



### **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: February 28, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Temporary Co-Location of 24Q585 with Queens Metropolitan High School, (28Q686), Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School (28Q167), and a District 75 School (P233Q) in School Building Q686

Date of Panel Vote: March 1, 2011

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### **Summary of Proposal**

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) proposes to temporarily site a new high school, 24Q585, in school building Q686 (“Q686”), which opened in September 2010 at 91-30 Metropolitan Ave., Forest Hills, NY 11375, within the geographical confines of Community School District 28. If this proposal is approved, this school would be co-located with an existing high school, Queens Metropolitan High School (28Q686, “Queens Metropolitan”), an existing 6-12 school Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School (28Q167, “Metropolitan Expeditionary”), and an existing District 75 school (“P233Q@Q686”). A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Queens Metropolitan and Metropolitan Expeditionary are both new schools currently in their first year of operation. Queens Metropolitan is a zoned high school currently serving students in grade 9 and is expected to reach its full scale of grades 9-12 in 2013-2014. Metropolitan Expeditionary is currently a District 28 choice middle school serving students in grades 6 and 7 and is expected to reach its full scale in 2015-2016 when it will serve grades 6-12. P233Q@686 is a new site of an existing District 75 school and serves students in grades 6-12. P233Q@686 is expected to reach its full scale enrollment in 2011-2012.

24Q585 will be a new DOE public high school, serving grades 9 through 12 at full scale. It would be permanently sited in Building Q585, which is located at 54-40 74th St, Queens, NY 11378, within the geographical confines of Community School District 24. Q585 is scheduled for occupation in September 2012. If this proposal is approved, 24Q585 would be temporarily co-located in Q686 with Queens Metropolitan, Metropolitan Expeditionary, and P233@Q686 as it awaits the completion of Q585 for the 2011-2012 school year. In September 2012, 24Q585 would be re-located to its long-term site at Q585. Although the construction is still on schedule for a September 2012 opening, if the building is not ready, any proposal to extend or expand

24Q585's co-location in Q686 or move 24Q585 to a building other than Q585 would be the subject of a subsequent Educational Impact Statement ("EIS").

24Q585 is proposed to have a Limited Unscreened admissions method, with priority given to students attending school or residing in District 24, and secondary priority given to students and residents of Queens. 24Q585 would gradually phase in by adding one grade per academic year beginning with a ninth grade cohort and would reach its full scale of grades 9-12 in 2014-15.

The details of this proposal are available in an EIS which can be accessed here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010-2011/Mar12011Proposals.htm>.

Hard copies of the EIS are also available in the main offices of each of the schools in Q686.

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

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at Q686 on February 9, 2011. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 150 members of the public attended the hearing and 40 people spoke. Present at the meeting were: Community Education Council ("CEC") 24 President Nick Comaianni; CEC 28 representatives Kathryn Thome and Emily Ades; Queens Metropolitan School Leadership Team ("SLT") members Marci Levy-Maguire and Debra Zampelli; Metropolitan Expeditionary SLT members Kathy Reddy, Julie Gomez and Helayne Birnbaum; P233Q SLT member Nancy Newman; Councilwoman Karen Koslowitz; Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley; Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi; representatives from the offices of Assemblyman Michael Miller and Assemblywoman Margaret Markey; Panel for Educational Policy member Dmytro Fedkowskyj and Superintendent Juan Mendez.

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

1. CEC 28 expressed concerns about incubating a school in the building, stating that it is not in the best interests of District 28. The CEC felt that the EIS focuses only on building utilization and not on impact, and does not guarantee that Q585 will be completed by 2012. As stated in the EIS, if construction is not completed on schedule, a new EIS would be required to change the siting plan; however, 24Q585's enrollment numbers listed in the EIS are not a guaranteed limit. The Q686 building was only designed to house three schools, and CEC 28 believed that an additional school would compromise the existing schools and community with extra traffic and congestion. CEC further stated that the goals of these new schools—academic rigor, personalization, and community partnerships—would be compromised for the short-term goal of opening this new school in the coming school year.
2. CEC 24 expressed support for the incubation, provided it does not interfere with schools currently in Q686. CEC 24 believes there is enough space in the building to accommodate 24Q585. CEC 24 also remarked that, at this time, the School Construction Authority ("SCA") does not foresee any delays in construction for 2012 opening.

