?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sara and possibly Jose as well.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, Jose. That's Jose there. Okay, would the three of you raise your right hand, please, if you don't mind? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members' questions?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I do.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Chancellor, the floor is yours. So before I go into my formal testimony, I want to thank you for your leadership over the last number of years as chair of the Education Committee. I know there are times we don't necessarily see eye to eye, but we always know that you are a very passionate advocate on behalf of our students and our parents and to the members of the committee in your respective roles; as well as council members, we want to thank

1
2 you for your leadership in your districts, as well
3 as part of the Education Committee. We do enjoy,
4 believe it or not, our interaction because it makes
5 us better, but more importantly it makes it better
6 for our 1.1 million students, so I want to thank
7 you for your leadership and all the members for
8 your participation and your respective leadership
9 as well.

10 In addition to that, I really want to
11 talk about the hallmark of our administration's
12 education reforms or portfolio strategy, the
13 Department of Education's long range blueprint to
14 create better school options. We are well aware
15 that our strategy of phasing out low performing
16 schools and replacing them with new smaller schools
17 has been controversial, and I am glad to be here to
18 discuss the details. We did not embark on this
19 strategy lightly. Our schools were in a terrible
20 crisis when the mayor took office in 2002 and
21 something seriously needed to be done for the sake
22 of our students' future. Nearly a quarter of our
23 students were dropping out of school each year and
24 that masked a far more dire situation in our city's
25 large high school campuses. The graduation rate at

1 Wingate High School in Brooklyn in 2002 was an
2 alarming 29 percent. That meant 71 percent of the
3 students were not graduating. At Park West the
4 graduation rate was 31 percent. At Erasmus it was
5 32 percent. At Evander Childs it was 31 percent.
6 At Seward Park it was 36 percent and at Prospect
7 Heights High School it was 34 percent. These were
8 disastrous situations and I can cite more and more
9 schools that had unfortunately similar graduation
10 results. Crime at these large schools was rampant.
11 Gang fights inside Adlai Stevenson High School in
12 the Bronx were so common that teachers regularly
13 pulled down iron gates from the hallway ceilings to
14 contain the rioting. Teachers at some schools
15 carried mace to protect themselves. At many of
16 these schools the dysfunction had persisted for
17 years and years and often decades as well.
18 Countless efforts to turn them around had come and
19 gone, but the culture failure never changed and
20 those schools stayed in business, continuing to not
21 educate our children properly. Something needed to
22 be done. Now there is often a common frame give
23 the failing school more time; give its leaders a
24 few more years to turn it around and that school
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1 will improve, but when a school continues to fail
2 its students year after year after receiving
3 additional support, we cannot continue to kick the
4 can down the road. We have a responsibility to
5 act. Allowing our students to fall further and
6 further behind is not an option. Students only
7 have one shot and if a school is not delivering we
8 have a moral obligation; we have a responsibility;
9 we have a commitment to our students to pursue
10 different approaches, ones that have been seen
11 repeatedly succeeding. That brings me to our
12 portfolio strategy.

14 Schools are dynamic places with many,
15 many moving parts. At most schools those parts
16 move perfectly in synch. In some small adjustments
17 need to be made, but in rare cases the moving parts
18 are operating so poorly that no amount of
19 professional development or additional dollars will
20 ever help. In those cases, we have learned that
21 the best way to transform a deeply dysfunctional
22 school is sometimes to reconceptualize it entirely.
23 Our approach is to conduct an exhaustive review of
24 the data, initiate conversations with families and
25 schools during our early engagement process and to

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2 communicate with the public in joint public
3 hearings. It is a painful process. I truly
4 understand and empathize with the community about
5 how painful it is to phase out a school. It is
6 tough emotional experience for school communities
7 and a difficult one for us as well and for me as
8 well. We know that hearings will be contentious.
9 We know that families are passionate about their
10 children and their schools and their communities
11 and we celebrate their connections to their
12 schools. But what you often don't see at these
13 hearings are the people those schools did not serve
14 well; the young adult struggling to make ends meet
15 because he or she doesn't have a high school
16 diploma. The teacher who left the profession
17 altogether out of the frustration over working at a
18 failing school; these are also people we are
19 listening to as well as the leadership of our
20 schools as well.

21 Over the course of this administration,
22 we have replaced 164, as you indicated, Mr. Chair,
23 of our lowest performing schools with better
24 options and opened up 654 new schools, probably
25 larger than most districts in the country with the

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2 number of new schools that we've opened. These new
3 small schools often serve the same student
4 populations in the same buildings with a fresh
5 school culture, a clear mission and moving parts
6 working in unison to achieve the results that they
7 need to do on behalf of our students. As you've
8 heard me talk about repeatedly, when we first
9 started and I first started as chancellor and I
10 came before you about choice and believer of being
11 and having choice for our parents, and we have
12 single sex schools to Career Technical Education
13 schools to 9 to 14 schools, which offer our high
14 school students an associate's degree in six years.
15 We have created extraordinary new offerings for our
16 students and our families. You've heard me cite
17 this figure and I will cite it again and again and
18 again. From 1898 to 1960, we had 18 what was then
19 called vocational schools created. From 1960 to
20 2002 we had zero vocational or what we now call
21 Career Technical Education schools created, zero.
22 From 2002 when we started to now, we have created
23 28 new Career Technical Education Schools with
24 still some on the drawing board from Energy high
25 schools to Emergency Management high schools to a

1 high school that I was at I think on Monday dealing
2 with software engineering; new choices for our
3 students that span the gamut as far as choice
4 options for them. Across the city these new
5 schools are serving tens of thousands of students,
6 giving parents high quality choices they never had
7 before. By housing two or more small schools
8 inside a single building, we've been able to create
9 more options than ever before; new small schools
10 that are large enough to tailor the themes to
11 students' interests and nimble enough to adapt to
12 individual students. We now have schools for
13 architecture, for television production, for
14 computer technology and even zoology. Where's the
15 school for zoology? I'd have to find that one.
16 Students in small schools get more personalized
17 instruction in environments where their unique
18 learning styles are understood and nurtured.
19 Teachers benefit from close partnerships and
20 individualized professional development takes place
21 as well. Principals themselves can focus on the
22 professional development and less on the day to day
23 operations. Instead of focusing on, for example,
24 3,000 students, a principal can now focus on 300 or
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2 400. Instead of hundreds of staff members, school
3 leaders can develop dozens of staff members. This
4 is an extraordinary instructional value in this
5 approach, and here are the results. Since 2002 the
6 graduation rate at the former Wingate High School
7 has risen from 29 percent to now 74 percent at the
8 campus. At Erasmus campus it has risen from 32
9 percent to 75 percent. At Park West the graduation
10 rate has risen from 31 percent to 74 percent. At
11 Evander Childs the graduation rate has risen from
12 31 percent to 70 percent. At Seward Park it has
13 risen from 36 percent to 76 percent. At Prospect
14 Heights High School the graduation rate has
15 increased from 34 percent to 70 percent. Citywide
16 the drop-out rate has plummeted by half. It is at
17 its lowest level ever. It is now at 11 percent,
18 and Mr. Chair, you talked earlier about crime.
19 Crime in our schools has been slashed by almost 50
20 percent over the last 10 years; 50 percent
21 continued reduction in crime. This is a sea change
22 for education in New York City, and in every
23 borough our new schools have higher graduation
24 rates than the borough-wide average. Across New
25 York City the new schools have higher graduation

1 rates than the citywide average. These
2 accomplishments are in a large part due to our
3 portfolio strategy, the total transformation of our
4 schools. The landscape is dramatically different
5 today than it once was. We have become a
6 nationally recognized model for urban school
7 systems and our portfolio philosophy is a major
8 reason why.
9

10 College and career readiness is now
11 permanently a part of the lexicon in all of our
12 schools, and I know that people like to beat us up
13 around the college career readiness rates and we
14 understand why, but high school is not enough and
15 so a number of years ago we started talking about
16 the importance of college and career readiness and
17 develop the metrics to measure that as well,
18 something that we've been very transparent about.
19 The Common Core Learning Standards, designed to
20 develop critical thinking skills, are preparing our
21 students for the future like never before, and
22 while we undoubtedly have a long way to go, we have
23 doubled college readiness.

24 This summer, MDRC, a widely respected
25 national not-for-profit group analyzed the effect

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2 of new schools we have created since 2002. The
3 findings show that many of our new schools, created
4 since 2002 graduate 10 percent more students a year
5 on average than others throughout the city. We
6 have proved that it is indeed possible to achieve
7 resounding results over a relatively short period
8 of time in an urban school system.

9 Across the city families are clamoring
10 for additional school options. At one school I was
11 recently at, the demand at that school has
12 increased dramatically as far as 10 for every one
13 seat available for that particular school and we
14 expect that number to go up even higher this coming
15 year and to realize for them we have taken a bold
16 due approach to precious resource in New York City
17 in that space. It is a commodity that all New
18 Yorkers wish they had more of and so do we, but
19 resources are finite and we have to maximize them.
20 That is why our strategy involves an innovative way
21 of thinking about classrooms and buildings that we
22 have. As we work to provide new buildings,
23 additions and lease sites across the city, 164 of
24 them since 2002 with 35 more buildings or gut
25 rehabs currently under construction, we have made

1 every square foot count. Just as an aside, as you
2 know our first Five-Year Capital Plan was \$13.2
3 billion. This current Five-Year Capital Plan,
4 which we're about to end now, is \$11.1 billion and
5 we have created 126,000 new classroom seats as a
6 result of these capital plans. We have done that
7 through co-locations. Co-locations are an integral
8 part of the success we have achieved through a more
9 personalized learning environment. The co-location
10 process is often driven by parents themselves who
11 "vote with their feet," removing their children
12 from large struggling schools and sending them to
13 better schools elsewhere. This frees up space that
14 we can use to introduce new high quality options
15 that excites students. This is another creative
16 way in which we are expanding access to excellent
17 schools and it contributes to a positive trajectory
18 for the entire building. Just as one more quick
19 aside and then I'll wrap up, Mr. Chair, as you may
20 know also, with all of our new constructions
21 they're automatically co-located space because we
22 developed a policy a number of years ago of making
23 sure that we co-locate District 75 schools within
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1
2 all new constructions, another form of co-locations
3 as well.

4 These are approaches never tried before
5 in a large city, but when you consider the system
6 we inherited, 32 separate unequal school districts
7 that yielded dismal results in a number of them,
8 that is just what our schools and our students
9 needed. Bi-engagement process is essential to this
10 work. When we propose changes with school
11 utilization we mobilize an elaborate communications
12 mechanism. It includes backpacking notices home to
13 every single family, posting information to our
14 website and releasing details to the general
15 public. Those notices are followed by hearings, a
16 feedback period and an intensive review process on
17 our end and that intensive review process, just to
18 let you know, includes meetings with me and going
19 over each proposal so that way I can be satisfied
20 with the results that I hear as well before a final
21 decision can be made in making recommendation to
22 the panel. It is a complex task to communicate to
23 such an extraordinary cross section of parents
24 across so many schools across so many
25 neighborhoods. It is work we have built upon,

1
2 refined and improved over time with feedback from
3 you and others as well, and this is not something
4 we take lightly in any sense. In a system of 1.1
5 million students and millions of stakeholders not
6 every decision will achieve uniform agreement, but
7 in the end this administration has stood up for our
8 families and our students, leveling the playing
9 field wherever we could. We have worked to ensure
10 that geographic boundaries and socioeconomic status
11 do not determine the quality of the schools that
12 children have access to. Our portfolio strategy
13 has helped reverse a deplorable situation, one that
14 prevented generations of children in New York City
15 from succeeding. It has changed the lives of
16 hundreds of thousands of students for the better.
17 Thank you for this opportunity to present to you
18 once again and I look forward to taking any
19 questions that you, Mr. Chair, or the members of
20 the committee may have in addition to Sara and our
21 staff are here to respond as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,
23 Chancellor. I appreciate your statement, but also
24 let me just say to you that I hope to see again
25 here in the Education Committee before the end of

1
2 my term and that's 12-31-13, but if not, I've known
3 you even before you became the chancellor; before
4 you became the Deputy Mayor, and while we may
5 disagree on several things, I do believe your heart
6 and mind is in the right place. It's just that
7 we're not on the same avenue at the same time.

8 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, what we can
9 do, Mr. Chair, is we can have a hearing at 11:59...

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [laughing]

11 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: On December 31st
12 [laughter] and create some news and get the media
13 out there and we can have our one last hearing
14 going into the sunset together.

15 [crosstalk]

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I like that. I
17 like that. I may take you up on that.

18 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Or we can jog
19 around Central Park at that time as well.

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let me turn to
21 our colleagues and my... if you can stay within the
22 five minute timeframe and then if necessary, we'll
23 come back to you again. Is that okay? So we're
24 going to go first to Steve Levin of Brooklyn
25 followed by Ruben Wills of Queens.

[Pause]

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much, Council Member Vann, Council Member Chin. Thank you, Chairman and thank you, Chancellor. I guess the first question I would have, Chancellor, in looking at, and I understand you know, in listening to your testimony, the rationale or the reasons that are propelling duly to go about the course of that they feel... that you feel is right, my question is at this time; I mean we just spoke; we're within three months or so of the end of the Bloomberg Administration and I don't want to make any predictions as to who the next mayor is going to be, but the person with the 40 point lead in the polls for an election that's a month away has said that he is not going to pursue co-locations as a strategy when he takes office, and so I question whether pursuing co-locations at this time right now moving forward in the next three months is the wisest course of action because it would be up to then a mayor; a likely mayor who has said that he does not support that policy.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: It would be up to that mayor to implement and that mayor's chancellor and with oversight from the next council, who you know, here we are passing resolutions today speaking to this very issue and calling for a moratorium on co-locations. I question whether it's setting this... pursuing this course of action now; co-locations now is setting up a kind of a collision course unnecessarily because it would be up to a new administration to implement and you know, maybe we ought to call well enough alone and wait for a new mayor to implement a new vision for the city, and I don't want to...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Undermine you as chancellor, but I think that it's worth considering whether it might not be the wisest course of action at this point in time.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So I will never ever call well enough alone when it comes to our students, quite frankly. I have a responsibility for our 1.1 million students and to pursue policies

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that we feel are in the best interests of our students and the...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I just meant... sorry, Chancellor, calling the policy of co-location well enough alone at this time.

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, I feel co-locations is a policy that benefits our students, so therefore I would never call it well enough alone and put my feet up. I am chancellor until December 31st and I have a responsibility to our 1.1 million students. So for example, just a couple of days ago I announced a three-year program in expanding the number of advanced placement classes for students in underserved communities, and that expands beyond my time as chancellor. We will continue to push forward policies that we feel benefit the students of New York City and...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: But this...

[crosstalk]

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2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We will follow it
3 through the process and by law and that's what I'm
4 doing.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, but this
6 one in particular is up to a new mayor to implement
7 and then you have a likely successor that's said
8 that he's not going to do it so...

9 [crosstalk]

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Again, I mean I
11 respect what you're saying, but again, I have a
12 responsibility to do what we feel is in the best
13 interests of our students and part of what we're
14 doing is also doing the early engagement process
15 that we've talked about in engaging the community
16 in the process and putting up on the table either
17 gray configurations, truncations or co-locations
18 that we are recommending to the panel and we've set
19 a very aggressive course over the next month of two
20 meetings in October, and I feel that's in the best
21 interests of our students, and then the new mayor
22 and the new chancellor will decide on how they want
23 to take that next step. But again, that's part of
24 my responsibility as chancellor, to look for the
25 best interests of our students, and I will never

1
2 treat our students just as I'm at the end of my
3 tenure as chancellor and then I put policies that I
4 think will benefit them in the long run.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: 'Kay,
6 Chancellor, I wanted to ask about... there's one
7 proposed co-location that's actually not in my
8 district, but I know some alumni from the school
9 and I've talked to the principal of the school, and
10 the source of concern is John Dewey High School.
11 There's a proposed co-location of John Dewey High
12 School in Brooklyn and right now there's a proposed
13 co-location, but without an actual school to
14 propose to co-locate. They're being listed with a
15 current year enrollment of 1,630 kids. The actual
16 enrollment is 300 higher than that; it's 1,928
17 children; students. The school was not on...
18 because it was targeted last year for closure it
19 wasn't on the high school handbook this year.
20 There's a number of circumstances that they brought
21 my attention to that make this seem like an ill
22 advised co-location, particularly this issue that
23 there doesn't seem to be a... there's not even a
24 school identified, so that's... it's not as if
25 there's a pressing need for a school to find a

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location. It seems like in this instance you know,
it's the...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-
hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: It's the tail
wagging the dog a little bit.

SARA KAUFMAN: So as the chancellor
mentioned, this is a proposal to offer a new high
quality option for students in Brooklyn, and the...
all of our new district schools go through a
process with our Office of New Schools, in which
new leaders are rigorously tested and evaluated in
regarding their new school plan and we believe this
new school is going to offer an option for students
in Brooklyn. It's a CT school and that's new
school is going to be a new option for kids aligned
with what the chancellor just was speaking about in
terms of our new school strategy.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: So the school is
identified; it's just not public? Is that right?

SARA KAUFMAN: The school is not... the
leader for the school is not yet identified, but it
will be identified in the coming months and we

2 typically bring out new school leaders to
3 communities to meet...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]
5 But the school itself is identified and the school
6 leader's not identified or...

7 SARA KAUFMAN: The school leader is not
8 identified and the...

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]
10 But the school itself?

11 SARA KAUFMAN: The school itself is a
12 function of what the school leader proposes, so
13 those are one and the same thing.

14 [crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: We don't have a
16 school. We're proposing a co-location without a
17 school. You see why this...

18 [crosstalk]

19 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But... but what...

20 [crosstalk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: To me this seems
22 a little backwards.

23 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: What I heard Sara
24 say... though, no, not necessarily, no, because it
25 really goes to the heart, part of what you're

1 saying because the school leader will identify with
2 the community the steps to address what guts of the
3 school will be, but I think I heard Sara indicated
4 that it will be a proposed Career Technical
5 Education School. Did I hear that correctly?
6

7 SARA KAUFMAN: Yes.

8 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And so that goes
9 to the basic foundation of what the school is, a
10 Career Technical Education new school in John Dewey
11 and then the leader working with the parts that
12 will go along with that.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, you just...
14 you have to wrap up and then we'll move...

15 [crosstalk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We can come back
18 to you a later time.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Okay, I just...
20 I would strongly urge Dewey to reconsider this
21 particularly because also enrollment in 9th grade,
22 from what I understand from the principal at Dewey,
23 would put the school on track to have an enrollment
24 of 2,500 to 2,400 kids, which would be a 100
25 percent utilized school. Also, this issue where

1
2 Dewey is saying that it's 300 kids less than what
3 their actual enrollment is, obviously if you're
4 citing enrollment to [chime] 1,640 kids and the
5 actual enrollment is [chime] 1,940 kids you know,
6 that's a discrepancy that needs to be obviously
7 cleared up before any steps are moving forward.

8 SARA KAUFMAN: Yeah, so we are
9 continuing to monitor the enrollment at Dewey. At
10 the beginning of school the enrollment,
11 particularly at our large high schools, can
12 fluctuate quite a bit and that enrollment has been
13 fluctuating and decreasing in these first few weeks
14 of school. We would obviously continue to monitor
15 the enrollment, but we do believe that there's
16 going to be space in this building for the new
17 school.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: We got a pretty
19 specific number from the principal that was 300
20 higher than what DOE is currently claiming that it
21 is, so one more reason why I just think that
22 there's issues here; not a wise path to pursue at
23 this point in time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
24 Thank you, Chancellor.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. If
3 you...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes, sir.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Wish to continue
7 questions we can put you back on the list. Council
8 Member Ruben Wills of Queens. We've been joined by
9 our colleague James Vacca of the Bronx directly in
10 front of us. Council Member Wills.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Good afternoon.
12 Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chancellor, I do want to
13 commend the DOE on your D 75, the aggressive way
14 that you're putting those into the new
15 constructions. My issues are again, with the co-
16 locations and the... I guess the lack of
17 partnership with the DOE. In your statement you
18 said that you have an issue with people that keep
19 saying give a failing school more time; failing
20 leaders and you can't kick the can down the road
21 and your chief portfolio officer just testified
22 that the new leaders are rigorously tested and
23 evaluated, but I have a problem with that because
24 it seems that some of the things in my district are
25 contradictions to what you are saying. August

1
2 Martin High School, which you're familiar with in
3 my district has had...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I am.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: Three principals
7 in the last three years, leaders that you placed
8 there with no community input, so and you snatch
9 them back out in less than a year. Richmond Hill
10 High School has the same issue, so how can we say
11 that these leaders are tested and that there's a
12 partnership or there's anything like that going on
13 with DOE if you're changing the principals
14 themselves? How are you really giving those
15 leaders; and these are not leaders that have been
16 there; how are you giving those leaders a chance to
17 actually develop a fresh and exciting new
18 culture...

19 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-
20 hm.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: In the schools
22 if this is the case?

23 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So without citing
24 specific cases that you raise, 'cause I would not
25 talk about individuals, but I will just talk about

1 the overall goal of what we're trying to achieve in
2 assessing leadership capability and delivering on
3 the results that we expect for our students, and in
4 some cases even when we place a leader in a school,
5 we do an assessment and we get feedback; we monitor
6 through both the superintendants and the networks
7 as far as performance levels or issues with a
8 leader and sometimes we find that that leader is
9 not performing up to our expectations and we'll
10 make a decision as far as the potential removal of
11 a leader of a school. And so again, not dealing
12 with the specifics, and I do know those cases, we
13 have a number of schools where for one reason or
14 another a leader may not have performed well or
15 there are issues and challenges that we need to
16 address and we feel it's in our best interest to
17 move a person out and so instead of allowing a
18 leader or a school just to exist and exist and
19 exist and as I indicated in my testimony you know,
20 kicking the can down the road and not acting; we
21 make a decision to act, but the vast majority of
22 the cases that we have in place we have leadership
23 in place that do establish the culture and the
24 environment of a school and we do not remove that
25

1 individual in either a short or long term period of
2 time and so again, it varies case by case without
3 getting into specifics, but I think we do invest in
4 what Sara was referring to our Office of New
5 Schools and our leadership development. As you may
6 know, we have a number of leadership programs that
7 we put in place, including our Leadership Academy
8 and the Lead Program. We've developed a new
9 program in making sure we have teachers who are
10 identified as future leaders. We have a
11 mentor/mentee program that we put in place. We
12 work with the CSA; I see Ernie here; in a variety
13 of different ways to make sure we try to provide
14 leadership for our schools 'cause we've empowered
15 our leadership and quite frankly changed the
16 paradigm around making sure that they're the ones
17 in charge and we've minimize the role of Tweed, but
18 there are times we're going to have to remove a
19 leader because of different types of issues.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: You spoke of
22 early engagement and I'm assuming that we're
23 talking about when we're dealing with these new
24 school ideas that are coming in?

25

1 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: That is correct,
2
3 sir.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I don't
5 understand what the definition of early engagement
6 is when we have four hearings scheduled for the
7 first 13 days of October and within 30 days after
8 that we have a PEP vote for co-locations in
9 schools.

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-
11 hm.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Especially when
13 that is as controversial as August Martin putting
14 in a success charter academy elementary school into
15 a high school that you just put a transfer school
16 in and is in the middle of a hot bed of gang
17 activity. So I don't understand what the thought
18 process was or how we can say that's early
19 engagement, but putting elementary students into a
20 high school that we're just trying to maintain a
21 certain level at we don't in our community think
22 that's a good idea. So that being said, early
23 engagement not notifying or having the tools that
24 you have or the mechanisms that you have in place
25 as far as backpacking flyers home when we know that

1
2 most students don't give the flyers to the parents
3 or notifying them on the DOE's website, which we
4 have seen has been proven not to actually indicate
5 any type of communication with the parents, I don't
6 understand how that is considered truthful or...
7 not truthful, that that is considered real early
8 engagement when we're dealing with something as
9 controversial as that. [chime]

10 SARA KAUFMAN: So over the last few
11 [chime] years we've continued based on feedback
12 as... based on feedback that we've heard about
13 continuing to improve upon our efforts to do
14 community engagement. We've made efforts to do
15 earlier and more frequent community engagement
16 regarding all of our proposals. So we make an
17 effort to reach out to communities and schools and
18 impacted stakeholders far earlier than the joint
19 public hearing, which you alluded to. So in many
20 instances we'll reach out to principals and have
21 conversations, reach out to school leadership
22 teams. We visit and attend Community Education
23 Council meetings to talk about needs for the...
24 school needs and...

25 [crosstalk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Please, I'm not trying to... I'm not trying to cut you off or be disrespectful, but I just was told...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I got one minute left.

SARA KAUFMAN: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: But if you have these things coming off of summer vacation and the parents are not really going to be focusing until September and you just spoke of having CEC meetings. Portfolio just came out to a CEC meeting in 226 last week for a hearing, a public hearing that's going to be next week and the parents were not notified in a substantial manner. How can that be justified when we're talking about doing that, especially doing that in a school such as 226 where they had enrollment of over 2,000 and change seven years ago, was on the underperforming list, a consistently dangerous list, just got off of that list and now you're putting three schools back into the same school? It just seems like it's just a ring around that [chime] just opens... I know I

1
2 have to stop. It's just it seems like it's just an
3 open speak that we're not getting any direct
4 answers on. What you're saying sounds good, but it
5 doesn't... is not practical to what's happening on
6 the ground. You spoke of "voting with your feet,"
7 and that's the third time I've heard that in four
8 days from the DOE so it must be a talking point,
9 but that you spoke of having all these new exciting
10 options and parental choices and I don't see any of
11 that in any of the proposed co-locations in my
12 district. You're just trying to stuff a school in.
13 You guys are very aware of the programs that we've
14 been paying for. We are very aware of the feeder
15 school program that we're dealing with; new dance
16 studios, telecommunication studios; some of the
17 things that you express as exciting options, but
18 none of those are even discussed in these co-
19 locations. You're just stuffing schools in and
20 giving the parents no choice of anything, so
21 "voting with your feet" really rings hollow to us
22 because the parents have no choice but to do that,
23 and then when they do or when you do open a new
24 school, you're taking the threes and fours from the
25 existing school, which puts the existing school in

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a worse off way than where they were in the beginning. I just don't understand where the communication is. I really don't understand that. I think that's the trigger point because if you had clear communications; if it was truthful; if you really wanted to communicate and have partnerships with the parental community, you would have a longer period of speaking to us, you would get the ideas of things that we thought we would need for our kids and that would have a less contentious process so you guys...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So you guys have...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: Made us contentious adversarial.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So just using one example, 'cause you've inflated a lot of points and...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: Yes, I'm sorry.

[crosstalk]

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CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Through all of that. No, I'm just saying...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: But I have one minute.

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I know and I don't have enough time to respond to all the points, but I mean with the issue of contention and not having quality choices available, I'll give you a real example in your district; I think it's your district, Councilman; of a school that was proposed for a building that people reacted to. It was around the school per se because people were excited. It was just the sharing of space and people react to that and we understand that, but we did the job. We put the notification out and we continued to put the notification out, as Sara indicated, in a variety of different ways and quite frankly, we do find backpacking to be extremely effective and the school I'm referring to is the Eagle Academy of Queens and now people have...

[crosstalk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: No, that's not
3 my district.

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Okay and...

5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: I was there at
7 the meeting...

8 [crosstalk]

9 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, people
10 fought us tooth and nail.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Mm-hm.

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Tooth and nail and
13 it was around the same basic core issue; we don't
14 want to share space; how dare you put this... and
15 it was not a charter school. Eagle Academy is not
16 a charter school. It's the issue of sharing and we
17 have a responsibility when we identify a space to
18 try to use that space effectively and make sure we
19 follow the letter of the law, which we do do, and
20 improve on the letter of the law and we go above
21 the letter of the law as far as notification is
22 concerned and we try to make sure we do it in a way
23 that is equitable to make sure that the community
24 has the information. If there are ways to improve
25 it, we're always looking for improvement, but we

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meet the letter of the law and we exceed the letter of the law as far as how we notify our parents to get the information and get the feedback out.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: Alright, thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: I mean Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I got the impression in the discussion regarding what Ruben was talking about, what came to my mind it seems as though that you're fast tracking it and moving along very, very quickly and not from a process where engaging the community in a manner in which they can be involved, but like one, two, three, let's get it done.

SARA KAUFMAN: Well...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Am I right in my listening to that?

SARA KAUFMAN: I mean in response to the specific situation that you raised in terms of the Q226 building; that's an example of a school that has been underutilized for over three years. We've had conversations with that school about the

1
2 availability of underutilized space in that
3 building many times and we have had conversations
4 with community members about specific needs for new
5 schools that that community was interested in
6 seeing in their community.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm sorry...

8 [crosstalk]

9 SARA KAUFMAN: And again and just
10 one...

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Go
12 ahead, go ahead, I'm sorry.

13 SARA KAUFMAN: In this specific... in
14 terms of this specific proposal, in the spring we
15 had conversations with the school community. We
16 spoke with the principal in advance of that
17 proposal being issued late this summer and in
18 advance of the meeting that you mentioned from last
19 week prior to the joint public hearing that will be
20 later on in October.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIS: I have
22 correspondence between the CEC and the DOE, in
23 which you canceled two meetings to meet with the
24 CEC, and just rushed and had a meeting with them...
25 this week we just had a meeting or last week we had

1
2 a meeting in regards to this and you still haven't
3 even met with the school community from the Hawtree
4 Middle school that you stepped in there last year.
5 That's a little disingenuous as far as whoever's
6 giving you that information. You have not actually
7 given us proper notification. Speaking to a
8 principal is not speaking to the stakeholders and
9 the community. You have your utilization meetings
10 and you have them with the principal; no custodians
11 are involved. I've gone over the footprint of
12 every one of the schools in my district, not just
13 the ones that you want to co-locate. Your EIS
14 statement says that you do not... you wish not to
15 impact the enrollment of the school, yet you've
16 already impacted the enrollment of 226, the Virgil
17 Grisson School with Hawtree, and now you're trying
18 to stuff a high school in there, all the while
19 school utilization of Queens told me that
20 Portfolios from the city told them not to go
21 forward with programs that I have. I have fully
22 funded two dance studios, a telecommunications
23 studio and the black box studio. They said that
24 you told them not to go forward with it because you
25 wanted to use the space for co-locations. You

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wanted to have the rooms available to count in that, so if any of that is true it kind of shatters what you're saying today.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I think that that's where the follow up... we need to have... you know, maybe you need to have a meeting with that and flush it out totally so that we get to the bottom of it.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So the only... only point I will say to that...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Go ahead.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And again, I haven't been part of that conversation. Yeah, I'm always reluctant when someone tells you... not you specifically, but this is just a general you know, I heard or someone told me and told me this. I mean it's like the telephone game; you know, what's real and what's not real and so not talking about you, Councilman, but just in the word of someone said this; someone said that; well, I hear this; without any concrete attribution and that's one thing. Now you did say about some type of communication with DOE canceling. You know, Sara

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can potentially respond to that, but you know, I don't rely on what the hearsay is because people have hearsay for their own purposes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright, let me... you'll follow up on that, but Ruben I'm sure you will follow up on that.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLS: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But let's turn to our colleague, Lew Fidler of Brooklyn followed by our colleague, Eric Ulrich of Queens. We've also been joined by Jumaane Williams of Brooklyn and Dan Garodnick of Manhattan.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Chancellor, I have to tell there's just so much that's been said on this side of the table that I agree with you know, and I'm just going to just quickly follow up on...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Councilman Wills' point, which it doesn't matter how early the engagement is if the engagement isn't real, right? As Councilman Vann has said you know, when have you ever heard the community that said this doesn't

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make sense; this doesn't work? And you know, you send down... DOE sends down some designated pinata to sit there and listen to the community almost unanimously almost every time tell you why in their view it doesn't work. When has the decision ever been changed? And so it's really kind of... you know, you said the question. What's real? What's not real? Well, we know what's not real, okay. The process is not real, alright and you know, you know, we get that and I think in all candor you have to acknowledge that if the process were real once or twice the end of the process would have resulted in a change of decision, alright?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, if that's my threshold, we've met that. I mean once or twice.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Well, yeah.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]

We've...

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: [interposing]

Out of 650 or you...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No, I mean you... you said once or twice so.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: And you know,
3 listen, not in my experience. You know, you know,
4 let me also... let me take a step back 'cause I
5 also want to associate myself with the opening
6 comments of the Chair. I mean I do enjoy these
7 little moments we have together and I doubt we're
8 going to run into each other jogging on the street
9 someplace so [laughter] we'll have to find a...

