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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING
John Ericsson Middle School 126 -
4/4/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 [Background noise]

3 MS. OLIVIA ELLIS: Good evening. We're
4 about to begin. Thank you.

5 [Background noise]

6 MS. ELLIS: Good evening. My name is Olivia
7 Ellis and I will be acting as moderator for this
8 joint public hearing. This is a joint public
9 hearing of the Department of Education,
10 Community Education Council, and School
11 Leadership Team to proposed closure of John
12 Ericsson Middle School 126.

13 [Background noise]

14 INTERPRETER: - - foreign language

15 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. I'll begin again.
16 Good evening. My name is Olivia Ellis and I
17 will be acting as moderator for this joint
18 public hearing. This is a joint public hearing
19 of the Department of Education, Community
20 Education Council, and School Leadership Team to
21 discuss the proposed closure of John Ericsson
22 Middle School 126, 14K 126, and the opening of
23 location and colocation of a new school, 14K 317
24 with - - North Side Charter High School. 84K
25 693 - - in 14K 126 in 2012-2013. Tonight's

1 proceedings will be recorded and transcribed.
2 Before we begin here, we ask that anyone who
3 wishes to speak during the public comment
4 portion of the evening, sign up at the table in
5 the back. Signup will end at 6:15. If you have
6 a question that you want to be addressed during
7 the Q and A portion of the agenda, please write
8 that question on index cards provided at the
9 back and submit them to a volunteer. Only
10 people who are signed up to speak will be able
11 to participate during the public comment
12 portion. All panel participants were asked to
13 be here no later than 5:30 P.M. Now that we've
14 started, if a panelist arrives late, he or she
15 will be given the time to speak at the first
16 opportune moment. We want to be respectful of
17 everyone's time. Please - - formal presentation
18 of the proposal and presentations by - -
19 followed by public comment. Speakers should
20 have already signed up at the signup table in
21 the lobby. Public comments can be no longer
22 than two minutes. The time limit will be
23 strictly followed, and speakers will be informed
24 when their designated time is - -. There will
25 be a question and answer period. Members of the

1 audience who have a question - - write your
2 question on a note card that was supplied at the
3 sign in table in the lobby. While the public
4 comments are taking place, staff members will
5 organize the questions into categories and - -.
6 Some questions will be answered directly, and
7 others will be batched with - - in order to
8 avoid repetitiveness. Even though all the
9 individual questions will not be addressed at
10 the forum tonight, the answers will be on the
11 website prior to the panel's meeting. If at the
12 end of the hearing, - - still have questions - -
13 directly to us by calling the number (212) 374-
14 0208, or D014proposals@schools.nyc.gov and you
15 will find that information - -. I would like to
16 introduce the panel that has been assembled for
17 this evening's joint public hearing. We have
18 Deputy Chancellor David Weiner. And - -
19 principal. We are pleased to announce the
20 following elected officials are with us this
21 evening: Steven Levin--Councilmember Steven
22 Levin. I will now turn the program over to
23 Deputy Chancellor David Weiner, who will present
24 the proposal.

25 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR DAVID WEINER: Thank you,

1 - -. Thank you everyone for coming to this
2 important event. Before we begin formal
3 proceedings, I would like to - - acknowledge the
4 unexpected death of Superintendent - - Fred
5 Rubino. I actually knew Fred when I was - - in
6 Brooklyn. It's an incredible loss for the
7 District 14 community, for Brooklyn, for those -
8 - for his family. Superintendent Rubino was a
9 dedicated educator, who for 30 years - -
10 impacted the lives of - - students; 28 of those
11 years - - 318, the past ten as principal. His
12 loss will be deeply felt by students and
13 families across District 14, and the New York
14 City at large. On behalf of Chancellor Dennis
15 Walcott and the entire Department of Education,
16 I offer sincere condolences to the
17 superintendent's family and his friends during
18 this very difficult time. This joint public
19 hearing is convened to discuss the proposed
20 closure and replacement of John Ericsson Middle
21 School. Ericsson Middle School at 424 Leonard
22 Street - - in Brooklyn currently serves students
23 in grades six through eight. On March 5th, the
24 Department of Education published an Educational
25 Impact Statement accompanied by a building