3. The Queens Metropolitan SLT representative expressed opposition to the proposal and stated that it seems to be a “done deal” because it has been in the media already. They expressed skepticism about the plan because the schools already in the building understood that they would have time to roll out the school growth and ensure success. The SLT also expressed disappointment that the construction of Q686 was not 100% complete as promised—doorknobs and security cameras were not provided—and stated that, as a result, it is difficult to assume that 24Q585’s new building will be ready for occupancy on time. The Queens Metropolitan SLT believes that future 24Q585 parents should be forewarned about these lingering construction issues. The SLT expressed support for the staff and principal. The SLT also asked for several items:
  - a. Security cameras to be installed on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors
  - b. More security agents in the building
  - c. Security staff for the booth on the grounds
  - d. Principal collaboration in advance of the co-location to ensure that there is minimal impact on students in September
  - e. Promises in writing that the items requested above will be addressed and accountability from the DOE, the Chancellor and the Mayor
4. The Metropolitan Expeditionary SLT representative expressed opposition to the proposal, citing concerns about the vagueness of the EIS and the statement that the co-location won’t impact current students. The SLT stated that the schools currently in Q686 were promised the opportunity to grow in the building and this promise has been broken less than one year later. The SLT requested that the following items be clarified before the March 1 Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) vote:
  - a. Term of incubation needs to be one year only, and must be clearly limited and enforced
  - b. There needs to be a defined enrollment cap for the new school, which is enforceable and dependable for planning purposes
  - c. DOE needs to create a plan for resource sharing, maintenance and budget issues that is approved by the impacted schools
5. The P233Q SLT representative stated that they are tired of kids being “pushed around” by the Mayor and the Chancellor; they waited seven years for appropriate facilities and refuse to give up any space for anyone, particularly for a school that might not have its own building completed on time. The representative stated that her child is finally eating lunch at a decent hour, unlike in previous shared spaces, and must be in school until the child is 21. Many things have been taken away from District 75 programs, and despite promises that they would be returned, that has not been the case. If this proposal is indeed a done deal, the P233Q SLT will ensure that no space is taken away from the District 75 program.
6. Assembly member Hevesi expressed frustration with the process and stated that he does not accept that the decision to implement the proposal has already been made. He demanded that the co-location last for one year only and also demanded the removal of the provision in the EIS that another EIS can be issued to extend the duration of 24Q585’s co-location in Q686. He represents both District 24 and 28 and understands

the overcrowding challenges they face. If the temporary co-location is implemented properly, District 24 could benefit significantly, but decisions regarding shared space should be driven by principals, not the DOE, and a list of concerns, including the building, security, and construction should be addressed. Due to the budget cuts, he has little confidence that Q585 will be completed on time, and existing schools in Q686 should not be jeopardized.

