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

**Co-Location of
Success Academy 9 at K096**

**September 30, 2013
5:30 p.m.**

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[START RECORDING]

MS. ELAINE BORDON: There is a second sign-up for current students so that - - have a chance to give comments. Then we will have our students speak first. That second row is reserved for speakers. So if you find a seat other than that second row - - .

[Background noise]

MS. BORDON: We're going to ask our interpreters to step forward in case anybody needs services.

FEMALE VOICE 1: [Speaking foreign language].

FEMALE VOICE 2: [Speaking foreign language].

FEMALE VOICE 3: [Speaking foreign language].

MALE VOICE 1: [Speaking foreign language].

FEMALE VOICE 4: [Speaking foreign language].

MS. BORDON: If those people in the back can take a seat, we are ready to begin.

1 [Background noise]

2 MS. BORDON: Good evening. I'm Elaine
3 Bordon [phonetic]. I work for the Department of
4 Education and I will be facilitating this joint
5 public hearing. This is a joint public hearing
6 of the Department of Education, - - , Education
7 Counsel 21 and the School Leadership Team of
8 I.S. 96 Seth Low. We are also joined by
9 Community Education Council 20 and we're happy
10 to have them, and also by the Community
11 Education Council - - .

12 The proposed co-location of Success Academy
13 Charter School New York 3 with existing school
14 I.S. 096 Seth Low, in building K096 beginning in
15 2014-15. Tonight's proceeding will be recorded
16 and transcribed. Before we officially begin, we
17 ask that if anybody wishes to speak during the
18 public comment portion of the evening to sign at
19 the table right outside. We will end sign-ups
20 at 6:20. Only people who are signed - - will be
21 able to participate in the public comment.

22 All panel participants were asked to be here
23 no later than 5:30 and all have complied. We
24 have a full panel. If there is somebody else
25 that should be seated - - and they show up a

1 little late, then we will accommodate them in
2 any possible way. There are elected officials
3 tonight. There may be others that come in
4 various times. If they wish to speak and they
5 come after the - - , we will accommodate them as
6 we can.

7 We are--it is now 6:07 and we are beginning
8 officially. Tonight's format will include a
9 presentation of the proposal and - - followed by
10 elected's, following by public comment. Public
11 comment will start - - . You should have
12 already signed up to speak, but if you have not
13 and you wish to, we will keep sign-up open until
14 6:20. Public comment can be no longer than two
15 minutes each and will be strictly followed.
16 Speakers will be informed when they have 30
17 seconds left and when their time is up. You
18 will be allowed to finish your sentence.

19 You can submit written comments and if you
20 don't get a chance to say everything you wanted
21 to say please do that either tonight or through
22 the email address and phone number that we'll
23 give you. The reason we're keeping strict on
24 the two minutes is tonight's hearings are
25 hearings. The people who sign up at the end of

1 the hearing never get a chance to speak if we
2 don't follow that two minutes pretty
3 religiously. So we will have - - at the mike.
4 We will be gentle reminders but we will have to
5 stay within the time.

6 I want to say something else. This is the
7 beginning of my 45th year as an educator and
8 it's been my experience that these public
9 hearings are intended to give everyone an
10 opportunity to give their perspective and we
11 honor those perspectives. And we want to make
12 sure that even if we have different points of
13 view that everybody's perspective is heard. I
14 also want to remind us that we have children in
15 the audience and they bear witness to the manner
16 in which we handle each other's comments.

17 I would say this, that if in fact you agree
18 with somebody's comment, rather than applauding,
19 you may just want to waive your hand. Not your
20 - - , just your hand. If you disagree, you can
21 sort of cross over to say you disagree. And the
22 reason for that is when you applaud or when you
23 show your disapproval it takes time away from
24 the speaker and two minutes isn't a lot of time.
25 So we want to make sure that everybody gets

1 their fair share.

2 I am now going to sit and tell you who is on
3 the dais with me, at which time we will then
4 have the proposal read and give the dais the
5 opportunity to give their comments. To my far
6 left we start with Ellen McHue [phonetic], who
7 is representing the Special Ed Community
8 Council. We have Maurine Clarkman [phonetic],
9 who is representing the SLT UFT rep. We are
10 joined by Principal Denise Levinsky, who is the
11 principal at Seth Low. And I've mispronounced
12 the name already, haven't I? She will correct
13 it. Let me apologize in advance for
14 mispronunciations of names and please when you
15 get them - - whether you be on the dais or you
16 be at the public mike free to correct me. We
17 have Lori Windsor [phonetic] from CEC 20 and we
18 have Heather Verick [phonetic] from CEC 21, and
19 Isabelle DiNova [phonetic], your district
20 superintendent.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. BORDON: We are also pleased to have the
23 following elected's who act after the dais will
24 have an opportunity to speak. I apologize in
25 advance for mispronouncing your names as well.

1 Councilman Gentile - - for Assemblyman Alex Row
2 [phonetic] - - , excuse me, Assemblymember Peter
3 Evate [phonetic].

4 MULTIPLE VOICES: Evite [phonetic].

5 MS. BORDON: There will be - - thank you.
6 Assemblymember Colton, and Councilmember
7 Greenfield. We also have--

8 [Applause]

9 MS. BORDON: We also would like to recognize
10 the superintendent of District 20. Thank you
11 for coming, Maureen, and also the network,
12 members of the network for Seth Low. And we
13 appreciate everybody's participation. At this
14 time I'd like to turn the program over to the
15 Chancellor's Designee, Isabelle DiNova,
16 Superintendent of District 21, who will present
17 the proposal. Thank you. If you would stand
18 for the Pledge of Allegiance?

19 MULTIPLE VOICES: I pledge allegiance to the
20 flag of the United States of America, and to the
21 republic for which it stands, one nation, under
22 God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for
23 all.

24 MS. BORDON: Tonight - - to a public hearing
25 where people remind us what we - - . Thank you.

1 Isabelle DiNova.

2 MS. ISABELLE DINOVA: Good evening everyone.
3 Can you hear me? Is this loud enough?

4 [Background noise]

5 MS. DINOVA: I will be reading the proposal
6 summary. New York City Department of Education,
7 or DOE, is proposing to open and co-locate
8 Success Academy Charter School New York 3,
9 Success Academy, in District 21. Success
10 Academy will be a new public elementary charter
11 school that will serve students in kindergarten
12 through fourth grade in building K096. The
13 proposal to open and co-locate Success Academy
14 in K096 is contingent upon the SUNY Charter
15 School Institute's approval of Success Academy's
16 application for charter authorization. Only
17 SUNY has the authority to approve or deny
18 Success Academy's application for charter
19 authorization. If SUNY does not approve Success
20 Academy's charter application, this proposal
21 will be withdrawn.

22 If this proposal is approved, Success
23 Academy New York 3 will be co-located with I.S.
24 96 Seth Low beginning in the 2014-15 school
25 year. I.S. 96 is an existing district middle

1 school that currently serves students in sixth
2 through eighth grade. The DOE has identified
3 the K096 building as underutilized building.
4 According to the 2011-12 enrollment capacity
5 utilization report, or blue book, building K096
6 has the capacity to serve 1,341 students. In
7 2013-14, the building is serving approximately
8 740 free students, yielding a utilization rate
9 of approximately 55%.

10 If this proposal is approved, Success
11 Academy would enroll 150 to 200 kindergarten and
12 first grade students in 2014-15, and will add
13 one grade each subsequent year until the school
14 is fully phased in in the 2018-19 school year.
15 In 2018-19, it is projected that there will be
16 approximately 1,110 to 1,200--1,292 in K096 and
17 the building utilization rate is projected to be
18 at 83 to 96%.

19 The DOE notes that enrollment has been
20 increasing at the elementary school within the
21 portion of District 20 that is zoned to I.S. 96.
22 As such, the building utilization plan for this
23 proposal reflects additional space allocations
24 for I.S. 96's instructional use. This is in
25 anticipation that the elementary school level

1 increase in zoned student enrollment in
2 District 20 may also become a middle school
3 level increase in zoned enrollment at I.S. 96,
4 even though I.S. 96's overall enrollment has
5 declined 32% since 2008.

6 K096 also has its Beacon [phonetic], a
7 community based organization and a United
8 Federation of Teachers Teacher Center. This
9 proposal will not impact the continued
10 operations or site of this program and office.

11 MS. BORDON: At this time, we will pass the
12 mike down the dais, starting with CEC - - .

13 FEMALE VOICE 5: Good evening. Can you hear
14 me? Good evening. Community Education Council
15 District 21 adamantly opposes the co-location of
16 Success Academy Charter School within I.S. 96
17 Seth Low. In our July meeting, we passed a
18 resolution opposing the co-location for a number
19 of reasons. When multiple schools share a
20 building, it makes coordinating the scheduling
21 of shared space difficult for students,
22 families, teachers, and staff. Seth Low has
23 experienced a co-location with an elementary
24 school during the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.
25 That co-location was done in a state of

1 emergency.

2 There is no emergency in this district that
3 we need another K to four school. During the
4 temporary co-location of I.S. 96 with P.S. 90,
5 there were many concerns for the younger
6 children that were in the building. The
7 coordination and scheduling of sharing space
8 became extremely difficult. Tonight you will
9 hear from students, teachers, and staff of I.S.
10 96. They will share their personal experience
11 of what happened during their temporary co-
12 location.

13 District 21 has experience with Coney Island
14 Prep co-location at I.S. 303 Rachel Carson High
15 School, disparities such as Coney Island Prep -
16 - and refurbishing their classrooms. I have
17 seen firsthand walking through the halls of I.S.
18 303 Rachel Carson High School and Coney Island
19 Prep. When looking into the classrooms, you can
20 see that Coney Island Prep students have better
21 lighting and more technology than our students.

22 District 21's - - expired some years ago
23 because a reduction in enrollment of junior high
24 school students. We are now starting to see an
25 increase in the building enrollment. The area

1 of Coney Island is experiencing revitalization
2 with an enormous housing expansion which of
3 course will require additional seats of all
4 these families who will be moving in. Several
5 have constructed their academic programs which
6 will require additional space that will not be
7 available to them in the shared building. With
8 this restructure of their academies such as
9 music and dance, visual arts, they will not be
10 able to fully expand their missions for their
11 students who choose to attend I.S. 96, that they
12 have to share these rooms.

13 Success Charter's application paints a poor
14 portrait of District 21's performance on the
15 state exam when in fact District 21 outperformed
16 the city and state on the ELA and math exams.
17 District 21 was the sixth highest performing
18 district in the city on the ELA and math exam.
19 District 21 outperformed the city and state on
20 two most vulnerable sub groups, our English
21 Language Learners and students with disabilities
22 in math and ELA exams.

23 Success Academy, show us your scores for you
24 English Language Learners and students with
25 disabilities, as many like to point out that

1 are--that you are a public school. Why are
2 your scores grouped into one total and not in
3 our traditional public schools which are broken
4 down into subgroups. Also, District 21 has
5 outperformed the city and state on the ELA and
6 math exams with - - African American students.

7 District 21 has numerous programs such as
8 two gifted and talented programs, P.S. 95, P.S.
9 215; two NEST programs, P.S. 199 Horizon and
10 P.S. 121 ASE NEST; technology, P.S. 188 - -
11 program; and P.S. 101 which is the DOE's - - the
12 city; Community Learning School Initiative, P.S.
13 188; Lincoln Center Focus Schools, P.S. 226;
14 Common Core Lab Site pilot school, P.S. 253;
15 Council for Unity at P.S. 177, P.S. 212, P.S.
16 215, and of course our edible schoolyard in P.S.
17 216.

18 We give our children in District 21 a
19 quality education. We are the sixth highest
20 performing district in the city on ELA and math
21 exams. We have great schools, teachers, staff,
22 dedicated parents, and the most amazing
23 children. We don't need another K to four
24 school in our district. Our district is already
25 outstanding. Thank you.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BORDON: I want to commend the - - for
3 using hand signals.

4 [Laughter]

5 MS. LORI WINDSOR: Good evening. I'm Lori
6 Windsor [phonetic] and I'm from Community
7 Education Council District 20. So CEC 20 is
8 very concerned about Seth Low and we do oppose
9 this co-location. So many of you are sitting
10 here saying, "Well, why is CEC 20 getting
11 involved?" And let me explain to those of you
12 who are not familiar with zoning, Seth Low is a
13 feeder school for District 20. Our elementary
14 schools feed to Seth Low. Seth Low, more than
15 half the zone of Seth Low comes from District
16 20, about 53%. So we do have a vested interest
17 in the future of Seth Low.

18 As has been my management for many years,
19 District 20 needs seats and we need junior high
20 school seats especially. And we've been saying
21 this on and on. And, as a matter of fact,
22 Portfolio knows. We've had many conversations
23 about it, especially last year, about creating a
24 talent piece and possible in Seth Low.

25 Now, in District 20 we are so overcrowded,

1 and we've been working on it for many, many
2 years. I've worked with SCA and SCA has been
3 great at finding new sites and giving us new
4 seats. And I drive around on the weekend with
5 my kids in the back taking notes of the space
6 that's available. Portfolio has been working
7 with the CEC with the superintendent on
8 rezoning. This is the first year in I can't
9 remember that we're not rezoning this year. It
10 must have been five, six years - - to attend to
11 relieve some of the overcrowding by us.

12 Now, in the capital plan of 2005-2009, are
13 you ready for this how many seats we had in
14 there? 5,448 seats. We've had three additions,
15 approximately 1,500 seats. We've had six new
16 schools built, over 3,700 seats. So out of all
17 those numbers we've had almost 3,500 seats just
18 on the elementary level. And that's an
19 understatement, 3,500, because I'm not counting
20 the elementary seats that we built in the K to
21 eights. So, if I really sat down to nitpick,
22 it's higher than 3,500.

23 Now, right now in construction and in design
24 we have three more sites, over 1,100 seats. So
25 all together we have approximately over 5,000

1 elementary school seats that have come online
2 or are about to come online. And guess what?
3 We still need new seats and we need to rezone on
4 our junior high level. So on our junior high
5 level we built an extension at McKinley, I.S.
6 259. P.S. 163 and P.S. 229 we reconfigured to
7 go K to eight, and that was to help I.S. 201
8 Dyker. And guess what? As of this week we are
9 still over utilized at those schools. Dyker is
10 at 108% capacity, 108. 163 is at 104, and 229
11 is at 103.

12 So what are we asking for? We're asking in
13 District 20 for more junior high school seats.
14 We've been asking for this for years. We need
15 new junior high school seats. We don't need
16 another elementary and it's going to be
17 irrelevant whether--to me personally, whether
18 it's a charter or a community school. We just
19 need more junior high school seats in this part
20 of District 20. Because these kids in one year
21 and in two years are going to be ready for
22 junior high. And the question I ask the DOE is
23 where are we putting them.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. BORDON: The sign-up sheet is now closed

1 and we'll turn the mike over to - - .

2 FEMALE VOICE 6: Good evening and welcome to
3 Seth Low. I had initially said that I was not
4 going to speak at all and to pass the mike, but
5 I felt that I needed to take the opportunity to
6 put on the record that I am adamantly against
7 the co-location of Success Academy Charter
8 School into Seth Low's building, where you are
9 right now.

10 [Applause]

11 FEMALE VOICE 6: And I'm willing to focus on
12 one central reason that I am opposed. The Seth
13 Low community, many stakeholders are here today,
14 parents, students, staff, worked diligently to
15 restructure two years ago to provide smaller
16 learning communities within Seth Low. Some of
17 you may know it as the academy structure. If a
18 school co-locates into this building, the
19 integrity of that restructuring will be severely
20 hampered.

21 Currently we have three academies, one
22 assistant principal for each academy, one family
23 assistant for each academy, one dean for each
24 academy that exists on its own floor. Teachers
25 teach within the academy. They get to know your

1 students, your children. With the roll out of
2 the charter school coming into--if it was to
3 come into Seth Low, we would not have that
4 discreet space for that academy structure. And,
5 instead, teachers will be sharing rooms, subject
6 areas will be sharing rooms, students will be on
7 the same floor as students from the other
8 academy.

9 The restructuring, while I'm sure that I
10 have community members that will be speaking
11 later, has provided a safe community for our
12 children. And that is the primary reason that I
13 would like to present why I am opposed to the
14 restructuring and the co-location of Success
15 Academy.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. BORDON: We will hear now from our SLT
18 member, followed by - - .

19 MS. MAUREEN HAUGHTMAN: I have to stand.
20 Hi. My name is Maureen Haughtman [phonetic] and
21 I've been a teacher at Seth Low for 25 years.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. HAUGHTMAN: And I have to say in those
24 25 years nothing less than passionate teachers
25 have come through these doors. And today we are

1 filled with compassionate, loving, seasoned
2 teachers, well trained and experts in their
3 subject areas teaching the children in this
4 community. They love the children and they love
5 their school.

6 Teachers that I've spoken to said they would
7 never send their children to a charter school,
8 and the reason is the children - - . We are not
9 measured only by our ELA and math scores.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. HAUGHTMAN: - - , we look at that and we
12 look in their eyes. Like the children we gave
13 birth to, we love them. We're compassionate.
14 We appreciate every talent and skill that they
15 bring in with them because even if the math
16 score--Rockefeller was - - . Who is vice
17 president of the United States? If you gave
18 them a reading test, you would have called him a
19 failure. True?

20 MULTIPLE VOICES: Yes.

21 MS. HAUGHTMAN: So when these kids come in
22 we love them and we support them. When we - -
23 94, it demands that all students are entitled to
24 a free, appropriate public education. Seth Low
25 provides that to all students.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. HAUGHTMAN: One in three of our students
3 is receiving a service, one in three, 33%, 33
4 and a third. That is a large population.
5 Charter schools will not service those children.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. HAUGHTMAN: - - disabilities, emotional
8 disabilities, disruptive and hard to manage
9 students come to our school and we service them.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. HAUGHTMAN: We provide speech,
12 occupational therapy, physical therapy. But
13 let's look at a specific population that really
14 hasn't been addressed yet. Let's look at our
15 ESL population. Almost 20% of our population is
16 ESL or ELL, new name. Sorry, 25 years, you've
17 got to give me a break. English Language
18 Learners, they are limited in their English
19 proficiencies. Let's think about why people
20 come to the United States, for more opportunity
21 and a better education. If you go to a charter
22 school--and the United States government is - -
23 in the House of Representatives now. How come
24 charter schools don't have numbers for their
25 reading and math scores? Because they don't

1 service them. We do.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. HAUGHTMAN: We have a - - . We're
4 applying for a grant that will provide dual
5 language classes to address more of their needs.
6 Consider the fact that most parents that come
7 into the United States as immigrants do not
8 speak English. They don't know the school
9 system and they don't know how to communicate to
10 get the best for their children. When you think
11 about separating ESL children, they don't have a
12 charter school special for them. We do that.
13 We service their needs. We fill the needs and
14 we provide a quality education moving these kids
15 up. They only get one year to take--one year to
16 - - on that reading test. That's not enough
17 time but we at Seth Low manage to move these
18 kids forward year after year after year.

19 In addition, there's one thing that nobody
20 talks about that really bothers me. And that is
21 the stability rate of scores. Now, a lot of
22 people don't know what that rate is. That rate
23 is--if you look at an eighth grade and measure
24 how many of those eighth graders were seventh
25 graders in a school last year. Well, in

1 general--I don't have a specific number for
2 Seth Low or of this charter school but I'm going
3 to give you a general statistic that I looked
4 up. Charter schools have a stability rate of
5 84%. Public schools have a stability rate of
6 93%. Why is there a 10% difference, almost a
7 10% difference? Because they don't have to
8 follow the same rules that public schools have
9 to follow. They encourage students that are
10 going to negatively affect their scores to leave
11 before the test. This year Seth Low, right
12 before the test, received three such students.
13 So those math and reading scores couldn't count
14 against the charter school. We have scores that
15 count for us, that count for our work and what
16 we do every day in the classroom, which doesn't
17 always come out in the reading or math score but
18 it comes out in the talent or a skill that later
19 on--not all children are going to be the best
20 readers and math but they're mechanics, they're
21 plumbers, they're electricians. And that's not
22 measured on a test.

23 Finally, let's look at the space. Right now
24 we have extra space but let's think about the
25 '70s and '80s and '90s when New York City Public

1 Schools were underused. What did the city do?
2 They sold off the schools. They got rid of all
3 those buildings. And what happened? We had
4 overcrowding. How many times did you see on the
5 news that we didn't have enough room? Students
6 were in cafeterias, in bathrooms, in libraries.
7 If we give up our space and the charter schools
8 no longer take the students that aren't going to
9 fit their image, where are we going to put those
10 children? Seth Low services all children.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. HAUGHTMAN: What I'd really like you all
13 to understand is that we're--at Seth Low we
14 maintain the single--we should maintain the
15 single location because we provide a safe,
16 positive learning environment for all students.
17 And co-location would limit our space to grow.

18 [Applause]

19 FEMALE VOICE 7: I should say last but not
20 least, but what I'm going to say is this ain't
21 my first rodeo. This is not--just for
22 information's sake, when you do this, that is
23 the American Sign Language - - for clapping. So
24 are you actually diversifying your understanding
25 of a disabled population. So, when you do it

1 again, I hope you all do it quietly because my
2 son will be listening or not, as the case may
3 be. For - - the New York City Board of
4 Education uses the utilization rate of 115% to
5 say that a school is overcrowded. As a person
6 who went through any number of iterations of
7 math and still can't balance a checkbook, I do
8 know that if I'm 115% overdrawn I'm in big
9 trouble. So using the 115% as the basis can
10 create other issues in this building.

11 Additionally, those children who are
12 receiving speech and language, OT, and PT will
13 lost--probably lose the rooms because the DOE
14 looks at those rooms as if they were available
15 classrooms, no matter what the size. So, in
16 that case, my son or my daughter might be in a
17 hallway, in a bathroom, in a closet, because a
18 smaller size classroom had been taken away from
19 those children who are in need of specific
20 services.

21 The DOE's recent specialist - - has also
22 asked schools or informed schools that they must
23 take those children who live in their area. No
24 longer can you send a child who is more
25 profoundly disabled down the road to the OTC or

1 over the bridge to the OTC on Staten Island.
2 They - - . Many of those children have some
3 profound needs, including toileting and other
4 feeding issues. They need a private space to be
5 where they can be taken care of appropriately.
6 Losing those spaces to charter school students
7 would not necessarily benefit anyone because the
8 charter school kids wouldn't know what they
9 took. Only the adults would.

10 In the past at these hearings, individuals
11 from charter schools, from Success Academy, from
12 Brooklyn Prep Academy, other academies have come
13 to present. It is unfortunate that they have
14 refused or have been reluctant to come to
15 tonight's meeting. Either they feel the venom
16 in the room, which is not a nice way to say it,
17 or they understand that the community is not in
18 support while they may be in support of the
19 mayor's efforts to ram these things through.

20 The political issue here--you see how easy
21 that was? That's what I'm talking about. This
22 is boring, just in case anybody - - . So if I
23 see that in the room I'll shut up. But at the
24 end of the day the issue here is how we as a
25 community, whether we are serving children with

1 disabilities, serving children who have
2 language issues, or serving children who are
3 just struggling to be accepting in a world where
4 adults fight, this is not where we should be and
5 the charter school people should not be ignoring
6 us when they're whole reason for being--I can't
7 speak for them--is to move into communities that
8 are unserved. I would urge you to continue this
9 October 15th and 20th BEP meetings. In many
10 cases people have given up, walked away, said
11 nothing even though these are rubber stamped
12 issues. Having said that, you have to establish
13 a history of rejecting of the plan and also
14 community participation. Is there anybody in
15 the room - - been removed from a charter school?
16 See? But that's what--that is where we need to
17 all be, so that more people can show up and have
18 a human conversation instead of having things
19 rammed down each other's throats. Good luck.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. BORDON: That concludes or formal
22 presentation. We'd now like to turn to our
23 elected. Since this is Councilmember
24 Greenfield's district, we'll start with him.

25 MR. DAVID GREENFIELD: Good evening. First

1 of all, I want to thank the panel. I think
2 you called them the dais, Elaine. Is that
3 correct? I called it a panel. I want to thank
4 you, Elaine. I want to thank the superintendent
5 - - . I want to thank Heather from CSE 21 and
6 Lori, CSE 20. Principal, thank you so much for
7 - - thank you for that eloquent speech. And,
8 Ellen, thank you for teaching me how to pick my
9 nose in public.

10 [Laughter]

11 MR. GREENFIELD: It means I'm bored. Right?
12 The next time I get caught in the New York Post
13 asks me what I'm doing, it just means I'm bored.
14 You know, I want to thank everybody for coming
15 out here tonight and I think the arguments that
16 have been made have been very compelling so far.
17 Of course my name is David Greenfield. I'm the
18 councilman who represents Seth Low. I'm
19 privileged to do so.

20 I've got to tell you something. I have a
21 confession to actually make here tonight, which
22 is I've never gone to a public school in my
23 life. I confess. In fact, I went to a yeshiva
24 growing up. I went to Touro College, which is a
25 Jewish college. I went to Georgetown for law

1 school, which is a Catholic law school. But I
2 have another confession, which is I love public
3 schools, and let me tell you why. Because the
4 way I think all of you described it--and I know
5 that we have so many staff members and teachers
6 who are here tonight--is public schools are the
7 great equalizers in our society. When you talk
8 about why someone comes to the United States,
9 one of the things that attracts them the most,
10 as you know, you can get a great education here
11 like you can get nowhere else. And it's thanks
12 to those dedicated teachers and staffers and
13 volunteers and CEC members, that's what makes
14 our school so great.

15 And that's why I'm very proud to fund each
16 and every public school in my district. Last
17 year I was proud to secure over 1.25 million
18 dollars for all of our schools. In fact, I'm
19 actually proud this year just to show my support
20 of Seth Low that we're going to be funding a
21 Casa [phonetic] program for Seth Low this year
22 as well because I think that--

23 [Applause]

24 MR. GREENFIELD: I think when a school has
25 taken a hit you've got to show your support. I

1 don't want to redo all the arguments here
2 tonight because you've heard them all but the
3 one question that I have for the Department of
4 Education is and does not make any sense to me,
5 and it's the one question that hasn't been
6 answered is who wanted a charter school. Who
7 actually came to you and said, "Hey, we are
8 desperate here and CEC 21 and CEC 20 want a
9 charter school?" The answer is nobody. Nobody
10 asked for a charter school.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. GREENFIELD: I want to be clear, by the
13 way, and all the folks here at the DOE who know
14 me, I'm moderate. I'm a reasonable guy. I
15 don't generally yell and scream. I'm not
16 opposed to all charter schools but there is a
17 limited, finite amount of charter schools by
18 law. Why would you put a charter school into a
19 neighborhood that did not ask for one, does not
20 need one, and doesn't want one? It just doesn't
21 make any sense.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. GREENFIELD: And I think that really is
24 the fundamental question that has to be asked
25 tonight. You know, you actually asked before,

1 Ellen, if there was anyone here from Success.
2 I didn't see it. If there was, is there one
3 person? Congratulations. Thank you very much.
4 I have a different question. Is there anybody
5 out here from the community who came out tonight
6 to support the charter schools?

7 MULTIPLE VOICES: No.

8 MR. GREENFIELD: Anybody, please stand up.
9 Anybody here who came out to oppose the charter
10 school?

11 [Applause]

12 MR. GREENFIELD: Elaine, respectfully to you
13 and to the Department of Education, it doesn't
14 make any sense. The reality is, and let's be
15 frank, we've all been around the block myself
16 and I want to thank all of my colleagues who are
17 here and of course I want to welcome our newest
18 colleague and teacher, Mark Tragger [phonetic],
19 who will be joining us - - as well, and
20 congratulate him. The reality is this. We
21 don't need a charter school. We don't want a
22 charter school. There is no reason to put a
23 charter school here. The only reason that the
24 charter school is placed here is because it's
25 tick-tock. Time is running out. Let's be

1 frank. Time is running out. There's a new
2 mayor coming in a few months. And as a result,
3 let's be frank--let's just - - .

4 [Applause]

5 MR. GREENFIELD: And, as a result--as a
6 result, Success is trying to sneak in another
7 charter school. They looked at the numbers in
8 the city and said, "Oh, okay, we have some space
9 over here." That's what it comes down to sadly,
10 which is numbers. It's not about numbers. It's
11 about people. It's about students. It's about
12 staff. It's about teachers. It's about
13 passion. It's about folks who have dedicated
14 their lives to Seth Low, to make it an
15 outstanding school. It's not easy to
16 restructure a school. When the principal says
17 that it's not something that happens overnight.
18 That is countless of hours of work that you sit
19 down and you figure out how are we going to make
20 it better, how are we going to invest. And they
21 said, "We're going to use every inch of space of
22 this school." And now the DOE is coming and
23 saying too bad. It's wrong. It's disrespectful
24 and I'll tell you why it's disrespectful,
25 because we didn't ask for it.

1 We were barely notified of it. All sorts
2 of - - when we would even have this opportunity
3 to have this conversation, and we don't want it.
4 So I'll tell you what. It's a big city. There
5 is eight and a half million people. No problem,
6 find another neighborhood that wants a charter
7 school and wish - - a success, the best success
8 in that neighborhood. But we here in this
9 community, we don't want a charter school. We
10 don't need a charter school. What we need is
11 more support that's been requested by our CECs,
12 our superintendent's, and our principal. That's
13 what we need. The only thing a charter school
14 will do in this community is it will divide the
15 community and quite frankly will hurt the
16 successful schools that we have.

17 And that's the final point I want to make,
18 which is I am very proud. We have some of the
19 finest schools here in this community. CEC 21
20 and CEC 20, the schools are outstanding. If you
21 listen to some of the schools, and quite frankly
22 it's every school. I have yet to be into one
23 school. I've yet to walk into one school in
24 this community where a teacher or an assistant
25 principal or a principal is sleeping on the job.

1 It doesn't exist. These are folks who give
2 their heart and soul to this community.

3 And that is why once again--and I want to
4 make this point again, which is it's
5 disrespectful to bring a charter school here
6 because the message that you're sending is that
7 your schools are not good enough, and that's
8 false. Our schools are outstanding. Our
9 schools are great. We have the best teachers.
10 We have the best administrators. We have the
11 best staff. We have the best parents and we
12 have the best teachers. And so all we're asking
13 for is--

14 [Applause]

15 MR. GREENFIELD: All we're asking for is,
16 Elaine, is give us a little bit of respect.
17 Thank you very much.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. VINCENT GENTILE: I've got to lower this
20 microphone. I'm a little--I'm a little shorter
21 than my colleague but I think I'm taller than
22 Marty Markowitz [phonetic]. I'm not sure. He
23 says I'm not. Right? Anyway. After hearing
24 the opinion of the panel and the opinion of the
25 audience, I think we're preaching to the choir

1 here tonight. But, in any case, I'm
2 Councilman Vincent Gentile and I'm here to also
3 voice my opposition to a co-location of Success
4 Academy Charter at I.S. 96.

5 Let me first say that I--with the mayor and
6 the DOE, they have no business with three months
7 left in their term to be making decisions of
8 this nature that will last long after they're
9 gone. They have no business making this
10 decision right now.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. GENTILE: This is a decision for the new
13 mayor. This is a decision for the new
14 chancellor whether or not to do anything of co-
15 location anywhere, not only at Seth Low but
16 anywhere. This DOE, this chancellor, this
17 mayor, your time is up. You should not be
18 making these decisions.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. GENTILE: And a bad decision you're
21 making if you do so because there's no need, as
22 we've heard, for a K to four school in this
23 district. There is plenty of room I'm told in
24 the elementary schools that exist here in
25 District 21 for K to four students. There is no

1 need for another K to four school in District
2 21. So I say to Portfolio Management, you know,
3 as we've just heard, it's no secret that
4 District 21's neighbor, District 20 that I
5 represent, is overcrowded and desperately,
6 desperately in need of middle school seats.
7 It's also well known, as Lori said, that over
8 50% of the students that come to Seth Low come
9 from the feeder schools in District--in District
10 20. So bringing in a K to four school is not
11 what they should be doing.

12 What they should be doing is helping
13 District 20 and helping District 21 by building
14 up I.S. 96, giving it the resources it needs,
15 and helping to make I.S. 96 a school with all
16 the resources so that it relieves the pressure
17 off of District 20 and makes it I.S. 96, the
18 jewel of District 21. That's the conversation
19 that should be had, not what they're deciding to
20 do.

21 [Applause]

22 MR. GENTILE: And so I say that the decision
23 making process - - of doing an elementary school
24 in an intermediate school, which needs other
25 resources, not an elementary school, is way off

1 base. They have no business doing it. So I
2 join the community and I join my colleagues in
3 saying no low at Seth Low. So thank you all.

4 [Applause]

5 MR. BILL COLTON: Thank you. I'm Assembly
6 Member Bill Colton and I represent this area in
7 the state assembly. And my office is only about
8 two blocks from here and I have heard very
9 clearly from the parents, from the community,
10 and also from educators that this decision makes
11 no sense, and I support their opposition to this
12 co-location.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. COLTON: You know, it seems to me that
15 this ill-conceived idea which nobody has called
16 for, as Councilman Greenfield so eloquently
17 pointed out, is attempting now to be rammed
18 through at full speed. We had a meeting just
19 this past week which was called on almost
20 literally no notice really in my mind on a
21 public hearing, called under SUNY's jurisdiction
22 to determine whether or not they would even give
23 a charter to this--to this school, Success
24 Academy 3. And, yes, I understand that this
25 decision that will be made by DOE will be

1 subject to the school being granted a charter.
2 But what is the rush? Why are we calling a
3 meeting by giving notice on a Thursday after
4 5:00 for a meeting to be called the following
5 Tuesday? So that the result is there is no
6 meeting. It is a nullity and that's why I wrote
7 a letter to the chancellor of SUNY and I made my
8 view clear.

9 That meeting was a nullity and the Education
10 Law has not been complied with because they are
11 required to consult the public. They didn't do
12 that. You had almost no parents there, almost
13 no people there. That meeting was a nullity and
14 they right now proceeding with this are in
15 violation of Education Law in my opinion. And
16 that was what my letter to the chancellor said.

17 [Applause]

18 MR. COLTON: Now, I look at the facts here
19 in this hearing. Seth Low needs space to grow.
20 What has--what has been happening in District 20
21 with so many--so many students in the lower
22 grades that are now going into the middle grades
23 is going to be repeated in District 21. So Seth
24 Low is going to be just booming in about four
25 years, at the very time where they put a charter

1 school here it is going to reach its maximum
2 capacity. So at the very time when seats are
3 going to be desperately needed, and they're
4 already desperately needed by CEC 20 and they're
5 going to be in four years desperately needed by
6 21, we are going to have a fact that there has
7 been overcrowding in the school. There is not
8 going to be seats available. So it makes no
9 sense to put a charter school here on such short
10 notice, without any real thought being put into
11 it. If they were going to put a charter school,
12 they should have considered it when they opened
13 a new building just a block away from here.
14 This is not the time.

15 [Applause]

16 MR. COLTON: Now, the reality is also going
17 to be that if they put a charter school here you
18 are going to have 2,500 students within one
19 block of each other, and that creates its own
20 problems and its own special challenges.

21 [Applause]

22 MR. COLTON: And the reality is that we also
23 have many special extracurricular programs in
24 Seth Low. You have the Beacon program. Now, I
25 looked at the EIS and the allocation statements,

1 the utilization reports, and it adds a simple
2 sentence. It will not be affected. Well, I
3 don't believe that. I don't think it was
4 carefully considered. I don't think it was
5 sought out and I think it will impact programs
6 like the Beacon program, the Federation of
7 Italian American Organization - - in this
8 building, a program that services many, many
9 children. And I believe they are going to end
10 up losing those services if we move in this ill-
11 conceived direction.

12 Now, also Seth Low itself, as the principal
13 so eloquently stated, has programs, the academy
14 programs, that is making a difference, that is
15 allowing this school to serve its students
16 better, that is utilizing space that is here
17 until we get to the point where there will be
18 more children coming in. Those programs are
19 going to be stunted and stopped. They're not
20 going to be stunted. They are going to be
21 stopped because the space is not going to be
22 there. So this does not serve the interest of
23 children. This does not serve the interest of
24 education. It doesn't fulfill any need that
25 exists in this community, and that's why. And I

1 always say before decisions are made we need
2 to listen to the parents because the parents
3 know what is best for their children.

4 [Applause]

5 MR. COLTON: And it is very clear to me that
6 the parents are saying with no ands, ifs, and
7 buts, that they do not need a charter school
8 here. They do not want a co-location, and they
9 Department of Education should listen to them
10 and reject this ill-conceived notion.

11 MS. BORDON: - - .

12 MALE VOICE 2: Thank you very much. And,
13 ladies, thank you very much for now briefly
14 explaining to everyone what exactly is going on
15 here. Let me just ask a question. Who is here
16 from the Board of Education other--that's it? A
17 few more people? Good. Okay. I think what we
18 heard tonight, and I hope you all bring it back,
19 that the facts that were presented shows that we
20 do not need a charter school here. It's clear
21 as day. As one of my colleagues says, there's
22 going to be a new administration coming in
23 making decisions.

24 [Applause]

25 MALE VOICE 2: Hopefully, hopefully when you

1 go back tomorrow you will recommend to your
2 bosses that it's not a good idea to come here
3 because I'm going to remember this. I've been
4 around 28 years and I'd remember this. So when
5 people do the right thing I try to do the right
6 thing by them. When people try to make a
7 mistake in my community, I try to make sure
8 they're not around to make a second mistake.

9 [Applause]

10 MALE VOICE 2: It's very clear. I do not
11 want the community hurt. It's not for me. It's
12 the people here. And I'm looking that way.
13 Look, it's the community. That's who we do it
14 for and that's important. And one from--excuse
15 me, I couldn't see from there, from the Success
16 Academy. Are you here to report back? Good.
17 Tell Eva it will be the worst mistake she ever
18 made to come into this community.

19 [Applause]

20 MALE VOICE 2: It would be the worst
21 mistake. Again, I - - all the time and - -
22 knows that, but over time I know if you don't
23 fight for the community and you don't go to the
24 higher ups - - . So that's all I have to say.
25 Thank you.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BORDON: Please welcome Councilmember -
3 - .

4 [Applause]

5 MALE VOICE 3: I want to thank the CEC and
6 everyone for being here tonight but there's a
7 few issues here. Tonight is a very sad night.
8 Tonight is sad because I have hundreds of my
9 constituents who would have loved to have been
10 here tonight from Coney Island but we were busy
11 last week fighting to extend Build it Back
12 program, and we just got that program extended
13 this afternoon. So they would have loved to be
14 here but they are constantly fighting for their
15 rights. The DOE is here tonight. There are
16 hundreds of kids and parents who come to this
17 school. They are still trying to get their
18 lives back because they were devastated by
19 Sandy. And now you're coming in here with
20 Success Academy and you want to crush them. How
21 much more damage do you want to do?

22 [Applause]

23 MALE VOICE 3: How much more do you want to
24 hurt people? - - .

25 [Applause]

1 MALE VOICE 3: How much more?

2 [Applause]

3 MALE VOICE 3: This is about what you do to
4 people, people that were devastated by Super
5 Storm Sandy. Let's concentrate on getting the
6 Coney Island schools back in order. Let's put
7 the money in our schools.

8 [Applause]

9 MALE VOICE 3: What does the DOE have to say
10 about that? You're from the DOE. What do you
11 have to say? Just sit there and not say
12 anything to us? Who is going to answer those
13 questions? Where is SUNY? Where is Success
14 Academy? Step up to the plate. Answer our
15 questions.

16 [Applause]

17 MALE VOICE 3: Where are they? Assemblyman
18 called and talked about the meeting, the hearing
19 that they were supposed to have. Notices were
20 sent out the last minute. CEC asked for an
21 extension. It was sent out on a Jewish holiday
22 and then they made the next meeting on another
23 Jewish holiday. What has this come to that we
24 don't respect people's religions and their right
25 not to hold public hearings on Jewish holidays?

1 [Applause]

2 MALE VOICE 3: Where is the DOE to answer
3 our questions? They sent representatives.
4 Where are the decision makers? You want to come
5 here? Let's sit at the table. Let's talk about
6 it. Let's answer these questions. But nobody
7 wants to answer our questions. It's not going
8 to happen. Like - - said, we will unite
9 together, District 20, 21, and 22. We are going
10 to unite. We are not going to let this happen.

11 [Applause]

12 MALE VOICE 3: The EIS is flawed and we'll
13 take this to court if we have to. It is flawed
14 because it gives expectations that enrollment
15 will drop at Seth Low from 743 to 675 in 2014,
16 and will maintain at this level. This is - - .
17 There is no basis. There is no proof of that.
18 But you know what gets me? When I was on the
19 school board - - this school was bursting at the
20 seams. Why did it go down? Why did - - get the
21 support from the Department of Education?
22 Because they've had a plan, a plan to bring the
23 school down, to put in a charter school.

24 [Applause]

25 MALE VOICE 3: They did this to John Dewey

1 High School. John Dewey High School, from
2 2004 I have emails and letters about saving the
3 school, getting a new principal. They kept the
4 principal in there for ten years until they ran
5 it to the ground. Now we put a new principal,
6 now they want to co-locate that school too and
7 we're not going to make that happen because this
8 is their plan.

9 [Applause]

10 MALE VOICE 3: We have great elementary
11 schools. We have excellent teachers,
12 paraprofessionals, school nurse, kitchen help.
13 District 20 and 21 and 22, they don't need this.
14 Coney Island Prep, we have a charter school for
15 this end of Brooklyn. And let me be very clear.
16 When they took applications for students, they
17 did not take the students who was a one. They
18 didn't take students who were twos. They took
19 three and fours and they cleaned out the Coney
20 Island schools. That's what a charter school
21 does.

22 [Applause]

23 MALE VOICE 3: So take out all the kids, the
24 threes and fours, leave the ones and twos,
25 because charter schools don't know how to

1 educate those kids.

2 [Applause]

3 MALE VOICE 3: Ladies and gentleman, this is
4 a sad night. This is a sad night. This was not
5 the intent when they add charter schools was to
6 throw out the public schools. That was not the
7 intent. Our schools are good. Our teachers are
8 great. Our principals are even better. We are
9 doing well. To the DOE, the fight has just
10 begun. Send them back and let everyone know at
11 the DOE that we will not let this happen. We
12 will fight. We will unite together and most of
13 all this goes for 96, Cavallaro, John Dewey, two
14 schools in 202. Okay? Stop it. Let us grow.
15 Support us. Let's give the money to these
16 principals to do what they need. Let's get the
17 - - .

18 [Applause]

19 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. BORDON: We have one more representative
22 of an elected - - .

23 FEMALE VOICE 8: I am reading a written
24 statement by the assembly man. So unfortunately
25 it's not coming from me. I--you know, all of

1 the enthusiasm, but I'll try to read it with
2 enthusiasm.

3 As both an elected official and a parent in
4 this community, I am very concerned about the
5 proposed co-location of the Success Academy
6 Charter School New York 3 and I.S. 96 in the
7 existing I.S. 96 Seth Low - - school. I stand
8 firm in my belief that the education of children
9 should be our first and foremost priority, and I
10 do not feel that this is appropriate for them to
11 be co-located with the existing New York City
12 Public Schools.

13 For students to have the ability to make the
14 most of their educational potential, I feel that
15 we need to create a safe and equalizing
16 environment for them to learn in. You cannot
17 reasonably expect a 12-year-old student not to
18 be jealous when they see their charter school
19 counterparts with brand new iPads and organic
20 lunches. The students' focus should be steered
21 toward learning and not the equalities between
22 the public school environment and that of a
23 charter school.

24 In this regard, to this particular proposed
25 co-location, many parents that I have spoken

1 with are fearful of the integration of the
2 elementary and intermediate aged children. The
3 educational and safety needs of five-year-olds
4 differed greatly from that of 13-year-olds. To
5 house them all in the same building and
6 environment seems unwise and unnecessary.

7 [Applause]

8 FEMALE VOICE 8: And here it comes. And
9 especially when the school's seats are--
10 intermediate school seats are in high demand and
11 I.S. 96 has the capability to accommodate more
12 students.

13 An additional safety concern which no one
14 else brought up is the physical location of Seth
15 Low. The school is located on a main
16 thoroughfare with a constant flow of vehicular
17 traffic that is increased during peak travel
18 times, which is precisely what younger children
19 would be required to cross the street coming and
20 going from school. These conditions are
21 dangerous and are in no way ideal for children
22 to navigate. Therefore, I respectfully ask that
23 the Board to please consider and evaluate all of
24 these factors as you move forward and make a
25 decision on this important issue. Thank you.

1 [Applause]

2 FEMALE VOICE 8: This is Assemblyman Alex -
3 - quotes. Okay? Thank you.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. BORDON: Please thank the assemblyman
6 for her comments. We want to thank the members
7 of the dais, the members of the electives for
8 your point of view. Your comments will be taken
9 back, I guarantee you. We now want to turn to
10 the public comment. We are going to begin with
11 our students. Let me remind you of a little bit
12 of procedure. This is to remind you that the
13 public has two minutes. You will be given a 30
14 second notice. You will be asked at the end of
15 your two minutes to finish your sentence and we
16 will move on. We do have a number of speakers
17 and we want to give everybody an opportunity to
18 speak. Your timekeeper is over here and she
19 will stand so that you can see. We--I thought
20 the handshaking worked really well, so while we
21 move into the public comment we want to actually
22 really use that so that people's time is not cut
23 short with applause. So at this time we have
24 ten students. We'd like them to line up in the
25 center aisle; Andre, Danielle, Fiona, M-E-R-A-R-

1 Y, Geneva, Alandra, - - , a group of three - -
2 , in that order started from Andre. Please
3 line up all together.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. BORDON: And thank you for finding the
6 courage to be heard.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. BORDON: Thank you again.

9 MR. ANDRE CORTEZ: Hi. My name is Andre
10 Cortez [phonetic]. I am class 642 here in Seth
11 Low. I don't want Seth Low to be co-located
12 with Success Academy because I don't want the
13 school to be crowded. I came here because there
14 are so many opportunities here that I love, such
15 as music. I don't want that to be jeopardized.
16 I am also worried about my sister here at Seth
17 Low when she enters here in 2016. Please don't
18 let this happen to our school. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. DANIELLE PERKINS: Hello. My name is
21 Danielle Perkins [phonetic]. I am in the eighth
22 grade. I will be graduating next year. The
23 reason why I do not want the charter school to
24 be allowed in Seth Low is because, for one, this
25 school, even though it's big, the hallways are

1 very crowded. The staircase is very crowded.
2 And even now we have kids getting injured or
3 maybe harmed sometimes because a lot of other
4 students may be running, chilling, talking. And
5 imagine having smaller, younger kids walking up
6 the stairs, walking down the stairs, walking in
7 the hallways trying to get to class and they get
8 injured. I'm pretty sure no one--no student in
9 Seth Low wants to be the cause of why someone
10 else is getting hurt.

