



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

**Notice**

December 15, 2014

## **The Proposed Grade Expansion of the Young Women’s Leadership School of the Bronx (09X568) with Existing School I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade Academies (09X117) in School Building X117 Beginning in the 2015-2016 School Year**

### **I. Description of the subject and purpose of the proposed item under consideration.**

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to expand the grades served by the Young Women’s Leadership School of the Bronx (09X568, “YWLS Bronx”) in school building X117 (“X117”) from six through eight to six through twelve, beginning in 2015-2016. YWLS Bronx is an all-girls school that currently serves students in grades six through eight in building X117, located at 1865 Morris Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453, in Community School District 9 (“District 9”). YWLS Bronx is co-located with I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade Academies (09X117, “I.S. 117”), an existing district middle school that serves students in grades six through eight. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, libraries, and cafeterias. Building X117 also houses Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention Specialists (“SAPIS”) and community-based organization (“CBO”) Beacon.

On March 21, 2012, the Panel for Education Policy (“PEP”) approved the proposal to open and co-locate grades six through eight of YWLS Bronx with I.S. 117 in the X117 building. This proposal is available on the DOE’s Web site at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/Mar212012Proposals.htm>. Although the proposal involved siting only grades six through eight of YWLS Bronx, it indicated that the school was intended to serve grades six through twelve as a secondary school and stated that the DOE will publish another Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) for the siting of grades nine through twelve. This proposal, if approved, will enable YWLS Bronx to serve its high school grades alongside its middle school grades in building X117 and will make it possible for current and future eighth-grade students from YWLS Bronx to continue their education at YWLS Bronx in the X117 building.

YWLS Bronx is designed to serve female students only. The school is part of the Young Women’s Leadership Network, an organization that helps create single-gender public schools and college access programs across the country, and whose mission is to raise

expectations, improve student performance, and inspire leadership for young women. In 2014, over 650 students ranked YWLS Bronx among their top three choices during the middle school application process. YWLS Bronx performs well in comparison to schools in District 9 and across New York City. In the 2013-2014 school year, YWLS Bronx ranked in the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile for District-wide and 65<sup>th</sup> percentile for Citywide English Language Arts (“ELA”) proficiency scores. In the 2013-2014 school year, YWLS Bronx ranked in the 92<sup>nd</sup> percentile for District-wide and 74<sup>th</sup> percentile for Citywide math proficiency scores. Given YWLS Bronx’s demand and performance, the DOE supports the expansion of YWLS Bronx.

If this proposal is approved, in 2015-2016, YWLS Bronx will begin serving approximately 80-90 ninth-grade students in building X117. YWLS Bronx will add one additional grade each year until the school reaches full grade scale in the 2018-2019 school year, when it will serve approximately 560-630 students in grades six through twelve.

I.S. 117 has seen a steady decline in its enrollment in recent years, and has gone from 866 students in the 2008-2009 school year to 619 students in the current 2014-2015 school year. Concurrent with this proposal, the DOE will work with the I.S. 117 community to continue gradually decreasing the school’s enrollment by approximately 124-154 students over the course of three years. Beginning in September 2015, I.S. 117 will admit a smaller incoming sixth-grade class of approximately 155-165 students, as opposed to the approximately 205-215 students it has served in sixth grade in recent years. I.S. 117 currently admits students to three programs: a zoned program that is opened to zoned students, a limited unscreened program open to students who are residents of Districts 9 and 10, and a Screened program open to students who are residents of Districts 9 and 10. The admissions methods will be unchanged for the 2015-2016 school year as a result of this proposal, but the limited unscreened program will admit fewer students. In the 2016-2017 school year and beyond, I.S. 117 will no longer admit students through the unscreened program and only admit students through the zoned and screened programs.

Additionally, I.S. 117 has struggled to provide quality outcomes for its students and is part of the School Renewal Program, which will result in the school becoming a community school. This proposal will not impact the school’s participation in the School Renewal Program. If this proposal is approved by the PEP, the DOE will continue to work closely with the I.S. 117 community to ensure all students receive the individualized support that they need. The DOE believes that I.S. 117’s participation in the School Renewal Program, coupled with a reduction in its enrollment such that the school can concentrate on a smaller cohort of students, will result in improved outcomes for I.S. 117’s current and future students. The DOE is committed to supporting I.S. 117 as it reduces its enrollment and focuses on improving.

According to the 2013-2014 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (the “Blue Book”), which is available at [http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Enrollment/2013-2014\\_Bookone\\_Target.pdf](http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Enrollment/2013-2014_Bookone_Target.pdf), building X117 has the capacity to serve 1,123 students.

Currently, in 2014-2015, the X117 building has a total enrollment of 873 students, which yields a target utilization rate of 78%. This means that the building is under-utilized and that the space could be used more efficiently to serve more students. Once YWLS Bronx has completed its grade expansion, a total of 1,025-1,125 students will be served collectively by I.S. 117 and YWLS Bronx, yielding a projected target utilization rate between 91% - 100%. The X117 building has sufficient space to accommodate both schools under this proposal.

**II. Information regarding where the full text of the proposed item may be obtained.**

The Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) can be found on the Department of Education’s Web site:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2014-2015/January2015SchoolProposals>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in the main offices of YWLS Bronx and I.S. 117.

**III. Submission of public comment.**

Written comments can be sent to [D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov).

Oral comments can be left at 212-374-5159.

**IV. The name, office, address, email and telephone number of the city district representative, knowledgeable on the item under consideration, from whom information may be obtained concerning the item.**

Name: Bridget Mercier  
Office: Office of District Planning  
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007  
Email: [D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
Phone: 212-374-5159

**V. Date, time and place of joint public hearings for this proposal.**

January 15, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.  
Building X117  
1865 Morris Avenue  
Bronx, NY 10453

Questions about the proposal should be directed as indicated in section IV above.

Speaker sign-up will begin 30 minutes before the hearing and will close 15 minutes after the start.

**VI. Date, time and place of the Panel for Educational Policy meeting at which the Panel will vote on the proposed item.**

January 29, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.  
Taft Educational Campus  
240 East 172 Street  
Bronx, NY 10457