7. Assembly member Koslowitz stated that she has been fighting for Queens Metropolitan and Metropolitan Expeditionary since 1993; there was supposed to be one new school for District 24 and one for District 28 located in the building. Over time, plans were changed while she wasn't in office. If the proposed incubation goes over one year, she believes that there won't be enough room in Q686 and she will not accept it. The DOE has projected that 250 students would enroll at Queens Metropolitan during 2010-2011, but that school enrolled 439 students.
8. Council member Elizabeth Crowley felt that the joint public hearing was taking place too late in the process; she believed that the DOE should have held a meeting when the idea of the co-location was first formed, but is not surprised because she feels that the DOE does things last minute and now must rush to fill the new school without advertising. New schools like Queens Metropolitan have some issues that are still being worked out, like traffic or curriculum; unfortunately most new schools have time to develop without a new school coming in making things more difficult. However, she acknowledged that District 24 is the most crowded district in the City. The DOE promised the community the opportunity to interview new leaders. However, the proposed 25Q585 principal was introduced at last CEC meeting and the community did not have an opportunity to get feel for other applicants; so there is a feeling that promises from DOE are not always kept, and the community and impacted people not taken into account. She asked the DOE to consider sending 24Q585 students to Queens Metropolitan for one year to address overcrowding without setting up a whole new school and administration. She further stated that a number of families were not able to enroll their students in Queens Metropolitan, so if that school were opened to more District 24 students, it would ease overcrowding. She also proposed that the DOE incubate 24Q585's 9th grade at I.S. 73 for one year. Both Queens Metropolitan and 24Q585 need to start off with a good reputation that community believes in so that students want to attend. Council member Crowley also insisted that the proposed co-location must be guaranteed to be one year only.
9. Multiple commenters expressed opposition to the proposal, stating that the DOE had promised the existing schools in Q686 the time and space to grow, that the building was made for only three schools, and that having an additional organization in the building would be detrimental to academics and school culture.
10. Multiple commenters expressed unqualified support for Metropolitan Expeditionary, citing the fact that teachers create their own materials instead of relying on textbooks, and stating that the school has the potential to become a model in the City; they felt that adding a new school to the building would undermine the school's success and growth.

11. Multiple commenters raised concerns about safety, traffic and congestion. In particular, in their opinion, Metropolitan Avenue is dangerous and needs another crosswalk as well as a crossing guard. These commenters believe that several hundred new high school students would exacerbate these traffic and congestion issues.
12. Multiple commenters, including several students, stated that they had concerns about bullying if middle school and high school students were to come into contact frequently; some commenters stated that any co-located ninth-grade students should be housed on the high school side of the building.
13. Multiple commenters raised concerns about how resources such as gym equipment, musical instruments and smartboards would be shared with the incubating school, and how the incubating school would contribute in case of wear or damage to shared resources.
14. Multiple commenters cited the fact that Queens Metropolitan was supposed to enroll 250 students this year, but received over 400.
15. A commenter stated that she doesn't understand "under-utilization." She wanted to know about utilization of space in the district office and in Tweed. She stated that construction may be easy, but educating children is hard.
16. A commenter queried whether the ninth graders from the incubating school would have a dress code, since current students must follow one.
17. Multiple commenters perceived the EIS as vague and concerned more with space than on educational impact, and expressed concern that a new EIS can be issued later to extend the co-location.
18. Multiple commenters expressed concern that the co-location could be longer than one year.
19. Multiple commenters stated that the new school does not yet exist; therefore, students cannot be impacted. They would have to change locations after only one year. The school should wait a year to open so its building is ready; the Queens Metropolitan and Metropolitan Expeditionary community waited for many years for their school building to open.
20. A commenter stated that the DOE espoused the importance of separating sixth graders from high school students and growing enrollment slowly when creating the schools currently in the building, but now that is being abandoned.
21. Multiple commenters stated that the district typically opposes truncations of K-6 schools to K-5 schools because of the impact on sixth graders, and research supports this. The DOE previously acknowledged this, but stated that this concern was unfounded with respect to Metropolitan Expeditionary, which will serve grades 6-12, because middle schoolers would be co-located with high schoolers who had grown with the schools and the existing culture. Sending a large group of new 24Q585 ninth graders to Q686 would be detrimental.
22. A commenter stated that the DOE had previously denied requests to increase enrollment at Metropolitan Expeditionary because it would have an adverse effect on the learning environment. The DOE promised not to add more students and schools to the building for this reason.
23. A commenter stated that the building needs more safety agents. Right now it has four, but it was supposed to have nine. There is not enough supervision for existing students. Also, an additional nurse is needed to support all schools.

