

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

**NEW YORK CITY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -  
DIVISION OF PORTFOLIO  
PLANNING**

**Opening and Co-Location of  
New District HS at K540/Dewey**

**October 23, 2013  
5:30pm**

1 [START RECORDING 368281\_master]

2 MS. ELAINE GORMAN: Good evening. Good  
3 evening. Please everyone take a seat. We are  
4 ready to begin.

5 [Pause]

6 We are ready to begin. I must have you  
7 seated.

8 [Pause]

9 Ladies and gentlemen we have a large number  
10 of speakers who want to speak and we want to  
11 begin.

12 [Pause]

13 I will wait.

14 [Pause]

15 Good evening. I am Elaine Gorman and I will  
16 act as your, as the Chancellor's designee and  
17 the facilitator. I'm going to wait until you  
18 quiet down so that everyone who speaks can be  
19 heard.

20 [Pause]

21 This is a joint public hearing of the  
22 Department of Education, Community Education  
23 Council 21 and the school leadership teams of  
24 John Dewey High School and P.S. 721 at Dewey  
25 High School.

1 [Pause]

2 Ladies and gentlemen, please.

3 [Pause]

4 To discuss the following proposal. The  
5 proposed opening and co-location of a new  
6 district high school 21K 768, which John Dewey  
7 High School and PS 721K and Building K540  
8 beginning in 2014/15.

9 Tonight's proceedings are recorded and  
10 transcribed. Before we begin the hearing we ask  
11 that anyone who wishes to speak during the  
12 public comment portion of the evening sign up on  
13 the list in the back of the auditorium. There  
14 is a separate list for current Dewey students.  
15 Those Dewey students will speak immediately  
16 following the speakers on the dais and our  
17 electeds.

18 Sign up will end at 6:30. All panel  
19 participants were asked to be here no later than  
20 5:30 and we are all assembled and they will have  
21 an opportunity to speak immediately after the  
22 reading of the proposal.

23 We see Mr. Recchia is here with us tonight.  
24 There may be other electeds that arrive. They  
25 will have an opportunity to speak at the first

1        opportune moment. Any of the electeds who are  
2        here at the time the dais finishes, will be able  
3        to speak at that time. Excuse me, assemblymen.  
4        Thank you very much.

5                Tonight's format will include a presentation  
6        of the proposal and presentation by hearing  
7        participants followed by the electeds and public  
8        comment speakers.

9                I want to make sure that you realize that  
10       while the days are not bound by a time  
11       restriction, public comments are. Each public  
12       speaker has two minutes. You will be given a 30  
13       second warning and then you will have to end at  
14       your two minutes. That is in order for everyone  
15       who has signed up to have an ample opportunity  
16       to speak. The time will be strictly followed  
17       and speakers will be informed when their  
18       designated time has ended. There will be a  
19       timekeeper who will keep track and we will allow  
20       you to finish your thought.

21               I would now like to introduce the panel,  
22       which is assembled for tonight's joint public  
23       hearing.

24               We have Heather Fiurica, CEC 21 President,  
25       Marianne Russo [APPLAUSE], Marianne Russo from

1 the Citywide Council on High Schools,  
2 [APPLAUSE], we have Kathleen Elvin, your  
3 principal [APPLAUSE], we have Christina Escobar  
4 who is your PA President [APPLAUSE]. We'd like  
5 to acknowledge Barbara Tremblay who the  
6 principal from 721. Thank you for being here  
7 tonight. [APPLAUSE] We also have with us Martin  
8 Haber who is not sitting on the dais but who  
9 will speak after the panel. [APPLAUSE]

10 We also want to acknowledge the large  
11 contingency from the alumni. Thank you for  
12 being here and always supporting the staff.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 I will now take my seat to read you the  
15 proposal. Thank you very much.

16 The New York City Department of Education is  
17 proposing to open and co-located a new district  
18 high school 21K 768 that will serve students in  
19 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in Building K540 in  
20 District 21. 21K 768 will open if the proposal  
21 passes in 2014/2015 with 9<sup>th</sup> grade, adding one  
22 grade each year until it reaches full grade span  
23 and serves grades nine through twelve in  
24 2017/18.

25 21K 768 will admit students through the

1 citywide high school admissions process using a  
2 limited unscreened admissions method. If this  
3 proposal is approved, 21K 768 will be co-located  
4 in K40 with John Dewey High School, and existing  
5 highs school that serves grades nine through  
6 twelve and once site of a multi-sited District  
7 75 school. PS721 at 540 that serves students in  
8 grades nine through twelve in an inclusion  
9 program at Dewey.

10 Two community-based organizations, Spark and  
11 Council for Unity\* are also located in K540. If  
12 this proposal is approved, students at PS721 @  
13 540 will continue to be enrolled at general ed  
14 classes at John Dewey High School and will  
15 continue to receive all mandated services. If  
16 this proposal is approved, 21K 768 will open of  
17 the 2014/15 school year, admit approximately 105  
18 to 115 9<sup>th</sup> graders in 2014/15 and add one grade  
19 level every year until the school reaches its  
20 full grade span of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades in  
21 2017/18 school year when it will serve  
22 approximately 420 to 460 students.

23 The DOE has identified K540 as an under  
24 utilized building. K540 has the capacity to  
25 serve approximately 2,434 students. In 2013/14

1 John Dewey is projected to serve approximately  
2 1,630 students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades and  
3 PS721K @K540 is projected to serve approximately  
4 22 students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades. This  
5 yields a building utilization rate of  
6 approximately 68%, which demonstrates that the  
7 building is under utilized and has space to  
8 accommodate additional students.

9 While Dewey's current enrollment on register  
10 is above projections, it's anticipated that  
11 enrollment at Dewey will stabilize in a way that  
12 closely aligns with projections. As with any  
13 proposal, significant changes in enrollment  
14 could result in an amendment to the plan.

15 If the proposal is approved in 2017/18 K540  
16 will serve 2,050 to 2,135 students from 21K 768  
17 PS 21K 2K540 and John Dewey collectively, which  
18 would yield a project utilization rate of 84 to  
19 88%. Thus, K540 has sufficient space to  
20 accommodate the proposed co-location.

21 As described in the educational impact  
22 statement, the DOE is planning to create  
23 additional capacity in Building K540. This  
24 construction will create at least six additional  
25 full-size rooms in the building which are

1 necessary to accommodate 21K 768 full-scale  
2 enrollment. It is anticipated that the project  
3 would be completed before 21K 768 is at full  
4 scale in the building.

5 At this point I'd like to turn over the mic  
6 to our CEC 21 President.

7 Yes, there's been a request to have the  
8 Principal speak first and we will turn the mic  
9 to Kathleen Elvin.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 MS. KATHLEEN ELVIN: Good evening students,  
12 staff, families and members of the panel. It's  
13 nice to see that we don't look too under  
14 utilized this evening.

15 It is my great and good pleasure to work at  
16 John Dewey High School every day. It is a  
17 school that I believe is the perfect reflection  
18 of our country in all of its complexity and  
19 diversity. It is also the namesake of John  
20 Dewey, America's greatest educator.

21 Tonight I would like to focus on two key  
22 points. First, we are not the under utilized  
23 facility described in the EIS. We've been  
24 caught in a series of policies that made it  
25 difficult for families to choose Dewey as a

1 school.

2 Second, and most important, John Dewey is  
3 part of a vanishing breed, namely effectively,  
4 high performing, comprehensive high schools that  
5 offer a range of programs to a wide range of  
6 students.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 John Dewey offers the school choice that  
9 many New York City residents want and no longer  
10 have. First, although it's great to have  
11 everybody here tonight, I think it's under a  
12 mistaken premise. For the past two years the  
13 Department of Education has severely under  
14 projected enrollment at John Dewey High School.  
15 Last year we were projected to have 1,682  
16 students. In reality, 1,920, 250 more students  
17 than we were funded for and more students than  
18 are enrolled in some small schools.

19 This year history repeats itself. Despite  
20 serious budget negotiations, enrollment projects  
21 were again way off. We are funded for 1,630  
22 students and today we have a register of 1,957  
23 students.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 That's way above the 68% utilization rate.

1 We're above 80% utilization rate. This year  
2 we are under funded by 330 students. In other  
3 words, 20% less than we're entitled to. I  
4 wonder if there is another school in the city as  
5 under funded as John Dewey. Certainly none have  
6 been under funded to such a degree for two years  
7 in a row. And yet, it is a testament to the  
8 caliber of the teachers, the students, the  
9 families and the support staff that we are a  
10 high functioning school with rising indicators  
11 on all fronts. - - on the progress report, way  
12 up over the past three years, 74% graduation  
13 rate and rising.

14 When the Chancellor spoke about the  
15 advantages of co-location, he mentioned a series  
16 of schools. After co-location their graduation  
17 went up to 70%. We're ahead of that already.  
18 We got a proficient on our quality review. We  
19 have 13 advance placement courses. A record  
20 matched by very few schools in New York City and  
21 no small ones. We have 450 ESL students, many  
22 of them experiencing their first year in America  
23 right here at John Dewey High School.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 We're a bronze medal winner in U.S. News and

1 World Report. We have three new programs this  
2 year in theater, art and pre-med. Those  
3 programs are slated to expand our enrollment by  
4 an additional 300 students after this year.  
5 Those new programs need space to expand.

6 How can we interpret this disconnect between  
7 performance, enrollment and funding? Dewey has  
8 been caught in a web of initiatives and  
9 misinformation over the last three years that  
10 eventually put us in the pool of transformation  
11 and restart schools.

12 When negotiations between the city and the  
13 UFT broke down over teacher evaluations, Dewey  
14 was labeled turnaround and slated to be closed.  
15 As a result, over the last two years we have  
16 suffered from what I call the enrollment  
17 trifecta.

18 First, a closing school. In the spring of  
19 2012 every single family at John Dewey High  
20 School and every single student on our list  
21 notice of incoming 8<sup>th</sup> graders received a letter  
22 telling them that John Dewey High School was  
23 closing and that they should considering  
24 attending another school. See the list attached  
25 and apply for a seat.

1           It's kind of like these families were in  
2 their car, driving toward the George Washington  
3 Bridge and heard on the radio the bridge  
4 collapsed and disappeared into the Hudson River.  
5 Should they continue driving to the George  
6 Washington Bridge? Or should they take the  
7 Lincoln Tunnel or the Tappan Zee Bridge? What  
8 would you do?

9           Then surprise, Dewey didn't close. Were  
10 those families offered their seats back? We  
11 were offered our student back? No, we were not.

12           Second, the high school handbook, high  
13 school handbook. Can you find John Dewey High  
14 School in here? No you cannot. Last year how  
15 would students and counselors know how to apply  
16 to John Dewey High School? If you look in the  
17 handbook and the school has disappeared, you  
18 can't apply to that school. We received calls  
19 from families whose guidance counselors wouldn't  
20 let them apply to John Dewey because they  
21 honestly believed that we had closed.

22           Item three on the trifecta list. Super  
23 storm Sandy. Just one year ago Coney Island was  
24 devastated by super storm Sandy. Hundreds of  
25 our students and dozens of our staff members

1 lost homes and possessions on that fateful  
2 October night. We still have dozens of families  
3 living doubled up and recovering from the storm.  
4 One of our biology teachers was stranded her car  
5 in a field of rising seawater. She thought that  
6 was going to be her last night on earth. Her  
7 home was completely destroyed and yet a few days  
8 later she was here teaching, guiding and  
9 mentoring every single day.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 She is just one of hundreds in our school  
12 community who watched houses and cars float away  
13 before their eyes. The D train which usually  
14 stops on our doorstep wasn't running. You  
15 couldn't get here by train. Cars had floated  
16 away and there was no gas to be had and yet we  
17 persevered.

