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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
Division of Portfolio
Planning**

**Gompers Replacement
March 8, 2012**

1 [START 285_699]

2 MS. YOLANDA TORRES: Okay, good evening
3 everyone. We are about to start our joint
4 public hearing. And we're going to look at two
5 proposals. So good evening again. This is a
6 joint public hearing of the New York City
7 Department of Education or DOE, Community
8 Education Council and School Leadership Team for
9 Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education
10 High School. And I am Yolanda Torres. I am the
11 Community District 7 Superintendent. This joint
12 public hearing is being held in regards to two
13 proposals. One of them is the proposed
14 collocation of a new transfer high school, 07X-
15 557 with Samuel Gompers Career and Technical
16 Education High School which will be--which is
17 07X-655 and New Visions Charter High School for
18 the Humanities II, which is 84X-TBD, to be
19 determined in School Building X-655 beginning in
20 the school year 2012-'13.

21 And the other proposed collocation is of a
22 new charter high school, New Visions Charter
23 High School for the Humanities II, 84X-TBD with
24 Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education
25 High School 07X-655 and new transfer high school

1 07X-557 in school building X-655 also beginning
2 in school year 2012-'13.

3 The New York State Education Department,
4 SED, the charter authorizer for New Visions is
5 required to hold a facilities hearing to receive
6 feedback on the proposed resiting of New Visions
7 Charter High Schools for the Humanities II, to
8 building X-655. As such this public joint
9 hearing or joint public hearing will also serve
10 as the State Ed Department facilities hearing.

11 If you have any questions or comments about
12 the charter itself we have here from the State
13 Ed Department Ms. Susan Megnar who is obviously
14 present at the hearing today and will now tell
15 you how to submit your questions and comments.
16 Welcome.

17 MS. SUSAN MEGNAR: Thank you. Thank you for
18 being here tonight. As you heard I'm Susan
19 Megnar. And I come from the Charter School
20 Office of the New York State Education
21 Department. And we are required to be at--to
22 conduct these hearings because we are the
23 charter authorizer for the New Visions Charter
24 High School for the Humanities II. And that
25 means that we approved this school and issued a

1 charter last year and they will be opening, as
2 you know, in 2012, September or late August.
3 And we are interested in gathering feedback from
4 the community about the proposed collocations so
5 I will be taking notes as you speak. You can
6 also submit testimony directly to us by sending
7 it through email to
8 CharterSchools@mail.nysed.gov. This information
9 is on the meeting notice so if you don't have it
10 you can always look it up there. We also have
11 posted these notices on our website so if you go
12 to the New York State Education Department
13 website and do a search for the Charter Schools
14 Office you'll find all the information there.

15 You can also fax comments, written comments,
16 or mail them to the attention of our colleague
17 in our Brooklyn office here in New York City and
18 that's Jamal Young. And the address is on here.
19 I won't read it to you now but if anybody needs
20 that you--you can look it up and the fax number
21 is also on here. So I'll be listening and
22 taking notes. And that's my role. And thank
23 you very much for being here.

24 MS. TORRES: Thank you so much. We have
25 also asked District 7 Community Education

1 Council and the School Leadership Team from
2 Samuel Gompers Career and Technical Education
3 High School or Samuel Gompers to participate in
4 this joint public hearing. I am joined tonight
5 by Ms. Joyce Mills-Kittrell, the principal of
6 Samuel Gompers. Good evening Ms. Kittrell.
7 Neyla Franco, CEC member of District 7; Evelyn
8 Rodriguez, PTA President, welcome; and also Ms.
9 Rodney, UFT Chapter Leader for Gompers.

10 This hearing is going to be recorded. And I
11 would like to remind anyone who needs
12 translation I believe that there's no one
13 [asking in Spanish]? That's your job.

14 TRANSLATOR: [Repeating message in Spanish]

15 MS. TORRES: No problem with translators
16 [laughing]. So the purpose of this hearing
17 tonight is for you to provide comments about the
18 proposal. And before I describe the proposals I
19 want to make sure that you're all aware of the
20 opportunity to provide your input. All those
21 who wish to speak at this point I believe we
22 have four speakers, they had to sign up and this
23 was located on the outside of the auditorium. I
24 believe that the list has been closed already.
25 And all comments will be limited to two minutes.

1 You need to please specify to which proposal
2 you're commenting on or questions as directed
3 because we have two proposals.

4 There may be also elected officials who
5 arrive at different times during the meeting,
6 during the evening. And if they wish to speak,
7 we will do our best to accommodate them at the
8 first opportune moment. And those who are here
9 at the start of the public comment segment will
10 be asked to speak first.

11 All comments will be then addressed in the
12 analyses of public comments to be published and
13 provided to the Panel for Education Policy on
14 the evening before the panel votes on the two
15 proposals. The vote is scheduled for March 21st,
16 2012 6:00 o'clock. And it will take place at
17 the High School of Fashion Industries which is
18 located at 225 West 24th Street in Manhattan.
19 In addition we also welcome comments and
20 feedback that you may have at any time before
21 the panel votes on these proposals. And the
22 email address as well as phone number where
23 these comments may be made are
24 D07Proposals@schools.nyc.gov and the number is
25 (212) 374-05159.

