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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
Bread & Roses Integrated Arts High  
School - 4/3/12**

1 [START 290\_224\_MASTER]

2 MR. ANTHONY SETTLE: --is of tonight's  
3 proceedings. Also please note as this is an  
4 official hearing, it will be recorded and  
5 transcribed and so with that said we shall  
6 begin.

7 Good evening, my name is Anthony Settle and  
8 I will be the facilitator for tonight's  
9 proceedings. This is a joint public hearing of  
10 the Department of Education, the Community  
11 Education Council and the school leadership team  
12 to discuss the proposed closure and replacement  
13 of Bread and Roses for Integrated Arts High  
14 School.

15 An official record of tonight's proceedings  
16 will be recorded and transcribed. So before we  
17 start the hearing we ask that anyone who wishes  
18 to speak during the public comment portion of  
19 the evening to sign up at the table in the back  
20 of the auditorium. Signup will end at--promptly  
21 at 6:15.

22 If you have a question that you want to be  
23 addressed during the question and answer portion  
24 of the agenda, please write that question on the  
25 index card provided at the back and submit them

1 to a volunteer by the table. Only those who  
2 have signed up to speak will be able to  
3 participate in the public comment.

4 All panel participants were asked to be here  
5 no later than 5:30 p.m., so now that we have  
6 started if a panel participant arrives late he  
7 or she will be given the time to speak at the  
8 first opportune moment and we want to be  
9 respectful of everyone's time.

10 There may be elected officials who arrive at  
11 different times throughout the proceedings this  
12 evening, if they wish to speak we will do our  
13 very best to accommodate them at the first  
14 opportune moment. Those who are here at the  
15 start of the public comment segment will be  
16 asked to speak first.

17 So I ask that you please take a moment, take  
18 a look at the agenda, the format will include a  
19 presentation of the proposal and presentation by  
20 hearing participants followed by public comment.  
21 Speakers should have already signed up at the  
22 table in the lobby. Public comments can no  
23 longer be than two minutes in length. We will  
24 enforce the time strictly. Speakers will be  
25 informed when their designated time has come to

1 a close.

2       There will be a question and answer period,  
3 we ask that members of the audience, if you have  
4 a question, each of you again, we ask that you  
5 write your question on a postcard that is  
6 supplied at the sign-in table when you arrived  
7 here this evening.

8       While public comments are taking place,  
9 staff members will organize the questions into  
10 categories and have them ready for the question  
11 and answer period.

12       Questions will not be taken from the floor.  
13 Some questions will be asked directly and others  
14 will be batched under headings in order to avoid  
15 repetitiveness.

16       Even though all individual questions will  
17 not be addressed in the forum tonight, the  
18 answers will be on our website prior to the  
19 Panel for Education panel meeting.

20       If at the end of the hearing you still have  
21 questions, we encourage you to direct them to us  
22 by calling the number on the bottom of your  
23 factsheet or sending them to us via email,  
24 again, to the address found at the bottom of  
25 your factsheets.

1 I would now like to introduce the panel  
2 which has been assembled for this night's joint  
3 public hearing. We will start at the person  
4 closest to my right, Dr. Dorita Gibson, Deputy  
5 Chancellor. Mr. Maurice Horn, Member of the  
6 Community Education Council for District 5.  
7 Sonja Jones, Member of the Community Education  
8 Council for District 5. Dr. Juan Vives,  
9 Principal of Kappa IV. Louisa Grugle  
10 [phonetic], SLT Chair.

11 We are pleased to have the following elected  
12 officials with us. Also on our dais is Mr. Kurt  
13 Jones who is the President of the Community  
14 Education Council for District 5. Oh, I'm  
15 sorry, sorry, is a member of the SLT, I'm very  
16 sorry Ms. Jones and Mr. Jones. Also  
17 representing Council Member Inez Dickens is  
18 Jamilah Richards and Sophia Rahim.

19 I will now turn the program over to Deputy  
20 Chancellor Dr. Dorita Gibson who will read for  
21 us the proposal.

22 DR. DORITA GIBSON: Thank you Mr. Settle and  
23 good evening ladies and gentlemen. Thank you  
24 for being here this evening and before I go into  
25 the proposal, I would like to recognize a few

1 people in the audience today, Superintendent  
2 Gale Reeves, thank you for being here. Dr.  
3 Sabrina Hope King, Abyssinian and Department of  
4 Ed.

5 From New Visions we have Barbara Gambino,  
6 from Central Department of Ed, we have Rosemary  
7 Stuart, our District Family Advocate, Denise  
8 Gordon, I saw her in the audience, the UFT, I  
9 think Mr. Dwayne Clark is here, and I do believe  
10 there is someone from the CSA, she should be  
11 here as well.

12 This joint public hearing was convened to  
13 discuss the proposed closure, replacement of  
14 Bread and Roses. Bread and Roses is located at  
15 6 Edgecombe Avenue, New York, 10030 within the  
16 geographical confines of Community School  
17 District 5 in Manhattan.

18 It currently serves students in grades 9  
19 through 12. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the New York  
20 City Department of Education published a  
21 proposal to close Bread and Roses and open a new  
22 school, 5M302.

23 By closing Bread and Roses and replacing it  
24 with a new school we are seeking to rapidly  
25 create a school environment that will prepare

1 for success in college, work and life. The new  
2 school will build on the strongest elements of  
3 Bread and Roses and it will also incorporate new  
4 elements in order to create a rigorous culture  
5 for teaching and learning.

6 Students will have access to a higher  
7 quality educational option while they continue  
8 to attend school in this very building. We  
9 believe this process will ensure that all  
10 students are set on a path for accomplishment.

11 We stand behind Principal Rodney Lofton who  
12 is here this evening, his leadership, and we  
13 believe he is the right person to be the  
14 proposed new leader of this school.

15 In his time here at Bread and Roses he has  
16 shown commitment and a strong will to improve  
17 student achievement and learning. We hope you  
18 will use tonight to share with us your thoughts  
19 about the qualities you want to see in the  
20 proposed new school, including the  
21 characteristics that matter to you in a  
22 principal.

23 Additionally, in conjunction with this  
24 proposal as a way to support additional school  
25 improvement, the Department of Ed submitted an

1 SIG application to the State Ed to implement  
2 the turnaround model at the new school. If this  
3 is approved this will make the new school  
4 eligible for up to \$850,510 in supplementary  
5 federal funding.

6 I want to acknowledge the students and  
7 families who feel that their sons and daughters  
8 are being well-served at Bread and Roses.  
9 Tonight we will hear some stories from families,  
10 from our electeds and from our students. These  
11 are success stories and we honor them, but we  
12 also need to consider that many students who  
13 started with some of the children in the 9<sup>th</sup>  
14 grade have not experienced the same success and  
15 all of our students deserve better.

16 Despite a number of challenges the school  
17 has faced some data indicates that elements of  
18 Bread and Roses are worth preserving in the new  
19 school. The Department of Ed believes that with  
20 new programs and a push to improve teacher  
21 quality, the new school could expand the recent  
22 improvement in student outcomes. For example,  
23 in 2010/2011 sixth school year, the six-year  
24 graduation rate was 70%, notably higher than the  
25 2007/2008 six-year graduation rate which was

1 54%, indicating that the school is having some  
2 success graduating students on the extended  
3 timeline.

