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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION – DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**

**Expansion and Re-siting
of Central Park East II
Grades 6-8 in Building M108**

January 23, 2015

5:30pm

1 [START OPP_MASTER_AUDIO__PA_FEED_.MP3]

2 SUPERINTENDANT ALEXANDRA ESTRELLA: Good
3 evening, we are going to begin. Before we
4 provide you with an overview of the hearing
5 process, we're going to take a moment to
6 introduce ourselves. Naomi, you want to start?

7 PRINCIPAL NAOMI SMITH: Naomi Smith,
8 Principal Central Park East II. Good evening,
9 everyone.

10 PRINCIPAL GRYSSELE MACHICOTE: Good evening,
11 everyone, and welcome. Principal Gryssele
12 Machicote of PS 108. Bienvenidos. [Spanish -
13 00:00:55]

14 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: Good evening,
15 Alexandra Estrella, Superintendent of District
16 4. Happy Friday.

17 MS. LAURA LUGO-RIVERA: Hello. Laura Lugo-
18 Rivera, CEC 4 Representative.

19 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: So, I'm going to
20 start off by giving you an overview of the
21 hearing process. This is a joint public hearing
22 of the Department of Education, Community
23 Education Council, and the School Leadership
24 Team for the proposed grade expansion of Central
25 Park East II, also known as CPE II, from K-5 to

1 K-8. And the proposed co-location of CPE II's
2 middle school grades with PS 108 Assemblyman
3 Angelo Del Toro - also known as PS 108 and
4 Building M108 - beginning in the 2015-2016
5 school year. I am Superintendent Alexandra
6 Estrella. We have asked the District 4
7 Community Education Council and the School
8 Leadership Team of CPE II and PS 108 to
9 participate in this joint public hearing. I am
10 joined tonight by PS 108's Principal Gryssele
11 Machicote, CPE II Principal Naomi Smith, and
12 Laura Lugo-Rivera, representing the District 4
13 Community Education Council. This hearing is
14 being audio- and video-recorded. If anyone
15 needs translation at this point, please make
16 sure to come to my right. Interpreters are here
17 with devices for your support.

18 [Crosstalk]

19 INTERPRETERS: Buenos Noches - -. [Spanish -
20 00:2:52 to 00:03:05]

21 [Foreign Language - 00:03:05 to 3:45]

22 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: So the purpose of
23 this hearing is for you to provide comments
24 about the proposal. Before I describe the
25 proposal, I want to make sure you are aware of

1 the opportunity to provide your input. All
2 those who will wish to speak must sign up in the
3 speaker sign-up area located just outside the
4 auditorium. The sign-up list will close in 15
5 minutes. Speakers will be given the floor in
6 the order that they signed up. All comments are
7 limited to two minutes. There may be elected
8 officials who arrive at different times
9 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak,
10 we will do our best to accommodate them at the
11 first opportune moment. Those who are here at
12 the start of the public comment segment will be
13 asked to speak first. All comments will be
14 mentioned in the analysis of public comment to
15 be published and provided to the Panel of
16 Education Policy on the evening before the panel
17 votes. That vote is scheduled for January 29th,
18 2015. In addition, we welcome any comments and
19 feedback you may have at any time before the
20 panel votes on this proposal. The email address
21 and the phone number where comments may be made
22 are d04proposals@schools.nyc.gov and 212-374-
23 3466. We're going to provide you now with a
24 summary of the proposal. CPE II is an existing
25 non-zoned district elementary school that serves

1 students kindergarten through 5th grade and
2 offers a pre-kinder program. CPE II is co-
3 located with PS 171 Patrick Henry, also known as
4 04M171 in building M171, located at 19 East
5 103rd Street, New York, New York, 10029 in
6 District 4. Under this proposal, CPE II will
7 expand to serve students in kindergarten through
8 8th grade while retaining its pre-kinder
9 program. Due to insufficient space to house CPE
10 II's middle school grades in building M171, the
11 DOE proposes to co-locate CPE II's new middle
12 school grades with PS 108 in building M108.
13 This means that CPE II will be split-sited, such
14 that CPE II's elementary grades will remain in
15 building M171, while the school's middle school
16 grades will be served in building M108.
17 Building M108, also in District 4, is located at
18 1615 Madison Avenue, New York, New York, 10029,
19 approximately 0.3 miles north of building M171,
20 CPE II's current site. PS 108, the school with
21 which CPE II would be co-located in building
22 M108, currently serves students in kindergarten
23 through 8th grade, with one section of a full-
24 day pre-K kindergarten program. PS 108 is a
25 zoned elementary school and has screened

1 admissions for its middle school program.