1 So let's start with the proposal summaries
2 and we're going to do the first one. I will
3 first present a summary of the proposed
4 collocation of the new transfer high school 07X-
5 557 with existing school Samuel Gompers and a
6 new public charter high school, New Visions
7 Charter High School for the Humanities number II
8 in school building X-655 beginning in the school
9 year 2012-'13. And the Department of Education
10 has issued this proposal as of February 3rd,
11 2012.

12 The collocation of--means that two or more
13 schools are located in the same building and
14 that they may share common space such as the
15 auditorium, gymnasium, libraries, cafeterias.

16 Last month the Panel for Educational Policy
17 approved the Department of Education's proposal
18 to phase out Samuel Gompers based on the results
19 of the Department of Education's extensive
20 review of data and community feedback indicating
21 that the school lacks the capacity to turn
22 around quickly to better support its students or
23 the needs of the students. As a result the
24 Samuel Gompers will no longer admit new 9th
25 graders after the conclusion of school year

1 2011-'12. And the school's enrollment will
2 decrease gradually over the next three years and
3 the school will complete its phase-out in June
4 2015.

5 The proposed location or collocation of new
6 transfer high school 07X-557 in building X-655
7 is part of the Department of Education's central
8 goal to create new school options that will
9 better serve the future of our students and also
10 the community at large. The new transfer high
11 school will offer a rigorous and challenging
12 academic curriculum and will prepare students
13 for post-secondary educational work.

14 The school will open to students who are 16
15 years of age and older and who have attended
16 another New York City public high school for at
17 least a year. It will also have a rolling
18 admissions policy accepting eligible students
19 throughout the school year. To enroll, students
20 and their parents and guardians should contact
21 the school directly and to schedule an intake
22 appointment and students are expected to or
23 requested to provide a copy of their
24 transcripts, of their academic transcripts for
25 the--during the intake interview.

1 If this collocation proposal is approved
2 new transfer high school 07X-557 will open in
3 2012-'13 school year when it will serve
4 approximately 130 to 170 students. Transfer
5 schools typically serve students in all grades,
6 9 through 12, and they do not adhere to strict
7 grade distinctions as students typically enroll
8 at various stages of credit accumulation or
9 number of Regent's exams passed. Therefore 07X-
10 557 will gradually phase in over a period of
11 three years through the 2014-'15 school year.
12 The school is expected to reach full scale in
13 terms of enrollment in 2014-'15 when it will
14 serve approximately 230 students to 270.

15 In the current school year, 2011-'12, the
16 building is serving approximately 630 students
17 yielding a target utilization rate of 47%. In
18 the 2017-'18 school year, after Samuel Gompers
19 has completed its phase-out and both Humanities
20 II and 07X-557 have completed their phase-ins
21 and reached full scale, the Department of
22 Education projects the building will serve
23 approximately 810 to 910 students yielding a
24 target utilization rate between 60% and 68%.
25 This means that building X-655 has adequate

1 capacity to accommodate Humanities II and 07X-
2 557 when they reach full scale and Samuel
3 Gompers is no longer--when they reach full scale
4 and Samuel Gompers is no longer in the building.

5 Now we're going to summary two. Now the
6 proposed collocation for a new public charter
7 high school, New Visions Charter High School for
8 the Humanities II with existing school Samuel
9 Gompers and new transfer high school 07X-557 in
10 school building 655. Beginning the school year
11 2012-'13 the Department of Education also issued
12 this proposal on February 3rd, 2012.

13 The mission of Humanities II is to ensure
14 that its graduates have the skills and content
15 knowledge necessary to succeed in their post-
16 secondary choices by engaging them in coherent
17 learning experiences that cultivate critical
18 thinking and creativity. The school charter was
19 approved by the State Ed Department on September
20 12, 2011.

21 The proposed collocation of Humanities II in
22 building X-655 is part of the Department of
23 Education's central goal to create new school
24 options that will better serve future students
25 and their--the community at large. Humanities

1 II will offer CTE programs which will train
2 students with workforce skills in specific
3 careers and will thus help meet the Department
4 of Education's goal of providing new CTE options
5 for the community in light of the phase-out of
6 Samuel Gompers.

7 Under this charter Humanities II will admit
8 students through a charter lottery giving
9 preference to students who reside in District 7.
10 If the proposal is approved Humanities II will
11 open in September 2012 serving approximately 120
12 to 130 students in the 9th grade. Humanities II
13 will gradually phase into the building by adding
14 one grade at a time in each subsequent year.

15 The school is expected to reach its full
16 grade span of grades 9 through 12 in 2015-'16
17 when it will serve a total of 530 to 580
18 students. However since the school is starting
19 with a smaller enrollment during the first two
20 years of phase-in it will take two additional
21 years before the school's enrollment grows to
22 full scale at approximately 580 to 640 students
23 in grades 9 through 12. As previously
24 mentioned, building X-655 will have adequate
25 capacity to accommodate both new transfer high

1 school 07X-557 and Humanities II at full
2 scale.

3 Moving forward I would like now to present
4 hearing participants and I would like to first
5 give Ms. Neyla Franco, CEC member of District 7,
6 to present her statement.

7 MS. NEYLA FRANCO: Good evening. I'll start
8 with a question. The new high school which is
9 the 577...?

10 MS. TORRES: 557?

11 MS. FRANCO: 557, is that starting off with
12 9th grade or is it going from 9th to 12th?

13 MS. TORRES: It's 9th, it's 9th.

14 [Off mic discussion]

15 MS. TORRES: Right.

16 MS. FRANCO: Mm-hmm.

17 MS. MEGNAR: [Off mic] It takes all high
18 school students who are--after--they've been in
19 high school at least one year but it doesn't
20 matter what grade it is.

