

Public Comment Analysis

Date: February 24, 2015

Topic: The Proposed Re-Siting and Co-location of Global Neighborhood Secondary School (04M381) with P.S. 96 Joseph Lanzetta (04M096) in Building M096 Beginning in the 2015-2016 School Year

Date of Panel Vote: February 25, 2015

Summary of Proposal

On January 8, 2015, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) posted an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) proposing to re-site Global Neighborhood Secondary School (04M381, “Global Neighborhood”), an existing middle school that currently serves students in sixth through eighth grades, and co-locate it with P.S. 96 Joseph Lanzetta (04M096, “P.S. 96”), an existing school serving students in kindergarten through eighth grades and a pre-kindergarten program, in building M096 (“M096”) beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. Global Neighborhood is currently located in building M117 (“M117”), located at 240 East 109th Street, New York, NY 10029 in Community School District 4 (“District 4”). Building M096, also in District 4, is located at 216 East 120th Street, New York, NY 10035, approximately 0.7 miles away from M117. A “re-siting” means that a school will be located in a building different from the building in which the school currently serves its students. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building, often sharing large common spaces like the auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria.

Global Neighborhood is currently co-located with three other schools in M117: the Talented & Gifted School for Young Scholars (04M012, “TAG”), Esperanza Preparatory Academy (04M372, “Esperanza”), and one site of a multi-site District 75 program, P138M (75M138, “P138M@M117”). TAG is an existing citywide Gifted and Talented school that currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grades. Esperanza is an existing secondary school that currently serves students in sixth through eleventh grades. Esperanza is in the process of phasing in its high school grades and will reach full scale in the 2015-2016 school year when it will serve students in sixth through twelfth grades. P138M@M117 is an existing site of a multi-site District 75 school. Building M096 also contains a community-based organization (“CBO”), Union Settlement. Under this proposal, Union Settlement will not lose any space that it currently occupies in M096.

The DOE is proposing to re-site Global Neighborhood because of significant space constraints in M117, where the school is currently co-located with the three school organizations described above. Currently, Global Neighborhood operates across three separate floors in M117, posing challenges related to supervision, the logistics of students moving between classrooms, and the cultivation of a cohesive school culture. Under this proposal, Global Neighborhood will be re-sited to M096, where it will be co-located with P.S. 96. Global Neighborhood will be able to operate within contiguous space on a single floor in M096.

If this proposal is approved, Global Neighborhood will be re-sited to M096 beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. M096 will serve as Global Neighborhood’s long-term site. Global Neighborhood will no

longer serve any students in M117 following the conclusion of the 2014-2015 school year and will serve all of its students in M096 beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. Global Neighborhood will continue to serve students in sixth through eighth grades when it moves to M096 in the 2015-2016 school year.

According to the 2013-2014 Enrollment Capacity Utilization Report (the “Blue Book”), M096 has the capacity to serve a total of 738 students. If this proposal is approved, Global Neighborhood is projected to serve approximately 130-160 sixth through eighth grade students, and P.S. 96 is projected to serve 418-508 students in kindergarten through eighth grades and one section of pre-kindergarten in M096 in the 2015-2016 school year. This will result in a total projected building enrollment of 548-668 students in M096, yielding a building utilization rate of 74%-91%. Accordingly, the DOE believes there is sufficient space in building M096 to accommodate the co-location of Global Neighborhood with P.S. 96.

The details of this proposal have been released in an EIS which can be accessed here:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2014-2015/February2015SchoolProposals>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in the main offices of the following schools: Global Neighborhood, P.S. 96, Esperanza, TAG, and P138M@M117.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing at M096

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at building M096 on February 9, 2015. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately eight members of the public attended the hearing, and one person spoke. Present at the meeting were Alexandra Estrella, District 4 Superintendent and facilitator for the hearing; David Pretto, P.S. 96 principal and School Leadership Team (“SLT”) member; Luis Genao, Global Neighborhood principal and SLT member; Janette Cesar, TAG Principal and SLT member; and Kia Higgins of the DOE’s Office of District Planning.

