



### **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: February 28, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Co-location of a New DOE School, 17K122, and the Re-siting and Co-location of Academy for Health Careers (13K751) with Paul Robeson High School (17K625) in School Building K625

Date of Panel Vote: March 1, 2011

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### **Summary of Proposal**

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to co-locate a new school, 17K122 (“17K122”), and the Academy for Health Careers (13K571, “Academy for Health Careers”), an existing school, in school building K625 (“K625”). The name of the proposed new school is Pathways in Technology Early College High School (“P-Tech”). Building K625 is located at 150 Albany Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11213, within the geographical confines of Community School District 17 (“District 17”). Building K625 currently houses Paul Robeson High School (17K625, “Paul Robeson”) and the Living for the Young Family Through Education (“LYFE”) program. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, libraries, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) posted on December 17, 2010, the DOE proposed to phase out and eventually close Paul Robeson due to the school’s longstanding performance struggles. The Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) voted to approve this proposal at its meeting on February 1, 2011. This means that Paul Robeson will not accept new ninth-grade students after the end of this school year. Paul Robeson’s enrollment will decrease gradually over the next three years and the school will close in June 2014. For more details about that proposal, please visit the DOE’s Website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010-2011/Feb12011Proposals>. The DOE received oral and written comments from the public on the phase-out proposal. To read the Public Comment Analysis regarding the phase-out of Paul Robeson, please visit the DOE’s Website at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010-2011/Feb12011Proposals>.

If this co-location proposal is approved, the new school, 17K122, would open in building K625 in September 2011 serving students in grade nine. 17K122 would gradually phase in to the building by adding one grade level every year until it reaches its full grade span of 9-12 in the 2014-2015 school year. The Academy for Health Careers, which is currently housed in school

building K813 (“K813”) located at 355 Park Place, Brooklyn, NY 11238, within the geographical confines of District 13, is a new school which opened in September 2010 serving students in the ninth-grade. The Academy for Health Careers would re-locate to building K625 in 2011-2012. The school would continue its phase-in at the new location, adding one grade level every year until it reaches its full grade span of 9-12 in 2013-2014.

The proposed co-location of 17K122 and the Academy for Health Careers in building K625 is part of the DOE’s central goal to create new school options that will better serve future students and the community at large. 17K122 would offer a rigorous academic program and prepare students for post-secondary work. 17K122 would be open to students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process, and would have a Limited Unscreened admissions method offering priority to students or residents of Brooklyn. The Academy for Health Careers also admits students through the Limited Unscreened admissions method, offering priority to Brooklyn students or residents. Limited Unscreened schools give admissions priority to students who demonstrate interest in the school by attending an Information Session, Open House events, or visiting the school’s exhibit at any one of the High School Fairs.

The proposed new school, 17K122, and the Academy for Health Careers would be temporarily co-located with Paul Robeson as that school phases out. Long-term, 17K122 would share space with the Academy for Health Careers and the LYFE program in K625. The K625 building has adequate capacity to accommodate 17K122, the Academy for Health Careers and the LYFE program at full operational capacity. Once 17K122 and the Academy for Health Careers complete their expansions, and Paul Robeson completes its phase-out, the building, which has capacity to serve 1,112 students, would serve approximately 800-900 students in 2014-2015. This would yield an approximate building utilization rate of 81% of target capacity.

The Educational Impact Statement is available in the main offices of Robeson and the Academy for Health Careers, and online at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010-2011/Mar12011Proposals.htm>.

### **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing**

Two joint public hearings regarding this proposal were held, one at K625 on February 16, 2011 and one at K813 on February 17, 2011. At the hearings, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal.

On February 16, approximately 50 members of the public attended the hearing at K625 and 8 people spoke. Present at the meeting were: Paul Robeson High School Interim Acting Principal Katherine Kefalas; Paul Robeson High School’s School Leadership Team (“SLT”) member Stefanie Siegel; Academy for Health Careers Principal Deonne Martin; Academy for Health Careers’ SLT member Niobe Hayes; Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm; Director of the Office for Family Information and Action (“OFIA”) Ojeda Hall; and New York City Councilmember Albert Vann. As noted on the record during the joint public hearing, Community Education Council (“CEC”) 17 confirmed availability for the hearing but no representatives were in attendance.