21 MS. FRANCO: Are you giving priority to
22 Gompers?

23 MS. MEGNAR: [Off mic] We will actually love
24 for Gompers students but there's nowhere - - .

25 MS. FRANCO: My concern, since you are

1 closing it out and you're phasing it out; I
2 think they should have priority in that program
3 because how are you going to help them to catch
4 up on their credits if you're going to already
5 come in with filling up that school when they
6 could be helped first. That's my first
7 priority.

8 MS. TORRES: [Off mic] That's something to
9 explore.

10 MS. FRANCO: And I think that that's only
11 fair to the kids in this school.

12 MS. TORRES: Yeah, it's something to explore.

13 MS. FRANCO: And right now it's my concern.
14 I'm not for closing and I want you to understand
15 that. I--I don't believe in closing the
16 schools. I'm very upset. And I'm not against
17 charter schools. I'm looking for the best for
18 our kids. But I think they--they need the
19 opportunity and given the chance. So I'm going
20 to put it to the side but I wanted to make sure
21 that you understood. This is my community and
22 I've been here for over 50 years and I've never
23 in my life seen what has been happening to our
24 education.

25 MS. TORRES: Thank you Ms. Franco. And now

1 we will have Ms. Evelyn Rodriguez, PTA
2 President of Gompers.

3 MS. EVELYN RODRIGUEZ: So it's not...

4 [Off mic discussion about microphone]

5 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Un-hun.

6 [Pause]

7 MS. RODRIGUEZ: All right. Good evening
8 everyone. I'll stand with Ms. Franco
9 [chuckling]. Okay I was here before and I want
10 to reiterate what Ms. Franco was saying that her
11 most--her concern here is for the students.
12 That they get priority for these transfer
13 schools and they get priority for the new
14 charter school that they want to implement on
15 this school. My other comment that I'd like to
16 make is the disrespect as the Department of
17 Education has given Samuel Gompers High School
18 and some of the other high schools here in this
19 community.

20 Samuel Gompers was told at a meeting with
21 the parents that the CTE programs will remain
22 here even if there was an additional school or
23 it became phased out and another school was
24 phased in, they were promised by the
25 superintendent, Mr. Aberdeen [phonetic], that

1 the CTE programs that are existing now were
2 going to remain.

3 This is not the case. Human--New Visions
4 Charter School for Humanities does not provide
5 the computer programs that we have here, that
6 are existing, that are helping the children of
7 the Bronx. That is a problem. A big problem.
8 Because our promise--we are being promised
9 things and then not--we're not following
10 through. We are given lies. The other thing, I
11 was at Middle School 144, the rush, haste makes
12 waste. We have all have heard it. The rush for
13 these form to go out, there have been so many
14 errors throughout all this phasing out of these
15 schools throughout the Districts: 7, 8, and 9,
16 11.

17 They wrote--it was printed that Samuel
18 Gompers was--was a--the school that was going to
19 be put here in Samuel Gomper's place here was
20 not Humanities. They still had the old
21 information a few days ago that the school that
22 was going to be put in through Samuel Gompers
23 with the math and science high school, the
24 Charter School for Math and Science. What is
25 the rush to close our Samuel Gompers? This is

1 our first F. There have been other schools
2 that have re--been received poor reviews and
3 they took the time with the schools, they worked
4 with the children and the teachers and the
5 administration. Our school has not been given
6 that opportunity.

7 I have a question regarding the proposal--
8 you mentioned something about the proposed
9 charter was approved September 12, 2011. Why
10 then are we sitting here discussing phasing out?
11 Not the collocations, right, this is the
12 collocation.

13 [Off mic] - - collocation.

14 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Right.

15 [Off mic]

16 MS. TORRES: That wasn't...

17 [Off mic]

18 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. I understand that
19 now.

20 MS. TORRES: [Off mic] Okay.

21 MS. FRANCO: And could I say something?

22 MS. RODRIGUEZ: Mm-hmm.

23 MS. FRANCO: One of my questions was about
24 our--our programs here, our plumbing, our
25 construction and I--I think I gave this New

1 Vision a hard time. I gave them a run for
2 their money. 'Cause they had to explain to me
3 at the CEC what were they going to do. You're
4 taking the programs and what are you going to
5 do? Where are you going do? So there was a
6 conversation between the CEC members at our
7 meeting and they said, right now, it's supposed
8 to be in the charter 'cause they weren't able to
9 get an approval unless it's in the charter that
10 they're--those programs eventually will be
11 phased in, based on the needs within the
12 community.

13 I--don't tell me that you're going to sell
14 hotels. I, you know, we don't have a hotel yet.
15 And not everybody's going to be in a hotel. But
16 what do you do about the beauticians, the
17 construction workers, the plumbers, that also is
18 my concern. I come from a vocational
19 background. I come from Dodge so that's very
20 important to me is about these programs and not--
21 -and yes I did speak to New Visions about that
22 program. And both Jane--Kennedy that they have
23 a Kennedy and I spoke to them about this
24 location too.

25 What exactly, how are they going to bring

1 them? I'm willing to sit down. They asked us
2 that we all sit down to bring in those programs.
3 Now in the 11--the 10th and 11th grade 'cause
4 they're starting with--from the beginning the 9th
5 grade. I'm going to hold them to it. Like I
6 said, I'm not going anywhere.