10 [crosstalk]

11 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: You're welcome
12 to...

13 [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Different
15 way...

16 [crosstalk]

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Join us.

18 [crosstalk]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: To break bread
20 and meet...

21 [crosstalk]

22 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I'll meet you in
23 pool on the bike path.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: The bike path.
25 What are you, Sadik-Khan here? Come on. Alright,

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so I mean actually I do... though we have deep philosophical...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I get my own clippings.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Differences, Mr. Chancellor...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I do very much respect...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: The work and the job and the sincerity of the work you do. In the next three weeks, I've got two co-locations hearings in my district and you know, you know, you pointed out that you have a responsibility to the students to do what you have to do and you know, we all have a job to do until December 31st at midnight and I'm going to do mine and I'm glad to hear that you're doing yours.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

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COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But part of that responsibility is not taking steps that are likely to be reversed because they're going to be contrary to the next policy of the folks that follow us or that are going to cost the taxpayers time, money, resources, not to mention adgeda (sp?) The two co-locations in question; one is actually Council Member Williams' district at Andries Hudde Junior High school and the other is at Roy H. Mann in my district; you know are adamantly opposed by all the local stakeholders. I can almost guarantee you at both of those hearings we're going to hear unanimous opposition, except for the people that get bused in by the charter school probably in their employ. You know, what about that? I mean what about... I mean I understand you know, yes, putting in more advanced placement courses; that's going to go on for a long time after you're gone. I mean that's not a controversial policy. The next administration's not likely to undo it, but why would you go to the time, money, resource and expense of doing something that not only the community opposes, the next administration's likely to oppose and may very well undo? Why would...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: We do that?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So leadership is not about testing the wind and putting my finger up on what the next administration may or may or not do. I'm not one who can prognosticate what the administration will do and running for office is different than governing once you're in office. So it is part of my responsibility and our responsibility to continue to put forward policies that we believe in and so I'm not going to attest which way the candidate is going to go or not going to go and then make my decisions on a person who is running for office. I work for a person who is in office right now and I'm in office as chancellor and so that is part of my responsibility and then that is part of the decision making that we have and I take it seriously. I'm not using this as just a talk point or anything else. I take my job extremely seriously and the people that you refer to as piñatas are hard working staff of the Department of Education who are out in the communities engaging the community and doing their

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job and doing their job sometimes under very trying
circumstances and...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yeah, they're
absolutely doing their job and there's absolutely
trying circumstances...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But I mean...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But not...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: To proclaim a name
for them; I will not allow my staff to be referred
to and I know you didn't mean it like this, as
piñatas. They're out there engaging and they're
doing their jobs and they're doing it extremely
well and so that's part of my job, to put forward
the policies that I believe in and not worrying...
you know, one of the reasons, and I say this to
group for a specific purpose in that I made it very
clear early on that I would not... not that they
would keep me anyway, be the chancellor come
January 1st 'cause I didn't want to be perceived
that any decisions that I make as chancellor in

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2 putting forward is to curry favor one way or the
3 other. This is not about currying a favor. This
4 is my belief around our students and doing what we
5 feel and we've been doing over the last 11 and a
6 half years, what's in the best interests of our
7 students. [chime] That's what this is about, and
8 so when the new mayor comes in office that mayor
9 will make decisions on who their chancellor will be
10 prior to that. We'll work on a very smooth
11 transition plan 'cause we put that mechanism in
12 place and we look forward to working with the new
13 mayor and identified person who would be the
14 chancellor as far as that transition is concerned
15 and then that person will make their decision, but
16 I can't make my decisions on wondering who's going
17 to be in office January 1st. That's not the right
18 thing to do for our children.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: You know, Mr.
20 Chancellor, first of all, I think you're well aware
21 of the fact and I think you acknowledged that I did
22 not use the term piñata as pejorative phrase...

23 [crosstalk]

24 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And I
25 acknowledged that.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But you know, I
3 have a great deal of...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I just don't
6 like...

7 [crosstalk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Sympathy for...

9 [crosstalk]

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Names attached.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: A person who
12 can step in front of the room and take harangues of
13 parents who think that it's up to them whether or
14 not the decision is made and to me, engagement is
15 more than that. It's more than having people sit
16 there and yell at you. It's giving you know,
17 answers and it's engaging in dialogue about what's
18 good and what's bad, but that's...

19 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But...

20 [crosstalk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: That's the...

22 [crosstalk]

23 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But I think you
24 raise a very solid point also, and I know that a
25 lot of times our discussions are on the extremes at

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2 times. There's a lot of middle that place that we
3 just don't discuss because it's just not part of
4 how you need to represent your constituencies in
5 their belief, and there are a lot of engagements
6 that take place that are not the yelling a lot of
7 panel meetings, believe it or not, where we have on
8 some issues, not necessarily this topic, unanimous
9 votes, but we don't have yelling taking place
10 [chime] and so we always have the debate on the
11 extremes and there's a lot of middle that happens
12 that also benefit our students.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But as you
14 pointed out, not so much on this issue and I really
15 would say that were the council to pass a law now,
16 knowing that it would be overturned in January that
17 was going to cost the taxpayers money, we'd be
18 subject to a considerable amount of criticism no
19 matter how right we thought that policy was.

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But you would not
21 stop your fiduciary responsibility in looking at an
22 engaging and developing of laws and passing laws or
23 resolutions that you feel are right and the next
24 administration...

25 [crosstalk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yeah.

3 [crosstalk]

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And...

5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Actually I
7 probably would factor into that decision at a very,
8 very high price.

9 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Wow.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: The fact
11 whether or not I was wasting taxpayers' money and
12 causing unnecessary aggravation and disruption to
13 the lives of parents and children, I would probably
14 well, you know, recognize that golly, gee, there'd
15 been an election, and I certainly wish Washington
16 would recognize this, there's been an election and
17 the people have spoken.

18 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well...

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: [interposing]

20 Okay, so I mean I do believe that...

21 [crosstalk]

22 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, the people
23 haven't spoken yet, sir.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Mm... you know
25 well... [laughter]

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2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: They have not
3 spoken yet.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Alright, you
5 know that...

6 [crosstalk]

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I mean there's an
8 election...

9 [crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: That's true.

11 [crosstalk]

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: In November.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yeah, that's
14 true, okay.

15 [crosstalk]

16 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: There's an
17 election in November.

18 [crosstalk]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Yeah, that's
20 true, but you know.

21 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And then I am...
22 and the mayor is still the...

23 [crosstalk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: And we could
25 take...

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[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mayor until...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: A small wager
on that.

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: December 31st.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Alright, now
I... you know, I really had intended to get to the
core of the two co-locations, both of which involve
putting an elementary school in with junior high
school or intermediate schools. Now, I know I've
been out of junior high school for a long time, but
you know, my recollection was that kids at that age
even the quote unquote good kids are pretty
obnoxious at that age, you know and I just kind of
wonder what the efficacy is of...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-
hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Putting very,
very small children into that building. I think
when you talk to parents they are unanimously
opposed to that idea and I'd like to know...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]

Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Why we're going ahead to do that even though we're probably not going to do it in three months anyway.

SARA KAUFMAN: Well, we have lots of examples of buildings across the city that are obviously co-located, but that are co-located with various grades from K to 12. We have elementary schools that serves... that are in the same building as middle schools, we have middle schools that are in the same building as high schools and we see that these buildings that have multiple grade levels often do work really, really well together and it's you know, incumbent on the principals in that building who work together as a building council to make sure that they've put together the right safety plans and shared space plans that work best for both schools regardless of the grade span; if it's two elementary schools together or an elementary and a high school together, and we see this work time and time again in buildings all across the city.

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COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I'd love to see the data that supports that conclusion...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But certainly as to Roy H. Mann, we don't yet have an elementary school in the building. We've had safety problems on and off for the last 12 years that I've been the councilman. We've had numerous principal changes. We had one principal in there that did a fabulous job of improving safety. He lasted a year, you guys promoted him and you know, then we started to have the problems again, so I don't know how you can make a decision like that in the vacuum of what's actually going on in terms of school safety at the school, and if Mr. Chairman, I could ask one other question and then I'll shut up and hear the answer. On your graduation statistics...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I'd like to know... I mean the numbers are certainly shocking, okay, shockingly good. I'd like to know whether you have any data that compares the entering classes that provide each of those two...

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2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: The grad and...

3 [crosstalk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: They...

5 [crosstalk]

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And drop-out?

7 [crosstalk]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: The... right

9 and what the demographics are, what their
10 educational record and background was and whether
11 or not you also factored out any increases that
12 were given in equivalency courses and equivalency
13 credits.

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, we'd be glad
15 to get you any information that you require. I
16 mean we have to follow very strict guidelines as
17 far as how one categorizes graduation and drop-out
18 rates and the state several years ago even
19 toughened the drop-out requirement even more so in
20 as far as validation of discharges and what it
21 means and then we've toughened our requirements as
22 well, so we can get you all the information as far
23 as both demographics and cohort measurements, the
24 four, five and six year rates and any way you want
25 to cut, we can cut it and we have standards in

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2 place that we follow and as I indicated, it has
3 gone up significantly and just one other factoid
4 just as FYI, I guess around three years ago we made
5 sure that we didn't have two standards because at
6 one point we were always reporting I think as early
7 as 1986 the city rate, and then the state really
8 started to capture the rate and then I guess around
9 two or three years ago we reported out the state
10 rate, but we still keep track just for comparative
11 purposes of the city rate in comparison back to
12 1986 so we can see a constant trend line as well,
13 so we can provide that to you, which shows a
14 distinction and also what's included in the cohort
15 and what's not included in the cohort, so we'd be
16 glad to get you that information.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I'll look
18 forward to the information, but it's you know, I
19 want to be sure they're not comparing apples and
20 oranges here and when you tell me that the
21 graduation rate at Wingate was x and now it's y...

22 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Oh, yeah, I'll be
23 glad to do that.

24 [crosstalk]

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COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: It's probably
Due to the fact that Wingate doesn't exist anymore.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, but it's the
same... it's a building and the same basic draw of
students.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. We've
been joined by our colleague, Danny Dromm of
Queens, and before I turn to our colleague, Eric
Ulrich, I want to ask one quick question. How many
schools are currently co-located and do you have
the breakdown of for example, the different various
elementary, intermediate and/or high school or...
and then we'll turn to our colleague, Eric Ulrich.

SARA KAUFMAN: So there are about just
over 1,100 schools that are co-located across 538
DOE buildings. About 10 percent of the schools
that are co-located are charter schools, so the
vast majority of schools when we're talking about
co-locations are actually in district charter
schools; district or district co-locations, excuse
me, or as the chancellor mentioned earlier,
district schools that are co-located with District
75 programs. I don't have the breakdown...

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actually I do. There are... out of the 538 buildings that are co-located... [interposing]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Uh-huh.

SARA KAUFMAN: There are...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: This right here?

SARA KAUFMAN: Yes, let me get this, one second. There are about 133 buildings that are co-located with elementary and middle schools, 63 buildings that have middle school and high schools that are mixed and 196 buildings that have K to 12. Many of those buildings though are... that number is impacted by the District 75 numbers, which serves students in all grades.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, okay, so you said 133 elementary and middle, 63 middle and high schools and 196 K to 12 and many of those; do we mean all of them or just the K to 12?

SARA KAUFMAN: The K to 12 number is grossly impacted by the District 75...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: By D 75.

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Co-locations, yes.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, okay and if you can provide us with those...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
Sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Statistics then...

SARA KAUFMAN: Absolutely.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, be glad to.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I appreciate it very...

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And one quick question and this came up before when we were looking at numbers, and I don't remember what hearing it was, but all of the districts had co-locations except one district was District 26. Is that... what's the situation with District 26? Do they have any co-locations and if so, what configurations? And at that time and even now, I believe District 26 is the highest performing district overall in the city.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: D 2 and D 26 basically.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yes, so...

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2 SARA KAUFMAN: I'll have to get back to
3 you on the district... on the number of schools
4 that are co-located in District 26. I believe that
5 there are, but we can get that information.

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Depending on the
7 length of the hearing let us do our due diligence
8 and we'll get back to you.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, very good.

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: With specifics.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let's turn to
12 Eric Ulrich, our colleague from Queens.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Thank you, Mr.
14 Chairman. I also happen to know; I don't represent
15 District 26, but I do know from representing from
16 Queens that that happens to be one of the most
17 overcrowded districts, so that may be one of the
18 reasons why...

19 [crosstalk]

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: There aren't a
22 great deal of co-locations there. I don't know,
23 but I do know that the high schools and the middle
24 schools up there are bursting at the seams and
25 you'll often read in the Queen's local papers about

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parents rallying for you know, additional schools to be built there and so I don't know. I don't want to answer the question for him. I know that they will follow up.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, I can answer that just as a quick aside. I mean...

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: [interposing]
Yeah.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: You are correct, but we want to be, especially since we're sworn in now, want to be totally accurate [laughter] with our...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Yes.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Information.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: You know you...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And so...

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: You were sworn...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And...

[crosstalk]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: In, but we
3 weren't.

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: So...

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I know so...

7 [laughter]

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's the
9 problem. We should have some role reversal here
10 but... [laughter]

11 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: That's right.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: All council
13 members raise your hand! Yeah, but...

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I'm just glad that
15 this was a swearing in and not a swearing at.
16 Yeah, and but the other thing is it's so
17 fascinating 'cause when we proposed to build
18 schools there then in certain communities of D 26,
19 we get pushed back as well, so we'll get you the
20 accurate information.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Yeah, I'd like
22 the time back on the clock, please. [laughter]
23 That took a minute away. I want to say,
24 Chancellor, I think that you're doing a very good
25 job and I said that after Hurricane Sandy. and I

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2 would say the same before Hurricane Sandy 'cause my
3 district, as you know, was severely impacted by the
4 storm and Marc Sternberg did a phenomenal job of
5 helping those students who were displaced who were
6 living in Brooklyn or in other parts of Queens make
7 sure that they can get their lives back to normal
8 and I think that that is key to a student's success
9 and also maintaining that level of stability, so I
10 want to thank you again and Marc Sternberg.

11 Ironically, I've been calling Marc Sternberg for a
12 few months; he didn't call me back. Now I know
13 why, because he's no longer working for the
14 Department of Education.

15 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Not yet.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: But...

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Soon to be.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Tell him he
19 owes me a phone call and I wish him well in his
20 endeavors, but a few questions on the topics that
21 we are speaking about today. Obviously the issue
22 of school co-location is very controversial.
23 People have very strong feelings about it. I don't
24 believe that it is always, and I mean that in the
25 absolute term, a bad thing and I use bad very

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2 loosely. For instance, in my district several
3 years ago, the Department of Education decided to
4 co-locate and create a new high school, Robert H.
5 Goddard High School, in the same building as the
6 Robert H. Goddard Middle School, which turned out
7 to be a very good idea and the middle school acts
8 as a feeder to the high school and they share space
9 and when I allocate discretionary capital money to
10 renovate a media center or a computer lab, both
11 principals work very closely together and both
12 schools are benefitting from that, so I'm able to
13 give money for two schools for the price of one,
14 and the relationship there is very good and I think
15 that students in the middle school are aspiring to
16 go to the school you know, the high school. What
17 happens though I believe and people have the
18 sincere belief; some of my colleagues; that when
19 you co-locate two or three schools that are
20 competing for the same grade for the same students
21 and fighting over the same resources that
22 necessarily that that doesn't create competition,
23 healthy competition. That's actually creating
24 animosity in the same building, so you know, to
25 what extent has the Department of Education looked

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2 at renting Catholic schools who are closed or
3 renting other facilities to put newly created
4 schools in rather than creating this animosity and
5 this unhealthy competition if that is in fact the
6 belief that we're assuming?

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So I'll try to
8 divide your questions in two ways. One, our goal
9 is to not create animosity, even though I know
10 animosity gets created at times, and through I
11 think the process that Sara alluded to or said
12 earlier and we can go into more detail both by the
13 establishment of building councils, but also trying
14 to partner with schools we try to minimize that and
15 I think the chair in his opening talked about some
16 of the issues that had existed before that we
17 worked very hard to correct around potentially
18 unequal funding and also the law that was passed
19 with the new School Governance Law as well around
20 our capital investment if money is raised on one
21 side then it has to be equally invested in all the
22 schools in the building and so from a capital point
23 of view we've done that as far as trying to make
24 sure there's equity in those type of capital
25 allocations, but it doesn't address though that

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2 each school whether they are district schools or
3 district charter schools may want to use the
4 dollars differently and so you'll have different
5 items that are purchased so while they may have the
6 same capital investment, they may appropriate those
7 dollars in a different manner.

8 Now going to the core of your question
9 around you know, the new schools, as you heard me
10 indicate in my opening of my remarks, that you
11 know, we've had two successive capital plans that
12 have been roughly \$25 billion and as a result of
13 that we've created 126,000 new seats and we have 35
14 projects still in process of gut rehabs, which
15 include former parochial schools as well, which
16 we've used in a very creative way. I think the
17 uniqueness of the parochial schools is that the
18 church doesn't sell the space. They lease the
19 space, so as long as it's a church space then we
20 have to abide by the church rule and so that's why
21 a lot of the leased space with churches is in the
22 elementary grades, so we're not in conflict with
23 the church teachings, but at the same time, we have
24 been very creative in working with the church as
25 far as having offsite like in Queens at John Adams

1 High School where have a program in a former church
2 facility where birth control is offered offsite, so
3 we've been able to work freely with that. You'll
4 be getting from me in the very near future as part
5 of the guidelines our new capital plan and I'm
6 reviewing that now and the new capital plan will
7 talk about the next five-year capital plan that
8 will outlive us, and so it's a plan that we have a
9 responsibility to develop that will be over the
10 next five years that will impact the system,
11 similar to what happened to us when we were [chime]
12 in office with a five-year capital plan. That'll
13 [chime] address some of the overcrowding, but it
14 doesn't necessarily address the animosity and part
15 of those capital plan dollars from the development
16 in the new schools will develop new co-located
17 schools, so similar in your district where we
18 developed the Elmhurst campus in Queens. We
19 developed a new school building that had three
20 schools that were housed in that building and that
21 was the way it was designed. So the new capital
22 plan will take that into consideration in making
23 sure that a lot of it will be with share space of
24 schools, which will also relieve some of the
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2 pressure in the overcrowded districts as well as
3 developing co-located options.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: And my second
5 question very quickly 'cause I know my time has run
6 out. Aside from the animosity factor, the morale
7 among teachers is so low right now. The teachers
8 that live in my district and that I represent, they
9 feel very unappreciated and they work incredibly
10 hard. These are educated professionals and I know
11 that you have at every opportunity and occasion
12 that you have praised them and thanked them for the
13 job that they do, but you know, in your opinion, we
14 are now facing the reality that there will be a new
15 administration; potentially...

16 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: A new schools
18 chancellor. What do you think the Department of
19 Education can do in the future, beyond the
20 successes that you've been able to accomplish, to
21 boost the morale among teachers?

22 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, I mean I
23 don't want to make a recommendation for the future,
24 'cause I can see the headline "Chancellor Makes
25 Recommendation to New Chancellor," and I don't want

1 that to be misconstrued at all. I think we have
2 done a lot of things to address the morale of our
3 teachers, but all of our staff right now are
4 working very hard to implement new things, so we
5 have a new evaluation system, we have Common Core.
6 You have a lot of new things that are going on in
7 the system and our teachers have been working
8 extremely hard on behalf of their students and
9 quite frankly, their focus has been let me go into
10 my classroom; let me teach; let me get my students
11 prepared for that next grade and to be college and
12 career ready and by singing their praises on a
13 regular basis and holding them accountable as far
14 as performance, which is done in a way that's not
15 denigrating them, but talking about how we can
16 improve them and I think an evaluation system,
17 quite frankly, will go a long way in doing that.
18 Instead of having a two-tiered evaluation system
19 right now having a four-tiered evaluation system
20 that will greatly improve both the feedback and the
21 observation process for our teachers where they're
22 getting regular feedback in a variety of different
23 ways and then having teacher improvement plan in
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place to allow them to grow and I think those types of things will help tremendously as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: I want to thank you, I want to thank the chair and I want to reiterate before my respect and admiration for you as chancellor. I think that you have done a very good job and I believe that it's your congenial style and your approach and the respect that so many of us I know have for you, even when we disagree with you, that sets you apart from your predecessor and has been able to tone down some of the rhetoric and actually have a good conversation about how we improve...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Thank you, sir.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: The New York City Public School System, so thank you, Chancellor.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Thank you, sir.

COUNCIL MEMBER ULRICH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. We're going to turn to Margaret Chin, but I'm going to

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ask a very quick question, Margaret. Can you tell me... someone asked a question from the public on twitter. What is the highest number of schools co-located in one location?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Which district has the highest number? No.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No, not what... what school or what building has the highest number of co-locations? How many schools are co-located that...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: In a building what's the...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yes.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Highest number? Offhand I... do you know the answer?

JOSE RUIZ: Yes, I believe that is Stevenson in the Bronx. I believe that is Stevenson in the Bronx. It is my cluster. It has elementary school, middle school and high school students and safety is up at least 50 percent there.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: How many schools?

How many schools?

JOSE RUIZ: About nine schools.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Nine schools.

JOSE RUIZ: Including the Pre-K Program, yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: and that school was originally... what's the size of that school like as far as utilization? How many numbers?

JOSE RUIZ: The building...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Yeah.

JOSE RUIZ: Utilization; we don't have the exact number. It is around 3,500, uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: About 3,500.

JOSE RUIZ: Yes and...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And you have nine small schools in there?

JOSE RUIZ: That's correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: From... you said from Pre-K to high school?

JOSE RUIZ: That's correct.

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2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And that's the
3 building I referred to in my testimony that used to
4 have to pull down the gates and so...

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]
6 Okay.

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: It's creative use
8 of the campus.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay and just for
10 the record just identify yourself again, if you
11 don't mind, and your position.

12 JOSE RUIZ: I am Jose Ruiz, cluster
13 leader, Cluster 6.

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Of cluster what?

15 JOSE RUIZ: Cluster leader of Cluster
16 6.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, 6, okay.
18 Thank you. Go ahead.

19 SARA KAUFMAN: Can I...

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]
21 Yeah.

22 SARA KAUFMAN: Can I add something to
23 that? I...

24 [crosstalk]

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sure.

2 [crosstalk]

3 SARA KAUFMAN: I just wanted to... the
4 average of organizations across all buildings in
5 New York City is 2.3, so even...

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] 2.3
7 is the average number.

8 SARA KAUFMAN: Of all buildings
9 across...

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] And
11 that includes...

12 [crosstalk]

13 SARA KAUFMAN: Across the city.

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The D 75...

16 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: in that number?

18 Is that...

19 [crosstalk]

20 SARA KAUFMAN: It does.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Correct?

22 SARA KAFUMAN: Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: How many District
24 75s are there, in essence, because of the policy of
25 DOE to have children... D 75 and those are children

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

with the highest needs in the district. I just want to sort of like...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]

Sure, that's a great question.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You know, get a sense of how many of those?

SARA KAUFMAN: There are 59 unique District 75 organizations that are co-located with different schools. That's not the number of District 75 programs within a building. District 75 programs often are one school that's located in multiple different...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]

SARA KAUFMAN: Different buildings, but there are 59 unique District 75 schools that are co-located with other buildings.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, good.

SARA KAUFMAN: Other schools.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Margaret Chin, our colleague from Manhattan.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you, Chair. I have a couple of questions. The first one is do you do an EIS every time you propose a co-location?

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2 SARA KAUFMAN: Yes. Well, what... we
3 do an EIS every time there is a co-location with
4 existing schools. There are instances in which
5 there is new buildings that were designed to serve
6 more than one school, which the chancellor alluded
7 to, in which we would not do a proposal for the co-
8 location if they are both new schools going into a
9 new building.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, so in the
11 old school, right, there's a lot of skepticism in
12 the community that it's just a rubberstamp, so when
13 you do the EIS how many times has... has there ever
14 been an EIS ever found that there's negative impact
15 on the school?

16 SARA KAUFMAN: So and each of our EISs
17 goes through a careful assessment of what the
18 impact of a new co-location could be, whether
19 that's on the enrollment of a new school, of
20 programming at the new school. All schools that
21 are existing schools and buildings have the ability
22 and we give leverage to the principals to determine
23 how they want to program their schools, so
24 certainly there are instances in which offerings to
25 schools change over time, which happens in all

1 schools regardless of if a new school is being co-
2 located in that building, so we do take a careful
3 look. If there are... if construction is going to
4 be needed in a building we make that clear in our
5 Educational Impact Statement and we look at the
6 impact again, from an enrollment perspective, from
7 a programming perspective, from an admissions
8 perspective of the co-location on a new school and
9 we again, rely on our building councils to work
10 with the principals to work with each other to
11 figure out what the best route for it is from a
12 shared space perspective, and we leave a lot of
13 that up to principals because they know what works
14 best in their own schools.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But don't you do
17 the EI... you do the EIS before you do the co-
18 location, right?

19 SARA KAUFMAN: Correct.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So how long do
21 you spend on doing that?

22 SARA KAUFMAN: How... how long...

23 [crosstalk]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And...

25 {crosstalk}

2 SARA KAUFMAN: Do we spend on...

3 [crosstalk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: On you know,
5 doing that study and also interviewing and talking
6 to the existing principals and the parents in the
7 existing school before you bring in another school?

8 SARA KAUFMAN: So we only propose co-
9 locations that we think are going to work. We do
10 an extensive analysis and if we don't think that a
11 co-location is going to work in a particular
12 building we don't propose that co-location so we...

13 [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, last year,
15 right, in my district...

16 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] Yeah.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: At Murry
18 Bergtraum, DOE co-located a CTE school there.

19 SARA KAUFMAN: Yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: It didn't work
21 out because you guys didn't do all the study
22 because you... it was the architect and landscape
23 CTE school, but it wasn't appropriate, so you have
24 to now remove it and bring in another one to the
25 school.

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SARA KAUFMAN: Yep, so in that instance, absolutely we would... you know, the ideal scenario would've been that we were able to identify the appropriate facility for the Mather School that you're speaking of from the beginning. The impact of that school is not an impact on Bergtraum; rather we learned information about what the specific facility needs were going to be for that new school and unfortunately, Murry Bergtraum's buildings do not accommodate that need. It had to do with ventilation and cleaning for the specific CTE Program that that school is going to offer from a carpentry perspective. So that school is going to... we have proposed that the new CTE school that opened in the Bergtraum building will move to the location of the new Emergency Management School at Graphics. Next year, obviously it would've been great if we had been able to identify that issue with the facility in Bergtraum, but both of those schools are prepared for the move next year and you know, will be working to make sure that their new...

[crosstalk]

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, right
3 now...

4 [crosstalk]

5 SARA KAUFMAN: Facilities meet...

6 [crosstalk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You are
8 proposing...

9 [crosstalk]

10 SARA KAUFMAN: Their needs.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You are
12 propose... DOE is proposing another CTE school into
13 Bergtraum. At the same time, you're proposing to
14 put in an elementary school from a charter
15 elementary school, Success Academy, into Bergtraum,
16 which is a high school, which the community feels
17 is really inappropriate. I mean if you want to
18 talk about offering choice to a high school student
19 put in another CTE school; give the student their
20 choice. But why are you putting a charter...
21 elementary charter in a high school?

22 SARA KAUFMAN: So we are going... there
23 will be a CTE school in the Bergtraum building and
24 we are proposing that the Urban Assembly School for
25 Emergency Management, which opened about a month

1
2 ago in the Graphics campus, will move to the
3 Bergtraum building next year and will take the
4 exact same space [chime] that we had identified for
5 the Mather School [chime] that's partners with the
6 National Park service, and that National Park
7 Service School will move and take the space that
8 had originally been allocated for the Emergency
9 Management School at Graphics. So those two
10 schools have the exact same enrollment, they are
11 both CTE schools and they will switch with the...
12 essentially we're proposing that they switch based
13 on the facility needs.

14 In terms of the question around the
15 proposal of an elementary school in Bergtraum, as I
16 had mentioned before, we do have many buildings in
17 which an elementary school shares space with high
18 schools. Another such example in Manhattan is the
19 Brandeis campus, where we proposed the success...
20 Upper West Success a few years ago. That school is
21 co-located with I believe three or four high
22 schools and there's been a tremendous success at
23 that campus in terms of the high school sharing
24 space with the elementary school and we've seen
25 that work really well. We've been able to do some

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construction in that building to help the
building...

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, I...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Safe for both
elementary...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You can say...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: And high school.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Yeah, but in this
school, right, there has been security issues,
safety issues, students {chime} have to be escorted
you know, to the subways. So the community and
parents there really don't think it's appropriate
to bring in an elementary school into that school.
So that will be discussed I guess...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Duly noted.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: We will be
discussing that at the PEP meeting. The other one
that I just wanted to raise was that I wrote a
letter to the chancellor about another high school
in my district, which is also being proposed for

1 co-location. This is the University Neighborhood
2 High School and the response that I got back was,
3 "There's space in the school and it'll be okay." I
4 mean but that's not what we were raising. The
5 issue is that it is a very old building. It is
6 100- year old building. It doesn't have a
7 lunchroom. It doesn't have a gym. It doesn't have
8 an auditorium. The classrooms are very small. It
9 cannot hold up to 34 high school students.
10 Hallways are very narrow, not enough bathrooms. We
11 said a lot of that in the letter and the response
12 that I got back was you know, with all the
13 regulations and everything and it said, "Oh,
14 there's room for 694 students." So it's... I mean
15 I just urge you, Chancellor, you should come down
16 and visit that building and see for yourself
17 whether you could put another 400 high school kids
18 in there. There's already about close to 300 high
19 school kids who are doing well in the school, and
20 we want the kids there to continue to do well, but
21 putting another 400 high school kids where there is
22 no space for them.

24 SARA KAUFMAN: So we know that this
25 building, the M446 building is not you know, an

1 example of the most fabulous facility we have in
2 New York City, but we did a thorough review of
3 space. We've been to that building many times and
4 we conducted a walk through with the Office of
5 Space Planning and have determined that there is
6 available space in that building to house a new
7 school. To clarify something on the enrollment of
8 the new school, the new school will serve
9 approximately 300, 350 new students. The EIS
10 represents or mentions a higher number of students
11 because this is a proposal for a new 9 to 14
12 school. The students that stay in that school and
13 have the opportunity free of charge to maintain or
14 to pursue an associate's degree and a CTE endorsed
15 diploma. Those students are not likely to spend as
16 much time in the building as the students who are
17 in grades 9 to 12, so we expect and hope that
18 students will stay in that school through grades 13
19 and 14 as they pursue an associate's degree and EIS
20 accounts for those additional students, but those
21 students are not expected to be in the building.
22 They're expected to be taking college level
23 courses.
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2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well, we just
3 want to be on the record. We...

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
5 Sure.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Absolutely do not
7 agree with you on these two co-location situations,
8 so you'll be continuing to hear from us and the
9 community. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now we'll turn to
11 our colleague, Jumaane Williams of Brooklyn
12 followed by colleague Danny Dromm of Queens.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you,
14 Mr. Chair. Thank you, our chancellor and all. I
15 do want to start by saying I actually appreciate
16 the sincerity that you have in really trying to do
17 what you think is best to educate our children,
18 even though I disagree a lot of what is happening.
19 I do think not everything that's happened is bad.
20 I don't want to throw the baby out with the bath
21 water. I will say one of the problems I have with
22 the administration is whether it's good or bad if
23 you take a spoonful of sugar and try to shove it
24 down someone's throat, they are going to
25 regurgitate it, even though sugar tastes pretty

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good, and I feel this is what this administration has done on every single policy whether it's education or not; tried to ram it down people's throat whether or not people are saying, "Hold up, I'm actually choking right now. Let me get a chance to figure out what it is that's going down my throat." And I get worried because some of the things that I think... I'm a public school baby from preschool to Master's and I'm very proud of that. You may find it very hard to believe, but I was a bit of a troublemaker in school and {laughter} but some of the things that I think...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] I'm under oath, so I won't... [laughter]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Some of the things that I think helped guide me through; I'm worried that if I went to these schools now, I wouldn't be... I would've been thrown out if there were a bunch of things that they actually attempted to do didn't happen, then that maybe I wouldn't be where I was. My mother was annoyingly involved in my business when it came to being in school, which is quite helpful as an older person; not very good when you're a teenager. I had teachers,

1 particularly Miss Ned [phonetic] in the 5th grade,
2 that were allowed to reach me in ways that she may
3 not be allowed to reach me now in the confines of
4 what's going on in schools now. So that really
5 troubles me that I feel like parents don't feel
6 they have the voice that they had and that teachers
7 feel they don't have some of the flexibility that
8 they had, and I'm concerned 'cause I know the
9 graduation rate is a bit better now, but still, I
10 don't believe people are graduating college ready,
11 as noticed by the many, many people who need
12 remedial work when they go into college, or career
13 ready, and when it comes to the co-locations again,
14 the fourth co-location is the charter schools, and
15 charter schools I'm not even as of right against.
16 It's just the way it's been handled by this
17 administration. So I got one in Tilden High
18 School, which unfortunately slipped by me when I
19 took my eye off the ball for a second, but it's an
20 elementary school and a place with three high
21 schools and none of the principals believe that
22 they were consulted when this was happening, and
23 this was a school that was failing and actually is
24 doing much better now. Instead of taking credit
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for turning that school around, you shove an elementary in and I was told it's because they need access... the elementary school needed access to more seats, but that just wasn't true. That was just a lie. Like there was a school... they needed seats for better performing schools and there's a school around the corner that actually is performing quite well, and doesn't have as much students as it needs and now as mentioned, Hudde, I thought we won that one; I thought we were off the hook and here you go again, coming back and trying to shove that one down our throats.

