



Public Comment Analysis

Date: December 13, 2010

Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of P.S. 023 The New Children’s School (10X023) to a K-5 School

Date of Panel Vote: December 14, 2010

Summary of Proposal

P.S. 23 The New Children’s School (10X023 or “P.S. 23”) is an existing zoned early childhood center/elementary school located at 2151 Washington Avenue, Bronx, NY, 10457, in Community School District 10. P.S. 23 currently serves students in Kindergarten through second grade and offers a Pre-Kindergarten program. P.S. 23 is located in building X023. On October 29, 2010, the Department of Education (“DOE”) published an educational impact statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to implement a “grade expansion” so that P.S. 23 will serve Kindergarten through fifth grade. This means that P.S. 23 would continue to serve existing students as they are promoted to third grade in the 2011-2012 school year. P.S. 23 would then grow to serve fourth graders in 2012-2013, and fifth graders in 2013-2014, as laid out in the chart below. P.S. 23 would complete its grade expansion in September 2013, at which point it would enroll students in Kindergarten through fifth grade and continue to offer a Pre-Kindergarten program.

School Year	Grades Served
2011-2012	K-3
2012-2013	K-4
2013-2014	K-5

On November 15, 2010, the DOE published an amended EIS, which clarified data concerning the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price meals, but which did not revise or modify the proposal itself.

On November 22, the DOE published a second amended EIS, which clarified P.S. 23’s school performance data and corrected typographical errors, but, again, did not revise or modify the proposal itself.

The DOE strives to ensure that all students in New York City have access to high-quality schools at every stage of their education. Having elementary schools that terminate in different grades

(i.e., K-2 versus K-5) creates challenges for students who must leave elementary schools after second grade and move to other elementary schools for third through fifth grades. When P.S. 23 students leave P.S. 23 and attend their zoned elementary school in grade 3, this creates an enlarged enrollment for the zoned school in grades three through five. For students zoned to P.S. 23 for K-2, these students are zoned to P.S. 59 starting in third grade. Elementary schools typically enroll students from Kindergarten to fifth grade (K-5).

The proposed grade expansion will help standardize elementary school grade spans in District 10, giving P.S. 23 students the typical six years in elementary school. Once P.S. 23 serves students in grades K-5 in 2013-2014, fifth-grade students will be able to apply to middle schools through the Middle School Choice process.

In addition, this proposal addresses changing enrollment trends based on recently approved and potential additional rezoning plans. Historically, many students attended P.S. 23 from other overcrowded elementary schools in District 10, including P.S. 8, P.S. 56, P.S. 94 and P.S. 85. However, the construction of new school facilities and certain already approved rezoning proposals have significantly addressed these overcrowding issues. Therefore, fewer students from other District 10 elementary schools will need to attend P.S. 23, and many will return to their zoned elementary school. As this trend continues, P.S. 23's elementary school enrollment will decrease in grades Kindergarten through second grade, resulting in sufficient space in X023 to accommodate the proposed expansion.

Furthermore, the DOE is working with the District 10 Community Education Council ("CEC 10") to change P.S. 23's zone pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-185. If approved, P.S. 23's new zone would stabilize enrollment at P.S. 23, P.S. 59 and P.S. 85. At P.S. 23, the current projected Kindergarten enrollment is 128 students. Assuming that the rezoning and grade expansion proposals are approved, P.S. 23's Kindergarten enrollment would be reduced to approximately 70-80 students, and the school would grow to its projected enrollment at scale in 2014-2015 with approximately 425-475 students, or slightly below the school's target capacity of 485 students. No further construction or facilities changes are necessary to implement the grade expansion.

The DOE presented the rezoning proposal to CEC 10 on November 18, 2010. The vote is scheduled for the CEC 10 meeting on December 14, 2010.¹ The CEC's approval of the rezoning proposal would be contingent on the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP)'s approval of this grade expansion proposal.

Even if the rezoning proposal is not passed, the expected drop in enrollment at P.S. 23 described above will create space in the building and will allow for the school to expand and accommodate students in Kindergarten through fifth grade. The DOE would work with P.S. 23. and P.S. 59 to reach target enrollment levels at P.S. 23 by limiting that school to approximately three sections per grade. This would be monitored by the DOE's Office of Student Enrollment office to ensure that the school has the necessary space to successfully serve all students.

¹ This meeting was originally scheduled for December 16, 2010 (as noted in the EIS). The meeting has been rescheduled for December 14, 2010.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at P.S. 23 The New Children's School on November 30, 2010. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 17 members of the public attended the hearing but none provided comments on the proposal. Present at the hearing were District 10 Superintendent Sonia Menendez; District 10 Community Education Council President Marvin Shelton; and Principal Shirley Torres on behalf of the school leadership team of P.S. 23.

There were no comments made at the joint public hearing.

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

1. CEC 10 President Marvin Shelton expressed support for the proposal.

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

Comment 1 expresses support for the proposal, and as such does not require a response.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes in the proposal were made in response to public feedback.