7 MS. TORRES: All right. Thank you. Thank
8 you. We are also going to have Ms. Rodney, UFT
9 Chapter Chair for Gompers.

10 MS. HELEN RODNEY: [Off mic]

11 MS. TORRES: You have to speak into the
12 microphone because we're recording.

13 MS. RODNEY: Yes. Samuel Gompers High
14 School has served this community for over 70
15 years preparing our students for college, career
16 and other special services. Now we have a large
17 percent of special needs kids. And we prepare
18 our special needs kids for work. They--some--
19 not everyone wants to go to college and several
20 of our special needs kids can go to work and
21 support their families right after graduation.

22 Along with that Samuel Gompers has a large
23 percent of special education students, 25%, and
24 we have 77% boys. Now. The programs we have at
25 Samuel Gompers right now, we have desktop

1 publishing. We have A+, information
2 technology which is Cisco, pre-engineering,
3 computer course certification and electrical
4 insulation.

5 Now these programs, they're all CTE
6 certified programs. We have two new pilot
7 programs, the electro mechanical insulation
8 repair. We have electronics and computer audio
9 technology. And the Cisco program, it's unique
10 to Samuel Gompers in the Bronx. It's the only
11 CTE school that offers Cisco in the--in the
12 Bronx. And we provide workplace learning, guest
13 speakers from industries, 21st century
14 employability skills training, career
15 explanation--exploration, internships and other
16 volunteer activities.

17 Now some of our graduates enter the
18 workforce right away. We have a very successful
19 construction skills 2000 program.

20 Now my question to you right now, what will
21 be the CTE focus for special needs students in
22 New Vision Charter High School for the
23 Humanities? What percent of your students will
24 be special needs? And how will you admit or
25 select these students?

1 Now at this point I would like to show you
2 some of our special needs students at work. One
3 minute while I transfer from here.

4 [Pause]

5 MS. RODNEY: At this point, I--when the
6 computer works again I'm going to show you our
7 special needs students at work.

8 [Pause]

9 MS. RODNEY: Technology for you... Okay. Our
10 special needs students at work.

11 [Plays video]

12 MS. RODNEY: Now all of these students are
13 special needs students. And when they graduate
14 some of--some of these students are ready for
15 industry right away.

16 [Plays video]

17 MS. RODNEY: And that's Mr. Grizzard
18 [phonetic] in the background with--with the
19 glasses.

20 [Plays video]

21 MS. RODNEY: And one more minute. And now
22 you can see the solar panels. I - - you have
23 solar panels - - .

24 [Plays video]

25 MS. RODNEY: We have--we now have solar

1 panels on our roof. And I--I'll stop now. At
2 this point, I'd just like your permission for
3 Mr. Hyland to speak next - - . Thank you.

4 MR. JOHN W. HYLAND: Good afternoon. I'm
5 John Hyland. I'm the president of the alumni
6 here. I graduated here in 1966. Okay. So I
7 can tell you a lot about the school. But I'll
8 tell you that when I speak. I'm going to tell
9 you about this story.

10 Several years ago through my contacts the
11 Council General of Ireland came to this school.
12 He toured the whole school. He went down to
13 that shop and he went crazy because they have a
14 big problem in Ireland in the north of Ireland
15 with some of the kids that are not educated. It
16 used to be a father and son thing in the
17 shipyards. Shipyards are closed, kids got
18 nothing to do. They come home from school, play
19 on the computer. There's nothing.

20 They saw this. They immediately took it
21 back to Ireland. They're putting it into
22 schools in Ireland exactly what you see there
23 with the workbenches and whatnot. Okay. Don't
24 know about the solar energy because that wasn't
25 there yet. But the second part of that was that

1 we're going to set up a link between Samuel
2 Gompers High School and a school in the north of
3 Ireland so these kids could talk back and forth.
4 Okay that never happened yet. Okay.

5 But I got to tell you it's world-renown
6 here. The stuff that we do here has always
7 been, but I'll get into that when I speak. So
8 you need to know this stuff. Well actually
9 there--I fell there when I was here in '66
10 because we just had the radio antenna on that--
11 on that north tower. And we're up working on
12 the antenna and I fell off. Did it mean
13 anything? No. Probably gave me some brains but
14 that's another story.

15 MS. TORRES: Thank you so much Ms. Rodney
16 and Mr. Hyland for the presentation. Thank you.
17 I would like to acknowledge--

18 [Applause]

19 MS. TORRES: The answers to the questions.
20 Huh? It was in the statement.

21 [Off mic] The last one - - .

22 MS. TORRES: Which one? The last one about
23 the special education students?

24 MS. FRANCO: Yes.

25 MS. RODNEY: Yes, uh-huh, my question was

1 simple. The slides you just saw, all of those
2 students are special--all of those students are
3 special needs students and my question was what
4 CTE focus do you have for special needs
5 students? How will you admit these students or
6 select them, you seem to have a lot of--method
7 of selecting. How will you select the special
8 needs students?

9 MS. TORRES: So that's later on in the
10 presentation, you will be able to address those
11 questions. Okay, 'cause they are coming up for
12 presentations. Three questions, yes. So I
13 would like to acknowledge also Ms. Tracy Woodall
14 [phonetic] President of the Community Education
15 Council for District 7. Would you like to
16 present some words Ms. Woodall? No? Okay thank
17 you, welcome.