I have a couple of questions that I want to ask and I know...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I'm running out of time. The first one, has there been an instance where public opposition, whether CEC or the hearings, has led you to say that we would not do this co-location or the school closure?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Absent of going to court?

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CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Oh, so what was... what caused that public response to cause you to say we would not have this co-location and...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure and as I indicated in my, I think, opening testimony or maybe it was also in response to a question probably prior to you coming in, is that the process is that before we get to the panel I will take a look at all of the requests that are pending before the panel and go through it, take a look at the review of the public hearings that have taken place and I'll meet with all of the members who are part of my team who participated in a leadership role at those hearings and go down each school as far as the validity or lack thereof of what we're proposing and then make decisions based on that. In addition to that, I do listen to what people have to say as well; as well as I take both formal and informal visits to schools and get a sense firsthand; not to every school that people want me to come to per se, but to go into a lot of schools

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without any entourage to get a personal feel of what's going on and there have been some decisions where we have changed our minds as well.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Which schools?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sara can give you the exact schools.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And this was without being brought to court?

SARA KAUFMAN: Yeah, so in terms of particularly in regard to the question about phase outs, we start... we have conversations with many more schools than we end up actually proposing for phase out. Last year we had conversations with around 60, [chimes] 60 schools that we...

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [interposing]
So...

SARA KAUFMAN: Identified...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Sorry.

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: As struggling. Yep.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yeah, if I can just...

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 110
2 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.
3 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: After...
4 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] Sure.
5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Just I would
6 like to see the list of...
7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
8 Yeah.
9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Co-locations.
10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And Sara raises a
11 great...
12 [crosstalk]
13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And...
14 [crosstalk]
15 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Point.
16 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I heard that
17 she's...
18 [crosstalk]
19 CHANCELLOR WILLIAMS: Yeah.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: You speak to
21 more than you actually close. If you...
22 [crosstalk]
23 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Right.
24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Can... can I
25 get the list of the co-locations and the...

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 111

2 [crosstalk]

3 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We can give you
4 whatever list you want and make the...

5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBERS WILLIAMS: Particularly
7 the ones that responded to public and CEC requests
8 not to close or not to co-locate. I think we can
9 just...

10 [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, of course,
12 but I just wanted... if you don't mind, to finish.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Oh, sure.

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, 'cause...

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]

16 Finish.

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: There were a
18 couple points to go over really...

19 [crosstalk]

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead, sir.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Alright, I
22 didn't want to spend all my time. Okay, cool.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead, sir.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay, we're
25 all good then.

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CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We can get you the information, so that's one part of it. The other part though to how you opened up, sir, a couple of things. One, I don't want it to lay out there like it's not being responded to in that using you, since you used you as an example, the student that you may have been before and being in today's school system you will have a variety of different alternatives that never existed before as far as making sure you were getting still a quality education. Our Alternative Learning Centers, which were in place for students who have to be removed from a school building, but making sure they get [chime] continued education. The number of suspensions, [chime] both superintendent as well as principal suspensions, are down and I think the overall factor that makes for good morale within a school, as I indicated before is that crime is down and number of incidents; all types of incidents are down in the schools, and so all that creates the environment that allows for a student who even may be disruptive to do better in that school.

Now, the second part that you raised around college and career readiness; I talked about

1 that earlier as well, in that you know, we started
2 talking about college and career readiness. We
3 were very transparent with the metrics that we use
4 to measure whether a school has graduating students
5 college and career readiness ready and so we've
6 been talking about that, and we knew we'd be
7 criticized around that, but that's fine because I
8 think we have a responsibility not to just have
9 high school as enough; that a student needs to be
10 prepared for college and career readiness and then
11 you know, the metric that you talked about, which
12 we understand as well around remediation rates at
13 the community colleges, that's something that was
14 never talked about prior to a number of years ago,
15 but it started to my knowledge, and that could be
16 wrong, as far as within this administration people
17 started talking about remediation rates and that's
18 something that's important because we don't want
19 our students to be remediated. We don't want them
20 to expend dollars and not get any type of credits
21 and then expend their TAP grants or whatever other
22 financially they're performing. So we've been very
23 clear around the unacceptable nature of having that
24 in place and trying to address that as well.
25

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 114

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Well, thank
3 you.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I wanted to hear
5 Sara's response to your question.

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sara, I'm sorry.

8 SARA KAUFMAN: In terms of examples?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yes.

11 SARA KAUFMAN: In which, yes, so we
12 have... we have made changes to school... changes
13 to co-location proposals based on community
14 feedback, whether that's prior to actually getting
15 to a proposal or once a proposal has been issued.
16 One example that comes to mind, and as the
17 chancellor said, we're happy to get you a more
18 complete list, was a couple years ago we had
19 proposed moving of a District 75 program to the new
20 Spring Creek campus. That proposal went to the
21 panel. We heard from many members of the District
22 75 school community that that District 75 community
23 wanted to stay together. We were proposing moving
24 part of the school to... part of the program to the
25 new Spring Creek campus and part of the program to

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another building, and after that proposal went to the panel we amended unrevised our proposal and that District 75 program is now... has or is sited in one location based on their... based on their feedback.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And there are number of schools...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: That's just one example.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And there are a number of schools that...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Wait, did that co-location happen or it didn't happen?

SARA KAUFMAN: The co-location of the District 75 program did not happen in Spring Creek, no.

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: As a result of the feedback and there are a number of schools that were either on phase out or other type of proposals that we heard from different quarters, whether it's through the EIS process or through the local hearings where we made that decision and

1 specifically with Spring Creek that was at a panel
2 meeting and I remember being very moved by what the
3 people had to say, and we got back, huddled and
4 talked about finding a solution to that. In
5 addition to that, there was a proposal that one of
6 your colleagues had raised around a co-location of
7 a school in a new building that was doing extremely
8 well in this particular council member's district.
9 We took that back, we analyzed the information and
10 then from that we then found a building that was
11 being vacated, if I remember correctly, by another
12 school and moved a transfer school into that
13 particular building, so we do hear the feedback and
14 make decisions based on that.

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.
18 I'll ask these two questions in succession because
19 I know I'm out of time, but I do think there's been
20 a lot of good stuff happening with trying to lower
21 some of the crime and I know that's a very real
22 stat. I don't think... from what I've seen a lot
23 of the... I don't think that we've done a good job
24 in the past few years of getting quality education
25 to all of the people who need it in the City of New

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2 York and make them college ready or career ready,
3 and I think that bears out when you look at the
4 numbers of what happens after they actually go to
5 12th grade.

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So I got... I
7 can't let that just sit out there.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

9 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I don't
10 necessarily disagree with you. That's why the
11 mayor launched the Young Men's Initiative and we've
12 put a significant amount of both private and public
13 dollars in focusing on black and Latino males in
14 particular. That's why we've started in taking a
15 look at our Expanded Success Initiative where we
16 have identified 40 high schools that are doing it
17 right as far as having students of color,
18 especially male students of color, graduating above
19 the average as far as college and career readiness
20 and how we deepen that within those schools, and
21 then replicate it throughout schools. That's why I
22 said before, before you came in that we identified
23 new initiatives of expanding Advanced Placement
24 courses in schools over the next three years and
25 have had students of color in underserved

1 communities and schools starting I think with 50
2 new high schools this year that have not been
3 offering AP classes, and then that's why we also
4 talked about it from a comprehensive point of view;
5 the establishment of 4,000 new preschool seats in
6 underserved communities that are universal full day
7 four-year old Pre-K seats as well. So I mean we've
8 taken a look at it in a variety of different ways
9 and that's what these policies are all about.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Alright, I'm
12 going to ask a question that I do want to push back
13 a little, but I'll...

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
15 Sure.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Just ask the
17 question 'cause I know I'm out of time. The first
18 one, and I've asked a lot of agencies since I know
19 a lot of issues and the statistics where there's
20 crime, unemployment, axed education kind of travel
21 together. They're usually in the same basic zip
22 codes, so I've asked all of the agencies how often
23 do you sit with say, NYPD, DYCD, look at the stats
24 that they're using to figure out where they're
25 putting programs and work with them to figure out

1
2 what you can do in those same zip codes so that we
3 can use a laser like focus to have all the agencies
4 working together in the same problems areas and
5 then...

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] All
7 the time, to answer your question directly, sir.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLAMS: All the time?

9 [crosstalk]

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We... I do it and
11 my staff do it all the time. We work
12 collaboratively with the other city agencies; with
13 ACS, Department of Homeless Services, definitely
14 NYPD and do collaboration. Our Attendance
15 Improvement and Truancy Project is a collaboration
16 by the mayor of city agencies working together and
17 targeting those areas 'cause I mean it's one thing
18 to say we have 90 to 92 percent attendance, but
19 then when you have a differential of 10 to eight
20 percent of students who are not there on a regular
21 basis, that's unacceptable, so we've been working
22 collaboratively with all of our sister agencies and
23 brother agencies on how we focus on especially
24 underserved communities. What we just announced
25 around the expansion of the number of slots with

2 OST is done in conjunction with DYCD as well in
3 allocating...

4 [crosstalk]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I would love
6 seriously before December 31st to see what you're
7 doing because every other agency has said no, so if
8 you're working with them and they're saying no,
9 that's kind of funky but...

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I...

11 [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I would... I
13 would love to...

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Have no idea...

16 [crosstalk]

17 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: See how this
18 works.

19 [crosstalk]

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Who has said no,
21 but we...

22 [crosstalk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: But the last
24 question, sir...

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: First he says...

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COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: No, he answered it. It was the last... it's the last one.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But you understand it was like five minutes ago.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: No, please, because I've gotten to ask all the staff; I've never gotten to ask the chancellor particularly. With the charter schools, my understanding is that they're supposed to be innovative and so I've been trying to figure out what has the department found out in the charters that are working that you can now replicate and bring back to the rest of the Public School System, keeping in mind that I don't know if I would have survived in the system because I know...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] You don't know what?

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I would... I may not have survived in the system because from what I've learned some of them use a disciplinary code after people have gotten in to remove people who are most troubled... here you go... so I may not have actually survived in that charter school

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system and gotten that good education. But I want to know what is it that we've learned in the years that we've been doing this that now we can replicate and bring back to the entire system?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure. I mean so there are a number of things. One, a number of them have longer days. They start earlier. They have a longer school year. They allocate resources to the teachers in a variety of different ways. They have professional development that we've also put in place as well as far as the doubling down of our amount that we're doing with professional development and increased to \$100 million a year. So there are a number of things that charter schools have done, but in constant accountability as well in measuring performance and results in those accountability systems that we've put in place. We learn from each other because I will not take a back seat as far as district schools as well and what they're doing and being creative and we have a lot of great district schools that are doing things extremely well and work with their teachers and the unions and trying to expand the day. As you may not know and you may know this, we have

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what's called an Innovation Zone. We have the I-Zone, which takes a look at new models as far as both the school year and the school day itself; how they measure the results in a way that allows the teachers to get constant feedback. So there are a lot of innovations, both from the charter school side as well as the district school side, that have been benefitting our students.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So Chancellor, before I turn to our colleague, Danny Dromm of Queens, I want to ask a question. How many proposed co-locations are on the drawing board right now?

SARA KAUFMAN: I'm going to have to look at that number to get back to you. Out of the... there are 52 proposals for the October 15th and 30th panel meetings.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But not all co-locations.

SARA KAUFMAN: But not all of those are co-locations.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 124

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And are there
3 great...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: It's the...

6 [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm.

8 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Great truncations
9 so there are a variety of different types, but we
10 can get you that info.

11 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Okay?

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Do you... and I
14 guess let me ask more specifically as far as the
15 Success Academy, how many of the proposed co-
16 locations are Success Academies, because from my
17 experience some of the most controversial and
18 problematic are the Success Academies.

19 SARA KAUFMAN: There are eight
20 proposals that are related to Success Academy. Six
21 of those are from new Success... new schools.

22 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Where are they
23 located at; what boroughs?

24 SARA KAUFMAN: They are in...
25

2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
3 Queens, Manhattan...

4 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] And
5 Brooklyn.

6 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And Brooklyn.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, if you can
8 give us the details...

9 [crosstalk]

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And Bronx?

11 [crosstalk]

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Of...

13 [crosstalk]

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And Bronx. Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: If you can give
16 us the specifics of that a little later.

17 SARA KAUFMAN: Absolutely.

18 [crosstalk]

19 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes, we will.

20 We'll give it to you, Mr. Chair.

21 [crosstalk]

22 SARA KAUFMAN: Yes, absolutely.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, so now
24 let's turn to our colleague, Danny Dromm of Queens.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 126

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Thank you. I
3 just want to go to some questions about the EIS,
4 Educational Impact Study. What... how far out from
5 making a decision do you have to provide the
6 community with that EIS?

7 SARA KAUFMAN: The EIS is released 45
8 to 60 days prior to the vote by the Panel for
9 Educational Policy.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And the...
11 before it goes to the PEP it goes to whom? Does it
12 have to go to the CEC or...

13 SARA KAUFMAN: We have a joint public
14 hearing that is held jointly between the Department
15 of Education and the CEC prior to the Panel for
16 Educational Policy voting on the proposal.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So I'm somewhat
18 concerned about the co-location that's going into
19 Long Island City High School, and I just wanted to
20 ask a couple of questions about that. I believe
21 that the CEC meeting is on October 23rd and then
22 the PEP meeting is on 10-30.

23 SARA KAUFMAN: Correct.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Alright, so they
25 only have a week between the two meetings and that

1
2 doesn't seem to me to be like an awful lot of time
3 to give the parents and the community that's
4 involved time to digest what was said at the CEC
5 meeting. I don't know how you justify that. Can
6 you tell me how you know, you're only allowing
7 seven days, even five business days you know,
8 really when you come down to think about it.

9 SARA KAUFMAN: So the timeline for both
10 the joint public hearing and the Panel for
11 Educational Policy vote are required and set based
12 on the... like the State Loft and Chancellor's
13 Regulation A-190 and so it is a requirement that
14 the joint public hearing is held between 30 and 45
15 days after we publish an EIS and that the Panel
16 meeting follows after. The...

17 [crosstalk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Right, but
19 you're scheduling the one on the 23rd and then the
20 second on the 30th. That's seven days in between.
21 I mean you would think that you would want to have
22 maximum exposure to the public so that they would
23 have an opportunity to digest this, especially when
24 you're doing a co-location in a school as big as
25

2 Long Island City High School, and seven days does
3 not seem like enough time.

4 SARA KAUFMAN: So we provide potential
5 dates to every school that we do a proposal with...

6 [crosstalk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Yeah, but you
8 can...

9 [crosstalk]

10 SARA KAUFMAN: And we...

11 [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Control those...

13 [crosstalk]

14 SARA KAUFMAN: Coordinate...

15 [crosstalk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Date, so you...
17 you're...

18 [crosstalk]

19 SARA KAUFMAN: We... we...

20 [crosstalk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: In charge of
22 when those...

23 [crosstalk]

24 SARA KAUFMAN: We can...

25 [crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 129
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Dates are going
3 to be.
4 [crosstalk]
5 SARA KAUFMAN: We can control the
6 dates, but only within a two-week window. The
7 joint public hearing has to be within 30...
8 [crosstalk]
9 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So 45...
10 [crosstalk]
11 SARA KAUFMAN: to 45 days.
12 [crosstalk]
13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Days before the
14 30th, which would've been about September 15th or
15 so, right, you didn't know or didn't think to move
16 that first meeting up? Is that what you're telling
17 me? You decided...
18 [crosstalk]
19 SARA KAUFMAN: No.
20 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You could only
21 meet on the 23rd?
22 SARA KAUFMAN: So after we publish an
23 Education Impact Statement, it's required that the
24 joint public hearing happens between 30 and 45 days
25 after we post that proposal, so there's only a two-

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week window in which that hearing can happen. We propose dates to both the CEC, the School Leadership Team and any other impacted stakeholders and they agree on a date and that's when we hold...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So they had two weeks; you're giving them a week. It still doesn't seem like a lot of time to me. Basically that's what you're telling me.

SARA KAUFMAN: We... we... there were dates in those two weeks. There...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Alright.

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Can be one hearing.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Let me move onto another point. That EIS that's provided, it's given to the CEC. Now, is it given to them in English or is it given to them in other languages as well?

SARA KAUFMAN: It is... we produce the Educational Impact Statements in English and then

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we do also work to translate the Educational Impact Statements into Spanish.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So the CEC 30 has not received any translated version of that as of this point. As of this morning I got an email on that. As a matter of fact, I wrote a letter to Savita Iyengar I believe it is, the head of Portfolio Planning to protest that and you know, Long Island City High School is probably 90 something percent immigrant communities and I believe that the number there is 60 percent Spanish speaking as the first language. Wouldn't you think that there's an immediate need to inform those parents and the school body and the community of the EIS in a language that they can comprehend and understand?

SARA KAUFMAN: So the parent... we... for every proposal in addition to the Educational Impact Statement, we also produce a letter that goes directly to parents and a notice regarding the joint public hearing. Those were provided in both English and Spanish to Long Island City earlier on in September and we will have a translated

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Educational Impact Statement that's available prior to the joint public hearing.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And what date is that?

SARA KAUFMAN: The... it will arrive before the joint public hearing.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: What date will the joint public hearing be?

SARA KAUFMAN: The joint public hearing is on October 23rd.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So that doesn't even really give you much time to get that statement out to Spanish speaking or to other language speaking people. When will you have the statement available to them?

SARA KAUFMAN: So they already have the parent letter and the notice, which describes and summarizes the...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: But that's not the...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Proposal.

[crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 133
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Educational
3 Impact...
4 [crosstalk]
5 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.
6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Statement...
7 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] We're
8 work... we're work...
9 [crosstalk]
10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Which is what
11 they need to know.
12 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.
13 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: The notice is
14 one thing.
15 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.
16 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: But they need to
17 know what impact this is going to have upon their
18 school community and unless they have that
19 information and unless they information translated,
20 which by the way, I believe is a Chancellor Reg. I
21 don't know if I can recall the number, and then
22 certainly it's a Mayoral Directive that that
23 information be translated and it...
24 [crosstalk]
25 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure.

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COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And it should be translated with enough time. This is a problem. This is a very big problem that you've created.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, I don't know if it's a big problem, but I respect the point that you're making and the only reason Sara's not saying a specific time right now is because we need to make sure with any translation that we do we have the quality control in place, but our goal is to get it out ASAP and after the hearing we'll go back to our translation unit to get an update on the exact timeline and feed it back to both the chair, the committee and to you...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And Mr. Chancellor...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: As well.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Is the EIS out now for that, for the school?

SARA KAUFMAN: The Educational Impact Statement is out in English and we are working to translate...

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 135

2 [crosstalk]

3 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So why can't...

4 [crosstalk]

5 SARA KAUFMAN: It as fast...

6 [crosstalk]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: It be done...

8 [crosstalk]

9 SARA KAUFMAN: As possible.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: That you have it
11 translated at the same time when you release it;
12 before you release it? That's really the question
13 that I'm trying to get at.

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: It's not fair to
16 our immigrant communities and to our other language
17 speaking communities that they don't have this
18 information at the same time, especially when it's
19 an Educational...

20 [crosstalk]

21 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Fair point.

22 [crosstalk]

23 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Impact Statement
24 that's going [chime] to direct...

25 [crosstalk]

2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Fair point.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: How communities
4 are affected. If you don't have it in the language
5 that those communities speak, it's not a true
6 statement.

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, I don't know
8 how it's not a true statement, but I understand the
9 point about making sure you have it in languages
10 they speak and it's a fair point, Councilman.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Well, I would
12 really urge that you get that out immediately.

13 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes, sir. Yeah,
14 we hear you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, because
16 that is a disgrace.

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We understand.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And let me just
19 comment on what Danny said about the Educational
20 Impact Statement. You know, I agree with Danny
21 that it should not be done after the fact; it
22 should be done at the same time, even though you
23 may say, "Well, we need it in English first in
24 order to translate it into Spanish," but if that's
25 the case it should be done immediately. You

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shouldn't have to wait, especially when you're dealing with schools. So for an example, I know when they were talking about PS 132 in District 6...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And the information; the flyers or anything else that was issued by the Department of Education was in English and the schools is 99 percent Hispanic, and I say to you that if anytime you're dealing in that situation, you need to have it in English and Spanish right away, not oh, we'll get it to you and we'll get to you a week later or something like that. That's just... just not acceptable, not in 2013 so I just...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We agree, but...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: At the same time to be fair, 'cause we have a very dynamic translation unit that has been very consistent in translating information and text as well, and do it

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on regular basis in multiple languages. As you know, we have roughly 175 different languages spoken in our school, and they do a monumental job in doing that, but and also to put context I just asked Sara while you guys were talking; I mean the EIS is 70 pages long and so in a 70 page document we have to make sure in any type of interpretation it is done correctly, but I do respect the point that you raised, but it is not a flyer and it's not a letter. It is a 70 page document, but your point is well taken.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Just to follow up, so yes, it's a 70 page document, and that is exactly the point that I'm also trying to make, is that it takes a long time to read that...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Understood.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: And to digest that.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We don't disagree.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So since these meetings are scheduled and here we are, October 2nd, I guess they have about less than two or three

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weeks, right, to read this and to get it out. It's not going to be... it's not going to be translated probably for at least another week or so.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Well, you don't know that.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, well, we hope we can speed it up, but what I'd like to ask is can you move those meetings so that...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You know.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No, the answer to that...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So that we can have...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Is no.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Another date so the parents...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: But we'll have...

[crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 140

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Can have that
3 information before them before they have to
4 participate in this...

5 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We will have the
6 information out and no, we're not going to move the
7 date.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: So you won't
9 move the meeting.

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Okay, 'cause...

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: 'Cause we'd have
13 to...

14 [crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You don't really
16 want the parental involvement. That's...

17 [crosstalk]

18 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Not so, we will
19 have the information out.

20 [crosstalk]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Exactly the
22 statement that you're making to me.

23 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I made the point
24 that we will have the...

25 [crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 141

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Well, that's...

3 [crosstalk]

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Information out.

5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Exactly the
7 statement you're making to me, that's the statement
8 you've been making to parents and that's what
9 you've been doing this whole administration.

10 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Okay, okay.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: You don't listen
12 to teachers and you don't listen to parents.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So I think that
14 in my opinion a 70 page document to digest that
15 from... with parents is going to take some time and
16 I think it's not reasonable, Dennis, if you can
17 move the timeframe back because one of the things
18 if I'm you, what I don't want is I don't want a
19 legal challenge.

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: That's true.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Saying that the
22 timeframe was not enough and then a judge rules in
23 the favor of the parents and what have you.

24 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Anything we do we
25 do in consultation with our lawyers and so while I

1
2 hear the point, we will have information translated
3 and out.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, thanks. Al
5 Vann of Brooklyn.

6 [Pause]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Yeah, thank you,
8 Chair. I... the problem with mayoral control is
9 that who the hell knows what the next mayor is
10 going to want? [laughter] You know, there's no
11 guarantee of any continuity at all, even if we
12 wanted to continue that which we are experiencing
13 now. I guess I'm old enough to remember when
14 parents were up in arms in New York City. They
15 were very angry about the type of education their
16 kids were receiving and as I'm sure you remember,
17 IS 201, Ocean Hill-Brownsville, Two Bridges were
18 the three major areas where there was a lot of
19 protests and so forth and it raised... it came to
20 the city level. It came to the attention of the
21 powers that be. The state legislature was poised
22 to pass legislation; community Control. Community
23 control legislation meaning that most of the
24 decision making would come from the community; the
25 budget, the policies and so on and so forth. UFT,

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2 our good friends at UFT, went up and they lobbied
3 the legislature at that time and they forced them,
4 if you will, not to have a community control
5 legislation, but then they got desegregation or
6 rather not desegregation.

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Centralized...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Decentralization.

9 Decentralization is not community control
10 obviously, and that made a major difference. The
11 Board of Education at that time did not agree with
12 it, they were not supportive of it and so
13 decentralization was left to develop on pretty much
14 on its own and in the judgement of many they did a
15 good job in a lot of places around the city. When
16 the powers that be got ready to change that to
17 Mayoral Control and let it be known, almost every
18 mayor wanted Mayoral Control. It's a wonder that
19 all these mayors loved education or maybe they
20 loved the budget. Maybe they wanted that money. In
21 any event, it did not occur obviously until Mayor
22 Bloomberg came into play. Then we demonized
23 decentralization. You would think it was the worst
24 thing in the world. It was the first time that
25 community had a chance to pick superintendents.

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It's the first time the parents and community felt very comfortable knowing where to go, who to see and a certain culture was developing and I think that it was very positive and supportive of the educational process. Be that as it may, they decided it was time for Mayoral Control for the first time and now we have it. The one thing that I dislike most about Mayoral Control, and I'm not commenting on all of it, and if there's a legacy it's not going to be determined now; it will be determined after the administration; how well we've done; is the way that we are forcing the closing of schools, the co-locations, the phase outs. That's really... that aspect of it is really... I mean it's too much because it makes the community feel so helpless like there's nothing they can say about it you know, no matter what they say or do. But you know, I know best and this is better for you and so this the way it's going to be. So you know, I think... I just wanted... I had to add that to this discussion. I wanted you to know you know, how I feel about it and my feelings are not just based on an emotionalism. It's based on a history of being involved in this education thing for a

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very, very, very long time and understanding that you know, we've done some good things as well, but on balance I'm wondering have we ever educated the majority of the poor people in New York City? You know? When I thought that we were doing it and was doing well we destroyed that system. We said that doesn't work. Decentralization doesn't work. They still... they're getting jobs for their family; petty larceny. Better to have grand larceny than petty larceny. [laughter] Yeah, it's petty larceny, but there was a culture. There was a feel; there was involvement; there was engagement that we haven't seen before and I don't know if we will see again, so there may have been some values, some things that came out just testing culture; maybe others think it's positive. I find it difficult to find that this is what our system has to become. Our kids will only do well if they test well and we must be focused. Education is so much more than that that we're losing out on because we have to focus on making sure they get to level four and level three and so forth. So we're missing out on something and I think that comes when you bring in... when... when [chime] educators... when

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2 educators [chime] are not in charge of your system,
3 then I think you succumb to all of these things.
4 People are trying to do the right thing; trying to
5 get them you know, ready for jobs, trying to get
6 them into business and so forth. They... the best
7 of intentions, but the way you educate and inspire
8 the minds of young people is not just on tests.
9 There's a lot of things that come into play and I
10 think it is lacking. Having said that, I want to
11 thank you, Chancellor, for your friendship, for
12 your commitment and trying to do the very best that
13 you think you could do and at the same time serve
14 your mayor. I really don't know what... well, I
15 won't even go there, but thank you for your time.
16 Thank you for your service and I wonder what the
17 next mayor will bring to the New York City Public
18 School System.

19 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So let me thank
20 you for the thank you, but I got to just comment on
21 one thing and you know, Council Member, I have the
22 ultimate respect {chime} for you and the history
23 and your role as a council member and it's not that
24 I'm serving my mayor. I'm serving what I feel are
25 1.1 million students, quite frankly, and while

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2 people may have disagreements around policy or
3 philosophy, this is not about the mayor. This is
4 about the students and I'm a true believer in what
5 we're doing and I'm a true believer as far as the
6 changes we've put in place. I am a true believer
7 of the more choices available for our students.
8 I'm a true believer as far as the role of critical
9 thinking and preparing our students for college and
10 career readiness and not having it solely based on
11 test prep, but it's based on the new curriculum
12 that's in place and the standards that have been
13 raised year after year after year to make sure our
14 students are achieving at a higher level. I'm a
15 big believer in the affiliation that we've
16 developed with the city university system and the
17 sharing of data. I'm a true believer in the
18 accountability systems that we put in place to
19 measure the performance of our schools. I'm a true
20 believer in the accountability measures we've
21 developed for our principals around evaluations now
22 with our teachers. I'm a true believer in the
23 paradigm shift that's taken place as far as giving
24 our principals more budget control than ever before
25 or hiring and firing than ever before, ability of

1 holding their staff accountable. I'm a true
2 believer in a variety of things that we've done
3 over the last 11 and a half years and I do agree
4 with you that it's not a popularity contest. I'm
5 not in this about me. If I was in this about me,
6 then I'm in the wrong job. I'm in it for the 1.1
7 million students and how we effectuate change that
8 benefit them in the long run and quite frankly,
9 history will determine the success of this
10 administration, but quite frankly, no matter how
11 you look at it number of graduates over the last 11
12 and a half years has gone up by roughly 40 percent.
13 It had flat-lined for a number of years at 49 and
14 50 percent as measured by the city itself and it
15 was a flat line continuously. And then we can
16 offline of this, have our discussion about 1968 and
17 all that took place and where we are now and that
18 role and that's a conversation I would love to have
19 with you; you know, just the two of us talking, but
20 at the same time this is not about the mayor. The
21 mayor is the mayor and I do work for the mayor and
22 I'm very proud to work for the mayor, but at the
23 same time this is about 1.1 million students and
24 focusing our energies to reform a system that had
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been failing them in a variety of ways and the only thing I would say in response to one of the points you raised. There was an unevenness of the system before as far as how and who got a quality education and quite frankly, we wanted to make sure that there's an evenness throughout the entire system, but I truly thank you for your partnership as well 'cause you have been a very solid member of making sure you always advocate on behalf of the community and making sure your community gets the best.

COUNCIL MEMBER VANN: Thank you and

we'll let it go there. [laughter]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Chancellor, let

me lay out... my colleagues have one or two more questions and then I, as the chair, want to follow with about six questions and so timeframe of probably 10 more minutes, okay?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Great. I'm in

your house, yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, thank you.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I'm not going

anywhere.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So I just wanted to give you a timeframe. So let me turn to our colleague, Steve Levin then Jumaane Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you again, Chancellor Walcott. I just had to... wanted to follow up. If you were to graph out the kind of a timeline of co-locations over say the last three years or five years, it seems to me like right now towards the end of the administration it's speeding up. There's more co-locations happening this month I imagine than most other months or any other time in the last few years. Is there... is that... is that true? Is that sense accurate, that there's... it's speeding up and if so, why is that the case because it seems to me from my perspective that you know, DOE is trying to get as many done as possible before the end of the administration, so it's not... it's not really continuing a policy so much as kind of packing it in or speeding up the process otherwise.

SARA KAUFMAN: So if you're... we've opened up many new schools over the last 10 years; 600 plus schools that the chancellor mentioned before, and we continue to open up new schools

1 through the co-location process, so if you're
2 referring to the fact that there are proposals in
3 October, which I believe is what you're referring
4 to.

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6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yeah.

7 SARA KAUFMAN: So we are... this is
8 earlier in the process in some instances, but it is
9 not more than typical.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: It's not more
11 than a typical fall, for example? So in October of
12 2012, 2011, 2010 there were 58 proposed co-
13 locations during each of those months during those
14 respective years?

15 SARA KAUFMAN: So I don't have the
16 months in front of me, but over the last three
17 years the Panel for Educational Policy has approved
18 over 40 proposals more than 18 months in advance of
19 when that proposal has taken place, and so here we
20 are in October proposing proposals for next
21 September, which is you know, 11 months out, and
22 the earlier in the year that we can actually move
23 forward and approve co-location proposals we think
24 that sets up the co-locations for even more
25 success. It gives schools longer... more time to

1 work together from a building council committee. It
2 gives more opportunity to address any facility
3 concerns that might arise or to propose capital
4 improvements to buildings to help facilitate the
5 co-location.
6

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: I understand
8 what you're saying.