11 I also think that the charter school should
12 not be allowed in Seth Low is because all of the
13 programs that we have here. They have creative
14 writing, art, dance, music, and having so many
15 students in there is crowded as it is now.
16 There are 27 to 30 kids in each class with more
17 students coming into Seth Low it's going to be
18 harder for everyone to learn at the same speed,
19 learn how to play instruments at the same speed,
20 learn how to dance in the same speed. So how
21 are we going to have any talent show, dance
22 show? How are we going to do any great
23 performances, show our talent, when no one is
24 really on the same page or on the same note.
25 Thank you.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BORDON: - - to the timekeeper. Fiona?

3 MS. FIONA: Good evening. Tonight we are
4 gathered here to discuss a very important issue
5 occurring in our school. As many of you may
6 know, next year a new charter school is coming
7 into our building, which means students
8 attending Seth Low will not have access to some
9 floors or some classrooms. I am in seventh
10 grade now and even though next year will be my
11 last year attending Seth Low I am concerned
12 about the upcoming sixth, seventh, and eighth
13 graders. We will have to share everything with
14 another school, including this building.
15 Everything will change in our schedules, room
16 numbers, and many of the floors will be crowded,
17 meaning larger class sizes, less classrooms.
18 The students--the Seth Low students won't have
19 as much room as we have now. There are a lot
20 more problems that will happen in the school if
21 this school comes in. So we do not want--we do
22 not want a new charter school coming into our
23 school because it will get too crowded and we
24 won't have enough space for the Seth Low
25 students. Thank you.

1 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. MERARY ELIGHT: Good evening. My name
4 is Merary Elight [phonetic] and today I will be
5 talking about the charter school that might be
6 coming here. I disagree with this. I don't
7 want the charter school to come here. Why?
8 It's because Seth Low wouldn't be Seth Low
9 anymore. It would be like two schools combined.
10 The charter school would take away our fourth
11 floor and our third floor. Where will the sixth
12 graders go? Where would the - - academy go?
13 There is almost not enough room for us and there
14 might as well not be enough room for the charter
15 school. Soon we will run out of room.

16 Also, we use the gym for physical education
17 and if the charter school comes here we wouldn't
18 be able to use the gyms. Where would we have
19 physical education from now on? For my
20 elective, I use the dance room for dancing. We
21 wouldn't have access to it anymore if the
22 charter school comes here. Also, there are many
23 programs like the one I go to, track. When I go
24 to track, we use the fourth floor gym. If a
25 charter school comes here, we wouldn't be able

1 to use the fourth floor gym for track.

2 If all of these stuff happens, soon parents
3 wouldn't want their child to be in Seth Low
4 anymore. They wouldn't want their child to be
5 another school--they would want their child to
6 be an another school. Also, teachers will be in
7 so much stress. Our schedule would change and
8 everyone would be confused. Everything would
9 change if the charter school comes here. It
10 wouldn't be the same anymore. This is why I
11 want to say no to the charter school to come
12 here and invade our school. Thank you.

13 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. DARA: Good evening everyone. My name
16 is - - Dara [phonetic] and I'm in the seventh
17 grade. I have heard about the charter school
18 that is being co-located to our school, Seth
19 Low. Our school does not approve the Success
20 Academy coming into our school and changing it.
21 Seth Low will change to Seth Low Success
22 Academy. You cannot come to our school and
23 invade it. Seth Low does not approve the
24 charter school to come. There wouldn't be
25 enough space and think about the sixth graders.

1 Where would they go? The Success Academy
2 coming to our school would just be a bad idea
3 because it - - learning schedule, etcetera.
4 Please, we ask you not to come and - - to our
5 school. Thank you.

6 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. ALANDRA LOPEZ: Good evening everyone.
9 My name is Alandra Lopez [phonetic] and I am in
10 class 720. Today I am here because our school,
11 Seth Low I.S. 96 will have to be shared with the
12 charter school. I disagree with this. I
13 believe Seth Low should remain separate. There
14 are many reasons why I disagree. First of all,
15 we don't have any more space for another school.
16 Second of all, this is our second home. We all
17 treat each other like family. We're growing up
18 here. We all learn here.

19 If a school moves in with us, it would cause
20 a lot of controversy between the charter school
21 and Seth Low. It would affect our learning
22 schedule, the teachers, and even parents. This
23 is why I believe that Seth Low should only be
24 one school. The charter school moving in will
25 affect all of us in many ways. Thank you and

1 have a nice day.

2 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. AMELDA HIGH: Hi guys. My name is
5 Amelda High [phonetic] and I'm from - - . So
6 the charter school is coming to our school and -
7 - . They cannot just come to our school, number
8 one, because it's our property and not theirs.
9 The charter school is almost like a private
10 school but not exactly. So if a charter school
11 came into our property without even having a
12 discussion or meeting together to see if they
13 are able to say, they came in without asking.
14 What if you had something and they took it
15 without asking? You would not like that.
16 Right? Well, ours is a - - because we are
17 sharing a school that we barely have enough for
18 us and the charter is making it worse for us.
19 So the charter school is from first to
20 fourth grade. It's an elementary school. So of
21 course they would take up all the third and
22 fourth floor, which is the highest floor. But
23 all of the sixth graders would go on the first
24 and second floor but since there is a lot of
25 them it would be so crowded it would just - - .

1 We need more space in rooms for activities and
2 other things. We can't let the charter school
3 take over our school. We want to make these
4 three incredibly special years, especially
5 eighth grade, and we need more rooms - - . And
6 with the charter school here we cannot.

7 Also, do you think it's a good idea because
8 what if a first grader - - a couple of eighth
9 graders by accident? Something bad could happen
10 and a first grader could get really hurt. After
11 all, we have to remember - - . And the first
12 are not able to handle things alone. The
13 parents would be worried and mad about it. So
14 that is why I think it's a bad idea. If you
15 think as well, then act now and do something
16 about it. Thank you very much.

17 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. NICOLE DIO: Hi. My name is Nicole Dio
20 [phonetic] and I am in class 645.

21 MS. SAMANTHA ORGERY: Hi. My name is
22 Samantha Orgery [phonetic] and I'm in class 640.

23 FEMALE VOICE 9: - - and I'm in class 640.

24 MS. DIO: We are - - our school has no space
25 to waste.

1 MS. ORGERY: And our school is perfect the
2 way we are.

3 FEMALE VOICE 9: The charter school will
4 ruin everything. Even though we just came here,
5 we love this school as our second home.

6 MS. DIO: And we need space to grow and
7 expand.

8 MS. ORGERY: So it's perfect just the way it
9 is. Don't change that.

10 MS. DIO: Thank you.

11 MS. ORGERY: Thank you.

12 FEMALE VOICE 9: Thank you.

13 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. REGINA SOTO: Hi. My name is Regina
16 Soto [phonetic] and I am in seventh grade. And
17 if the charter school comes in it's not--it's
18 not going to be a good thing because there are
19 certain kids that need certain help and if a
20 charter school comes in we're going to--we're
21 not going to have that kind of help that we
22 need. I'm one of those children. I need
23 special help and if this charter school comes in
24 what's going to happen to my help? Am I going
25 to have the right help that I need? Am I going

1 to be able to succeed? And probably if this
2 charter school comes in it's not going to happen
3 for us. And we need this help not only for me
4 but for kids from other countries. They're
5 coming in for a better education, for a better
6 life, and if this charter school comes in and we
7 want--and kids that don't know our language and
8 don't know our curriculum want to come in, we
9 can't have them because of the this charter
10 school.

11 We're not going to have enough space and
12 we're not going to have the right teachers. And
13 if this charter school comes in teachers
14 probably--most likely teachers are going to be
15 out of jobs and students going to be--end up not
16 wanting come--wanting to come to school because
17 there's not going to be enough space for I.S.
18 96.

19 And, if I.S. 96 doesn't have enough space,
20 then slowly but surely I.S. 96 is going to be no
21 longer Seth Low Junior High. It's going to be a
22 charter school, and we don't want that to
23 happen. We want it to be our school and we want
24 to have all of the things that we have now, we
25 want to have it in the future, not only for the

1 students now but for the students in the
2 future. And it's unfair for this to happen to
3 not only for us but for the students that are
4 coming here in the future. So, with that said,
5 I don't think it's a good idea that the charter
6 school is coming in because it's not fair for us
7 or the students.

8 MS. BORDON: Thank you so much.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. MONIQUE: Hi. My name is Monique
11 [phonetic] and I would like to - - Seth Low to
12 be our school, not Seth Low and charter school
13 because we all need the fourth floor for our
14 electives and other things needed for us. Seth
15 Low is for us and we will not share it with
16 charter school. So charter school is out. Seth
17 Low is only for Seth Low students.

18 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. KAITLYN: Hi. My name is Kaitlyn
21 [phonetic] and I'm... Hi, my name is Kaitlyn
22 and I'm - - . I think charter school is not a
23 good decision because you haven't really decided
24 if you really want it in the school. Third and
25 fourth floor could probably be in the junior

1 high and high.

2 MS. BORDON: Thank you, Kaitlyn.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. BORDON: - - . I think that the school
5 and the parents ought to be extremely proud of
6 the manner in which the young people presented
7 themselves.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. BORDON: Thank you. I think that you
10 were great models for the adults that are now
11 following you. Our first speaker is Carmine
12 [phonetic], and are you speaking from there?

13 MR. CARMINE: - - .

14 [Applause]

15 MR. CARMINE: Including the students tonight
16 - - very eloquent. - - but here I am stuck in a
17 position following the kids - - . - - in mind,
18 you realize how much money you would save if the
19 K to four school doesn't come here and you don't
20 have - - . Most of you know who I am. On the
21 school board. I've been on the - - . You can't
22 hear me?

23 MULTIPLE VOICES: No.

24 MR. CARMINE: You can't hear me?

25 MULTIPLE VOICES: Now we can.

1 MR. CARMINE: Okay. Most of you know me.
2 Whoever don't know me? You saw a unified
3 political force here and - - forces together and
4 get - - . You saw how beautifully our students
5 spoke. You saw how our leaders have spoken who
6 really - - . But let me tell you this. I am -
7 - . I know that those people coming to take
8 over this building - - over here. So let's keep
9 up the good fight. We'll be with you all the
10 way. I will - - fighting with you and I do
11 appreciate everybody showing up today. Thank
12 you - - .

13 [Applause]

14 MS. BORDON: I'd like the next five speakers
15 to please come down and stand in line for the
16 mike. Numbers two, three, four, five, and six;
17 Howard - - , Rosemary, Laura, - - . Howard,
18 please begin.

19 MR. HOWARD RYBACK: Good evening. My name
20 is Howard Ryback [phonetic] and I've been a
21 special education teacher here at Seth Low for
22 the past 32 years.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. RYBACK: Since the beginning of my
25 teaching career here in Seth Low all those years

1 ago, I have had the opportunity to witness
2 change. What type of change you may ask?

3 MS. BORDON: Howard? Howard, stop one
4 second. There is a lot of ambient noise, making
5 it hard for Howard's comments to be heard and
6 recorded. Thank you so much. Please begin.

7 MR. RYBACK: Parents who visit on opening
8 school night, who inform the students. I've had
9 the opportunity to incorporate new academic
10 philosophies which are continually changing and
11 presently include Common Core and Danielson
12 standards, of course the infusion of new
13 technology in the classroom setting, computers
14 and smart boards.

15 These are well and good and serve their
16 place in instruction but what is more important
17 and what makes the school unique is the
18 dedication of our staff both past and present,
19 as it strives to work with all our population of
20 students which include English Language Learners
21 and students with disabilities. You see, unlike
22 charter schools we don't turn students away.
23 Today our public schools are asked to do more
24 with less. And why less? In one word, charter
25 schools.

