

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 50 Talfourd Lawn Elementary School (28Q050) to a K-5 School

I. Summary of Proposal

P.S. 50 Talfourd Lawn Elementary School (28Q050, “P.S. 50”) is an existing elementary school located at 143-26 101st Avenue, Jamaica, NY 11435, in Community School District 28. It currently serves students in Kindergarten through sixth grade and offers a Pre-Kindergarten program. This is a proposal to implement a “grade truncation,” meaning that the school would no longer enroll sixth graders after the current 2010-2011 school year.

At the close of the 2010-2011 school year, all fifth and sixth graders who meet promotional standards would graduate from P.S. 50. In September 2011, these students would enter middle school as sixth and seventh graders, respectively. Beginning in 2011-2012, P.S. 50 would serve students only in Kindergarten through fifth grade and continue to offer a Pre-Kindergarten program. From that time forward, P.S. 50 students would participate in the middle school choice process during fifth grade and move on to middle school for sixth grade.

Prior to June 2010, students in District 28 could attend their zoned middle school, or they could apply to choice middle schools on a school-by-school basis. In June 2010, the District 28 Community Education Council voted to adopt “Middle School Choice.” Now, students may apply to and rank middle schools throughout the District on a single application. They also have the opportunity to rank zoned middle schools outside the zone in which they reside. While zoned students still have priority for admission to those schools, other District 28 students are now eligible to attend those schools if there are remaining seats once zoned children are accommodated.

Middle schools typically enroll students beginning in sixth grade, and P.S. 50 students have the option to apply to start middle school as sixth graders. With the adoption of district-wide middle school choice, P.S. 50 students who wait until sixth grade to apply to middle school are limited to those schools that still have available seventh-grade seats. In particular, there are several unzoned, choice middle schools in District 28, and those schools rarely have open seventh-grade seats, which become available only if sixth graders leave the school. As a result, students who remain at P.S. 50 through sixth grade will have fewer options than their peers who start middle school a year earlier.

Additionally, when students enter middle school at multiple entry grades (sixth and seventh), this creates challenges for both the students and the middle school as a whole. P.S. 50 students who start middle school in seventh grade may face transitional challenges related to entering middle school a year later than most of their classmates, and they remain in their new middle school for only two years before again transitioning to high school. Similarly, having students enter in multiple years creates an instructional challenge for middle school teachers and leadership who are responsible for preparing all students for high school. Those students who enter the middle school at seventh grade will not have the benefit of a sustained educational experience in the middle years; this has the effect of depersonalizing the school experience when adolescents tend to need the most personal and supportive environments

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

This proposed grade truncation will help standardize middle school application and entry grades in District 28, giving all P.S. 50 students access to the same range of middle school options as their peers throughout the District.

At the same time, this proposal will alleviate overcrowding pressures at P.S. 50 and create additional K-5 seats in an area where demand for elementary school seats is high:

- P.S. 50 students attend school in two buildings:¹

Type of Facility	Building	Target Capacity	Target Utilization
Main Building	Q050	588	112%
Transportable	Q850	124	196%
Total		722	

- Despite having a total capacity of 722 students, P.S. 50 served 919 students in the 2009-2010 school year, and they are projected to serve 920 students during the 2010-2011 school year.²
- Taken together, these utilization rates, enrollment numbers, and capacities show that P.S. 50 is quite overcrowded.
- Phasing out the sixth grade will free up approximately 144 seats in the school. Those seats could be used by lower-grade students or to meet other needs of the school (e.g., art room, resource center).
- Approximately 144 additional K-5 seats will be created in an area that has high demand for elementary seats. This will help address the increasing enrollment P.S. 50 has seen over the past three years. There are currently 25 schools serving elementary students in District 28, including 14 that terminate in sixth-grade. Of these 14 schools, 11 are candidates for grade truncation this year. If all 11 potential truncations move forward and win approval, the vast majority of District 28 elementary school students will apply to middle school during fifth grade and enter middle school in sixth grade, giving those students equal access to the choice process.

II. Proposed or Potential Use of Building

The buildings in which P.S. 50 is located, Q050 and Q850, have the capacity to serve 722 students. Q050 has a target utilization rate of 112 percent, and Q850 has a target utilization of 196 percent. At this time, the DOE has no planned additional uses for the building after the grade truncation takes place. The additional space made available by phasing out the sixth-grade class is intended to alleviate overcrowding at P.S. 50. In particular, the school leadership is currently planning to use the additional space to create classrooms for specialty instruction subjects like art or music; some specialty instruction classes currently do not have designated classrooms, and instead the teachers move from room to room, bringing materials and supplies with them.

