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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
P.S. 396 (10X396) - 1/4/11**

1 [START 181\_320]

2 MS. SONIA MENENDEZ: Good evening, and  
3 welcome. Thank you for coming tonight to the  
4 joint public hearing for two proposals. The  
5 proposed grade extension of P.S. 396 to a K to 5  
6 school, and the proposed - - of M.S. 390 to a 6  
7 through 9 school.

8 I am Sonja Menendez, the community  
9 superintendent to District 10. We have - -  
10 District 10 CEC and school leadership team of  
11 both schools to participate in this joint public  
12 hearing. I am joined tonight by representation  
13 by the school District team of M.S. 390 and P.S.  
14 396 and the District 10 CEC.

15 At this time, I would like them to introduce  
16 themselves. However, before I do that, I just  
17 want to let you know that translation services  
18 are available. So if anyone needs translation  
19 services, please, if you sit to my right, which  
20 would be the left. [Speaking foreign language]  
21 Thank you.

22 MS. VALERIE GREGIOUS: Good evening. My  
23 name is Valerie Gregious [phonetic], CEC - - for  
24 District 10, - - secretary.

25 MR. MARVIN SHELTON: Marvin Shelton

1 [phonetic], president of New District Education  
2 Counsel [phonetic] number 10.

3 MALE VOICE: Good evening. - - Mercedes  
4 [phonetic], principal, middle school 390.

5 MS. NICOLE TENAY: Good evening, everyone.  
6 Principal 396, Nicole Tenay [phonetic].

7 FEMALE VOICE: [Speaking foreign language].

8 - - .

9 MS. CARMEN: My name is - - Carmen  
10 [phonetic]. Part of the SLT committee at both  
11 schools.

12 MS. OLGA VASQUEZ: Good evening. My name is  
13 Olga Vasquez [phonetic], part of the SLT for  
14 390.

15 FEMALE VOICE: - - and I'm part of the SLT  
16 committee.

17 MR. DANIEL NORQUEZ: Good evening. My name  
18 is Daniel Norquez [phonetic]. I'm also part of  
19 the SLT committee, and I'm also the committee  
20 codirector.

21 MR. GEORGE SWANTERN: George Swantern  
22 [phonetic], social studies teacher at M.S. 390  
23 and a member of the school leadership team, 390.

24 MR. MARCUS ESCABAR: Marcus Escabar  
25 [phonetic], technology teacher at 390, SLT

1 member and M.S. 390 - - .

2 MR. DOUGLAS MANZELA: And Doug Manzela. I'm  
3 the school leadership team chairperson at P.S.  
4 396 - - .

5 MS. MENENDEZ: Thank you. As a reminder,  
6 this hearing is being recorded. The purpose of  
7 this hearing is to for you to provide comment  
8 about the proposals. Before I describe the  
9 proposals, I want to make sure you are all aware  
10 of the opportunity to provide your input. All  
11 those who wish to speak must sign up in the  
12 speaker signup area, located just outside the  
13 auditorium. The sign up list will close in  
14 about 15 minutes, and speakers will be given the  
15 floor in the order that they sign up. All  
16 comments are limited to two minutes.

17 All comments will be - - comment to be  
18 published at provided to the Panel for  
19 Educational Policy that - - recorded now votes.  
20 The votes are scheduled for Wednesday, February  
21 19 at 6:00 p.m. In addition, we welcome any  
22 comments and feedback you may have at a time  
23 before the panel close on both proposals. The  
24 e-mail address and phone number where comments  
25 may be made are D10proposals@schools.nyc.gov,

1 and at the following number, (212) 374-5159.  
2 So as a reminder, if anyone would like to speak,  
3 please make sure that you sign up at the sign up  
4 sheet, which will close in about 15 minutes.

5 I would like to give you the proposal  
6 summary. P.S. 396, or 10X396, is an - -  
7 elementary school located in the building X26 at  
8 1930 Andrews Avenue in the Bronx, New York, ZIP  
9 code 10453 in community school District 10.

10 P.S. 396 currently serves student in  
11 kindergarten through the fourth grade, and  
12 offers a prekindergarten program. P.S. 396 is  
13 collocated in M.S. 390, 10X390, a middle school  
14 that currently serves grades five through eight.  
15 Currently, most P.S. 396 students attend M.S.  
16 390 for middle school.

