



Notice  
August 26, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott  
Chancellor

## **The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 224 Hale A. Woodruff (19K224) to a K-5 School in the 2012-2013 School Year**

### **I. Description of the subject and purpose of the proposed item under consideration.**

P.S. 224 Hale A. Woodruff (“P.S. 224”) is an existing zoned elementary school located in building K224, at 757 Wortman Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208, in Community School District 19. It currently serves students in kindergarten through sixth grade and offers a full-day pre-kindergarten program. P.S. 224 is currently the only school located in building K224.

This is a proposal to implement a “grade truncation,” meaning that the school would no longer enroll sixth graders after the 2011-2012 school year. If this proposal is approved, at the close of the 2011-2012 school year, all fifth and sixth graders who meet promotional standards would graduate from P.S. 224. In September 2012, these students would enter middle school as sixth and seventh graders, respectively. Beginning in September 2012, P.S. 224 would only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade and would continue to offer a pre-kindergarten program. From that time forward, P.S. 224 fifth grade students would participate in the Middle School Choice Process during fifth grade and would move on to middle school for sixth grade.

Prior to the May 2010, students in District 19 could attend their zoned middle school, or they could apply to choice middle schools on a school-by-school basis. In May of 2010, the District 19 Community Education Council voted to adopt “Middle School Choice.” Now, students may use a single application to rank and apply to middle schools throughout the District, including zoned middle schools outside the zone in which they reside. While zoned students still have priority for admission to zoned middle schools, other District 19 students are now eligible to attend those schools if there are remaining seats once zoned children are accommodated.

Middle schools typically enroll students beginning in sixth grade, and P.S. 224 students have the option to apply to middle school as fifth graders. With the adoption of district-wide Middle School Choice, P.S. 224 students who wait until sixth grade to apply to middle school are limited to those schools that still have available seventh-grade seats. In particular, there are several unzoned, choice middle schools in District 19, which rarely have open seventh-grade seats. Seats become available only if sixth graders leave the school. As a result, students who remain at P.S. 224 through sixth grade will have fewer options than their peers who start middle school a year earlier.

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) strives to ensure that all students in New York City have access to high-quality schools at every stage of their education. Having middle schools that begin in different grades (i.e., 5-8 versus 6-8) creates unequal levels of access for students based simply on the year they exit elementary school.

This proposed grade truncation will help standardize middle school application and entry grades in District 19, giving all P.S. 224 students access to the same range of middle school options as their peers throughout the District. Additionally, having students start middle school through multiple entry grades (sixth and seventh) creates challenges for students and the school as a whole. P.S. 224 students who start middle school in seventh grade may face transitional challenges related to entering middle school a year later than most of their classmates. They remain in their new middle school for only two years before moving on to high school, leaving them with very little time to adjust to a new school environment and new academic expectations before facing another transition and adjustment. Multiple transitions in such close succession can have the effect of depersonalizing the school experience when adolescents tend to need the most personal and supportive environments. Having students enter in multiple years is also challenging for teachers and leadership from an instructional perspective.

Changing P.S. 224's grade span from K-6 to K-5 would reduce the school's enrollment by approximately 109 students, freeing up additional space that P.S. 224 could use to accommodate additional lower-grade students or to meet other needs (e.g., art room, resource center, etc.).

## **II. Information regarding where the full text of the proposed item may be obtained.**

The Educational Impact Statement ("EIS") for this proposal can be found on the Department of Education's Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/Oct2011Proposals>

Copies of the EIS are also available in P.S. 224's main office.

## **III. Submission of public comment.**

Written comments can be sent to [D19Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D19Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)

Oral comments can be left at 212-374-0208.

## **IV. The name, office, address, email and telephone number of the city district representative, knowledgeable on the item under consideration, from whom information may be obtained concerning the item.**

Name: Lily Haskins  
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning  
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007  
Email: [D19Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D19Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
Phone: 212-374-0208

**V. Date, time and place of joint public hearings for this proposal.**

September 27, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.  
P.S. 224 Hale A. Woodruff  
757 Wortman Avenue  
Brooklyn, NY 11208

Questions about the proposal should be directed as indicated in section IV above.

Speaker sign-up will begin 30 minutes before the hearing and will close 15 minutes after the start.

**VI. Date, time and place of the Panel for Educational Policy meeting at which the Panel will vote on the proposed item.**

October 12, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.  
Bronx High School of Business  
240 East 172 Street  
Bronx, NY 10457