¹ The official target capacity and utilization rates for the 2010-11 school year are not yet available. All references to building utilization rates in this document are based on data from the 2009-10 Enrollment Capacity Utilization Report (the “Blue Book”).

² These enrollment figures, including those for the 2010-11 school year, are projected and unaudited at this time. Audited enrollment figures for the current school year will not be available until February 2011.

III. Impact of the Proposal on Affected Students, Schools, and Community

A. Students

In the past, many P.S. 50 students opted to remain at the school through sixth grade, while others chose to attend sixth grade at either a District 28 choice middle school or J.H.S. 8 Richard A. Grossley, the middle school to which most P.S. 50 students are zoned. Specifically, approximately 19 percent of last year's fifth graders chose to exit P.S. 50 after fifth grade. This creates a small class at the sixth-grade level with limited resources to provide the types of extracurricular activities and enrichment opportunities available in a full-size middle school.

On June 23, 2010, the Community Education Council of District 28 ("CEC 28") voted to adopt a Middle School Choice enrollment process for the entire district. As a result, all District 28 students entering middle schools in 2011 and beyond now do so via the Middle School Choice process. Every fifth grade student is issued a personalized middle school application and should apply to the middle schools they would most like to attend.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 50 students would apply to middle school during fifth grade and start middle school as sixth graders. That would mean they would be applying when all seats in the District's middle schools were open, giving P.S. 50 students equal access to their top-choice schools.

Middle schools typically have extremely varied and rich instructional offerings, especially in the sciences and languages, as well as extra-curricular activities. Middle schools' space and facilities are also better aligned to support these programs. By entering middle school for sixth grade, P.S. 50 students will have more opportunities to take advantage of these enriching, high-school preparatory experiences. At the same time, they will avoid transitional challenges related to entering the school a year later than most of their classmates.

This year's fifth- and sixth-grade students at P.S. 50 will all apply to middle school by participating in the Middle School Choice process during the current school year.³ If this proposal is approved, at the close of the 2010-2011 school year, all fifth and sixth graders who meet promotional standards would graduate from P.S. 50, and in September 2011, those students would enter middle schools as sixth and seventh graders, respectively.

Beginning in 2011-2012, P.S. 50 would serve students only in Kindergarten through fifth grade and continue to offer a Pre-Kindergarten program. From that time forward, P.S. 50 students would participate in the Middle School Choice process during fifth grade and move on to middle school for sixth grade. If a current P.S. 50 sixth grader does not meet promotional standards and is required to repeat the grade this year, the Department of Education will seek to place that student in sixth grade at the same middle school to which he or she has been matched for seventh grade through the Middle School Choice process. If such placement is not feasible, then the Department of Education will find an alternative District 28 placement for that student.

Under Middle School Choice, students rank their preferences from among all District 28 middle schools. These options include:

- a zoned middle school in the zone where the student resides (zoned students have priority for placement to their zoned school);
- zoned middle schools in District 28 outside the zone in which the student resides;

³ Visit <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle> for more information about middle school enrollment, including timelines and district directories.

- unzoned middle schools with unscreened or limited-unscreened application processes (unscreened means that all students are eligible to apply; limited-unscreened schools admit students on the same basis as unscreened schools except that they give preference to students who have attended a school information session); and
- unzoned middle schools with a screened application process (entrance is based on criteria designated by the school).

P.S. 50 students who wait until sixth grade to apply to middle school are guaranteed a seventh-grade seat at their zoned school, but are otherwise restricted to other District 28 middle schools (zoned and choice) that still have remaining seventh-grade seats. As discussed in greater detail below, there are typically few such seats available, meaning that P.S. 50 sixth graders have limited access to the choice process compared with students who apply to middle school during fifth grade. If this proposal is approved, all P.S. 50 students will apply to middle school in fifth grade. This will give P.S. 50 students greater access to their top-choice middle schools.

Through the Middle School Choice process, students receive priority admission into their zoned middle school only when they rank that school on their District 28 Middle School Choice application. If students do not rank their zoned school at all, they lose their zoned-student priority status. After a zoned school admits all zoned students matched during the middle school choice process, the school's remaining spaces are open to out-of-zone District 28 students who indicated a preference for that school.

It is expected that zoned middle schools will try to fill all remaining sixth-grade spaces available after accepting zoned students. Those spots would be filled with out-of-zone students who indicated a preference for that school during the sixth-grade middle school application process. Very few, if any, spaces will be available in later years to out-of-zone students wishing to enter as seventh graders. Such seats will only be available if spaces open up due to students leaving the school.

In addition, there are several unzoned, choice middle schools in District 28. Those schools generally only accept students as entering sixth graders. Again, it is only in rare cases, when a space opens due to a student leaving the school, that choice middle schools admit new students into grade seven or higher.

As a result, families that would like their children to attend one of the District 28 choice middle schools, or a zoned middle school outside their school zone, should participate in the choice process offered to every fifth grade student in the District each year.

District 28 middle schools open to P.S. 50 students, along with their peers throughout the District, include:

School Name	Address	2010-2011 School Level	2010-2011 Grade Span	Grade Span at Scale (if different)
P.S. 50 ZONED PREFERENCE Option*				
JHS 8 Richard S. Grossley (28Q007)	108-35 167 th Street	MS	6-8	
CHOICE PREFERENCE Options				
Queens Collegiate (28Q310)	167-01 Gothic Drive	MS/HS	6, 9-11	6-12
York Early College Academy (28Q284)	108-35 167 th Street	MS/HS	6-9	6-12
Young Women’s Leadership School (28Q896)	150-91 87 th Road	MS/HS	6-12	
Metropolitan Expeditionary Academy (28Q167)	91-30 Metropolitan Avenue	MS/HS	6-7	6-12
Queens Gateway to Health Sciences Secondary School* (28Q680)	160-20 Goethals Avenue	MS/HS	7-12	6-12
Other ZONED PREFERENCE Options				
JHS 190 Russell Sage (28Q190)	68-17 Austin Street	MS	6-8	
JHS 157 Stephen A. Halsey (28Q157)	63-55 102nd Street	MS	6-8(9)	
JHS 217 Robert A. Van Wyck (28Q217)	85-05 144th Street	MS	6-8	
Catherine & Count Basie Middle School 72 (28Q072)	133-25 Guy Brewer Boulevard	MS	6-8	

* Most, but not all, of P.S. 50’s students are zoned to J.H.S. 8 Richard S. Grossley. Others would be zoned to one of the “zoned preference” schools listed.

Additionally, District 28 students may still apply to borough-wide and citywide middle schools as in the past.

P.S. 50 will continue to meet the needs of its students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) in grades K-5. Current fifth and sixth graders with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or requiring ELL services will continue to receive appropriate services at the middle school to which they are matched.

Students with IEPs will participate in the middle school admissions processes in the same manner as their non-disabled peers. Middle schools will be supported by the DOE in reviewing students’ IEPs to focus on addressing the needs of students with disabilities by providing individualized service models that ensure students have access to the general education curriculum to the greatest extent possible. It is expected that the middle school to which a student is matched will develop a program to meet the students’ needs. This process will apply to students with IEPs currently in fifth and sixth grades at P.S. 50 in the same manner as it applies to all other students.

In accordance with DOE policy, ELLs participate in the middle school admissions processes in the same manner as their peers who are not English Language Learners. Information regarding the type(s) of ELL programs historically offered by the middle schools available to impacted students can be found in the Middle School Directory for District 28 (<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/Publications>).

P.S. 50 currently operates two sections of a full day Pre-Kindergarten program. Barring unforeseen circumstances, we expect Pre-Kindergarten to continue being offered at P.S. 50.

P.S. 50 has “arts residencies” in all grades. Barring unforeseen circumstances, the expectation is that all K-5 students will still have the opportunity to participate in residencies if this proposal is approved and the school no longer enrolls sixth-grade students.

B. Schools

No other schools are co-located in Buildings Q050 or Q850, which house P.S. 50, so there will be no impact on other schools in the buildings.

By phasing out the sixth-grade class, the proposed grade truncation will reduce the number of students enrolled in Building Q050 by approximately 144 students, thereby reducing overcrowding. After this proposal is implemented, there will be sufficient space to serve P.S. 50 students pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint (the “Footprint”). Please visit the New York City Department of Education website to access the Instructional Footprint, which guides space allocation and use in City schools:

http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/8CF30F41-DE25-4C30-92DE-731949919FC3/87633/NYCDOE_Instructional_Footprint_Final9210TNT.pdf

Last year, approximately 19 percent of the fifth-grade class left P.S. 50 after fifth grade. As a result of this proposal, all of the 147 rising sixth graders at P.S. 50 will be participating in the Middle School Choice process this year.

C. Community

This proposal addresses many needs of the P.S. 50 community:

- Phasing out the sixth-grade class at P.S. 50 creates 144 additional K-5 seats in an area where demand for elementary-school seats exceeds available capacity.
- District 28 has a high demand for a limited number of elementary seats. District 28 middle schools, however, have unused, available capacity. By serving sixth-grade students in middle schools, we open up much needed elementary seats and space to younger students, while using space more efficiently in District middle school buildings.
- Phasing out the sixth-grade class at P.S. 50 will align the school’s grade span with other schools in District 28.
- There are currently 25 schools serving elementary students in District 28, including 14 that terminate in sixth grade. Of these 14 schools, 11 are candidates for grade truncation this year. If all 11 potential truncations move forward and win approval, the vast majority of District 28 elementary school students will apply to middle school during fifth grade and enter middle school in sixth grade, giving those students equal access to the choice process.
- This proposal is one of four grade truncation proposals in District 28 that will be going before the PEP for approval in either November or December. P.S. 144 Col Jeromus Remsen was posted on October 1 and will be voted on by the PEP on November 16. P.S. 140 Edward K Ellington and P.S. 55 Maure are both being posted concurrently with this proposal, and all three will be presented for PEP approval on December 14. Even if all four of these grade truncation proposals are approved this year, there will be sufficient middle school capacity in District 28. There are 7,913 total seats in middle schools or in grades six, seven, and eight at 6-12 schools in District 28. There are 6,234 students currently enrolled for these same seats. If the P.S. 144, P.S. 50, P.S. 55, and P.S. 140 proposals are all approved, there will

still be 1,679 available seats remaining in middle schools or grades six, seven, and eight at 6-12 schools in District 28.

- At the same time, creating a single entry grade helps schools build and foster stronger school cultures. Taken collectively, these proposed changes would enable schools to better support students throughout the District 28 community.
- The school hosts an after-school program run by Catholic Charities, a community based organization (CBO). Currently, this program is available to all students. Barring unforeseen circumstances, this CBO will continue to provide after-school programming to the students at P.S. 50.
- This proposal is not expected to impact the ability of community members and organizations to obtain school building use permits at Q050.

IV. Enrollment, Admissions and School Performance Information

The only impacted school in this proposal is P.S. 50.

Admissions Data

Current Admissions	Pre-K: Standard Universal Pre-K Admissions K-6: Zoned
Admissions after Grade Reconfiguration in 2011-2012	K-5: Zoned

Enrollment Data

Current Grades Served	K-6
Projected 2010-2011 Enrollment	920 ⁴
Grades Served after Grade Reconfiguration in 2011-2012	K-5
Projected 2011-2012 Enrollment:	751-801 ⁵

Demographic Data

Percentage Special Education Students⁶	7%
Percentage English Language Learner Students	13%
Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch	98%

⁴ Please note that this does not include students enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program.

⁵ Please note that this does not include students enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program.

⁶ Special Education students as percentage of total students. Special Education count does not include SETSS or students receiving speech or language services.

School Performance Data

	2008-2009	2009-2010	Website
Progress Report Scores	A	B	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/28/Q050/AboutUs/Statistics
ELA Score (% Level 3/4)	80.0%	49.8%	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/28/Q050/AboutUs/Statistics
Math Score (% Level 3/4)	91.2%	61.3%	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/28/Q050/AboutUs/Statistics
Accountability Status	In Good Standing	Not Available	http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/28/Q050/AboutUs/Statistics
Average Attendance	93.7%	93.0%	http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/data/stats/attendance/default.htm

V. Initial Costs and Savings

No initial costs or savings are expected due to the P.S. 50 grade truncation.

VI. Effect on Personnel Needs, Costs of Instruction, Administration, Transportation and Other Support Services

A. Personnel Needs

Some current P.S. 50 staff positions may be excessed due to declining enrollment associated with the 144 sixth-grade students that will no longer be enrolled at P.S. 50. It is difficult to precisely predict the number of affected positions.

Any necessary excessing would be conducted in accordance with existing labor contracts. For example, the current United Federation of Teachers (UFT) contract would require excessing to take place in reverse seniority order within each given teaching license area. Most teachers working in grades 1-6 hold a “common branches” license, regardless of their students’ age.

Barring system-wide layoffs, excessed teachers would be eligible to apply for other City positions, and any teacher who did not find a permanent position would be placed in the Absent Teacher Reserve pool, meaning that they would continue to earn their salary while serving as substitute teachers in other City schools. Should there be a vacancy in the school in a teacher’s license area within one year of the teacher being excessed, the teacher would have a right of return to the school, consistent with applicable contractual provisions and law regarding teachers’ seniority.

It is also important to understand that the sixth-grade students who would otherwise have enrolled in P.S. 50 will now be enrolled in other District 28 middle schools, and those schools might need to hire new teachers to serve their larger student populations.

B. Cost of Instruction

Most funding in school budgets is allocated on a per-pupil basis. For each student no longer on the P.S. 50 roster after the truncation is completed, the school is expected to receive approximately \$4,384.81 less annual base funding. These estimates are based on current Fair Student Funding (FSF) per capita allocation levels and are subject to annual variation. FSF covers basic instructional expenses and FSF funds may, at

the school's discretion, be used to hire staff, purchase supplies and materials, or implement instructional programs.

As a result of the truncation, the total number of students enrolled at P.S. 50 is expected to decline, meaning that the school will need fewer teachers and fewer supplies to meet the needs of its smaller student population. If for some reason the overall school enrollment grows again, the overall budget will increase accordingly. In any case, funding will be provided in accordance with enrollment levels, allowing the school to meet the instructional needs of its student population. This is how funding is awarded to all schools throughout the City, with budgets naturally increasing or decreasing as enrollment fluctuates from year to year.

In addition, FSF awards supplemental allocations on a per pupil basis to students who have additional needs and therefore cost more to educate. For example, during the 2010-2011 school year, schools received an additional \$2,031 per pupil for each English Language learner they enrolled. It is difficult to project the impact of this proposal on the total supplemental funding that P.S. 50 will receive because future students' achievement levels and needs cannot be predicted for each of the next three years, but the school will be awarded supplemental funding for higher-need students according to the same formula as all other schools citywide, ensuring that funds are in place to meet those students' needs.

As with all other schools citywide, P.S. 50 may receive additional "categorical" funding based on student characteristics and needs. For example, federal Title I funding is awarded to schools based on the proportion of low-income students they enroll. P.S. 50 is currently a Title I school. Assuming that the school continues to meet Title I criteria, the school's Title I funding award will adjust as the size of the school population changes.

While schools do receive supplemental support for special education students through FSF, that only represents part of the funding provided to support those students. Schools are budgeted to meet the needs of their special education students as defined by their Individual Education Plans (IEP). After the truncation is completed, funding will continue to be provided to meet the needs of all special education students in accordance with their IEPs.

Please note that increased or reduced per capita funds allocated to the school as a result of this proposal do not represent net/incremental system costs. All dollar amounts are based on FY10 allocations and are subject to annual variation based on adjustments to the DOE's overall operating budget.

C. Administration

No change in school supervisory or administrator positions is expected as a result of the grade truncation at P.S. 50.

D. Transportation

Transportation will be provided according to Chancellor's regulation A-801:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/21A1B11A-886B-4F74-9546-E875EE82A14C/40303/A801.pdf>.

There will be no change to existing transportation practices at P.S. 50 due to this proposal.

E. Other Support Services

Other support services will continue to be provided consistent with citywide policy.

VII. Building Information

Type of Building	Elementary School
Year Built	1922
Overall BCAS rating	2.41
Target Utilization	Q050: 112%
	Q850: 196%
Target Capacity	Q050: 588
	Q850: 134
FY 2009 Maintenance Costs	Labor: \$14,260 Materials: \$12,479 Maintenance and Repair Contracts: \$17,129 Custodial Operations Costs—Materials: \$4,406 Custodial Operations Costs—Custodial Allocation: \$223,406
FY 2009 Energy Costs	Electric: \$100,890 Gas: \$60,962 Oil: \$0
Projects completed during the current or prior school year	Ext. Masonry/Parapets/Roofs. Playground redevelopment & FY10 Reso A computer lab upgrade
Projects proposed in the capital plan	No projects identified
Accessibility of the building	Building is not functionally programmatic accessible
Building attributes	Auditorium, Cafeteria, Computer room, Multi-purpose room & Library