18 And what about our building? I woke up a  
19 year ago, almost to the day, to see pictures of  
20 John Dewey blowing up and in flames. Newspapers  
21 reported that we were the most badly damaged  
22 school in all of New York City. For a week we  
23 had no idea where we would hold classes for our  
24 students. We had to plan to divide our school  
25 and assign students and staff to three other

1 high schools, Sheepshead Bay Madison and  
2 Lincoln. With no functioning systems in our  
3 building, all of the communications with our  
4 family was through Facebook. Most members of  
5 the community had lost their homes, including  
6 their cell phones. In the end our damage  
7 consisted of an almost completely destroyed  
8 electrical system due to an exploded  
9 transformer. Our amazing custodians worked  
10 around the clock with the Department of  
11 Education, Division of Facilities Management to  
12 clean the damage. Every wall and floor and  
13 piece of furniture in this building was washed,  
14 cleaned, re-washed and re-cleaned.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 I met here many mornings at 5:00 with the  
17 custodian to watch the installation of two  
18 generators to get us some electricity. Although  
19 it was wonderful to be back in our home, we  
20 spent the next seven and a half months with a  
21 hobbling electrical system. Some days the  
22 custodial workers went through the building  
23 unscrewing light bulbs and turning off computers  
24 in an effort to keep the building running. Some  
25 days it was all hands on deck to make sandwiches

1 for students because there was no heat or  
2 electricity in the kitchen to prepare lunch.

3 Because of lost instructional time, we were  
4 determined to have our students here for a  
5 summer program. We invested over \$300,000 of  
6 our school money in funds to upgrade electricity  
7 to support our summer program. One year to the  
8 day later it is still not connected because the  
9 storm damage repairs are not finished.

10 It is heartbreaking to see the funds that  
11 will invested in alterations for a new school  
12 when repairs to Dewey are still not complete.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 And the last item is about school choice.  
15 Co-location is supposed to be about offering  
16 choice to families. That's the rationale behind  
17 the new school system. A review of all the high  
18 schools in Brooklyn shows that there are more  
19 than 100 schools to choose from already. Only  
20 ten of these schools, that's right, ten, can be  
21 considered medium or large comprehensive high  
22 schools. The other 90 are small schools. Only  
23 Dewey is in the 2,000 student range, big enough  
24 to offer a range of programs and small enough to  
25 be a community.

1 Families that I talk with often say that  
2 they are fatigued by choice and yearn for a  
3 comprehensive local school like all of the  
4 children in the suburbs have. Scarsdale has not  
5 implemented co-location neither has Manhasset,  
6 Ardsley or Port Washington. Choosing among  
7 single themed schools can feel like choosing  
8 between tofu and parsley. Many families would  
9 rather go to the international smorgasbord with  
10 a range of dietary choices. That is what  
11 comprehensive schools offer.

12 Is a 14 year old really ready to commit to a  
13 niche subject before he has the chance to  
14 explore other options?

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 As Malcolm Gladwell sagely points out, many  
17 people who achieved greatness did so because  
18 they were in an environment that offered them  
19 options. You cannot become a robotics whiz if  
20 your school doesn't have robotics.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 Are you fascinated with marine biology?

23 [APPLAUSE]

24 But still want to take advanced placement  
25 Chinese? Then you need to come to John Dewey,

1 which offers both.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 Do you like fashion, modeling --

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 Let me finish the sentence. Do you like  
6 high fashion and modeling but you want to take  
7 AP chemistry and prepare for a career in  
8 medicine? This is the place for you.

9 [APPLAUSE]

10 Many parents have told us that they love the  
11 idea of their child being in a place where  
12 everyone and everything is available for their  
13 child. No closed doors, no restricted hallways,  
14 no lunch at 9:30 a.m. in the morning because  
15 that is the only time the cafeteria is  
16 available. They like open access to sports  
17 teams where spots are not divvied up among  
18 competing schools.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 When they go to a game they want to know  
21 which school they're cheering for. They want to  
22 send their children to John Dewey, fulfilling  
23 the vision and mission that it was designed for.  
24 It is up to you to make this happen. Thank you.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 MS. GORMAN: We will now hear from the PA  
2 President.

3 MS. CHRISTINA ESCOBAR: I don't know if  
4 everyone knows but I graduated from the Class of  
5 '89.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 And when I came to Dewey, Dewey prepared you  
8 for college, that was it. I am so proud to be  
9 your PA President because I've seen the change  
10 in education, in programs, advance placement,  
11 college now, what about our boys and girls  
12 soccer team? They made it to the play offs.

13 When I came to Dewey we didn't have sports.  
14 The only thing they made me do is run those  
15 tracks. I am so proud of John Dewey. John  
16 Dewey we are a family. We should stick  
17 together.

18 [APPLAUSE]

19 We have created bonds, the children, we're  
20 here for the children. The children have  
21 created a bond between their friends, their  
22 classmates, other students in other programs.  
23 They help each other. Our students have  
24 received also tutoring. There's so many  
25 wonderful teachers here in Dewey that are

1 creating their special time for our children.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 We've had a rough road. I remember those  
4 days going to down to downtown Brooklyn and  
5 rallying and they were trying to close us. But  
6 we stayed open. We need to stick together. We  
7 need to keep sticking together as a big Dewey  
8 family.

9 [APPLAUSE]

10 Anything else? Well all I know is that my  
11 daughter is about to graduate. She's a senior  
12 now.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 And just because she's graduating doesn't  
15 mean that the mommy is leaving.

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 I want to see Dewey for another decade. And  
18 I want stronger programs. Look how beautiful  
19 our marine science program is, our robotics.  
20 Our sports is growing each and every day. I am  
21 so proud of the AP courses that we offer and  
22 also the College Now. I never received that in  
23 '89. I know that Dewey in '89 they were  
24 preparing us to go to college. We didn't have  
25 these extra curriculum programs and Dewey we

1 have them and we're going to keep on growing.  
2 But just let us grow. Like I said at the CAC  
3 meeting, please just let us grow. We were hit  
4 by Sandy. We still have families that do not  
5 have a roof over their heads. Please just let  
6 us keep growing. Thank you.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. You will now hear  
9 from the CEC 21 President.

10 MS. HEATHER FIURICA: Thank you. Before I  
11 start I have a message from Superintendent of  
12 District 21, Isabella DiMola. She sends her  
13 regrets that she could not attend here tonight  
14 due to personal matters, but she wishes she  
15 would be here.

16 All right. I'm going to ask you to be  
17 respectful. I am here for you and when you talk  
18 I'm going to listen to you. So as I get through  
19 my statement, I want just a little bit of quiet  
20 'cause there's so many out of you and we're so  
21 proud that you're here tonight.

22 Good evening. My name is Heather Fiurica,  
23 President of Community Education Council of  
24 District 21.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1           Officially the CEC of District 21 gives  
2 support to elementary and junior high schools in  
3 our district. Our council is made up of 11  
4 members, all volunteers and are elected by the  
5 parents to represent them. It is mandated by  
6 law that the Community Education Council of this  
7 district host this joint public, joint public  
8 hearing tonight.

9           Even though we are not officially your  
10 liaison, my fellow council members, which are  
11 all in the front row, are here to support you  
12 and listen to you.

13           [APPLAUSE]

14           A mandate or no mandate, these are all our  
15 children. We stand here and rally with you. I  
16 might have one child at home, but every single  
17 child in this room is my child. Every single  
18 child in this district is my child. So I stand  
19 with you.

20           If you wonder why I'm so tired, this is our  
21 third joint public hearing in less than 30 days.  
22 We were at the October 15<sup>th</sup> PEP meeting and we  
23 will be with you October 30<sup>th</sup>. I will speak on  
24 Cavallaro IS 281 and on behalf of Dewey for you.  
25 And we're going to ask them to vote to vote no

1 to all proposed co-location.

2 Our district is being invaded by co-  
3 location. Our last two joint public hearings  
4 our council opposed the co-location of not one  
5 but two kindergarten to fourth grade charter  
6 schools, one in Seth Low, IS 96 and the other in  
7 Cavallaro, IS 281.

8 Tonight we are here for John Dewey High  
9 School and a new district high school, yet to be  
10 named. At least it's not a charter school. So  
11 we can all look forward to getting the shaft  
12 from the DOE equally. I guess this is what the  
13 DOE means when they say equality because we all  
14 know charter schools and traditional schools are  
15 not equal.

16 Community Education Council of District 21  
17 adamantly opposes the proposed co-location of  
18 District High School 21K 768 with John Dewey  
19 High School 21K 540 and P721K District 75K 721  
20 that would begin in 2014/2015.

21 In our September meeting the council as a  
22 whole passed a resolution opposing this co-  
23 location for numerous reasons. There is no  
24 legitimate basis for a co-location. John Dewey  
25 High School is not under utilized. Department

1 of Education impact statement, EIS is flawed.  
2 Dewey is listed as having a current enrollment  
3 of 1,630 when it actually has 1,920,  
4 approximately 80% capacity. If there was any  
5 under utilization it is not the result of the  
6 community.

7 The children and their family were not given  
8 the choice. Students did not decline to apply  
9 to Dewey. They were not given the choice to do  
10 so. The DOE loves to say we want families to  
11 have choice, but Dewey was excluded from the  
12 high school handbook. Students and guidance  
13 counselors from - - schools never knew John  
14 Dewey High School was an option for them.

15 Also parents and students were under the  
16 impression that Dewey was closing, was going to  
17 be a turnaround model, as well as being damaged  
18 from super storm Sandy leading to mass confusion  
19 in our district.

20 The DOE failed to recognize that Dewey's  
21 graduation rate has increased 74% and Dewey  
22 scored a B on the school report card. We are  
23 here tonight at the renowned John Dewey High  
24 School campus. It offers quality seats despite  
25 the DOE's indication that it does not. There is

1 no need for an additional high school to co-  
2 locate. Dewey can serve the growing needs and  
3 demands of our students. The DOE should be  
4 supporting, advertising and funding this school  
5 that is already in this building. The funds  
6 that they will use to fund the new school could  
7 be used right now, here at Dewey.

8 They need to stop neglecting us and start  
9 providing more support to this outstanding high  
10 school. We already have an outstanding size  
11 school. There is no need to place another one  
12 in this building.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 There is no need to have two different  
15 administrators or two teaching staff. Resources  
16 should be focused on one high school, not  
17 divided between two.

18 Let's speak about high school with no name  
19 and what it would entail for our children. What  
20 is this brand new high school given to us? We  
21 weren't even given the respect that we deserve.  
22 We should have had input on what type of high  
23 school that we will place in this building.  
24 Shouldn't the families who live and work in this  
25 community have a say in their child's education

1 future?

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 On October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the City Council hearing,  
4 Councilman Steven Lavin questioned Chancellor  
5 Walcott and Chief Portfolio Eric Hoffmann  
6 regarding John Dewey and was under sworn  
7 testimony. Ms. Kaufman stated a proposal to  
8 offer high school, a quality option in Brooklyn.  
9 We believe this new high school will offer a new  
10 option in Brooklyn. It will be a career  
11 technical education and that in the upcoming  
12 months they would bring the leaders to meet us  
13 in the community. How nice of them to think of  
14 us after the process is down.