4 Additionally, while overall first-year  
5 credit accumulation at Bread and Roses is poor,  
6 the school has done better in helping incoming  
7 students with poor academic records accumulate  
8 credits. This is positive, but much more work  
9 needs to be done.

10 With new supports and restructuring, the  
11 Department expects that the new school will be  
12 able to effectively leverage these areas of  
13 strength while improving student outcomes.  
14 However, Bread and Rose's performance data  
15 overall and feedback from the members of the New  
16 York State Board of Regions that the pace of  
17 change in New York City's persistently lowest  
18 achievement school is not quick enough to meet  
19 student needs, and suggests that Bread and Roses  
20 should be closed and replaced with a new school  
21 with new programs and support.

22 Graduation rates at Bread and Roses have  
23 been consistently low for years and have  
24 recently declined further. In 2010/2011 Bread  
25 and Rose's four-year's graduation rate, which

1 includes August graduates, was 47%, well below  
2 the citywide graduation rate of 51--I'm sorry,  
3 of 65.1% and in the bottom 6% citywide.

4 In 2009/2010 Bread and Rose's four-year  
5 graduation rate including August graduates was  
6 56%. If Regions diplomas alone were accounted  
7 toward graduation, as will be the case for most  
8 students in the 2011/2012 school year, the four-  
9 year graduation rate at Bread and Roses would  
10 drop to just 34%, putting this school in the  
11 bottom 8% of high schools citywide.

12 The progress report measures the progress  
13 and performance of students in school as well as  
14 the school environment, compared to other  
15 schools serving similar student populations.

16 Bread and Roses earned an overall D grade on  
17 its 2010/2011 annual progress report, with an F  
18 grade in student progress, a C grade in student  
19 performance, and an F grade on the school  
20 environment. Bread and Roses also received an  
21 overall D on its 2009/2010 annual progress  
22 report.

23 The first-year credit accumulation is a key  
24 predictor of student success because students  
25 who fall behind early in high school often have

1 trouble getting back on track for graduation.  
2 In 2010/2011, only 66% of first-year students at  
3 Bread and Roses earned at least 10 credits. The  
4 progress reports define students earning 10 or  
5 more credits a student who earned at least 6 of  
6 these 10 credits in three of the following  
7 subjects, Math, English, Science and/or Social  
8 Studies. This rate of credit accumulation puts  
9 Bread and Roses in the bottom 17% of high  
10 schools citywide.

11 The school attendance rates remain below  
12 that of most high schools. The 2010/2011  
13 attendance rate was 78%, putting Bread and Roses  
14 in the bottom 10% of city high schools in terms  
15 of attendance.

16 Safety issues have been a concern in the  
17 school in recent years. On the 2010/2011 New  
18 York City School survey, only 69% of students  
19 reported feeling safe in the hallways, bathrooms  
20 and locker rooms. In addition, only 36% of  
21 teachers reported that discipline and order were  
22 maintained at the school. This response is in  
23 the bottom 9% of high schools citywide.

24 Before we hear from other members of the  
25 panel and move to the public comments, I would

1 like to briefly discuss the impact of this  
2 proposal on current Bread and Roses students and  
3 families if this proposal is approved.

4 All current Bread and Roses students will  
5 have a guaranteed seat in the new school. This  
6 includes all current 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> grade  
7 students, as well as any 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who  
8 do not meet graduation criteria by the beginning  
9 of the 2012/2013 school year.

10 All incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders who have applied to  
11 Bread and Roses are matched to it in the high  
12 school admissions process will automatically be  
13 enrolled in the new school. Additionally, the  
14 Department of Ed does not anticipate that the  
15 proposed closure and replacement of Bread and  
16 Roses will impact the co-locations of the school  
17 currently collated on the campus, Kappa IV and  
18 Mott Hall High School.

19 Finally, I want to clarify the process the  
20 new school will go through to hire best possible  
21 staff if this proposal is approved.

22 There is no quota of staff that must be  
23 removed as a result of this process. This  
24 proposal does not require the turnover of any  
25 set percentage of staff. Pursuant to the city's

1 teacher contract, if this proposal is  
2 approved, pedagogical staff who apply to work at  
3 the new school will be reviewed by the five-  
4 person school-based personal committee. The  
5 committee is made up of the Principal, two  
6 designees of the Chancellor and two designees of  
7 the UFT President.

8 The proposed new leader will develop  
9 qualifications for positions in the new school  
10 and the Personnel Committee will consider each  
11 candidate who applies. All teachers from the  
12 current school are eligible to apply and work in  
13 the new school.

14 If sufficient numbers of staff from the  
15 closing school apply, at least 50% of the new  
16 school's pedagogical positions must be selected  
17 from among the appropriately licensed, most  
18 senior qualified applicants. Again, there is no  
19 set percentage or limit on the number of staff  
20 from the closing school who can be hired to work  
21 in the new school, and the decisions are made by  
22 the Personnel Committee of the new school.

23 And thank you, we look forward to hearing  
24 your comments and questions. Mr. Settle.

25 MR. SETTLE: We'd ask that you please wait

1 if you have signed up for the public comments  
2 that would be the time, or if not and you had a  
3 question, we'd ask that you please write it out  
4 and submit it to one of the volunteers.

5 At this time I would like to present Mr.  
6 Maurice Horn, a member of the CEC from District  
7 5.

8 MR. MAURICE HORN: Good afternoon to all.  
9 My name is Maurice Horn and I'm a representative  
10 of the CEC 5. As the only student member of the  
11 Council I have experience in the position that  
12 is often overseen, and that is the student of--  
13 the position of student.

14 From my experience the persons or person  
15 left to deal with these unfair results caused by  
16 adults are usually the students and other adults  
17 who are low on totem pole.

18 In all honesty, no good parent wants their  
19 student to lose their school, and in all  
20 honesty, no studious student wants to lose a  
21 good school. However, closure is a new opening  
22 but isn't always needed. To this school what's  
23 needed is a change, because I or the powers that  
24 be to close the school aren't here every day, we  
25 can't exactly pinpoint what or who exactly needs

1 to change.

2           However, the numbers still--the numbers  
3 don't lie and they still stand. So giving  
4 recognition to the numbers, closing one thing  
5 and opening it--closing one thing and opening  
6 the same thing and calling it different doesn't  
7 actually bring a change.

8           So the question tonight is what makes the  
9 change different? The question tonight is what  
10 makes the change different as well as--as well  
11 as how does the change make anything better?  
12 That's all.

13           MS. SONJA JOHNSON: Good evening, my name is  
14 Sonja Johnson, I'm the President of the  
15 Community Education Council for District 5, and  
16 I find the proposed closing of Bread and Roses  
17 interesting at best, and I'm perplexed as to  
18 what is being proposed.

19           I find it difficult when I see politics  
20 pervade our educational system to such a degree  
21 where our children pay the price for a political  
22 ploy of an entity charged with providing access  
23 to quality education for our students.

24           If the goal is to provide support to Bread  
25 and Roses, then the method chosen to achieve

1 this goal is questionable. The better  
2 question is what additional supports were  
3 provided to Bread and Roses, and by whom, in  
4 order for them to be successful as they  
5 currently stand?

6 The proposal speaks of developing new  
7 programs and school supports that are extended--  
8 intended to improve student outcomes. How  
9 exactly is that going to be implemented? Who  
10 sits at the table during such a development? If  
11 a change is what is at the core of this proposed  
12 restructure, then the parties at the table must  
13 change.