9 SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: But it just
11 seems to me I'm getting a sense that the rate is
12 increasing and that's concerning me because it
13 seems as if DOE's trying to get as many of these
14 done as possible. One other question and this is a
15 much more specific question. Well, it's specific
16 and then maybe there's a broader lesson to be
17 learned, but so in a number of co-locations... I
18 have a Success Charter co-location in my district.
19 How does DOE determine space allocation in terms of
20 like what's essential and what's not essential?
21 [chime] So I know that Success [chime] you know,
22 they have rooms like a block room or a karate room;
23 meanwhile, the schools that they're co-located with
24 sometimes are losing what seem like maybe more
25 essential space resources for their operations and

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so can you explain to me like why is a block room an essential space allocation?

SARA KAUFMAN: Alright, so we have a standard footprint that we use to assess the number of rooms that any school across the city; the minimum number of rooms that any school needs to have and that's based on grade level, so an elementary school gets a room for every section of students that they have plus resource rooms for pull-out services plus cluster rooms, which could be used for art, music et cetera, and so we apply that... we use a standard footprint to determine the number of rooms and in our co-location proposals there's a building utilization plan that goes with those proposals that lays out the number of rooms that each school would be entitled to, but we do not designate how those rooms should be used, so we leave that up to the schools to determine how they want to use the rooms that they...

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: [interposing]

If...

SARA KAUFMAN: That they have.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: If one of the schools has a problem with that, who arbitrates

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that? Who... so who do they go to? Do they go to you?

SARA KAUFMAN: So there's an escalation process for if there's a conflict within a building. First, the schools go with their network leader [chime] and they try to work out whatever [chime] that issue is with their building council; then that proposal or that issue can be escalated to our campus management team that goes out and facilitates those conversations with schools and... Jose?

JOSE RUIZ: Yes, in addition to that, my job as a cluster leader is to work with NATO leaders; part of my job; in addressing those issues. When principals don't agree on how to share a particular room, we work with them. In the worst case scenario, we may have to engage the superintendent to make a phone call or have a meeting. That rarely happens. In most cases we're able to work within the building council to address the issue.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much. Thank you, Miss Kaufman and I thank you, Chancellor. I want to join my colleagues in

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thanking you for your service and I always am confident that the 1.1 million school children in New York City schools are well served by their chancellor so.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Thank you, sir and I can use you as a job reference then since [laughter] I'll be unemployed?

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Any time.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Alright, I appreciate that as well, sir.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Jumaane Williams.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you. A couple of things: one, I wanted to ask; give you the opportunity to respond to one thing in particular.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: We've been hearing a lot of zero tolerance things, particularly when it comes to Success Academy; that they're kind of weeding out the people who may cause some trouble at some point in time and

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actually removing them from the classroom, so they're not really educating the same...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Population in this school that they may have in another school. Is there any response to that?

SARA KAUFMAN: So all of our schools are... we work to make sure that all of our schools are meeting the needs of all of their students, whether those students are English language learners or students with special needs, and we make sure that if we ever hear of a specific instance in which that's not the case, we absolutely immediately follow up on that and we...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: have you had any...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Take any allegations very...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Of...

[crosstalk]

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SARA KAUFMAN: Seriously.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Some of the charter schools using disciplinary actions to remove people?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So I've heard it and then I ask for the substance to back it up versus just hearing it and then not really provided with that information, but again, with you or any other individual, if they hear something they need to let us know, but it's not relegated to Success Academy. I mean I hear complaints, whether it's districts schools or charter schools in general about you know, either disciplinary or other issues and we have a variety of ways of cross-checking information, but I've heard the complaint, but then we do the due diligence and I have not seen any evidence of those complaints.

COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay and secondly I wanted to ask you, we talked about some of the things that were learned in charter schools and district schools, so district schools in particular 'cause I know charter schools will be less... maybe a little harder, but how are we bringing some of those things back to the general

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2 population? Like PS 119 in my school is one of the
3 best schools in the district and we're actually
4 unfortunately preventing them from getting more
5 people into the school, which is one problem, but
6 how are we getting the information from the schools
7 that are working back to the general population?

8 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [off mic] You want
9 me to... you got it? So I mean there are a couple
10 ways. One is, as I indicated with the Innovation
11 Zone and the I-Zone is something that you know,
12 we've never really had a chance to talk too much
13 about and we'd be glad to get you the information,
14 but the I-Zone has been doing a variety of creative
15 things that allow the successes that you're talking
16 about to be replicated in other areas and for
17 people to learn from each other, so we do a lot of
18 sharing along that line. Through the clusters and
19 the networks they have a lot of cross-pollinating
20 that take place within their respective school
21 communities as well as successful practices, and if
22 you want Jose can talk about that. So we have a
23 variety of different ways and how many now are part
24 of the I-Zone? Over 300 if I remember the numbers
25 correctly so...

1 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: [interposing]
2
3 Mr. Chair, are you aware of the I-Zones?

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, we've talked
5 about it before.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

7 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes, we've talked
8 about it, but I mean we can get you information to
9 do a deeper dive separate apart of this.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Sure.

11 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Council Member,
12 that we'll share. I think some of the beauties of
13 the I-Zone and some of the other things we're doing
14 to be creative around replicating successful
15 models.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Okay.

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And the Expanded
18 Success Initiative [chime] also is something; I'm
19 not sure how familiar you are with that; [chime] is
20 something we're really working hard around college
21 and career readiness rate for black and Latino
22 males in particular and how we deepen it within the
23 existing 40 schools, but also expand it out, so we
24 take a look at a variety of different models;
25 successful models that work.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 160

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.

3 SARA KAUFMAN: Now can I...

4 [crosstalk]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: No more...

6 SARA KAUFMAN: [interposing] Oh, just
7 to add one thing though. The state also had
8 released a Dissemination Grant to facilitate best
9 practice sharing between district schools and
10 charter schools and are funding schools to partner
11 with each other in order to share those best
12 practices and that's aligned with also the
13 District-Charter Collaborative that works together
14 to also facilitate those connections.

15 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: And something you
16 guys have been involved in, especially through the
17 SPECO with the Middle School Quality Initiative as
18 well and taking a look at successful practices with
19 middle schools and you know, when I started as
20 chancellor I talked about creating 50 new middle
21 schools. We have exceeded that goal. We have
22 created 61 new middle schools and part of that is
23 based on successful models and how we replicate and
24 expand that as well.

25

2 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: Thank you.
3 I'd love to see any reports that have come for
4 those. I did want to allow myself with some of the
5 comments of Council Member Vann; historically many
6 of these same communities are always told what's
7 better for them and so it's extremely painful when
8 it happens repeatedly, whether it's through
9 policing, through education or through other
10 processes, but again, thank you for the service and
11 the dedication you put...

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing]
13 Thank you, sir.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: And I do want
15 to ask my... to be onto Resolution Number 1906.
16 Thank you. I think my colleague Danny Dromm does
17 as well also. Resolution 1906, please sign on
18 Dromm and Williams.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,
20 Council Member. Chancellor, before I ask my
21 questions I just wanted to say what's on the record
22 that people submitted, so for the record we have a
23 resolution from Council Community District
24 Education Council 30 calling on a moratorium of all
25 school closures, phase outs and charter school co-

1 locations. Community Education Council District 6
2 a resolution co-locating schools in existing
3 District 6 buildings. For the record, a letter
4 from Miriam Aristy-Farer, CEC President, CEC 6
5 regarding co-location hearing. For the record,
6 from Natacha Fernandez Urena, a parent of a
7 seventh-grader at M362 CSS, the Columbia Secondary
8 School of Math, Science and Engineering, about the
9 co-locations. A Debbie Taylor Kerman with her son,
10 a ninth-grader at M362 the Columbia Secondary
11 school for the record, and for the record testimony
12 from Advocates for Children of New York we receive
13 testimony.
14

15 Chancellor, I just have a couple
16 questions. I don't think they're pretty long.

17 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yes, sir.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But many CECs
19 have passed resolutions regarding school locations
20 and other changes in school utilization. Does the
21 Department of Education or the Panel for
22 Educational Policy respond to such CEC's
23 resolutions and if so, is it in writing?

24 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No, I don't think
25 we comment on resos whether it's... I think that's

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just been policy whether it's the city council or
CECs. Am I correct in that? Around CEC resos we
don't... whether it's with the council or CECs,
they just passed the resos and we don't comment on
that. That is correct. Okay, I just want to make
sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, I think
that you should reconsider that policy because the
CECs...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] It's
an administration policy. That's... okay.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: It's an
administration policy.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Around resos, yes,
sir.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, so it's
not... when you say administration policy that is
the policy of the mayor.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: The
administration, correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Represented by the
mayor.

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2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright, so
3 that...

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: On resolutions,
5 mm-hm.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, because I'm
7 looking at these resolutions of the CECs and it
8 goes to the heart of what part of the
9 administration's game plan is as far as dealing
10 with school closures, phase outs and charter
11 schools. Do you... I would think that just like
12 you responded here today...

13 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-
14 hm.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: These are
16 concerns. There should be some formal response to
17 these specific resolutions, but if that's the
18 administration's policy, I just think that the
19 administration should revisit that policy.

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We engage, and
21 Sara can correct me if I'm wrong. We engage...

22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay.

24 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: The CECs as far as
25 their feedback and as you know, I go to Town Hall

1
2 meetings at the CECs as well, so there is an active
3 engagement both from a staff point of view, as well
4 as I have been along with my team to the CECs over
5 the last two and a half years I've been chancellor,
6 so there's that formal mechanism.

7 SARA KAUFMAN: Yes, so we absolutely do
8 engage and collect feedback, as we mentioned
9 before, in terms of specific proposals and in terms
10 of anything in writing, we do respond to all
11 feedback that we collect, whether that's over the
12 phone, over email or in person or letters that we
13 receive prior to the Panel for Educational Policy
14 voting on a proposal, and the feedback that we get
15 and our responses are public made online; posted
16 online and also shared with the panel prior to a
17 vote on that proposal.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, okay, so
19 Chancellor's Regulation A-190 specifies that the
20 chancellor must send a hard copy of any Educational
21 Impact Statement by delivery of first-class mail to
22 the impacted CEC, Community Board, Community
23 Superintendent, and I'm basically reading it.

24 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Mm-hm.
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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: In order to ask the question.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Sure, by all means.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The school principals and appropriate citywide councils; however, the regulation leaves it upon the Community Superintendent to provide notice to all impacted parents directly or via the principal, but does not specify the method for such notification. The question is since state law requires the chancellor to notify affected parents, why does the Chancellor's Regulation A-190 leave it up to the discretion of the Community Superintendent without specifying a method of notification?

SARA KAUFMAN: So the process of notification that we use to make sure all impacted parents are made aware of our proposals is to send home a letter; backpack a letter with every student who is in a building that could be impacted by this proposal, and we think that's the most effective and efficient way to make sure that parents get notification about what's being proposed for a building as quickly and as seamlessly as possible.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Do you have emails of parents; email addresses of parents that you could send them emails besides the backpack?

SARA KAUFMAN: If a school community or a school principal has an alternative method of communicating with their families, obviously that's appropriate, but we also send home with students the notice of the hearing and the information about the... about the...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that's...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Proposal.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that's for... at all grade levels K to 12.

SARA KAUFMAN: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And Chancellor, I heard you said in your opening statement that you feel that that method has been successful?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We have found that backpacking is a tried and true way of communicating and in addition to I think the other layers on top of that that I referred to as well, but you know, we always look for new ways to find communication and as you know we've developed a

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text messaging capacity as well and so there are a variety of mechanisms, but I think from the feedback I receive the old fashioned way of backpacking does work well.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Has the Department of Education done any evaluation on the fiscal impact of school closings including start up costs for new schools as well as the cost of adding many more teachers excess from closing schools into their Absent Teacher Reserve Pool? And especially I think you mentioned earlier, Sara, with respect to there's a formula when there's a new school opening and to co-locate a school...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: [interposing] Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Or a charter school the number of rooms like for a principal in an office and other things like that, what is the financial impact on all of the situations regarding school closures and including start ups for new schools?

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: So we've done analysis.

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] On
3 the average.

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Alright, average.
5 I mean I don't have my fiscal people here so...

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]
7 Right.

8 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I mean we can get
9 you that information, but we do know at the front
10 end in the starting up of new schools it costs more
11 than as... 'cause you're doing a ramping up of
12 hiring and equipment purchasing and things along
13 that line while the phase out schools... and I know
14 reports have shown you know, still have a high per
15 pupil ratio as well as far as the Fair Student
16 Funding is concerned, so a lot of the costs are
17 front ended with the new schools and then that'll
18 evolve and they have greater flexibility in the
19 first three years, if I'm not mistaken, of doing
20 the ramping up with hiring 'cause they'll be
21 phasing up as far as the number of sections they
22 have per grade, and then that'll level off and then
23 the same rules that apply to the entire school
24 system, whether in a hiring freeze or not, will
25 apply to those schools. But we can give you a more

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deeper dive analysis and I can get our fiscal people to coordinate with your staff as far as the exact details and Sara may have some additional information to add. No? No, I mean...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: How many rooms are... when a school is co-located how many basically rooms are necessary? I know you talked about there are a certain number of students; there's a room as far as a classroom, but how many administrative rooms are basically necessary in a school set up?

SARA KAUFMAN: In terms of administration?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah.

SARA KAUFMAN: Yeah, so the...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Administration, principal, dean or supplies or whatever.

SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: In essence that impact, especially the number of classrooms within a school that would...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Yep.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Impact.

SARA KAUFMAN: So we do have, as I mentioned before, a footprint that is a citywide standard for how we assess the space across the city. In that there's an instructional room count that's provided to a school in addition to a cluster room, which would be for a specialty purpose, resource rooms for pull-out and then also administrative space. Administrative space is based on the size of the school, so the number of students in a school determines the number of admin rooms that that school would get. Often our sort of standard small school size of about four sections of grade has about three and a half rooms designated for administrative purposes and those rooms could be configured as three full size rooms and a half size room or smaller office spaces, but an equivalent of three and a half administrative spaces, which again, could be multiple half size rooms that would be an equivalent of a three and a half.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And how many new schools have you opened in this administration; 600 and what?

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2 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: 54.

3 SARA KAUFMAN: 54.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. So host
5 schools are often giving up some classrooms as well
6 as libraries, science labs, music rooms, art rooms
7 for us by the new co-located school and each school
8 also needs its own rooms for administration. We
9 have heard estimates that a building loses 10
10 percent of the capacity for every additional school
11 that moves in. Have you heard of that and do you
12 agree with that if so; if not and what is your
13 estimate? 10 percent.

14 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Alright, we've
15 looked at each other. We've never heard that 10
16 percent...

17 [crosstalk]

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: you never heard
19 of that?

20 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Figure.

21 SARA KAUFMAN: No.

22 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: We know and then
23 Sara can do the deeper response to your question
24 that...

25 [crosstalk]

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: A school that may be in an underutilized building naturally spreads and so there's a spread that takes place where they take over underutilized space, and then what Sara's team and Kathleen Grimm's team will do we'll go in and work with the school taking a look at the space, determining full rooms versus half rooms and then we work on the allocations, so some people may have been used to an art room being over here as a result of the spread, but now that room may be used for something else, but the art room is not eliminated altogether and that's what the building planners do in conjunction with the folks. Sara?

SARA KAUFMAN: And just to add to that, on average we actually see that the buildings that only have one organization tend to actually be more overcrowded than the buildings that have more than one school in them, and that's as a result of the buildings where we house or the buildings where we propose to co-locate new options are typically the buildings that tend to be more underutilized from the beginning. And in terms of specialty rooms, schools are able to determine how they want to

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program their classrooms and are able to you know,
if they'd like to use one of the rooms for dance or
art, that's up to the schools to make that
decision.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now, do you have
schools that are... that exceed the total capacity
utilization of the building because I'm told that
you allow co-locations to exceed 100 percent of a
building's capacity according to the formulas you
use in the blue book.

SARA KAUFMAN: Yes, so there are two
ways in which we assess...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Which...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: Space.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: As you know
crowdedness causes problems and I'm...

[crosstalk]

SARA KAUFMAN: So...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Just...

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I mean...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

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CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: No, I was going to say Sara...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's fine.

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Is really expert at this answer so I mean...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: It really is a very interesting and deep answer that is fascinating.

SARA KAUFMAN: And I'd be happy to go as far into the details here as you'd like, but there are two ways to assess the capacity and the utilization of the building. One is the utilization figure, which you mentioned, in terms of being over 100 percent utilized. That is based on the number of student enrolled in a school and the capacity of the building. When we propose a co-location, we use much more information than is available based on that number. We do a walk-through of every building with the Office of Space Planning to figure out the number of classrooms

1 that are actually in that building and when I
2 mentioned the footprint before, that we... if a
3 school is programming... say has 60 students in
4 Kindergarten, that school could be programming or
5 in first grade, could be programming two school...
6 the two sections with 30 students or say three
7 sections of 20 students and we take that into
8 account when we determine how many classrooms that
9 school is actually going to need. So and the other
10 item that impacts the capacity is the number of
11 students that are actually served in a building; is
12 served in a classroom, so if there's a... typically
13 in our buildings that are very underutilized there
14 tends to be a lot of rooms that maybe are used for
15 administration and not for classrooms, and those
16 classrooms do not generate a capacity number. So
17 when those classrooms then end up being used for
18 students, the capacity of the building essentially
19 increases as opposed to when they're being used for
20 adults and for administration. So there's one
21 factor, which is the utilization rate, but what we
22 really focus on is the number of rooms in the
23 building and how those rooms are being used for
24 students.
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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And when you said that you go in with your assessment team and walk through is the principal or someone from the school part of that walk-through in order to assess what the total capacity is?

SARA KAUFMAN: Absolutely. The principal attends the walk-through with the Office of Space Planning. We've often had requests for either other...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] And what about like the do you have UFT Chapter Chair? I mean because basically I would think that you would want a consensus of all of the players at that particular building that this is what it is.

SARA KAUFMAN: Right, which is why we have the Office of Space Planning, who do those assessments. They are... they walk through the building and identify... literally count the classrooms in the building and how big they are. There's no judgment made about how the rooms are being used. It is a non-judgmental use of the buildings. It's an count of classrooms based on how the building looks.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay. Well, let me thank you, Chancellor and your team for coming in, where there will be follow up with our team here.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Thank you, Chair.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We appreciate it very much. I hope to see you again before 12-31-13, but if not, you know I appreciate you. You're a runner; you have done what do you call it; a triathlon.

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Triathlon.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: I did one in August, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I have a lot to follow up on you with that, but also I appreciate... I truly believe that you have the best interests of children in your mind and in your heart. I know that your children went to public schools and your grandson...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Yeah, my children.

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Or at least one
3 of them.

4 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Now our
5 grandchildren go.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Are attending
7 public schools. Even though I disagree with this
8 administration on several aspects regarding what
9 they do, it is all for the betterment of us
10 refocusing on what's best for the children of New
11 York City.

12 CHANCELLOR WALCOTT: Thank you, Mr.
13 Chair.

14 [crosstalk]

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I want you to
16 know that.

17 CHANCELLOR JACKSON: And I, as I
18 indicated in my opening, I have the utmost respect
19 for you and your leadership. Even prior to
20 becoming a city council member and definitely
21 before becoming chair of the Education Committee,
22 you've been a long term strong advocate on behalf
23 of our students and I thank you for your years of
24 service to our public schools and especially to our

2 public school students, so thank you for your
3 leadership.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next
5 we're going to hear from the three unions. Mike
6 Mulgrew from the United Federation of Teachers,
7 Ernie Logan from CSA, and also from DC 37... [off
8 mic] who do we have? Glen Blacks...

9 [Pause]

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Vice President of
11 Local 372, which represents the schools. Let's
12 take one minute to adjust the transition, please.

13 [Pause]

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, are we
15 ready to begin? Everyone in the room please take a
16 seat. There are some seats. People in the other
17 room, if you want to come forward, I see about six,
18 seven vacant seats up front, so people in the other
19 room can come in and sit down if you can hear me
20 over there. Sergeant, would you make the offer?
21 We've been joined by Domenic Recchia, the chair of
22 Finance Committee from Brooklyn. With that, now
23 we're going to turn to the unions and we're going
24 to hear from Michael Mulgrew, the president of UFT;
25 Ernest Logan, president of Council of Supervisors

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and Administrators; Glen Blacks, vice president of Local 372 and Janella Hinds, UFT vice president for high schools. Now all of you, the four of you... do you need that top there, no? Okay, would you raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members' questions?

MICHAEL MULGREW: I do.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Mr. Mulgrew, you may begin.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Good afternoon, Chairman Jackson and to all the members of the City Council. I appreciate you having these hearings and it's very sad that we are here today, and the reason we are here today is because of some of the... I want to just talk about some of things that have caused this to be such a major issue of conflict throughout this city under this administration. The injustice, lack of integrity, lack of fairness, zealous ideology, bad governance and to wrap it all up, simply gross incompetence and mismanagement on behalf of this administration

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2 has caused so many communities inside of this
3 school to be... inside of the city to be pitted
4 against each other. I will not read my testimony.
5 I just want to make some short comments.

6 We have had co-locations in New York
7 City for decades, decades and you never saw a
8 single community put in conflict with each other.
9 This administration... and I'll bring you some
10 examples of what they're trying to do right now.
11 You know that my organization is suing the city for
12 the co-locations they're planning on into the
13 future and I will talk about some of the most
14 recent ones that have gone on. IS 2 in Staten
15 Island school was ravaged by Hurricane Sandy. They
16 are trying to co-locate another public school
17 inside of IS 2. They want to put an IS inside of
18 an IS. The parents have asked... our community's
19 been greatly damaged. We are having... we're
20 getting... most of the children are back. We have
21 lost major amounts of supplies and different
22 things. Why do you want to put an IS inside of our
23 IS? Why would just not help us? The city has no
24 answer. They just said it would be better to have
25 two intermediate schools in one building, and when

1 the parents asked where was the Department of
2 Education getting the money to do this, the
3 Department of Education said they had set aside
4 \$200,000, to which the parents became very outraged
5 and they wanted to know if you had \$200,000 for
6 another school, why can't you fix our boiler that
7 hasn't worked for a year? This is zealous
8 ideology. This is an order perhaps coming down
9 from above saying do more of these before we leave.
10 PS 302 in Brooklyn has trailers, the famous moldy
11 trailers, have been there for decades, decades.
12 They are still there and the children from PS 302
13 in Brooklyn are still going there, yet the
14 Department of Education has said there is room for
15 a co-location. When the school said why can't we
16 just get rid of the trailers and bring our children
17 back in, they said no. So they would rather leave
18 children in moldy trailers so they can keep their
19 ideology and move forward with their path of
20 destruction and conflict. Flushing High School has
21 been overcrowded for years, years. Many has
22 taken... and the larger schools have taken larger
23 budget cuts. They now want to co-locate two more
24 additional schools inside of Flushing High School.
25

1 That will mean that the school with an 11-period
2 day that has lunch starting at 8:50 in the morning
3 needs to readjust again. I am sure without reading
4 it that every Educational Impact Statement tells
5 you that this is proper, it is not a problem and
6 the existing school can handle it. Those are lies
7 and this has all come about because of Mayoral
8 Control and a PEP panel with no checks or balances.
9 It should never have happened, and in terms of the
10 charter schools, which is such a hot topic, people
11 are... you've heard the stories over and over. I
12 can bring up individuals that are inside of my
13 testimony. I really would not want to right now,
14 but the fact that schools; the charter schools are
15 being given preferential treatment in terms of the
16 facilities; how the facilities are then fixed and
17 maintained once you're inside of the public
18 schools; the fact that one charter school operator
19 claims to be a public school in terms of space, but
20 then will sue the controller of New York City
21 claiming that are private and should not be
22 audited. I blame this on this administration and I
23 also blame it on State Commissioner King and
24 Chancellor Tisch. In 2009, we passed a law. There
25

1 was a law passed in Albany. That law 'til this day
2 has never been implemented. The only thing that
3 has been implemented was the raise of the number of
4 charter schools in New York City. The assurances
5 that they have the same children, the assurances
6 that they are being... that the public school is
7 treated the same as the charter school. It has
8 been one feeble excuse after another by both
9 Commissioner King and Chancellor Tisch why they
10 cannot enforce the law that was passed in 2009. I
11 am asking... and I support what the City Council is
12 doing. I am asking for an amendment. I think that
13 your resolution does not go far enough. I think
14 that before a co-location is approved for a charter
15 school that they must be completely transparent
16 with all of their economics and they must be
17 completely transparent with all of the student
18 enrollment, how the student enrollment happened to
19 be there, with expulsions, with suspensions, with
20 needs of the students. And when I say transparent
21 with economics, I mean all financial records must
22 be made open to the public, as well as the fact
23 that no co-location in this city should be approved
24 without the approval of the CEC and the parents and
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2 the schools that are actually being impacted by
3 this. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

5 Ernest Logan, the president of CSA, the Council of
6 Supervisors and Administrators.

7 ERNEST LOGAN: Thank you, Chairman
8 Jackson. My testimony is there for the record.
9 I'm just going to bring up some points. I got here
10 early today because I wanted to hear what the
11 chancellor had to say and I wanted to hear his
12 answers to the questions that you brought up, and
13 one of the things he never really quite talked
14 about is that when we do co-locations, even though
15 we've been doing them for a decade, we've never had
16 a situation where it was A Tale of Two Cities; the
17 haves and the have nots. Now all of a sudden as
18 we do co-locations we... my members are in many of
19 these co-locations. I represent the principals who
20 are not co-located and instead of having this
21 ability for people to work together, they are
22 imposed on each other without any conversation with
23 the host principal and the incoming principal.
24 They are told, "You are to be there." Now, I've
25 heard a lot of conversation today about these walk-

1 throughs and about having the community involved.
2
3 Never once has anyone mentioned the superintendent
4 today. By law the superintendent, the community
5 superintendent is responsible for the schools in
6 their districts. That's by law, and yet no one has
7 indeed followed the law. They've circumvented the
8 role of the superintendent and done exactly what
9 they wanted to do, so they have the superintendent
10 meeting with the CEC and the CEC will say to the
11 superintendent, "We don't approve this." It
12 doesn't matter because the superintendent has
13 orders to just go along with the program it's from,
14 Tweed, or as you heard today, they did not bring a
15 superintendent. They brought a cluster leader.
16 What standing does a cluster leader have in the
17 true governance of New York City schools? None
18 whatsoever. It's a position that was created. It
19 is not a chancellor; it is not a deputy chancellor.
20 It's a created managerial position called a cluster
21 leader. Nowhere in state government does that
22 person have any control over the schools unless
23 given directly by the chancellor. Now, are they
24 telling you today that this cluster leader is over
25 the superintendent? Well, they never say that, but

1 that's what they exact are doing. We found that
2 with co-locations of charter schools, charter
3 schools get the preferential treatment, and I'll
4 give you a case in point. When we raised the issue
5 of PCBs in schools, every time they were getting
6 ready to co-locate a school with a charter school
7 they removed the PCBs in the charter schools area
8 and left the traditional district school just as it
9 was and then when they exploded on children that's
10 when they went back, even though we raised that
11 issue.
12

13 Since 2003, more than 140 schools have
14 been closed or phased out. Many of these same
15 schools were created by this administration. I
16 know when someone asked the question today can you
17 tell us about the schools that you put new schools
18 in and how are they doing, and the case in point
19 that was made when someone mentioned... I think
20 Council Member Wills mentioned August Martin High
21 School. They've had three principals there. The
22 problem is that no one's had an opportunity to be
23 successful because no one has provided support for
24 the school leader to allow them to be successful,
25 and then they went on to talk about how successful

1
2 they were with Goddard Middle School to Goddard
3 High School. That was done where the principal met
4 where the school community and decided to take
5 Goddard 202 in District 27 and make that a school
6 that went from sixth through eighth to sixth
7 through 12. It's an interesting little piece
8 there. Successful truncations of schools happen
9 only when the community is involved, and you don't
10 have the animosity that comes about when you're
11 imposing on a community.

12 No one can ever explain to us to any
13 satisfaction why we are doing co-locations in the
14 first place, and yes, we have done them. Do not
15 count District 75 as a co-location, because our
16 parents and our leaders in the community want the
17 children with District 75 students to attend...
18 attempt to go to school in the neighborhoods where
19 they live, so that's not a co-location. To us,
20 that's providing additional resources for students
21 with needs in that community. So to say that's a
22 co-location and it's alright 'cause we've always
23 done it, that is indeed not a co-location. The PEP
24 has become a rubberstamp, so I want to ask the
25 question today. Has there ever been, after going

1 to the PEP, ever been one that has been rejected?
2 And they couldn't answer that because they never
3 take something to that board that they let the
4 board reject. Everything that they go through the
5 board rubberstamps. Unfortunately, parents now say
6 why even bother? You even now find parents that
7 only want to be on the CEC, so we have looked at
8 the resolutions and we strongly endorse the
9 resolutions that are presented by the City Council.
10 [chime] We hope to look at the amendment that the
11 UFT [chime] is offering and add our voice to that.
12 So thank you, Mr. Chairman.

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you for
15 coming in and listening to the testimony and
16 steering the course. And next we're going to hear
17 from the vice president of DC 37, Mr. Blacks.

18 GLEN BLACKS: Good afternoon, Honorable
19 Chairman Robert Jackson and the fellow committee
20 members. At this time I would like to give
21 testimony on behalf of my president, Santos Crespo,
22 Jr. We represent about 25,000 members that are in
23 a non-teaching capacity for the New York City
24 Public School System. Our members are parent
25 coordinators, school aides, school crossing guards,

1 substance abuse counselors. Our members are in the
2 front line between the Department of Education and
3 the people in the community we serve. We are
4 responsible for providing the safe, efficient and
5 orderly environment for the proper education of New
6 York City 1.1 million school students. I am here
7 in support of Resolution Number 1263 and Number
8 1906 and proposed Resolution 1395-A. If enacted,
9 these resolutions will be the first step toward
10 restoring the community voice to our schools. Our
11 city just went through a long primary election to
12 choose the next mayor. Based on the results of one
13 of those races, one statement came out very loud
14 and clear; this is A Tale of Two Cities, and
15 nowhere is this tale being told more vividly than
16 in our co-located charter and public schools.
17 People will come before this City Council and speak
18 about the charter schools as if they are quote
19 unquote "a shining city on the hill;" however, to
20 quote the former governor, Mario Cuomo, there is
21 another part to the shining city, the part where
22 the glitter does not show and there is despair. As
23 a policy co-locations have exasperated the great
24 injustice that is inequality. We have co-located
25

1 facilities where the students of the charter school
2 walk around with the last ipads, while the public
3 school students in that same school building are
4 working from outdated text books, and their
5 teachers and their parents are forced to dig into
6 their own pockets to come up with resources for
7 them. What message does that send to our kids? It
8 says one, you're not good enough, better luck next
9 time. Just as importantly what does it say about
10 us; that we will subject our children to this level
11 of inequality? Co-location flies in the face of
12 the whole idea of public schools being an
13 environment for equality, encouragement and the so-
14 called Fair Student Funding. The resolutions which
15 the committee is considering are just the beginning
16 of revolutionizing our school by reengaging parents
17 and the community.

19 The Bloomberg Administration has used
20 schools closures and reconfiguration as a means
21 towards shoving their ideology into our collective
22 throats. These school closures and
23 reconfigurations have clearly been designed as a
24 means for the Bloomberg Department of Education to
25 break down the school unions. Unfortunately, the

1 sad legacy of Bloomberg's Department of Education
2 is that it has silenced the voice of parents and
3 ignored the community. Under Bloomberg, the DOE
4 has taken an "us versus them" approach toward
5 running our school as opposed to we are all in this
6 together approach that our children so richly
7 deserve. We must repudiate the Bloomberg Education
8 Policy for all its failures including deemphasizing
9 the role of school support team.
10

11 Local 372 members ensure that children
12 arrive to school safely, on time and are properly
13 fed so that they are ready for our teachers and
14 principals to educate them. They listen to our
15 students and help them cope with the stress at home
16 so they are focused and able to learn. Local 372
17 members are the friendly voices that prevent school
18 children from bullying each other and helping those
19 very children build the confidence they need to
20 move on. My membership is made up of people from
21 the community. We have a vested interest in seeing
22 that our children succeed in the classroom as well
23 as in life. Under the Bloomberg Department of
24 Education, our members have endured 12 years of
25 layoffs with constant threats of future layoff,

1
2 attrition and stagnant wages instead of embracing
3 the important role that Local 372 members provide
4 our school. Unfortunately, the members of Local
5 372 can tell that Tale of Two Cities firsthand
6 because each and every one of us live it every day.