1 We hear on the news that our city has
2 become a Tale of Two Cities which consist of the
3 haves and have not's. Why is this happening?
4 Unfortunately, Wall Street is taking over Main
5 Street, which includes our public schools. What
6 we are witnessing is a gradual weakening of our
7 democratic principles of which our public
8 schools have been in the forefront of
9 protecting. Seth Low has been a public
10 institution for democracy serving this community
11 for over 80 years. Let's not allow certain
12 corporate interests extinguish its flame. Make
13 no mistake we are the crossroads. Charter
14 schools don't belong here. Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. BONNIE BERITZ: Hi. My name is Bonnie
17 Beritz [phonetic]. I am an ELL teacher and I
18 have been for the past 23 years here at Seth
19 Low, starting my 24th year. I am very
20 privileged to work with my ESL students.

21 Federal government officials have asked that
22 charter schools be investigated for excluded ESL
23 students. Well, I'll be speaking about charter
24 schools and how they negatively Ell students due
25 to the exclusion of ELL students by charter

1 schools. One reason I am concerned by having
2 a charter school located at Seth Low is lack of
3 choice for the parents of ELL students. Having
4 access to free, local education is not a right
5 enjoyed around the world. In the U.S., with the
6 advent of charter schools, proponents wanted
7 such schools by claiming that at last parents
8 would have a choice in their child's education.

9 MALE VOICE 4: Excuse me. I'm going to
10 interrupt.

11 MS. BORDON: You should know better.

12 MS. BERITZ: However, if ELL students are
13 excluded either outright or by more veiled
14 means, their immigrant parents are denied the
15 same freedom of choice as their American
16 counterparts. Another reason to be concerned
17 about charter schools excluding ELL students is
18 a blatant segregation of the student population.
19 We are taking a giant step backwards in our
20 social growth if we again revert to segregation,
21 this time excluding a portion of the population
22 simply because their native language is not
23 English, which is linked to their ethnicity.

24 Charter school cheerleaders will deny that
25 they exclude ELL students. If that is the case,

1 one has to wonder why within the last month
2 democrats in the House of Representatives of the
3 Congress of the United States asked the United
4 States Secretary of Education Arnie Dunkin
5 [phonetic] to investigate whether charter
6 schools are meeting standards for English
7 Language Learners.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. BERITZ: They are requesting this
10 because a government accountability office
11 report found that charter schools, although they
12 are required to, are not reporting student
13 performance data, including reading and math
14 proficiency rates and graduation rates for all
15 students. They said this calls into question
16 whether charter schools meet current standards
17 of educational equality and accessibility for
18 ELL students. For all of the reasons I
19 enumerated, I oppose the placement of a charter
20 school in Seth Low.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. ROSEMARY MCCORMICK: I'm Rosemary
23 McCormick [phonetic]. I'm a shy person and I'm
24 not a public speaker, but I signed up because I
25 have something very important to tell the

1 parents of District 21. I am your school
2 nurse. What your Success Academy people did not
3 tell you is that they'll bring in their own
4 principal. They'll bring in their own teachers.
5 They'll bring in their own office staff. They
6 will not bring in a new nurse. You now have to
7 divide my services in half. Okay?

8 [Applause]

9 MS. MCCORMICK: And if you have a child who
10 needs special services, I don't want to be the
11 one who has to tell your child you now have to
12 wait 60% longer to see me because I am mandated,
13 which I am not in the intermediate school,
14 sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. But if we
15 have a K to four year, grades three and four
16 will get my services to also teach, to teach a -
17 - class, thus removing me from the medical room
18 again.

19 If you want to talk about the numbers, last
20 year we saw walk-ins. Walk-ins are kids without
21 an appointment, the ones who get sick at school,
22 the ones who get hurt at school. I saw 5,040
23 walk-ins myself alone.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. MCCORMICK: Five years ago I was here

1 when we had almost 1,370 kids in the school.
2 We had an assistant then. We had 7,200 to 7,800
3 kids walk in per year. We don't have an
4 assistant anymore. That's another thing our
5 mayor did for us was to cut the funding to the
6 Department of Health and we do not have a public
7 health assistant. So now I have that many kids
8 alone. That kills be professionally and as a
9 parent myself. That kills me that I do not get
10 to help your children faster.

11 If you want to talk numbers, last year with
12 5,000 kids, 28 are the daily average. Five
13 years ago when I had 7,200 kids, 40 on a daily
14 average. Some days 50, 55, 57. I had a day when
15 I saw 63 children. A medical room is like any
16 hospital triage. You don't see first come first
17 serve. You see worst hurt first served. So
18 your child may wait and they may wait a long
19 time. Professionally, that's not right.
20 Personally that's not right and as a parent and
21 a nurse in this school I feel that's not right.
22 Please don't let this go over.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. BORDON: Laura - - , then we'll hear
25 from Maryanne Russo [phonetic] - - , followed by

1 Peter, Marty - - .

2 MR. LAURA BOLTON: Good evening. My name is
3 Laura Bolton [phonetic]. I'm here today because
4 I went to school here at Seth Low. My older
5 brother went to school here as well. I live
6 just a few blocks away and the school is part of
7 my community. This is where I had teachers who
8 saw that I was struggling with the learning and
9 helped me catch up. Seth Low is not just a
10 school. It's a home to over 700 students who
11 just like me are attempting to learn and to
12 better themselves.

13 Seth Low right now is in the top 43% of all
14 New York Public Schools. How does that sound
15 when measured up to the National Association of
16 Charter Schools statistic that 900 to 1,300 of
17 the privately run, publicly financed schools are
18 in the bottom 15% of public schools in their
19 state? That sounds great to me.

20 Seth Low is ranked number 653 out of 1,136
21 New York Public Schools as of 2013. In 2012,
22 that number was 800. Think of the progress the
23 school has made in just one year. If we allowed
24 new students to come to this building now, to
25 take even more space in already crowded

1 classrooms and hallways, we will allow that
2 progress to be wasted effort on behalf of the
3 students, teachers, and staff here at Seth Low.
4 If I were still a student here, I would not want
5 that progress to be in vain.

6 This is not just a junior high school. It
7 allows students the opportunity to begin their
8 high school credits with both the integrated
9 algebra and earth science Regents exams. Seth
10 Low as 100% pass rate on both of those exams.
11 51% of the students that pass the integrated
12 algebra exams are ranked as advanced in the
13 subject and 59% are ranked as advanced in earth
14 science. These grades were not achieved by
15 waiving a magic wand. These grades were
16 achieved by hard working students and teachers.

17 As a community, we need to realize that
18 progress and success comes with hurdles and
19 challenges, and this is just one of them.
20 Together, we'll overcome this. We can raise a
21 voice and say that we will not neglect the
22 students already enrolled in Seth Low to make
23 room for an elementary school. These can be
24 your own family members, friends, and neighbors.
25 Within the four walls of Seth Low, these

1 students are not just students. They're being
2 taught how to be the leaders of tomorrow. Don't
3 become their hurdle to success. Don't allow
4 them to fall behind. And, more importantly,
5 don't allow someone else to change your mind of
6 who and what's important. Thank you.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. BORDON: Please line up - - Maryanne,
9 Peter, Marty, Brian.

10 MR. JOSEPH FRIZZY: Good evening everyone.
11 My name is Joseph Frizzy [phonetic]. I'm the
12 director of the Beacon. And for 15 years we've
13 been in this community, in this school, as the
14 Beacon of the community, as our name says, the
15 community center. For many years, these
16 wonderful public officials and others have
17 supported us with funds and with whatever space
18 we needed. It's been mentioned many of time--
19 Lori was the first one to say--we need, we need
20 seats. Well, we need space. We cannot operate
21 our ESL classes for youngsters and adults if we
22 don't have space. We cannot operate a ballroom
23 dance if we don't have space. We cannot operate
24 a soccer program for youngsters, which even
25 Michelle Obama is involved with right now as we

1 speak. It's called Soccer for Success. We
2 cannot operate a Nike sponsored basketball
3 program, SAT, GED, ESL we mentioned, - - . You
4 name it.

5 All I have to say is that we treat everybody
6 according to--well, one slogan that you see on
7 our currency, E pluribus unum. We take
8 everybody and we created America. I am a
9 product of one of those slogans. I came here at
10 the age of 15 and I'm proud to say that I'm
11 taking care of my fellow Americans and those
12 that will become Americans. And the other thing
13 is that I take much pride in is that we give
14 respect and rights to everyone.

15 And, as long as this is the case, then if
16 the Department of Education takes into
17 consideration the two things that I mentioned,
18 you have the God given rights to do what you're
19 doing. But if not and you want the best of the
20 community and the students in this area, please
21 reconsider it. Thank you.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. MARYANNE RUSSO: Good evening. I'm
24 Maryanne Russo from CCHS, Citywide Council for
25 High School, former member of CC 21, product of

1 District 21 elementary school 120 Cavallaro
2 and Lafayette High School. And also my children
3 attend District 21 schools.

4 I've heard--everything has been said the
5 reasons why we should not have a co-location but
6 I would like to read part of the environmental
7 impact statement, is that the proposed co-
8 location of SA in K096 is not expected to impact
9 current or future student enrollment, admission,
10 or instructional programing in I.S. 96. This is
11 absolutely not true.

12 To make such statements without consulting
13 the staff and the programming, and even in your
14 own statement in the student calculations, the
15 current enrollment is 743. You expect maximum
16 690 in the future. So therefore you are
17 limiting and capping enrollment to K096. And
18 that is contrary to what everyone else says,
19 that our population is increasing. More
20 children are attending our elementary school.
21 We will need the space and urge you not to be so
22 short sighted and not to take care of District
23 21. Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MR. PETER: Hi, I'm Peter from NIA Community

1 Services Network [phonetic]. As a proud
2 partner--all right. How is that? As a proud
3 partner of several schools in Districts 20 and
4 21, the NIA Community Services Network would
5 like to express its opposition to the proposed
6 plan to develop new charter schools within these
7 districts.

8 While we support the development of charter
9 schools in certain instances, we do not feel
10 that they are appropriate or necessary in this
11 particular school community. We see charter
12 schools as a valuable alternative educational
13 opportunity for families with children in low
14 performing schools. In many cases, charter
15 schools provide the only real opportunity for
16 their children to receive a high quality
17 education. However, our local schools are high
18 performing and provide excellent educational and
19 enrichment opportunities for all of our
20 students.

21 With high test scores, high quality
22 performing arts, stem, and athletic activities
23 already available in our schools, we do not see
24 a high need for the charter school option in our
25 area. Instead, we fear that the intrusion of

1 charter schools will have a negative impact on
2 our local schools by decreasing their enrolment
3 and subsequently their budgets. With fewer
4 resources, our schools may find it difficult to
5 continue offering the enrichment and educational
6 opportunities that currently make them what they
7 are. Ironically, leaving the children who are
8 not selected for the charter schools with fewer
9 opportunities than before. Thank you.

10 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. BORDON: Marty, Robert, Judy, Esther,
13 and Scott.

14 MS. MARTY ALIAS: Good evening. My name is
15 Marty Alias [phonetic], a district manager of
16 Community Board 11. I am here this evening to
17 speak regarding the proposed co-location of a
18 new charter elementary school, Success Academy,
19 within I.S. 96 Seth Low beginning in 2014-2015.
20 As you are aware, the Lucretia Marcigliano
21 Campus located at 50 Avenue P is home of the
22 Brooklyn School - - , the Academy of Talented
23 Scholars, as well as P.S. 370. This campus,
24 with a combined target enrollment of
25 approximately 1,100 children, is located within

1 400 feet of Seth Low.

2 According to the educational impact
3 statement, during the fourth and final year of
4 the proposed implementation in 2017-2018, the
5 projected enrollment for I.S. 96 would be 690
6 students, and SA New York 600 students. The
7 total targeted enrollment for both buildings
8 would be approximately 2,400 children without
9 staff within a one-block segment of Avenue P.