2 Under this proposal, beginning in the 2015-2016

3 school year, CPE II will serve 6th grade in

4 building M108. CPE II will add one grade each

5 year until the 2017-2018 school year when the

6 school will reach full-scale, serving students

7 in 6th through 8th grade in M108, while

8 continuing to serve pre-kinder and elementary

9 students in building M171. During the current

10 2014-2015 school year, building M108 serves 626

11 students, yielding a building utilization rate

12 of 80%. If this proposal is approved, when CPE

13 II becomes co-located in building M108 and

14 reaches full-scale in the 2017-2018 school year,

15 the school will serve approximately 150 to 180

16 students in 6th through 8th grades. At that

17 time, all the building will serve approximately

18 683 to 803 students from both CPE II and PS 108,

19 resulting in a projected utilization rate of 88%

20 to 103%. Although the projected utilization

21 rate may exceed 100%, CPE II and PS 108 will

22 receive at least their baseline allocation of

23 space pursuant to the citywide instructional

24 footprint. The DOE believes that there is

25 sufficient space to accommodate CPE II's middle

1 school grades and PS 108 in building M108 if
2 this proposal is approved. The DOE believes
3 that this proposal will benefit the District 4
4 community by providing a strong middle school
5 option. This proposal will enable CPE II's
6 elementary students to continue their education
7 in the school through 8th grade. In addition,
8 the co-location of CPE II with PS 108 will
9 provide opportunities for the two schools to
10 share resources and collaborate on how best to
11 serve their respective middle school population
12 in building M108. At this time I'm going to
13 move on to the next presenter, will be Ms. Laura
14 Lugo of the CEC.

15 MS. LUGO-RIVERA: Good evening. I've had
16 the opportunity to speak with parents from both
17 sides, and at this point at the CEC, we really
18 don't see anything wrong with this joint
19 hearing, or with the co-location taking place.
20 The main concern from 108 has just been in
21 regards to very minute things as far as uniforms
22 and shared spaces, but I'm pretty sure with the
23 collaboration and with the partnership, we could
24 definitely make this work out. And if there's
25 any other further questions or comments for the

1 CEC, feel free to email them at
2 cec4@schools.nyc.gov. Thank you.

3 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: At this time I
4 would like to ask the SLT representatives from
5 both schools to please come up and introduce
6 themselves, and if they wish to speak they may
7 do so as well. No, the representatives.

8 MS. AMANDA WALSH: Good evening, I'm Amanda
9 Walsh. I'm PS 108's UFT chapter leader and SLT
10 member. I'm also a teacher in the school, in PS
11 108 - 6th grade science and 7th grade math.

12 MS. VANESSA MILLER: Hi, I'm Vanessa Miller.
13 I am the Chapter Leader at CPE II. I teach
14 kindergarten and 1st grade there. I'd just like
15 to say that we're all looking forward to
16 collaborating and working together as a
17 community, and that we hope this will be a
18 really positive transition.

19 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: So now we have
20 concluded the formal presentations. We will now
21 open the floor for public comments. Speakers
22 will be given the floor in the order that they
23 signed up. All comments are limited to two
24 minutes. Our first speaker is Cynthia Santiago.

25 MS. CYNTHIA SANTIAGO: Hi. Actually, Ms. -

1 -said that you guys spoke. I wasn't in the
2 last meeting, so I have a list of questions.
3 But I see that you said you spoke to both sides
4 of the parents in regards to some of my concerns
5 with this uniform policy. Because I believe - I
6 do have a middle schooler here in 108, yes, I'm
7 actually a parent at 108, by the way - and I do
8 also have two younger children, pre-K and 2nd.
9 And I know that, being an advocate for this
10 school for many, many years, I see that the
11 uniform policy has changed the attitude of all
12 our kids in the school, especially the middle
13 school because they focus more on their
14 education and not what they're wearing. So
15 that's one of my concerns to see if CPE will
16 definitely adhere to our uniform policy, whether
17 they choose to have a different color shirt.
18 But at least it's identifiable so if something
19 does happen, they can say oh, okay, that one has
20 PS 108 logo, or CP, whatever uniform policy it
21 is. If you guys adhere to it, that's something
22 that I would definitely want to look forward to
23 in regards to the middle school area. Another
24 concern was the safety of all our children, now
25 that we're going to have more children. At