14 If the proposal is inferring that the  
15 current PLA status rest upon the current  
16 structure, including that of the management  
17 organization and the network leader, then let's  
18 give our students a fighting chance at academic  
19 success and change who's sitting at the table.  
20 You cannot raise the bar and have an expectation  
21 of achievement if you do not provide the tools  
22 necessary for success.

23 If we cannot reasonably ensure that change  
24 will be better benefit our students, then one  
25 must ask the question why? Why create

1 destruction if we are not prepared to  
2 implement successful change?

3 Finally, if in fact we get to a point where  
4 the proposal to close Bread and Roses is  
5 approved, and I hope we do not get there, the  
6 CEC respectfully requests that Bread and Roses  
7 be allowed to maintain their name, as it has  
8 cultural roots to the community.

9 DR. JUAN VIVES: Good evening. I guess  
10 normally you're supposed to start off a  
11 conversation like this with like a nice story or  
12 something to make the crowd feel a little more  
13 comfortable. I would rather start with a real  
14 simple quote. The definition of insanity is  
15 constantly doing the same thing expecting  
16 different results.

17 Now I want you all to kind of keep that like  
18 in your minds just for a moment till we finish  
19 this conversation. By their inherent nature,  
20 people are resistant to change. While American  
21 South was resistant to the change in the post-  
22 civil war reconstruction period, and also during  
23 the civil rights movement of the 50s, 60s and  
24 70s, people saw the changes of these eras as the  
25 breakdown or erosion of the moral fiber of

1 America. They thought these changes would  
2 signal the end of our society, and as a result,  
3 they fought tooth and nail for these changes not  
4 to occur. Much like many of you are willing to  
5 fight.

6 Without these changes that were made early  
7 on in this country's history, many of us would  
8 not have the opportunity to stand, discuss or  
9 fight to save our school, we wouldn't even have  
10 a school.

11 Much like our predecessors, we here at Bread  
12 and Roses are also resistant to change. We see  
13 it as a bad thing, we see it as an erosion of  
14 the very fiber of our school, in short, we  
15 simply see it as something that we don't want.  
16 But here is the essential question, is it a bad  
17 thing? Is it bad because a number of teachers  
18 may not have the opportunity to work at this  
19 school? Is it a bad thing because the name of  
20 the school may change? Is it a bad thing  
21 because we are not changing the student  
22 population? Is it a bad thing because the  
23 writing on the wall has become clear that what  
24 we are currently and have been doing isn't  
25 working? Or is it bad because we simply fear

1 the unknown and the changes that inevitably  
2 come with it?

3 Change itself is inevitable; it's the only  
4 constant in this world. And if that change  
5 means towards the growth and success of our  
6 students, children and the community, then as a  
7 school leadership team we are in support of that  
8 change.

9 If this change is an opportunity for  
10 improvement that allows us to produce socially  
11 conscious and motivated students who are  
12 prepared for the world beyond these walls, then  
13 the school leadership team is in support.

14 We are in support of these changes because  
15 we understand that all we do and stand for is  
16 the education and upliftment of this community.  
17 So like I said earlier, that thought I wanted  
18 you to keep at the back of your--in your heads,  
19 the definition of insanity is doing the same  
20 thing expecting different results over and over  
21 and over again. We aren't insane, are we?

22 MR. SETTLE: This time I would like to  
23 acknowledge the presence of Mr. Juan Pagan who  
24 is a member of the Citywide Council representing  
25 the Borough of Manhattan for High Schools. I

1 would also ask our next presenter at this time  
2 will be Ms. Sara Mordredge who is representing  
3 the Honorable Robert Jackson, Council Member and  
4 Head of the Education Committee at the City  
5 Council. Ms. Mordredge?

6 MS. SARA MORDREDGE: Good evening. Is this  
7 on? I just need to lean a little closer.

8 Council Member Jackson does not represent  
9 the District where Bread and Roses is located,  
10 but many of his constituents, families, their  
11 students attend the school. I'm here tonight to  
12 speak to not only this particular school but a  
13 general concern about the turnaround model and  
14 why it's being implemented.

15 I have participated in two briefings and the  
16 rationale that has been presented at both the  
17 Citywide Council for High Schools and the  
18 briefing that was given to staff, elected  
19 official staff, explained the desire to create  
20 momentous change within these schools that are  
21 going through the turnaround process. And that  
22 change does not extend to a difference, new  
23 approach in admissions policies, that's an  
24 important consideration when you are talking  
25 about extensive change, to ignore the fact that

1 you will be working with the same students.

2 The rationale that was given for moving to  
3 the turnaround process had to do with a failure  
4 to achieve agreement on a teacher evaluation  
5 system, but it was not mentioned that it was the  
6 Department of Education that walked away from  
7 the negotiation table, so that the failure to  
8 achieve agreement--the breakdown in negotiations  
9 was left hanging as if the students and the  
10 administration were somehow responsible for the  
11 failure to achieve agreement on a teacher  
12 evaluation system.

13 The turnaround model depends on a number of  
14 things, and we--one of the primary reasons for  
15 this being implemented had to do with a loss of  
16 \$58 million in school improvement grants that  
17 would be forfeited if the turnaround model were  
18 not implemented.

19 These statements were coming two or three  
20 weeks after a City Council hearing on Medicaid  
21 reimbursements, where amounts 10 times that  
22 value were simply left on the table because the  
23 DOE didn't have the resources to go after over  
24 \$500 million worth of Medicaid reimbursements  
25 for special education services that had been

1 delivered.

2           So my question at those briefings was, isn't  
3 there a less disruptive way to achieve the goals  
4 that are sought for these 33, and they were 33,  
5 but several have been taken off the table,  
6 persistently low achieving schools?

7           We've been approached by parents at this  
8 school to ask for intervention. We haven't been  
9 welcomed into this school. We haven't achieved  
10 access so we haven't really been able to provide  
11 the support that we could have in working with  
12 the SLT, in working with the parents  
13 associations and in working with the students.

14           My advice to the parents association  
15 officers who approached us was to factor in that  
16 it's only the students who can actually change  
17 the attendance levels, the achievement levels,  
18 the things that the schools are evaluated on.

19           So on behalf of the Council Member I would  
20 like to say we're very disappointed that there  
21 has been a failure of imagination, a failure of  
22 adequate resources coming in to address the  
23 problems with the students that have been the  
24 underlying cause of a persistently low achieving  
25 school.

1           I think that the connection to the  
2 original dream, and I do know people who were  
3 part of the team that formed this school, that's  
4 been--it's evaporated over the course of the  
5 years, that could have been reinvigorated, it  
6 could have been brought forward, but until, both  
7 in this particular school and schools across the  
8 city, until the DOE implements a model for  
9 reform that involves focusing on the students  
10 it's going to be, as you said, more of the same  
11 insanity repeating.

12           So on behalf of the Council Member, we are  
13 very disappointed that this school, which is  
14 small, it's viable and it hasn't been handled in  
15 a way that would bring--help it to realize its  
16 potential.

17           MR. SETTLE: At this time I'd like to  
18 acknowledge the presence of Ms. Sheena Wright  
19 who's President of the Abyssinian Development  
20 Corporation, and also I'd like to acknowledge  
21 the presence of Assemblyman Keith Wright. Thank  
22 you. Thank you for your presence.