18 So now we have concluded the formal
19 presentations and we're going to open now the
20 floor for public comments. Yes, Ma'am.

21 [Off mic]

22 MS. TORRES: I was not informed that's why I
23 did not...

24 [Off mic comment]

25 MS. TORRES: Sure. What's the name, please?

1 MR. EMILIO MARTIN: Emilio Martin.

2 MS. TORRES: Emilio Martin?

3 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, Emilio Martin.

4 MS. TORRES: Okay, welcome Sir.

5 MR. MARTIN: Yeah. So I don't have a
6 prepared speech, but yeah, I'm the reporting
7 secretary for the PTA. And when I can recall
8 when the school was doing good we had a program.
9 I--I don't recall what it was. But I do know
10 that when it was in effect the school did
11 receive for the three consecutive B's for 2007,
12 '08 and was it '09. And I was trying to talk to
13 one of the teachers, was it a Mr. Wilson, who
14 began the Actor's [phonetic] program and get the
15 school a second chance before we shut it down
16 entirely. That was my comment. Let's give that
17 program another chance before we shut down
18 Gompers. That's what I wanted to say
19 [phonetic].

20 MS. TORRES: Okay. Thank you Mr. Martin.

21 [Off mic question]

22 MS. TORRES: We haven't started that. These
23 were the formal presentations [laughing]. We're
24 going to start them now. You're welcome, okay.
25 So we're going to now open the floor for public

1 comments and speakers will be given two
2 minutes. And I will be calling them in the
3 order in which they signed up. We have, first,
4 I hope I say your last name correctly, Mr.
5 Chaluisan.

6 MR. RON CHALUISAN: Chaluisan.

7 MS. TORRES: Ron Chaluisan. At the mic.

8 MR. CHALUISAN: Right there?

9 MS. TORRES: Yes.

10 MR. CHALUISAN: Hello?

11 MS. TORRES: The other one is on.

12 MR. CHALUISAN: Hi. Okay. So actually
13 given that we have two minutes, I'm going to
14 just answer the questions and--

15 [Off mic question]

16 MR. CHALUISAN: Oh sure, Chaluisan. C-H-A-
17 L-U-I-S-A-N. Ronald.

18 MS. TORRES: Okay, before you start, Sir.

19 MS. CHALUISAN: Yes.

20 MS. TORRES: You can take more than two
21 minutes--

22 MR. CHALUISAN: [Interposing] Oh.

23 MS. TORRES: --so you can--

24 MR. CHALUISAN: [Interposing] Okay.

25 MS. TORRES: --be very specific.

1 MR. CHALUISAN: Great.

2 MS. TORRES: Thank you.

3 MR. CHALSUISAN: So I'll... I'll still start
4 by answering the questions and obviously I'm an
5 unknown entity here so I could only show you the
6 evidence that we have from other schools and
7 then engage you in a conversation about how
8 we're going to go about for students here. So
9 we did open two charter schools last year.
10 They're both on the John F. Kennedy campus.
11 West-on the west side of the Bronx. Currently
12 we have about 19% of our student population that
13 are students with special needs and about 13% of
14 the students are students that are English
15 language learners.

16 So that we do a tremendous amount of
17 outreach. Our preference, someone had asked
18 before, our preference, the state preference for
19 the lottery is District 7. And so the way that
20 that works is that my colleagues, Jennie Solen-
21 McIntosh and, huh... thank you, Eunice, my brain
22 has completely shut down, have--are really in
23 charge of designing a--a process by--of
24 outreach.

25 And so we have been working and that's where

1 Ms. Franco had commented, we've been in
2 contact with Ms. Franco and with a bunch of
3 students and community members. We've worked
4 through St. Mary's and we have a session coming
5 up at Betances where we basically are going--
6 doing outreach to families in District 7 with
7 the hope of getting as many applications for the
8 school. The application literally is name and
9 address. That's the full application.

10 The only requirement for the school is that
11 the student finish his 8th grade. So that--
12 there's no special requirements. There are no
13 additional requirements. Graduation from 8th
14 grade qualifies them to be in the lottery and
15 basically it's name and address.

16 The lottery is on April 17th. It's going to
17 be held at Hostos. And everyone is welcome to
18 come. If we get--so I think the Superintendent
19 spoke about the number of seats, we have 125
20 seats in our 9th grade class. If we get--if we
21 get fewer than 125 applicants from District 7,
22 all of those student automatically get into the
23 school. There's no other admissions criteria.

24 If we get more than 125 applications from
25 District 7, then all of the District 7 families

1 are put into the lottery and then those--we--
2 they basically, the first 125 selected through
3 the lottery get the seats and the additional
4 students are first on the waiting list.

5 If we have applications from outside of
6 District 7, that's a separate lottery after all
7 of the District 7 families are either with a
8 seat or with a seat and on the wait list. The
9 additional students, they will be added to the
10 end of the wait list. So that's kind of--
11 someone had asked about how they were selected.

12 With, I'm trying to remember all of the
13 questions so I think that that gels with the
14 special education students, a little bit of
15 track record and the process moving forward and
16 also with the lottery process.

17 The last question I think that I member was
18 around the CTE programs. And so on the CTE
19 programs, we had a very long conversation with
20 Ms. Franco. And the way that we'd like to go
21 about doing this, our school is in the
22 application that we presented to the State it is
23 college and career readiness, preparing students
24 for post-secondary options.