15 But at last night's community board meeting  
16 13's meeting, a member of Portfolio Management  
17 said it was not a career technical education  
18 school. I'm not sure if I'm confused or the DOE  
19 is.

20 We are here at a joint public hearing to  
21 speak about an incoming school of no name. We  
22 don't know what it will really be or how it will  
23 affect our children. So at this time I think we  
24 should do something productive and name this new  
25 school. How about the, I'm Not Sure We'll Tell

1 You Later High School. Or my personal  
2 favorite, the High School of Bloomberg's Fourth  
3 term.

4 The Council of Community Education District  
5 21 opposed this co-location. We will not only  
6 ask that they vote no against the proposal, but  
7 to have it pulled from the PEP all based on it  
8 being rushed. Information about the new high  
9 school is unclear and that John Dewey is already  
10 an outstanding choice for our children of this  
11 district.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. We now  
14 are going to turn it over to our representative  
15 for the City Wide Council of High Schools.

16 MS. MARIANNE RUSSO: Thank you. My name is  
17 Marianne Russo from Citywide Council of High  
18 Schools, on High Schools. I represent Brooklyn  
19 and your school.

20 DOE states in the environmental impact  
21 statement that it does not anticipate the  
22 proposed co-location will impact admission,  
23 current or future students enrollment.

24 MS. GORMAN: Can we please, can we please  
25 have it settled down and for everyone to either

1 have a seat or walk outside so that our CCHS  
2 representative can be heard.

3 MS. RUSSO: As we heard from the principal  
4 of John Dewey, that it will be affected. The  
5 school is not under utilized with over 1,900  
6 students. And the new programs they started  
7 this year, the pre-med, theater arts and visual  
8 arts are not even listed in the environmental  
9 impact statement. Also, school utilization  
10 plan, which is also another mandated item was  
11 not posted for this school.

12 The item stated that the DOE will and work  
13 with the schools for maximum efficiency. What  
14 does that really mean, maximum efficiency of  
15 their classrooms? That means that some of your  
16 specialty classes will be removed, larger class  
17 size. I mean according to me that is impacting  
18 the students of John Dewey, the district and the  
19 community.

20 Also to allow for 460 students to come in  
21 for the new school, new proposed school it will  
22 um take away 16 rooms from the existing school.  
23 So where will these rooms come from?  
24 Additionally rooms will be used for staffing of  
25 their new schools because all the administrators

1 have to be duplicated.

2 So again both environmental impact statement  
3 is incorrect and therefore null and therefore  
4 should be ignored and re-presented. So this  
5 proposal should be removed from the PEP  
6 immediately because their entire environmental  
7 impact statement is incorrect.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 DOE offers parents choice and have any of  
10 you gone to the recent high school fair? All  
11 the schools sounds exactly the same. All have  
12 about 100 income students. All supposedly have  
13 specialties, but when you really visit these  
14 schools, they don't. They're all exactly the  
15 same. The name is just a show. There's nothing  
16 behind those programs.

17 A new school was developed for landscaping  
18 without having an exterior space to perform this  
19 landscaping specialty that is offered. So again,  
20 schools, these new schools that are providing  
21 parents with high quality seats are not even  
22 being proven to offer them high quality seats.

23 John Dewey has a long history, great history  
24 and we should give them the opportunity to  
25 continue to grow and improve. They've made

1 great strides over the last few years and we  
2 should continue to support them. With another  
3 460 children in they will be over utilized and  
4 creating an overcrowding situation.

5 Let's incorporate whatever program they're  
6 proposing that is going to benefit District 21  
7 in John Dewey. We don't need a separate name.  
8 You don't need separate administrators. You  
9 just include it. If it's such a great idea, why  
10 didn't they propose what it is? And they  
11 probably haven't figured it out yet because  
12 they're in such a hurry to get this approved  
13 before this administration leaves office.

14 So let's put some thought in our new schools  
15 before we offer them. Let's give John Dewey a  
16 chance for their enrollment to rise naturally as  
17 it is. With their improvements it will and it  
18 will draw students from district and from the  
19 borough.

20 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. I think the members  
21 of the dais. We will now hear from our electeds  
22 followed by any other members of the CEC who  
23 wish to speak, followed by Mr. Haber the  
24 remaining member from the SLT. So we will hear  
25 from our electeds. The electeds will go next.

1 We will have assemblyman Cymbrowitz, followed  
2 by Council Member Recchia, followed by Senator  
3 Diane Savino, followed by Assemblyman William  
4 Colton. We thank you all for being here.

5 ASSEMBLYMAN STEVEN CYMBROWITZ: Good  
6 evening.

7 MS. GORMAN: Why don't you use this one  
8 until we get it fixed.

9 ASSEMBLYMAN CYMBROWITZ: All right. We got  
10 it now. All right. Thank you.

11 Good evening and thank you for a chance to  
12 testify on this important issue. My name is  
13 Steven Cymbrowitz and I am the new Assemblyman  
14 and proud to represent John Dewey.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 I stand firmly with the parents, teachers,  
17 administrators and the entire Dewey community  
18 tonight. The co-location proposal is misguided,  
19 dysfunctional and was designed to be the death  
20 nail of John Dewey High School as we know it.  
21 The sad fact is that the city bureaucrats want  
22 Dewey High School to fail. Everyone who cares  
23 about Dewey knows this.

24 The school that was once an ambitious  
25 experiment in progressive education has become a

1 dumping ground for the so-called over the  
2 counter students. Students not matched with any  
3 of their chosen schools because of factors  
4 including a prior of history of behavioral  
5 issues. Dewey is not the only school to  
6 experience this problem.

7 According to a recent report by the  
8 Annenberg Institute for School Reform, which  
9 recently conducted a study of enrollment data  
10 the Department of Education's inequitable  
11 assignment of over the counter students to  
12 struggling high schools reduces the  
13 opportunities for success for both the students  
14 and their schools.

15 In other words, DOE is dooming John Dewey to  
16 failure by packing the register with difficult  
17 kids. Failure becomes a self-fulfilling  
18 prophecy.

19 But here's the amazing part. Even with  
20 these challenges Dewey is seeing an upswing.  
21 The four year graduation rate increased from  
22 51.2% for the class of 2009 to 66% for the class  
23 of 2011. Now that was amazing and  
24 congratulations to everyone here for that. The  
25 percentage of Dewey graduates deemed college

1 ready increased amazingly. And again,  
2 congratulations to you for that.

3 It is true that Dewey has a way to go before  
4 the numbers satisfy everyone but its star has  
5 risen before and there are strong indications  
6 that it is rising again. That John Dewey has  
7 succeeded in spite of the challenges as a  
8 testament to the talented teachers and  
9 administrators who care deeply about this  
10 school.

11 They want Dewey to remain whole, not to give  
12 up precious classroom space simply because the  
13 DOE believes Dewey is not worthy enough to  
14 occupy a whole building.

15 MS. GORMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, the  
16 Principal of John Dewey would have students give  
17 time to hear what your elected officials have  
18 come out here to say. I'm going to ask you to  
19 settle down, find a seat, or step out into the  
20 hallway. But these people give their time to  
21 you on a regular basis and they deserve to be  
22 heard.

23 Thank you. Sorry to interrupt you.

24 ASSEMBLYMAN CYMBROWITZ: Thank you. The  
25 Bloomberg education legacy is not a healthy one.

1 His policy has been to divide and conquer  
2 existing schools. He has spent 12 years trying  
3 to defeat, dissect and destroy schools that are  
4 struggling instead of extending a helping hand  
5 to pull them back up. This isn't just bad  
6 policy, it's cruel and inhumane. We don't do  
7 that to people who are struggling and we  
8 shouldn't be doing that to schools.

9 The Mayor Panel for Education Policy has  
10 turned a deaf ear and a blind eye to what's best  
11 for education. They don't care there's already  
12 no space in Dewey and teachers have to go  
13 searching for available classrooms. They don't  
14 care that enrollment at Dewey is near capacity,  
15 contrary to what DOE believes. The Mayor's  
16 agenda just plows ahead. It's a runaway train  
17 but our children happen to be in the way.

18 With a policy like this in place you would  
19 think Dewey's fate was decided even before this  
20 hearing was scheduled.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 But according to many people, you would not  
23 be wrong. But enough is enough. The Mayor's  
24 tenure is thankfully almost over and it's time  
25 to reclaim John Dewey High School to continue

1 its positive progression and give students,  
2 teachers and administrators the opportunity to  
3 flourish without sacrificing much needed space  
4 to a school that shouldn't be there in the first  
5 place. I say no to co-location. Thank you very  
6 much.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 COUNCILMAN RECCHIA: Thank you. Tonight I  
9 speak not as the Councilman for this great  
10 learning institution, shhh. I speak as a public  
11 school parent. I speak as a graduate from John  
12 Dewey High School.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 So let's talk about the school; where it was  
15 and what happened to it. When we heard our new  
16 principal, Principal Elvin is doing a great job.  
17 She talked about a graduation rate of 74%. When  
18 I went to school here they had a graduation rate  
19 close to 100 with 98% going on to college.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 When I got elected I tried very hard to work  
22 with John Dewey and get what they needed. I got  
23 them hundreds of thousands of dollars that they  
24 need, but there was a problem and the problem  
25 was the leadership of the school at the time.

1           I wrote letters, had meetings with the DOE  
2           and I was always told we are working on it. We  
3           had a principal when we had a shooting here who  
4           was at a conference in Boston and did not come  
5           back to this school and they still kept him here  
6           as the principal. That message was loud and  
7           clear to me that he did not care about his  
8           students. He did not care about his school.

9           The DOE, they are to blame for this school.  
10          Now I look back they had a plan and the plan was  
11          let's bring the school down, let's not support  
12          it and then we will bring in other schools. But  
13          they had a problem is that when they tried to  
14          close the school down, we as a Dewey family with  
15          the strong Alumni Association is here tonight,  
16          we united with the teachers and the faculty and  
17          the students and we stopped it. We stopped the  
18          school from closing.

19          I have a stack of e-mails and letters to the  
20          DOE. They finally pulled the principal. The  
21          pulled the principal and we finally have a new  
22          leader, someone whose heart is into the school,  
23          someone who works tireless every day for her  
24          school, a great staff that wants to work to make  
25          this and bring it back. We need the proper

1 funding 'cause you don't get the proper  
2 funding where it should be. If you want to keep  
3 the Dewey spirit alive then that's what we  
4 should do. We don't need another school to come  
5 in here. In 72 days we're going to have a new  
6 mayor, Mayor De Blasio. Help is on the way.  
7 People have to believe that this school will be  
8 saved. A new beginning will arrive on January  
9 1. The students will get finally what they  
10 deserve, the principal will have the support.

11 During super storm Sandy I was here. I saw  
12 and I experienced everything. I know what the  
13 school went through. The school is still not up  
14 to running 100%. The Chancellor and the PEP,  
15 they should just leave us alone. They should,  
16 we suffered enough. How much more do the  
17 parents and the students and this community have  
18 to go through by bringing in another school that  
19 we have no idea what their focus is on. We have  
20 no idea what they're going to do. We have no  
21 idea what they're all about, but more important  
22 let's take this money and give it to John Dewey  
23 'cause it's going to cost a few hundred thousand  
24 dollars. We need the money, the proper funding  
25 to bring this school back.