7 Our city is at the point in time where
8 we simply do not have enough school aides, SAPIS
9 workers, parent coordinators and other support
10 staff to provide the level of service that our
11 children so very well need and deserve. We have
12 been sounding the alarm for years and [chime] have
13 been ignored. We can no longer [chime] ignore the
14 fact that the achievement gap Bloomberg promised to
15 close is getting bigger and wider every day. Our
16 students are scoring poorly on standardized tests,
17 drug abuse continues to rise and threaten students
18 and bullying is occurring at an alarming rate. It
19 is high time we recognize as part of being part of
20 the solution. We know we can help turn the tide,
21 and as being part of the community who better
22 understands our children's need? I want to thank
23 you for this opportunity and I hope we all can work
24 together.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: First, I'd like to thank all of the respective unions for the Department of Education; UFT, CSA and DC 37 Local 372 for coming in and giving testimony on the resolutions, also on the whole issue of the oversight hearing that we are holding now this afternoon. I'm shocked when I'm hearing that at a certain high school lunch is being served at 8:50 in the morning. 8:50? What time do the kids start school, 5:30 in the morning? Seven what? So basically within one hour when they get to school they have to have lunch? That's ridiculous.

MICHAEL MULGREW: If you're not aware, a normal school day would be eight periods. That high school currently has 11.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And so it's way overcrowded?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Way overcrowded.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And is that one school or is that a co-located school?

MICHAEL MULGREW: It's Flushing; it's one. They're co-locating two new schools into it.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Wait a minute.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 196

2 MICHAEL MUGREW: EIS says it will not
3 have an impact and the school's not overcrowded.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So...

5 ERNEST LOGAN: [interposing] Let me
6 just add a little to that.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] I'm
8 trying to understand.

9 ERNEST LOGAN: Yeah, the EIS; I think
10 someone raised that here; asked a question about
11 the EIS.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Be... when you...
13 [crosstalk]

14 ERNEST LOGAN: Yeah.

15 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: When you comment
16 just identify yourself so we can...

17 [crosstalk]

18 ERNEST LOGAN: Oh, Ernest Logan...

19 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: [interposing] And
20 that was Mike Mulgrew.

21 ERNEST LOGAN: Mike, yeah.

22 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Okay.

23 ERNEST LOGAN: When the EIS is
24 presented, besides not having enough time to really
25 analyze the EIS, they've never done an EIS that

1 showed that it's a negative impact on the school
2 community for what they want to do. I have yet to
3 see one that said this is a negative impact. We
4 should not do it.
5

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So you mean they
7 tailor it to look like it's going to be a positive
8 aspect.

9 ERNEST LOGAN: Correct and they also
10 say when they're doing the EIS that all of the
11 school community has been involved in the analysis.
12 That means the SLT, the teachers, the principal and
13 most... in many cases they show up at the school
14 and say to the principal, "Walk with me," and the
15 principal follows along 'cause the boss is here,
16 the "tweedies" are here and they look around and
17 then they leave, and next thing you know there's a
18 report that says this is available space.

19 Now, one of the other questions that
20 was raised today during testimony was that
21 sometimes when you co-locate a charter school for
22 instance, you take away rooms that are absolutely
23 important for the traditional school that they
24 lose.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Like what?

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ERNEST LOGAN: Like a library, for instance and now you come up with a karate room for the charter school or a dance studio or today I heard the block room. I wanted to know what the block room was. I want to know what the block room is. It's a place for blocks? They hold blocks? [laughter] But you see, the problem that I have, Chairman Jackson, is I'm not saying that we should not try to do things that are innovative, that bring people together and support all our children. It's the arrogance of the boss; the master knows better than the people that they're serving, and that's my issue.

JANELLA HINDS: Janelle Hinds, United Federation of Teachers.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

JANELLA HINES: To add to that point, if you look at a school like Lehman High School in Brooklyn... I mean sorry, in the Bronx, which is a community school, which was slated for closure at one point. After the community outcry, the DOE decided not to close that school, but they decided to continue with their plans to co-locate new schools in the building. In order to co-locate new

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schools in that building, they had to reduce the enrollment at Lehman, which resulted in the reduction of essential programs that made Lehman what it was, and so when they talk about educational impact not being negative to a school community, it's an unrealistic perspective about what a high school experience or a middle school experience or an elementary school experience is to the students in a particular neighborhood.

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Now wait, I heard the chancellor and Sara... I forgot her last name. She's head of Portfolio... Kaufman, right? Sara Kaufman indicated though that they don't respond in writing to resolutions of CECs and don't respond to resolutions of city council, but they engage the communities. If they're looking to co-locate or close they're engaged and whatever comments, they respond in writing to those comments and it has to be posted on the website and sent to the parties under the rules and regulations. So I would... so if people are raising the negative impact... so you're basically saying to me what they do is they turn around and put a positive spin on a negative situation?

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2 JANELLA HINDS: Not necessarily.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: What do they do?

4 JANELLA HINDS: Sometimes they will
5 say, "We have heard what you've had to say. We
6 still believe that this is the best decision to
7 make for this particular school community."

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Oh, okay. Uh-
9 huh.

10 ERNEST LOGAN: Council Member, may I
11 respond a second?

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Ernest, what's
13 your name?

14 ERNEST LOGAN: Ernest Logan.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Uh-huh.

16 ERNEST LOGAN: Chairman Jackson, a case
17 in point is Dewey High School.

18 GLEN BLACKS: I was just going to say
19 that.

20 [crosstalk]

21 ERNEST LOGAN: No one has asked Dewey
22 High School community...

23 [crosstalk]

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that's in
25 where, Brooklyn?

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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ERNEST LOGAN: Brooklyn. No one has asked the Dewey High School community whether they want another school or not. They've decided that they wanted to do that. Now I'll go to Queens. Long Island City High School, a school...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Right.

ERNEST LOGAN: They attempted to close that we blocked on the closure. This school year they reduced the number of incoming students and then decided to have a meeting to do a co-location in this school with the space that they opened up by reducing the number of freshman students, which then caused them to lose programs that were successful.

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Ah...

ERNEST LOGAN: You see, I can't have space in a school unless I stop having students come to this school. So they decided that Long Island City High School; they're going to get what they want one way or the other, so this year they reduced I believe it's over 300 incoming freshman so they would have space to now say we have space to do a co-location, and that's what I'm talking

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about. The school, they put a new principal in; a new team. They really started turning this school around. They had great numbers last year.

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: So you mean the turn around with being successful.

ERNEST LOGAN: Correct. They couldn't close it like they wanted to, but they put in a new leadership team there and that team worked together with small learning communities to turn the school around and they had a first year out the box success. They wanted to build on that. They find out that when they see their numbers for this year they're missing 300 students, which meant they had to axe those teachers; viable teachers in the programs that they had, support personnel, as well as assistant principals. That's how you create failure and then you're able to do the things by design that you wish to do, which is to co-locate something because I want to have a place for a small school somewhere.

COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHA: Council Member, can I just...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sure, go ahead.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: I want to
3 thank President Mulgrew and...

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Domenic Recchia.
5 [crosstalk]

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: President
7 Logan, but on John Dewey High School; it's my high
8 school. It's in my district.

9 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Mm-hm.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And... and...

11 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Excuse me,
12 there's...

13 [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RECCHIA: And we're
15 focusing on which... from 2004 'til today I have
16 emails, letters and minutes of meetings that I had
17 with the administration about the problems at John
18 Dewey High School. We had shootings, stabbings.
19 They kept the same principal in there. When the
20 community asked for that principal to be removed,
21 okay, the school was run down. Now they put a new
22 principal in and she's doing good. The community
23 supports her, we're all supporting her and now they
24 want to put a new school in next year and they
25 don't even know the name of the school. This is

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2 unacceptable. I feel like we are being set up. We
3 are being set up across the city and just to say I
4 have three co-locations going on right now in my
5 district, alright? Every night I'm at a different
6 co-location meeting; tonight I have another one,
7 and it's just out of control for no reason.

8 MICHAEL MULGREW: I believe that in the
9 end history will write this as one of the worst
10 chapters in New York City Public School history.
11 The reason, as I stated in my testimony, we
12 shouldn't be here right now. This was purposely
13 done. It was incompetent. It was destructive.
14 You took good schools and caused them to fail. You
15 took schools that were struggling and then put more
16 stress on top of them. You never considered a
17 school that said we're beating the odds. We're an
18 award winning school and you're telling us we don't
19 need our art and music programs, even though that's
20 what we're using to beat the odds, and then take
21 that space away from us.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: How does the
23 budget impact because a lot...

24 [crosstalk]

25 MICHAEL MULGREW: The budget impact...

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[crosstalk]

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Of the schools have been... lost monies and they have to lay off teachers and one school I know is asking the Parent's Association for money in order to have teacher development. To me that's crazy!

MICHAEL MULGREW: And the sad thing is that education funding has continued to go up, but the funding is not at the schools. The funding is at the central and the fact that all having a lot of small schools costs more money, but well, you guys... the City Council has for years wrestled with the Department of Education to be transparent about its funding. It will shift personnel onto school records when you ask them how much is being spent in schools and then they shift them back to central. It's been a game, it's disgraceful and that is why there are going to be significant changes in 90 days, seven hours and 32 minutes.

[laughter]

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Danny Dromm from Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER DROMM: Well, just to reiterate what Council Member Recchio was saying

1
2 and President Logan was saying as well, they're
3 doing it to Long Island City High School right now
4 and they did it to Newtown High School last year,
5 and I want to tell you, Newtown has been under
6 attack for over three years. They started out
7 making it a turn-around school. Then they wanted
8 to close it and they actually went through the
9 closing procedures and closed it, but due to the
10 UFT lawsuit they had to reinstate the principal, so
11 when they... and CSA. Then they come back around
12 last year; this is after two years of that other
13 nonsense that went on; and say now we're going to
14 supposedly reduce your numbers and we're going to
15 put in an International High School in the same
16 building that was overcrowded for many years and
17 was part of the reason for the failure of the
18 school to begin with. And actually, in the case of
19 Newtown, Newtown went from a C to a B with all of
20 that nonsense going on, so that's testimony to the
21 teachers and the principals that have to work in
22 that school. And finally, if I might also say when
23 I was questioning the chancellor before, it was in
24 regard to the Tale of Two Cities that I think our
25 representative from DC 37 brought up as well. So

1 when you put out an EIS in English only two weeks
2 before anybody else can see it, and then two weeks
3 later you still don't have a translated version in
4 a school that has to be minimally 90 percent
5 immigrant; 60 percent Spanish speaking; that I know
6 for sure, you are saying to those parents that they
7 don't matter, that their children don't matter and
8 that whatever they have to say about what goes on
9 in that school doesn't matter and that the decision
10 has already been made because when I asked the
11 chancellor if he would be able to hold off on that
12 meeting, he said he would not and they're going to
13 proceed as planned with the parents not even having
14 the correct notification. Maybe we need another
15 lawsuit.

16 [Pause]

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Asked the
18 chancellor that he should reconsider his decision
19 on that because it's just that you're talking about
20 a 70-page document and you're talking about you
21 know, parents that are reading it in Spanish and
22 having a dialogue and time to do that. It takes
23 time and if a lawsuit is filed, it's going to take
24 even more time and attorneys are going to be
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involved. It's just not in the best overall for our children and the people involved, and I asked him to reconsider that so. I want to thank you all for coming in. We appreciate it. We're going to hear from Dave Golovner, the New York City Charter School Center; Valerie Babb, New York City Charter School Center and Barbara Martinez, Uncommon Schools. Please come forward. Sergeant, if there's anyone in the other room you need to let them know there are seats available in this room. They hear me? Okay, you can come over if you wish, whoever's over there.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Okay, I don't know what I did with it. They were right here. Okay, David Golovner of the New York City Charter School Center, Valerie Babb from the Charter School Center and Barbara Martinez from Uncommon Schools, welcome. Would you raise your right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council members' questions?

DAVID GOLOVNER: Yes, sir.

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Good. I don't
3 know who's going to begin first.

4 DAVID GOLOVNER: I will.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

6 DAVID GOLOVER: Good afternoon,
7 Chairman Jackson and members of the New York City
8 Council Committee on Education. My name is David
9 Golovner and I am the vice president for Policy and
10 Advocacy at the New York Charter School Center.
11 I'm pleased to testify this afternoon about
12 Department of Education facilities, in particular
13 as they relate to charter schools. In the interest
14 of your time, I will not read my whole testimony.
15 I'm going to summarize a bit. Charter schools
16 comprised less than one-twelfth of all co-
17 locations, do not receive funding for facilities,
18 operate in the smallest amount of space per pupil
19 of any New York City school, trigger an equal match
20 to any school they are co-located with in terms of
21 funding for capital improvements, if they do
22 improve their space, and yet, we attract a
23 disproportionate share of political attention,
24 usually negative. Enacting these resolutions by
25 the New York State legislature would cripple the

1 movement that has benefitted thousands of New York
2 City school children and has the potential to help
3 thousands of more. Of the over 50,000 children
4 currently on charter school waiting lists, close to
5 18,000 of them are represented by members of this
6 Education Committee, but there's more than two and
7 a half times the number of students in charter
8 schools in just those districts alone. The great
9 majority of charter school students, 93 percent,
10 are non-white with 73 percent receiving free
11 reduced priced lunch. Not surprisingly, a 2013
12 citywide poll showed that charter schools are much
13 more popular with non-white New Yorkers than in the
14 less affluent sections of the city. In fact, our
15 experience doing advocacy for charter schools
16 throughout the city has shown that a good portion
17 of the opposition to charter schools comes from
18 gentrified neighborhoods of parents with means;
19 this while studies consistently show that charter
20 schools in New York city are bridging the
21 achievement gap between the Haves and the Have
22 nots. While I don't think anyone would argue that
23 the existing system of building utilization cannot
24 be improved, we believe the proposed resolutions
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2 are too flawed to merit your support, and I would
3 also like to say that charter schools are public
4 schools and we do believe strongly they deserve
5 access to public space. However well meaning they
6 may be, all three of these resolutions prioritize
7 the parents of children who attend existing
8 district schools over those families whose children
9 are either not yet old enough to attend school or
10 those who want a choice of district or charter
11 schools. All New York City families deserve your
12 consideration. The passage of these resolutions
13 would send a clear message that some kids matter
14 more than others. As to the particulars of each
15 resolution, I would like to note the following:
16 Number 1263 would grant CECs the power to block co-
17 locations, yet only district school parents are
18 allowed on CECs. 40 percent of Harlem's
19 Kindergarteners are students of charter schools;
20 zero percent of their parents are eligible to be
21 members of CECs. If this resolution was to go into
22 effect, CECs would have jurisdiction over all
23 public schools, though a lot of public school
24 students and parents will still remain
25 unrepresented. The CECs also suffer from a broken

1
2 opaque election process. A 2011 study of that
3 process commissioned by four of the borough
4 presidents and the public advocate found
5 mismanagement and neglect around training, support
6 and elections. In those elections only 5,036 votes
7 were cast, and when the elections were re-held
8 because of questions over ballot flaws, the number
9 of votes went down to 2,782, an appalling figure
10 with over 1.1 million students. Transferring the
11 control that the state legislature granted to the
12 mayor to an unaccountable body is ill advised even
13 under the best of circumstances. To do so without
14 even first addressing existing structural problems
15 would only codify disenfranchisement and
16 dysfunction. 1395 calls for a moratorium in order
17 to allow us to study the impacts of school closures
18 and forced co-locations. That study has been done.
19 The MDRC, an independent non-aligned Think Tank
20 created by the Ford Foundation studied small high
21 school in New York City for several years and
22 recently reconfirmed earlier findings. To quote,
23 "Small schools of choice in New York City continue
24 to markedly increase high school graduation rates
25 for large numbers of disadvantaged students of

1
2 color, even as graduation rates are rising at the
3 schools with which SSCs are compared. As measured
4 by student achievement and/or parental demand there
5 is no question that charter schools have benefitted
6 low-income communities this moratorium purports to
7 help.”

8 Stanford University’s 2013 CREDO study
9 found that 63 percent of New York City charter
10 schools show significantly larger growth in math
11 and 22 percent in their reading than students in
12 district schools. There are charter schools in the
13 Bronx with as many as 2,776 and 19,037 applicants
14 for 35 or 80 seats respectively. Do you believe
15 any of those parents want to see new seats? I’m
16 going to turn it over to my colleague, Valerie
17 Babb, to finish the last resolution.

18 VALERIE BABB: So 1906... good
19 afternoon, everyone, nice to see you. 1906 defines
20 affected parents and student as those with children
21 already in existing school buildings and would
22 demand increased notification for them. What about
23 the new schools moving into a community who do not
24 yet have students enrolled? Who will be notified
25 on their behalf, all potential applicants? The

1 school building does not belong to the DOE or
2 school leaders or the parents who attend that
3 school. It, in fact, belongs to the entire
4 community and a call for a change in the
5 notification that excludes parents who may want to
6 see changes in the utilization of the building is
7 not a meaningful reform. It is making sure that
8 the haves do not have to share with the have-nots.
9 We all live in New York City and understand that
10 real estate is precious. Nobody wants to give up
11 space and the parents of children [chime] in
12 existing schools understandably want that building
13 used for the maximum benefit of their child, but
14 your role is not that of a parent. Your role is to
15 protect the interests of all children in the city.
16 An existing school already has a constituency; a
17 new school by definition does not.

18
19 There is a sense of despair among New
20 York City parents about the limited options
21 available to their children. Many point to polls
22 showing parental dissatisfaction with the state of
23 schools in New York City. This generally gets
24 interpreted as a rejection of new schools, be they
25 district or charter. Perhaps it is more reflective

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of the impatience of those parents who are desperate for good seats and actually don't have the 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 five 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 and Jackson Heights that their need to send their child to a great school will just have to wait.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next, please.

BARBARA MARTINEZ: Good afternoon. My name is Barbara Martinez and I am Chief External Officer of Uncommon Schools. Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony. If you could follow along with a PowerPoint I have. Hopefully you have a copy of that. Great.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Can you tell me what are Uncommon Schools?

BARBARA MARTINEZ: Sure, that's the next slide. That's slide number two. Uncommon...

[crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 216

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Oh, I'm sorry.

3 [crosstalk]

4 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Schools is a Charter
5 Management Organization. We're a network of 20
6 schools in Brooklyn.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]
8 Okay.

9 BARBARA MARTINEZ: We have 5,000
10 students in Brooklyn, 535 teachers, over 100
11 support staff members and 42 school meters. We're
12 one of the largest charter management organizations
13 in the state.

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, do you have
15 a PowerPoint that you can put up? No? Oh, okay.

16 BARBARA MARTINEZ: I have a USB, but I
17 didn't know if it was possible. I can...

18 [crosstalk]

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We can put it up.

20 [crosstalk]

21 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Certainly put it up.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah. Oh, we
23 can't put it up in here? No?

24 [Pause]

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Continue.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

BARBARA MARTINEZ: Of course. We are in neighborhoods; that's the next slide. We are in neighborhoods in Central Brooklyn mostly in Bed-Stuy, in Brownsville, Crown Heights and Ocean Hill. We have one school in Williamsburg and now a couple of schools in Canarsie, and 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. I mentioned we have 5,000 students. We have over 10,000 students on our waiting list. Whether it's working hard to have positive co-locations, which we do, making an impact on our community or sharing best practices with teachers in our district co-located schools, 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 and we are particularly proud of our ability to catch students up and propel them forward. Our first 12th grade class graduated in June and 100 percent of them enrolled in college and are currently in college. Many of them came to us in fifth grade reading and doing math on a first grade level, and not even thinking

1 that college was in their future, and how did we
2 turn that around for them? Well, a longer school
3 day and a longer school year for sure. If you want
4 to get better at something, no matter what it is,
5 the more time you have to do it, the better the
6 outcomes will be, and as important though we
7 support our teachers. Uncommon is known as one of
8 the best places in the country for a teacher to get
9 really good at teaching and why is that? Every
10 teacher gets a coach that spends time in their
11 classroom and that coach and that teacher work
12 together about what of the things that you see in
13 your classroom that you want to get better at.
14 That's why last year we had over 6,000 teachers
15 from across the country apply for only 300 jobs;
16 teaching jobs in our schools. Teachers know that
17 this is a place to grow, and for our kids to do
18 well in college we must provide rigorous lessons
19 that are also joyful and that's a picture of a
20 student that you might see on page five. One of
21 the things we do at all of our middle schools is we
22 have pi day. That's March 14th, 3.14, and the
23 students who learn the most digits of pi get to
24 throw a pie in their teacher's face and we make
25

1 math fun and our kids love math, and that's why 100
2 percent of our eighth graders last year passed the
3 Algebra Regents Exam in eighth grade and that's
4 including our Special Ed students as well. So we
5 make math lots of fun, and we do this, by the way,
6 all on the public dollar. It is Uncommon's mission
7 to operate mature schools solely on the per pupil
8 amount, so we take donations for schools that are
9 growing or are new because it's costly to open a
10 new school, but once our schools have all of their
11 grades, as most of ours do, we take zero
12 philanthropic funds. Our point in doing that is
13 this: providing a high quality education to low-
14 income students is doable on the funds that are
15 currently available.

17 I know that the purpose here today is
18 to talk about resolutions involving co-location, so
19 I want to spend a moment talking about our co-
20 locations. I want you to know that our school
21 leaders, every single one of them, work really hard
22 to have positive co-location relationships with
23 their district partners and I can tell you that in
24 almost every single one of our co-locations we do
25 have a positive relationship, and I encourage you

1 and anytime you want to come to come visit us and
2 we can talk about what makes those co-locations
3 work.
4

5 Take, for example, Williamsburg
6 Collegiate Charter School. Our seventh and eighth
7 graders at Williamsburg Collegiate Charter School
8 are the homework buddies to PS 16 students
9 downstairs. On many occasions PS 16 has invited
10 our students to perform in their school-wide
11 performances and vice versa, and recently our
12 school leader and PS 16 school leader got together
13 and said let's make some nice signs for our schools
14 that show both of our names, and you have a picture
15 of that in that PowerPoint presentation of the sign
16 that both the principal of PS 16 and our principal
17 worked on together.

18 At Bed-Stuy Collegiate, we partnered
19 with PS 267 and also La Cima Charter School for a
20 KaBoom! project. If you don't know what a KaBoom!
21 project is, it's a one-day build of a playground,
22 and what they did is they took an empty distressed
23 lot right next to PS 267, and the children of PS
24 267, along with the children from our charter
25 school and a third charter school worked on this

1
2 project together as partners, and now they have a
3 beautiful playground that is enjoyed by over 1,000
4 children in the community.

5 We also work very hard to codify what
6 we know works in classrooms for students and
7 disseminate it, so in the past year we've provided
8 free professional development to our district co-
9 located partners, so hundreds of district teachers
10 and principals have come to our free professional
11 development.

12 Had the resolutions that are being
13 considered today been in effect as state laws,
14 little to any of this would have happened. We are
15 concerned that requiring CEC approval of a co-
16 location before presentation to the Panel for
17 Educational Policy and issuing a moratorium on co-
18 locations could harm the future growth of great
19 options like ours. We believe that input from all
20 stakeholders is critical to the establishment of a
21 successful school, but we don't want to risk
22 creating more barriers where they aren't needed.
23 I'm happy to take your questions and I would love
24 for you to come visit some of our schools.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, first, let me thank all three of you for coming in representing your respective organizations. I do have some questions, but let me ask a question that was asked for me to ask the question. So can Uncommon Schools explain what is their guidance to charter schools regarding out-of-school suspensions?

BARBARA MARTINEZ: I'm sorry, what is the question?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Can you with Uncommon Schools explain what is their guidance to charter schools, 'cause you have how many charter schools?

BARBARA MARTINEZ: For our own charter schools.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah.

BARBARA MARTINEZ: So what is our... are you asking what is...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah.

BARBARA MARTINEZ: Our policy, our...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I guess so.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 223

2 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Out-of-school...

3 [crosstalk]

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Regarding...

5 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Suspensions?

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Out-of-school

7 suspensions.

8 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Right. We have out-
9 of-school suspensions and we have in-school
10 suspensions. I can get you information on our
11 exact policies about what would trigger an out-of-
12 school suspension. I can tell you that they're
13 very rare because we don't want children to lose
14 instruction. When it is necessary and for kids to
15 go home and reflect on what happened and what they
16 did, they do take their work with them and we have
17 mechanisms in place for them to catch up on that
18 work, but sometimes it is necessary for a student
19 to go home and reflect on how their actions are
20 impacting their ability to get to and through
21 college, which is what we all want for them.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Do you keep
23 statistics as to the number of in-school and out-
24 of-school suspensions and how long for example, are
25 the suspensions?

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 224

2 BARBARA MARTINEZ: I believe we do,
3 yeah and I believe we report those to the state.
4 Those are all public information.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

6 BARBARA MARTINEZ: I can also get them
7 for you.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, can you
9 supply that to our...

10 [crosstalk]

11 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Absolutely.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Staff if you
13 don't mind?

14 BARBARA MARTINEZ: Sure, mm-hm.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The second
16 question is what is Uncommon Schools doing to
17 ensure that students with disabilities who require
18 small class settings have access to charter
19 schools?

20 BARBARA MARTINEZ: That's a great
21 question. If you look at our Special Ed
22 percentages across all of our schools, they are
23 very close to the district school and when they are
24 lower, what's really important to note is that in
25 many of our schools we have students who get IEP

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like services and pull-out and go into our what we call skills Rooms. We don't call it Special Ed in our schools; we call it in skills room and so you might have a student within IEP sitting right next to a student without an IEP, but they're getting the same help with their skills in a very small environment, so six kids at a time, things like that. So we absolutely encourage kids with IEPs to apply. Our IEP kids do great and we're happy to show that to anybody who wants to come and see how that works.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: What is your average class size in your charter schools?

BARBARA MARTINEZ: In the elementary and middle school it's about 29 kids per class.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm. And so you're basically saying with respects to the children with special needs that have an IEP you're saying they're getting the services within their normal classroom or they are in smaller classes?

BARBARA MARTINEZ: We have pull-out.

We don't have... I would have to check for you whether we have the self-contained all Special Ed type of things, but we don't necessarily believe

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that that's the best thing for all students and so we work with the parents and the Child Study Team to make sure that the student is getting what they need. It's not always what maybe another school would do.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm. They did...

[crosstalk]

BARBARA MARTINEZ: But we have great examples. There's one, our class president, who just graduated in June, came to us in fifth grade with an IEP. He had a behavioral IEP.

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: [interposing]

BARBARA MARTINEZ: He used to roam the hallways and throw things and things like that and his IEP said basically he doesn't really learn anything. You just sort of sit him in a classroom, and we believed in him a lot more than that. Within a year we declassified him because we do that a lot. We find that kids really just needed the structure and needed the extra attention and then they don't need an IEP. He's in college right now. He's in Oswego. He lost his IEP within a year

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with us and as I said he graduated as class president.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Excellent.

David, did you want to comment?

DAVID GOLOVNER: Yeah, the Special Ed question's an interesting one and actually it's very timely.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] Go ahead.

DAVIS GOLOVNER: As you know, the city's Special Education Reforms are moving away from self-contained classroom. The charter school sector in general has not used self-contained classrooms to the same extent that the city has, and a lot of the Special Ed providers in charter schools would say that in the district side there's been overreliance on marginalizing Special Ed students and putting them in self-contained classrooms and not having them participate in the instructional programs that our larger student body is doing. We just participated in a study, a citywide study of Special Ed programs in charter schools. As you know, the Charter Center has been pushing for transparency in enrollment numbers and

1 things like and there is a gap in enrollment and
2 retention numbers of people who have been
3 identified with an IEP in charter schools versus
4 district schools. We are aware of that. It's been
5 public for several years since the 2010 state law
6 was changed, but partly the target for charter
7 school is to address that. This study that this
8 gentleman, Marcus Winters, had just done that was
9 commissioned by the Center for Reinventing Public
10 Education out of Washington state looked at charter
11 schools enrollment with Special Education students
12 trying to figure out why that gap exists. There's
13 been a lot of supposition for it. One of the
14 findings that came out of that was that charter
15 schools are actually putting less children in the
16 Special Ed track in the first place. They're
17 giving less children IEPs in the beginning and are
18 mainstreaming the kids fully. The kids are getting
19 the same education as every other child and they're
20 performance; you know, there's not a performance
21 gap within the student body itself and that with
22 students are designated with IEP are graduating out
23 of the Special Ed system quicker on the charter
24 school side than they are on the district side, so
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it doesn't account for the entire gap, but according to the study it accounts for approximately 80 percent of the gap between Special Education student numbers on the district side with their corresponding charter schools.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: With that study you make reference to...

DAVID GOLOVNER: [interposing] It was just released on Monday and we're actually going to distribute it to all members of the community as well as the council.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Was that study on New York City charter schools or...

DAVID GOLOVNER: That is correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: It was.

DAVID GOLOVNER: New York City charter schools specifically.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: How do you... we hear from charter school parents and others say that charter schools are coach...

DAVID GOLOVNER: [interposing] Counseling out?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Counseling out so that they don't have to deal with them and then you

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know, as you know, as you know if you get kicked out of private school or if you get kicked out of parochial school or a charter school, you have to go back to your normal public school.

DAVID GOLOVNER: Yep, the phenomenon of counseling out as it's been sort of you know, categorized, is illegal. Any instance where it happens where somebody's got proof like, and as I've said before to other people; I believe to this community, we will stand there and help try to... if there's an actual case where somebody is being counseled out, it is wrong. The school should be taken to count for that. What is often considered counseling out is also... is one, is that the students are not necessarily being put into the Special Ed track in charter schools and two, in the charter school side of the Educational Law, the Special Ed students that have been identified with an IEP are managed by the district, not by the charter school because of the economies of scale with charter schools to provide like self-contained classrooms, and the more intensive programs for Special Education students is very costly per student. Not every charter school, especially

1
2 independents, are able to afford to do that because
3 legally speaking the Special Education student is
4 still a district student even though they go to
5 school and class in a charter school. The charter
6 school can say legally to that student, "We do not
7 have the services for you. We cannot provide them
8 in this school." If that is the case, it's in the
9 best interest of the school; I mean of the student
10 to then go back to the district where they could
11 get District 75 program or you know, find another
12 school because this particular school could do
13 that. Part of the reason for that is purely
14 economies of scale. You know, you've got a budget
15 for one school and you need to provide and service
16 that for say a medium spectrum autistic child for
17 the district's program is about \$80,000 per student
18 and similarly cost in the charter school sector, so
19 unless your school is actually budgeting for that,
20 if the child comes in say on the autistic spectrum
21 and you do not have \$80,000 within the budget to do
22 that it makes it very difficult for the school to
23 accommodate the services on that small a basis.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm.
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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

DAVID GOLOVNER: We are trying to fix that I mean in terms of technical aspects of the law, and for the past two years we've introduced state legislation that would help that and we've unfortunately been able to get no movement in the state assembly to help us with that.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And in making reference to the resolutions, there's three resolutions on the table and quite a number of CECs and very active parents in the public school system support this and obviously you don't.

BARBARA MARTINEZ: Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Why do you think that it... is it that the charter schools are so in contradiction to the public schools where the parent activists in the public schools are supporting these resolutions? Are they upset with you guys or are they upset with the administration, the Bloomberg Administration?

DAVID GOLOVNER: Honestly I think it's a little of all that. You know, I mean again, the dynamic of charter schools you enter a lottery. If you get in that lottery, great, you love that school. If you don't get in that lottery and

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there's no other charter school that you could go to, I'm thinking that person probably is not walking away a lover of charter schools, right, 'cause they didn't get into the system. They're now going to a district school that they were maybe trying to avoid, so that is you know... sort of inherently sets us up where if you're not within sort of our population of people, there's a sort of natural resentment and we understand that. That's natural.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, I think that those...

[crosstalk]

DAVID GOLOVNER: We've also got though...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I think those individuals want to be there, so not are not individuals, in my opinion, that you know, are supportive of these resolutions. The one...

[crosstalk]

BARBARA MARTINEZ: I would...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That I think that are supportive of those, those are the ones that

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are parent leaders; that are part of CECs; that are parent activists.

DAVID GOLOVNER: You've also got with CECs, and Val's met with a lot of them and we'll speak to that more specifically, but the CECs are a poorly empowered body by the state law when they were first created. They don't have any real jurisdiction other than the zoning guidelines. These legislations that the resolution would support would give them quite a bit more power. I would think the CECs would be very interested in expanding their portfolio to actually have an impact upon the school system. One of our basic problems with that is there is nowhere within city government where a citizen body; citizen committee has veto power over set actions by the city government like what these pieces of legislation would give to CECs. Community boards...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRMAN JACKSON: But well, now...