The DOE invited Community Education Council 4 (“CEC 4”) to attend this meeting, and CEC 4 confirmed that a representative would be in attendance. However, due to a last minute scheduling conflict, CEC 4 informed the DOE that a representative would not be able to attend.

Below is a summary of the comments received:

1. Luis Genao, Principal of Global Neighborhood, stated that Global Neighborhood is a community school, and he envisions, if the proposal is approved, P.S. 96 and Global Neighborhood developing into a larger community campus.
2. Multiple commenters stated their general approval of the proposal.
3. Multiple commenters expressed their interest and excitement in P.S. 96 and Global Neighborhood’s potential collaboration, including the opportunity to identify and share resources.
4. A guidance counselor at P.S. 96 inquired about the following:
 - a. The number of students currently enrolled at Global Neighborhood with Individualized Education Programs;
 - b. Whether Global Neighborhood would employ a guidance counselor for its students if re-sited to M096; and

- c. Whether the number of parking permits allocated for the M096 building would be increased if this proposal is approved.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing at M117

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at building M117 on February 12, 2015. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the hearing, and 11 people spoke. Present at the meeting were Alexandra Estrella, District 4 Superintendent and facilitator for the hearing; David Pretto, P.S. 96 principal and SLT member; Luis Genao, Global Neighborhood principal and SLT member; Janette Cesar, TAG Principal and SLT member; Wendy Mercedes, Esperanza Principal and SLT member; Laura Lugo-Rivera, member of CEC 4; and Kia Higgins and Drew Patterson of the DOE's Office of District Planning.

Below is a summary of the comments received:

5. Laura Lugo-Rivera, member of CEC 4, asserted that:
 - a. She spoke with liaisons from the SLTs of both P.S. 96 and Global Neighborhood and does not have concerns regarding this co-location.
 - b. CEC 4 is in favor of this co-location and is available to assist with the transition should the proposal be approved.
6. David Pretto, Principal of P.S. 96, indicated his excitement regarding potentially collaborating with Global Neighborhood, and looks forward to the opportunity to share resources and engage in other collaborative practices that may further academic progress among all students in building M096.
7. Luis Genao, Principal of Global Neighborhood, asserted that:
 - a. The Global Neighborhood community enjoyed its seven-year tenure in building M117.
 - b. He expressed gratitude to all of the school organizations in building M117 for their support and partnership.
 - c. Global Neighborhood seeks to move because of the opportunities that additional space would provide for students and families.
8. Multiple commenters indicated that, if this proposal is approved, the remaining school organizations in building M117 should be allocated additional space created by Global Neighborhood's re-siting.

The DOE received a number of comments at the Joint Public Hearing which do not directly relate to the proposal. Those comments are summarized below.

9. Wendy Mercedes, Principal of Esperanza, stated that Esperanza and Global Neighborhood engaged in collaborative practices, such as sharing a music teacher, which allowed the schools to utilize available funding for other academic purposes.
10. Janette Cesar, Principal of TAG, stated that TAG also collaborated with Global Neighborhood in terms of staff and resources.

11. Multiple commenters expressed concern regarding the availability of space for TAG in building M117.
12. Multiple commenters indicated that future discussions regarding space in building M117 should take place in a public forum and include families as well as school staff and faculty.
13. Multiple commenters expressed concern regarding the use and scheduling of shared spaces in building M117, such as the cafeteria and gymnasium.
14. Multiple commenters expressed concern regarding the lack of space in building M117 for enrichment and extracurricular activities.
15. Multiple commenters expressed concern regarding the rumored movement of all second floor classrooms to the basement in building M117.

