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**BOARD OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF PORTFOLIO
PLANNING**

**Opening and Co-Location
of a New D75 Site at X042**

**Building X042
1537 Washington Avenue**

Bronx, NY 10457

April 1st, 2014

5:30 P.M.

1 MS. DELORES ESPOSITO: Good evening,
2 everyone. Buenos noches. Thank you for being
3 with us this evening. Today this is a joint
4 public hearing of the Department of Education
5 Community Education Council, and the School
6 Leadership Team for the Proposed Opening and Co-
7 location of a new site of a new District 75
8 school with P.S. 42, Claremont in the building
9 X042.

10 Beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, I am
11 the Community School District superintendent
12 Delores Esposito, and I will be facilitating
13 tonight's hearing. Thank you once again for
14 being here.

15 We have asked the District 9 Community
16 Education Council and the School Leadership Team
17 or SLT from the school currently in the building
18 to participate in this joint public hearing. I
19 am joined tonight by Principal Castillo, to my
20 right from P.S. 42, and Ms. Nora Mercado from
21 the CEC. I am not sure if Mr. Hecht is in
22 attendance, that is the District 75
23 superintendent.

24 So, this hearing is being recorded and I
25 just want to make sure that if anyone needs

1 translation, do we have the translators?

2 So, this hearing is being recorded. The
3 purpose of this hearing is for me to provide to
4 you information and comments about the proposal.
5 Before I describe the proposal I want to make
6 sure that you are all aware of the opportunity
7 for you to provide input. All of those who wish
8 to speak must sign up in the front. There is a
9 speaker list right outside. The signup list
10 will close in the next fifteen minutes, so
11 please be sure to take the time if you would
12 like to speak.

13 Speakers will be given the floor in the
14 order that they signed up. All comments are
15 limited to two minutes. There may be elected
16 officials who arrive at different times
17 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak,
18 we will do your business to accommodate them at
19 the first and most appropriate opportune moment.
20 Those who are here at the start of the public
21 comment segment will be asked to speak first.

22 All comments will be mentioned in the
23 analysis of the public comment to be published
24 and provided to the Panel for Educational Policy
25 the evening before the panel votes. That vote

1 is scheduled for May 6, 2014. In addition, we
2 welcome any comments and feedback that you may
3 have at any time before the panel votes on this
4 proposal. The email address and phone number
5 where comments may be made are
6 DO9Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov. I am going to
7 repeat that again, the email where comments may
8 be made are DO9Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov. And
9 the phone number is as follows: 212-374-5159.
10 Again that number is 212-374-5159.

11 Next I will read the proposal summary. The
12 New York City Department of Education or the
13 Department of Education is proposing to open and
14 collocate a new site of a new District 75 school
15 in Building X042 located at 1537 Washington
16 Avenue, Bronx, New York 10457 beginning in the
17 2014-2015 school year.

18 We have an increasing population of students
19 referred to District 75 schools in the Bronx and
20 this proposal is designed to address the needs
21 of this population. If this proposal is
22 approved in this new District 75 program and
23 will be collocated with P.S. 42 Claremont
24 09X042, otherwise known as P.S. 42, the new
25 District 75 program in the X042 building, which

1 is where we are will serve 48 to 96 students in
2 the kindergarten through grade 5 who are
3 classified as autistic or intellectually
4 disabled on their Individualized Education
5 Programs.

6 P.S. 42 is an existing zoned elementary
7 school that serves students in grades
8 kindergarten through 5 in the X042 building and
9 offers a full day pre-kindergarten program. The
10 X042 building also houses Supported Children's
11 Advocacy Network or SCAN, which is a community
12 based organization which provides enrichment
13 activities and homework assistance for students
14 after school hours. This proposal is not
15 expected to impact the community based
16 organization The Children's Advocacy Network,
17 SCAN.

18 Building 42 has a target capacity to serve
19 717 students during the 2013-2014 school year.
20 The building is serving a total of approximately
21 460 students yielding a building utilization
22 rate of 64%. This means that this building is
23 underutilized and has sufficient space to
24 accommodate the Co-Location of this new District
25 75 program on a long term basis.

1 If this proposal is approved at both P.S.
2 42 and new the District 75 program are served in
3 the 42 building, the building will serve a total
4 of approximately 474 to 582 students yielding a
5 building utilization rate of approximately 66 to
6 81%.