17 The Department of Education is proposing to  
18 implement a grade expansion so that P.S. 396  
19 will serve kindergarten through fifth grade.  
20 This means that P.S. 396 would continue to serve  
21 existing students as they were promoted to fifth  
22 grade in the year 2011/2012 school year. P.S.  
23 396 would complete its grade expansion in  
24 September of 2011, at which point they would - -  
25 student in kindergarten through fifth grade, and

1 continue to offer a prekindergarten program.

2 This proposal will allow P.S. 396 students  
3 to attend their zoned elementary school for  
4 grades K through 5, the standard grade span in  
5 New York City. The proposed grade expansion  
6 will help standardize elementary school grade  
7 spans in District 10, giving P.S. 396 students  
8 the typical six years in elementary school and  
9 instructional continuity.

10 Once P.S. 396 serves students in K to 5 in  
11 2011 to 2012, fifth grade students will be able  
12 to attend their zoned middle school, M.S. 390,  
13 or apply for middle school through the middle  
14 school choice process. As a result of this  
15 proposal, there will be an increase in the  
16 number of students being served by P.S. 396 by  
17 approximately 45 to 55 students.

18 The building in which P.S. 396 is located  
19 has space to accommodate the - - . The school  
20 building, S26, has currently capacity of 1,121  
21 students, and a target utilization rate of 71%.  
22 No further instructional facilities changes are  
23 necessarily to implement the grade expansion.

24 In a separate educational impact statement,  
25 the Department of Education is also proposing to

1 implement a grade truncation at M.S. 390,  
2 meaning that M.S. 390 would no longer enroll  
3 fifth graders as of the current 2010/2011 school  
4 year. Beginning in September 2011, M.S. 390  
5 will serve students only in sixth through eighth  
6 grade. The Department of Education strives to  
7 ensure that all students in New York City have  
8 access to high quality schools at every stage of  
9 their education. Having middle schools that  
10 begin at different grades, such as five through  
11 eight versus six through eight, creates unequal  
12 levels of access for students, based simply on  
13 the year they exit elementary school.

14 Elementary schools typically terminate at  
15 grade five. Middle schools typically enroll  
16 students beginning in the sixth grade. M.S. 390  
17 is one of two remaining five through eight  
18 middle schools in District 10. The proposed  
19 grade truncation will help standardize middle  
20 school entry grades in District 10.

21 Furthermore, M.S. 390 will become a middle  
22 school-choice-option for District 9 and 10 fifth  
23 graders applying to sixth grade for the  
24 2011/2012 school year.

25 All rising sixth graders who live in the

1 M.S. 390 zone will still be guaranteed a seat  
2 at this school. Under the proposal, at the  
3 close of the 2010/2011 school year, all M.S. 390  
4 fifth graders - - will continue at this school  
5 for sixth grade. The truncation of M.S. 390 and  
6 the expansion of P.S. 396 along with P.S. 226,  
7 another elementary school that serves students  
8 in the same zone as M.S. 390 and P.S. 396, will  
9 achieve the following.

10 It will allow P.S. 396 students to spend the  
11 typical six years in elementary school, and it  
12 will allow M.S. 390 students to spend the  
13 typical three years in middle school. In  
14 addition, M.S. 390 plans to offer a limited, - -  
15 language and leadership development program  
16 called Excel at - - for English language  
17 learners that would be available to students  
18 through a middle school - - process in the  
19 2011/2012 school year.

20 Students of Districts 9 and 10 interested in  
21 applying to this program can do so during the  
22 2010/2011 school year. In the P.S. 396  
23 expansion proposal--I'm sorry. If the P.S. 396  
24 expansion proposal is approved, beginning with  
25 the 2011/2012 school year, P.S. 226 and P.S. 396

1 graduates will be able to attend M.S. 390,  
2 their zoned middle school, as sixth graders, or  
3 apply to all schools in District 9 and 10 that  
4 participate in the middle school choice process.