Summary of Comments Received at the Community Meeting

A community meeting regarding this proposal was held at building M096 on January 21, 2015. At that meeting, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input and ask questions regarding the proposal. Approximately 10 members of the public attended the meeting, and four people spoke. Present at the meeting were Alexandra Estrella, District 4 Superintendent and facilitator for the hearing; David Pretto, P.S. 96 principal and SLT member; Luis Genao, Global Neighborhood principal and SLT member; Wendy Mercedes, Esperanza Principal and SLT member; and Kia Higgins of the DOE's Office of District Planning.

Below is a summary of the comments received:

16. One commenter inquired about whether there were opportunities for P.S. 96 and Global Neighborhood to share resources at all grade levels, as opposed to just the middle school grades.
17. One commenter inquired about the rationale for selecting building M096 for the proposed re-siting and co-location.
18. One commenter inquired about whether the DOE evaluated other schools as potential sites for the proposed re-siting and co-location of Global Neighborhood.
19. One commenter inquired about the use of shared spaces in building M096 should this proposal be approved.

Summary of Additional Written or Oral Comments to the DOE

20. One commenter asserted that:
 - a. District 4's current superintendent, Alexandra Estrella, previously served as the principal of Esperanza, one of the school organizations in building M117.
 - b. The superintendent's previous involvement with building M117 creates a conflict of interest, and she should recuse herself from any decision-making related to building M117.
21. One commenter, a parent of a TAG student, asserted that:

- a. She is concerned about the space available in building M117 for TAG’s instructional and extracurricular programming.
- b. TAG needs additional space and should be allocated additional space if this proposal is approved.
- c. Global Neighborhood currently occupies classrooms on the basement level which are not conducive to learning.
- d. High school students should not intermingle with kindergarten students.
- e. In the long-term, TAG should be expanded and re-sited to a building that is not co-located.
- f. TAG and Esperanza should be reconfigured in the building such that each school occupies separate sides of the building on each floor, maintaining separate stairwells.

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

Comments 1, 2, 3, 5a-b, 6, and 7c are in favor of the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 4a asks about the number of students at Global Neighborhood who have Individualized Education Programs (“IEP”). In the 2014-2015 school year, 31% of students enrolled at Global Neighborhood have an IEP.

Comment 4b inquired as to whether Global Neighborhood will have a guidance counselor if re-sited to the M096 building.

The principal of Global Neighborhood responded to this question at the joint public hearing on February 9, 2015, stating that if this proposal is approved, Global Neighborhood will employ its own guidance counselor. Moreover, Global Neighborhood may employ other staff members who provide student support services as required by law and as necessary to address students’ needs.

Comment 4c relates to the allocation of parking permits.

Each academic year, the Department of Transportation determines the number of parking permits each school building receives. This number is based on available space outside of the building and not on the number of school organizations in a given building. This means that fewer parking permits may be available for P.S. 96 if this proposal is approved.

Comments 7a-b, 9, and 10 relate to Global Neighborhood’s tenure in building M117 and the school’s relationship with its building partners.

The DOE commends Global Neighborhood, Esperanza, TAG, and P138M@M117 on their efforts to develop and maintain a cohesive building culture.

Comments 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, and 21a-b and f relate to how decisions are made concerning the allocation and use of shared spaces in co-located schools. Several comments relate to how space will be allocated in M117 upon Global Neighborhood's departure, and one asks about how Global Neighborhood and P.S. 96 will share space in the M096 building.

The Citywide Instructional Footprint ("Footprint") sets forth the baseline number of rooms that should be allocated to a school based on the grade levels served by the school and number of classes per grade. For existing schools, the Footprint is applied to the current number of classes and class size a school has programmed and is confirmed by a walk-through of the building by the Borough Director of Space Planning and the school's principal. In addition, the Footprint allocates a number of baseline full-size equivalent ("FSE") classrooms for student support services, resource rooms, and administrative space based on the grades a school serves and its enrollment at scale. Any space remaining beyond the baseline shall be allocated equitably among the co-located schools. In determining an equitable allocation, the DOE may consider factors such as the relative enrollments of the co-located schools, the instructional and programmatic needs of the co-located schools, and the physical location of the excess space within the building.