10 While Community Board 11 is aware of that
11 because this proposal is a co-location with an
12 existing school building a formal application
13 including environmental impact statement
14 pursuant to citywide environmental quality
15 review does not come before the board for formal
16 review. My board is very concerned about
17 potential traffic, transportation, pedestrians,
18 and parking impacts in the surrounding areas of
19 both schools on Avenue P.

20 This particular location has had previously
21 implemented traffic improvements as part of a
22 school safety project. Most recently, the
23 Department of Transportation has released data
24 showing that 92% of cars are speeding with a
25 quarter of mile of where we stand. Therefore,

1 at the - - meeting of Community Board 11 held
2 on Tuesday, September 10th, 2013, a resolution
3 was unanimously adopted opposing - - of the co-
4 location of Success Academy Charter School in
5 building K096, located at 99 Avenue P. Thank
6 you.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. BORDON: If you want to turn in the
9 resolution, we're happy to - - .

10 MR. ROBERT E.: Good evening. My name is
11 Robert E. and I'm speaking on behalf of the
12 students and families of P.S. 682, The Academy
13 of Talented Scholars, a community school that is
14 located directly across the street to I.S. 96.
15 I have been PTO president of P.S. 682 for the
16 last three years, a member of the CEC of
17 District 20, and of Community Board 11. The
18 families of our school have been dealing with
19 horrendous traffic conditions near the school
20 during drop-off and dismissal since the school's
21 inception, and we have tried several different
22 measures to alleviate the dangerous conditions
23 with no avail. As such, the families of P.S.
24 682 are very concerned with this new charter
25 school co-location, due to the large influx of K

1 to five students in less than a two block
2 radius. Further, if the congestion and
3 dangerous traffic conditions were not enough,
4 the DOE has released information that our area
5 was number two in the city for speeding near
6 schools.

7 The addition of another K to five school
8 with young students who require more supervision
9 during drop-off and dismissal will add even more
10 cars and buses to an already volatile traffic
11 condition. The term a perfect storm comes to
12 mind. As parents, we were never asked how we
13 felt a co-location so close to our school would
14 affect the safety of our children, nor was a
15 traffic analysis ever done to see how the
16 existing traffic conditions would be impacted by
17 this new co-location. I ask Low--

18 MS. BORDON: [Interposing] It's very hard
19 for me to hear when there are so many other
20 conversations going on.

21 MR. E.: I ask Low's decision makers to
22 please, for the sake of the safety of our
23 children, to examine these issues with great
24 care. For I will hold you personally
25 responsible should a child ever be injured and a

1 motion passes without contemplation of these
2 issues. Please take the time to serve the best
3 interests of our children. Take the time to
4 protect those dearest to our hearts. Thank you.

5 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. JUDY GAROWITZ: Good evening. My name
8 is Judy Garowitz [phonetic] and I'm the District
9 21 UFT representative with United Federation of
10 Teachers. Here is what happens, to be very
11 specific, at Seth Low every day. They've
12 created a new academy configuration for their
13 student body. It must be given time to develop
14 and grow. The arts are flourishing in Seth Low
15 with an art, drama, dance studio, and music
16 rooms in full swing. Seth Low - - school with a
17 brand new computer lab, the second one - -
18 education is paramount and computers are an
19 integral part in today's education. Students
20 with testing modification must be tested in
21 separate locations by law. Space is needed for
22 this. 96 offers Regents in science and math.
23 Space is needed for that. Astrocare [phonetic]
24 provides an in-house psychologist to administer
25 to those students in need. Beacon provides

1 afterschool homework assisting.

2 Teachers use classrooms on their own time,
3 unmeasured by the DOE, to work with students for
4 enrichment and grade enforcement. The
5 gymnasiums are used by students throughout the
6 day, every day. Teachers have organized soccer
7 and wrestling teams, among other sports. Parent
8 workshops are held here on weekends. I.S. 96
9 offers a welcome class during regular school
10 programing for students who are new to the
11 United States. Should I ask 96 students to
12 forego all these programs because Success
13 Academy wants their space?

14 Here is what we know and Dominic talked
15 about - - and how this school took in P.S. 90.
16 I'm going fast. I'm going to try to make it on
17 time. It is vital for you to note that not only
18 District 21 but District 20 feeds into this
19 school. What public school do you expect these
20 students to attend?

21 In the next four years, Moscowitz
22 [phonetic], who is not here--these are her
23 representatives and the one young lady in the
24 back. Moscowitz proposed to inhabit 27 out of
25 the existing 62 full classrooms at Seth Low.

1 This is an outrage. It sets Seth Low up with
2 limited space, with no growth potential and
3 possible closure. Moscowitz and her charter
4 school folks have the unmitigated gall to
5 disrespect the District 20 community, 21
6 community, in its entirety by not appearing at a
7 mandated New York State meeting last week and
8 again tonight. Is this how she ingratiates
9 herself into a community?

10 By the way, Seth Low's mission is to educate
11 all students who walk through our doors. We
12 don't discard those that don't live up to our
13 expectation. For this reason, I.S. 96 must be
14 given a chance to grow.

15 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. BORDON: Esther - - , Maureen, Angela,
18 and Kaitlyn please come and line up.

19 MS. ESTHER L. LOGAN: Hi. I'm Esther L.
20 Logan [phonetic]. I'm the speech provider, so
21 I'm talking for your son, Ellen, who desperately
22 needs services. I remember working in front of
23 bathrooms, working in hallways, working in
24 stairwells, trying to deliver services. So
25 imagine the outrage for our neediest students,

1 our neediest students with attention deficits,
2 with hearing, emotional, language impairment
3 getting services back there. I remember those
4 days quite well.

5 We now provide at our school, in Seth Low,
6 integrated teaching. We have special ed support
7 teachers pushing in, pulling out, servicing our
8 entire population. These are students that are
9 getting services in public school. They will
10 not be getting those services in charter
11 schools. Our administrator, who has an
12 extensive special ed background, is helping us
13 move our students to the least restrictive
14 setting, giving us supports, starting from
15 crisis paras for emotionally disturbed students
16 to bilingual paras, to all the other services.
17 We service kids with all kinds of needs,
18 including autistic students, in a general ed or
19 in a--in a co-teaching environment. Charter
20 schools would not allow us providers to be able
21 to service those students.

22 In addition, our school is a community. We
23 start off with breakfast programs. We start
24 with extended school day programs for our
25 students who are ones and twos. We give all

1 different kinds of services, including the
2 Beacon program, which has been beneficial for
3 our schools. And, in the future, there is talk
4 about things like GED and other kinds of adult
5 education courses for our community. We need
6 the space for our students and we need the
7 services that we can give them in a small
8 setting. Thank you.

9 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. BORDON: Maureen - - .

12 MR. SCOTT CRAVINSKY: For those - - I
13 apologize for talking before. So I apologize.
14 I'm a bad person but I'm a great teacher and--

15 MS. BORDON: [Interposing] And your time is
16 running.

17 MR. CRAVINSKY: Okay, I'm sorry. My name is
18 Scott Cravinsky [phonetic]. I'm a teacher at
19 P.S. 188, Coney Island. I've got the greatest
20 job in the world and also I have the greatest
21 superintendent in the world, Isabelle DiNova.
22 But there's a big, big - - . I'm not going to
23 blame the DOE for coming in here and trying to
24 put a new school here. It's not their fault.
25 The problem is when I have my students I have to

1 assess my students. What are the needs of my
2 students? What are the needs of the school?
3 What are the needs of community?

4 And I don't think--I'm going to put you on a
5 developmental stage right now in terms of the
6 Charlotte Danielson - - . So you're going be
7 under the developing right now but I'm going to
8 help you because what I also do is I do--I'm a
9 community education advocate. I'd be willing to
10 sit down with you and with my friend, Mr. Mark
11 Tragger, okay, Councilman Tragger. We can build
12 a gifted and talented career and technical
13 education district within the whole area,
14 District 20 and 21. And that's what I want to
15 do.

16 I don't want to say it's a bad thing what
17 you're doing, but I think that it needs to be
18 tweaked because I don't think you really know
19 what we know in the area. And that's why the
20 politicians are so passionate about what we do.
21 We're not going to let it happen in 96. We're
22 not going to let it happen in John Dewey. We're
23 not going to let it happen in Cavallaro. It's
24 not going to happen but it's not your fault.
25 We're going to help you correct it because I'm

1 going to bring you up from a one to a two, or
2 from a three to a four, because I'm a wonderful
3 educator. Okay? And I love my community.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. BORDON: Thank you. Maureen? Is
6 Maureen Maxwell [phonetic] here? Are you
7 Angela?

8 MS. ANGELA: Yes.

9 MS. BORDON: Please go ahead.

10 MS. ANGELA: Hello mike. I'd like to talk
11 about efficiency. I completely appreciate that
12 what charter schools want to offer is a dynamic,
13 quality, efficient education, something that
14 utilizes all of the resources to offer the best
15 possible opportunity for students. I'd just
16 like to bring forward though that that's what
17 Seth Low does for all students.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. ANGELA: And quality education takes
20 space. And sometimes people who are aren't on
21 the front lines don't fully understand how it--
22 how it actually happens, what actually happens
23 day to day. And having the space to provide the
24 services that Seth Low does is critical to the
25 quality delivery of the service and also is

1 critical to the growth of Seth Low.

2 Seth Low services this community. Seth Low
3 is a part of this community. And as this
4 community grows and continues to be as diverse
5 as it is, it is so important that we have the
6 space and the opportunity to provide a quality
7 education, to provide a dynamic education for
8 all of the people in the community.

9 The other thing that I think is really
10 incredible about Seth Low, when I first joined
11 the staff the examples that I received were
12 teachers setting up their rooms. And when I
13 asked questions about particular elements of the
14 room, the answer that I got was, "I want to make
15 it a really fun, inviting place. I want kids to
16 know that math is fun." I had colleagues that
17 were like, "Yeah, it's totally okay if you want
18 to tutor kids during your lunch. It's totally
19 okay if you want to tutor kids during prep."
20 Those are the examples that I got from my
21 colleagues here at Seth Low. That's the kind of
22 education that we provide here at Seth Low. We
23 provide that for all students. Don't stop that.

24 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

25 [Applause]

1 MS. BORDON: Is Kaitlyn - - here?
2 Kaitlyn? Mark, followed by - - , Miriam,
3 Maryanne.

4 MR. MARK TRIGGER: My name is Mark Tragger.
5 I'm not yet a councilman. I'm still a proud
6 teacher at - - High School. And I want to say
7 I'm also a proud product of District 21. My
8 parents came to this country in 1979 with no
9 resources and no English, and we were raised on
10 Bay Parkway [phonetic] and 61st Street where I
11 went to P.S. 226.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. TRIGGER: That's right. And I got the
14 skills that I needed to succeed, the
15 foundational knowledge, at P.S. 226. So I am
16 proof that success is already here in District
17 21. We don't need a charter school to prove
18 that success will be here.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. TRIGGER: I just--you know, I could
21 write a book about examples of mindboggling
22 decisions from the last 12 years from the DOE,
23 but I just want to share with you this story
24 that I think the public should know. A few
25 months ago the deputy chancellor from the DOE,

1 who is I think now left to the Walden
2 Foundation [phonetic], visited a school called
3 Brady High School [phonetic] where the principal
4 showed him a room. And Brady is a school of 700
5 kids, most high needs, you know, special needs
6 children. And they went to a room where the
7 kids were building a house with their hands.
8 They were building a house. And the deputy
9 chancellor had the nerve to tell the principal
10 to her face that her school is ineffective. I
11 want to see the mayor build a house with his
12 hands. I want to see the chancellor build a
13 house with his hands.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. TRIGGER: We must--we must understand
16 that we have students that are not just with
17 special needs. They have special talents that
18 must be brought out. We must broaden the way we
19 measure student performance.

20 I just also want to echo the comments of my
21 colleagues and partners here in government, the
22 process by which Success Academy has gone
23 through the District 21 has been nothing short
24 of disgraceful, nothing short of disgraceful.
25 To have those hearings held during a Jewish

1 holiday, to rush through this whole process
2 because they know and we know--ma'am, I know
3 that time is running out but time is running out
4 on the DOE as well and this mayor - - .