On February 17, approximately 12 members of the public attended the hearing at K813 and 1 person spoke. Present at the meeting were: Academy for Health Careers Principal Deonne Martin; Academy for Health Careers' SLT members Jeaural Wilson and Niobe Hayes; and Brooklyn High School Superintendent Karen Watts. As noted on the record during the joint public hearing, CEC 13 and CEC 19 confirmed availability for the hearing but no representatives were in attendance.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearings:

1. Stefanie Siegel, Paul Robeson High School's SLT member, said the Paul Robeson High School community will not sit back as they are pushed into an environment which Ms. Siegel characterized as based on an unhealthy competition for space. She said the community holds no ill will against either of the schools proposed for co-location, and wishes them the best in finding a different home.
2. Niobe Hayes, Academy for Health Careers' SLT member, said her school is excited about the re-location to the Paul Robeson Campus.
3. Councilmember Albert Vann said he grew up in the community and has strong roots in the community for various reasons. He stated that he has opposed mayoral control from the beginning because he believes the mayor has other things to focus on and because it leaves no room for community control. He said he does not support the phase-out of Paul Robeson High School, but noted that the PEP vote on that proposal has already taken place. Now, he says he aims to win the war of providing excellent education to students. Councilmember Vann asserted that the community should be involved in the decision process, and that it is even worse to pretend to listen to the community than simply not to involve them. There should be engagement with the community beyond just following procedures in place. He said he thinks the IBM school is an excellent concept, but he cannot transition to saying he wants the school just after saying he wants Paul Robeson High School to remain a school. Finally, Councilmember Vann expressed the opinion that with the principal of the new school already picked, it seems decisions are being made without any pause to allow the community to give input.
4. Multiple commenters said the co-location process should be one that does not cause pain to Paul Robeson High School students. The commenters cited stories they had witnessed or heard of about existing schools being denied resources or isolated because of a co-location of another school. They said the DOE should provide a plan for how to support existing Paul Robeson High School students, to ensure they are not ostracized by the new schools or denied access to resources and they have the proper emotional support needed in the situation.
5. A commenter expressed understanding for the Academy of Health Careers need for space, but that Paul Robeson High School students have suffered from limited resources as well because of the phase-out. He said the student body would appreciate if the two schools did not come into the building.
6. A commenter said she does not understand why the two schools need to be put into the building, asserting that the IBM school should have enough money for its own

building, and the circumstances of Academy for Health Careers current placement do not make sense.

7. A commenter expressed the opinion that the PEP decision about the proposal has already been made, even if the vote is in the future.
8. A commenter expressed the opinion that the planned co-location of a charter school in the building in concert with the phase-out of Paul Robeson High School will take away the opportunities to earn all the credits Paul Robeson High School students need, especially in cluster subjects, because of diminishing resources and space. The commenter asserted that the co-location plan segregates and isolates the students in Paul Robeson High School, taking them back to “slavery.” Finally, the commenter asserted that if the new schools get so many resources, Paul Robeson High School students should as well, since there is no way to program them for credits they need without increased resources.

**The DOE received a comment at the Joint Public Hearing that did not directly relate to the proposal and therefore will not be addressed.**

9. A commenter said that the DOE has not supported Paul Robeson High School over the last 5 years, despite its claims to the contrary. The commenter noted that the court held the same opinion when it overturned phase-outs last year. Students at Paul Robeson High School today should have the opportunity for their children to attend Paul Robeson High School some day as well.

#### **Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE**

10. CEC 17 submitted a statement saying it only supports the co-location of 17K122 if there is adequate space in the building and the building is under-utilized. The new school also should give priority enrollment to students from District 17. The Council does not support the placement of Academy for Health Careers in the building because it takes space away from District 17 students and gives it to District 19 students. If the school is placed on the Paul Robeson Campus, priority enrollment should be given to District 17 students.
11. CEC 13 member Khem Irby said she does not support the placement of a school that was originally a District 19 school into a District 17 building. The school should be placed somewhere closer to the students’ homes. She said District 13 has been very accommodating but they would like to use the District 13 building again for their own kids.