1           So ladies and gentlemen, to all the  
2 students, to everyone here tonight. You must  
3 come out to the PEP meeting on October 30<sup>th</sup>. I  
4 can't tell you how important it is. Your voices  
5 must be heard. Your voices have to be so loud  
6 that they will finally get the message. This is  
7 not a done deal. Do not let anyone tell you  
8 this is a done deal. We have to start tomorrow.  
9 You have to start calling the Mayor. You have  
10 to start calling the Chancellor. You have to  
11 get hundreds and thousands of phone calls to  
12 say, stop closing John Dewey, stop hurting our  
13 school. They will get the message. You have,  
14 you have to unite and get the message out to  
15 City Hall and to the Department of Education.

16           We must keep John Dewey the way it was.  
17 It's a great learning institution and we must  
18 support the new principal who is doing a great  
19 job. Thank you very much.

20           MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Senator,  
21 thank you.

22           SENATOR DIANE SAVINO: Thank you Dominic.  
23 Good evening everyone. I'm State Senator Diane  
24 Savino and I am going to join Councilman Recchia  
25 and Assemblyman Steve Cymbrowitz and I know

1 behind me, sitting here is Council Member  
2 Elect Mark Treggar [phonetic] who is not just a  
3 councilman, he's a public school teacher at New  
4 Utrecht High School.

5 All of us are going to stand up here and  
6 talk about the same thing and to ask that the  
7 Panel for Education Policy reject this co-  
8 location at John Dewey High School.

9 This is the third co-location hearing I have  
10 been to this week. We were together the other  
11 night at Cavallaro`. I've been at two in Staten  
12 Island. I will be at two more next week and  
13 what we are seeing everywhere we go is an  
14 administration that asked to be judged on its  
15 education experience. Many of your seniors here  
16 entered school 12 years ago with a mayor who  
17 then said, give me the education system and I  
18 will make it better.

19 Well we are at the tail end of that  
20 experiment and there are few who could tell us  
21 that our schools are better now than they were  
22 then. We've had 12 years of divisiveness, 12  
23 years of fighting, of co-location, of pitting  
24 charters against community schools, children  
25 against each other, parents against one another

1 for resources. The time for that has come to  
2 end.

3 We have 71 days left until a new  
4 administration. Seventy-one days until a new  
5 mayor, who most of us believe will be Bill  
6 DeBlasio, who is committed to changing  
7 education, eliminating unnecessary co-locations  
8 and school closures, eliminating this divisive  
9 practice and we would ask DOE, we would ask the  
10 Panel for Education Policy to listen to the  
11 principal. Listen to Kathleen Elvin, listen to  
12 Heather Fiurica, listen to the Community  
13 Education, listen to the parents, look at the  
14 improvements that have been made at John Dewey  
15 High School and give us more to make it work.  
16 Let's make the next 12 years the real, you know,  
17 12 years of improvement in education. Not what  
18 we just had, what we need going forward.

19 So we're going to be there next week. All  
20 of us need to be at that hearing on October 30<sup>th</sup>  
21 when we take up the co-location of John Dewey,  
22 when we take up the co-location of Cavallaro,  
23 when we take up the wrong headed decisions of  
24 this administration and say, enough is enough is  
25 enough. We're going forward, not backward. Be

1 there next week. Thank you.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Mr. Colton,  
4 Assemblyman Colton. Well let's wait until the  
5 young people have chance to settle down.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN COLTON: Good evening. I'm  
7 Assemblyman Bill Colton and I am here to speak  
8 out against this co-location plan.

9 You know I have often said that if you want  
10 to find out what's good for education, if you  
11 want to find out what works in our schools, you  
12 need to listen to the people who are in our  
13 schools, the staff, the parents, the students of  
14 our schools. They know what's good. And very  
15 often decisions are made by people in offices  
16 that have no idea what they are doing, that have  
17 no idea the impact of their decisions.

18 I believe in the Dewey family. I believe  
19 that this is an excellent school and it's going  
20 to be even more excellent.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 I believe that this plan is seriously flawed  
23 because it does not benefit the children of this  
24 school. It doesn't benefit the students. And  
25 that is true again and again with these co-

1 location plans. They don't know the kinds of  
2 programs and extracurricular activities that  
3 exist in an school like this. They haven't seen  
4 the soccer program. They haven't seen all of  
5 the extracurricular activities. And if they  
6 did, they would realize the effect that their  
7 proposal will have on students in this school.

8       So I am opposed to this co-location. In  
9 fact, it is even more disastrous because it  
10 appears that an attempt was made to make the  
11 facts that they are claiming appear to be true.  
12 They deliberately reduced the registration in  
13 this school by leaving Dewey off the list. They  
14 deliberately made it so that they could say the  
15 school was under utilized. But you know what  
16 that means? That means that seats which would  
17 be available, which would be available to  
18 benefit students in future who would want to  
19 engage in all the learning activities, all the  
20 extracurricular activities, all the great things  
21 that go on inside this building, will not have  
22 those seats. Instead they will be occupied by  
23 an unspecified school, with an unspecified  
24 mission whose only purpose is to utilize the  
25 seats so that they will not be going to students

1 of the great school of John Dewey.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 So we must oppose this co-location plan and  
4 no matter what the Panel for Education Policy  
5 does on October 30<sup>th</sup> we will continue to opposed  
6 it. We will continue to believe in John Dewey.  
7 We will continue to believe in the great things  
8 that are going on in this school and we will not  
9 stop until we have succeeded. Together we will  
10 keep John Dewey's great tradition and make it  
11 even greater. Onward for John Dewey.

12 Thank you.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. We have  
15 now concluded the formal presentation. We are  
16 going to turn to public comment beginning with  
17 RFT and CEC and then we go to our speaker's list  
18 of sign ups. All speakers from here on out will  
19 have two minutes.

20 I want to remind you that while the other  
21 speakers were not limited in time and your  
22 applause did not cut into their time, the  
23 speakers from here on out are limited and the  
24 applause will take away from their time. So we  
25 ask for, for not only your quiet, but your

1 indulgence. We have about 90 speakers signed  
2 up. That means that we need to stick to the  
3 time strictly.

4 Ladies and gentlemen at this time we will  
5 turn it over to the UFT rep on the SLT followed  
6 immediately by those members of the CEC who wish  
7 to speak and can line up now.

8 MR. MARTIN HABER: Thank you. My name is  
9 Martin Haber. I'm the UFT Chapter Chair in the  
10 building. I've been a teacher here for over 20  
11 years. I've been in teaching for 30. I wanted  
12 to make sure to get to the microphone because I  
13 wanted to be the first to say that we are  
14 against the co-location. The rank and file  
15 teachers in this school, like the elected  
16 officials just said, have been through the mill.

17 We've already been through every type of  
18 abomination you can think of and we've survived  
19 it. I could only tell you that the colleagues  
20 that I work with are my heroes and the students  
21 who are representing their other students here  
22 today are my heroes as well.

23 You have to keep on doing the same thing  
24 you're doing tonight, being here and being at  
25 that October 30<sup>th</sup> PEP. Your words might fall on

1 deaf ears at the PEP. I've been there and  
2 it's like talking to the wall when you talk to  
3 the Chancellor, when you talk to the people on  
4 the dais. But you have to ignore that and speak  
5 truth to power. That's what I want to teach my  
6 students for the last 20/30 years and I continue  
7 to do that as I go forward.

8       You must all not bow down to the DOE. The  
9 DOE will have this school as a retched place  
10 where no one will get an education. It's not  
11 that kind of place. It's a great place. I've  
12 spent my life here at this point and I want to  
13 say to all of you, that don't buy any of the  
14 official nonsense from the DOE, from the  
15 Chancellor's office.

16       Just get out there and represent your  
17 community, parents, students, teachers, my rank  
18 and file educators, don't give up. We will win  
19 this one and thank you for being here speaking  
20 truth to power.

21       MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Please immediately  
22 come to the mic and give your name before your  
23 comment.

24       MS. EVANGELINE PEW: I'm a CEC Member, a  
25 pole worker, part of Community Voices Heard,

1 Coney Island Coalition and out of all that  
2 what's most important is I'm a John Dewey  
3 mother. My son goes here. He loves the school.  
4 He even loves it more that he's here. Before I  
5 had problems getting him up in the morning to  
6 schools, his teachers may attest to that, that  
7 he was late in the beginning. Now he's on time  
8 because he likes coming here.

9 The most important thing that ya'll need to  
10 know is that public money needs to go back into  
11 public school. The money that is being taken  
12 away to be put into charter schools that's  
13 supposed to be put into our public schools.  
14 That's the big difference. When that money  
15 comes back then there will be enough room for  
16 enough space, enough money for everything once  
17 the programs that want to be ran here.

18 And most importantly, vote because when the  
19 elected officials, when they don't do what we  
20 want them to do, we need to vote them in or out  
21 of office. We need to control that. Thank you.

22 MS. GORMAN: Please our next speaker.

23 MS. MARIA DEGRACIANO: Good evening. My  
24 name is Maria DeGraciano [phonetic] and I am a  
25 CC member. I'm the Brooklyn Borough Appointee.

1 I am also the President of President's  
2 Council. I'm District Title 1. I'm President  
3 of PTA at Brooklyn Studio High School. I'm  
4 Vice-President of an elementary school and my  
5 most important is I am a Dewey alumni.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 I'm also a Council from Council for Unity.  
8 I have three children. All three of them are  
9 now council members. Dewey has made me who I  
10 am. I was a shy little girl who - - used to  
11 call Fooch the Pooch because I was a little shy  
12 puppy that came in as a freshman from immigrant  
13 parents and a very strict family life. I came  
14 into this humongus school which was with rockers  
15 who had five feet hair sprayed Mohawks with  
16 focus. I had Gucci cool jeans walking around  
17 with chains bigger than them. Trans Ams parked  
18 in the lot and kids going with the flowers and  
19 people playing folk songs.

20 In that time as a freshman I became friends  
21 with the sophomores, with the juniors, with the  
22 seniors. I took courses like leadership. I  
23 became part of council. I took a dream analysis  
24 class. I took Italian. So much that I didn't  
25 know if I wanted to go into psychology, business

1 or language, did all three. Winded up going  
2 to Brooklyn College and then being offered a  
3 position in Dewey as an Italian teacher but  
4 offered a position at George Funaro CPA,  
5 representing Italian firms in the United States.

6 I'm a mother. I have a ten year old and an  
7 11 year old and a 16 year old. When my 16 year  
8 old was looking for a high school I wanted Dewey  
9 but it was told to be closed. I'm hoping Dewey  
10 will be the one I remember so my other two can  
11 attend. Thank you.

12 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Anna. No it's  
13 okay. Please begin.

14 MS. JOYCE FINGER: Hi my name is Joyce  
15 Finger. I'm a CEC representative. I have four  
16 daughters. Actually my eldest daughter  
17 graduated from John Dewey and she did it with  
18 honors. I'm very proud of her.

19 I'm going to make this short and sweet. I'm  
20 not very good at talking.

21 I'm very opposed to this co-location and we  
22 will continue to fight for your children and  
23 ours.

24 So just say no to the co-location. Thank  
25 you.

1 [APPLAUSE]

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Anna.

3 MS. RAMSEY GARRETT: Hi my name is Ramsey  
4 Garrett [phonetic] and I'm also on the CEC.

5 I really don't understand the purpose of  
6 this meeting because parents are supposed to be  
7 either for or against this co-location. Yet we  
8 don't know what the co-location is about because  
9 nobody said what this new district high school  
10 is.

11 Since we're under new administration from  
12 Ms. Elvin who is doing a good job according to  
13 the students who are here in the audience. If  
14 the DOE thinks that parents need choice for  
15 their children, why don't they give the  
16 resources to the school that the school needs  
17 and let the school decide and the community  
18 decide with the parents voices included where  
19 the DOE does not hear us, they actually listen  
20 to what we say?