24. A commenter asked what the DOE would do to ensure construction of the Q585 is completed on time.
25. A commenter asked others to stop referring to potential 24Q585 students as “them” and telling their children that the co-location will cause problems; opposition to the proposal is fine but divisiveness is unnecessary.
26. Multiple commenters stated that they had heard or felt that a decision was already made. Multiple commenters reported hearing about the co-location on NY1. One commenter had received a flyer about the possible new school, but that it was sent home with his/her elementary school student, not his/her high school student, and this was disrespectful to parents. Another commenter received a letter saying that 24Q585 was available as a choice in the building.
27. A commenter stated that 24Q585 parents and students should be forewarned that there will be outstanding construction issues when the building opens and the DOE will try to co-locate another school in that building.
28. Multiple commenters stated that Q686 was not 100% complete in September and there are outstanding issues related to security cameras.
29. A commenter stated that he feels that the DOE does not put children first and that the co-location is unfair to the future 24Q585 students, as well as existing students in Q686.
30. A commenter stated that Metropolitan Expeditionary currently serves a diverse population of students with various needs, which are accommodated by customizing the experience for each student, which is only possible because it's a small school. The small schools movement is a positive trend, but by incubating 24Q585 in the building, it would turn three small schools into one big school, which undermines the movement and the schools themselves.
31. A commenter expressed concern that the co-location would lead to overcrowding down the road, and that the City government continues to make decisions without considering impact.
32. A commenter stated that she is a supporter of 24Q585 and that this is the first time she heard that a 6-12 school will be created.
33. A commenter stated that there is good culture in the schools of District 24 and there is potential for the sharing of space to be positive for all involved.
34. Multiple commenters expressed support for proposal, but only under the “best” conditions.
35. A commenter expressed support for the proposal, citing overcrowding issues in District 24, and noting an example of a successful co-location between P.S. 290 and I.S. 73, which house students of varying ages as well. Security and scheduling issues can be managed by effective principals working together.
36. A commenter expressed support for the proposal, stating that a group of students would miss out on this opportunity by delaying a year, and there is space in the building for this temporary plan.

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

The DOE received seven written comments regarding this proposal.

37. The Queens Metropolitan SLT commented that they have worked hard despite challenges of starting a new school in a building that was not completely finished in September, and that they fear that the additional burden of a co-location will undermine their success to date. They are specifically concerned about the following issues:
  - a. Safety and Security
  - b. Utilization of space on campus
  - c. Protection of school property and technology
  - d. The community's ability to support so many students
38. CEC 28 stated that the EIS does not adequately address the impact of a fourth school in the building. There is no guarantee that the school under construction will be completed in time, or that enrollment plans can be counted upon. The added burden of extra students would compromise existing schools as well as the community due to traffic and congestion. The long-term goals of existing schools should not be compromised for this short-term goal, and therefore the incubation is not in the best interests of District 28.
39. Councilwoman Karen Koslowitz submitted a letter signed by Councilwoman Elizabeth Crowley, Assemblyman Andrew Hevesi and Assemblyman Michael Miller, stating that they have worked hard to get the Q686 campus set up, insisting that the co-location must be guaranteed to be one year only, and stated that certain topics must be addressed:
  - a. Space usage for the schools
  - b. Improvement to MTA bus access to the area
  - c. Arrival and dismissal times
  - d. Culture of existing schools and students
40. Multiple commenters stated that the EIS does not adequately address the proposal's impact on education, and should address the physical, social, environmental and administrative strategies that would be put in place, including what would happen if Maspeth's new building is not ready in time and a guaranteeing an enrollment limit.
41. A commenter stated that adding these new students will exacerbate traffic and safety concerns.
42. A commenter expressed concerns about wear and tear on the building and resources, and the lack of motivation for 24Q585 to respect the facilities when they are leaving.
43. Multiple commenters wondered what will happen if the construction of Q585 is not completed on time, and sought assurances that the DOE is ensuring that it is done.
44. A commenter stated that the existing schools on the campus are potential models of excellence and it would be unfortunate to derail those efforts for a short-term goal.
45. A commenter felt that the joint public hearing on this proposal was a fraud and that the DOE has already planned for the 24Q585 ninth graders to attend Q686 in September.
46. A commenter stated that the PEP does not put children first, but votes unanimously in favor of the Mayor's plans. The PEP's commitment to "safety and mutual respect for all" should guarantee the appropriate implementation of existing schools' plans and allow schools to grow and thrive, building stable learning communities as promised.
47. A commenter stated that the stability of all schools involved would be threatened by the co-location, and that the schools would be unsupported.
48. A commenter stated that due to Dmytro Fedkowskyj's membership on Community Board 5, which includes Maspeth, his former role on Community Education Council for District