5       If the two grade expansion proposals are not  
6 approved, but M.S. 390's grade truncation  
7 proposal is approved, the Department of  
8 Education would not implement the grade  
9 truncation to ensure that students would retain  
10 a zoned fifth grade option. As a result of this  
11 proposal, approximately 120 to 140 students, who  
12 would have attended M.S. 390 for fifth grade in  
13 2011/2012, will attend their zoned school  
14 instead. There are enough seats to accommodate  
15 those students at their zoned school.

16       P.S. 396 and P.S. 226 are the two main  
17 elementary schools that feed students into M.S.  
18 390, as their zoned students are also zoned to  
19 M.S. 390. A small number of students who would  
20 attend M.S. 390 come from other elementary  
21 school throughout Districts 9 and 10, and there  
22 are enough seats to accommodate them.

23       At this time, we will open the floor for  
24 public comments. Speakers will be given the  
25 floor in the order that they signed up. All

1 comments are limited to two minutes. We'll  
2 just wait a couple of minutes for the speaker  
3 list.

4 Our first speaker is Douglas Manzela.

5 MR. MANZELA: I don't have a formal speech  
6 prepared, but I do have a few comments. One,  
7 I've been at P.S. 396. This is my fifth year,  
8 as a teacher. I teach third grade. And P.S.  
9 396 is of course dear to my heart, and over the  
10 years, we've continually had so much success in  
11 our school, from being a - - school four years  
12 ago to being a high - - school today, this year.  
13 We've continued to have really great success in  
14 our school.

15 It'd be nice to keep the fifth graders and  
16 the fourth graders going into fifth grade  
17 another year. I think personally, from a  
18 personal standpoint, I think a ten-year-old  
19 child going into middle school is still too  
20 young, and as we--as Sonia read before, it's  
21 typical, I mean, in the suburbs of New York,  
22 most schools are, you know, K through five,  
23 middle school starting in sixth grade. It's  
24 just--it makes sense. It's where the city is  
25 moving, and also, one of our big programs here

1 is it's called Autistic Spectrum Disorder  
2 program. It's - - program, and we have children  
3 in fourth grade who are in this program, and it  
4 would allow them to stay in our school for  
5 another year. There are not many other programs  
6 like that in our area, so it would give us that  
7 extra year to work with these students, and I  
8 think it's necessary and important. And in  
9 addition to that, it also may give M.S. 390 the  
10 opportunity to look into potentially having ASD  
11 program in their school as another - - looking  
12 into that. So it could be a real great benefit  
13 for both of our schools. Thank you.

14 MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker, Emilita  
15 Oritz.

16 FEMALE VOICE: We need a translator to  
17 translate for her. Can a translator translate?  
18 She has a question.

19 EMILITA ORITZ: [Speaking foreign language]

20 MALE VOICE: She would like to ask a  
21 question. Are the children who are going to be  
22 coming to--have to repeat the fifth grade, or  
23 what - - children?

24 FEMALE VOICE: The - - question, I think the  
25 question is about for kids who need to repeat

1 the fifth grade, what's the plan for them. If  
2 that's the case, the parent should speak to the  
3 guidance counselor, and they will either be  
4 given the opportunity to continue to seek  
5 services for fifth grade at M.S. 390, or  
6 potentially at P.S. 396 - - elementary school.  
7 But they would be given the services of  
8 continuing at 390 or at their elementary school,  
9 their zoned elementary school.

10 MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker, Andrea  
11 Hernandez [phonetic].

12 MS. ANDREA HERNANDEZ: Hi, I was just--my  
13 son just started 396 kindergarten. He's part of  
14 - - program. And it's, for me, the proposals  
15 are a non-issue. It should go through. 396  
16 should be a school from kindergarten to fifth  
17 grade. This whole public school Board of Ed. is  
18 all new to me because in my family, we've gone  
19 through private. But in order for my son to get  
20 the services that he needs, we had to go public.

21 So I haven't, like, - - a ten-year-old  
22 attend middle school, it doesn't make sense to  
23 me. I still think that it's still very young.  
24 This program serves my kids. It's important for  
25 my son and me because without it, his cognitive

1 ability, he can deal with the regular  
2 education program. But without the - - program,  
3 he would be put either in a 12 to one to one,  
4 which is not a situation where he should be  
5 because the CTT classes in our zones have about  
6 28 to 29 students in the classroom.