1 first I didn't know that you guys were going
2 to start off at one year, which is at 6th grade.
3 I thought you were going to do the whole three
4 years in one shot, and I think that would be a
5 shock to all our students, especially the little
6 ones, because it's going to be just too much so
7 fast. So, again, reading the information that
8 was given to me afterwards, I think it is a good
9 idea that we do collaborate. And if you start
10 at one year, I think that's - I agree with that.
11 Another question would be for the CPE II
12 families will work with us, the parents, and the
13 staff to encourage and enforce, again, the rules
14 and regulations that we have enforced here. And
15 then, of course, any type of programs that they
16 bring, that we all collaborate as one, so that
17 the school is not seen as two - CPE and PS 108,
18 but of one whole school in general.

19 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: Thank you. Next
20 speaker, Andre Martel.

21 MR. ANDRE MARTEL: Hi guys. So, I am a
22 parent at CPE II. I'm also a teacher at CPE II,
23 and I was a teacher at PS 108, and I went to
24 school at PS 108, so there's a whole lot here.
25 I was actually going to read this letter from a

1 new student that we just got into the school
2 on Monday, and he showed up. So he actually
3 wants to read it, so I'm going to have Latrell
4 come down.

5 LATRELL: When I got to the school, I
6 thought it was - I usually wasn't picking up
7 books, now I like start picking up books. And I
8 did the letter, it says, "I think CPE II should
9 make a middle school because the school is
10 teaching kids how to read and do math. And if
11 they go to a different school, they may fall
12 behind. And as a student of CPE II, I feel I am
13 getting better in math and reading because of
14 CPE II teachers. That's why I want a middle
15 school, and I only been there for two days."

16 MR. MARTEL: So, I was actually going to
17 explain all that, but I don't need to because he
18 did it for us. I actually - I was talking to
19 Ms. Machicote when he came in, and I'm really
20 hoping that I could somehow be that positive
21 link since I was in the building before, and I'm
22 in the building over there now, and I think we
23 really can make this happen.

24 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: Next speaker,
25 Elizabeth Summons. Did I say it right? Simmons

1 - I'm horrible with names, I'm sorry.

2 MS. ELIZABETH SIMMONS: Hello, my name is
3 Elizabeth Simmons. I'm a parent at CPE II. I'm
4 also the PA president. This is kind of
5 spontaneous because I didn't really have
6 anything prepared, but basically what I would
7 say is we really are looking forward to being in
8 this space and collaborating with you. We
9 really want to be good neighbors. We are good
10 neighbors. We want to expand our community and
11 have - - as much as you want to - - in your
12 community and your events, so we're really
13 looking forward to working together and joining
14 together as a community. That's it. Thank you.

15 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: Carol Rodriguez -
16 -. Help me with your last name. Thank you.

17 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Hello, I'm a parent of - -
18 back there, and we're at CPE II. We're actually
19 new to the school - he's in kindergarten. The
20 reason we came, or tried to come and then
21 successfully did come to CPE II was specifically
22 because of their values and the philosophy that
23 it has, and I think it's unique to the city.
24 I'm actually not familiar with 103, so I can't -
25 or 108, 108, sorry - so I can't speak to the

1 philosophies there, but I do know that, for
2 me, having something built in for the future
3 just kind of for now, seeing forward until he's
4 13 or 14, for me brings so much peace and just
5 kind of really not having to look somewhere else
6 for the same things that I love about CPE II.
7 So we would love it, and it looks like
8 everyone's in support, so I'm just preaching to
9 the choir. Thank you.

10 SUPERINTENDENT ESTRELLA: Raquel Benoit.
11 Raquel, you wish to speak? You're passing? Oh.
12 The speaker list is now exhausted. Again, we
13 welcome any comments and feedback you may have
14 at any time before the Panel for Education
15 Policy votes on this proposal at its January
16 29th meeting. The email address and phone
17 number where comments may be made are
18 d04proposals@schools.nyc.gov and 212-374-3466.
19 Thank you for your participation. This joint
20 public hearing is now closed. Have a happy
21 Friday, everyone. Thank you for coming on a
22 Friday.

23 [END OPP_MASTER_AUDIO__PA_FEED_.MP3]
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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: January 27, 2015

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