23           At this time I'd like to call Jamilah  
24 Richards and Sophia Rahim who are  
25 representatives of Council Member Inez Dickens

1 to the microphone please.

2 MS. SHAHEENA: Good evening and thank you  
3 all for being here. The Council Member would  
4 like to lend her support to the teachers,  
5 students and parents of Bread and Roses. The  
6 parents here at Bread and Roses Integrated Arts  
7 High School are not asking for a great deal, in  
8 fact, they want nothing more than to see their  
9 kids achieve, especially for those students  
10 diagnosed with learning disabilities or  
11 challenges, however, without the unnecessary  
12 politics.

13 Bread and Roses has had two principals in  
14 the last three years, with each not receiving  
15 nearly enough time to implement or execute any  
16 comprehensive strategies to increasing student  
17 performance or attendance.

18 Subsequently, Bread and Roses is a public  
19 education institute with an open enrollment  
20 which oftentimes contributes to a school having  
21 to take on more than their fair share of  
22 students with learning [phonetic] challenges.  
23 Moreover, leaving it a dumping ground, to some  
24 extent, for students with developmental  
25 challenges, non-English speakers and sometimes

1 students facing both.

2 One might think that there should be a more  
3 sophisticated way of determining school  
4 closures, like looking at assessing the  
5 influencing variables that lead to performance  
6 in the first place and first and foremost  
7 addressing those.

8 We absolutely cannot continue to place blame  
9 on our students by calling the one place they  
10 depend on to seek refuge, guidance, and most  
11 notably education, failing. Let's place blame  
12 where blame is due, on a lack of a stable and  
13 consistent administration with clear directions,  
14 the lack of a consistent and sound support  
15 system within schools and home environments, and  
16 a demoralized teaching staff who has had to  
17 perform miracles with insufficient resources, in  
18 addition to bearing the brunt of the blame for  
19 poor student performance.

20 It is not very often that you hear the  
21 powers that be take some level of responsibility  
22 for the fails within the system.

23 For example, the countless number of federal  
24 state and city policy changes that are  
25 implemented which often sometimes are not

1 necessarily best practices and many times lack  
2 the adequate research supporting their  
3 effectiveness. This is by the way--this by the  
4 way contributes to the success and failures of  
5 any institution.

6 In closing, it is imperative that we keep  
7 focus on the heart of the matter which is  
8 educating our students without traumatizing them  
9 in a bitter political battle.

10 However, we do commend the Mayor and his  
11 staff for their efforts in trying to bring much  
12 needed Race to the Top dollars to schools that  
13 otherwise wouldn't receive them. Thank you.

14 MR. SETTLE: This now concludes the formal  
15 presentations of tonight's proceedings. I'd ask  
16 that Mr. Carlos Ruiz is President of the  
17 Manhattan High School Council, please approach  
18 the microphone.

19 MR. CARLOS RUIZ: Good evening everyone. My  
20 name is Carlos Ruiz, President of the Manhattan  
21 High School Presidents Council.

22 I'm here to support the school and I'm  
23 actually--I'm appalled as President of the  
24 Parents Associations Council that the PA  
25 President is not sitting up there on the stage

1 because the PA President represents the  
2 parents of this school and this shows to me a  
3 little lack of leadership here where the  
4 President is not allowed to sit at this table.

5 I've been to tons of these fair hearings and  
6 the PA President is always sitting at that  
7 table. So that's one bad judgment on the fall  
8 [phonetic] of this school and its leadership.

9 I really don't know how this school got  
10 here, but due to the lack of support which I  
11 heard of and tons of principals--well, actually  
12 two principals change that this school has had,  
13 I don't see that this school was given adequate  
14 [phonetic] time and support to succeed.

15 I see here intimidation because people are  
16 like scared to speak or whatever here. I'm not,  
17 myself, intimidated by no one or anyone. I  
18 encourage all parents, teachers and students to  
19 speak on the behalf of their school. And that's  
20 all I have to say.

21 MR. SETTLE: Thank you. I would ask that  
22 the following please approach the microphone for  
23 your public comment. We ask that you please  
24 keep your comment to two minutes or less. Aisha  
25 Seku, Juanita Bass, Vernee Bryan, Dwayne Clark.

1 Aisha Seku, Juanita Bass, Vernee Bryan, Dwayne  
2 Clark. Aisha Seku, Juanita Bass, Vernee Bryan  
3 and Dwayne Clark.

4 MS. AISHA SEKU: Peace and blessings family.  
5 One, I come to this meeting not as a community  
6 leader but as a community member. I live in  
7 this in this neighborhood, I live down the  
8 block. I've been living there for over 30  
9 years, my daughter played in this playground, we  
10 attended many activities here, and as part of a  
11 community-based organization, we actually  
12 provided workshops for Bread and Roses.

13 My reason for being here, and I'm very, very  
14 tired and didn't want to come. I've been to  
15 most of these meetings at different schools but  
16 I hear the hopelessness in the children who live  
17 in this community. And they are tired, they are  
18 afraid, they have become very fearful about  
19 what's theirs.

20 One, they're stopped, frisked, searched all  
21 the time, and then they have a school where they  
22 feel like the name is going to be changed, they  
23 think that the doors are going to be closed,  
24 that they're not being provided what other kids  
25 throughout the city in other schools are being

1 provided and they feel like they don't have a  
2 voice in this. So they said, Ms. Aisha, can you  
3 show up and make sure that you say something on  
4 behalf of our school.

5 So there's something that I'm going to say,  
6 it's just real simple, that I'm not sure, and  
7 it's been said before me, I'm not sure about the  
8 benefit of closing this school and reopening  
9 under another name with the exact same issues  
10 and problems not being thoroughly addressed. I  
11 think that it's going to take us really looking  
12 at or the school really looking at or the  
13 administration--the whole Bloomberg  
14 administration that's working, in terms of  
15 education and the Department of Education  
16 itself, looking at what the real issues are.  
17 And it's not just how many books in the  
18 classroom, how many computers, but the staff and  
19 are they really here and wanting to support and  
20 teach these young people? Are they being  
21 provided with the things necessary to do the job  
22 or to take on the challenges that they are  
23 given? Because I know that these young people  
24 coming from this community come with a wide  
25 variety of challenges. And then they're being

1       raided along with everyone else, but the  
2       challenges are much greater--often much greater,  
3       and so I really didn't know exactly what I was  
4       going to say, but I do know that closing and  
5       opening under a new name is not the answer.

6               We will have that so-called rise to the top  
7       money while we suffocate our children and our  
8       community, and so we bring nothing again. So  
9       I'm just going to ask the powers that be to  
10      rethink that process. Yes, the school does need  
11      the money but we also need a real fair  
12      assessment of what the problem is and then a  
13      treatment plan, a way to treat the problem so  
14      that our children are properly educated. Peace  
15      and blessings.

16             MR. SETTLE: Thank you.

17             MS. JUANITA BASS: Good evening, I'm Juanita  
18      Bass representing the Council of School  
19      Supervisors and Administrators, and to those on  
20      the dais, please excuse my back but I really  
21      want to address those who are sitting here in  
22      the audience with a CSA statement that says the  
23      DOE's latest attempt to close 33, or I think  
24      since yesterday, 26 schools, which were already  
25      in the process of a three-year reform program,

1 is nothing more than a political maneuver that  
2 is not rooted in sound educational practice.  
3 Rather it began as a ploy designed to avoid  
4 negotiations with CSA and the UFT over new  
5 principal and teacher evaluation systems. The  
6 motivation behind that ploy was to follow  
7 turnaround model, a model that does not require  
8 principal and teacher evaluations and allows the  
9 city to close and immediately reopen schools  
10 under new names.