25 Obviously careers are a really important

1 part of a post-secondary options. What we--
2 we--what we felt a good process would be and
3 we're committed to and will state publicly will
4 be is--we would love to engage the members of
5 District 7, the families of the students coming
6 into the school in a process between now and the
7 beginning of next school year, given that the
8 first year of the school is career explorations
9 anyway. Right? We have an advisory.

10 What we currently do is we have a speaker
11 series. We have a number of community members
12 come in. We do a project called the community
13 role models where basically we look for members
14 of the community to come in and meet our
15 students. Our students interview them about the
16 work that they do, about how they participate in
17 their community, and what role the students can
18 have in the continuous improvement of its
19 community. So that's kind of our freshman year.

20 The CTE kind of course sequence
21 traditionally starts in the 2nd year of the
22 school. So what we'd like to do is to take the
23 time between now and the beginning of the next
24 school year to have conversations with the
25 families, with the--with--and to start to see

1 which are the best fit for the families that
2 are coming on CTE options.

3 I know that Ms. Franco said she would
4 participate in those and that we would
5 definitely do outreach and so the notion is I--I
6 know that there was some of the computer-aided
7 or computer-based certification programs which
8 are a piece that we've been looking at. So we
9 don't have a final answer. I'm being straight
10 and honest with you. There's not a specific CTE
11 program that we have said this is the one
12 because we wanted to work with the community to
13 define which were the best fit.

14 The one thing I will say on the computer
15 side is that our students, we don't have fixed
16 computers in our budget. We actually have kids
17 do one on one. They have the comput--there's a
18 computer available for the students so that we
19 will have the capacity to actually look through
20 and--some of the certification programs and make
21 sure that if those are the programs students are
22 going to sign up to do, we would follow through
23 on that.

24 And again at the risk of being completely
25 honest and I actually look to the Superintendent

1 for some support in this, we have had on the
2 Kennedy campus, some difficulty around our
3 computer usage, basically because the
4 infrastructure of that building is not very
5 good. So when we have 125 students on the
6 computer at the same time, all of the lines go
7 down. So we've been trying to figure out how to
8 build that infrastructure.

9 I don't know the infrastructure of this
10 building but I would certainly--we definitely
11 are making provisions for students to work with
12 and potentially get certifications on computer
13 technology. I'm assuming that the
14 infrastructure in the building is strong. But
15 again, it's--it's a real issue that we faced on
16 our first two schools.

17 So I think those were the general questions.
18 I just wanted to get those out. And if I may,
19 maybe, just two minutes on how the organization
20 is and kind of our track record. Is that okay?

21 So New Visions has been around for 25 years.
22 We've worked with a number of superintendents
23 over the last few years specifically in the
24 Bronx, when Norm Wexler was the Superintendent
25 of High Schools here in the Bronx and when Eric

1 Nadelstern [phonetic] and Laura Rodriguez,
2 these are all people that we have worked with in
3 the past.

4 Over the last 15 years we ran--well between
5 2002 and 2008 we were part of an initiative for--
6 -called the New Century's High Schools
7 Initiative which was really creating public
8 schools with community input and community
9 partners. And through that process there were
10 about 99 schools across the City and about 30 of
11 those were in the Bronx.

12 We work on the Kennedy campus. We work on
13 the Evander campus. We work on the Columbus
14 campus, on a whole series of campuses here in
15 the City with District public schools. I would
16 strong suggest because Kennedy is the place
17 where we work with both District public schools
18 and charter schools, Lisa Luft is the Principal
19 of Kennedy proper. And there are four--there
20 are five District public schools on that campus
21 and there are two charter schools. That's a
22 place where I feel more than anything I can say
23 to you that's the proof in the pudding. That on
24 that campus, those eight principals have been
25 working together on a number of different things

1 for the entire campus to have good
2 opportunities for their kids.

3 So on some specifics; we're doing math work
4 across all of the schools on that campus. We've
5 leveraged some dollars to help rebuild the
6 library in the building, that would be for all
7 students on the first floor. There's a health
8 clinic that's been leveraged for all students in
9 the building, that's also located on the first
10 floor. And we're looking for a bunch of
11 different types of projects that benefit all of
12 the kids on the campus regardless of the school
13 that they go to.

14 That's the kind of work that we like to do.
15 As I said I could tell you that here you don't
16 know me so but I can very much clearly say and
17 you should feel free to reach out to any one of
18 those principals or come and visit at the--at
19 the school site because I think their word
20 probably carries a lot more weight than my word.
21 So I encourage you to do that.

22 I think--we do have an information session
23 that is coming up on March 21st at the Betances
24 Center. So we'll be going much deeper into what
25 the exact curriculum is and all of the pieces

1 about the school. So if you would like to
2 attend that we encourage you to do that.

3 And also on our website, NewVisions.org, are
4 the meeting days for the charter board meetings.
5 Each charter school has its--it has a board.
6 And those meetings are also public meetings. So
7 we very much encourage you to, if you'd like,
8 attend those meetings and get to know more about
9 the charter schools in particular. Good?
10 Great. And I'm here so feel free to ask me
11 whatever questions whenever.

12 MS. TORRES: At this point we're--would...

13 [Off mic question]

14 MS. TORRES: Yeah, well you--right it
15 doesn't have to be on record. You can talk and
16 ask a question. Okay? All right. So thank you
17 so much. Now we will have Jennie Solen-
18 McIntosh.