21 Give the resources to one school. Let them  
22 put the programs that you need. If there's  
23 anything else that you could think of and you  
24 want, let the students and parents decide what's  
25 good for the community. Let the money go to one

1 school. Why are you going to pay separate  
2 administration, teachers, separate rooms, make  
3 bigger class sizes on one, take one, give to the  
4 other. It's a community as a whole. Give it to  
5 the school as a whole. Let them do with it  
6 what's good for our community, not what's good  
7 for the DOE. Thank you.

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Can we have  
9 students with numbers one through five please  
10 line up at the mic. Students one through five.  
11 Anna please begin.

12 MS. ANNA LUMBERSKY: Hi Anna Lumbersky  
13 [Phonetic], CEC 21.

14 Any decision made by DOE shouldn't be made  
15 as a benefit of our children. The only decision  
16 to co-locate another high school into Dewey  
17 contradicts any common sense.

18 First DOE all the schools do it. What DOE  
19 did not consider is that by trying to close the  
20 school they reduce enrollment, conveniently  
21 forgetting to add the Dewey into the high school  
22 catalog.

23 Now the co-location. Why not to put money  
24 into the school instead of paying extra salaries  
25 to the additional personnel? Co-locating

1 another school into Dewey will not only  
2 disrupt already existing environment, it will  
3 create crowding and unsafe conditions.

4 But how Dewey can make a correct decision is  
5 apparently the unutilization numbers exist only  
6 on the paper and in DOE's portfolio minds. It  
7 does not exist in reality. Sorry.

8 Co-locating is not the answer. If you want  
9 to make school stronger, flow of the funding,  
10 that's the answer. Why not to reduce class  
11 sizes to increase the level of education? We  
12 heard from many of Dewey's students at one of  
13 the meetings. They all indicated that the  
14 classes are extremely over crowded.

15 Why not to support already successful  
16 environment? With less than 70 days left of the  
17 term of the current administration, pushing co-  
18 locations simply sneaky. Besides when the new  
19 administration comes, all of the co-location  
20 decisions will be over turned and we will fight  
21 for that to happen.

22 Instead of spending funds on the, instead on  
23 spending funds on bringing a new school, make a  
24 responsible decision. Vote no to co-location.

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you, Brian.

1           MR. BRIAN GODLEVE [Phonetic]: I'm  
2 Chairman of Community Board 13's Education  
3 Library and Youth Services Committee.

4           And it wasn't that long ago when I had a  
5 committee meeting in this very auditorium when  
6 the Department of Education was looking to close  
7 down Dewey. We all stood together and said, no,  
8 Dewey needs to have a chance to succeed. And  
9 the Department of Education in its infinite  
10 wisdom, and I use that term very loosely, is  
11 once again looking to phase out Dewey.

12           They say it's under a co-location yet  
13 they're not giving the resources and the  
14 opportunity to the new administration to  
15 succeed. The students here at Dewey need to be  
16 given the resources, need to be given the  
17 opportunity, need to be able to expand on what  
18 they have to be a successful and to bring  
19 themselves back to where Dewey had historically  
20 been, one of the better and greater schools in  
21 Brooklyn and the city.

22           And what the administration is doing is fast  
23 tracking on its way to privatization by doing a  
24 midnight run to push through co-locations. And  
25 to have a co-location application where nobody

1 knows what type of programs are going to be  
2 offered. Nobody knows what type of student base  
3 the high school that's being proposed is going  
4 to have or anything of that. Just to have a co-  
5 location for co-location sake is wrong.

6 People in this community deserve better.  
7 They deserve to be given answers. They deserve  
8 to be made part of the process, not to be told,  
9 this is what's happening and then we're going to  
10 go through the PEP meeting which will be a  
11 rubber stamp for the mayor to support this.  
12 It's wrong and it should be turned down.

13 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. We now turn to our  
14 students starting with Danique [phonetic],  
15 number one Danique. Number two Asra [phonetic].  
16 Is Danique speaking?

17 MS. DANIELE THORPE: My name is Danielle  
18 Thorpe [phonetic] and I am a senior at--my name  
19 is Daniele Thorpe and I am a senior at John  
20 Dewey High School and I entered this school in  
21 the 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

22 I was lucky enough to be placed in the  
23 Computer Science Institute. My teachers and my  
24 classmates made it home for me. I had love,  
25 support and a place where I belonged.

1           We are family. We came in as babies and  
2 leaving as adults. The teachers in the school  
3 encourage me to do things I never thought to do  
4 like this speech.

5           Without this family I would never have the  
6 courage and conviction I have right now. This  
7 school offers the best opportunities. I am not  
8 only graduating with an advanced Regis diploma,  
9 I am also graduating with up to 18 college  
10 credits.

11           [APPLAUSE]

12           Co-location would destroy the very thing  
13 that makes the school unique. This is my home  
14 and I don't want to share it. Would you want to  
15 share your home with a stranger? The place  
16 where you grew up from a baby into a thriving  
17 adult, would you?

18           MS. GORMAN: Asra, Asra. Please begin.

19           MS. ASRA RASHID: Hello my name is Asra and  
20 I'm currently a senior. Four years ago when I  
21 came here from Saudi Arabia I was very  
22 intimidated starting a new life in a new country  
23 and in a new school. On my first day at John  
24 Dewey High School I was welcomed with open arms  
25 truly. The staff made sure I was comfortable

1 and welcomed in the school.

2 I was, I'm involved in many different  
3 activities in John Dewey High School such as  
4 Academy of Finance. By the way, we were the  
5 first school in the entire country to have the  
6 Academy of Finance.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 Now it is a national program where students  
9 are across the United States participate in.  
10 Computer Science Institute and at Summer Bridge  
11 Program in which we invited freshmen to get a  
12 head start on their high school career, which  
13 was featured in the local Brooklyn newspaper  
14 titled, Home Report and News.

15 Taking away a portion of our school will  
16 increase our already over populated classes  
17 substantially. My only wish is that other  
18 incoming John Dewey High School students can  
19 feel as welcome as I did on my first day.

20 Having another school co-locating with John  
21 Dewey will limit resources and prevent other  
22 students from experiencing the same  
23 opportunities that I had. Please don't let this  
24 happen and safe John Dewey. Thank you.

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Muhammad please

1 begin. And would numbers six through ten  
2 please line up? Student numbers six through  
3 ten. Muhammad please begin. Muhammad please  
4 begin.

5 MR. MUHAMMAD ZAFAR [Phonetic]: Good  
6 evening. My name is Muhammad --

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 And I started here three years ago straight  
9 from Pakistan, did not know a single word of  
10 English. Today I'm standing here in front of  
11 everybody and speaking all thanks to John Dewey  
12 High School for making me believe in myself that  
13 I could do it.

14 Please vote against it. There's - - needed.  
15 This is one school, this is my family that  
16 supported me when I did not know a single word  
17 of English.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. GORMAN: Congratulations. Huming please  
20 begin.

21 MS. HUMING HUANG [Phonetic]: Hi everybody.  
22 My name is Mandy. I'm a senior in Dewey but  
23 today I'm not here to talk about myself. I am  
24 speaking on behalf of my best friends and his  
25 friends at Syracuse University.

1           My best friend graduated from Dewey in  
2 2011, is a junior in Syracuse right now. In  
3 that year nine ESL students from Dewey were  
4 accepted by Syracuse and he was one of them.

5           The students from Dewey were accepted by  
6 Syracuse and he, I'm sorry.

7           [LAUGHTER]

8           In 2012 another eight ESL students were  
9 accepted and last year the number was ten. They  
10 were all grateful to Dewey but the Syracuse is  
11 really far away and they cannot be here. So  
12 they asked me to read this, for them tonight.  
13 So here's what this says.

14           We are, we are all Dewey graduates who are  
15 right now studying in Syracuse University and  
16 our names are listed here at the end of the  
17 testimony. All 27 of us are new immigrants and  
18 except for two. We all have been here for less  
19 than one years before we entered Dewey.

20           When we were still in Dewey we never truly  
21 realized how well we were prepared for college.  
22 Looking back, we are all grateful for the  
23 wonderful educations we receive and the  
24 wonderful teachers who helped us along the way.

25           Believe it or not, some of them are still

1 helping us now. We often talk about our days  
2 in Dewey that prepared with our experience here  
3 in college. We have all been doing very well so  
4 far. We all have GPA way above 3.0.

5 We credit our success to three factors.

6 MS. GORMAN: Give the three factors and then  
7 you can submit the rest of it to me. It will be  
8 part of the public record.

9 [APPLAUSE]

10 MS. HUANG: All right. So we believe that  
11 if the government puts another school in Dewey  
12 it would be destroy this wonderful community and  
13 break the family that exists across years and  
14 expands to all the Dewey students.

15 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Jasmine please  
16 begin. Jasmine please begin.

17 MS. JASMINE FAULKNER: Hello. Hi everyone.  
18 I'm Jasmine Faulkner [phonetic]. I've been  
19 going here for about like almost a year now. I  
20 have overcome a lot of obstacles with many  
21 teachers. Gave so many teachers a hard time,  
22 but just to know how much they cared about me.

23 I'm here today because I would like to put a  
24 stop to John Dewey High School co-location.  
25 John Dewey High School already has enough

1 students. If you ask me, it's reached its  
2 carrying capacity. This school has over 80%  
3 capacity for the 2014 school year already. So  
4 why would we need to add another school? We're  
5 making progress just on our own.

6 I show my face here today on this Wednesday,  
7 October 23, 2013 to say our community is our  
8 community and let it stay that way. More  
9 students means more paperwork for the office and  
10 larger classes. I feel like more students means  
11 hiring more teachers. Why higher more teachers  
12 and lose money when we could just say no to co-  
13 location?

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 MS. GORMAN: Please begin.

17 MR. ABBAS AHMAD: Good evening. My name is  
18 Abbas Ahmad [phonetic] and I'm myself is an  
19 immigrant to this country. I came in four years  
20 ago.

21 Dewey is a great school personally speaking  
22 --

23 MS. GORMAN: [Interposing] you need to speak  
24 right into the mic.

25 MR. AHMAD: Oh sorry.

1 MS. GORMAN: And what is your name please?

2 MS. AHMAD: Abbas Ahmad. Dewey is a great  
3 school personally speaking. I started as and  
4 ESL student but now I'm qualified enough to take  
5 AP classes such as biology, physics and  
6 chemistry.

7 But tonight I'll be speaking on behalf of my  
8 classmates, school mates who couldn't make it  
9 today because they're attending university of,  
10 Cornell University majoring in computer science  
11 and engineering programs.

12 Their names are Tu Jen Shang [phonetic] and  
13 Su Lee [phonetic]. Dewey for them was a diverse  
14 and bountiful program which made them who they  
15 are today. As one of the students says, as an  
16 immigrant who has come to the United States four  
17 years ago, Dewey's bilingual program has helped  
18 her adapt to American culture, give her  
19 encourage and motivation to stand out and speak  
20 up at school she was despite the cultural  
21 differences and gave her, and gave her, and  
22 provide her numerous AP classes with experience  
23 and great teachers.

24 Besides it was after John Dewey High School  
25 Robotics Program, which she, when she realized

1 that her passion was in engineering and  
2 technology. She was sure that she would be  
3 something different if it wasn't for the  
4 robotics program. Dewey's robotics program has  
5 a - - with Dewey community through many teachers  
6 and during her junior year recently her robotics  
7 team has made it to New York Daily News with the  
8 robot throwing a baseball pitch at Coney Island  
9 Cyclones MCU Park.