7 And it would really not be beneficial to  
8 him, and I'm not just speaking for just my son,  
9 but I think this program, to me, I feel like all  
10 public schools in New York City should have it  
11 because, I mean, the children, not just the - -  
12 children, but the - - children that are there,  
13 they get the best of both worlds because this is  
14 - - a place, the compassion that they have for  
15 one another, and they learn tolerance. They  
16 learn acceptance. And I just feel that I am all  
17 for the K through 5 at 396, again, and I'm  
18 hoping that this proposal goes through. And I  
19 just wanted to say that - - .

20 [Applause]

21 MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker, Nicole  
22 Wyner [phonetic].

23 MS. NICOLE WYNER: Good evening. My name is  
24 Nicole, and I have--my son came to this school  
25 in fifth grade, and he's been an honor role

1 student for the past two years. I think M.S.  
2 390 is a very good school. The teacher are very  
3 patient with helping children. They're very  
4 concerned. If there's something going on, they  
5 call. They let you know what's going on in the  
6 school, and I have a little one that is in 226,  
7 and I can't wait to bring him into M.S. 390 to  
8 join his brother, you know? And I will also  
9 love chess in the school because my eight-year-  
10 old, he plays chess, and there's a lot of  
11 children in M.S. 390 that plays chess that came  
12 from 226, that plays chess, and there is no  
13 chess club in M.S. 390, and I apologize - -  
14 chess - - . Thank you.

15 MS. MENENDEZ: Next speaker, Toni Diaz  
16 [phonetic].

17 MS. TONI DIAZ: Hi, I'm a parent of a child  
18 in the - - program in the third grade. We've  
19 been here since kindergarten, and we fully  
20 support the expansion through fifth grade. We  
21 do not think that our children, at fourth grade,  
22 are ready socially. If you know about autism,  
23 you know, that socially, that that's one of  
24 their impairments. That they're ready to move  
25 onto middle school at that age.

1           396 has been supportive to not only our  
2 children, - - and academically and socially, to  
3 the parents of that mental process as well. And  
4 we fully are behind this expansion, and we are  
5 also--we will look for the right kind of school  
6 for our children as well. So we will not just  
7 accept anything that's offered to us. We are  
8 going to be looking for the right place for  
9 them, that's prepared for them and trained for  
10 them and openly accepting them. Thank you.

11           [Applause]

12           MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker, Jeziah  
13 Longridge [phonetic].

14           MS. JEZIAH LONGRIDGE: - - how are you? I'd  
15 like to mention that I'm a concerned member of  
16 the community. I'm an MSW in social work, and  
17 what I'm concerned about is - - cause - - to the  
18 people of this school and this neighborhood are  
19 going to - - or perhaps be - - . Here I find  
20 that parents, there are concerned people here.  
21 This school has provided, you know, a  
22 stabilization of the children's formative years,  
23 and they're gaining a program that - - other  
24 options if these measures, truncations, come  
25 forth. What I mean by having school transition

1 where if you have siblings attending one  
2 school, which is right next door to the other.  
3 If there were more collaboration of - - , if  
4 they could consider perhaps sharing the funding  
5 as opposed to allocating the resources to one  
6 school, changing - - the other, which loses the  
7 intent, the input, the compassion and the  
8 participation of the parents of the students in  
9 the community, that would not help anyone.  
10 These children need you. You've got - - .  
11 That's my main concern.

12 I mean, you provide competence,  
13 effectiveness and efficiency, and make quite  
14 sure these children have passed the board exams  
15 and done what they need to do - - teachers and  
16 other faculty and such. The community - - has  
17 also provided many outputs and excesses and  
18 resources for them to utilize. Can you go  
19 further? - - and say let's close this down and  
20 make that - - . It's only offering one program  
21 at the next school.

22 What they have right now, they have  
23 stability. Please don't take that from them.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. MENENDEZ: Our next speaker is Elaine

1 Ellison [phonetic].

2 MS. ELAINE ELLISON: Hi. Good to see many  
3 of you. My son is a student here at 396. He's  
4 in the - - program. He's in the third grade.  
5 Next year, he will be in fourth grade. I feel  
6 that he is--he will be--it would benefit him if  
7 he could stay up to the fifth grade, to be  
8 standard with all the other schools in the  
9 District. I feel that at middle school, he is  
10 not ready to prepare to go into at fifth grade.  
11 It would be nice to have that continuity.