11 What else would be new about them? Fifty  
12 percent of the teachers would be while 50% of  
13 the former teachers would be put into excess.  
14 There is nothing educationally sound about this  
15 intervention plan. It is being introduced for  
16 cynical reasons, not to help students. It will  
17 not contribute to the development of sound  
18 principal and teacher evaluations systems.

19 Furthermore, by removing half the staffs  
20 from these schools and recruiting replacements  
21 from other schools, the DOE will destabilize  
22 schools throughout the system one after another  
23 like dominoes.

24 While these human costs are the most  
25 important ones, there are fiscal costs too.

1 Removing 1,800 teachers and tossing them into  
2 the HER pool where they will work as substitutes  
3 at full salary will cost the city approximately  
4 \$180 million annually. They say children first,  
5 we say children when? Thank you.

6 MS. VERNEE BRYAN: Hello, my name is Vernee  
7 Bryan. I'm a student here at Bread and Roses, I  
8 live in the community. I believe that--I  
9 believe that every student should have a chance  
10 for quality education, for quality teachers.  
11 And I feel that Bread and Roses has--I feel that  
12 Bread and Roses has everything that I need to  
13 prepare for a future in our society.

14 I feel that the closing of Bread and Roses  
15 is not only unjust, but it's a disrespect to us  
16 as students and the community we live in, and  
17 the people who care about my future and the  
18 future of hundreds of Bread and Roses students  
19 that will follow in my footsteps.

20 If the closure happens, the people in my  
21 community and the students in this school  
22 appreciate what the faculty and the staff has  
23 done to help us for our future and I'm here to  
24 do the same. Thank you.

25 MR. DWAYNE CLARK: What, I got to hold it

1 like this? You want to hold it? By all  
2 means. Good evening. Well, yes, you can, but  
3 then I'll grab it back. My two minutes starts  
4 now.

5 Good evening, my name is Dwayne Clark. I'm  
6 the UFT District Representative for Community  
7 School District 5.

8 I've been working with Bread and Roses  
9 through all of this turmoil that they've been  
10 dealing with for the last number of years.  
11 They've been approached in so many different  
12 ways, they're given an opportunity to get into  
13 new innovative programs, ideas, but you know  
14 what, that was never the intent as we've already  
15 heard this evening.

16 The level of politics within this particular  
17 school is running rampant as far as where is the  
18 school going? The only thing I know about this  
19 is that there is a hardworking staff that is in  
20 this school. They have given their heart and  
21 soul to this school for years, through the  
22 declines and the ups and the downs as you want  
23 to call it. Whether you want to look at the  
24 political side of the learning environment  
25 survey, whether people completed it or not and

1 looking at it to use it now against them,  
2 which is another political ploy, as to how the  
3 report card grade is developed based on  
4 learnings environment survey response.

5 But for me just to watch a school go  
6 through multiple administration--changes in  
7 administration, the lack of curricula support  
8 that should be in any school if you want to help  
9 it to grow successfully, not there.

10 The school programs that were originally  
11 here when I first started to support this school  
12 as district representative, all those programs  
13 that support students, parents, the community,  
14 even the staff, all removed from the school now.

15 How do you expect a school to grow and  
16 improve if you're taking away the support that  
17 really was their bread and butter to help them  
18 move the school? You can't do that, you can't  
19 expect to have a whole bunch of success  
20 happening.

21 Only thing I'm recognizing right now and  
22 what I'm hearing right now and why the staff is  
23 discouraged, as I feel they're discouraged, is  
24 that right now what they're experiencing is the  
25 drive-byes, as I call it, by the top brass of

1 Tweed, who are always telling them that  
2 they're lesson are not up to par, not up to  
3 snuff, but no one is modeling what's supposed to  
4 be their best practices to help the students in  
5 this school community.

6 So for me, all I'm saying is this was an  
7 intent to fail the school. That was it bottom  
8 line, the politics were going to prevail.  
9 Whomever wants this school building for whatever  
10 reason, I'm sure it's going to grow bigger than  
11 just Bread and Roses as time progresses. This  
12 is all about--it's all about the politics, this  
13 is a disgrace and people should be ashamed of  
14 themselves.

15 MR. SETTLE: At this time I'd like to call  
16 to the microphone Assemblyman Keith Wright, the  
17 Honorable Mr. Wright.

18 ASSEMBLYMAN KEITH WRIGHT: Good evening.  
19 Historically, I have been totally, totally  
20 against the way the Department of Education  
21 closes its schools. I just think it's  
22 absolutely horrible. The way that they do it  
23 from the top down by executive fiat just saying  
24 we need to close this school has been absolutely  
25 horrible and has been totally disrespectful to

1 our community over the years.

2 The community--let me just say this, the  
3 community needs a real-real victory in terms of  
4 our educational politics--policies. We marched,  
5 we rallied and we got a victory at Wadleigh, but  
6 it took the whole heart and soul and blood and  
7 sweat and tears of this community.

8 I have introduced a few bills in Albany. I  
9 have a bill in Albany along with the UFT that  
10 would actually give the determination of co-  
11 location to all schools to the CECs and not down  
12 there at Tweed Courthouse.

13 I also--I've also introduced a bill that  
14 would repeal mayoral control of the school  
15 system. This school deserves, it needs the  
16 support of not only the City of New York but  
17 also of this community, this school deserves it.

18 I spoke at the graduation ceremonies of this  
19 school, maybe about five years ago, and I saw a  
20 school that needed help, that needed help, and  
21 we are willing to give it the help.

22 I have been to a lot of these hearings, and  
23 quite frankly, a lot of these hearings, you  
24 know, I've wasted my breath. The fix is already  
25 in, in so, so many ways. However, if this is

1 going to be real, if there's going to be a  
2 real restructuring of this school and not just  
3 the name change, what's in the name as they say.  
4 If it's going to be a real restructuring then  
5 our parents have to be involved, very much  
6 involved. Then our teachers have to be  
7 involved. I can't tell you how important it is  
8 for our teachers to be involved. I'm the son of  
9 a fifth grade teacher at PS 197. My mother  
10 became the Assistant Principal over at PS 197.  
11 I can't tell you how important it is for our  
12 teachers to be involved. I can't tell you how  
13 important it is for the Abyssinian Development  
14 Organization to be involved. Essential, and I  
15 can't tell you how important it is for all of  
16 our community to be involved, especially our  
17 businesses, everybody. You have a goldmine out  
18 here in this community that want, they want this  
19 school--they want this school to succeed. You  
20 know, as I was walking into the school, this--  
21 they don't even make schools like this anymore.

22 This is one of the most beautiful, oldest  
23 architecturally-sound buildings that I have  
24 ever, ever seen. So we have to take care of not  
25 only of this edifice in this building but the

1 students in it. So if it's going to be real,  
2 you will get all the help you need out of me,  
3 but quite frankly, I'm tired of talking to these  
4 hearings, and you just hear my voice and you  
5 take down the testimony and then Mayor Bloomberg  
6 does what he's going to do anyway, all right?  
7 Quite frankly, I'm sick and tired of it, but I  
8 wouldn't want you to say that it's--if it's  
9 going to be a real restructuring you have all my  
10 support. Thank you very much.