10 The teen has reached out to other activities  
11 including asking Greg Olson, the third private  
12 citizen to go to space to visit Dewey. The  
13 bilingual program also has been helping students  
14 to reach their potential and sending them to  
15 prestigious colleges. Without the bilingual  
16 program and Mr. Chan, who is sitting the  
17 auditorium right now --

18 MS. GORMAN: Please wrap it up.

19 MR. AHMAD: She wouldn't be able to go to  
20 Cornell right now. Thank you.

21 MS. GORMAN: I will take the paper though.  
22 Would numbers up to 15 please line up at the  
23 mic. Numbers up to 15 on the student list.  
24 Please begin as soon as the mic gets to you.

25 MR. CHRISTOPHER SMITH: I'm good, I'm good.

1 Oh speak. Hi my name is Christopher Smith.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 I am a senior and I'm one of the many  
4 leaders at John Dewey High School.

5 John Dewey is my home away from home. It's  
6 here the faculty treat me like family. I was  
7 able to participate in our fashion show and last  
8 year and now I'm the President of the Modeling  
9 Club.

10 Working along side Mr. Bibisada [phonetic]  
11 one of AP's of mathematics. Because of this  
12 opportunity, I will be able to attend FIT next  
13 fall. I will also be able to mentor incoming 9<sup>th</sup>  
14 graders over the summer and recruit them many of  
15 the club.

16 I want other students to have the same  
17 opportunity as I did. Bringing in another  
18 school will divide our resources and prevent  
19 others and future students from experience the  
20 same opportunity as me.

21 Please stop co-location.

22 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Is number eight  
23 here, number eight?

24 MS. SIEDA BUCHANNAN: I'm number ten.

25 MS. GORMAN: Number seven or eight?

1 MS. BUCHANNAN: Ten.

2 MS. GORMAN: Go ahead. You didn't get your  
3 turn. Number seven or eight.

4 MS. BUCHANNAN: Hello my name is Sieda  
5 Buchannan [phonetic] and I'm here to talk about  
6 John Dewey adding another school in it.

7 The question is why? Why should we add  
8 another school in John Dewey? Why should our  
9 programs be taken away from us? Why should we  
10 suffer for somebody else's actions?

11 Our programs are really, they mean a lot to  
12 us. Why should we, why should we, why should  
13 that be taken away from us? We have a lot of  
14 fun in our programs and that's going to be taken  
15 away from us with this school added in our  
16 school.

17 The classrooms are going to be bigger. Too  
18 much students are in this school already. The  
19 classrooms are already huge as it is. Why  
20 should we suffer? We're students. We have  
21 feelings too. We have no, no, we have no voice  
22 as students. I'm here to speak up for all the  
23 students that here's and say, why should we add  
24 another school in John Dewey? Why?

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much.

1 MS. BUCHANNAN: Do not add another school  
2 in John Dewey. We already big enough as it is  
3 it. We have voices too, our students. Do not  
4 add another school. Don't. Fight against this.  
5 Fight.

6 MS. GORMAN: Can you please give your name  
7 and begin. What number?

8 UNKNOWN FEMALE 1: She's six.

9 MS. GORMAN: What is your name?

10 MS. WIZNAR MOMET: Wiznar Momet [phonetic]

11 MS. GORMAN: Okay.

12 MS. MOMET: Hi my name is Wiznar Momet and  
13 I'm here to speak on the co-location.

14 I believe as a freshman of John Dewey High  
15 School that we should not add another school  
16 into it. Because like at first when I came to  
17 the school I wasn't sure that I wanted to be  
18 here. But I grew to love this school, the  
19 students, the staff and everything, the clubs.  
20 I'm so glad that I actually came here and I  
21 don't want to transfer.

22 And I feel like if there's another school  
23 added onto this school then a lot of privileges  
24 will be gone for our students. I wake up every  
25 day actually wanting to come here, which is

1 really shocking 'cause I really don't like  
2 waking up. But I'm really glad that I'm  
3 actually in John Dewey and for another school to  
4 be added onto here, I would really hate it and I  
5 would really not like it.

6 So I'm just saying please don't add another  
7 school into this and I will fight for this until  
8 we actually don't get another school in this.  
9 Thank you.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Ladies and  
11 gentlemen I know you feel like you're  
12 whispering, but there are so many little  
13 conversations that it is hard for the recorder  
14 to pick up what the students are saying.  
15 Please.

16 Are you Charles?

17 MR. CHARLES MURRIA: Yes ma'am.

18 MS. GORMAN: Please begin.

19 MR. MURRIA: Hello my name is Charles Murria  
20 [phonetic] and I'm a senior at John Dewey.  
21 Unlike most of the other speakers, I didn't  
22 start here. I'm actually from a different  
23 state. So coming here was kind of like culture  
24 shock all together. On my first day I was so  
25 nervous. I'm going to be completely honest. I

1 was scared out of my mind. The night before I  
2 stayed up and I was so terrified that I wouldn't  
3 have any friends. So we've all been through  
4 that.

5 I came to school that day and I was blown  
6 out of my mind at the amount of people who  
7 wanted to talk to me just 'cause I was different  
8 and from a different place and it was amazing.

9 On my first day, eight period in my first  
10 chemistry class ever two girls came up to me and  
11 they asked me to sit at lunch with them and I  
12 was completely blown out of my mind that they  
13 would sit with a total stranger the next day at  
14 lunch and that really made my day.

15 That's what Dewey does. It makes us feel at  
16 home. People on the outside don't get that,  
17 they really don't. And as soon as you walk  
18 through the doors you will feel it. I'm telling  
19 you. What makes this place so great is the  
20 diversity and students and the experience. If  
21 someone took that away from me, the opportunity  
22 to meet different people, doing different  
23 things, I don't know what I would do.

24 I'm going to level with you right now, my  
25 little brother, his name is Ricky, he's four.

1 The only thing he talks about now is going to  
2 John Dewey High School.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 He just started school this year. We asked  
5 him where he wanted to go and he was like, John  
6 Dewey. And let me rephrase, let me illiterate  
7 this again. He wants to go to John Dewey, not  
8 some co-located school, John Dewey and all it's  
9 wonderful programs and teachers and people. Not  
10 some co-located school.

11 [APPLAUSE]

12 Leave Dewey alone, leave my family alone,  
13 leave my home alone.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Please begin.

15 Please begin. Please give your name.

16 MR. FERNANDO WILLIAMS: My name is Fernando  
17 Williams and I'm a senior at John Dewey High  
18 School.

19 I don't have a speech prepared but everybody  
20 came here. I came here to John Dewey as a  
21 freshman. You know, this is my fourth - -  
22 school and as a freshman I was shy. I, you  
23 know, I was different and I grew to love Dewey.  
24 I actually hated Dewey. I didn't want to come  
25 here when I was a freshman. But I grew to love

1 it. I grew to, you know, Dewey's a family,  
2 Dewey is my family. You can't put another  
3 school in Dewey because that messes up the  
4 environment of a family. You can't break up a  
5 family. The space in Dewey is for the space in  
6 John Dewey High School kids.

7 Please ask me why do I care about a co-  
8 location if I'm graduating. I want to come back  
9 to Dewey and visit John Dewey High School, not  
10 John Dewey High School and another school, an  
11 unknown school that nobody knows the name of. I  
12 want to come back to John Dewey High School and  
13 see that all the people I'm leaving behind are  
14 continuing the John Dewey High School Legacy.

15 My little brother asks me why is John Dewey  
16 not in the book, 'cause he's a 8<sup>th</sup> grader  
17 graduating this year. And I told him the reason  
18 because the Department of Education doesn't want  
19 to see John Dewey High School succeed. I want  
20 to see John Dewey High School succeed.

21 With the little funding we have now, we  
22 finally got sports two years ago. This is my  
23 second year on the soccer team. We are now the  
24 number one in Division B.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1           This is my fourth year on the John Dewey  
2 High School Robotics Team. This year we're  
3 going to St. Louis and we're winning the  
4 championship. I'm graduating John Dewey High  
5 School as a --

6           [APPLAUSE]

7           I am graduating John Dewey High School as a  
8 John Dewey High School Senior because this will  
9 be forever John Dewey High School and nothing  
10 else.

11          MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would numbers  
12 through 23, student numbers through 23 please  
13 line up? And you may begin.

14          MS. TAHYA CLARKE: My name is Tahya Clarke  
15 [phonetic] and --

16          [APPLAUSE]

17          MS. GORMAN: What is your--I didn't hear --

18          MS. CLARKE: My name is Tahya Clarke number  
19 12.

20          MS. GORMAN: Okay. Thank you.

21          MS. CLARKE: So before I even got to  
22 experience Dewey I went to the Bridge Program  
23 and I met so many wonderful people, so many  
24 seniors, sophomores at summer school and I  
25 though, wow. These teachers and students are so

1 dedicated into making somebody who they don't  
2 know feel welcomed.

3       When I actually came for the Bridge Program  
4 I saw so much diversity and cultured people and  
5 I thought, wow they have so much stuff that the  
6 city has. As fashionable as I am, I always  
7 wanted to go to the city. But then coming here  
8 I'm like, wow there's so many different kinds of  
9 people that you can't probably even see in the  
10 city.

11       So when I came here I was just shocked. I  
12 was shocked at the diversity, the culture, how  
13 dedicated these teachers are. They're not  
14 sitting here at the table staring at you and  
15 say, I'm only here for the money. I'm here for  
16 you. The teachers come here for you, to teach  
17 you, to educate you, to so you that yes, I'm  
18 here for you to get your education and show you  
19 yes, I want you to go to college and come back  
20 here and say thank you. Thank you for teaching  
21 me. Thank you for being there for me and show  
22 me the ways of life, to benefit you, not to just  
23 sit in your face and say, oh well you can't do  
24 it, I can't help you.

25       They're there for you. There's over

1 capacity of kids already. They don't needs to  
2 be any more. There's no more room and right now  
3 as from everybody I heard, it's a family.  
4 There's no need to be any more kids. They are  
5 not welcome. We don't welcome you.

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Destiny. Destiny.  
7 Destiny you can begin.

8 MS. DESTINY CAMANCHO: Okay. Good evening  
9 everyone here at John Dewey High School. My  
10 name is Destiny Camancho [phonetic] and I am an  
11 - - here at Dewey. I am also a new student here  
12 at Dewey and let me tell you a little story  
13 about my first day here at Dewey.

14 I didn't like it here. I actually hated the  
15 fact that I was in this school until I actually  
16 put in a little interest into classes, some of  
17 the classes here and I realized that the  
18 opportunities, classes and clubs they have here  
19 at Dewey. And I wake up every day at 5:00 a.m.  
20 in the morning because I like it here at Dewey.  
21 It's a two hour ride but I love this school. I  
22 feel like it's worth it and you should too. And  
23 don't bring no other students in this school  
24 because you're going to mess it because there's  
25 no space here. You're not welcome, like she

1 said. You're not welcome here.

2 Anyways shout out to the Modeling Club and  
3 the Cheerleaders and shout to John Dewey.

4 MS. GORMAN: Mercedes thank you, I mean  
5 Destiny thank you. Mercedes you can begin.

6 MS. MERCEDES SHANDS: Hello everyone. My  
7 name is Mercedes Shands [phonetic].

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 And I am currently a student at John Dewey  
10 High School.