24, and his residence in Middle Village, he has a conflict of interest and should abstain from voting on this proposal.

**The DOE received a few comments and a question that did not directly relate to the proposal and therefore will not be addressed.**

49. A commenter wondered which PEP members have children in public school in New York City.
50. A commenter requested a bike rack for students.
51. A commenter stated that the proposal pits neighborhood against neighborhood unfairly in order to confuse the issue and push through the DOE's agenda.
52. A commenter stated that the DOE and SCA should not jump from project to project without finishing them.
53. A commenter stated that they were exhausted by having to fight with the DOE for decent options, and that the DOE has not supported the SLT and its role in decision-making in existing elementary schools, and that they are unhappy with the DOE's focus on test preparation.
54. One commenter stated that the building has heating issues and on some days it is 58 degrees in some places.
55. A commenter stated that District 24 should be aware of the broken promises and unexpected issues that were experienced at Q686; the commenter believe that good principals do make difference, but they shouldn't have to deal with another set of concerns.
56. A commenter stated that since the DOE is contemplating laying off teachers for budget reasons, including at the Metropolitan Campus, it should refrain from incubating new schools and instead should focus on supporting existing schools.

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

Comments 2, 32, 33, 34, 35, and 36 are all in support of the proposal and do not require a response.

With regard to comment 5, P233Q@Q686 will not lose any space as a result of this proposal. As indicated on p. 8 of the EIS, P233Q@Q686 is allocated 22 rooms in the building (14 full-size and 8 half-size) and there is no anticipated change to its allocation of space in 2011-2012. If the proposal to co-locate new school 24Q585 is approved, that school will be allocated a baseline of 7-9 full-size spaces plus administrative space consistent with the Citywide Instructional Footprint (the "Footprint"). This means that Queens Metropolitan, Metropolitan Expeditionary, P233Q@686 and 24Q585 would be allocated a baseline of 60-62 full-size rooms in 2011-2012, leaving an excess 19-21 full-size spaces in the building. These excess spaces shall be allocated equitably among the co-located schools in conjunction with the Building Council, consisting of the principals from all co-located schools, and the Office of Space Planning. In determining an equitable allocation, the DOE may consider factors such as the relative enrollments of the co-

located schools, the instructional and programmatic needs of the co-located schools, and the physical location of the excess space within the building. In response to the concern about lunch schedules, specific decisions regarding the scheduling of shared spaces would be made by the Building Council in conjunction with the DOE Office of Space Planning.