[crosstalk]

DAVID GOLOVNER: Cannot veto land use decisions...

[crosstalk]

2 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Yeah, but they're...

3 [crosstalk]

4 DAVID GOLOVNER: To provide...

5 [crosstalk]

6 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: They're elected
7 local rep... that's the local body. That's the
8 local community school board, so they're not...
9 they're citizens. I'm a citizen, so the
10 legislative body is a citizen body. They're
11 elected. Now, you...

12 [crosstalk]

13 DAVID GOLOVNER: They're not... they're
14 not...

15 VALERIE BABB: [interposing] So
16 Chairman, I would just jump in and say...

17 [crosstalk]

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: One second,
19 please, if you don't mind. They're elected. You
20 may disagree with the electoral process. You may
21 not think that they have the juice that they have,
22 and you're right. They have been watered down, but
23 they are elected and they represent that community
24 and that's why you know, so just like you're... you
25 know, let's assume that you were the body of the

1 Charter School Association. You're elected by your
2 body in order to represent. Go ahead. I'm sorry,
3 continue.
4

5 VALERIE BABB: Mm-hm. I was just going
6 to go back to your original question and I would
7 say I would agree with you that I think folks are
8 more disillusioned with this current
9 administration.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm.

11 VALERIE BABB: I think that's what the
12 issue is and that's what I've heard from making
13 visits to community boards across the city as well
14 as CECs; that people feel like the Bloomberg
15 Administration has not done some of the things that
16 they said that they would do.

17 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Mm-hm. So well,
18 you... well, you're here doing all of the
19 discussion with the chancellor and with members
20 asking questions.

21 VALERIE BABB: Mm-hm.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You know, any
23 comments about anything regarding that; anything
24 that was said, because the bottom line is that I
25 think that everyone that I know wants all of our

1 children to be successful and I do believe that
2 many parents choose charter schools; that are in
3 charter schools right now because they don't feel
4 that the local public schools are providing the
5 type of education; the quality of education that
6 their kids deserve, and you know, as I indicated,
7 you may have heard that one school I know is asking
8 parents and the Parents Association for money for
9 teacher development. That's insane in my opinion.
10 The school should supply that. The system should
11 supply that. You shouldn't have to ask the
12 parents. It's a public school. So that's just one
13 example of... and then I heard Mike Mulgrew say
14 students are eating lunch at 8:15 in the morning.
15 They come in there at 7:30! They're not eating
16 lunch. They just had breakfast, or if anything
17 they're going to get breakfast, not lunch, and then
18 they have to be in school all afternoon. That's
19 the type of stuff that we must avoid, and when
20 parents run into situations like that if there are
21 other options, they're going to look at other
22 options. We...

24 [crosstalk]

25 DAVID GOLOVNER: My...

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[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Shouldn't be in this type of situation.

DAVID GOLOVNER: My... my... I don't disagree with any of the emotions expressed at all. I might have some interest in seeing some of the facts on that. You know, I mean because the problem with co-location issue is there's a huge amount of contention and real heartfelt emotion that's out there that's also being organized by both sides of the issue. I mean the... Michael Mulgrew's union has been organizing ending some charter school co-locations since there have been charter school locations. I don't know how widespread the 8:15 a.m. lunch phenomenon is, but I would be willing to bet that it's not the most common occurrence in co-locations across the city. You know, a lot of the worst case scenarios that are often thrown out there as though they happen on every school building that has a co-location I would be willing to bet are extremely rare instances, if they are in fact actually even really occurring, to be honest. I mean with the factual evidence that we've looked at and looked at co-

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locations around the city, the most co-locations, as has been said, are district to district. Most school buildings that are overcrowded that have the highest crowding in them; the highest building utilization percentage and rate are single school buildings, not co-located buildings. They're buildings that only have one school in them. Most buildings that have district to district co-locations in them are more crowded than buildings that have charter school co-locations in them. So again, like those facts are not what you know, are thrown in our face. What we hear is the 8:15 lunch.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The impression... I'm sorry, this is the last question. There are so many panels that have to be heard. Why do I get the impression that a lot of the... I guess push back is with Success Academies? Be realistic. Don't bullshit.

[crosstalk]

DAVID GOLOVNER: Why do you get that impression...

[crosstalk]

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Don't...

3 [crosstalk]

4 DAVID GOLOVNER: Or why is that

5 [laughter] your reality?

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Don't give me a
7 runaround. Tell the truth, David. We expect the
8 truth from you, just like Valerie said what she had
9 to say in speaking the truth.

10 DAVID GOLOVNER: Look, mayors use co-
11 locations; use charter schools for a lot of
12 different reasons. They've improved student
13 performance. One could make a case that he's used
14 them for political purposes at different times.
15 He's had different partners in doing that. One of
16 the largest charter operators in the city is
17 Success Academies, but their co-locations have gone
18 into school buildings all around the city four
19 boroughs. The only borough where they're not I
20 believe is Staten Island. Is that true? Yes, they
21 are growing. They're growing quickly. They're
22 growing large. Their schools are some of the
23 highest performing schools in the state, right, and
24 again, something you do not hear about in the whole
25 co-location battle. All you hear about is Eva

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Moskowitz is moving into our building and world's going to fall and this...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And we hear a lot of coaching out at those schools too.

DAVID GOLOVNER: And again, I would love to see somebody come up with proof about that; call whomever and actually do an investigation and show us that there is counseling out going on. All I've heard is allegations about that.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Why don't you do an investigation as to how many children are dismissed from the schools and then interview those parents? You're the Charter School Center. You would want to know that I would think.

DAVID GOLOVNER: We don't have that sort of investigatory power to... to pull... we can look at public documents, but we can't... we can't...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So you mean...

[crosstalk]

DAVID GOLOVNER: You know...

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 242

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You don't...

3 you...

4 [crosstalk]

5 DAVID GOLOVNER: We can't do

6 investigative...

7 [crosstalk]

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You don't

9 oversee...

10 [crosstalk]

11 DAVID GOLOVNER: Things to parents.

12 That would be highly inappropriate.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You don't oversee

14 charter schools?

15 DAVID GOLOVNER: No, no, no, we do not.

16 We're an independent private partner...

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]

18 Okay.

19 DAVID GOLOVNER: Private public

20 partnership set up as a non-membership

21 organization...

22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

24

25

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 243

2 DAVID GOLOVNER: So that we do have as
3 objective a viewpoint of charter schools as we
4 possibly could have.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, thank you
6 for coming in. Sorry.

7 VALERIE BABB: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You're welcome.
9 The next panel is Deborah Yates of CEC 5; Sonni
10 Mun, MD, CEC District 2 and Lower Manhattan
11 Community; Jim Devore, CEC 15; Nicole Job, CEC 17
12 and Kathleen Daniel, CEC 16. Please come forward,
13 please.

14 [Pause]

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, are we
16 ready? Deborah Yates, are you here?

17 DEBORAH YATES: Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Good, Sonja Mund,
19 MD.

20 SONNI MUN: Sonni Mun.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sonni Mun, I'm
22 sorry.

23 SONNI MUN: That's okay.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's you?

25 SONNI MUN: Yes.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 244

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Jim, you're here.
3 Nicole?

4 NICOLE JOB: I'm here.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Nicole is here
6 and Kathleen? Good. 'Kay, would you all raise
7 your right hand, please? And do you swear or
8 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and
9 nothing but the truth in your testimony before this
10 committee and to respond honestly to council
11 members' questions?

12 ALL: Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. 'Kay,
14 Deborah Yates. I'm following the order. Sonni
15 Mun, you're second and Jim and Nicole and Kathleen,
16 okay? Is that alright? Good.

17 DEBORAH YATES: Good evening and thanks
18 for the opportunity to read this statement, Chair
19 Jackson, from CEC 5. I must also apologize that I
20 must leave directly after, so if you have any
21 questions, please...

22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I can understand.
24 I...

25 [crosstalk]

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DEBORAH YATES: Contact me, please.

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Apologize that we're going late, but this is an important hearing so.

DEBORAH YATES: Okay and this is a statement from our chair, 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 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 effuse 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 has 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

1 and/or specialty space, and in some instances
2 students with disabilities are forced to receive
3 mandated services in hallways or even more
4 insultingly, in closets.
5

6 An end must come to the current
7 implementation of a policy that does not value and
8 is irrespective of the views and input of parents,
9 students, teachers and members of the community at
10 large. An end must come to the policy by which
11 divisive co-locations severely undermine the
12 quality of education our district public school
13 students receive, thereby creating separate and
14 unequal environments within their own schools and
15 buildings. Community Education Council 5
16 reiterates our numerous demands that the New York
17 State Legislature amend the school governance laws
18 so that all proposals to close, phase, truncate or
19 co-locate New York City District Public Schools
20 must be approved by the District Community
21 Education Council in which the school resides prior
22 to it being for a vote by the Panel for Education
23 Policy, Resolution Number 1263.

24 We reiterate our call upon the New York
25 City Department of Education to institute a

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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 desperate... thank you, impact on low-income communities, communities of color, disabled students and homeless students, proposed Resolution Number 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 meaningful and effective manner, Resolution Number 1906. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next, please. Just turn on your mic, please. Is that it there?

SONNI MUN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go.

SONNI MUN: So I just joined the CEC just a few months ago and I just wanted to tell you about some of my experiences and what I've seen to

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 speak to the issues that are being discussed at
 this meeting.

 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And just state
 your name for the record and what's your position
 on CEC?

 SONNI MUN: My name is Sonni Mun and I
 am a member of CEC District 2.

 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

 SONNI MUN: Okay and so I came into the
 CEC open-minded. I wasn't necessarily for or
 completely opposed to charter schools or co-
 locations, but in trying to understand more of the
 issues... I live in this neighborhood. I live a
 few blocks from here and one of the issues that I
 became very involved with is the proposed co-
 location of the Success Academy at Murry Bergtraum
 High and just the frustrations with this particular
 school I think is very illustrative of the
 frustrations that a lot of the parents have had.
 So I live in the community and I was not aware
 about this co-location until the co-location was
 already almost a done deal. I live probably five
 blocks from Murry Bergtraum High School. Once I
 decided that I wanted to get more involved I tried

1 as much as possible to get information, and I found
2 out last week, and this is as a member of CEC, that
3 there was an application hearing for the charter
4 Monday, this past Monday. I found out like the
5 five days... and that's not even five business
6 days. The hearing was scheduled at the same time
7 as another hearing that I was supposed to go to;
8 exact same time at a different location about the
9 Mather Emergency Preparedness School, so again, if
10 we want community involvement and community
11 engagement, that's not how it happens. I found out
12 five days before this hearing and it was scheduled
13 at the same time as another hearing that I needed
14 to attend. When I went to this hearing on Monday,
15 the only person who came to testify was me. There
16 wasn't a single other person there to testify. I
17 was the only person from the community. A person
18 representing Success Academy did come, but she... I
19 think she was late, so she missed most of what I
20 had to say. Again, that's not community
21 engagement. I tried to find out more so that I can
22 again, be more open-minded so I've been looking to
23 get more information about demographics on some of
24 these charter schools 'cause I don't want to just
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say something without data, so I've tried very hard. When I asked the person from the charter school about demographics about the recently opened schools in Manhattan so that I can have a sense of where these kids are coming from; how... what percentage are from... or English language second... you know what I'm trying to say; English as a second language [chime] learners. They told me that I would have to reach out to the schools individually, and I don't have a name of a person. I don't know who I'm supposed to contact and this should be public information. What I do know is that with some recent charter schools that have opened in similar neighborhoods, more than half of the students, from what I could tell from you know, available data is they don't come from that surrounding area. My neighborhood where I live right five blocks from here, we have a huge issue with overcrowding. Yes, we want more schools, but it is... the parents have been 100 percent clear. We want more zoned elementary schools for the neighborhood. We have never asked for a charter school in our neighborhood.

1 The issue that... and I... earlier when
2
3 Dennis Walcott was saying that he doesn't want to
4 think beyond the next election; he wants to do
5 something right now. Well, my district has a huge
6 crisis with middle schools. Last year, we had more
7 appeals regarding families dissatisfied with middle
8 school applications than ever before. One reason
9 may have been there was 150 more applicants than in
10 previous years. This is the second elementary
11 school; charter elementary school that they're
12 putting in our district. Half the students are not
13 going to be from our district, but they're going to
14 be able to apply to our district middle schools.
15 We are building a couple of new elementary schools,
16 but there's no new middle schools around here, so
17 we're taking a crisis with overcrowding and making
18 it worse by not thinking about what's going to
19 happen a few years down the road.

20 I also want to say that I myself was
21 thinking okay, I'm not being fair. Like we have
22 great schools in our neighborhood; everybody should
23 have it. What about kids who need to go to a
24 really great school and this is their only
25 opportunity? I have to say I think that's

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terrible. I would not send my child to an elementary school at Murry Bergtraum. There were two fistfights on opening day this year. If I wouldn't send my child, why should somebody else who wants a good education have to send their child to a school that I wouldn't? They also should have funding so that they have great schools in their neighborhoods. This is not the way that public education should work. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next, please is... oh, Jim, okay.

JIM DEVORE: Hi, Chairman Jackson. We meet again and I want to thank you also for your service. One correction on the record, I'm no longer a president of District... Community Education Council for District 15. I'm a compelled retiree. My child is aged out. I'm a former president, but like war horses I come to the... I salute when the bugle is blown. I speak in favor... although I support all three resolutions, I'm here to speak about Resolution 1263. A Tale of Two Cities has been sort of a successful meanness here. Let me talk to you about a tale of two processes instead. As a testimony, which I brought

1
2 you, which I presented last year will tell you
3 about the sorry history of the Success Academy
4 encouraged into District 15 into Cobble Hill. It's
5 not really about whether there should have been a
6 charter school there, although I would particularly
7 argue that... and in fact, we had suggestions about
8 different charter schools co-locating at that site
9 because there was an underutilization in that
10 building. The question is a matter of process and
11 since then we're going through a rezoning process
12 in District 15, which got a lot of coverage in The
13 New York Times almost exclusively about the real
14 estate issued attached; you know, about whether or
15 not we would force declining values in certain
16 parts of Park Slope, as The New York Times is ever
17 vigilant about you know, what really matters to its
18 readers. But in any event, we went through that
19 process that was a fairly contentious process, but
20 also, we had a situation where there was additional
21 capacity added to the district and because we had
22 the power of rezoning and because there was added
23 capacity in that district, we were able to
24 enforce... we... first of all, we got a pretty good
25 rezoning plan. It was not the first plan presented

1 to us. It was something after major conversations
2 that went back and forth between Tweed and us, and
3 to the credit of some of the staff at Tweed, there
4 were very good conversations and we were listened
5 to and we listened to them and we took that very
6 seriously. But more importantly, because there was
7 that power with that relationship we had, there was
8 another school, PS 133, which was opening up, where
9 we were able to for the first time in the entire
10 history of the Bloomberg Administration create a
11 targeted admissions program, which gave preference
12 to English language learners and children with free
13 and reduced price lunch in Boerum Hill, which is in
14 a rising neighborhood in brownstone Brooklyn, and
15 that was only... we were able to achieve that
16 because they had to listen because we had rezoning
17 over their heads. [chime] Just as I would argue we
18 could've and we can end up with good co-locations
19 where they're appropriate and stop bad co-
20 locations, and those co-locations can be with
21 school... you know, with public schools, they can
22 even be with charter schools where they are
23 appropriate. For example, middle schools... middle
24 school charter schools we tend to be more favorably
25

1 disposed towards because no one's got the magic
2 bullet on middle schools and we're open to
3 experimentation. That process that we talked about
4 that we obtained through the rezoning power that we
5 had should be one that should also be applied to
6 co-locations. We have demonstrated that we are
7 serious, that we are successful at getting better
8 outcomes and we have every reason to believe that
9 other Community Education Councils given that
10 responsibility would behave in a similar manner.
11 Thank you for your time.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you, Jim,
13 and thank you for your time because I remember
14 reading about that rezoning that you did, and
15 you're right. Approving zonings are in the CEC
16 jurisdiction under the law. Nicole Job, CEC 17.
17 We've been joined by our colleagues, Gale Brewer
18 from Manhattan, David Greenfield of Brooklyn and
19 Debbie Rose of Staten Island. Okay.

20 NICOLE JOB: Welcome. Good evening.
21 I'm Nicole Job, CEC 17 president. Basically, we
22 oppose the methods and processes of co-locations in
23 our district. There's a sense of rushed agendas,
24 especially for 2015/2016. For example, there's a
25

1 new district school in our district, PS 532, New
2 Bridges, that's scheduled for co-location. For
3 some reason, it's apparent that the laws aren't
4 being honored or followed. This school is fairly
5 new. There wasn't a PTA in place, no SLT. There's
6 no UFT chair in place. I had the opportunity to
7 visit a PTA meeting scheduled Monday, which was
8 September 30th at 5:30. This meeting was held to
9 actually... how to say, to develop the PTA, so
10 before you do that, there are supposed to be bylaws
11 approved and adopted and then an election for the
12 PTA board. Now, this meeting started at 5:30 and
13 in less than one hour the meeting was over. The
14 new members, parents, of course, were not even read
15 their roles and responsibilities, so with that you
16 had parents like oh, well... you know, like they're
17 just going to go along with it and they'll learn as
18 they go, but the law stipulates within the bylaws
19 that you have to you know, tell the parent what
20 their rules and responsibilities are. The bylaws
21 were not given out to the parents in place. The
22 bylaws weren't even filled in. It was basically on
23 the principal's laptop for... you know, given to me
24 after questioning certain things that were done, to
25

1
2 me, improperly, that's when they you know, showed
3 it to me on his laptop and I know we probably have
4 PTA members here from the past. If you know
5 anything about bylaws, I believe parents are
6 supposed to have it on hand, so my question to you
7 is, and just I'm questioning how is it that this
8 whole procedure was done in less than one hour? So
9 it's a sense of rushing the process to just get
10 things moving and why is it being done for
11 something that's supposed to be put in place for
12 2015/2016? Okay so you know, we're not anti-
13 charter because our district you know, we're also
14 co-located with district schools. [chime] You
15 know, we are against the process and obvious
16 underhand movements that aren't right you know, as
17 far as when it comes to engaging our parents
18 beforehand. Our council passed the resolution
19 opposing the posting of EIS you know, August. Our
20 parents aren't there; some are not returning from
21 summer vacation. So I just want it to be known
22 that we are really opposing the process when it
23 comes to co-locations in our district.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you and...

25 NICOLE JOB: Thank you.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 258

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [off mic] Yeah,
let me just finish the panel. So Kathleen Daniel,
CEC 16. Are you a member of CEC 16?

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Yes, sir.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, what's your
position, please?

KATHLEEN DANIEL: I am the First Vice
President, CEC 16 in Bedford-Stuyvesant.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Kathleen Daniel.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, very good.

KATHLEEN DANIEL: I am here because
frankly, because of my children. I blame my
children fully for my participation in this
hearing, [laughter] and I'd like to thank the
Education Committee for being here, especially
those council members...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: In all
fairness, it's your fault for having the children,
right, [laughter] so I don't think it's fair...

KATHLEEN DANIEL: [interposing] That
is...

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COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:

[interposing] As a parent myself, I don't think it's fair to blame the children. What did the children ever do? That was a voluntary...

[crosstalk]

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Well, they're not here.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Action, right? Okay.

KATHLEEN DANIEL: I'm sure my daughter put you up to this. So and I'd like thank the council for coming, especially those of you members that made time and still stole time out of your day to come towards the end of this meeting. I have so many disappointments, and let me express while I'm very happy that there is a hearing and I'm very happy that we did receive notice in the CECs to come, I'm disappointed that the hearing is happening and public commentary was due to start at dismissal and those of us with small children, those of us with children we're doing double duty in you know, Head Starts and Pre-Ks and middle school and we want to make sure the high schooler went straight home and did what they were supposed

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to do. Why on earth should we be here and you know, the text messages are going and we are absolutely schizophrenic because I am very concerned right now about pick up and drop off and the school buses and everything else. So I am disappointed that we're not having this somewhere you know, out of school or at various times; that this is the only time. I do appreciate your time and that we're having it, but again, I have some disappointments. I guess mom is just never happy, so I have to be absolutely transparent in that.

As a member of CEC and as a parent, I have to say as well that I don't know that this is the right hearing to have. I would like to have a hearing on the Department of Education. As a person who has never missed an election, who myself has toyed with the idea of running for public office, I have seen mayors...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Whose district...

[crosstalk]

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Come and go.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 261
2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Are you in;
3 which council district?
4 KATHLEEN DANIEL: Bedford-Stuy.
5 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I just want
6 to make sure.
7 [crosstalk]
8 KATHLEEN DANIEL: Oh no, you're safe.
9 You're totally safe.
10 [crosstalk]
11 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Where do
12 you live?
13 KATHLEEN DANIEL: In Bedford-
14 Stuyvesant. You're totally...
15 [crosstalk]
16 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Okay.
17 KATHLEEN DANIEL: Safe.
18 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Wow.
19 [crosstalk]
20 KATHLEEN DANIEL: But...
21 [crosstalk]
22 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: That was
23 close.
24 KATHLEEN DANIEL: I have experienced
25 mayors coming and going. I've seen council members

1
2 come and go two terms, three terms, but I have
3 never seen the Department of Education come and go.
4 We have a bureaucracy that has divisive policies.
5 I, myself have children in two different school
6 districts and see a vast difference and I have to
7 admit it, and I'll hear the hisses, I also have
8 children in charters, so I've seen all ends of the
9 spectrum and what I have seen is that we have a
10 chancellor that sends the CEC notification that he
11 is coming to have a Town Hall; here is the flyer;
12 here is the date. We don't even get to vote on
13 when it is best for our constituency to attend and
14 then he doesn't show. He sends other people from
15 his office. I have seen that there is the
16 transparency in the Department of Education
17 funding; where the money comes from and which
18 schools get which funding. We just actually looked
19 at \$500 of school funding that came in to be spread
20 across the entire District 16, [chime] 32 schools,
21 so the Department of Education's funding, and they
22 have more money than God and they print their own
23 monies perhaps, it is absolutely opaque and as a
24 CEC member that has to vote and represent a
25 constituency; I have to represent all the kids in

1 the community, not just mine; I can't do that
2 effectively if I've got a bureaucracy that is
3 designed to hinder and hamper parent engagement.
4 Parent engagement; they have a website that is so
5 counterintuitive, you have to conduct an
6 archeological dig to get information and I'm on the
7 inside. I'm an elected... well, I'm an appointed
8 member of the CEC because as a person who has
9 children in charter schools, I'm not allowed to run
10 and I'm not allowed to participate unless I go to
11 the Borough President; and how many parents can do
12 that; and get appointed. But again, the hearing
13 that I would like to participate in is the
14 bureaucracy that has created this fake fight about
15 what kind of choices parents have made. What I
16 want to talk about is that parents need a voice and
17 need to have a choice. These proposals that you
18 have here are great, but you have a governor that
19 has a Commission on Education where there are no
20 parent seats, you have a PEP that doesn't have
21 enough parent seats and very few of you have
22 students in public school systems right now and
23 parents need a voice. We have more skin in the
24 game than anybody else. We deploy the children to
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2 these schools and they come home to us to reinforce
3 and partner and make sure that what some of these
4 great teachers are doing out there, which is the
5 overwhelming majority; there are some great
6 teachers out there; we make sure that it sticks and
7 then we are stuck with the decision when we're
8 looking for a nursing home that those children
9 needed to be successful so that we get a good one
10 and that we get good you know, in-laws and things
11 of that nature, and I implore you to have a hearing
12 and demand oversight on the Department of Education
13 because it is unchanging and school may not be the
14 same as it was when I went to Midwood High School
15 to public school, but it is getting worse and it
16 will never get better unless I and he and she and
17 all the rest of the parents here have a real voice
18 and real power.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.
20 [Applause] You're about making change and that's
21 why you're on the CEC and that's part of the
22 process and I say to you that myself as an example,
23 I was involved in the Parents Association, then I
24 ran for the School Board and then was elected to
25 public office and Chair of the Education Committee,

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so hopefully you'll be sitting here chairing this committee in the near future. [laughter] Let's turn to my colleague, David Greenfield for...

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD:

[interposing] Thank you and Mr. Chairman, I just want to say a few things first of all, in response. What was your name? I'm sorry. I missed it.

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Kathleen Daniel.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: I'm writing

that down and saying it to my colleague in your neighborhood. [laughter] Kathleen Daniel. No, seriously speaking, a few things. First, first off is that you should be aware that our committee under the leadership of Chairman Jackson actually holds multiple hearings. We have the longest hearings. They start in the morning. They don't go 'til the night, so I just think fair is fair. If you turn on channel 74 at night you will see that we go on and on and on and nobody does more oversight over the Department of Education than this committee and Chairman Jackson is actually live on the internet as well. To your point as far as the timing you know, the reality is I just think in all fairness to civil servants and we have

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wonderful civil servants here who many are attorneys and staff members. I don't think it would be fair to them to start our hearings at 5:00 p.m. and end at 5:00 a.m., right? I mean so you know, I understand that you're frustrated, but the reality is that the whole world works from 9:00 to 5:00. As elected officials, I actually start work at around 6:00 in the morning and usually don't get home 'til around 11:00 or 12:00 at night, just to give you sort of a sense, so certainly we appreciate it, but I think you just sort... there needs to be you know, sort of a little pragmatism, right, which is that you know, we can't really hold our hearings from 5:00 to midnight. It's just not fair, quite frankly, to people who work or the staff or anyone else, so I just sorted wanted to address that.

As far as the work that all of you do, we're very grateful. We know that you're volunteers. We appreciate the frustrations and the challenges that you have and quite frankly if it was up to us, we would've solved all these problems. However, you should be aware that the laws do emanate from the state and we are not state

1 officials. We are only city officials, and
2 therefore, many of the grievances that you have
3 really should be directed there and in fact, what
4 we're doing is we try to put pressure through these
5 resolutions.
6

7 And then the final point I wanted to
8 just make is on the resolution we're talking about,
9 specifically the frustrations that many of you have
10 about co-locations. I have the same thing, I mean
11 and you know, and I'm an elected official. I have
12 a co-location happening right now where there's a
13 charter school that wants to come into Seth Low IS
14 96 on Avenue P in Brooklyn, and let me tell you
15 something. They held a hearing with no notice on a
16 Jewish holiday when they're elected official is an
17 Orthodox Jew, okay and so you talk about
18 frustration, right? And so there's... [laughter]
19 yeah, exactly, not a coincidence, right? There's
20 no respect on behalf of the system, for lack of a
21 better of term and we do the best that we can to
22 push back and we're fighting the co-location
23 currently and we sympathize with you. We have the
24 same struggles and the same issues and the same
25 concerns that you have. I just wanted to thank you

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for that and just to make you aware that we're on your side. You know, I think sometimes it's sort of I guess the "us versus them." It's not us versus you. We're really on the same team and we know how hard all of you work and everybody's come out here and given the time and we're really very grateful for that and we're doing everything we can to support you and I just wanted to state for the record, there is no greater champion for public students in this city than our chairman, Robert Jackson, so thank you very much.

COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: Thank you.

So...

KATHLEEN DANIEL: [interposing] Can I ask the panel a quick question? Then does that mean that you would support a resolution to the governor and the new mayor demanding more parent seats or some parent seats at all on his commission as well as the PEP?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Of course, of course.

KATHLEEN DANIEL: Wonderful. Thank you. I'll follow up.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So... [laughter]

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER GREENFIELD: We... in
3 the church that I attend every Sunday; I'm joking;
4 I think we call this preaching to the choir.

5 KATHLEEN DANIEL: Okay.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER GREEFIELD: So we're on
7 the same page. We certainly agree that we need
8 that we need more transparency, more information
9 and more parental involvement and I do encourage
10 you to stay up late at night and watch us on
11 channel 74. It's a great way to fall asleep
12 [laughter] and you'll see that we keep going and
13 going and going and we got your back.

14 KATHLEEN DANIEL: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Council Member
16 Gale Brewer from Manhattan.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Just very
18 quickly, on something really specific that we have
19 not been able to do and it involves the state, and
20 maybe you talked about it earlier, Robert, which is
21 that the PEP no matter who's mayor, is Mayoral
22 Controlled and I have had... I actually sued the
23 charters coming into my area. I didn't win, but I
24 know what it's like to have a really frustrating
25 experience at the PEP, I mean like really

1 frustrating. So a long story short, at the very
2 least the state should make, in my opinion, all of
3 the members, at least those appointed by the mayor
4 and maybe those appointed by others, to go through
5 a what we call advice and consent, and that would
6 mean that they have to have a public hearing at the
7 City Council, and that would give you and everybody
8 else a chance to know what their background is.
9 Some of those people now, they've never been in a
10 public school and since I had to experience that, I
11 know that and others do also. So it's an example
12 of a really specific way to get parent input in a
13 sense that okay, are you a parent or not, and if
14 you're not then the City Council may not vote for
15 you and you won't get that job, but it has to go
16 through the state is my understanding in order to
17 make that change.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, so what I
20 wanted to say to all of you, especially to you,
21 Nicole. It seems as though they fast tracked and
22 just to have something on paper. What I say to all
23 of you, and I've said to many people, when you're
24 involved know the rules of the game. If you don't
25 know the rules of the game, they will use you to...

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whoever will use you to their benefit. So now, what you're going to have to do... you're the president, so you're going to have to be able to get the training. You're going to have to get all of the bylaws. You're going to have to get all the chantis (sp?) right. You're going to have whoever your executive assistant is and if necessary there are groups and organizations out there that will give you the type of training that you need, because if you expect to be trained by the Department of Education so you can advocate against them, I don't think they're going to do that, in my opinion, because then you're going to be fighting right against them like other parents in CECs.

NICOLE JOB: Well, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: If I'm them I wouldn't want to...

[crosstalk]

NICOLE JOB: I'm...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Educate like that.

NICOLE JOB: I'm on it.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You're on it?

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2 NICOLE JOB: Thank you, yes.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

4 NICOLE JOB: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. So
6 with that, we thank you all for coming in. We have
7 several more panels that we want to hear from and
8 so stay involved. You know, advocate for your
9 children and make sure you know all of the rules
10 and regulations and bylaws, so that you can
11 advocate for your children and your community.
12 Thank you. Next, we're going to hear from Jaclyn
13 Leffel, New York City Collaborates; Samantha
14 Valerio, Bronx Charter School for Better Learning;
15 Arthur Samuels, Mesa Charter High School; Shondel
16 Nurse, Coro Youth and Abdeal Cabral [phonetic],
17 Coro Youth and there's two Coro Youths that names
18 are going to be called, but they're not speaking,
19 Shakirah Wright and Cheyanne Smith. All of you
20 please come forward.

21 [Pause]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Chair Jackson...

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Council Member...

24 Council Member Debbie Rose has the floor. Council
25 Member Rose?

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COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I just wanted to say for the record, Chair Jackson, that I also have a co-location in my district.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] One second, please.

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It is...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sergeant, could you tell them to keep quiet out there, please?

[Pause]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I also...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead, please.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Have a co-location in my district. It's PS 16 and there's been no mention of it here today. There's been no mention of it in the UFT testimony and I want the record to reflect that this is a co-location that the community is opposed to, and that I would like it to be included in all of the conversations going forward in terms of co-locations. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: A co-location with another public school or a charter school?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: It's a public
3 school.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. So
7 would you raise your right hand whoever's going to
8 testify? I think the two of you are not
9 testifying, right? Okay. Do you swear or affirm
10 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
11 the truth in your testimony before this committee
12 and to respond honestly to council member
13 questions? 'Kay, alright, Jaclyn? We're going to
14 ask all of you if you could stay within the three
15 minutes. We have several more panels, if you don't
16 mind. Go ahead, please.

17 JACLYN LEFFEL: Distinguished committee
18 members, I represent NYC Collaborates, an
19 initiative that creates opportunities for educators
20 to join together to share ideas and inspiration as
21 we work together to improve public education for
22 all New York City students. NYC Collaborates is a
23 program born out of New York City District-Charter
24 Compact. The Compact is a national initiative
25 spearheaded by the Bill and Melinda Gates

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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. A District-Charter Collaboration Council comprised of 20 educators from large district schools, small high schools, charter schools, specialized schools, charter management organizations and networks come together regular 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 percent 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 happens every day when collaboration and good will are prioritized for the benefit of the students.

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our school. I'm looking forward to a year full of sharing best practices and resources to the benefit of all of our students."

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. So you had indicated that this is a Compact that's with chartered and public schools?

JACLYN LEFFEL: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That correct?

JACLYN LEFFEL: Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, very good. Next, please. Samantha Valerio, Bronx Charter School for Better Learning.

SAMANTHA VALERIO: Correct. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You're welcome.

SAMANTHA VALERIO: Good afternoon or evening. I'm not sure what it is yet. [laughter] Basically, I represent a small independent school located in the northeast section of the Bronx. I got to be honest and say that typically we would shy away from these types of things. We are quite complacent doing our own thing where we are, but we believe passionately that in our case in particular co-location has been an amazing opportunity for us as well as PS 111, whose building we modestly

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2 occupy. Right now we're a K through 5 elementary
3 school, about 420 students and we have one full
4 grade and a library in PS 111, and to be honest
5 again, I got to say that the beginning of this
6 partnership; forced partnership on PS 111's part
7 you know, could've been a really frustrating
8 experience and over time the last years we've been
9 able to turn this into a very fruitful partnership
10 and with high hopes going forward. Like I said, it
11 started off very rocky. The Department of
12 Education kind of came in and said that PS 111 had
13 this space for us. You know, in no way is our
14 being there you know, influencing their enrollment.
15 We are told that we have x amount of space based on
16 enrollment after they've already been... after
17 their enrollment is complete. So every year the
18 Department of Education comes back to us and says
19 okay, you have four classrooms or maybe we'll have
20 five classrooms next year, but that's the way our
21 partnership or our arrangement works and to be
22 honest, I don't know you know, the way it works
23 across the board. But I have to say with you know,
24 new administration and time passing, the
25 relationship between the two of us has actually

1
2 become very pleasant and like I said, we have high
3 hopes going forward and just in terms of students
4 scores on state tests, I can tell you our students
5 are outperforming the school that we are co-located
6 with. In math we're 44 percent proficient and I
7 believe they're in single digit numbers in math
8 proficiency and we're 34 percent in ELA; again, I
9 believe they're seven percent proficient. So
10 we're... and we're literally physically down the
11 hall from these students. Their principal has
12 recognized the discrepancy in these state scores
13 and asked to partner with us in certain
14 professional development, share best practices as
15 well as utilize physical space together. We had...
16 last year we had 46 spots open in our lottery. We
17 had over 1,600 applications. The need in the
18 community is completely overwhelming and I really
19 feel like after a time and you know, nurturing the
20 relationship with our shared... with our co-locator
21 they've really come to see us as an asset and an
22 ally as opposed to you know, somebody invading
23 their space. So I got to just say for us in the
24 Northeast Bronx, the co-location is really working
25 out wonderfully for us. Thank you.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And what's your position with that school, please?

SAMANTHA VALERIO: Director of Development and Communications.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, good. Next, please?

ARTHUR SAMUELS: [off mic] There we go. Good afternoon. My name is Arthur Samuels and I'm the Executive Director of Mesa Charter High School. We're a new charter high school that opened in Bushwick this year. We're very different from some of the other charter schools you might hear about, so we are one of the very few stand alone charter highs schools in 9 through 12 in the city. There are over 180 charter schools in the city, but only 16 of them are high schools, and in fact, Mesa is the only independents who are not affiliated with a network 9 through 12 charter high school to open in New York City this year. We opened on August 19th with 132 ninth graders. 90 percent of our students are from Bushwick, so they're from the district. 90 percent received free or reduced lunch. 15 percent of our students are diagnosed with learning disabilities and 25 percent are English language

1 learners, and these numbers are all higher than the
2 district numbers.
3

4 While we've only been open for six
5 weeks, we can claim some modest success so far.
6 Our average daily attendance has been 96 percent,
7 which is significantly higher than the 80 percent
8 that most of the other schools in District 32
9 average. More significantly, and this'll really
10 land with you if you've ever worked in a high
11 school before, our punctuality rate has been 95
12 percent, so today we had three kids out of our 132
13 who were late. They were less than five minutes
14 late, and what we do is as soon as they walk in the
15 door they call their parent to apologize for being
16 late. It's one thing for us to give them a pass;
17 it's another thing for them to call their own
18 parent and apologize for being late and we don't
19 get a lot of kids who are late the second day in a
20 row, and our parents love that. It's one of the
21 things that our parents have been very responsive
22 to.

23 The point is that our kids want to be
24 at Mesa. We have a hands-on STEM class and a four-
25 year college bound program. We are co-located, but

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2 we have a very collaborative relationship with the
3 two other schools in our building and we generally
4 have the support of the community. In fact, the
5 CEC president's son is a freshman at Mesa.

6 So here we are, an independent school
7 collaborating with the community providing a
8 rigorous college prep education in a community
9 where the high school graduation rate is 56
10 percent. But if the resolutions being considered
11 today were binding law, we never would've come into
12 existence. We can't afford facilities. We are not
13 a charter network with multiple schools. We're not
14 sitting on a huge endowment, and we don't have any
15 aspirations to become that. We want to be one
16 independent good high school. Our Board of
17 Trustees is focused on governance in educational
18 excellence. We have two former DOE employees on
19 our board. One is the retired principal of a
20 District 75 school, so she brings a tremendous
21 amount of expertise, but not fund raising. We only
22 have the money that's there, so we don't have the
23 capacity to pay for private space.

24 We've been praised by our Committee on
25 Special Education for constructing individualized

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programs responsive to our students' needs,
including for our 17-year old freshmen, who read on
a first grade level, and our Bilingual Literacy
Program for RLs, but if we...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 17-year old
reading on a first grade level?

ARTHUR SAMUELS: We have a couple of
students; we have three students who are 17-years
old in ninth grade and one of them reads on a first
grade level, that's correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And you've tested
them to determine...

[crosstalk]

ARTHUR SAMUELS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That?

ARTHUR SAMUELS: Yeah, we did
diagnostic testing at the beginning and they take
part in a Wilson Reading Program. [chime] So
Wilson's a highly structured literacy program
for... it was designed initially for adults who
couldn't read and it's been adapted for high school
students.

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Are those... and the individuals that were tested, are they English language learners?

ARTHUR SAMUELS: The three in this case who are over 17 no, they are not English language learners. So just to wrap up because I want to be respectful of the time, I understand the challenges of co-location. Our students live them. In fact, in our school we're the ones who have lunch at 1:45, which is not the end of the world, but it's late. It's a choice that our kids make in order to be able to come to our school. But the administrators of our building are able to work together. We collaborate on projects. We worked with... we are co-located with a transfer high school, so their students are overage and under-credited, and we worked together this summer to paint our whole third floor together, so we share the space. Our kids painted their space; their kids painted our space. The kids got to know each other. We tried to do a little news story on it; nobody cared. Nobody wanted to come. So here's this really exciting, cool, collaborative thing that's happening. It's not sexy. It's not, you

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know? It's not as much fun as people being at each other's throats. I think it's indisputable though that the Bushwick community right now is better off for having Mesa present. I think our kids and our parents would say that, and I think our neighbors would say that. Small, independent community minded charters like theirs, we don't get the same press as the bigger networks, but the truth is if this happens; if these resolutions were in effect, we would be the ones most impacted by it. Our CEC actually couldn't pass a resolution 'cause they never have quorum, so even if they wanted to support us, they wouldn't be able to. So as you consider these resolutions, I ask you to think of Mesa as well. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Next, please.

[Pause]

SHONDEL NURSE: Okay, good afternoon, Education Committee members. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to come testify before this body about co-location. My name is Shondel Nurse and this is my colleague.

ABDEAL CABRAL: Abdeal Cabral.

SHONDEL NURSE: And...

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CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing]

Abdeal, okay.

SHONDEL NURSE: These two here are also members from the Brooklyn Youth Advisory Council. So, pretty much the Brooklyn Youth Advisory Council is a project based youth advisory group in partnership with Margaret Kelley in the Brooklyn Borough President's Office. So last year we were tasked to get the perspective of co-location from the students and our method was we facilitated focus groups at six co-located campuses over two years and we surveyed over 600 students who attended those co-located schools, and being members of the council, we also have our own experience and knowledge of co-location since we all attend co-located schools.

So, the first thing you should know small schools are working. Overall our data suggests that students are comfortable and they are glad with their experience that they are receiving at small schools. However, there are some challenges with the way co-location is being implemented in these high schools.

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ABDEAL CABRAL: Some challenges

students report on co-located campuses are as follows: number one, there are too few opportunities for students to build a sense of community amongst their schools. Students reported often feeling isolated in their individual schools on their co-located campus. Second, there are too few campus-wide leadership opportunities and opportunities for a participatory youth voice in decisions made that affect their life, in particular, we did a focus group in South Shore, the student made it clear that they were interested in working together with the other students in other schools to work on the issues that they have, but they didn't have that opportunity. Third, there are too few opportunities to have academic and extracurricular activities with students in other schools. And finally, there are too few entry and exit points for students to get in and out of school. This is a problem because when four or five schools have to enter and exit from one point, it creates congestions and causes students to be late, which increases possible tensions. These are just a few of the challenges that come

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out of our data. We'd like to thank you once again for your time and we hope this has been useful to you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, thank you. [Applause] Please. Hmm... Gale Brewer, my colleague.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I'll be quick. I mean I have some co-location and it's challenging, so my question is this about the charter schools: is it... it appears to me that you have more resources. I don't quite understand why, but you have more resources, so in your portion of the building does the cafeteria and the schools and walls, does it look better than in the regular, and doesn't that mean that there's a division in terms of how the other school's students feel about maybe being second class students? That's what I'm experiencing. I mean where do you get your money? I never understood that.

ARTHUR SAMUELS: So I would respectfully disagree with the contention that we have more resources I think. We receive the same per pupil funding. We receive \$13,527 per student,

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that our kids have. We're pretty low tech. We've invested most of our money in faculty.

SAMANTHA VALERIO: Sorry, I would just say that in terms of resources, the school that we're co-located with has infinitely more than we do. We eat in our classrooms. If it's cold outside or in inclement weather we have gym in our classrooms. We have an art teacher and a music teacher who push a cart from classroom to classroom because we don't have the facility space to support that. So just in terms of you know, and charter schools don't receive funding for facilities, so that's really the biggest difference in you know, what our charter school looks like versus our public school that we're co-located with. Also though, to be honest, they do have people like me in development who go out there and fundraise and have you know, annual goals that they have to meet in order to...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: The public schools don't have that. They don't have you. I'm just saying. I have 35 public schools in my district, so I...

2 SAMANTHA VALERIO: [interposing] And
3 those public schools are receiving facilities
4 funding, which charter schools do not.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, but I'm
6 just saying there's nobody like you to go out and
7 do specific fundraising. The PTA does it, but
8 just...

9 ARTHUR SAMUELS: At Mesa we don't have
10 a person like that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, I still
12 don't understand all this, so I'm trying to
13 understand it and I don't get the differences, but
14 I'm trying.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, well, I
16 want to thank all of you for coming in. Did you
17 all sit through all of the testimony with the
18 chancellor and everything? So you heard the issues
19 and concerns that were raised by members of the
20 City Council. Just think about that and understand
21 these are representatives that are hearing from
22 their constituents and CECs and so forth and so on
23 and parent leaders, and you heard me ask the
24 question of the charter school representatives,
25 meaning the center. Do they... why do they

1 think... is it because their parents are pulled to
2 the charter schools or DOE, and you heard one
3 response was a combination of everything. And then
4 another representative of the center said it was
5 against DOE, so I just... just collectively we need
6 to... we collectively need to think about that, but
7 clearly there's going to be a change as of 1-1-
8 2014, and I've said that the world doesn't end 12-
9 31-13. So think positive.

11 ARTHUR SAMUELS: Okay, I think one
12 thing that... we've worked very, very hard to build
13 support within our community and I think if you
14 were to come to our school and talk to the people
15 in our community and our parents and our CEC, you
16 would see that. One of the things... you know and
17 it didn't happen overnight. It was a lot of
18 meetings like this and a lot of shoe leather and
19 being very, very responsive to parents. We think
20 that's a great model, but I think that also we
21 needed time to be able to do that, and I think one
22 of the things that gives me a little bit of pause
23 about the resolution that the council is
24 considering is if that had been in place, I think
25 the CEC would've been able to simply say you know

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what, you say charter; we don't want to hear, and it took a while for them to get to know us and to hear we might be a charter school that's not the same as every other charter school that they've seen, to the point that the CEC president was willing to send her child to our school. To me, that... you know, for us that was a real victory, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And you may go to that CEC and she may speak on behalf of it and...

ARTHUR SAMUELS: [interposing] Mm-hm.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: CEC may say yes, we agree with this co-location.

ARTHUR SAMUELS: But I don't know if they would've been able to do that right at the beginning and they also don't have the... because they don't have quorum, they couldn't have even passed the resolution.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well and that's one of the problems...

[crosstalk]

ARTHUR SAMUELS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We have in our system and especially when the system does not, in

2 my opinion, give the type of training and
3 development that is necessary to ensure the
4 leadership.

5 ARTHUR SAMUELS: Mm-hm.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you very
7 much...

8 [crosstalk]

9 ARTHUR SAMUELS: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: For coming in.

11 Next the next panel is Nelson Mar, Legal Services
12 NYC Bronx; Jacqueline Colson, New York Parents
13 Union Queens Chapter Leader; Alison Loeb, Columbia
14 Secondary School; Mary Escalante, CSS, Columbia
15 Secondary School. Please come forward.

16 [Pause]

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay. [off mic]
18 That doesn't matter. It's going to be real quick.
19 So yes, Natalie, StudentsFirstNew York, are you
20 here? Come on down. Along with Tenicka Boyd,
21 STudentsFirstNY. Tenicka, come on. Okay, thank
22 you. Just slide down a little bit, Nelson. Thank
23 you. Alright, so you have the five of you. That's
24 fine. Just can you all raise your right hand? Do
25 you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole

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truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council member questions? 'Kay, thank you. Did you say that... go. Just identify yourself before you speak, please.

MARY ESCALANTE: [off mic] Is that on? Is that on? To Chairman and the City...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

MARY ESCALANTE: Council...

[background static]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] You need to turn it on or move it closer so everyone can hear you.

MARY ESCALANTE: Okay, better?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Better. A little louder would be better, yes.

MARY ESCALANTE: Thank you for this opportunity to testify for this important hearing. My name is Mary Escalante, and I am a parent of a seventh grader at...

ALISON LOEB: And oh, sorry.

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sergeant.

2 ALISON LOEB: I'm Alison Loeb, a...

3 [crosstalk]

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sergeant.

5 [crosstalk]

6 ALISON LOEB: Parent of an 11th grader.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sergeant, start
8 the clock, please.

9 ALISON LOEB: Okay, say your name
10 again. Just... okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead, please.

12 MARY ESCALANTE: Alright, thank you for
13 the opportunity for this important hearing. My
14 name is Mary Escalante. I'm a parent of a seventh
15 grader.

16 ALISON LOEB: And I'm Alison Loeb, a
17 parent of an 11th grader.

18 MARY ESCALANTE: At entry 62, CSS, the
19 Columbia Secondary School of Math, Science and
20 Engineering, a public school in Harlem. This
21 school is a highly diverse school culturally and
22 economically. It's a school with a big majority of
23 Latin American and African American students who
24 live mostly above 96th Street in Manhattan. We
25 thank you all of you have supported our school so

1 far. Columbia Secondary School is currently co-
2 located in one building with KIPP STAR Charter
3 School and PS 125, as well as the superintendent's
4 offices on the floor designated for community
5 meetings, and we're not here to hash any school.
6 We... I'm going to tell a little story about it.
7 Seven years ago, the Department of Education
8 promised a new... Columbia Secondary School its own
9 building. Instead, and without any effective long
10 term plan, the Department of Education began
11 warehousing our kids at PS 125 on the Ralph Bunche
12 campus, and before we reached capacity in adding
13 promised sixth to 12th grades, the Department of
14 Education added the KIPP STAR Charter School into
15 another part of the building. CSS has reached full
16 capacity this 2013/2014 school year. We still have
17 500 students to go. The DOE original short term
18 plan can't contain us. Co-location has pitted out
19 school communities against each other, forcing us
20 all to dig out a space in other resources. Even
21 with the best relationships within co-located
22 schools, it's often survivors meets New York City
23 education and in tandem with the DOE neglect, all
24 of our kids lose. Common space negotiating like
25

1 cafeteria, bathrooms, library and auditorium usage,
2 with little to no support from the Department of
3 Education, has been time consuming and unsuccessful
4 overall.
5

6 ALISON LOEB: Thank you. This is also
7 time that should be freed in order to be able to
8 focus on our kids' educations. As a result, our
9 kids are affected every day by co-location related
10 space issues. Imagine not being able to eat
11 because of inadequate cafeteria facilities. Kids
12 can't eat in their rooms because of roaches, rats,
13 things like that, and the cafeterias are meant for
14 elementary school kids.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay, did you say
16 rats?

17 ALISON LOEB: Oh, well, they talk about
18 you know, they don't want there to be any food in
19 the rooms because there is a rat and vermin problem
20 at the school, yes, sir.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: There is? Okay.

22 ALISON LOEB: So imagine not being able
23 to even have time to eat in the cafeteria because
24 of lack of facilities or having to hold it all in;
25 hold it in all day because there are two bathroom

1 stalls per 200 kids. We're talking about urinary
2 tract infections for middle schoolers that some of
3 the parents have reported. So that's what life is
4 like for many of our kids at CSS. Our community's
5 been dealt a triple whammy by the DOE; forced co-
6 location, having to negotiate all shared spaces,
7 which are insufficient to begin with, and
8 unfulfilled promises that the DOE will alleviate an
9 appalling situation in a timely way. There are
10 currently only 200 lockers for 700 plus middle
11 school and high school students; three and a half
12 kids per locker. The DOE's suggestion is for our
13 kids to use lockers located in the basement, an
14 area shared by elementary school students. Excuse
15 me. Bathrooms the DOE promised still haven't
16 materialized. I already mentioned the two toilets
17 for 200 kids. They have promised us enough
18 bathrooms and they decided to go on to their own
19 project without notifying the school, doing
20 anything or alleviating the situation. Often the
21 toilets don't flush. Many of our kids avoid using
22 the bathroom at all. That's the urinary tract
23 infection problem that I... that a parent or two
24 mentioned earlier. There is no working PA system
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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 1,000 children K through 12. That's where the 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. lunches come in. So we do our best. Mostly the kids choose not to eat at all. There's no place for our kids to change for Gym. That's illegal also I believe. There are not enough classrooms for high school courses. The kids are told, "I'm sorry, you can't take AP English. We don't have enough classrooms."

Contrary to all rational thought, DOE reps continue to 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?" [chime] Almost there. Another rep [chime] 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." Each grade has

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only 100 kids." So they're moving other kids in that they want us to serve that don't fit in with our population and they don't give enough resources for those classes of kids to deal, so onto Mary.

MARY ESCALANTE: New York City is the greatest city in the world. So it should be to school system. So I'm sorry, we're missing something here.

ALISON LOEB: Here we go. Start with CSS.

MARY ESCALANTE: CSS is one of the best schools in the city with numbers to back it up. It's also the lowest funded public school in District 5.

ALISON LOEB: Can I just say something? Sorry, we heard \$13,000 in Bushwick. We get \$3,500 per student, okay? How is this possibly fair?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's not accurate.

ALISON LOEB: Well, do you know it, because that's the number we...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's not accurate, but anyway...

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 303

2 [crosstalk]

3 ALISON LOEB: I apologize. We heard...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's okay.

6 ALISON LOEB: 87 percent Fair Student

7 Funding.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's okay.

9 Everyone just...

10 ALISON LOEB: [interposing] How far off

11 am I?

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You're way off.

13 ALISON LOEB: Seriously?

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yes.

15 ALISON LOEB: Okay, please correct me

16 later.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, okay.

18 ALISON LOEB: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright, but why

20 don't you... can you all wrap up? Let me get all

21 of your lists. Let me get your testimony 'cause

22 that's... it's in my district. It's in the last

23 block of my district and you're my constituent and

24 so I'd like to have that list. I'm going to come

25 visit your school.

2 MARY ESCALANTE: So...

3 ALISON LOEB: Here, if you can just
4 finish up here.

5 MARY ESCALANTE: Yeah.

6 ALISON LOEB: Well, we'll talk to you
7 later.

8 MARY ESCALANTE: As I was saying, New
9 York City's know to be the greatest city in the
10 world. So it should be to the school system. That
11 can only happen if we all work hard and make it
12 happen together. Our children are doing their best
13 under these limited conditions, but this cannot
14 continue any longer. We need you to your part.
15 They're doing their part with our support. Thank
16 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next,
18 please. Natalie and Tenicka, okay.

19 NATALIE OLIVER: Mm-hm. Thank you,
20 Chairman Jackson, and thank you to the committee
21 for giving me a chance to speak today. My name is
22 Natalie Oliver and I am the Director of Educator
23 Outreach for StudentsFirstNewYork. As a former New
24 York City traditional public school teacher who was
25 in the classroom up until last year, I have

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2 experienced firsthand both school closure and co-
3 location, and I can say that these resolutions send
4 an ambiguous message to parents and students,
5 particularly those in underserved communities. I
6 see a quality public education as a critical
7 component to a fair and just society and I think we
8 can all agree on that. Where our views may diverge
9 is in the how. I do not believe that we can
10 tolerate or ignore the level of dysfunction that I
11 witnessed firsthand at a failing school. To me,
12 these instances do call for aggressive and
13 immediate intervention. Delay is not an option.
14 Replacing a failing school is by no means easy and
15 could cause confusion in the affected communities;
16 however, conditions exist that warrant proposals to
17 phase out schools. In the time between a proposal
18 to phase out a failing school and the decision to
19 close a school, there are opportunities to make
20 needed changes. If communities do not make
21 progress in their efforts to address students'
22 needs in that time, the only alternative should not
23 be to force kids into what we know is a failing
24 environment. That's something I cannot abide.

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2 In 2012, I spent time in a school that
3 was phasing out. The experience was unexpected,
4 but in some ways was a blessing in disguise. It
5 gave me a renewed appreciation for and faith in
6 what is possible when educators, parents and
7 students are all invested in making things work.
8 For four months in the aftermath of Hurricane
9 Sandy, my school was unusable. Our students and
10 staff were split between two different schools in
11 two different districts. School administrators had
12 the challenging task of creating programs and
13 schedules under these incredibly difficult
14 circumstances. Students and parents saw their
15 routines completely upended. Educators faced
16 massive challenges as well, but everyone did their
17 part, demonstrating a level of resilience that none
18 of us was sure was in us. Granted, all we did was
19 follow through on our commitment; make sure that we
20 show up and that our students learn because we are
21 invested in their greater good. Unfortunately, I
22 was forced to confront another more disturbing side
23 of our school system. It didn't take long for me
24 to see why the school with which we were
25 temporarily co-located had been identified for

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2 closure. I saw unmotivated kids, ignored by
3 administrators and educators, left to roam the
4 halls aimlessly. I saw violent incidents go
5 unaddressed because neither the principal nor
6 anyone with appropriate youth development training
7 was available to diffuse the situation [chime] or
8 work with students afterwards, and I'll end here.
9 I'll say it was clear that these students were
10 being failed and any thoughtful adult who observed
11 the situation would agree. I know how difficult it
12 is to acknowledge and accept when something's not
13 working, but allowing it to continue and not
14 replacing it with something better would be a
15 travesty, and that is exactly what would happen if
16 we do not make the difficult decisions right now.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next,
18 please.

19 TENICKA BOYD: Thank you, Chairman
20 Jackson. I'm Tenicka Boyd, StudentsFirstNewYork's
21 Director of Organizing, so I'm not a policy expert
22 and I'm not here as an expert. I'm informed both
23 by my organizing work having talked to over 300,000
24 New Yorkers. We have 16 chapters across this city
25 and I'm also a New York City public school parent.

1
2 I want to share my views on the policies at the
3 heart of our discussion, namely providing parents
4 with high quality charter school options and
5 replacing failing schools with better options. My
6 concern is that the efforts contemplated by the
7 committee would undermine the progress our city
8 schools have been making over the past decade.
9 This systematic effort to close the city's giant
10 failing high schools and replace them with new,
11 smaller high schools has arguably done more to
12 improve education outcomes for more kids in New
13 York City over the past decade than any other
14 policy. In 2006, all phasing out high schools had
15 a combined graduation rate of 38 percent; I think
16 the chancellor said that as well. In 2011, all new
17 high schools had nearly doubled that combined
18 graduation rate to 70 percent. As The Daily News
19 recently editorialized quote, "To halt closures is
20 to halt one of the most effective tools of raising
21 student achievement."

22 Similarly, charter schools have
23 delivered for our kids. A recent study concluded
24 that quote, "On average students in New York City
25 charter schools learn significantly more than their

1 virtual counterparts in reading and mathematics."

2 Why would we deny parents this powerful choice, and
3 more importantly, why would we deny black and brown
4 students a chance at quality education?
5

6 I'm the mother of second grader
7 attending a high performing traditional city
8 district school, 'cause I know I have to say that
9 'cause people think charters are not public
10 schools. So my daughter does not attend a charter
11 school. She attends a traditional district school
12 and it is high performing and she is very
13 fortunate, but what about the students whose
14 parents can't afford the rent that I pay? Are they
15 doomed to the whims of geography? There is
16 something horribly wrong with that. As we talk
17 about having our kids career and college ready,
18 there are schools in Brownsville and East New York
19 and Bushwick, where we have chapters, where only
20 four percent of black and Latino students are
21 proficient in reading, four percent. So tolerating
22 persistently failing schools and denying parents
23 high quality school choice won't help a single one
24 of our kids read. Instead, it significantly
25 undermines the role of parents and the educational

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outcomes of both 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 we will never sanction academic failure and demanding that we provide all kids regardless of their race, income or their neighborhood [chime] access to quality schools, [chime] and I will end here. As parents, which I believe most of us are, we all regardless of our zip code, our skin color and our earning potential want to choose what is best for our children. For far too long we have accepted and even sanctioned academic failure and in doing so we have failed parents. They and our kids deserve better.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

Nelson Mar.

NELSON MAR: Good evening, Council

Member/Chairperson Jackson and the rest of the Education Committee. Thank you for allowing our

1 office to have this opportunity to weigh in on the
2 resolutions before the committee. I want to
3 initially say that Legal Services NYC
4 wholeheartedly supports the Resolutions 1262, 1395-
5 A and 1906. I definitely would underscore a lot of
6 the concerns raised throughout this hearing about
7 the challenges that co-locations and the process
8 with which it occurs... I want to underscore those
9 issues because I've been through a number of school
10 closures in the South Bronx where parents and staff
11 felt so frustrated by the process; so
12 disenfranchised by the process that it just fed
13 into the cycle that they had no say in the running
14 of their school and in their community. And at the
15 same time, it is true. You know, there are a lot
16 of failing schools in the South Bronx and there are
17 a lot of failing schools in other parts of the city
18 and things do need to be done, but I think these
19 resolutions do provide a better approach to this
20 'cause currently there is no collaborative effort.
21 There is no serious input from parents and the
22 community in this process. It's essentially fiat
23 by the mayor and whoever else is making the
24 decisions down at the Department of Education.
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I want to also address some of the points raised at this hearing. I'm not going to go through my testimony. I think one of the fundamental issues that our office is concerned about co-locations is... and with co-locations of charter schools is that many of these charter schools, as you're heard you know, do not accept students with disabilities that require small class size, and if these schools are as they say they're public, they cannot discriminate against those children and so in essence, they are violating the law. They are not complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. They're also violating the New York City Human Rights Law and also the Americans with Disabilities Act, and if you look at the chart in my written testimony, if you look at some of the poorest districts in New York City, they have over 25 percent of their enrollment are students with disabilities. If you have charter schools coming into these neighborhoods and essentially saying we will not you know, provide small classrooms for students with disabilities, they are essentially [chime] locking the door [chime] for a quarter of the

1 student population in their communities. And how
2 could they come in and then take public resources
3 while discriminating against an entire segment of
4 that population? That is one of our fundamental
5 concerns 'cause we see the issue day in and day
6 out. Just since the beginning of this school year,
7 I've received over three calls from different
8 parents about their charter schools doing serious
9 illegal things with regards to their child with a
10 disability, and that brings up the other issue
11 about suspensions.
12

13 Unfortunately, the folks from Uncommon
14 Schools are not here. I would like to have
15 addressed the issue about out-of-school
16 suspensions. It is illegal. New York State Law
17 requires that all children between the age of six
18 and 17 to be in school any day that school is in
19 session, so for them to suspend a child home is
20 violating New York State Law. Unfortunately, it's
21 not just Uncommon Schools. It's an entire system.
22 As you might've read in The Daily News; the article
23 about two of my clients; it's happening
24 systematically in the Success Charter School
25 Network and that is actually one network that

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really has no excuse. They have over I don't know, 30 schools now. They can provide small classroom environments. They can provide alternative education sites for children who are suspended who need to be suspended outside of their school. So I think those issues are fundamentally at the heart of why Legal Services supports these resolutions. There needs to be greater accountability. There's needs to be greater parental and community input. The concerns that you know, the CEC process is broken is fair, but you know, I think if a charter school has these wonderful things to offer, they can definitely convince the CEC to allow them to come in and co-locate. You know, this process would be far better if there's greater conversation between the charter schools and the schools that they want to co-locate into. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON:

Thank you. Now all of... did all of you hear... were you here for the entire hearing? Did you hear everything? You did, okay. So... I'm talking to the panel that's up there now. [laughter] So you had the opportunity to hear what members had to say and some of the reasons why, and you may have heard if

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you were here from the beginning, I am co-sponsoring two of the resolutions myself. I'll let you know that when people ask me, "What is your position on charter schools?" My response to them, if you have never heard it, is, "I'm pro-choice," and I use those words very specifically because I believe not in dealing with schools, but a woman's right to choose. So I use those words because I do believe parents have a right to decide what's best for their children overall, and I'm not going to tell you what's best for your child. I have never hid the fact that my three girls went to K to Eight public school. Two of them went to public high school and the same two went to public University, SUNY, but our last one we sent to private high school and to Julliard, so I've never hid the fact, so everyone has to make a decision what's best overall. But the problems and concerns that you've heard, and I think that the Uncommon Schools; I've never really heard of them, but you know, there are issues with a little bit of everything. I've heard a lot more problems with Success Academies and the bogart that they're try to do to force their way into schools and try to take over. Anytime you

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2 come in my house and try to take over, you got a
3 fight on your hands, and that's what happens
4 overall. And so, and I don't think there's a type
5 of collaborative approach in dealing with education
6 where the successes both in public and charter are
7 not shared with one another. Sharing I don't think
8 is there at all. So there's a lot of issues and
9 concerns that have caused members like myself and
10 others to put forth resolutions that has caused
11 State Assembly members and Senators have said they
12 would not vote for Mayoral Control again. So as I
13 said to you before, the world is not going to end
14 12-31-13. So hopefully we will learn a lot more,
15 work closer together and improve the educational
16 outcomes of all students in New York City. Thank
17 you all for coming in and staying the course.
18 Thank you.

19 The next panel is Sonja Jones,
20 Community Board 9; Natasha Capers, District 23. I
21 guess that's in Brooklyn, right? Modupe Gillis-
22 Combs [phonetic], IS 240-K, Nostrand Avenue in
23 Brooklyn; Claudette Agard, District 17 and Samantha
24 Bernadine, parent of District 17. Please come
25 forward with the next panel, please. The next

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panel after this one will be Khem Irby, The Mothers Agenda of New York; Dr. Burchell Marcus, Community Advocate and Development, Church Avenue, Brooklyn; Elsie Chan, John Dewey Alumni Association; John Muchete, Public Schools. Anything else? And anyone else after that? Anbody's name I did not call that wants to testify? The one that I just read off will be the last panel, so with this panel here...

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sonja Jones, Natasha Capers. Will you all raise your right hand, please?

CITY CLERK: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee and to respond honestly to council member questions?

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sonja, you're first.

[Pause]

SONJA JONES: Good evening. My name is Sonja Jones. I'm the co-Chair of the Youth Education and Libraries Committee for Manhattan

1
2 Community Board 9, and I'm going to read into
3 record testimony by our community board.

4 Manhattan Community Board 9 has been
5 entrenched with cries from the community as it
6 relates to the New York City Department of
7 Education's policy on significant school changes.
8 As a result in April 2012, we adopted a resolution
9 calling for New York city Chancellor of Education,
10 the New York City Mayor, the New York State
11 Commissioner of Education and the Chancellor of the
12 New York State Board of Regents to place an
13 immediate moratorium on all school co-locations
14 within our community.