11 First off I would like to say that John  
12 Dewey is a school full of amazing students,  
13 school safety and staff. All of the teachers  
14 welcome and support us no matter how many times  
15 we mess up.

16 Adding another school will break our bound.  
17 The students, as well as the staff work hard at  
18 achieving our academic goals. Although I will  
19 not be attending this school next year, I'm glad  
20 to support the decision. No co-location. We  
21 worked very hard to get where we are today. And  
22 adding another school, no and adding another  
23 school will not only affect the staff, it will  
24 also affect the students, my second family.

25 Thank you and have a nice night.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. John, you can  
2 begin.

3 MR. JOHN CORDOVA: Hi my name is John and  
4 I'm a senior at John Dewey High School. So  
5 before anything all I want to say is this.

6 First it was 21K 451. Now it's 21K 768.  
7 And there's only one word to describe this -  
8 really. Really?

9 The DOE severely miscalculated enrollment at  
10 the school and at the beginning of this meeting  
11 you said that we hope that the numbers will  
12 align and stabilize with the DOE calculation.  
13 How is that possible? How is that possible? If  
14 the new school is moving in next year, how does  
15 1,900 students automatically morph to 1,600  
16 students? It's impossible.

17 This school does not have enough space to  
18 accommodate another high school as the DOE says  
19 it does when we actually have a utilization rate  
20 in the 80s instead of the 60s. You know how the  
21 DOE always has this model, children first  
22 always. This is putting children last and our  
23 educational futures are severely, severely and  
24 alarmingly in danger. If you do, if you do not  
25 go back to Tweed and them to stop this, you will

1 only further and deepen the destruction and  
2 the crisis of American public education.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 Secondly, let's put it in DOE perspective.  
5 It will cost the DOE more money to build another  
6 school in this school than to support the  
7 school. We have a 74% graduation rate, a B  
8 rating and we were named as one of the 150 top  
9 high schools in the state. We have long made  
10 the NYC DOE and New York City public schools  
11 look amazing.

12 Chancellor Walcott also visited our school  
13 and I actually interviewed him for the school  
14 newspaper, The Dewey Current. He even  
15 congratulated us for our accomplishments in  
16 robotics and our state rankings. So tell me how  
17 does Dewey deserve a co-location? It does not.

18 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Alpha.

19 MR. MANUELO SERRITO: Hello my name is name  
20 is Manuelo Serrito [phonetic]. I'm a current  
21 John Dewey student. I speak for me and my  
22 sisters, Dimanius Serrito [phonetic] a special  
23 Ed student at this school. And she couldn't  
24 even speak when she came to this school. She  
25 was so emotional and I'm so proud of my sister.

1 I'm proud of the teachers that come here every  
2 day to stay with us to help us learn, to make us  
3 feel like we're special and encourage. We come  
4 here to learn, to learn and to succeed in life  
5 where we will not succeed, I'm sorry. I'm a  
6 little over excited.

7 I had, I had three brothers and sisters all  
8 in special Ed and they will never know what it's  
9 like in the outside world and these teachers  
10 give them hope. They give hope. They, we are a  
11 family and they take care of us as family. We  
12 will never know what it's like in the outside  
13 world for other people to take care of us as  
14 family.

15 Sorry. And everybody who knows that I'm the  
16 type of person that likes to be tough, but when  
17 it comes to me and my family, John Dewey, I will  
18 care. I will care about every single teach,  
19 every single student that is in this school. I  
20 have had the best years in this school, the most  
21 emotional years of my life and they helped me  
22 and I will help any teacher.

23 I wish every teacher the best. I want to  
24 come back here in a couple of years and wish  
25 every teacher the best. And I wish they

1       succeed. I want them to stay. We have  
2       teachers here that been here since 30 years, 20  
3       and they are not noticed by the outside world.  
4       The students here, we all accept them. We all  
5       see them. Some of the teachers even admit about  
6       their faults but they are the best teachers that  
7       you will ever have in New York City and I'm in  
8       New Jersey. I'm from New Jersey and the  
9       teachers at this school is the best school.

10           I'm a little excited.

11           MS. GORDON: Thank you very much.

12           [APPLAUSE]

13           Is number seventeen is Alpha, is Alpha  
14       number seventeen here? What number are you?

15           MS. DEBORAH GALENDEZ: Seventeen but my name  
16       is Deborah Galendez [phonetic].

17           MS. GORMAN: Go, begin.

18           MS. GALENDEZ: Okay. All right. So I have  
19       this story. So in my middle school we had, it  
20       was my school called Montauk and an all girls  
21       school. You see they had half of the fourth  
22       floor, but over the years they wind up getting  
23       the whole fourth floor and then they got the  
24       third floor. So while the other school is  
25       growing, Montauk the original school, is getting

1 shorter. We don't want this in John Dewey.  
2 This is a big school. We're all a family.  
3 We're all united as one. We don't want no other  
4 school to come in and break our family 'cause if  
5 that school gets bigger and we'll get smaller.

6 This is called John Dewey. We won't be John  
7 Dewey. We're all a family. We fought to have,  
8 to not have our school close down and we're  
9 going to fight to not have co-location 'cause  
10 we're all a family and we're united as one. And  
11 that's all I have to say. I love this school

12 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Are you  
13 Tyler? Are you Tyler? Please begin.

14 MR. TYLER HENDERSON: I would like to start  
15 by saying I have, I want to talk about a certain  
16 amount of--I want to thank Mr. Kay [phonetic]  
17 from elementary school. He's here in attendance  
18 today. I want to thank Mr. Speese [phonetic].  
19 I want to thank Mr. Personette [phonetic]. I  
20 want to thank Ms. Valors [phonetic]. I want to  
21 thank Mr. Ess [phonetic]. I want to thank Mr.  
22 Bembosata [phonetic]. And I want thank the  
23 whole security guard staff and of course the  
24 cheerleaders.

25 And my name is Tyler Henderson, aka Best in

1 the World. And I just want to say I've been  
2 to a school, Lafayette, and I dealt with the  
3 five schools in one and I didn't like it at all.  
4 If I would go to another school, I would get  
5 suspended. So if it's co-location is, it's five  
6 schools in one. It's not going to be the same  
7 as one school, which is what I love the most.

8 And every day in that school I left there in  
9 10<sup>th</sup> grade, in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, I left here and I went  
10 to--oh yea, I'm sorry. I went there in 10<sup>th</sup>  
11 grade and every day I did not like it at all. I  
12 just thought about Dewey. And the first day I  
13 came back Ms. Elvin greeted me, the first day,  
14 the very first day I came back and I thank her  
15 for that too.

16 And all right so end, she, no co-location  
17 and she gave us this right here and this is our  
18 team and this is what I stand for which is  
19 basketball. But it's not only basketball. It's  
20 about just being family and it's a whole new  
21 world. So I thank her for that and go Dewey, I  
22 guess.

23 MS. GORMAN: Thank you.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 Fatima, Fatima please begin.

1 MS. FATIMA BARNES: My name is Fatima  
2 Barnes [phonetic] and I'm a senior at John  
3 Dewey. I just want to speak upon the students  
4 that when they first came here and wasn't doing  
5 good in the school. And I'm proud of myself  
6 'cause this is my first time getting like  
7 passing all my grades, all my classes and  
8 everything. And I'm very proud of my friends  
9 and everybody that's starting to go to class and  
10 pass all their classes.

11 And we just want to thank the students and  
12 the teachers because if it wasn't for the  
13 teachers, the teachers really push us to do what  
14 we, like we don't have the guts to like try,  
15 they push us and give us the--I don't know the  
16 word. But they push us to give us the  
17 inspiration to help us to do our best.

18 And Dewey is really a family. Like we keep  
19 saying it's a family because it's like when you  
20 walk down the hallway it's so easy and  
21 comfortable to walk around. You could come not  
22 worried about what you have on and don't care.  
23 People really, other schools, you go to other  
24 schools and it's a like of makes and the  
25 students are rowdy and this school we're not

1 like that. We're fine where we get along none  
2 the less. We have our little problems now and  
3 then but we usually get over them fastly and we  
4 have a lot of peer mediations and stuff like  
5 that to get over the situations and they push us  
6 to become the best kids we are and everything.

7 So no co-location. Go Dewey.

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Margarita.

9 MS. TAMIA MUNERLYN: My name is Tamia  
10 Munerlyn [phonetic]. I am a senior at John  
11 Dewey. When I started my freshman year I was a  
12 shy girl until I met some friends. And then I  
13 met the wrong friends and I went down the wrong  
14 path for three years. Then when I got to my  
15 senior year I changed.

16 I like coming to school. I actually get up.  
17 I make, I make it my way, I make it possible for  
18 me to pass my classes. Not me, but my teachers  
19 help me. The staff members help me to success,  
20 to get good grades. Before I had 50s, 55s, 45s.  
21 Now I have 90s, 80s, 70s and above.

22 So I feel like a co-location for Dewey  
23 because it's making it more, it's not going to  
24 helps. It's just taking away our activities and  
25 stuff.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Is Margarita  
2 here? Margarita number 21?

3 MS. MARGARITA KAPLAN: Hello my name is  
4 Margarita Kaplan [phonetic]. I'm a sophomore at  
5 John Dewey and when I first came, started the 9<sup>th</sup>  
6 grade --

7 MS. GORMAN: [Interposing] Excuse me  
8 Margarita. Let's give your, your classmate the  
9 attention that is deserved.

10 MS. KAPLAN: When I first started 9<sup>th</sup> grade I  
11 immediately for a screened art audition at a  
12 different high school because I just didn't want  
13 to be here. And when I was accepted I was  
14 really troubled because I wanted to stay in the  
15 school because I liked it so much.

16 The atmosphere is so comfortable for me and  
17 the teachers and all my friends made me want to  
18 stay here, which is why I'm here this year.

19 I'd like to say that John Dewey is the first  
20 school I've been in where I haven't been  
21 bullied.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 John Dewey help me get the help that I  
24 needed with my academics. So last year, because  
25 of this amazing school, I was able to get a 95

1 above average. I was able to get counseling  
2 in the school and thanks to all my friends and  
3 this counseling, I was able to build up the  
4 courage to come out to my family and all of my  
5 friends.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 I'd like to say that all schools have their  
8 flaws and the school is growing and it's  
9 improving and we need to give it the benefit of  
10 doubt, like I did when I was faced with the  
11 decision of transferring and staying here. With  
12 enough time and effort, this school will be come  
13 a good school by rank and by reputation.  
14 Combining another school with Dewey would  
15 jeopardize all of the hard work we put into this  
16 and my choice to trust the school would have  
17 been wrong.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would number 36  
20 through 40 line up please. Number 22 you may  
21 begin.

22 MR. HANSY: Hello my name is Hansy  
23 [phonetic]. First of all I'd like to say good  
24 evening council and teachers and staff and  
25 security. First of all I'd like to say no to

1 co-location because this school is beautiful.  
2 When I came here I thought I was going to get  
3 picked on and I thought something bad was going  
4 to happen.

5 But honestly I got the most warmest  
6 welcoming into the school ever and I like the  
7 school. I feel very comfortable with my  
8 friends, with the Model Committee and the  
9 Cheerleading Committee. They really grown on me  
10 and these, the teachers they're inspiring me to  
11 do better and better and better every day. And  
12 I get up just to come to this school.

13 And honestly why put money into a new school  
14 when you could put money into the funding to  
15 help repair this school and to new recreational  
16 sports that we would like. I'm sure the guys  
17 would like a football team. But yea, I have to  
18 say no to co-location.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. GORMAN: Number 23 you may begin.