12 As one of my colleagues mentioned, if this  
13 zoning thing does not go through, I will be  
14 shopping for a middle school at the fifth grade  
15 level. I won't accept any other school that has  
16 - - other one, as - - shopping for one that  
17 meets my son's needs.

18 I think it just makes sense that the  
19 Department of Education has put this through. I  
20 think it's wonderful. I think it's forward  
21 thinking. I think it makes sense, and I would  
22 appreciate if this--I know that not only my son,  
23 but other children, not only in the - - program,  
24 but in the general education population, would  
25 benefit from students going into the fifth--are

1 you translating? [Laughter] Would benefit  
2 from the education that they are getting at P.S.  
3 396 from this - - program. I know that many of  
4 the teachers are not trained at M.S. 390. I  
5 don't appreciate the standards that they have at  
6 M.S. 390. I expect more from the teachers and  
7 from the parents and staff.

8 There is a wonderful environment at P.S.  
9 396, which I do not see at P.S. 390. And I  
10 enjoy the parents' participation that occurs at  
11 P.S. 396, and I'm sure that participation will  
12 continue if the Department of Education sees fit  
13 that these students stay at P.S. 396 through the  
14 fifth grade. That's about it. Thank you so  
15 much, and I hope this goes through.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker is Sharon  
18 Moore [phonetic]. Rhonda Sevac [phonetic].

19 MS. RHONDA SEVAC: Hello, everyone. I had a  
20 son in - - who's at 396, and he's been there  
21 since kindergarten. He's in the fourth grade,  
22 and he, you know, he's done really, really well  
23 at 396, in the ASD program. To tell you the  
24 truth, I've been looking for a private Jewish  
25 day school for him because we would like the

1 Jewish aspect, too, and there's nothing out  
2 there that's as good as 396's ASD - - program -  
3 - . So he'll probably be at 396 next year,  
4 where I hope there will be a fifth grade because  
5 he'll be going into fifth grade next year. And  
6 you know, he's just come such a long way, and  
7 the people--the staff is so supportive to the  
8 children as well as the adults, like especially  
9 Fred Buchanen [phonetic]. He, like, holds the  
10 program together, I'd say. And all the - -  
11 teachers and therapists have been excellent, and  
12 we're really, really so happy with the program.  
13 Thanks.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. MENENDEZ: The next speaker, Carmen  
16 Marcy [phonetic].

17 MS. CARMEN MARCY: Hi, I have a child in  
18 third grade - - , and we have the best. I  
19 couldn't see him anywhere else, but an extra  
20 year would be great for him to grow up and  
21 mature. And to get a fair chance and get into a  
22 middle school that, you know, more chances of  
23 getting--you know, more options out there than  
24 just one school or two schools that - - start at  
25 fifth grade. It's just--we need it. We must

1 have it. Thank you.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. MENENDEZ: Francisco Duranpur

4 [phonetic]. Francisco? Duvista Kunis

5 [phonetic]. Duvista Kunis? Martha Kanderera

6 [phonetic]. Martha Kanderera? Augustina Atino

7 [phonetic]? Augustina Atino?

8 FEMALE VOICE: There's been a mistake. She  
9 wasn't planning on speaking.

10 MS. MENENDEZ: Oh, she thought she was  
11 signing up. A sign-in. Okay. Martha Caristan  
12 [phonetic]? Martha?

13 At this time, the speaker list is now  
14 exhausted, so again, we welcome any comments and  
15 feedback you may have at a time before the Panel  
16 for Educational Policy votes on both proposals  
17 at the January 19, 2011 meeting. The e-mail  
18 address and phone number where comments may be  
19 made are D10proposal@schools.nyc.gov and the  
20 phone number is (202) 374-5159. Thank you again  
21 for your participation and coming up and seeing  
22 me. This - - public hearing is now closed.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability.

Signature /s/ Kayla Jessen

Date January 6, 2011\_\_\_\_\_