1 utilization plan to close Ericsson Middle
2 School School and replace school 14A 317. The
3 DOE - - the building utilization plan on March
4 20th providing updated information for the US
5 Department of Education that will revoke Believe
6 Southside Charter - - corporation. Believe
7 Southside will close at the end of this school
8 and does not have an impact on the proposed
9 closure of Ericsson Middle School and the
10 proposed opening of the new school described
11 herein. Believe Northside will continue to
12 phase in and will serve students in ninth
13 through twelfth grade as of the 2012-2013 school
14 year. The revised - - corrections. The revised
15 building utilization plan accompanying that
16 revised - - reflected changes in the proposed
17 space allocation and shared space schedule, as a
18 result of Believe Southside's closure. On March
19 29th, the DOE issued an amended revised EIS
20 which corrected the initial - - Ericsson Middle
21 School, the new school, and clarified the status
22 of the District 14 magnet grant in which
23 Ericsson Middle takes part. No changes were
24 made to the building utilization plan - - March
25 20th. By closing Ericsson Middle School and

1 replacing it with a new school, - - radically
2 increase the learning - - that will prepare
3 students for success in college, work, and life.
4 The new school will build on the strongest
5 elements of Ericsson Middle School, but it will
6 also offer new elements in order to create
7 rigorous - - teaching and learning. Students
8 will access higher quality educational options
9 while continuing to attend school in - -. We
10 believe this path, this process will ensure that
11 all students are set on a path for college. We
12 stand behind Principal - - and we believe he's
13 the right person to - - new year of the new
14 school. In his time here at Ericsson, he's
15 shown commitment and strong will to improve
16 student achievement and learning. We hope - -
17 qualities we want to see in the new school,
18 including better - -. Additionally, in
19 conjunction with this proposal, as a way to
20 support additional school improvement, the DOE
21 submitted a city application to the state to
22 implement - - new school. If approved, this
23 would make the new school eligible for up to
24 \$800,000 aid in supplemental federal grants. I
25 want to acknowledge the students and families

1 who feel that their children are being well
2 served by Ericsson Middle School. Tonight,
3 we'll hear success stories at what's happening
4 here at Ericsson Middle School. There are
5 success stories and we honor these, but we also
6 want to consider the many students starting in
7 this school who have not experienced the same
8 success. We believe they deserve that. Despite
9 the number of challenges the school has faced,
10 some - - that elements of Ericsson Middle School
11 are worth preserving in the new school. For
12 example, - -. Last year, 89% of students at
13 Ericsson passed their core courses. This pass
14 rates put Ericsson top 56% of middle schools
15 citywide. The DOE will seek to preserve
16 Ericsson Middle School's performance - - success
17 while implementing new supports to improve
18 achievements - - successes. Additionally, while
19 the school's overall quality - - the review
20 indicated and noted that there is a - - such as
21 that the school works closely with families by
22 the chance to share relevant information related
23 to student progress to promote clear and timely
24 expectations for learning. With new supports
25 and restructuring, the DOE will assess that the

1 new school will be able to leverage these areas
2 of Ericsson's strength while continuing to
3 improve student outcomes. Unfortunately,
4 Erickson Middle School's performance data
5 overall - - New York City - - suggests that
6 Ericsson Middle School is struggling and should
7 be closed and replaced with a new school and new
8 support structures. Unfortunately, low student
9 achievement has been a persistent trend. Last
10 year, only one in ten students at Ericsson
11 Middle School was performing at grade level in
12 English. Only 16% of students were performing
13 on grade level in math, putting the school in
14 the bottom 3% of middle schools citywide in
15 terms of math. Unfortunately, Ericsson is not
16 adequately helping students make progress. Last
17 year, the school was in the bottom 15% of middle
18 schools in terms of learning growth in English
19 and the bottom 3% in terms of learning growth in
20 math. Students are not making progress the need
21 to at this school. Finally, Ericsson received
22 an overall grade of D on its last progress
23 report, with a D on student performance, a D
24 grade on student progress, and a D grade on
25 school environment. Before we hear from other

1 members of the panel and move onto public
2 comment, I would like to briefly assess the
3 impact of the school closure occurring on
4 Ericsson students and families if it is
5 approved. All current Ericsson Middle School
6 students will have a guaranteed seat in the new
7 school. This is for all sixth and seventh grade
8 students as well as eighth grade students who do
9 not graduate from the school by the end of the
10 next school year. All incoming sixth grade
11 students who applied to Ericsson Middle School,
12 are matched with it through the middle school
13 admissions process will be automatically
14 enrolled in the new school. Additionally, the
15 DOE doesn't think that the closure and
16 replacement of Ericsson will impact the
17 colocation of the school currently located on
18 the campus, Believe Northside Charter High
19 School and Believe Southside Charter High
20 School. However, as previously noted, Believe
21 Southside will be closed at the end of this
22 school year due to - - to revoke Believe
23 Southside's charter - - corporation. This is a
24 separate matter than the current proposal to
25 close Ericsson Middle School and open the new