5 [Applause]

6 MR. TRIGGER: Yes. So I kindly,
7 respectfully ask you to send word back to the
8 DOE leadership that this community is united
9 against this application, the process has been
10 disgraceful. The message here is clear. The
11 community, the school does not need this charter
12 school. If anything--I know, just give me 30
13 seconds more and I'll finish. I know that the
14 DOE will always claim that the school
15 utilization rate is a number of worries them,
16 but that's a number that worries me about the
17 DOE because that's indicative of the lack of
18 support they have shown Seth Low over the course
19 of this last decade. Seth Low does not need a
20 roommate. Seth Low needs support and this city
21 needs leadership with education on its mind.
22 Thank you.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. BERSKY: Hi. My name is - - Bersky
25 [phonetic], CEC 21, a parent in District 21.

1 It's very simple, DOE. Keep your hands in
2 your pockets. Give us funds to support our
3 schools. Give us funds to support our kids.
4 Get the co-locations out. We don't need the
5 neighbors. We know we don't need invaders. We
6 don't need disparity that we see in the district
7 already. We don't want 303 repetition. We
8 don't want that.

9 You heard from the kids. You heard from the
10 future leaders of this country. They don't want
11 to be co-located. They want to have a free
12 education, be prosperous, have a good, solid
13 teachers, good educators. We don't want
14 anything to do with co-location. We don't want
15 anyone in our school. Put them - - , bring the
16 programs out. No co-locations. Thank you.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. BORDON: Shawn, Miriam, Maryanne - - ,
19 John, and last name - - .

20 MR. SHAWN CHEN: Good evening. I'm Shawn
21 Chen [phonetic], CEC 21. I've certainly learned
22 a lot about this--about the charter schools. If
23 you asked me about three months ago I probably
24 would have signed up for a charter school. Why
25 not? Preferential - - preferential treatment,

1 better treatment, why not sign up? But I
2 think I've heard and I think the public needs to
3 know about the long-term impact about this.

4 And, as a new member, I've been researching
5 a lot of the other proposals and I don't mean to
6 be a pessimist but it should be known that the
7 Panel for Educational Policy has never rejected
8 a proposal of a co-location or a charter school.
9 So I'm hoping for and I'm glad to hear that
10 we're prepared for the fight for the next step
11 if that does happen, if they do approve this.

12 I do want to revisit some of the comments
13 that I've heard. Success Academy's proposal,
14 they suggest--their data suggests that District
15 21 is underperforming when, like Heather's
16 comments, that our test scores are outperforming
17 city and state in many cases. And I do want to
18 echo one of the elected official's statements
19 that the educational impact statement is flawed.

20 It's--you know, as I have had a career in
21 planning and analysis for a financial services
22 company. We've always implemented two
23 approaches, a top down approach and a bottom's
24 up approach. And they attempt to provide sanity
25 checks. And it seems like I don't--I think that

1 the DOE has not implemented any of the best
2 practices that we've implemented. Especially
3 listening to all the key stakeholders - - . The
4 key stakeholders here are the community, the
5 principal, the superintendent, the CEC, and I
6 think our voices are loud and clear.

7 I do want to point out one of the flaws, if
8 I may read on page five that echoes Lori's
9 statements. They do note--the DOE notes that
10 enrollment has been increasing in the elementary
11 school level within the portion of District 20
12 zoned to I.S. 96. As such, the building
13 utilization plan reflects additional space
14 allocation for I.S. 96 instructional use in
15 anticipation that this elementary school level
16 increase in zoned student enrollment will also
17 become a middle school level increase in zoned
18 enrollment at I.S. 96. This is on page five of
19 the EIS. However, on page three someone needs
20 to explain why in that case the enrollment is
21 projected to decrease as much as 12% at I.S. 96.
22 Those are my comments.

23 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. BORDON: Miriam, Maryanne.

1 MS. MIRIAM SOTO: Hi, my name is Maryanne
2 Soto [phonetic] and--

3 MS. BORDON: [Interposing] You need to come
4 up to the mike.

5 MS. SOTO: My name is Miriam Soto and I am
6 an angry parent. I am angry at the fact that
7 they're coming in here and bringing in this
8 woman. I don't know who she is and she's not
9 even here. I wonder if she has children. I was
10 just wondering if maybe she has children. And,
11 if she does, would she want this to happen to
12 her school where her child attends? My child
13 attends this school. I have my son Brandon Soto
14 who attended here and graduated from Seth Low.

15 I have my daughter - - Soto who spoke here.
16 I don't want this for her. I don't want things
17 taken away from her. I don't want her teachers
18 to be too busy with other children and other
19 things, not to educate my child.

20 And I hope I speak for the PTA, for the
21 parent coordinators, for every parent that has a
22 child going to the school - - . I'm here to
23 represent them. And I want better for my child.
24 I want my teachers to educate her. I want my
25 deans to be here for her and for the other

1 children. I do not want this to happen. So
2 don't let them come in and invade. Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. BORDON: Maryanne?

5 MS. MARYANNE MULVOY: Good evening. My name
6 is Maryanne Mulvoy [phonetic]. I'm an angry
7 parent as, you know, you know because it's not
8 fair on the children that are already here for a
9 charter school to come in. It's going to take
10 everything away from the kids. I have - - to
11 the school. He loves band. He loves track. I
12 have two kids that graduated from this school.
13 They come back sometimes for parent/teacher
14 conference to come and see their teachers, their
15 deans, and I really don't want to - - . I don't
16 want it done. So please don't do it. Don't
17 take this opportunity away from the children
18 that are already here and have this opportunity.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. BORDON: Our last - - . Your name is?

23 MR. BRIAN GOTTFRIED: My name is Brian
24 Gottfried [phonetic]. I'm - - .

25 MS. BORDON: Who is it?

1 MR. GOTTFRIED: My name is Brian
2 Gottfried. John had to leave.

3 MS. BORDON: Oh, John had to leave? Let me
4 ask if number 23 is here, last name O-H-L-M-A-N.
5 And - - if you're here.

6 FEMALE VOICE 10: Yes.

7 MS. BORDON: Okay. So the speaker and then
8 you will be our last public speaker.

9 MR. GOTTFRIED: Okay. Good evening. My
10 name is Brian Gottfried. And even though I'm
11 here tonight in my own individual capacity I'm
12 Chairman of Community Board 13's Education
13 Library Committee, and I also serve for five
14 years as a member of Community School Board 21.
15 And when I'm looking at all of this a single
16 word comes to mind. Now, a word that when I was
17 growing up my mother used all the time, it's the
18 word - - .

19 [Laughter]

20 MR. GOTTFRIED: Now, the Department of
21 Education and the mayor has said for the last 12
22 years we want to open up the process. We want
23 parental involvement. We want all of this. And
24 yet when you have to have a meeting, you know,
25 everything is done in the dead of night. It's

1 like when the Colts left Baltimore for
2 Indianapolis with moving trucks out in the
3 middle of the night and we can put a checkmark
4 next to the checklist.

5 We had a meeting, check. We put this down,
6 check. But, you know, last week's meeting
7 nobody was there. We didn't find out - - . So
8 there was no one to hear what the community
9 thought. Tonight I haven't heard a single
10 person step up and say they wanted a charter
11 school, whether it's here at I.S. 96 or any of
12 the other locations.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. GOTTFRIED: And I think that rather than
15 repeating what's already been said because there
16 were very eloquent speakers, particularly the
17 students, I think what the Department of
18 Education should do is something they haven't
19 done, is look, listen before the leap. You
20 know, because separate but equal is not equal.
21 It's only in many instances concerning the
22 charter schools where that's going on.

23 And I know that some people will take what
24 I'm saying and what others have said is it's an
25 attack on the children. It's not. Every parent

1 has a right to send their children to whatever
2 school they believe will give them the best
3 education. That's not the issue. The issue is
4 preserving public education. And doing what--
5 you know, and working and acting in a way that -
6 - of this administration. And that's what I
7 think needs to be done, deny the application of
8 co-location and make sure that the children that
9 go to this school and the other schools
10 throughout the city of New York get the
11 resources they need, not to just put it up on a
12 fancy flyer.

13 MS. BORDON: Thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. BORDON: Our next - - .

16 FEMALE VOICE 10: Hello, my name is - - .
17 One, I've had prior children go to this school
18 and this is the first time--when my--when my
19 first son started going here it was the first
20 time that I understood what an IEP was. Until I
21 came here, I didn't understand that before and
22 it was explained to me properly here. So I
23 definitely like the - - here. From youngest to
24 the oldest, from the best student to the worst
25 student when my--of my children, they all were

1 happy here and they all were glad to be here.

2 My youngest one, he didn't even want to
3 leave elementary school. He actually refused to
4 leave until when he came here. Then he said,
5 "It's not like I thought it was going to be. I
6 like it." And he's upset when he misses the bus
7 and he's late and I have to actually get up and
8 come and bring him if he misses the bus.

9 I'm a - - worker and one of the things that
10 people have to understand to talk to the people
11 here that the DOE and the mayor sends here is
12 kind of like redundant because they just--
13 they're doing their job. They can't make these
14 choices. They can't make the decisions. We
15 need to make the decisions at poll time.
16 Everybody needs to come out and vote. You need
17 to come out and let your opinion be known.
18 Anything, any person, anyone whose running who
19 does not give our opinions, who doesn't have the
20 same opinions as us, does not want the schools
21 ran the way that we want them ran, we need to
22 let them know at voting time. If they don't
23 make the choices that we want made, we have to
24 make it clear to them that this is not who we
25 want.

1 Four, we have to put money back into the
2 public schools. It's public money. It should
3 be in our schools.

4 [Applause]

5 FEMALE VOICE 10: Five, we need--we should--
6 we have been fighting the same fight, to keep
7 the class sizes small. From--I mean this has
8 been ten years now. When I first went on the
9 bus to Albany and one of the women that was on
10 the bus was pregnant at the time, her child was
11 ten and we're still fighting the same fight for
12 smaller class sizes. They keep us down here
13 grumbling and crumbling and grabbing for crumbs
14 while meanwhile the big issue is why don't they
15 put the money back where it's supposed to be.

16 Bloomberg is feeding his cronies instead of
17 feeding the schools the way that it should be
18 done. There is no need to have a private school
19 into a public school. It's fine if they want it
20 someplace else. They can put it over there,
21 over there, over there, and we have no problem
22 with that. The money that should be put into
23 our schools could be used for computers, for
24 music, for art. I'm not opposed to charter
25 schools but I just need it to be someplace else.

1 And that's all I have to say.

2 MS. BORDON: Thank you very much.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. BORDON: I want to thank the Community
5 Education Councils and our citywide councils for
6 participating so well tonight. We heard many
7 significant and passionate comments. We truly
8 do appreciate the feedback and contribution for
9 this hearing. Please note that your comments
10 will be recorded.

11 Please note that the earlier iterations of
12 the joint public hearing notice and parent - -
13 incorrectly stated that the Panel for
14 Educational Policy would vote on this proposal
15 October 30th. Actually, this information will
16 be shared with the Panel of Educational Policy
17 on October 15th at 6:00 p.m. at Prospect Heights
18 Campus located at 883 Classon Avenue in
19 Brooklyn.

20 If you want to give additional comment or
21 there are people that wanted to come tonight and
22 couldn't, please tell them that they can email
23 d21proposals@schools.nyc.gov. That's
24 d21proposals@schoos.nyc.gov, or 201-374-0208.
25 As your principal has served 35 years, I want to

1 congratulate her on a wonderful and
2 successful career. We wish you the best and
3 future of her students. Thank you all for
4 coming. This joint public hearing is officially
5 concluded.

6 [Applause]

7 [END RECORDING]

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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.

5
6 Signature: 

7 Date: October 10, 2013
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