All buildings that share space have Building Councils that include the principal of each school within the building. Building Councils allow school leaders to collaborate in sharing common space, facilitating administrative decision-making and ensuring that all schools in a building operate smoothly and safely. With respect to the use of shared spaces, such as cafeterias, libraries, gyms, and auditoriums, the Building Council will collectively determine the final shared space schedule if this proposed co-location is approved by the PEP. Additional guidance regarding the governance of shared space is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/campusgov>.

It bears noting that as to comments 11, 13, 14, and 21a-b which express concern about space constraints in building M117, this proposal to re-site Global Neighborhood to the M096 will create additional space in building M117. This may enhance the ability of the remaining school organizations to serve their respective student bodies. If this proposal is approved, space allocations, including room type and location, for each school in the building will be made in consultation with the principals of each school and the Office of Space Planning.

Comment 16 relates to resource-sharing among co-located schools.

In general, principals have discretion over their budgets and determine how to prioritize their resources, including staffing and programming for their individual schools. If this proposal is approved, Global Neighborhood and P.S. 96 may elect to share resources, such as jointly funding a class, program, or staff person among the schools. To this end, the DOE supports school collaboration and the sharing of resources that collectively benefit all students in the building.

Comments 17, 18, and 21e relate to the process for selecting buildings for proposed co-locations.

The DOE considers multiple factors when evaluating buildings for potential co-location, such as the availability of space in the building; the building's configuration; the current and proposed grade levels in the building; building location; as well as school and district community input. For the current proposal, based on these and other factors, the DOE believes building M096 is the best option for the proposed re-siting and co-location of Global Neighborhood.

With respect to comment 21e's claim that TAG needs a non-co-located facility to enable the school to expand, the DOE notes that there is not funding in the 2015-2019 Capital Plan for capital improvements in District 4 such that a building can be constructed uniquely for TAG. Regarding TAG's potential expansion, TAG has not submitted an application to the DOE to expand the grades served by the school. As described above, if this proposal is approved, Global Neighborhood's re-siting to building M096 will create additional space in building M117 which may benefit the other schools in building M117.

Comments 20a-b relate to the District 4 superintendent's role in relation to this proposal.

Pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-190, in consultation with impacted school staff, faculty, families and the larger district community, the Chancellor submits all proposals creating significant changes in school utilization to the Panel for Educational Policy. While the superintendent provides feedback as to the proposal, the Panel for Educational Policy has the exclusive authority to approve such proposals, unless the Chancellor deems action is immediately necessary to preserve student health, safety, or general welfare.

Comment 21c suggests that the space that Global Neighborhood occupies in the M117 building is not conducive to learning.

This proposal aims to address this concern by re-siting Global Neighborhood to a space better suited to its needs.

Comment 21d relates to the co-location of schools with different grade levels, with the commenter stating that high school students should not intermingle with kindergarten students.

This proposal seeks to co-locate Global Neighborhood, a middle school, with P.S. 96, a school serving students in kindergarten through eighth grades. Thus, no co-location between kindergarten and high school students will result from this proposal.

To the extent that comment 21d expresses dissatisfaction with the existing co-location between TAG and Esperanza in the M117 building, the DOE notes its commitment to the creation of safe school environments that are conducive to learning. The school leadership teams of all school organizations within a co-located school must devise and implement programmatic and operational policies that maximize school safety and facilitate appropriate interaction amongst peers of co-located school organizations.

Regarding safety, pursuant to Chancellor's Regulation A-414, every school/campus is mandated to form a School Safety Committee, which is responsible for developing a comprehensive School Safety Plan that defines the normal operations of the site and what procedures are in place in the event of an emergency. The School Safety Plan is updated annually by the Committee to meet the changing security needs, changes in organization and building conditions, and any other factors. The Committee will also address safety matters on an ongoing basis and make appropriate recommendations to the Principal(s) when it identifies the need for additional security measures.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal.