



**Public Comment Analysis**

Date: December 13, 2010  
Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of I.S. 119 The Glendale (24Q119) to a K-8 School  
Date of Panel Vote: December 14, 2010

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**Summary of Proposal**

I.S. 119 The Glendale (24Q119 or “I.S. 119”) is an existing zoned middle school located at 74-01 78th Avenue, Glendale, NY, 11385, in Community School District 24. It currently serves students in sixth through eighth grade. I.S. 119 is located in building Q119.

On October 15, 2010 the Department of Education (“DOE”) published an educational impact statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to implement a “grade expansion” so that I.S. 119 will serve grades K-8. This means that I.S. 119 would begin enrolling Kindergartners in the 2011-2012 school year, in addition to maintaining its sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. P.S./I.S. 119 would then grow to serve an additional grade in each subsequent year, as laid out in the chart below. P.S./I.S. 119 would complete its grade expansion in September 2016, at which point it would enroll students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. P.S./I.S. 119’s enrollment would continue to expand until the 2019-2020 school year, when students from its inaugural Kindergarten class graduate.

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Grades Served</b>
2011-2012	K, 6-8
2012-2013	K-1, 6-8
2013-2014	K-2, 6-8
2014-2015	K-3, 6-8
2015-2016	K-4, 6-8
2016-2017	K-8

I.S. 119 will continue to serve four sections of Gifted and Talented (“G&T”) students in each of grades six, seven, and eight. The middle school will also continue to enroll sixth grade students from the nearby P.S. 91 Richard Arkwright, who are currently zoned, and will continue to be zoned to I.S. 119 for middle school.

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 did not revise or modify the proposal itself.

The idea to expand I.S. 119 into a K-8 school came from the school community in response to the recent K-8 grade expansions of three elementary schools that previously sent rising sixth graders to I.S. 119. As P.S. 128 Juniper Valley, P.S. 49 Dorothy Bonawit Kole, and P.S. 113 Isaac Chauncey have added middle school grades, two things have happened: there are fewer students zoned to I.S. 119 for middle school, and those three schools have developed greater elementary level demand than they can meet.

In March, the principal of I.S. 119 submitted a letter of intent to apply for the grade expansion, and, in July, a team of I.S. 119 teachers and administrators submitted an application to expand the school. That application was supported by I.S. 119 parents and the broader community surrounding the school, including elected officials representing the community. On August 31, a grade expansion panel interviewed the I.S. 119 applicant team. DOE officials also visited the school and concluded that the school was positioned to successfully begin an elementary school expansion.

Such an expansion will build upon the growing success of the I.S. 119 school community in recent years. The school's proficiency levels (Levels 3 and 4) in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics last year were above the citywide average, the Queens average, and the District 24 average. The school's leadership is also at the forefront of introducing the Common Core Standards (new national standards that align in rigor and content across the nation) into the school's curriculum and instructional practices. These positive steps indicate a record of success that can continue with an expanded grade span.

The building in which I.S. 119 is located will have space to accommodate additional grades. As students from P.S. 128, P.S. 49, and P.S. 113 continue to articulate into the middle school grades now offered at their own schools, fewer students will enroll at I.S. 119 for middle school. This creates space at I.S. 119 to accommodate elementary school grades. No further construction or facilities changes would need to take place. Moreover, the youngest grades (who would begin to gradually enter the school, one grade at a time) would be able to start out in a separate part of the building.

The DOE will be working with the District 24 Community Education Council ("CEC 24") to create an elementary zone for the school, pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-185. The school's new zone will be created prior to January 2011, when the Kindergarten registration process for children entering Kindergarten in September 2011 begins. If the CEC 24 votes to approve a rezoning plan prior to the December Panel for Educational Policy vote (at which time I.S. 119's grade expansion will be before the Panel), the rezoning plan will be made contingent upon Panel approval of this grade expansion proposal.

## **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing**

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at I.S. 119 The Glendale on November 22, 2010. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 28 members of the public attended the hearing, and 9 people spoke. Present at the hearing were District 24 Superintendent Madeline Chan; District 24 Community Education Council president Nick Comianni; District 24 Community Education Council vice president Peter Verscici; P.S. 119 Principal Dr. Jeanne Fagan; Assistant Principal of I.S. 119 Fred Baumann; School Leadership Team members from I.S. 119 Maria Coleman, Andrew Bennett, Lisa Comainni, Ann Marie Hoff, Chris Kurre, Eileen Walsh, Anthony Wansor, Nelicia Cruz, and Tina Mavrikos-Kual; President of the President's Council Marge Kolb; District 24 UFT representative RosemaryParker; Senior Manager of the Citywide Community Education Council Ewel Napier; District 24 District Family Advocate Eleanor McNamee; and Deputy Network Leader (CFN 208) Roseann Napolitano.

### **The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing:**

1. Dr. Fagan expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to expand I.S. 119 and her excitement towards the proposal.
2. President of the President's Council Marge Kolb expressed concerns related to overcrowding at nearby schools and re-zoning for I.S. 119. She acknowledged that I.S. 119 has experienced decreased enrollment in grades 6-8 as a result of other nearby schools expanding to middle school grades, but questioned why I.S.119's current zoned admissions policy was not changed so that I.S. 119 could become an unzoned, choice school to alleviate overcrowding in other communities. She questioned why the public hearings to propose the expansion and rezoning of the school were not joined as one hearing.
3. A commenter responded to Ms. Kolb's concerns about re-zoning and why the meetings were separate.
4. A commenter expressed support for the proposal but asked questions about the proposed geographical parameters of the new zone for I.S. 119.
5. A commenter suggested that right now is the right time to expand the school because it supports the psychological welfare of children by preventing them from having to transition to a new school.
6. A commenter expressed concern with the re-zoning.

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

The DOE received 5 comments by e-mail and 1 comment by telephone.

7. A commenter believed that it was the intent of I.S.119's School Leadership Team to expand I.S. 119 to offer high school grades instead of elementary school grades.
8. A commenter expressed concern about the expansion and the zoning rules of the district. The commenter also expressed a concern related to busing students in and students

having to cross major intersections to attend school. This commenter also expressed concern about mixing Kindergarten students with eighth-grade students.

9. A commenter disagreed with the decision to hold only one public hearing on the re-zoning and inquired about variances for siblings.
10. A commenter expressed concern regarding the expansion and the costs related to creating K-5 classes. The commenter also inquired as to why I.S.119 was not selected to be a choice school.
11. Commenters inquired about how the new zone for P.S./I.S. 119 would affect where their children would attend school for September.

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

Comments 1, 4, and 5 all express support of the proposal and do not require a response.

Comments 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, and 11 all regard questions and concerns about re-zoning for I.S. 119. The procedures for changing the zone lines are laid out in Chancellor's Regulation A-185, available at [http://docs.nycenet.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-13/A-185\\_1-14-05.pdf](http://docs.nycenet.edu/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-13/A-185_1-14-05.pdf). All re-zoning decisions are made by the Community Education Council 24 ("CEC 24"), as they are the body with purview over zone line changes. The DOE is currently working with CEC 24 to create an elementary school zone for P.S./I.S. 119, contingent upon the Panel's approval of this proposal. If the proposal is approved, the school's new zone will be determined prior to January 2011, when the Kindergarten registration process for children entering Kindergarten in September 2011 begins.

Comment 9 also inquired about the sibling priority policy for students attending P.S./I.S. 119. In accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101, priority will first be given to students who live within the zone who have a sibling at P.S. 119 (grades K-5); then to students who live outside the zone who have a sibling at P.S. 119 (grades K-5); then to students who live within the zone; and finally to students who live outside the zone. This response is meant to clarify and supersede a previous response provided by the DOE to the commenter that may have implied that students with siblings in sixth grade or higher would have priority at P.S./I.S. 119. Sibling priority only applies to students with older siblings in kindergarten through fifth grade.

With regard to the number of meetings related to this specific expansion proposal, representatives from the Division of Portfolio held meetings at the school and with CEC 24 to gather feedback before making a formal proposal. As for the separation of meetings for proposals concerning re-zoning and changes in school utilization, this is due to the fact that CEC 24 is the body that has purview over zone line changes. Any changes in school utilization proposals are presented by the DOE and must include a joint public hearing held by the CEC and SLT at the impacted school to listen to community feedback.

Comments 2 and 10 question why I.S. 119's zoned admissions policy was not changed so that I.S. 119 could become an unzoned choice school. This option was not considered because elementary overcrowding was identified as a key issue in the community; creating a zone for I.S. 119 and expanding the school's grades to serve K-5 in addition to 6-8 addresses this issue. In addition, feedback from community members indicated a preference for zoned schools.

With regard to Comment 7, concerning the SLT's purported preference for I.S. 119 to expand to serve high school grades rather than elementary school grades, there is a need for both types of seats. However, there is a new high school planned for Maspeth, which will add capacity in the immediate area. This high school's building will be ready in 2012, but the DOE is looking into feasibility of incubating the school at another location while its permanent site is finished. There are also many 6-12 schools in Queens which will be phasing in over the next few years. These include Metropolitan Expeditionary Learning School (grades 6-7 this year) in District 28, York Early College Academy (6-10 this year) in District 28, Queens Collegiate (6, 9-11 this year) in District 28, Young Women's Leadership (6-12, 12th added this year) in District 28, and Eagle Academy for Young Men (6 this year) in District 29. The DOE recognizes that these schools are not in the Glendale/Maspeth/Middle Village area, but they nevertheless add high school capacity to the borough and City, and therefore will address the demand for high school seats. In addition, contrary to the commenter's suggestion, current SLT members are in support of the proposal.

With regard to Comment 8, which expresses concern about busing students to I.S. 119 and students having to cross major intersections, the DOE's rezoning proposal has avoided, wherever possible, major intersections in the zone for I.S. 119. Specifically, the only major crossing in the zone is from the southern side of Myrtle Ave. However, no current I.S. 119 students live on the southern side. Additionally, as mentioned above, all zoning issues are under the purview of the District 24 CEC. P.S./I.S. 119's leadership will also continue to work with the Office of School Safety, the New York City Department of Transportation and the New York City Police Department to ensure a safe environment for all students on their way to and from school.

Comment 8 also expresses concerns over having Kindergarten students in the same building as eighth graders. Several schools in the City enroll students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. As is the case with these other schools, P.S./I.S. 119's school leadership will work with the DOE to ensure that all students are being taught in age-appropriate spaces. Moreover, if the proposal is approved, Kindergarten students would have access to bathrooms that are solely for their use.

Comment 10 also inquires about the costs of expanding the school. As stated in the EIS, I.S. 119 will receive approximately a one-time award of approximately \$3,000-3,400 during the first year of the grade expansion to help offset the costs of materials, such as new furniture and supplies, needed to support the additional grades. (This figure is estimated based on current funding allocations awarded to schools undergoing grade expansions, and is subject to some annual variation). As for additional instructional costs, if the proposal is approved, P.S./I.S. 119 is expected to receive approximately \$162,400 in total additional per pupil funding annually based on projected increases in total enrollment (once the grade expansion is fully implemented; these estimates are based on current Fair Student Funding (FSF) per capita allocation levels and are subject to annual variation).

### **Changes Made to the Proposal**

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