In response to comments 1, 3(d), 9, 10, 20, 37(b), 38, 39(a) and (d), 44, and 47 the DOE continues its commitment to supporting all of the existing schools in Q686 as they phase in. The temporary co-location of 24Q585 is not expected to jeopardize student learning outcomes or undermine the successes of the existing schools in Q686. There is sufficient space in Q686 to accommodate all three existing schools as well as the new school. 24Q585 will be allocated a baseline of 7-9 full-size spaces plus administrative space during the 2011-2012 school year. As stated above and in the EIS, there will be 19-21 full-size spaces in excess of each school's respective baseline allocation pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint. Although the schools currently in Q686 may be receiving slightly fewer rooms in 2011-2012 if this proposal is implemented, they will still each receive rooms in excess of their baseline allocations. In addition, to ensure that the transition is not disruptive to current students in the building, the DOE has asked the Principals of Metropolitan Expeditionary, Queens Metropolitan and P223Q to present their proposal for the location in the building best suited for the new school. The DOE is looking forward to reviewing that proposal and the Office of Space Planning and the Office of Portfolio Planning will work with the current Building Council regarding the final placement of the new school in the building for the 2011-2012 school year. If the proposal to co-locate 24Q585 is approved by the Panel for Education Policy, the building enrollment in 2011-2012 would be 1,250-1,385, yielding a building utilization rate of 72%.

In response to comment 7, concerning the timeline for the temporary co-location, the DOE is only proposing a one year temporary co-location of Maspeth High School in Building Q686 for the 2011-2012 school year.

In response to the comment regarding the Community School District each school in Q686 is intended to serve: Queens Metropolitan is a zoned high school encompassing parts of District 24 and parts of District 28. Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning is a 6-12 school that is open to middle school students through the District 28 Middle School choice process and high school students through the High School Admissions Process. These two schools add approximately 1,700 new seats in grades 6-12. The Maspeth High School that will open in 2012 in District 24 will provide approximately 1000 new high school seats to the community.

In response to comments 7 and 14, concerning the the number of students Queens Metropolitan serves, that school is intended to serve approximately 1000 students in grades 9-12, with approximately 250 students per grade. Last year, the DOE heard concerns from community members and elected officials that the Q686 would be empty for too long if there were only 250 Queens Metropolitan ninth graders in the building in the first year. Therefore, in consultation with the community, the DOE increased the target enrollment to 350 ninth grade Queens Metropolitan students for the 2010-2011 school year only to more fully utilize the building. The DOE worked to create a zone size for Queens Metropolitan that would result in about 250 students enrolling per year, and this is the target for new 9th grade seats in the 2011-2012 school year.

In response to the concern that Queens Metropolitan was over-enrolled this year: the DOE received a large number of applications to attend Queens Metropolitan for the 2010-2011 school year. Students who applied to the school were matched through the High School Admissions Process. However, many students who were zoned to the school did not submit a High School Choice application during the designated admissions period. Towards the end of the year, many of the students zoned to the school who had not previously applied decided to attend Queens Metropolitan. Because students entitled to seats did not apply until after the main round of high school admissions, Queens Metropolitan enrolled more students than originally projected. The DOE will work closely to monitor the enrollment of Queens Metropolitan to ensure the school is not overenrolled in its second year.

In response to comment 8 regarding enrolling students who would have attended 24Q585 in Queens Metropolitan instead, this alternative proposal would not address overcrowding concerns. If these students enrolled in Queens Metropolitan instead of 24Q585, they would have the right to remain at Queens Metropolitan in the following year (and through the course of their high school career), which could create challenges for Queens Metropolitan as the school would be serving more students than intended. Allowing 24Q585 to develop as a separate school will enable it to create a cohesive culture and climate and to establish important routines. Furthermore, the DOE is committed to opening a separate high school to broaden the range of options in Queens.

With regard to the alternative proposal to site the new school at I.S. 73 in building Q073, that building does not have the available space necessary to accommodate 200 students, the intended enrollment of the new school. Starting this year, P.S. 290, which is currently incubating in Q873 with a Kindergarten class, will be phasing in to Q073 during the 2011-2012 school year.

In response to comments 11, 38, 39(b) and (c), 37(d) and 41 regarding safety and congestion, the DOE will work with the Building Council to develop a plan for arrival and dismissal times across the schools in order to ensure safety for all students in the building. The DOE will also work with the MTA so that they are aware of the increase in the number of students who will be traveling to and from the school every day.