1 school. Finally, I want to clarify the hiring
2 process for the new school will go through to
3 hire the best possible staff if this proposal is
4 approved. There is no quota on the number of
5 staff that must be removed as a result of this
6 process. The proposal does not require the
7 turnover of any set percentage of staff. For
8 students under UFT contract, if this is proposal
9 approved, pedagogical staff who work at the new
10 school will be reviewed by a five person school-
11 based personnel committee. This committee is
12 made up of the principal, two designees from the
13 Chancellor, and two set designees from the UFT
14 president. The proposed new year will - -
15 interest in the school, and the personnel
16 committee will consider each candidate who
17 applies. All teachers at Ericsson Middle School
18 are eligible to apply to work at the new school.
19 If sufficient numbers of staff from the closing
20 school apply, at least 50% of the new school's
21 pedagogical positions must be selected from the
22 appropriately licensed most senior qualified
23 staff. Again, there is no set percentage - -
24 members of staff at the closing school can be
25 hired to work at the new school, and all hiring

1 decisions are made by the personnel committee
2 at the new school. Thank you, and I look
3 forward to hearing your comments and questions.

4 MS. ELLIS: Thank you, Mr. Weiner. At this
5 time I'd like to ask the School Leadership Team
6 member, Michael Mena, please come to the mike.
7 He'd like to make a presentation.

8 [Background noise]

9 MR. MICHAEL MENA: Is this on? There it is.
10 Good evening. My name is Mike and I'm speaking
11 in my capacity as the chairperson of the School
12 Leadership Team, and I am also the magnet grant
13 site coordinator for Middle School 126. What I
14 would say is not - - is that students at Middle
15 School 126 deserve better, and that there has
16 been a record of a lack of academic progress
17 which no one could hold up as a model of
18 success. But what I feel has not been
19 emphasized here is that there have been efforts
20 that have been put into place to address that
21 lack of progress.

22 [Background noise]

23 MR. MENA: For example, there's been a
24 change in school leadership. Mr. Bausch
25 [phonetic] has been appointed to the school and

1 I think I speak for all members of the faculty
2 that we have an extreme sense of confidence in
3 his ability to address the deficiencies that
4 were evident under the previous administration.
5 Similarly, we were fortunate to hear - - school
6 improvement grant which has brought resources
7 into the school that have, I believe, been
8 responsible for a turnaround which no one has
9 made mention of, and that's unfortunate because
10 in essence, we haven't had a chance to
11 demonstrate that with the resources that were
12 made available to us through the school
13 improvement grant and through the magnet grant
14 that we are in the process of turning the school
15 around. The other aspect the Chancellor didn't
16 consider is looking at the demographics of the
17 population of our school and the challenges we
18 face that are not faced by a number of middle
19 schools in the city. Our school has a very high
20 percentage of students with IEPs. Over 37% of
21 the student population have IEPs. We have
22 approximately 25% English language learners, and
23 we've had an incredible amount of staff turnover
24 in the period of time that I've been here, and
25 I've been working here since 2007. That being

1 said, since the start of this year, with the
2 partners that were brought in through the school
3 improvement grant, resources that were made
4 available, and partners - - magnet grant, I
5 think that we are in the process of turning this
6 school around. I wish that we had the
7 opportunity to demonstrate that, so that at the
8 close of this year, if in fact our numbers do
9 not improve, a strong case could be made that a
10 significant change would have to come into
11 effect. But as it stands right now, we are not
12 - - and I think that's a tragic mistake.

13 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. Now I'd like to call
16 another member of the School Leadership Team,
17 Sergio Zamora.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. SERGIO ZAMORA: You know, - - understand
20 the turnaround basically affects the staff in
21 this school. In the last four years, we have
22 had a turnaround of teachers of about 79%.
23 There are so many--about seven teachers left
24 from four years ago when it started. What is
25 your turnaround going to do for us now if we

1 have had that already? I don't know - - it's
2 huge. It's more than double the one for the
3 city average, so if you're talking about turning
4 around this building, we already had it. We did
5 it. It's done to us. I don't see the impact of
6 the turnaround. Like Mike was saying, special
7 education classes--we have, out of 17 classes, 9
8 classes are special ed. We have six - -, we
9 have three CCT, that's not counting the - - in
10 addition to 25% of the ESL students. What are
11 we having here? We have a very special school
12 that needs to be looked at in a very special
13 way. Grant--the money, we received money from
14 the state. You couldn't tell me why you - -.
15 This is - -. The same - - building, what's that
16 going to help? Where is the state money, and
17 where is grant money? We have a sign that goes
18 - - we don't know what we're going to have. So
19 that money, - - that money that the students
20 have for this year, they're not going to have
21 next year, and the turnaround, which this is
22 what we've been doing for four years. You
23 mentioned the struggling, you mentioned - -.
24 You know, that's what you have when you have so
25 many students with special needs. You have

1 persistently low achievement of these students
2 - -. - - Does that mean 10%? Does that mean
3 20%? Does that mean 90%? Does that mean 70%?
4 Please - -. Thank you.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. ELLIS: We have now--the formal
7 presentations of the Community Education Council
8 has been provided. If they show up, they will
9 be given an opportunity to speak if they show
10 up. At this point in time I want to now
11 introduce Councilmember Steven Levin.