7 For further details on space allocation see
8 the Educational Impact Statement.

9 This proposal is not anticipated to impact
10 the instructional programming, admissions
11 process, enrollment or extracurricular
12 opportunities of current or future students at
13 P.S. 42.

14 Thank you. Now be hearing from some of the
15 members that are here to present. Before we do
16 that I just want to recognize all the members of
17 the School Leadership Team that have been
18 participating in these conversations to really
19 help us think through if this is a proposal that
20 will help this community. So thank you in
21 advance to the chair Ms. Muir, Sonja Terado,
22 Greer Gardner, of course the principal Castillo,
23 Lenny Lopez the PA designee, Yolanda Twiggs of
24 the UFT. I am not sure if she is here. Yes,
25 Ms. Twiggs, Beverly Thomas, DC-37 rep, Karen

1 Evans, Lydia Lopez, Lisa Mallard, Jessica
2 Navarez, Eli Sosa and Vanessa Woods So thank
3 you for your support. And now at this point I
4 would like to turn it over to the CC member Ms.
5 Nora Mercado, if she would like to say anything
6 about the proposal.

7 MS. NORA MERCADO: No comment.

8 MS. ESPOSITO: Thank you. The next
9 presenter will be Principal Castillo of P.S. 42.

10 MS. CASTILLO: Good evening Thank you, very
11 much once more for coming out to support our
12 school as well as this proposal that has come to
13 us. Over the past month and a half or so since
14 we found out about the proposal our community
15 has convened to discuss it. I believe the
16 first time that it was discussed was with the
17 staff meeting that was held prior to the school
18 day starting where much of the staff asked some
19 questions that weren't necessarily answered then
20 because we didn't have the information, so I
21 encourage you to ask questions tonight and get
22 the answers now. This is a great time to do
23 that.

24 In addition to that we discussed the topic
25 during two of our last School Leadership Team

1 meetings where we discussed what were some of
2 the concerns that we had as well as some
3 questions that the community would like to pose
4 tonight, so, again, I encourage you to ask those
5 questions and raise those concerns.

6 Last week we also shared the proposal with
7 parents via News with Raduzza Coffee Hour that
8 happens once a month and we did that back in
9 March--I'm sorry back in February, the last
10 Friday of February when we met with parents and
11 we shared the proposal.

12 We backpacked those statements, the
13 educational impact statement. We have used
14 School Messenger to communicate to parents as
15 well and to elicit parents being here tonight
16 and again to encourage those of you who are here
17 to share your thoughts and concerns.

18 Last week we had a visit from the Deputy
19 Chancellor and other DOE representatives where
20 our school was seen as a beautiful space to
21 accommodate a D-75 program. And as I said last
22 week, while I cannot speak to the physicality of
23 the building, I can speak to our staff always
24 being very inclusive of special ed students in
25 our building, as seen through our ICP programs

1 and also our flexible group in the school year.

2 I assure us as a community that we will
3 continue to prioritize our students regardless
4 of what the outcome is, but that we will also
5 embrace this opportunity as something that can
6 really provide our students, our neighboring
7 families, even some of our siblings of students
8 in our own school with services that will help
9 meet their needs not far from home and realizing
10 that our school building can help to service our
11 community in other ways as well.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. ESPOSITO: We just want to invite other
14 school leadership team members if they would
15 like to make any comments or presentations.
16 Beverly Thomas? Ms. Twiggs?

17 MS. YOLANDA TWIGGS: Good evening, everyone.
18 Our school has a few concerns, just like any
19 other school, we have something new coming in
20 the building. There are a few concerns. I
21 heard you say that there is a new school coming
22 in the building will not impact our students
23 enrollment, it wouldn't impact the
24 extracurricular activities that they have.
25 However, what we would like to know, what we are

1 concerned about, what happens when attendance
2 in here increases? What happens to the space
3 now? We are already crowded, we are
4 overcrowded, what happens to that space that we
5 need for our children in this building?

6 I don't think we have a problem with sharing
7 with another school, welcoming other children,
8 welcoming other programs, but our major concern
9 is with the children that are already in the
10 building. What happens to those children? What
11 happens to the space that they need?