11 MR. SETTLE: Thank you Assemblyman Wright.  
12 At this time I'd like to call to the microphone  
13 Mr. Timothy Smith, Karen Alford, Timothy  
14 Harrell, Earnest Bryant JNR, and Papa [phonetic]  
15 Tall. Timothy Smith, Karen Alford, Timothy  
16 Harrell, Earnest Bryant Jr., and Papa Tall  
17 [phonetic]. Timothy Smith, Karen Alford,  
18 Timothy Harrell, Earnest Bryant Jr., and Papa  
19 Tall.

20 MR. TIMOTHY SMITH: Hey, my name is Timothy  
21 Smith, I'm a teacher here. I've been teaching  
22 for seven years at this school, 25 years total.  
23 I'm also currently serving as the UFT Chapter  
24 Leader for the school.

25 In my years working here and throughout the

1 city I've never been through a school closing,  
2 and I must say it is the most destructive  
3 process I've ever been through.

4 It is destructive, not only to the teachers,  
5 it's destructive to the students who are feeling  
6 stressed out, who are feeling like they are the  
7 ones that are failures, the parents feel  
8 marginalized, they are being kept out of the  
9 process, we are getting a constant stream of  
10 visitors who pull students from class to  
11 interrogate them and ask them questions, but in  
12 the end, almost all these visitors come and they  
13 all have negative things to say. Because they  
14 come in with goggles on, already determined what  
15 they're going to see and what they're going to  
16 hear. And we've just being beaten down, we've  
17 been stressed, taken the joy out of all  
18 teaching. I've never seen a process like this.  
19 If this is how the City does business with their  
20 education, then they ought to get out of the  
21 education business.

22 In the last three years, the number of  
23 students with special needs has gone up, the  
24 number of students with low level test scores,  
25 ones and twos, that feed into our school has

1 increased, we're an open enrollment school, we  
2 take everyone including students who come out of  
3 incarceration. Everyone can apply at Bread and  
4 Roses, unlike other schools where there is an  
5 enrollment process and they can screen out who  
6 they don't want to take. We take them all.

7 Yes, there are many things that we need to  
8 improve on, there are some changes that need to  
9 be made at the school.

10 In the last few years we've had, not two,  
11 but three different principals, okay? We've had  
12 New Visions come in, we've had Abyssinian  
13 Development Corporation come in. We were  
14 promised three years to turn this school around,  
15 then the Mayor decides, no, he's going to pull  
16 the rug from under us and close us all down,  
17 regardless of the changes that we have  
18 accomplished. But it seems that the only one  
19 getting the blame here are the teachers.

20 We've had our budget slashed, we've had our  
21 teachers' choice taken from us, this whole  
22 school had been turned into a political punching  
23 bag, okay? It's not about the students, it's  
24 about the politics. Because if we do close  
25 down, the only one who looks good is the Mayor,

1 because he gets to wipe the data clean. He  
2 gets to change the name around, but really,  
3 nothing is being accomplished. Three years  
4 later, if the next school's failing, he can just  
5 close that one down too.

6 What's being accomplished? What's the whole  
7 point in this?

8 But all I want to say to you, no matter what  
9 you guys do, because I know this is probably a  
10 done deal, is that this has been a very  
11 destructive process, and you guys really ought  
12 to rethink how you go about this. Because it's  
13 not hurting--it's not helping anyone, it's  
14 hurting, most of all the students, which is why  
15 we're all here. Thank you.

16 MS. KAREN ALFORD: Karen Alford, United  
17 Federation of Teachers Vice President.

18 As a mother of four, of course every parent  
19 wants their child in a successful school, and  
20 there's no denying that Bread and Roses is  
21 struggling. However, I truly believe that part  
22 of the reason why Bread and Roses is struggling  
23 is because the DOE has chosen to make this  
24 school, and 33 others, of which 6 have been  
25 released, as part of their political games.

1           And because the UFT and the DOE could not  
2 agree on a joint teacher evaluation plan, you've  
3 held these schools hostage, and you refuse to  
4 give them this funding, and you don't care about  
5 children's lives, and you're dangling their  
6 lives in the balance [phonetic] because you  
7 can't get an evaluation system for us. It's not  
8 fair and it shouldn't happen.

9           I've listened to the problems outlined with  
10 Bread and Roses, that there's only 78%  
11 attendance, there is safety and discipline  
12 concerns, minimal credit accumulation, but never  
13 once did I hear, how do you solve the problem?  
14 And that's been what's lacking from so many of  
15 these closing schools, is all the DOE can do is  
16 point fingers at what's wrong, but not help  
17 offer viable solutions for what makes it right.

18           And then you dangle the carrot in front of  
19 parents by saying, we're going to put a large  
20 infusion of money into the next school that  
21 comes in here, and we're going to put new  
22 programs, and we're going to put expanded  
23 improvements, according to Deputy Chancellor  
24 Gibson, but I didn't hear any of that about  
25 Bread and Roses. Why aren't those same supports

1 being given to Bread and Roses? It's not  
2 fair.

3 And so I ask, because I've been to so many  
4 PEPs, and as so many others have said, it is a  
5 done deal unfortunately.

6 But instead of playing with children's lives  
7 and playing this political football game, and  
8 depriving schools of resources that they  
9 desperately need, and if you're going to have  
10 open enrolment, which is fine, because we value  
11 all of our babies, all of our children that walk  
12 into these schools. But then darn it, you need  
13 to give the supports to these schools so that  
14 they can help when you send in L students,  
15 special needs students, students that have been  
16 incarcerated, coming back into the schools. You  
17 can't expect for them to do the same amount and  
18 make the same type of change and have the same  
19 type of academic support when you don't give  
20 them the funds to do it.

21 And to have a new school and to dangle money  
22 in front of them, if you don't have a real plan,  
23 which has already been expressed, then as the  
24 chapter leader said, again, we will be here  
25 three years later, talking about their closure.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. TIMOTHY HARRELL: Good evening, my name  
3 is Timothy Harrell, I'm from New York  
4 Communities for Change, I'm a Community  
5 Organizer here in Harlem.

6 I wrote something that I wanted to say, but  
7 what I have more is more questions, like, why is  
8 Bread and Roses being closed when you've changed  
9 the Principal twice? Dr. Lofton hasn't been  
10 here in ample time, according to Mayor  
11 Bloomberg's program, to evaluate the school  
12 adequately, to give--to appraise it as far as  
13 there being a turnaround, whether it's  
14 successful or whether it's not. But you're  
15 still closing the school.

16 Why are the teachers not here fighting to  
17 keep Bread and Roses open? Why are all these  
18 panels at every school that I go to, why are you  
19 supporting the Mayor's attitude and his proposal  
20 to break the union? That's what it's all about.  
21 You want to close public schools, push charter  
22 schools.