12 [Applause]

13 COUNCILMEMBER STEVEN LEVIN: Thank you,
14 Deputy Chancellor, thank you - -. Good evening
15 and thank you for allowing me the opportunity to
16 speak this evening. My name is Councilmember
17 Steven Levin. I represent the 33rd District
18 which includes North - - and - -. MS126 has
19 served these communities well over the years,
20 even if the test scores have not always truly
21 reflected the value and efforts of the school's
22 staff, principal, administration, and students
23 and parents. The dedicated - - administration
24 and staff of 126 have sought to once again make
25 this school that is a place the community can be

1 proud of, but the fact is that John Ericsson
2 Middle School is an essential component to our
3 neighborhood. The fact that we have a public
4 middle school in this building is absolutely
5 essential to this community. It's absolutely
6 essential to this - -. I ask the Department of
7 Education work with Principal Bausch, work with
8 the teachers, and work with us, the community,
9 to articulate the vision for this school that
10 assures that 126 will remain in our neighborhood
11 for generations to come. I don't want to say
12 that this is a foregone conclusion that this
13 turnaround model is going to be implemented. I
14 think that there are many great things about
15 this school that we can build on, but if in fact
16 the way that the Department of Education is
17 going to go, it's absolutely essential that the
18 community have - -. It's absolutely essential
19 that my neighborhood--I live, this is the
20 closest middle school to where I live--it's
21 essential that my neighborhood be able to send
22 their children to this middle school instead of
23 sending them to - - or to 318, so it's got to
24 have community behind it. It's got to have
25 community vision. It's got to be something that

1 parents are going to be willing to take a
2 chance on, and that's absolutely essential. So
3 just a few days ago, the District 14 community
4 lost somebody who had the tremendous ability to
5 see the opportunities for others - - and willing
6 that, Fred Rubino, who as a principal
7 transformed 318, one of the best schools in the
8 district that I represent, would have seen the
9 same opportunities at 126. I was personally
10 very excited to work with Fred on turning this
11 school around and it's a great tragedy that we
12 won't have the opportunity to work with him. He
13 would have--it's safe to say, he would have
14 worked to ensure this school also had the
15 resources necessary to thrive. I and all of
16 District 14 will miss Fred Rubino terribly. We
17 wanted to carry on his vision for the schools -
18 - community - -. Principal Bausch and the
19 teachers at 126 remain dedicated to serving the
20 students and - - I hope that the Department of
21 Education will work with them as well as with
22 parents, students and other community
23 stakeholders to collectively engage to find a
24 way to make this school a top school - - once
25 again. Instead of closing the school, let's

1 convene a taskforce with the Department of
2 Education, the principal, the teachers, and
3 elected officials and community leaders to find
4 a way forward. In North Brooklyn, we need long-
5 term - - goals to ensure that our children have
6 bright futures. And so I urge the Department of
7 Education to reconsider this plan, but I think
8 that the most important thing that we need to
9 take away today is that the resources have to be
10 there and long-term support is not just money.
11 We need to have a clear vision. We need to have
12 something that is going to be built with the
13 community aspect of the school. There's got to
14 be community behind it. There's got to be
15 community support. Without that, we're not
16 going to find the success that we need. And I
17 can tell you, I speak for myself that - - ensure
18 that this building be a public middle school - -
19 new year. Thank you very much.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. I will now introduce
22 - - Joseph Lental.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. JOSEPH LENTAL: Thank you very much.
25 Thank you for inviting me here tonight, and

1 first of all, let me say welcome to - -
2 opportunity to meet. And what I have to say, I
3 guess I can start out by saying ditto to what
4 Councilman Levin said. I'll try not to be
5 repetitive of what was already said and give you
6 some of what I believe is important to say.
7 First of all, all of us know that leadership
8 starts at the top, and from what I've heard of
9 Mr. Bausch I expect great leadership from him.
10 I also know that I - - taught at this school,
11 and he told me from the inside what went on at
12 this school, and sometimes lack of leadership at
13 this school. We had a new beginning back in
14 September as you all know. We called it the
15 transformation program, or a restart that we
16 implemented, and Mr. Bausch was part of that
17 restart effort. This was not our policy but
18 yours, because this was labeled struggling
19 school. Now we're in the middle or coming
20 towards the end of the school year, and we want
21 to change the game. After--I don't know if this
22 was one of the schools that partnered with an
23 enterprise, an educational partnership
24 organization that received funding. I don't
25 think it was, and maybe that's why you're

1 concerned unnecessarily that things aren't
2 going to change. But I believe with my whole
3 heart that you have the basis here for a school
4 to make change, to have the transformation that
5 began back in September and I think it's an
6 insult to your new principal to try and switch
7 gears now when you don't even know if the
8 original program is going to work in the first
9 place. I know that there's federal funding
10 attached to what they're doing, so there could
11 have been federal funding attached to the
12 transformation program, had you chosen to allow
13 us into a partnership with an educational
14 partnership organization and this could have
15 been - -. So I believe that change now and to
16 change courses in this thing is a mistake, and
17 this school will succeed. It has the will to
18 succeed, and it has to stay - -. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. I would now like to
21 introduce - -.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. CHRISTOPHER LAUKANG: Thank you very
24 much, and good evening everyone. I first want
25 to just say briefly that Fred Rubino was as

1 impressive and committed and remarkable an
2 educator as I have - - and his loss is such a
3 tremendous loss for our entire - - and he was
4 destined to be a truly great superintendent.
5 His decades of leadership of 318 were just
6 remarkable. It was one of the best known
7 schools in the city, and my thoughts and prayers
8 are with him, his family, and every person in
9 our community who had the privilege of - -. I
10 want to follow after Joe--I intend to say that I
11 agree with him, and I do. We have a situation
12 here with a new principal in Principal Bausch,
13 who I've only heard really great things about,
14 and - - this community, and thank you for the
15 work that you've done to date in coming in here
16 - - and I hope that you're going to be leading
17 126 for a very long time to come. This
18 turnaround model is new. It's not something
19 that the DOE has done before, but in my opinion
20 it's all too similar to the school closings that
21 we've seen create languor and distress for
22 families around this city. When we talk about
23 school closings and the effect it has on
24 students like - -, on parent confidence, on the
25 administration's sense of optimism in the

1 school, it's devastating. It's devastating.
2 And what we won't share is a deep commitment to
3 ensuring that we have the best possible outcomes
4 for our students, for our youth, for our future.
5 In my opinion, the Educational Impact Statement
6 that was written for 126 placed the blame on our
7 teachers, and I think we all understand - - that
8 you guys, we all - - 126 is not a place that it
9 needs to be. We need to improve this school,
10 but the way to improve this school is not to
11 blame teachers who are dedicated to our
12 students. The way to improve this school is to
13 invest in it. Progress is made here with
14 Principal Bausch's leadership and I would hope
15 and encourage the Department of Education to
16 double down on this effort and to invest more
17 and to provide additional professional
18 development to our teachers rather than forcing
19 50% of them to find new jobs. I've worked with
20 many of the teachers in this school, - -
21 wonderful job - - program. This is a community
22 institution comprised of students, teachers,
23 parents and an administration that is deeply
24 committed to our community. And I'm fearful
25 that a school closure will send a message that

1 this is not a place where students can
2 succeed. Thank you very much.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. - - We will continue
5 with the public comment portion of the evening.

6 MR. LINCOLN RESTLER: I just wanted to
7 introduce myself, - - from MCC14.

8 MS. ELLIS: Oh, thank you.

9 MR. RESTLER: I just wanted to let all of
10 you know that this school is amazing, and the
11 phase that we're going through right now is - -
12 shameful. I could speak tonight and tell you
13 all that - - I know its potential, and I went
14 here, graduated here, and - - top tier school in
15 the neighborhood, and now it's been - - list,
16 and it's a shame that it's gotten to this point.
17 I recognize the teachers in the room, the
18 teachers in the room, and all for supporting Mr.
19 Bausch, and he's great right now and I hope that
20 never happens will be - -, basically. And I'm
21 sure that whatever turnaround plan that the DOE
22 has for this school will be implemented pretty
23 soon because the school needs to be saved. I
24 know there's the potential in this school, but I
25 don't think it's anybody's fault. If anything,

1 - - but all I have to say on behalf of the
2 parents and the community is that I hope that
3 the school remains open as a - - return it back
4 to where it was. - -

5 MS. ELLIS: Thank you.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. ELLIS: We will continue with the public
8 comment portion of this evening. - - Came in
9 this evening, were given a card to sign up and
10 speak. I will call numbers. When you come up
11 to the mike, please state your name and - -.
12 Numbers one, two, three, four and five.