12 Thank you.

13 MS. ESPOSITO: Ms. Gardner is here?

14 MS. GREER GARDNER: Good evening, I am Ms.
15 Gardner, a third grade teacher in the building.
16 My concern is similar to what Ms. Twiggs said.
17 One of the questions I wanted to ask with the
18 new school coming in and taking the fourth
19 floor, what happens to our children when we do
20 increase enrollment or what happens next, the
21 following year when that school takes in ten
22 more kids, do they now move down to the third
23 floor and take another classroom to accommodate
24 those kids? Are our class sizes going to
25 continue get larger?

1 Another question I had in regarding the
2 proposal you just said that the school coming in
3 would not impact what goes on in our school but
4 it says, however, the proposed Co-Location may
5 change the way those programs are configured.
6 For example, some activities may need to share
7 classroom space or the scheduling of those
8 activities may change as a result of greater
9 demands on the available space during or after
10 school hours. As it is right now we don't use
11 the fourth floor, so why would that change what
12 we already have in place? And how is that going
13 to impact the program?

14 And I wanted to know if the new school would
15 have their own library or is that also another
16 space that would be shared and if it is shared
17 what resources are going to be brought in to
18 make the library better than what it already is?

19 MS. ESPOSITO: Thank you. Mr. Gregory Muir.

20 MR. GREGORY MUIR: Good evening. Greg Muir,
21 FOT chair. Perhaps my greatest concern is this
22 building serves as a safe haven for the students
23 as well as you know other enterprises that may
24 use the building. Given that actual enrollment
25 at the capacity of the building would increase

1 what safety measures would be put in place to
2 insure the security of the students in the
3 building given that there could be an increase.

4 The second question that I would like to
5 pose is given that there is a proposal for the
6 fourth floor to be occupied, what happens should
7 there be a need for you know I mean additional
8 space after the year is up? Is there going to
9 be a second you know--is there going to be a
10 request for more space after that point?

11 Also our enrollment, there's so many things
12 that is going on in the building right now in
13 terms of there is programs that we are trying to
14 build and our enrollment will increase so how
15 does that affect our community as a whole?

16 Also in terms of the budget, in terms of the
17 actual budgeting of the building you know, how
18 is that going to affect the fact that it is two
19 separate entities and given you know that
20 sometimes when there is more funds given to one
21 school, that can also lead to a situation where
22 there is more better features for one part of
23 the building and how is that going to in turn
24 affect our kids and our staff members

25 Thank you.

1 MS. ESPOSITO: Thank you. We have now
2 concluded the formal presentations and now we
3 are going to open the floor for public comments.
4 As I mentioned earlier, speakers will be given
5 the floor in the order that they signed up. All
6 comments are limited to two minutes. And I want
7 to welcome Councilwoman Gibson, who would like
8 to say a few words.

9 COUNCILWOMAN GIBSON: Good evening, ladies
10 and gentlemen. Thank you to each and every one
11 of you here tonight and I want to thank our
12 superintendent Ms. Delores Esposito and all of
13 the members of the Department of Education and
14 to all of you concerned neighbors, friends,
15 relatives. I want to also acknowledge the
16 principal, Ms. Castillo, thank you so much for
17 being here.

18 I am Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson and I am
19 newly elected to the City Council, I just took
20 office in January and I succeeded Helen Diane
21 Foster in the 16th Council District, which
22 includes all of Morrisania, Highbridge, Morris
23 Heights, Concourse, Claremont Village, Concourse
24 Village. Essentially I represent all of
25 District 9. And prior to that I was an

1 assemblywoman in the state legislature in
2 Albany for four years and I represented most of
3 that community. So education and the challenges
4 facing D9 are certainly not new to me. Many of
5 the parent leaders and advocates in the
6 Community Education Council, everyone pretty
7 much I have worked with over the years and so I
8 really want to commend the DOE for not just this
9 meeting, but I know there were meetings held
10 before, because these are critical opportunities
11 in which all of us can really have a critical
12 dialogue about some of the proposals before us.

13 And so while I have submitted an official
14 testimony to go to the Department of Ed, to our
15 chancellor, I just wanted to make a couple of
16 remarks and I apologize for the delay in being
17 late here. At the City Council we are starting
18 our preliminary budget for the year. So today I
19 met with about 45 groups that are looking for
20 funding from the Bronx and yesterday I met with
21 45 as well. So I have lots of numbers in my
22 head. But I am truly grateful to be here as
23 someone was educated in public schools all of my
24 life and someone who has always been advocate
25 for public education, for academic enrichment,

1 after school mentoring, all of the ingredients
2 that are truly the fabric of our democracy in
3 making sure the children have access to success,
4 access to academic curricular, access to so many
5 of the components that are truly, truly
6 important to make our students well rounded and
7 essentially successful leaders so they are able
8 to compete in the 21st Century.

9 And so I was contacted by the Department of
10 Ed as many of you were about this proposal to
11 collocate a District 75 school in P.S. 42. And
12 so what I just wanted to say is I recognize the
13 growing need for additional seats for D-75 and
14 while we understand that D-75 program caters to
15 students with disabilities and special needs,
16 essentially I really want to make sure that P.S.
17 42 is able to take on the additional schools
18 that will be in this building.

19 P.S. 42 has been here for quite a long time.
20 They have an assortment of arts and science and
21 you know, all the other components and other
22 classes in the school building, so my main
23 concern and not just with this proposal will
24 always be about long term capacity, long term
25 capacity to insure that as P.S. 42 grows in

1 population which we know it will, we want to
2 make sure that it doesn't impact the D75 school
3 and vice versa. I have a number of other D-75
4 schools. I have one at 204 in Morris Heights.
5 I have one at the New Settlement campus in Mount
6 Eden and I have seen when those schools come in
7 the demand on space, because it is not just
8 classroom space, it is also additional space
9 that is required for occupational therapy, for
10 physical therapy, for all of the additional
11 learning and one on one training that a lot of
12 our students really need and so that is space.
13 So I do want to make sure that the DOE
14 understands this proposal in the full form. I
15 want there to continue to be conversations with
16 the principal and her staff. I want to make
17 sure that this proposal does not impact P.S. 42,
18 because we know that we are facing a number of
19 challenges in public education and we always
20 hear and read about all the things going on, but
21 I am really proud at the progress that District
22 9 is making and our superintendent knows that
23 because she has truly been a leader in that.

24 District 9 has faced many challenges and we
25 are moving in the right direction. We have a lot

1 of model schools that are doing incredible
2 work. Students are reading above the state wide
3 average and they are really shining examples of
4 what other schools can do. And P.S. 42 is one
5 of those examples. And so I just want to make
6 sure that the DOE understands that as they are
7 considering this proposal. I would never be an
8 elected official that would ever turn away
9 students that have special needs and students
10 who have disabilities, students who are autistic
11 or any of that, but I just want to make sure
12 that P.S. 42 is not impacted in a negative way.

13 And so just the Co-Location, any
14 restrictions or limitations that would provide
15 limited access to the music programs, the art
16 programs, the science programs that are
17 currently here at 4, and so as the DOE continue
18 to have these conversations prior to the
19 official vote, I would ask that you know my
20 office be included as well, because we want to
21 make sure that all stakeholders are involved,
22 all of our educators, our teachers, our support
23 staff, our school leadership team, the CEC, as
24 well as all of the parents. I feel, again, I
25 have always taken a position and it is a very

1 strong position on Co-Locations for many
2 different reasons, but when I look at D-75, I
3 recognize that there is a major, major demand in
4 this community for additional seats. And while
5 we are always at a premium for open space in the
6 Bronx I want to again make sure that P.S. 42 is
7 accommodated, because I do know this proposal
8 will require additional space that may come from
9 P.S. 42.

10 So I am in support of D-75, I am in support
11 of this particular proposal but with a number of
12 concerns and I have outlined that in my
13 testimony and I will continue to make sure that
14 I work with Principal Castillo as well as all of
15 the DOE officials to make sure that all of our
16 concerns are heard as we move forward.

17 So I thank all of you for being here and
18 encourage you to please let us know if you have
19 any other concerns that have not been raised and
20 if you ever need my office for anything please
21 let me know. I have Helen Foster's old office
22 on Jerome Avenue and 170th Street. We are there
23 each and every day.

24 One of the things we also have are community
25 councils that meet every month in the office and

1 one of those councils is an Education & Youth
2 Council and we meet with CBOs, we meet with
3 teachers, we have principals, we have young
4 people and we meet every month and we talk about
5 challenges facing our young people and in the
6 community and we offer programs, resources,
7 solutions, we deal with policy issues, we have a
8 number of events with our youth that are youth
9 led and it is a great way to be involved in the
10 community. So if you are interested, we have
11 other councils as well, on housing, on parks, on
12 seniors, if you have any interest in being a
13 part of that please let us know, we are always
14 happy to take on more people. This is about
15 building and partnerships and really sharing
16 resources in this community.

17 So I am thankful to be here and thank you
18 for the work that you are doing and certainly
19 look forward to working with each and every one
20 of you and thank you again for your presence
21 tonight. Thank you

22 MS. ESPOSITO: Thank you, very much. And I
23 think we all share the sentiment that we want to
24 work together to make sure that anything that we
25 do to our schools on behalf of students is done

1 well and collaboratively with all
2 constituents. So than you for your comments and
3 for the issues that have been raised.

4 I also would like to invite Desiree
5 Magicovo.

6 MS. DESIREE MAGICOVO: Thank you. Good
7 evening. So I have several questions about the
8 space. I know that from experience I have seen
9 other schools collocate--well, maybe not
10 collocate and their building has been changed.
11 Are any of those ideas in the works for our
12 fourth floor? Will it be gutted and transformed
13 while the rest of the school stays in one
14 present condition?

15 Then what are going to be the demands on all
16 of the communal spaces, the auditorium, the
17 cafeteria, parking lot, playground, garden. I
18 guess that all also speaks to how much more is
19 the school going to be grow? Is it going to
20 grow to the point that P.S 42 gets phased out?
21 That's a huge concern for teachers who are
22 currently here.

23 And then how are the schools resources going
24 to be--how will they expect to be shared, such
25 as school based support, security guard, parking

1 permits, clusters, custodians, you know. Will
2 there be committees formed so that discussions
3 can continue, you know once everything gets put
4 in place if and when you know it does happen,
5 will committees be formed so that the voices are
6 truly heard and people are allowed to
7 collaborate and work together?

8 And as of right now we are trying to build
9 upon all of the wonderful programs that we have
10 here. Our art room, our science lab, the music,
11 which is wonderful. You know we have all of the
12 activities that happen here, you know now what
13 is going to be the plan for you know if we have
14 to move from those spaces.

15 So I know, you know I know--what am I trying
16 to say, I know that it is going to take a lot of
17 planning and how much are the people from our
18 school 42N, you know, the whole people to come
19 in going to be able to work those things out,
20 which is important. I think that's it.

21 MS. ESPOSITO: Thank you. The speaker list
22 is now exhausted. So again we welcome any
23 comments and feedback that you may have at any
24 time before the panel for educational policy
25 votes on this proposal at its May 6th meeting.

1 The email address and phone number where
2 comments may be made once again are
3 D09Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov. Again that
4 address D09Proiposals@Schools.NYC.gov and the
5 phone number is 212-374-5159. Again that number
6 is 212-374-5159.

7 I want to thank everyone for their
8 thoughtful participation and for being here to
9 really make that we represent what the community
10 wants and we want to make sure that we do what's
11 best. Your input matters. That's why we are
12 all here and we want to make sure that your
13 voices are heard and those that couldn't be here
14 certainly to email or call s that we can address
15 all of the concerns.

16 I want to assure you that as the
17 superintendent of this district that we will
18 work collaboratively with all members of the
19 school community and all of the groups through
20 the school's leadership team, which includes all
21 constituents, teachers, you know DC-37, UFT, CSA
22 Community Partners, parents, to make sure along
23 with the CEC that we are really asking those
24 very hard questions so that while we look to
25 bring in a wonderful program for the Bronx and

1 for District 9, and many students that need
2 these supports, that we also make sure that we
3 take care of P.S. 42 so that it can continue to
4 do well, because we are very proud of the work
5 that the teachers and the students and the
6 family do on behalf of students.

7 So I really want to thank you. I know today
8 was the first day of testing and I am proud to
9 tell you that principals are reporting to me
10 that our kids are sticking with it, they are
11 using all the strategies and that's because of
12 the hard work that the schools are doing and
13 that's also because of your hard work as parents
14 in supporting students and making sure that our
15 children are successful.

16 So thank you once again. I'm here to answer
17 more questions and to certainly speak to anyone
18 that still would like to ask other things that
19 perhaps weren't answered in today's
20 presentation.

21 Thank you so much and have a wonderful
22 evening. The joint meeting is closed.

23 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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8 Date 4/3/14
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