15 We called upon these agencies to review
16 the manner in which the Department of Education
17 implements the New York State requirements
18 regarding phase out, grade reconfigurations and co-
19 location of schools in existing public school
20 facilities. The policy, as currently written and
21 implemented by the New York City Department of
22 Education, is divisive in nature and does nothing
23 short of silencing the voices of those that have
24 the greatest to contribute and the most to lose;
25 the children and parents served by our educational

1 system. It has directly and negatively affected
2 the tone, temperament and environment of our school
3 system. Our class sizes have increased
4 dramatically in recent years, and the Blue Book
5 often underestimates the extent of overcrowding in
6 New York City public schools. Multiple schools
7 sharing a building makes necessary coordinating and
8 scheduling of shared spaces in starting and ending
9 time of school days, and is highly challenging and
10 time consuming for the administrators, teachers and
11 students.
12

13 Far too many co-locations throughout
14 the city have resulted in bitter battles between
15 parents, as well as further increases in class
16 size, the loss of critical cluster and specialty
17 spaces, and students with disabilities receiving
18 mandated services in less than pristine locations.
19 Additionally, the challenges of sharing a building
20 are often exacerbated when one school has more
21 resources than the other.

22 Community Board 9 unequivocally opposes
23 the proposed co-locations and further... and
24 future, my apologies, charter schools that do not
25 intend to obtain its own building outside existing

1 overcrowded public school infrastructures.
2
3 Manhattan Community Board 9 implores the New York
4 State Legislator to amend the State Education Law
5 in relation to Mayoral Control of the New York City
6 Public School System by requiring that the
7 respective Community Education Council approve a
8 co-location or school closure phase out proposal
9 before it can be presented for a vote by the Panel
10 for Educational Policy, Reso Number 1263; [chime] in
11 so doing, allowing for [chime] appropriate
12 stakeholders to have a voice in the process that
13 directly affects the communities in which they were
14 elected and/or appointed to serve.

15 Today, Community Board 9 reiterates our
16 call and supports the City Council in calling upon
17 the New York City Department of Education to
18 institute a moratorium of school closings and
19 forces co-locations in existing schools for a
20 period of at least one year in order to study the
21 impact of these policies on all New York City
22 communities, and in particular whether such
23 policies are having a disparate impact on low-
24 income communities, communities of color, disabled
25

1 students and homeless students, proposed Reso 1395-
2
3 A.

4 And finally, we stand firm in demanding
5 that the New York City Department of Education
6 amend their current policy in order to ensure that
7 the parents affected by proposed school closures
8 or significant changes in school utilization be
9 notified in a more meaning and effective manner,
10 Reso Number 1206. Sincerely, Reverend Georgette
11 Morgan-Thomas, Chair, Community Board 9.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you and
13 next, please.

14 CLAUDETTE AGARD: Good evening.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Hi.

16 CLAUDETTE AGARD: Thank you very much
17 for the opportunity to be able to address you,
18 Chairman Jackson and the Education Committee. My
19 name is Claudette Agard, and I guess I remember the
20 first time I ever saw you, Councilman Jackson, was
21 when I got familiar... I was on the CPAC
22 representing the High School Council, and I
23 remember there was a hearing with the DOE. All of
24 this was new to me, and so I remember your
25 directive to CPAC at the time under Tim Johnson and

1
2 Lorraine was just talk you know, 'cause it was all
3 of this, right, so that's where I'm going to go. I
4 wasn't able to prepare something written formally.

5 So, just a little bit of background: I
6 feel like I'm the parent who has served on every
7 possible structure that there is. So I've been the
8 PTA President on a middle school level. I've been
9 on the High School President's Council. I served
10 with Zakia as co-president, so we represented all
11 the high schools in Manhattan. I've been the co-
12 chair of CPAC, which is the Chancellor's Parent
13 Advisory Council. I've served on the State
14 Education Parent Advisory Council under Associate
15 Commissioner Sheila Evans-Tranumn. I've done
16 services in New York City up into Rochester and
17 I've served in a whole bunch of other stuff, but my
18 last stint was CEC President for District 17. So
19 Mr. Cole Jobe [phonetic] is now the current
20 president; I just finished being the former
21 president. And I've gone through this process and
22 I'm very familiar with the regulations and the
23 process, and what has been really offensive is the
24 lack of community and parent engagement. There's
25 this argument about utilization versus... to me,

1
2 it's utilization versus capacity. I'll use this
3 room as an example. You're holding a hearing. You
4 have all these chairs to seat, but if we were doing
5 a different type of event with tables and chairs,
6 wouldn't be able to accommodate the same amount of
7 people. That's how I think they treat classrooms,
8 alright, and so in order to accommodate the
9 learning and the things that we need to do in order
10 for the students to learn cannot necessarily have
11 the same number of people as they use in the Blue
12 Book.

13 District 17 has been labeled as the
14 most underutilized district in Brooklyn, and Office
15 of Portfolio has made it known to us that they have
16 all intentions to utilize every single space in the
17 district. The game that is played is I say okay.
18 They say we want to co-locate... we want to put a
19 charter school in. They have a preference at
20 District 17. They're not able to fill the seats
21 with District 17 students, so they now let District
22 16 students come in, so they actually are filling
23 up this space with kids that are out of district.
24 Then District 16 now doesn't have... they're
25 underutilized. So now we co-locate a charter

1 school there, but now we can't fill it with
2 District 16, so now we bring in District 23. It's
3 the game and I've studied it well. My colleague,
4 former colleague who spoke, [chime] Kathleen
5 Daniel, Excellence Charter School; girls. We don't
6 need a charter school with girls in District 17.
7 What has happened there's been a total disrespect,
8 if I may, to the DLT. The state requires that we
9 have a District Leadership Team; that we work on a
10 District Comprehensive Educational Plan; that we
11 have a needs assessment. This office totally
12 disregards everything that you look at. District
13 17 has said we have a need for boys; boys are
14 vulnerable, but this office goes and put in an all
15 girls charter school for girl, and they don't
16 listen to you. We have some principals that don't
17 mind being co-located because they are
18 underutilized, but not with what you're trying to
19 do. We have been bombarded with elementary
20 schools. The problem that nobody's speaking to
21 with charter schools is if you look at their
22 charter application, they grow. It is not K to 5
23 always. So they do the hearing for K to 5 and then
24 they put in for a revision in their charter to go
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to 8. Where are they going to go? Where are they going grow? They've come to the CEC and presented a case based on the K to 5 model, but it's not. It's a K to 8 model and then eventually to 12. So it's not transparent at all, and I think the demand for charter schools is false because we have parents. They fill out an application; they get a number. They don't want to go to the charter school, but the charter school never takes them off their list, so they're keeping those numbers up and then we hear they have 50,000 parents. Where do they show you that? Show me the 50,000 parents. When I asked the charter school office, "How do you verify that?" "Oh, we just take their word." It's just too many things, so I, personally, as a former CEC and then all the other things I've done, totally support the resolutions and feel at least it'll stop a process so that we can have a conversation and move on and there's more, but I know there's time, sorry. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, thank you from your perspective as someone that's been totally engaged at various levels. Next, please.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 326

2 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: Good evening. My
3 name is Samantha Bernadine. I am the PTA...

4 [crosstalk]

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Wait, it's not
6 afternoon?

7 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: Oh, it's not?

8 [laughter]

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm teasing;
10 joke. Go ahead.

11 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: I've been here
12 since 1:00 and I had to...

13 [crosstalk]

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Have you really?

15 [crosstalk]

16 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: Leave and pick up
17 my son.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright.

19 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: Thank you so much
20 for having him next to you. Good evening. I am
21 Samantha Bernadine. I'm the PTA President for PS
22 316 in Brooklyn, as well as a Community Board
23 member for Board 8 in Brooklyn. I speak on behalf
24 of the parents and the parent leaders of District
25 17 as an active member of the Community Board in

1
2 Brooklyn. During the summer months, we were
3 notified that there was a co-location that was
4 being done in District 17 by our CEC members. A
5 number of parents got together and we were able to
6 draft a letter to the CEC, and I would like to read
7 part of it for you.

8 During the summer months, parents,
9 along with member of CEC, District 17 were informed
10 that New York City Department of Education planned
11 to release several Educational Impact Statements
12 and joint public hearing announcements regarding
13 the closure and co-location of new school and
14 charter school within the district. As parent
15 school leaders, we oppose such actions being done
16 during the summer months while schools are closed
17 and families are on vacation... so yes, some of
18 them, 'cause I wasn't on vacation. Therefore
19 have...

20 [crosstalk]

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: This is during
22 the summer...

23 [crosstalk]

24 SAMANTHA BERNADINE: Have...

25 [crosstalk]

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: When... when
people are...

[crosstalk]

SAMANTHA BERNADINE: No, I run a summer
program.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But I mean in the
summertime when most parents are...

SAMANTHA BERNADINE: We're not there
and we just happened to be involved. Were not
informed of such actions; therefore, we
respectfully asked the CEC to send a letter to DOE
requesting that all proposed EIS and JPH
announcements be postponed until school officially
started and the following steps be completed: one,
all parties; school leadership team members,
parents, community members in the areas of target
schools are contacted and two, an evaluation
committee be established with the district office
to review identified barriers established in Title
1 Schools, and design strategies and develop goals
and objectives to improve student academic
achievement and school performance, as stated in
the Title 1 parent policy manual. According to
this policy, Section 2, Part 2 A and E: Community

1 School 17 in correlation with space and other
2 offices or as appropriate we'll ensure that
3 district schools receive the Title 1 funds and take
4 the following actions to involve parents in the
5 process of school review and improvement under the
6 Section 1116 of the ESEA. With that said, we also
7 requested that the CEC schedule several District
8 Portfolio Planning meetings, preferably within an
9 appropriate [chime] timeframe for outreach to the
10 parents with the Chief Academic Officer, Deputy
11 Chancellor, network and cluster leaders and the New
12 York State Education Regents to ensure true
13 dialogue sessions between PTA presidents, Title 1
14 parent reps, SLT members and community leaders. In
15 the event that co-location becomes an option, we
16 ask that the DOE follow through with the amendment
17 changes in the Chancellor's Regulations A-190 due
18 to the court... well, the swing of the chancellor;
19 of the DOE. Yes, as we prepare ourselves for the
20 new school year, we look forward to working with
21 the CEC, District Office and DOE in representing
22 the needs and wants of our parent leaders and
23 stated in the New York City Department of Education
24 Parent Bill of Rights and Responsibility quote,
25

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2 "Each child's maximized potential can best be
3 achieved through a partnership between parents and
4 the Educational Committee."

5 Let me also just say that we are not
6 against charter school or co-location. It's about
7 the policy and the respect that is due to not only
8 parents, but also community boards in large. I did
9 hear everything that the chancellor had said and
10 he... I just want to leave by saying he had stated
11 that it's all about sharing; however, you can't
12 share what's not there. In 316 we are a co-
13 location. We have a middle school in an elementary
14 school building. To have middle school students
15 who are so tall fit into classrooms where they are
16 basically sardines is inhumane, and for him to
17 continue on to saying that until his time is up, he
18 will care for the students; this is all about
19 education. Whether or not a parent chooses to take
20 their child into a charter, a public school, a
21 Catholic school or a charter school, it needs to be
22 a level playing field. If a school that is being
23 co-located gets \$5,000 in whatever; construction,
24 that is also entitled to that existing school. If
25 a school that is being co-located and you have to

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share resources, you have to share the gym and you have to share lunchtime. My second grader right here has lunch at 10:45, so by 1:00 he's hungry. So by the time that he gets picked up from school, he is starving. We have addressed... we have a wonderful principal. We inform her as parent leaders. She was able to provide a small snack for them around lunchtime, but due to budget, she cannot do that, so it falls on the burden of the PTA and we've been able to fundraise. We were able to fundraise for an additional teacher to be put into a classroom. According to DOE's policy, if a classroom... to justify a small class, it has to be 32 plus 14 additional students to justify having another teacher there. So as much as we may talk about this one side and that side, we also need to who's really in fault here. We don't want to be against principals; we don't want to be against teachers, but if we all don't come together and work together, we're all going to just be here testifying and blaming each other for what the real issue is, and it's educating our future students. Thank you.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 332

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next,
3 please, Claudette?

4 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Modupe.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, I'm sorry,
6 go ahead, just...

7 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Good evening, Mr.
8 Chairman...

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Oh, yeah, Modupe.

10 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: And the education
11 community.

12 CHAIRMAN JACKSON: Mm-hm.

13 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: I know.

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

15 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: It's my dad's
16 fault. [laughter] My name is Modupe Gillis-Combs
17 and I'm here representing IS 240 specifically
18 because of not one, but two co-location attempts
19 within the past six months. Yeah, so basically I
20 want to address every... first, I'm going to talk
21 about the Mayoral Control. Clearly that's been
22 working out. I mean us as parents of the whole
23 schools, we are totally... [background noise] Okay.
24 Okay, I should be reset. Yes, okay so anyway,
25 basically I feel that the mayor or the City Council

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has been shoving this stuff down our throats;
shoving charter schools down our throats and not...
well, Bloomberg's Office; whoever's responsible for
you know, doing that, but basically you know, I've
been running the gauntlet on of course, the MTA. I
have no car, and trying to not have my seventh
grader and now my sixth grader, who are in the same
junior high school, hanging out with toddlers. I
mean, really? They're bringing in Kindergarten and
first grade allegedly and then they're going to
project numbers that are going to end up at fifth
grade, but they also have junior high school under
their umbrella and they have a high school, so I'm
going to assume that they're going to take every
one of our students out and put every one of their
elementary, junior high and high school students.
So where will our children in our district be once
that is done? So.

I'm actually not against charter
schools, but I feel they undermine the public
schools and the funding that the charter schools
receive to phase in or to get phased in should be
spent on basically rectifying whatever is wrong
with failing schools, as opposed to just

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eliminating the schools and starting new schools.
That makes no sense. I mean how could you close
164 schools to reopen almost 700 [chime] schools?
[chime] I don't see the sense in that and I'm
pretty sure you know, they have... you know,
there's a method to the madness, but I'm not here
to justify that. Anyway, so we as parents need to
be able to ease our minds and know that our
children are where we expect them to be and be able
to get the time and space allotted to them, so it's
definitely not in the best interests of our
children because my seventh grader told me that
last year when he was in the sixth grade, there
were four concurrent gym classes in the gym with
three teachers. How is that considered space?
That makes no sense. They eat lunch... I almost
said breakfast because it was at 10 something.
They eat lunch at 10 something and each grade has
their own floor. The teachers... some teachers
give up their lunches to work with students. One
teacher told me she had 44 students per class. How
is that space or extra space? I don't understand
how that works. I mean anybody with common sense
can see that that's ridiculous. So I don't know.

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 335

2 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Can you tell what

3 district?

4 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: 22, District 22.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright.

6 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: I also have a

7 six-year old in another school, but that school is

8 not at risk.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay.

10 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: So.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Are you involved

12 in the Parents Association?

13 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: I am the

14 president of the PA.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Kay and you know

16 what I said earlier about learning the rules and

17 regulations so you...

18 [crosstalk]

19 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Absolutely.

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Can be able to

21 advocate is so...

22 [crosstalk]

23 MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Absolutely.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Important. Okay.

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: So I feel that the charter schools co-locating are in essence, bullying the host schools and I read that originally charter schools were intended to have their own buildings, and I've seen charter schools erect their own buildings and it's not a problem. I was offered space in charter schools. I declined respectfully. I mean you know, pro-choice.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, that's your choice.

CLAUDETTE AGARD: Councilman Jackson?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright, well, I want to thank you all for coming in and giving testimony and understanding that it's important that you stay involved in your children's education.

MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Absolutely.

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Absolutely and learn the rule and regulations so you advocate from a position of strength and knowledge and not be used in the process.

MODUPE GILLIS-COMBS: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

2 CLAUDETTE AGARD: Councilman Jackson,
3 can I just say one thing to you?

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Quickly.

5 CLAUDETTE AGARD: Just because of...
6 [crosstalk]

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I have another
8 panel.

9 [crosstalk]

10 CLAUDETTE AGARD: The record because
11 they said... you asked about the EIS posting and
12 the response that you got was it has to be 45 to 60
13 days, but the reality is they don't have the PEP
14 vote to the time the co-location is six months.
15 That's the state law. So they don't have to post
16 that EIS. It's because once they put it in place
17 it's starts the ball rolling, so that's why the CEC
18 is posing the posting, because once you post it
19 they have to do it.

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

21 CLAUDETTE AGARD: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Our
23 last panel; [cheers] last but not least. Elsie
24 Chan, John Dewey Alumni Association and Khem Irby
25 the Mother's Agenda of New York; John Muchete of

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 338
2 Public Schools and Dr. Burchell Marcus, Community
3 Advocate Development.
4 DR. MARCUS: I didn't get a chance
5 to...
6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [off mic] See you
7 later.
8 DR. MARCUS: Type up my statement.
9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, last but
10 not least.
11 ELSIE CHAN: Last but not least and
12 thank you so much for this opportunity and thank
13 you...
14 [crosstalk]
15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, one...
16 [crosstalk]
17 ELSIE CHAN: For the very long hours.
18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We got to swear
19 you in first. [laughter] So would you raise your
20 right hand, please? Do you swear or affirm to tell
21 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the
22 truth in your testimony before this committee and
23 to respond honestly to council member questions?
24 ALL: I affirm.
25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

2 ELSIE CHAN: I affirm.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So Elsie Chan and
4 what's your...

5 KHEM IRBY: Khem Irby.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Khem Irby and...

7 DR. MARCUS: Dr. Burchell M. Marcus.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay, so John is
9 here or not here? He's not here. Okay, go ahead.

10 ELSIE CHAN: Yes, again, last but not
11 least and thank you so much for your service and
12 staying so late to listen to us. My name is Elsie
13 Chan. I'm here today as a founding teacher of John
14 Dewey High School and Principal Emeritus of Murry
15 Bergtraum High School for Business Careers to give
16 my overwhelming support to you and all the council
17 members to support Resolution 1395-A to place a
18 moratorium on the closings of schools and co-
19 locations for at least a year. No more closings,
20 no more co-locations, which have stripped this
21 great city of the finest schools in the nation and
22 in the world. Smaller works. I was also a
23 principal of a small school and probably one of
24 those few who worked in small and large and
25 understand the merits of both. It is not the

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solution. John Dewey High School, a renowned school, was the birthplace of both. Edward R. Murrow High School and Murry Bergtraum High School, two of the best high schools in the city that have been decimated slowly and destroyed by co-location and the small school movement. Isn't that a terrible thing? I don't have to tell you. You hear it probably much more than I do, but I lived it. I see those two worlds creating. I have a house also; I'm retired; tier one; in Florida and see where my nieces and everyone go to private schools and what happened to public school? Did we not all go to public school? There are three council people now who graduated from John Dewey. Domenic Recchia came in. I could give you the names; Spike Lee. I could mention all of the students who graduated because they had the most wonderful program that you could imagine. Those students were right, but it will tell in time. I was a principal at both. You cannot give an economy of scale critical mass that number, so I am going to quickly tell you, sir, that we have prepared a position [background noise] Oh, oh. Remind me we should have a fire drill too. So we

1 have prepared a position paper for you. The
2 principal from Bergtraum could not be here, but
3 we're going to mobilize all of the principals and
4 I'm going to suggest something later. I saw
5 firsthand... I was also an assistant
6 superintendent, so I saw those problems with co-
7 locations, but I'm going to give you three reasons
8 why, not from my vantage [chime] point. All
9 schools are short changed. Number one, there is no
10 economy of scale. Why have five principals? Why
11 not that wonderful young man who was here before?
12 I would've hired him with his 120 kids and put them
13 into one school with me; just put them in, but they
14 need training. You said it. It's professional
15 development that some of these people didn't have.
16 I did not want to go to Murrow. I thought I was
17 too young to be assistant principal there.
18 Critical mass; no academic integrity. Students
19 from the small schools came to Bergtraum for their
20 Advanced Placement Exams, et cetera, et cetera and
21 the simple solution really is just to enroll them,
22 as I've said, but I want to say one thing. Why
23 did... why was Dewey created? Because the
24 educators got together. Superintendents, not
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bureaucrats, not young people who thought because they went to school they could create a school, so I challenge and ask you as well. If you're going to have a moratorium and it works ask the best of us. We still live in this city. Ask us and the students who were here what makes a good school and we will tell you. I had the best school leadership team in the city and Bergtraum was two percent white, so how come we could do it and now they can't? Because they brain drain. They do... I never hear that word before. They counsel or do something out and the last one is Special Ed. We had 500 Special Ed students at Bergtraum and there was no bilingual when we got there and we had another 1,000 bilingual. How come we could do it? And so they did this to the little. The result will be you know, what goes around comes around. There's no scores for them yet. We were US News and World Report all those years and they destroyed us. So I say what's the solution? You hear lots of testimony. I would get a group of people together after listening to this, of educators; current as well. We have people who graduated from Dewey who are principals today as well in the best

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high schools in New York City. We could bring them altogether and then we would give you testimony and give you a plan. No one's giving you a plan. They all complain. They all say this or that. Who's giving you the plan? We'll help you, sir. You're a wonderful person. It's the first time I've met you. It's my first time on City Council. I'm coming out of retirement for this, because they've destroyed public education for the people of New York.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you for coming out of retirement.

ELSIE CHAN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And expressing your...

[crosstalk]

ELSIE CHAN: And I will be there to help. Domenic Recchia, he pulls us out.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Next, please.

KEHM IRBY: Good afternoon.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, good evening.

2 KHEM IRBY: Oh, good evening. I'm glad
3 to be here and I'm always the last one to testify
4 at your hearings.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Oh, boy.

6 KHEM IRBY: I sit and I hear
7 everything.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's good that
9 you hear everything.

10 KHEM IRBY: My name is Kehm Irby and I
11 have to say I'm a proud graduate of Murry Bergtraum
12 High School.

13 ELSIE CHAN: I didn't know that!

14 KHEM IRBY: 1981...

15 [crosstalk]

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Ah...

17 KHEM IRBY: Class. So I... I am
18 highly, highly upset of what Success Academy is
19 trying to do in that community and when I attended
20 Murry Bergtraum, like she said, it was a diverse
21 school. We had Chinese students from the
22 neighborhood, African American students, Latino
23 students. Very few white kids did attend the
24 school, but it didn't matter. We were a diverse
25 community and everyone I know that graduated from

1 Murry Bergtraum is a success story. I am still
2 using the skills today to be employed, yes, and a
3 stenographer still from Murry Bergtraum, okay, so
4 and it was an experiment. I learned Century 21.
5 That was new. So I know the story of Murry
6 Bergtraum and that community, but I am here today
7 as a co-founder of the Mothers Agenda of New York.
8 I am also a former Uncommon Charter School parent.
9 I am also a former Achievement First parent. I am
10 also a former president of CEC 13 in Brooklyn. So
11 I have been extensively involved with the changes
12 of the Department of Education over the last 12
13 years. I have two successful graduates that have
14 gone onto college from New York City Public
15 Schools.
16

17 I have experienced co-location at its
18 best, but one co-location I have to put on record
19 that was disheartening, and that was when
20 Achievement First went into Philippa Schuyler.
21 Philippa Schuyler is a renowned special program in
22 Bushwick designed for those children and at that
23 hearing it was disclosed that they themselves had
24 waiting lists of students that wanted to get into
25 Philippa Schuyler, but because DOE would not allow

1 existing schools around our district, so it really
2 is a budget thing that if we chop up schools and
3 hire more principals that are heavyweight on the
4 school budgets. Actually co-locations should never
5 be a top-down model from the DOE. As a member of
6 the CEC, I've never had a parent say, "We want a
7 charter school in our district. I've been
8 waiting." I've been that charter school parent, so
9 but it wasn't because I asked for it. The DOE over
10 the last 12 years has given too much priority to
11 prioritize charter co-locations. They've become
12 the personal landlord of charter schools, and one
13 thing I don't understand is why do charter schools
14 want Mayoral Control when he does not control their
15 schools? So we have to be a little leery about
16 listening to charter school parents thinking they
17 want Mayoral Control when he does not have anything
18 to do with the management of their existing
19 schools, which they don't really understand they're
20 the pawn being in this game. I would like to see
21 charter schools encouraged to truly collaborate
22 more instead, and I also would like to see them be
23 committed to the district that they say that they
24 want to serve, as Claudette said. They jump
25

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2 around. In one application they want to be a part
3 of District 23, but if they don't like the space
4 available in District 23, they decide okay, we're
5 going over to District 13. So you know, it's this
6 jumping game and a public school cannot pick up and
7 decide they do not want to serve their district
8 anymore. So I don't know. You know charter
9 schools have this thing that they're doing that
10 has... you know they allow them to jump all over
11 the city like that to serve a community in another
12 district and they have to bus in the children.

13 Replacing failing schools is definitely
14 not a guarantee because anything that's new needs
15 time to succeed. So even a new charter school, a
16 new co-located district school is definitely not a
17 guaranteed solution to a failing school. I would
18 love to see failing schools really given an
19 opportunity to repurpose themselves and like she
20 said, bring in the educators to redesign our
21 schools for our children and have that real
22 collaboration happen for our schools. The only one
23 that's truly failing our schools has been the
24 Department of Education with the co-locations of
25 our schools, and the CEC, we do support charter

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schools once they've been co-located because we approve the capital plan for the whole building and we do not exclude them. They ride on the amenities of the public school budget, so co-locations actually do hurt the district schools and that I do support the moratorium on co-locations, on the closing of our schools and hopefully we'll get enough support to shut that down without suing the Department of Education again. [laughter]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Last but not least, and it seems to be the most boisterous.

DR. MARCUS: Oh, yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No, you're not going to...

[crosstalk]

DR. MARCUS: Good afternoon. Good evening.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Good evening, Dr.

DR. MARCUS: Good evening. You know, thanks, Councilman Jackson, for your hard work, your tireless work and...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [interposing] And all of the staff.

2 DR. MARCUS: And all of the staff.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Everyone.

4 DR. MARCUS: You know, I want to thank
5 the city council members that support this
6 resolutions; these resolutions. You know, just
7 last week, I was at South Shore. By the way, my
8 name is Dr. Burchell M. Marcus. I'm the Community
9 Director for the borough of Brooklyn and we
10 advocate for the people of Brooklyn for education,
11 jobs, you name it. We are the ones that bring all
12 the issues to the forefront and we have several
13 issues concerning education in our communities.
14 You know we have been pitted each other for far too
15 long. We turn our blind eye to the nonsense that
16 Chancellor Walcott and the mayor have been doing.
17 I would have like to ask him some questions while
18 he was here, even though he always ducks all my
19 questions.

20 You know, I sit on the Education
21 Committee at Community Board 17 and I give
22 scholarships and awards every year to several
23 schools that the committee decided that we're going
24 to give scholarships and awards to every year. So
25 I just want to say that just last week in a meeting

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at South Shore High School what the principals at that school; they have five schools right now in that building. I attended... I graduated from South Shore High School. I also attended briefly Murry Bergtraum High School and it was a wonderful school. So what they are speaking of is something that I know, and as I travel around Brooklyn, visiting the schools throughout Brooklyn because we have keep up with what's going on in every community and every district since we service the whole of Brooklyn. The mayor who pushed so hard for Mayoral Control; knowing the fact that we elected a number of people that doesn't understand education, does not understand the law and being a constitutional advocate, there were laws were passed that could be repealed because they are illegal, you know and we have this uphill battle with the co-location and everything else that goes along with it. I didn't get to write my... type up my... I didn't get a chance to type up my [chime] testimony, but I just want to say that putting another school in... or rather co-locating another school in South Shore; they don't have the room, and what they will do is actually force one of the

1 schools out. Somebody will have to go and right
2 now they are battling for space. They are
3 literally battling for space.
4

5 \$5 billion or \$6 billion every year
6 that this mayor has under his control. If he's so
7 in love with the charter schools, there's plenty of
8 space throughout the city that they could erect
9 buildings and put these charter schools like they
10 did with old theater on East New York Avenue and
11 Pitkin Avenue and that's around the Saratoga
12 Avenue. They're also building another building at
13 East 98th and Blake Avenue. That's in my district,
14 and several children were suspended out of the
15 school. They had to go back to public school.
16 They called me. They wanted to co-located
17 Kindergartens with the high school children at
18 Brownsville High School. How could this happen?
19 We have Mahalia Jackson. They call me over there
20 to do something about what's going on in that
21 school. It's not working, right? That's on East
22 New York Avenue and Troy. We have 167; we have
23 390... PS 398, right? We had a very good principal
24 in that school. The DOE forced her out. The DOE
25 needs to be revamped. We need new leaders. We

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have to... we have to literally put in place some sort of legislation that will stop the DOE in their tracks on what they're doing to our students. They're using our students for the prison pipeline. They're taking away their education. They are literally taking away the funding from these schools. They are withholding the funding from these schools. Ask them where the money is. We have a school... what is it, 236, that doesn't have books. They're using... the fifth graders are using fourth graders books. There are three schools in District 17 that we give school supplies to so that they could educate the students. We went to Target and other companies and got resources for those schools. It's ridiculous. Where is the money? DOE have to open their books and show us where these... where the money is and stop playing games with our students. The mayor is out, Thank God and we're going to have a new mayor who vowed to get rid of the policies of this mayor. I thank you, Councilman Jackson and I know that we're going to be doing a lot of work together and I'm going on this road. God put me on this road.

2 The Creator put me on this road. It's not about
3 me. It's about the people we serve. Thank you.

4 ELSIE CHAN: And just one last
5 statement, sir.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sure. Use the
7 mic.

8 ELSIE CHAN: Why did Murry Bergtraum
9 High school prevail?

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Alright, turn the
11 mic on.

12 ELSIE CHAN: Oh, I'm sorry. Is that on
13 now?

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah.

15 ELSIE CHAN: Okay, why did it prevail
16 when we had 3,500 students? Because it was broken
17 up into houses. The University; Yale University
18 and its separate colleges. There were houses and
19 it had each assistant principal overseeing like a
20 small school. What an economy of scale if you did
21 have a principal; a lead principal and then others
22 paid; it could be elementary or as assistant
23 principals, but you've got to have one person who
24 oversees it. Each of my schools... and I think you
25 said you went secretarial?

2 KHEM IRBY: Yeah.

3 ELSIE CHAN: They... and there was
4 accounting and computer science. They each had
5 their own report card. They each had their own
6 guidance counselors so...

7 [crosstalk]

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: That's right.

9 ELSIE CHAN: So it functioned as five
10 small schools.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm.

12 ELSIE CHAN: And you can do it. Other
13 than that, they fight against each other.

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mm-hm.

15 ELSIE CHAN: So why pay for those lists
16 and et cetera, et cetera. We have the model. I
17 say you ask us educators who were here. We'd be
18 wonderful. There's so many of us in retirement.
19 We'd love to be here and assist you however we can.

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, let me
21 thank all three of you for coming in and speaking
22 very passionately about this important issue, and I
23 say to you that let's stay involved because there
24 is going to be a new administration on 1-1-14 and
25 there are definitely going to be changes. Dennis

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Walcott basically he knows that he's not going to be continuing as the chancellor. There's going to be a new mayor. There's going to be new appointments all over the place. I will no longer be a member of the city council myself. I'm term limited out, so you'll have a new chair of the Education Committee next January and I will still be involved because I'm an education advocate. So thank you all for coming in.

ELSIE CHAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: [interposing]
We're going to push for you to be chancellor.

ELSIE CHAN: Yeah, oh, that's...

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No.

ELSIE CHAN: Wow!

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No, the
chancellor must be...

ELSIE CHAN: [interposing] Wow!

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: An educator.

ELSIE CHAN: Oh.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And I don't meet
the minimum...

[crosstalk]

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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: And you are
one.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I don't meet the
minimum qualifications. But first, let me close
out this hearing. This was an oversight hearing on
the Department of Education's significant school
changes, closures and reconfigurations and
community notifications. We also heard the hearing
today on Resolution Number 1263 calling upon 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 the
respective Community Education Council to approve a
co-location or a school closure phase out proposal
before it may be presented for a vote by the Panel
for Educational Policy. And we also heard on
proposed Resolution 1395-A calling for the new York
City Department of Education to institute a
moratorium on the school closures and forced
locations in existing schools for a period of at
least one year effective July 1, 2014 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-

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income communities, communities of color, disabled students and homeless students. And we also heard Resolution Number 1906 calling upon the New York City Department of Education to amend Chancellor's Regulations A-190 in order to specify specific procedures for notifying affected parents of any proposed school closure or significant change in school utilization.

I'd like to thank all of the staff at every level for being involved in this, and this hearing started about 1:20. It is now 7:18 p.m. Thank you all for coming. This hearing is now adjourned.

[gavel]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is no interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date 10/21/2013