13 [Background noise]

14 MS. MONA ROMAIN: Good evening. My name is
15 Mona Romain, and I'm the Assistant Director of
16 the United Federation of Teachers. I am here to
17 speak in support of the hardworking staff - -
18 and the hardworking students of MS126. I have
19 been in the school system for 41 years, and I
20 would say I've been in District 14 schools for
21 the past 25 years, and I can tell you that no
22 matter how dilapidated buildings look on the
23 outside, on the inside we found teachers who are
24 very, very happy to be there. We have students
25 who are engaged and learning, and all of the

1 sudden this is happening to District 14.
2 Never before in my 41 years of teaching have I
3 seen such disruption in a school system,
4 particularly for kids who are high needs.
5 Opening and closing schools is not a
6 comprehensive educational plan. Deputy
7 Chancellor, it would have been wonderful if you
8 were here sharing with us the wonderful programs
9 that you're going to put in place to service the
10 children of this school, and all of the support
11 that you are going to provide them. Telling us
12 how poorly they perform on a test tells us
13 nothing unless you're going to tell us about the
14 quality of education that you're going to
15 provide them to learn better than they are now.
16 This school does not deserve to close. This is
17 only happening because we have a spiteful,
18 vindictive mayor, who...

19 [Applause]

20 MS. ROMAIN: - - Process which he knows is
21 necessary for - - in Albany is putting this
22 school in the crosshairs and he's closing it out
23 of his spitefulness. Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. AVA PAYNE: Good evening. My name is

1 Ava Payne. I'm a seventh grader at MS126 and
2 I live in Greenpoint. It's come to my attention
3 that MS126 will be given a new name and - -
4 teachers - - will be gone. This cannot be. I
5 have been in this school for two years, and next
6 year I will be a senior. I want to come back to
7 MS126 unchanged and it will be identical as to
8 when I left it. It's completely biased as to
9 who decides when the school changes or not. Do
10 we not have a say in this? Are we a part of the
11 - -? Every teacher and any adult that - -. - -
12 The likes and dislikes - - teachers who loved
13 and supported me will no longer be - -. The
14 replacement teachers will be - - replace our
15 teachers, they will never succeed. The same is
16 true - - our teachers are - - so I - - save our
17 school and MS126. Our dreams should become
18 reality. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. ROB RICHARDSON: Good evening,
21 everybody. Thank you for the opportunity to
22 speak. I'm Rob Richardson. I'm the special
23 education teacher for math in seventh grade.
24 This is my first year. I come to this after a
25 20 year career in technology and the idea was to

1 come and help the school turn around. There's
2 an old analogy which is - - by cutting off their
3 heads and I think this applies somewhat here.
4 You've got a new principal in. You've got a
5 young staff, with important senior staff
6 members. You have all the momentum here going
7 forward to make this work, and it's possible,
8 this entire process, the sharing, the - - the
9 entire process itself is disruptive. It's been
10 disruptive up until now, it's disruptive
11 tonight, it's going to be disruptive going
12 forward, and all this momentum that the school
13 had, all this good faith and all this good will
14 to make this work has been somewhat disruptive,
15 and I think that's something that, as you go
16 through this final decision you really consider,
17 is the short-term disruption worth the long-term
18 value that you're actually getting back? - - I
19 don't see the value added in this process. I
20 think you have it all going forward - - a new
21 principal. I just don't - -.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. ELLIS: Thank you.

24 MR. WILLIAM KIRK: Good evening Deputy
25 Chancellor, community leaders, parents,

1 families, students and guests. My name is
2 William Kirk. I'm assistant principal here at
3 this school, MS126. It's been my pleasure to be
4 here and serve parents and students for the next
5 four years. And I just wanted to share with you
6 not just my opinions but some basic facts.
7 Assumptions are beliefs you take for granted.
8 Usually we don't question them, but we should.
9 You might assume that here in the 12th century,
10 the year 2012, 235 years since the Declaration
11 of Independence proclaimed that all men are
12 created equal, that schools would be a place of
13 equity, an example of what's fair and just. Let
14 me share with you the kind of equity that the
15 City has created here at MS126. As of March
16 16th, 2012, MS126 has a total population of 362
17 students. 104 of these students have IEPs,
18 individual education plans--that's 32.91%
19 receiving some level of special education
20 services. Were you aware of that, Deputy
21 Chancellor? 32.91%, special education services.
22 As of March 16th, 2012, citywide across the
23 whole Department of Education, there are
24 1,039,307 students. 162,559 of those students
25 have IEPs--that's only 15.64% receiving some

1 level of special educational services
2 citywide. That's half the percentage that we
3 have here. If the citywide average were the
4 same as MS126, the Department of Education would
5 have an additional 179,447 students to get
6 special education services. Where would they
7 put them? I have an idea where, and I'm sure by
8 now, you all do, too. Save this school - -.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. ELLIS: Six, seven, eight, nine, and
11 ten.

