

Public Comment Analysis

Date: May 28, 2014

Topic: The Proposed Opening and Co-Location of a New Site of an Existing District 75 School P233Q (75Q233) with P.S./M.S. 42 R. Vernam (27Q042) in Building Q042 Beginning in 2014-2015

Date of Panel Vote: May 29, 2014

Summary of Proposal

On February 28, 2014, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) posted a proposal to open and co-locate a new site of P233Q (75Q233, “P233Q”), an existing District 75 school, in building Q042 (“Q042”), to be called “P233Q@Q042,” beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Building Q042 is located at 488 Beach 66 Street, Queens, NY 11692 in Community School District 27 (“District 27”). If this proposal is approved, P233Q@Q042 will be co-located with P.S./M.S. 42 R. Vernam (27Q042, “P.S./M.S. 42”), an existing zoned school serving students in kindergarten through eighth grades and offering a pre-kindergarten program. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

On April 10, 2014, the Notice of Joint Public Hearing for this proposal was amended to reflect a new date on which the Panel for Educational Policy will vote on this proposal.

Based on projected need for District 75 seats, the District 75 office is seeking to increase its capacity to serve students with autism and intellectual disabilities within Queens. If this proposal is approved, the DOE will open a new site for an existing District 75 school, P233Q, in the 2014-2015 school year to help meet growing demand. P233Q@Q042 will serve a range of students across grades kindergarten through eight who are classified as autistic or intellectually disabled under an Individualized Education Program (“IEP”). P233Q@Q042 is projected to serve seven sections of students in self-contained sections in 12:1:1, 8:1:1, or 6:1:1 classroom settings (ratio of students:teacher:paraprofessional). Students are placed in District 75 programs based on their individual needs and recommended special education services, and are referred to District 75 during a period that extends into summer. Students may be served in this program throughout the course of their elementary and middle school education. Q042 also houses two community-based organizations (“CBO”), Project Hope, and New York Junior Tennis & Learning. This proposal is not expected to impact the continued siting of these programs in Q042.

According to the 2012-2013 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (“Blue Book”), Q042 has a target capacity of 1,311 students. During the 2013-2014 school year the building is serving 648 students, yielding an estimated building utilization rate of 49%. This means that the building is “under-utilized” and has space that could be used more efficiently to accommodate additional students. In the 2014-2015 school year, when P233Q@Q042 opens, it is projected that there will be 660-792 students served in Q042, yielding a building utilization rate of 50%-60%.

If this proposal is approved, P233Q@Q042 will open in September 2014 serving seven self-contained sections of elementary and middle school students, for a total of 42-84 students.

The details of this proposal have been released in an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”), which can be accessed here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/SchoolProposalsMay62014PEP>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in the main offices of P.S./M.S. 42 and P233Q.

Summary of Comments Received

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at the Q042 building on April 1, 2014. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the hearing and 1 person spoke. Present at the meeting were District 27 Community Superintendent Michele Lloyd-Bey; Principal Patricia Finn, Alicea Flynn, and John Krattinsner representing the P.S./M.S. 42 School Leadership Team (“SLT”); Principal Debbie Edmonds, Pam Gaynor, Donna Beggi, and Kathy Sanchez representing the P233Q SLT; and Estelle Acquah and Dean Guzman from the DOE. Community Education Council 27 (“CEC 27”) was invited but did not participate in the hearing due to an unforeseen circumstance. A walkthrough of the Q042 building was conducted by Deputy Chancellor Corinne Rello-Anselmi from the DOE on March 27, 2014 with P.S./M.S. 42 Principal Patricia Finn. Immediately following the walkthrough, Deputy Chancellor Corinne Rello-Anselmi and Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph led a community meeting regarding this proposal at the Q042 building. Approximately 10-15 members of the public attended the meeting and 6 people spoke. At that meeting, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on and ask questions about the proposal. Present at the meeting were: P.S./M.S. 42 Principal Patricia Finn; and Deputy Chancellor Corinne Rello-Anselmi and Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph from the DOE; Council Member Donovan Richards; and CEC 27 president Joshua Hirschman.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing and community meeting on this proposal:

1. CEC 27 President Joshua Hirschman expressed support for the proposal stating that the CEC would like to see students with special needs serviced within the community.
 - a. He asked if the students that will be enrolled in P233Q@Q042 will be District 27 residents.
2. P.S./M.S. 42 Principal Patricia Finn expressed support for the proposal.
 - a. She expressed relief that a new District 75 program will be located in Q042.
 - b. She expressed enthusiasm for a new District 75 program being located in the peninsula for students to attend.
 - c. She stated that this change can only benefit the community.
3. P.S./M.S. 42 SLT representative John Krattinsner stated that he was looking forward to finding out what this proposal is all about.
4. P.S./M.S. 42 SLT representative Alicea Flynn expressed support for the proposal.
 - a. She stated that the focus of this proposal is the needs of the P.S./M.S. 42 community.
 - b. She expressed enthusiasm to have the opportunity for this co-location and the additional support.
 - c. She expressed the desire to support the students with special needs in the P.S./M.S. 42 community.
5. Council Member Donovan Richards expressed support for the proposal.
 - a. He expressed support for an additional District 75 program on the peninsula.
 - b. He expressed his desire to ensure that additional resources are brought in to the Q042 community with the new District 75 program.
6. Multiple commenters asked if the new District 75 program would have access to shared spaces such as the library and cafeteria.
7. Multiple commenters expressed concern about safety as a result of multiple schools in the building.
8. Multiple commenters expressed support for this proposal.
9. Multiple commenters expressed support for District 75 programs.
10. Multiple commenters asked how the two schools can collaborate with each other.
11. One commenter asked if safety officers will be trained to make sure all safety concerns in the building would be addressed.
12. One commenter asked how the new program will address the needs of special education students at P.S./M.S. 42.
13. One commenter asked how strong the parent leadership is at P233Q in regards to collaboration.
14. One commenter asked if new students are designated as P233Q or P.S./M.S. 42 students.
15. One commenter asked about the grade spans of P233Q.
16. One commenter asked if P233Q will occupy space in the Q042 addition.

17. One commenter asked if P233Q is a new school or an addition to P.S./M.S. 42.
18. One commenter asked if P233Q will cause the enrollment of P.S./M.S. 42 to decline.
19. One commenter asked why both schools have different names.
20. One commenter asked if co-locations have a designated time period.

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

The DOE received no written and/or oral comments through its dedicated phone line and e-mail for the proposal.

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

Comments 1, 2, 2a, 2b, 2c, 4a, 4b, 4c, 5a, 8, and 9 are in favor of the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 3 is explanatory in nature and does not require a response.

Comment 1a asks if students enrolled in P233Q@Q042 will be District 27 residents.

During the community meeting on March 27, Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph explained that District 27 students will receive priority placement at P233Q@Q042.

Comments 7 and 11 concern the safety of the proposed co-location.

Pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-414, every school/campus is mandated to form a School Safety Committee, which is responsible for developing a comprehensive School Safety Plan that defines the normal operations of the site and what procedures are in place in the event of an emergency. The School Safety Plan is updated annually by the Committee to meet changing security needs, changes in organization and building conditions and any other factors; these updates could also be made at any other time when it is necessary to address security concerns. The Committee will also address safety matters on an ongoing basis and make appropriate recommendations to the Principal(s) when it identifies the need for additional security measures.

In addition, the DOE makes available the following supports to schools relating to safety and security:

- Providing "Best Practices Standards for Creating and Sustaining a Safe and Supportive School," as a resource guide;
- Reviewing and monitoring school occurrence data and crime data (in conjunction with the Criminal Justice Coordinator and the New York City Police Department);
- Providing technical assistance via the Borough Safety Directors when incidents occur;
- Providing professional development and support to Children's First Network ("CFN") Safety Liaisons;
- Providing professional development and kits for Building Response Teams; and
- Monitoring and certifying School Safety Plans annually.

Comment 6 asks about the use of shared spaces in building Q042 by both P.S./M.S. 42 and P233Q.