23 If someone has a better model for educating  
24 our children, then it should be given freely to  
25 all children. Children should not have to come

1 with resumes like they're being screened. I  
2 understand that's not the process of what's  
3 going to happen here, this is going to remain a  
4 public high school, but nevertheless, closing  
5 Bread and Roses is not the solution. Changing  
6 the teaching model is the solution, but that's  
7 the Mayor's attitude when it comes to our  
8 schools. He's closed over a hundred of them  
9 since he's been the Mayor, that's why we have  
10 overcrowding in classes. It's not because  
11 there's not have enough funds, it's because you  
12 keep closing schools and you're not reopening  
13 them.

14 Don't sit there and support his attitude  
15 towards our children's education.

16 And then us in this community, why do we not  
17 each have 20 people here? I called over a  
18 hundred homes. Look at the auditorium. This is  
19 what's going to happen. Gentrifying the  
20 neighborhood and now we're gentrifying our  
21 schools. In every neighborhood, in every  
22 community, I've worked in every borough in this  
23 city. So we close schools and then we close  
24 hospitals. Then we take homes, then you can't  
25 afford to pay rent. But we have to start

1 fighting at some point.

2 True, change is inevitable, it's going to  
3 come, it's going to happen, whether we accept it  
4 or reject it. But resistance is also a thing  
5 that keeps you alive. Resistance is also a  
6 thing that lets you know--that lets other  
7 individuals know that you're not going to  
8 tolerate them coming into our communities and  
9 just doing what they want to do, because that's  
10 what's happening, and that's what's going on,  
11 and that's what this panel represents.

12 This panel represents, we're going to do  
13 what we want to do, but we're going to sit here  
14 and we're going to listen to you.

15 I don't believe that it's a done deal and  
16 that it's over. Because we fought for Wadleigh,  
17 and at the last day--on the day of the vote,  
18 Wadleigh was taken off the list.

19 So you know what? We need to mobilize the  
20 whole community--I'm going to leave right now.  
21 We need to mobilize the whole community to come  
22 out and keep Bread and Roses open.

23 MR. ERNEST BRYANT: Hello, my name is  
24 Earnest Bryant, First Vice President of CEC 5,  
25 President Sonja Jones and a student

1 representative at the dais table.

2 My comment first of all is just that we've  
3 been to too many of these meetings, hearing the  
4 same thing over and over. That's insanity.  
5 That's insanity that we have to continue this  
6 type of fight in 2012. Our students are failing  
7 for a variety of reasons. Home life is in hell.  
8 Parents incarcerated, so many of our students  
9 live off their grandmothers, being raised in  
10 hellish situations, students themselves being  
11 arrested. But yet none of that is taken into  
12 consideration when schools are closed. The  
13 Mayor doesn't think about that, but he thinks  
14 about his battle with UFT, he thinks about his  
15 support with charter schools. How can I gain  
16 money out of this? Gentrification of education  
17 is what's going on.

18 NYU has done it on the eastside, Columbia is  
19 doing it on the Westside, and our Mayor is doing  
20 it in our education. It is time for this to  
21 stop. And I'm asking the individuals on this  
22 dais who represent the DOE to stop and to look  
23 at what this Mayor's doing.

24 There's two situations I'll always recall in  
25 history that had a tremendous impact on Blacks

1 and Latinos in American history.

2 One was the Tuskegee Airmen thinking that  
3 they can't do it because of their color. The  
4 second is the Tuskegee Experiment. Harlem has  
5 been an experiment on what--how can we gain  
6 money from charter schools? It's time for it to  
7 stop.

8 Let your bosses know that it's not about  
9 closing schools because of low performance,  
10 let's look at why they're performing low, and  
11 let's deal with that issue, let's deal with that  
12 issue.

13 How many students have being raised in a  
14 single family? Or raised by their grandmother?  
15 How many students have been in shelters and are  
16 still trying to deal in this competition of  
17 life? That's what we need to look at instead of  
18 closing schools, bring the resources that you're  
19 going to give to the second school to the  
20 current school and let's make the change.

21 MR. SETTLE: So that we are not amiss, we'd  
22 like to call, if they choose to speak, the Vice  
23 President of the PTA--PA of the school, to the  
24 microphone. We wanted to give them an  
25 opportunity to speak if they so desire.

1 MS. SHARON DAVIS: Good evening, my name  
2 is Sharon Davis. I'm the fifth generation of  
3 teachers in my family.

4 As a teacher, I face many obstacles, and  
5 often wanted to quit teaching. I would often go  
6 home to my mother and complain about teaching  
7 and the students that I was assigned to teach.  
8 So she sat me down and she said, I must tell you  
9 the story of your great, great grandmother.

10 She learned how to read from her slave  
11 master. She would often be found taking the  
12 children into the woods and teaching them what  
13 was taught to her. She did this as many times  
14 as she wanted to.

15 Oftentimes she would get caught and brought  
16 back to the village to be made example of. She  
17 was beaten and told not to do this again.

18 Well, being the woman that she was, she  
19 never stopped. She kept teaching, she kept  
20 taking the kids, she kept taking the beatings.

21 My grandfather would beg her to stop. She  
22 is quoted as saying, "I will never give up on  
23 the children. Someone has to help them."

24 So to the teachers of Bread and Roses, hold  
25 your head up high. To the DO, we need more

1 resources and more support from you. To the  
2 Mayor, we are begging you to keep Bread and  
3 Roses Integrated Arts High School open. To ADC,  
4 help us to move Bread and Roses to the next  
5 level that will make my family and the Bread and  
6 Roses family proud.

7 I stand here as a fifth generation of  
8 teachers, as a parent, as a concerned parent for  
9 this community school that I love very much. On  
10 my back, if I was my grandmother, would be the  
11 whips that I have taken to follow through to  
12 this day for you to hear my plea to keep Bread  
13 and Roses High School open. On my back is the  
14 32 staff members that represent this wonderful  
15 school that has helped my family and helped the  
16 family of the communities.

17 I need Bread and Roses to stay open. My  
18 grandmother needs Bread and Roses to stay open  
19 because she fought to keep Bread and Roses, a  
20 school like this, open, so that children could  
21 come here and be taught by teachers that really  
22 love them.

23 So if I had to get whipped today, this is  
24 what would be whipped, all the teachers that  
25 stand for Bread and Roses Integrated Arts High

1 School. Thank you.

2 MR. SETTLE: At this time I'd like to call  
3 to the microphone, Mr. Juan Pagan, who is a  
4 member of the Citywide Council of High Schools.

5 MR. JUAN PAGAN: Although I'm a member of  
6 the Citywide Council of High Schools and I do  
7 represent Manhattan, I want to speak to you not  
8 in that position but as parent.

9 My child attends a high school that's been  
10 phased out, and was set up to fail, and my  
11 daughter is feeling the effects of it in a very  
12 negative way.

13 So we're dealing with the DOE, we're dealing  
14 with the PEP in March 26th or the 28th, all  
15 right? But I'm going to tell you something, I'm  
16 a POP, and I said this before, I'm a pissed-off  
17 parent, okay? And we need to unite. Where's  
18 that brother? You hit it right on the head in  
19 regards to what's going on with our children,  
20 all right?

21 The problem is that the Mayor knows it, the  
22 DOE knows it and they are playing on the  
23 vulnerability of our children and our families,  
24 okay?

25 My talk is going to be very quick, and I'm

1 going to follow the format that brother Jones-  
2 -I'm going to make a statement first then I'm  
3 going to talk, and then I want you to think  
4 about the statement.

5 The test of the morality of a society is  
6 what it does for its children. That was  
7 Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian,  
8 Lutheran Minister during the time of Nazi  
9 Germany.