12 MR. ADRIATIK JEFE: Good evening, everyone,
13 and thank you for this opportunity to speak. My
14 name is Adriatik Jefe. I'm - - a member,
15 community leaders. This - - MS126, this school
16 was an A school for years. Then it became a C
17 school, then going back to B, then last year it
18 was a D school again. I've seen people in the
19 administration work hard in this system
20 throughout the school year. I have seen
21 teachers work hard in the system throughout the
22 school year. I've seen parents work hard in
23 support of their child, and their staff in the
24 school district - -. Also I've seen a lot of
25 children--they need a lot of educational

1 support, - - and help - -. Our school
2 received a C in the year of 2008-2009, it
3 received a B in 2009-2010, then received a D in
4 2010-2011 school year. Seeing that our school
5 has almost - - students with special needs and
6 ELL students, the DOE and - - and have - - what
7 we need from outside to really fulfill the
8 special needs for our students. This - - last
9 September from the beginning of the school year
10 but we didn't receive most of the grant money
11 until November, which affected the whole school,
12 and changed where money had been - -right now.
13 So seeing all these changes, - - students need -
14 - the school - - was a failure was - - staff,
15 and this was a debate that was very, very
16 difficult for all the stuff. But I can only - -
17 all the staff working in a professional - -
18 giving students, regardless of staff - - school
19 that their child was in was a failure. My
20 question is, knowing - - in our school which
21 provided for all - - and having 80% of the staff
22 - - is the best way to close our school? Don't
23 we - - the school to be successful?

24 [Applause]

25 MS. ELLIS: - -

1 MR. CHRISTOPHER ROSANO: My name is
2 Christopher Rosano. Hello Deputy Chancellor and
3 Councilman Levin. I also want to - - Rubino - -
4 and gave my respect to his family and friends.
5 On the other side of it, - - yeah, - - long
6 time. I've seen a lot of changes here. I've
7 seen a lot of new things in our community, a lot
8 of new things, a lot of old things, - - but the
9 one thing that has been core is our children.
10 When I was a kid, people would say in the
11 community, where do you go? MS126--and yeah,
12 over time, that's changed, and yeah, a lot of
13 those students go to 318, no disrespect to 318,
14 but my own comments about people - -former
15 superintendent - - you've got to reach out to
16 our community. Again, have them take us back.
17 This isn't their school. It's our school--
18 period, Ericsson. The point I'm trying to make
19 is that statistics and data or semantics - -
20 have dominated discussion, but the one thing I'm
21 telling you - - something I've told you, also,
22 is that there are a lot of - - here, and a lot
23 of kids here, and you know what? We all are
24 working here at Ericsson, because we want
25 Ericsson to succeed, and we have - - our former

1 principal, Mr. - - who - - leadership back in
2 2008 did some things, that again, caused - -
3 direction that - - and I say that from - - it
4 wasn't like that. She alienated the community,
5 - - and we - - saying something different now.
6 Before I go I want to just say that yeah, we
7 read the report of the D, but - - prior to - -
8 my staff - - us and the staff - - are working
9 hard to help this school succeed, and we need
10 time--time to do that. That is not mentioned,
11 and that's the - - all of those - - 2008-2009
12 mean something. Keep the Ericsson staff, and
13 the kids that worked hard to keep this our
14 school in our community--Erickson. Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. MILDRED BOYCE: Good evening, Deputy
17 Chancellor Weiner, Mr. Bausch, Olivia Ellis,
18 elected officials, staff, parents, and students.
19 My name is Mildred Boyce and I represent the CSA
20 and student council in this school - -. I am a
21 former middle school principal so to hear what
22 they're saying and feel your pain, I hear you
23 but I have to say that - -. The New York City
24 Department of Education's latest attempt to
25 close 26 schools which were already in the

1 process of the three-year reform program is a
2 political maneuver that is not rooted in sound
3 educational practice. Rather, - - designed to
4 avoid new changes in the CSA and UFT over new
5 principal and teacher evaluation systems. The
6 motivation behind that ploy was to fund the
7 turnaround model, a model that does not require
8 principal or teacher evaluations and allows the
9 City to close and immediately reopen schools
10 under new names. What - - can we do about that?
11 50% of the teachers would be new; around 50% of
12 the former teachers would be put into excess
13 willy-nilly. There is nothing educationally
14 sound this intervention plan. It is being
15 introduced for cynical reasons, not to help
16 children. It will not contribute to development
17 of a sound school and - - placements for other
18 schools. The DOE will destabilize schools
19 throughout the system one after the other, like
20 dominoes. While we see - - are the most
21 important ones, there are financial, fiscal
22 ones, too. Removing 1800 teachers and tossing
23 them into ATR where they work as substitutes at
24 fully salary will cost the City approximately
25 \$180,000,000 annually. Thank you.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. ELLIS: - -