Both P.S./M.S. 42 and P233Q will have access to shared spaces such as the library, cafeteria, gymnasium, and auditorium.

Comment 18 asks if this proposal will cause the enrollment of P.S./M.S. 42 to decline.

As stated in the EIS, this proposal is not expected to impact P.S./M.S. 42's future enrollment or programming.

Comments 10 and 13 pertain to collaboration between co-located schools.

The DOE supports collaboration between co-located schools. In an effort to improve collaboration and dialogue, co-located schools will create a Building Council, which is a campus structure for administrative decision-making for issues impacting all schools in the building. Principals from both schools in the building serve on the Building

Council and meet at least once a month to discuss and resolve issues related to the smooth daily operation of all schools in the building and the safety of the students they serve.

The DOE is confident that the Principals in the Q042 building will create a collaborative and mutually respectful environment for all students, staff, and faculty members.

Comment 16 specifically asks if P233Q will take space in the Q042 addition.

During the community meeting on March 27, Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph explained that placement of P233Q in Q042 is subject to the Building Council, consisting of principals from both co-located schools.

Specific decisions regarding the allocation of the shared and excess spaces will be made by the Building Council in conjunction with the DOE's Office of Space Planning.

Comment 15 asks about the grade spans of P223Q.

P233Q@Q042 will serve a range of students across grades kindergarten through eight who are classified as autistic or intellectually disabled under an IEP.

Comment 14 asks if new students are designated as P233Q or P.S./M.S. 42 students.

As stated in the EIS, P233Q@Q042 will admit future students in a manner consistent with current District 75 enrollment procedures. Students will be placed in District 75 schools based on individual student needs and recommended special education services. The following variables are taken into account when considering the best placement: whether the student needs a barrier free site, whether the student requires nursing services, the student's home district, and whether the student has siblings in the articulating school. Students will be placed in class sections based on their needs and may be served in this program throughout the course of their elementary and middle school education. Should future students require inclusion programming, the District 75 office will work with the families to provide the appropriate district placement for each student. P233Q@Q042 is expected to serve students in a 6:1:1, 8:1:1, or 12:1:1 setting. For additional information about District 75 programs, please visit the DOE's Web site at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/District75/default.htm>.

This proposal is not expected to impact the admissions process at P.S./M.S. 42 for students entering elementary school. P.S./M.S. 42 will continue to give priority to students who live in its zone, as it has in the past and in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. This proposal is not expected to impact the middle school admissions process at P.S./M.S. 42. P.S./M.S. 42 currently admits students through the middle school application process using an unscreened admissions method, with a first priority to continuing fifth-grade students. Other students residing in the 27Q042 zone have second priority to P.S./M.S. 42 for sixth-grade. Other students and residents of District 27 have third priority to P.S./M.S. 42 for sixth-grade. Students zoned to P.S./M.S. 42 may also apply to a range of programs provided on the application.

Comment 17 asks if P233Q is a new school or an addition to P.S./M.S. 42.

P233Q@Q042 will open as a new site for P233Q, an existing District 75 school. It is not an addition to P.S./M.S. 42.

Comments 5b and 12 ask what type of resources and support will be shared between P.S./M.S. 42 and P233Q.

During the community meeting on March 27, Deputy Superintendent Barbara Joseph explained that P.S./M.S. 42 and P233Q will have joint professional development meetings to discuss how to work with students with disabilities and discuss practices to address behavior management.

Comment 19 asks why P233Q and P.S./M.S. 42 have different names.

As stated earlier, P233Q@Q042 is a new site for P233Q, an existing District 75 school. P.S./M.S. 42 is an existing zoned school serving students in kindergarten through eighth grades and offering a pre-kindergarten program.

Comment 20 asks if co-locations have a designated time period.

There is no designated time period for this proposed co-location, which would begin in the 2014-2015 school year and continue indefinitely. All significant changes in building utilization are subject to Chancellors Regulation A-190. For additional information about Chancellors Regulation A-190, please visit the DOE's Web site at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/rulespolicies/chancellorsregulations/default.htm>.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to the proposal.