19 MS. JENNIE SOLEN-McINTOSH: Thank you. My
20 name is Jennie Solen-McIntosh. And I am the
21 Director of Community Engagement for the charter
22 schools at New Visions for Public Schools. And
23 I just wanted to speak to you for a moment about
24 the work that we're doing to make sure that the
25 young people in this community know that the New

1 Visions Charter Schools that are coming into
2 the Gompers campus are schools for them. And
3 that we want to make sure that they have the
4 opportunity to apply.

5 So just a few sort of logistics. As Ron
6 mentioned, we accept students via a lottery. If
7 we receive more than 125 students, our
8 application deadline is April 2nd. And on April
9 17th, we'll be holding the lottery. We are doing
10 a tremendous amount of work to try and get the
11 word out about the fact that the schools are
12 opening. That we are very interested in serving
13 English language learner students and students
14 with special need. That District 7 students
15 have priority in the lottery. And--and really
16 talking about the fact that the schools are
17 there to prepare them for college and career.

18 Our website is actually a place where
19 students can go and fill out an application.
20 The website address is
21 www.NewVisions.org/charter. And you can
22 actually apply online. You can call us and we
23 will fill out an application with the parent
24 over the phone. And we are obviously going to
25 be at a number of information sessions trying to

1 really just engage parents and answer any
2 questions they have and quite frankly helping
3 them with the application even though it's a
4 very simple application. But I know many times
5 parents think it's more complicated than it is
6 or they think that there's an exam or anything
7 of that sort and there isn't. It's a real--the
8 criteria is graduate from the 8th grade. And
9 you're eligible to enter our school.

10 I just wanted to highlight for you, Ron
11 mentioned the 21st is when we're having our next
12 community forum but we've been actually having a
13 number of forums in partnership with Pueblo en
14 Marcha [phonetic] on--in March. We had two
15 forums at St. Mary's Center. We have the one
16 coming up on the 21st. We were at the Citywide
17 High School Fair this past weekend at Martin
18 Luther King. And we're also going to be having
19 a forum at Forest Houses, the Sednick [phonetic]
20 Center and quite frankly we're looking for more
21 opportunities, as many opportunities as we can
22 find between now and April 2nd to just get out
23 there and get the word out and meet with
24 parents.

25 In partnership with--with Pueblo, we

1 actually disseminated fliers, information
2 fliers, under the door of about 157 of the
3 projects, all of the projects throughout the
4 south Bronx and basically just promoting that
5 there's an opportunity to apply, to over 16,000
6 residents. We've been doing direct mailing to
7 the parents of 8th graders. At this point we've
8 sent out about--mailings to about 18,000
9 families and obviously that includes the
10 families in District 7 as well.

11 All of our material is in Spanish and
12 English. I actually have information and fliers
13 if you're interested in receiving copies of
14 that. So again part of--part of what I'm trying
15 to illustrate is New Visions is--has a long-
16 standing history of working with the Bronx and
17 serving young people in the Bronx and our
18 charter schools is really a continuation of that
19 commitment and so we're here to sort of
20 reiterate that interest.

21 This is a community that both Ron and I grew
22 up in. In a community that we want to continue
23 to be a part of and we're very, very interested
24 in making sure that the young people that live
25 in this neighborhood, that would be coming to

1 Gompers next year, really are served well.

2 And that we're--we are responding to their needs
3 and preparing them for both college and career
4 or whatever makes the most sense for them.

5 You may have seen some of our bus shelter
6 ads so we have some bus shelter ads that we've
7 taken out. And we've also been dropping off
8 information at a number of major points, the
9 library, the Hunts Point Recreation Center, the
10 Point, meeting with a number of community based
11 organizations. We've been at the CEC meeting
12 and presented at those. And obviously, most
13 importantly, we've been doing a lot of outreach
14 at the schools, going to all of the middle
15 schools, attending parent teacher conferences,
16 sending out mailings to principals, guidance
17 counselors and parent coordinators.

18 So I hope that sort of illustrates for you
19 what we're doing to sort of try and get the word
20 out. We think we're sort of covering as much as
21 we can possibly do but if you have any ideas or
22 any suggestions or any recommendations about
23 folks you think we should meet or talk to,
24 please let her know--let us know because there's
25 a real opportunities to sort of impact the

1 application process.

2 The way for students to get in to these
3 schools is to be a part of the lottery. And
4 they have to be sure, we have to be sure that
5 they applied by the application deadline which
6 is April 2nd. And I, too, will be here so if you
7 have any other questions, I'm happy to answer
8 any questions you have. Thank you.

9 MS. TORRES: Okay. Thank you so much. And
10 now we will have Mr. John Hyland.

11 MR. HYLAND: It's me.

12 [Chuckling]

13 MR. HYLAND: Okay. As I told you, I
14 graduated here in 1966. This is not the first
15 time that there was a rumor that the school was
16 closing. Back then, I understand there was auto
17 here. There was electric upstairs. There were
18 plumbers around the corner. Oil burner. The
19 machine shop where we made handguns. We started
20 at the end of the hall. There was a welding
21 shop there.

22 All of a sudden, over the summer, it all
23 disappeared. It all went over to the new wing
24 of Smith. So now you've got a vocational school
25 with no vocation. And there is a picture around

1 here showing the then principal sitting on the
2 marble steps over there with his head in his
3 hands. Thought the school was closing.