3 MR. MATTHEW ROCHA: - - My name is Matthew
4 Rocha and I'm a - - 126 student. I'm here - -
5 speech. I want to stay I - -. We the students
6 are - - somebody - -. We - - we need this
7 school - - our school. - - Because we know - -.
8 - - Teachers because we - -. We're proud of our
9 teachers because they - -. All of this is why I
10 love my school and - -. Thank you for letting
11 me share my - - about this school.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. ELLIS: Eleven, twelve, thirteen,
14 fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen.

15 [Background noise]

16 MR. EDWARD NUNEZ: - - My name is Edward
17 Nunez. I would like to say that - -. This
18 teacher - - Principal Bausch - -.

19 MS. ELLIS: Thank you.

20 MR. NUNEZ: - - It worked back then. I got
21 extra credit every time you - -.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. SALLY TERRY: My name is Sally Terry - -
24 students - -. My - - at this school now, I see
25 150% improvement in his academics in two months

1 being at this school. I have a question for
2 you: Are you going to close the schools in
3 District 20, where an English class is treated
4 as a second language class, not an English
5 class? Why don't they close schools in District
6 20? And I don't believe the numbers, because
7 the numbers, - - with low numbers for my son, I
8 showed this to the staff there, - - our teachers
9 - - but in this school, I have Miss Bly
10 [phonetic] who's not afraid to text me or call
11 me and let me know what's going on with my son.
12 I call Miss Phillips every day to make sure
13 Brian [phonetic] made it to school on time. He
14 still - -. And - - there's more a friendly,
15 family environment. They make my son feel
16 welcome and at home, and my kids, I wanted to -
17 - 75 on a test; in District 20 he never got
18 that. In District 20, he - - for school. Why
19 are you closing - -? Those are not high
20 performing schools in District 20, but they're
21 still there and nobody's closed them. I think -
22 - Mr. Bausch a chance to turn the school around.

23 MS. ELLIS: Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MR. JAVIER BERNAL: Hello. My name's Javier

1 Bernal. I am in the seventh grade. - - I
2 think - - and I want to have a great - -. Here,
3 I have great teachers that show us - - they help
4 me, they get - - and they help me, and I want to
5 say that in middle school, I started here, and -
6 - I finished at this school and I'm here. Thank
7 you.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. ELLIS: Thank you.

10 MS. JESSICA ROSEN: Thank you. My name is
11 Jessica Rosen.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. ROSEN: I used to be a teacher here, and
14 I'm a teaching fellow. - - Finishing my third
15 year teaching in New York City and I absolutely
16 love it. One thing that was only mentioned once
17 tonight which was really a problem the last few
18 years here at 126 was Rosemary - -. I was
19 unfortunate enough to leave under the assumption
20 that she was staying because of all the
21 harassment she was - - with all the teachers.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. ROSEN: I think that - - as a
24 professional that they have integrated down into
25 our students. How do you expect students to

1 take anything seriously when the person in
2 charge, the king, the person that's supposed to
3 be the most admirable person in the school is
4 yelling at teachers, walking down the hallway
5 with a 2 by 4 piece of wood because she thinks
6 that a - - is more important than confiscating
7 things like that while - - school? She had
8 absolutely no control so she tried to control
9 the things that she shouldn't have. They need
10 someone more respectful. I've gone to a place
11 where I - - kids do not change. Their age does
12 not change, the core does not change. ESL stays
13 the same, special needs stays the same--it
14 doesn't matter if you have new teachers like
15 myself at a school where there are no new
16 teachers, and - - superstar--for once, I'm able
17 to be called something that I tried to be here,
18 but the - - on top wouldn't let anybody be what
19 she couldn't be. The kids didn't take her
20 seriously so therefore they did not take their
21 work seriously. Like I said, you eliminated
22 her--you took care of the problem. Give this
23 man a chance. The kids, I guarantee the kids
24 that are in here will not take this school
25 seriously if you get rid of all their teachers.

1 These people have been here for how long? How
2 many people went to this school? How many
3 people went to this school, go to school now,
4 and teach here right at this school and they're
5 watching this before their eyes, their kids are
6 watching this before their eyes? It's not
7 structured. It's not - -.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. ROSEN: Now, because of the structured
10 inconsistencies, this is not consistent. You're
11 getting rid of the teachers and the staff--for
12 what? The kids stay the same. They need
13 structure and respect, and if they respect this
14 man--

15 [Audio ends abruptly]

16 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability.

Signature 

Date April 9, 2012

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