10 I want to talk about Bloomberg's style, what  
11 he's doing, and how he's playing on the  
12 vulnerability of our children and our parents  
13 and our families and our communities.

14 Bloomberg has a four-step strategy to kill a  
15 school, and I'm going to tell you what it is  
16 because he's been hiding it by changing names  
17 and pretending that the problems that we are  
18 suffering do not exist.

19 His strategy, is number one, you attack the  
20 body of our schools. Devastate schools with  
21 years of budget cuts, overwhelm the most  
22 struggling schools disproportionately, like it  
23 did to my daughter's school, with high numbers  
24 of students, with high needs without resources,  
25 even as the cutbacks continue.

1           Use flawed and fabricated data to  
2 wrongfully justify closing and phasing out  
3 schools. Overwhelm teachers with overcrowded  
4 classrooms, no resources, and demand optimum  
5 results, and then wrongfully punish them for  
6 doing their best.

7           Step number two for Bloomberg, you  
8 contaminate the lifeblood of our schools.  
9 Teachers are the lifeblood of our schools. So  
10 he uses teacher data reports with flawed and  
11 inaccurate data that have a high margin of  
12 error, data that was collected experimentally,  
13 and was abandoned by the Department of  
14 Education, but happily revived by the coercive  
15 tactics of Mayor Bloomberg, to demoralize  
16 educators, pit parents against teachers, create  
17 doubt and discord among parents to create  
18 confusion and fear.

19           Number three--he has a four-step plan. I  
20 just told you the first two. Number three,  
21 okay, I'm almost done.

22           Children are the--attack the spirit, attack  
23 the soul of our children, of our schools.  
24 Children are the soul of our schools. Make  
25 children feel as if they are the failures,

1        disrupt the stability given by teachers and  
2        educators, create an adverse effect on their  
3        ability to learn, and lead our children to  
4        falsely believe that they are the failures, when  
5        it is Bloomberg's education reform policy that  
6        is failing our children.

7                Number four. Number four is coming up, I  
8        think on the 28th, is it PEP?

9                Number four is you bleed our schools to  
10       death. The final blow inflicted by the Panel  
11       for Educational Policy is like a sword stabbed  
12       in the back of our education system, directly  
13       into the heart of our schools is now twisted and  
14       pulled out by PEP, schools closing and being  
15       phased out is like watching them bleed to death,  
16       our schools are bleeding to death. So schools  
17       die. Ultimately, our children pay the price.

18               In regard to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's  
19       statement, the test of morality of a society is  
20       what it does for its children, the Department of  
21       Education has failed so miserably, okay, that we  
22       as parents need to unite, all right? This is  
23       about our kids, their future, our future, all  
24       right? Let's find a way, parents, mothers,  
25       fathers, guardians, grandparents.

1           I was at a meeting with the AARP, and yes,  
2           over a quarter of a million of our children in  
3           America are being raised by grandparents. Where  
4           are the mothers and the fathers? We need to  
5           unite. I'm a father, my daughter has a mother,  
6           we're uniting. Let's unite, because that's the  
7           only way we can fight back and effectively win  
8           what we need to win for our kids.

9           MR. SETTLE: I'd like to thank everyone who  
10          took an opportunity to make their comment. We  
11          will now begin the question and answer portion  
12          of our--tonight's proceedings.

13          Please remember that there will be some  
14          individual questions, and others that have been  
15          bucketed into categories where we will have  
16          representative questions asked.

17          Any question that is not answered here  
18          tonight will be answered on our website. If you  
19          have additional questions at the conclusion of  
20          the end of tonight's proceedings, we ask that  
21          you direct them to us via our phone number which  
22          you can find at the bottom of your factsheet, or  
23          via email. Again, the address is located at the  
24          bottom of the factsheet.

25          At this time, I will turn the microphone

1 over to Dr. Dorita Gibson, Deputy Chancellor.

2 DR. GIBSON: Thank you Mr. Settle, and thank  
3 you for your comments this evening.

4 I have six questions to read, the first one  
5 is, is this building being renovated for other  
6 than educational purposes? The façade of this  
7 building is being repaired and it should be  
8 completed by December 2012.

9 When can the proposed new school expect to  
10 receive additional funding under the turnaround  
11 model? If the proposal is passed at the PEP  
12 meeting, April 26, and the State Ed Department  
13 accepts our School Improvement Grant  
14 application, then the funds will be available  
15 for the 2012/2013 school year.

16 Instead of closing Bread and Roses, why  
17 aren't proper funding and programs being  
18 provided? If the school is to reopen as a  
19 smaller magnate school, and some children can  
20 automatically enroll, what would change to make  
21 it better?

22 The school is not being closed to open  
23 smaller magnate schools. The new school will  
24 build upon the strengths of Bread and Roses with  
25 new innovative instructional programs.

1           Why is the New York City Department of Ed  
2 seeking to close and replace this school? The  
3 Department is proposing to close and replace  
4 this school because we believe that doing so  
5 will provide a better educational option to  
6 current students more rapidly, with more  
7 certainty than the current interventions, which  
8 were simply not adequate in order to make this  
9 school an acceptable choice for current and  
10 future students.

11           Why is the Parent Association not at the  
12 table and we did offer them to speak?

13           The Parent Association is part of the School  
14 Leadership Team, and the School Leadership Team  
15 represents parents of the joint public hearing.

16           What happens to the staff? I'm going to  
17 read what the 18D [phonetic] process says.

18           Pursuant to the City's teacher contract, if  
19 this proposal is approved, pedagogical staff who  
20 apply to work at the new school will be reviewed  
21 by the five-person school-based committee, and  
22 that's the Principal, two designees from the  
23 Chancellor, and two designees from the UFT  
24 President.

25           The proposed new school leader will develop

1        qualifications for positions in the new school  
2        and the Personnel Committee will consider each  
3        of these candidates who apply.

4                All teachers from the current school are  
5        eligible to apply to work in the new school.  
6        I'll repeat, all teachers from the current  
7        school are eligible to apply to work at this new  
8        school.

9                If sufficient numbers of staff from the  
10       closing school apply, at least 50% of the new  
11       school's positions must be selected from among  
12       the appropriately-licensed, most senior  
13       qualified applications.

14               And the last question is, has the Department  
15       of Ed and the United Federation of Teachers  
16       reached an agreement yet on the teacher  
17       evaluation? And the answer to that question is  
18       no, however, negotiations are still ongoing.

19               Thank you. That's it for the questions, I  
20       thank you for coming out tonight. There's  
21       greatly a lot of support here from the community  
22       and from the school, we'll be here for a little  
23       bit afterwards, but please visit our website for  
24       additional questions. Mr. Settle.

25               MR. SETTLE: We've heard many significant

1 comments this evening. We appreciate your  
2 feedback and contributions to this hearing.

3 The information will be shared with the  
4 Panel on Education Policy, which will have its  
5 hearing shortly this month to vote on this  
6 proposal.

7 Please use the telephone number or the  
8 website at the bottom of your factsheet if you  
9 have any other questions or concerns.

10 Thank you all for coming to this joint  
11 public hearing, and I declare it officially  
12 adjourned. Thank you.

13 [END 290\_224\_MASTER]

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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

Handwritten signature of Carille Clarke in cursive script.

7           Date April 6, 2012  
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