4 Well of course we don't quit. So we picked
5 it up by the boots and we got computer repair in
6 here. We got business machine repair back then.
7 And all this stuff. But everything I'm hearing
8 here is a duplication. Okay.

9 Samuel Gompers has a transfer school. How
10 do I know that? 'Cause I was a transfer. Okay?
11 I was going to a private school on the
12 Concourse, it was a zero. I wound up coming in
13 here like we used to do on Saturdays, they had
14 open houses. And I said this place is pretty
15 cool. And I wound up coming here. Okay.

16 Not only me, Barney Ferguson, an NYPD
17 retired detective was in Cardinal Hayes High
18 School, I happen to know that 'cause he called
19 me up this morning. Said make sure you mention
20 me. He was going to Hayes High School. He
21 wanted to be an electrician. He left Hayes,
22 came in here. Graduated here, was ready to go
23 on an electrician and of course back then you
24 took the PD test and he did. And he passed.
25 And he did his time. And he retired as a First

1 Grade Detective. Okay.

2 Ritchie Alton graduated with me. He was in
3 the 5-year program. Okay. We've done it all
4 here. In the beginning, you just didn't come to
5 Samuel Gompers. We had an annex over on 138th
6 Street. You had to take a test. You'd go to
7 the annex. If you did well, you were allowed to
8 come to the main school here.

9 All that stuff is swept out the door. We
10 can't pick the kids we--we get now. Okay. And
11 I'm here a lot. And I talk to these kids and I
12 know what's going on. But it's basically a big
13 duplication. Everything that we're going to
14 make new has been done before. Okay?

15 The industries that you need now are the
16 industries that moved out. Okay? We don't need
17 a barber. You need heavy duty guys, Con Ed's
18 right down the street. Verizon is up the block.
19 Okay. You need people to fill the slots, the
20 blue collar slots. How can I say that? Because
21 they did it. I did 33 years. I retired. Very
22 happily retired. Okay. Then I took up my new
23 job of Santa Claus but very realistically, this
24 is what you need here in the community. Okay.

25 The community has always been an industrial

1 community. Hunts Point, on the other side of
2 the tracks, and this is what you need. I don't
3 agree with closing the school. The school's got
4 a lot of history here. 76 years' worth of
5 history. And that's my story.

6 MS. TORRES: Good story. Thank you.

7 MR. HYLAND: Thank you. - - .

8 MS. TORRES: Thank you Mr. Hyland. The
9 next--next speaker, I'm sorry, I--there's
10 someone else and I can't read the name. Elio
11 Bach [phonetic]? The fourth speaker?

12 [Pause]

13 FEMALE VOICE 1: Ellie Long - - .

14 MS. TORRES: Ellie Long? Does no one--
15 there's no one else.

16 [Off mic comment]

17 MS. TORRES: Anyone else would like to?

18 [Pause]

19 MS. TORRES: Anyone else? Yes, Sir. Yes.

20 [Off mic comment]

21 MS. TORRES: You want to write you name,
22 Sir?

23 [Off mic discussion]

24 MS. TORRES: Okay, go ahead.

25 MR. EDDIE OREJADA: My name is Eddie

1 Orejada. I'm the Bronx - - DDC [phonetic] Rep
2 for all high schools in the Bronx. It seems to
3 me that there is no reason to close a school
4 like this one. For years the DOE stay - - the
5 school issue [phonetic] by a little bit more
6 attention what's going on in the school. And if
7 they stay close to the school, maybe reduce the
8 number of students in a camp--in a--in a setting
9 [phonetic] here and allow a school like this one
10 remain open. No larger but at least less than
11 1,000 student.

12 We all know that the Bronx is--have the
13 larger unemployment of all Borough in New York
14 City. So on a career alternative education, a
15 school like this one, I think, it is so
16 important in the Bronx. So I--I been teaching
17 for 19 years. And I know that no everybody
18 maybe can go straight to college. But when you
19 got some type of technical education, you got--
20 have more opportunity than a lot of people
21 there.

22 So I believe that Gompers should be open
23 even though no larger school but at least in a
24 small environment. So it is no reason to close
25 the school. And I believe that the DOE is

1 proposing clo--phasing out the school like
2 Dodge, Gompers, Jane Adam [phonetic], the only
3 three school I believe that we have close here
4 in the south Bronx and I mean it doesn't make
5 sense. So hopefully DOE think about it and
6 remain with career and technical education like
7 this one, open, even in a small number--with a
8 small number of student in the--in the--in the
9 school. It shouldn't be closed at all. At
10 least leave it open for less number of students.
11 Thank you.

12 MS. TORRES: Thank you Mr. Orejada. So we
13 want to thank you for attending this meeting.
14 And again, we welcome any comments and feedback
15 you may have at any time before the Panel for
16 Educational Policy votes on the proposal at its
17 March 21st meeting which will take place at 6:00
18 o'clock at the High School of Fashion Industries
19 located at 225 West 24th Street in Manhattan.

20 The email address and phone number where
21 comments may be made are D07Proposal--
22 proposals@schools.nyc.gov. and number is (212)
23 374-5159. We thank you for your participation
24 and this public, joint public hearing is now
25 closed. Have a good evening everyone.

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[END 285_699]

C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the
4 best of my ability.

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7
8 Signature Laura L. Springate__

9 Date March 12, 2012
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