In response to 4(b), Q585 is projected to serve between 175-225 ninth grade students during the 2011-2012 school year. The Office of Planning will work closely with Student Enrollment to ensure that the number of incoming students falls within this range.

In response to comments 4(c), 13, 37(c) and 42, regarding the use of shared resources and 24Q585's treatment of Q686's facilities during its incubation, as in other situations where schools are co-located, the schools would need to share certain large common and specialty rooms in the building, such as the gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria. Specific decisions regarding the allocation of the shared spaces would be made by the Building Council, consisting of the principals from all co-located schools, in conjunction with the DOE Office of Space Planning. The DOE is committed to working with and supporting the new principal in the building to ensure that the students enrolled at 24Q585 will follow the same building-wide procedures around the use of shared space and resources that current students in Q686 are expected to follow.

With regard to comment 12, the Office of Youth Development (OSYD) supports schools in maintaining a safe, orderly and supportive school environment. OSYD works with CFN Clusters and Networks and directly with schools to establish and implement integrated safety, discipline and intervention policies and procedures, to promote respect for diversity, and to nurture students' pro-social behavior by providing them with meaningful opportunities for social emotional learning. We encourage all schools to seek support from OSYD to address any issues involving safety and bullying.

With regard to the physical location of the new school in the building, as discussed above, the DOE has asked the Principals of all three schools currently in the building to identify the location in Q686 best suited to the new school. We look forward to reviewing their proposal and working with them to determine an appropriate location for the school.

With regard to comment 15 about how underutilized space is identified: detailed information about the capacity, enrollment and utilization of every building is available in the Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (the "Blue Book"), which is available at [http://source.nycsca.org/pdf/capitalplan/2009-10/BB\\_2009\\_2010.pdf](http://source.nycsca.org/pdf/capitalplan/2009-10/BB_2009_2010.pdf)), and which guides decision-making about proposed co-location.

As described in the EIS, a building's target utilization rate is calculated by dividing the aggregated enrollment of all the school organizations in the building by the aggregated "target capacities" of those organizations. Each school organization's "target capacity" is calculated based upon the scheduled use of individual rooms as reported by principals during an annual facilities survey, the DOE's goal classroom capacities (which are aspirational targets lower than the UFT contractual class sizes and differ depending on grade level), and the efficiency with which classrooms are programmed (i.e., the frequency with which classes are scheduled in a given classroom). As indicated in the EIS, if this proposal were implemented, Q686 will have an estimated utilization rate of 72%. Again, the DOE does not anticipate that this temporary co-location will compromise the educational outcomes of the students currently enrolled in the existing schools.

In response to comment 16, the decision to enforce a dress code at 24Q585 will be made by the school community and administration. The DOE does not require schools to exercise a dress code policy.

In response to comments 1, 4(a), 6, 17 18, 24, 38, 40, and 43, regarding the duration of 24Q585's co-location at Q686 and the timely completion of Q585, as discussed in the EIS, the DOE does not anticipate that the new school will be co-located in building Q686 for more than one year. Construction of Q585 is on track for completion prior to the commencement of the 2012-2013 school year and the DOE does not anticipate that any budget cuts which may be implemented for the next fiscal year will impact completion of this building. However, in the highly unlikely event that Q585 is not completed as scheduled, the DOE reserves the right to reassess the available space in Q686 as well as other underutilized buildings in Queens to identify an alternative siting option for 24Q585. Any change to the initial proposal will be the subject of a future Educational Impact Statement. The DOE will take every step necessary to work with the SCA to ensure the project is completed on schedule.

In response to comments 19 and 29, which propose delaying the opening of 24Q585 until Q585 is completed and express concern over the impact of the proposal on 24Q585 students, the DOE feels that proceeding with co-location is in the best interests of District 24 as a whole, and future 24Q585 students. District 24 is currently experiencing significant overcrowding in its high schools. In order to provide access to additional seats as soon as possible, the DOE is proposing to utilize the available space in Q686 so that rising ninth grade students will have an opportunity to attend the new school in 2011-2012 instead of waiting until the building is completed in 2012-2013. This will also minimize the overcrowding in many of the schools in District 24.