#### **Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal**

Comments 1, 4, 5 and 8 address the plan for sharing space within the building. For any building in which the DOE proposes a co-location where two or more schools share a building, the Office of Space Planning conducts a comprehensive site survey and space

assessment to determine that there is sufficient space for all schools to be co-located. Specifically, the K625 building has capacity to serve 1,112 students. In 2009-2010, the building enrolled 868 students, yielding a building utilization rate of 78% of target capacity. In 2010-2011, the building has a student enrollment of 570, which yields an estimated building utilization rate of 51% of target capacity. This means that the building is under-utilized and has extra space to accommodate additional students.

Space is allocated based on the Citywide Instructional Footprint (“Footprint”), which guides the baseline number of full-size, half-size and administrative space needed by a school. The Footprint can be accessed on the DOE’s Website at

[http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/8CF30F41-DE25-4C30-92DE-731949919FC3/87633/NYCDOE\\_Instructional\\_Footprint\\_Final9210TNT.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/8CF30F41-DE25-4C30-92DE-731949919FC3/87633/NYCDOE_Instructional_Footprint_Final9210TNT.pdf).

Paul Robeson High School will continue to be allocated at least its baseline minimum allocation of space as it phases out. Paul Robeson High School will also continue to be supported by the DOE as all students work towards graduation. The Academy for Health Careers and 17K122 will also be allocated the baseline minimum allocation of space as they phase in. Any space in excess of the minimum baseline footprint allocation will be distributed among schools in conjunction with the Office of Space Planning and the Building Council.

While the Footprint sets forth a baseline space allocation, school leaders are empowered to make decisions about how to utilize the space allocated to the school. Many buildings in New York City have more than one school sharing space within the building. As the K625 building is proposed to house 3 individual school organizations in 2011-2012, the campus will create a Building Council in which the Principals from the three schools will meet to discuss campus issues. While the assignment of individual spaces to a particular school will be determined by the Director of Space Planning in consultation with the Building Council, the Building Council will also work to determine how to schedule the use of shared spaces within the building.

Comment 2 is in support of the proposal and therefore does not require a response.

With respect to comment 3, the DOE held two Joint Public Hearings in February 2011 and sought feedback from the community on this proposal. Public feedback was collected at these meetings and through dedicated e-mail and phone numbers. The Department’s analysis of public comment is contained in this document.

With regard to comments 6 and 8 related the DOE’s rationale for the co-location of 17K122 and the Academy for Health Careers in K625 beginning in 2011-2012: The DOE is proposing to co-locate 17K122 and the Academy for Health Careers in building K625 beginning in 2011-2012 in order to more efficiently use under-utilized space. Additionally, the siting of these two schools addresses the need for high-quality high school seats that will better serve students and families in the community. The proposed new school, 17K122, is a partnership between the NYC Department of Education, the City University of New York and the IBM Corporation. The school’s mission is to provide students with a personalized

pathway towards mastery of the skills and knowledge that they will need to graduate with an Associate's degree, secure an entry level position in the highly competitive Information Technology fields and/or complete their studies in a four year higher education institution. 17K122 is not a charter school.

17K122 would provide approximately 100-125 ninth-grade seats next year, and approximately 400-450 seats in 2014-2015 at full scale. Similarly, the re-siting of the Academy for Health Careers in K625 is intended to provide a much-needed high-quality educational option for students in the community. The Academy for Health Careers would serve approximately 400-450 students in grades 9-12 when it reaches full scale in 2013-2014. The co-location of 17K122 and the Academy for Health Careers will more than offset the approximately 651 seats that Paul Robeson High School will lose once it is fully phased-out.

With regard to comment 7, the Panel for Educational Policy is scheduled to vote on this proposal at its March 1, 2011 meeting. This Analysis is provided to the Panel for Educational Policy, which consists of 13 appointed members and the Chancellor, prior to its vote on the proposal.

Comment 9 is not related to the proposal and therefore does not require a response.

In response to comments 10 and 11, the proposed new school, 17K122, would be open to students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process and would have a Limited Unscreened admissions method, offering priority to students or residents of Brooklyn. The Academy for Health Careers also admits students through the Limited Unscreened admissions method, offering priority to Brooklyn students or residents. Limited Unscreened schools give admissions priority to students who demonstrate interest in the school by attending an Information Session, Open House events, or visiting the school's exhibit at any one of the High School Fairs.

### **Changes Made to the Proposal**

No changes have been made to this proposal.