Comments 20, 21, and 42 raise concerns about middle school students sharing space with high school age students. There are close to a dozen multi-school campuses in Queens housing 6-12 grade spans. These schools operate successfully and have been able to maintain a safe learning environment for all students. As stated previously, the DOE will work with the principals of the existing schools to identify an ideal location for the new school to be housed to ensure younger students will feel safe in the building.

With regard to comment 22, this proposal does not contemplate a long-term increase in Q686's anticipated building enrollment, as the request to permanently increase Metropolitan Expeditionary's enrollment did. This proposal only contemplates slightly increasing building's enrollment during the 2011-2012 school year.

With regard to comment 30, although the overall building enrollment will increase slightly at Q686 during the 2011-2012 with the addition of the new school, this should have no impact on classroom instruction or the learning environment in the other co-located schools.

With regard to comments 3(a), (b) and (c), 23 and 37(a), school safety agents are allocated to schools based on the building's projected enrollment. The building currently has 6 safety agents. As the campus grows, it is likely that there will be a commensurate increase of agents. The NYPD/SSD looks at a set of variables to determine the number of agents to deploy, including the crime rate, size and design of building, enrollment, and grade span.

In response to comments 3(a) and 28, SCA's Chief Project Officer for Queens had indicated the contractors are scheduled to return to the building to install 17 cameras on poles around the campus perimeter. The contractor will also address any outstanding issues relating to the cameras inside the building.

Comments 3, 6, 26 and 45 raise concerns around the timeline for the DOE's decision making process and express the concern that the proposal is a "done deal." A flyer advertising the proposed new school was distributed to middle school parents during the week on February 7<sup>th</sup> to begin developing awareness of the school and to provide 8<sup>th</sup> grade students an opportunity to apply to the school should it be approved by the Panel for Educational Policy. This proposal cannot be implemented until it has been approved by the PEP, which has not yet voted on it. On February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 a joint public hearing was held to solicit community feedback. This feedback will be presented to the Panel members in advance of the March 1<sup>st</sup> vote to inform their decision on this proposal.

With regard to comment 27, as of now there is no plan to site an additional school organization in the building with 24Q585 when it moves to Q585. However, the DOE assesses underutilized space in buildings across the city on an annual basis. Any future decision regarding the utilization of available space in building Q585 would be outlined in an Educational Impact Statement.

Comment 31 suggests that there will be overcrowding as a result of the co-location. As stated in the EIS, if the proposal to co-locate 24Q585 is approved, the building enrollment in 2011-2012 would be 1,250-1,385, representing a building utilization rate of 72%. In addition, there is expected to be 19-21 full-size rooms in excess of each school's baseline allocation pursuant to the Footprint in the building.

With regard to comment 40, which suggests that the EIS does not adequately address the proposal's impact on education, and should address the physical, social, environmental and administrative strategies that would be put in place: the impact of the proposal on affected students, schools, and the community is, in fact, outlined in section three of the EIS. This section describes both the anticipated impact on current and future students with respect to partnerships, extracurricular activities, enrollment, and academic offerings.

In response to comment 46, the PEP consists of 13 appointed members and the Chancellor. Each borough president appoints one member and the mayor appoints the remaining eight. The Chancellor serves as an ex-officio non-voting member. The PEP carefully reviews each proposal before making a decision regarding a significant change in the utilization of a building. Feedback on each proposal, including testimony provided during joint public hearings, is submitted to panel members prior to each vote to inform the final decision.

In response to comment 48, decisions concerning the recusal of a PEP member from voting on a particular proposal must be made by the individual panel member. The DOE will forward this comment to Mr. Fedkowskyj for his consideration.

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

No changes have been made to this proposal.