21 MS. JIE ZHEA ZHENG: Hi my name is Jie. A  
22 senior from John Dewey High School. Before I  
23 start my speech I would like to ask you a  
24 question. How would you feel if your community  
25 and you build something wonderful space and

1 mutually and then someone came along and said,  
2 well now you have to give part of this to us?

3 First of all, it won't be so wonderful any  
4 more because there simply is not enough space  
5 and resources. It won't be so wonderful because  
6 our identity will be damaged. Who will we be if  
7 we share our building? What would be so  
8 wonderful about that? And who would be the one  
9 that's going to suffer all this mess? It is we  
10 the student. Not anyone but we the student.

11 Secondly, sharing will create a competitive  
12 environment that will create a lot of tension  
13 between the two school. It might unsafe for all  
14 of us.

15 Finally, all that we at Dewey have worked so  
16 hard for will no longer be just ours. We know  
17 each other right now and who to turn to when we  
18 need help. Many of the adults would be  
19 strangers.

20 These are just some reasons why John Dewey  
21 High School should stay the way it is. Please  
22 keep John Dewey as is the way that we love it  
23 and the way that - - have served and graduated  
24 hundred of students for the last 40 years.

25 Thank you.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Are you Tanisha?  
2 You can begin.

3 MS. TANISHA DOUGLAS: Good evening everyone.  
4 My name is Tanisha Douglas [phonetic] and I'm a  
5 --

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 And I'm a junior here at John Dewey High  
8 School. During my three years as a student at  
9 Dewey, teachers have helped me to become the  
10 person I am today. It's true what they say  
11 about school being your second home. At Dewey  
12 students and teachers are like family and we all  
13 work together as a team.

14 Sorry. Here at Dewey there are many  
15 programs for students to interact with each  
16 other and express themselves. Unfortunately the  
17 co-locations may put an end to some of these  
18 activities.

19 Dewey has become a home away from home for  
20 so many students. It wouldn't be fair for us to  
21 have share our home with another school. It  
22 affects the whole school, but mainly the  
23 students. Therefore, this co-location should be  
24 put to an end for the students' sake. Thank  
25 you.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Are you number  
2 37?

3 MR. RUBINSKY: Thirty-eight.

4 MS. GORMAN: Is number 37 Yvonne here? You  
5 may begin.

6 MR. RUBINSKY: Hello my name is Rubinsky  
7 [phonetic]. I went to Dewey in 2007 and it's  
8 nothing like it was before. It's nothing, it's  
9 grown to a beautiful thing. We have a nice  
10 principal now, even though Mr. Fine was nice,  
11 but you know she's reformed this school and it's  
12 become a beautiful thing.

13 I was actually just walking around here  
14 earlier and there are pictures of like what they  
15 were doing, like all the activities they do.  
16 They didn't have that when I was there in 2007.  
17 They had the hanging out on the campus, buying  
18 stuff, I don't know.

19 But either way stopping, closing Dewey down  
20 now would just be oppression at its finest form.  
21 There wouldn't be anything good of doing it  
22 because they just starting getting better. So  
23 you know you should give them the chance. Kind  
24 of like Mr. Koredo's [phonetic] beard, you  
25 should just kind of let it grow, you know. So

1 thank you.

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would numbers  
3 through 45 please step to the mic, student  
4 numbers through 45, which includes 44, the  
5 soccer team.

6 Ariele you may begin.

7 MS. ARIELE GOLDMAN: Thank you. My name is  
8 Ariele Goldman and I'm senior at John Dewey High  
9 School. I had the opportunity to enter this  
10 school the summer before I entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

11 The Summer Bridge Program, a program that is  
12 specifically designed for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders  
13 was the best thing that could ever happen to me.  
14 It allowed me to enter the school not only  
15 having friends, but knowing teachers who I can  
16 count on. If I had any problems, I could go to  
17 them.

18 Tough I never had some of these teachers  
19 during the regular school year, I still think of  
20 them and go to them for everything.

21 As a student with dyslexia, learning does  
22 not come easily to me. I have struggled my  
23 entire life academically. I entered, oh and  
24 because of my disability I had the hard time  
25 socially.

1           This is a school that helped me come out  
2 of my shell and be proud of who I am. I am now  
3 a member of the Student Organization, School  
4 Leadership Team and I've played softball for the  
5 past two years here at John Dewey High School.

6           If it wasn't for the support the school  
7 offered me both academically and socially, I  
8 would not be who I am today. The school also  
9 helped me personally. Without the school's  
10 counselors I could honestly say that I would be  
11 living on the streets. The counselors helped me  
12 work through my issues and deal with everything  
13 that stands in my way. If it wasn't for Senior  
14 House, I wouldn't be graduating with my class.

15           Please leave John Dewey High School alone.  
16 There is no need for co-location. Send these  
17 kids to John Dewey High School instead of its  
18 own school. Without the resources we have here  
19 today I would not have made it this far. John  
20 Dewey High School saved my life. Let John Dewey  
21 High School be.

22           MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Frederica.

23           MR. R.J. WATSON: I'm 45. R.J. Watson.

24           MS. GORMAN: Forty-one, 42, 43 and 44, are  
25 any of you here? What number? Forty-three? Is

1 40 to 43 here? Let's have 43 go while the  
2 young lady steps forward. Forty-three, 42, okay.  
3 Please begin. Mark.

4 MR. MARK VENTALORA: Yea. My name is Mark  
5 Ventalora and I am currently a freshman here at  
6 John Dewey High School. All my life I enjoyed  
7 building and making things with my hands. When  
8 I saw that Dewey offered robotics as part of  
9 their curriculum --

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 I knew that this was the school for me.  
12 When applying to high school my counselor at  
13 junior high school told me to return my  
14 application to my parents and made sure that  
15 Dewey was really what they wanted for me under  
16 the circumstances, that was happening at the  
17 school - -. My father sent an application back  
18 time and time again writing notes, tell her that  
19 Dewey was not closing and that that's what we  
20 wanted.

21 The counselor did nothing but put the school  
22 down. Why? I feel because all the issues that  
23 the DOE was creating at the school was, they  
24 were not there. From my fellow classmates and  
25 myself to be in this school is an honor and do

1 not agree on bringing another school into our  
2 building. What will happen? We will still have  
3 access to the many after school activities or  
4 our clubs? Would our robotics team still be  
5 able to work on their projects like we do now?

6 All of this is in question if the DOE  
7 approves the co-location of Dewey with another  
8 high school. In the short time I have been here  
9 I created relationships with my teachers and  
10 peers. By sharing the school with another  
11 school I feel like, I fear these relationships  
12 will not be as personal or one-on-one as they  
13 are now.

14 The teachers at Dewey go above and beyond  
15 for us by staying after school and continuing  
16 our educations of the - - .

17 MS. GORMAN: If you want to turn it in, you  
18 can. What number are you sir?

19 MR. HAROLD GONZALEZ: Number 43.

20 MS. GORMAN: Forty-two?

21 MR. GONZALEZ: Forty-three.

22 MS. GORMAN: Okay. You can begin.

23 MR. GONZALEZ: Hi I'm Harold Gonzalez  
24 [phonetic]. I'm currently a junior here at John  
25 Dewey High School. I'm part of the John Dewey

1 High School Robotics Team.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 I first came to this school starting last  
4 year. I had a fresh new start here. I came  
5 here around November. So it's been almost a  
6 year now that I've been here. When I first came  
7 to Dewey I had no friends. I really didn't know  
8 anybody and quickly I was accepted. I made a  
9 lot of friends very quickly and I started to  
10 know almost everybody in this school. And the  
11 atmosphere made me feel like at home, something  
12 that I never really had in any other school that  
13 I've been to and I've been through a lot of  
14 schools here in New York City.

15 And one thing I really love our about school  
16 is our Robotics Team. Our Robotics Team has  
17 been able to make me do things that I've never  
18 been able to do before, meet new people, do a  
19 lot of important things. I was appointed as a  
20 driver on this team and I killed it in the  
21 competition. So when I heard about this school  
22 getting a co-location school here at John Dewey  
23 I really thought about the space here. Now I  
24 know in the beginning of the year, this year we  
25 had some problems, especially with, you know,

1 over filled classrooms and stuff like that.  
2 And I'm just thinking to myself, well what if  
3 this school takes a big portion of what we have  
4 here? We have so many students and there's  
5 about what, 400 more coming? What's going to  
6 happen to our students here?

7 We're going to be filled with classrooms and  
8 a lot of people are just not going to be able to  
9 pay attention as much as we are supposed to.  
10 There's going to be a lot of noise in the  
11 classroom and people are going to end up sitting  
12 on floors because they don't have space in the  
13 classrooms. And, you know, I'm pretty sure a  
14 lot of people here probably have like one  
15 favorite spot in their school that they love  
16 because they have so many memories there. Just  
17 imagine if it's just taken away from you from  
18 this other school?

19 What about our robotics room? What if this  
20 school, the other school takes away this  
21 robotics room? That's one fear that I have.

22 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Is number  
23 40 or 41 here? Forty-four can begin.

24 MR. ANDRE WATSON: I'm 45.

25 MS. GORMAN: Is the soccer team here? They

1 signed up as 44. In which case, 45 Andrea,  
2 you can finally speak.

3 MR. WATSON: Hi I'm Andre Watson [phonetic].  
4 I'm a senior at John Dewey High School and like  
5 everyone said, when a student first comes to  
6 Dewey, they don't really fit in right away. But  
7 because Dewey is full of all kinds of people and  
8 clubs, such as Modeling, Cheerleading,  
9 Volleyball and Basketball, just to name a few,  
10 every student finds a place. Only Dewey has a  
11 diversity and class and teaching method. Dewey  
12 is my family and we've overcome many hurdles.

13 Adding a new school would destroy this  
14 family. We don't want to share our resources  
15 and we don't want to share, we don't want a new  
16 school.

17 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would numbers 47  
18 through 57 please line up.

19 MR. CHRISTIAN RAYEZ: My name is Christian  
20 Rayez [phonetic] and I'm a senior at John Dewey  
21 High School. But apparently they thought --

22 MS. GORMAN: [Interposing] that's fine. Go  
23 ahead. Are you a current student?

24 MR. RAYEZ: I'm a senior at John Dewey High  
25 School. Of course I am.

1 MS. GORMAN: Okay. Well then you may  
2 begin.

3 MR. RAYEZ: All right. So as many of my  
4 classmates that were here, well no longer here  
5 'cause it got kind of late and I guess they had  
6 homework. As many of them know, we've all gone  
7 through this process before. Happened at the  
8 beginning of my sophomore year.

9 MS. GORMAN: Could the people in the back  
10 that are having conversations please step out  
11 into the hallways so the students can be  
12 formally on the record? Thank you. I'm sorry  
13 to interrupt you.

14 MR. RAYEZ: Happened at the beginning of my  
15 sophomore year where they tried to close our  
16 school down. And every since then well I just  
17 wanted to let people know that this was not a  
18 school to be closed down. And so I asked myself  
19 why is it that if we were able to survive from  
20 being shut down that now they're going to try to  
21 bring in a school that doesn't belong here and  
22 as many people have said, they clearly don't  
23 want it here.

24 What is Dewey? Well you've seen from people  
25 that are from Saudi Arabia, from Pakistan, from

1 all different countries, from different places  
2 all over the world. Well I took Mr. Keller's 9<sup>th</sup>  
3 grade history class and he taught us about  
4 cultural diffusion. Just walk through the  
5 hallways at John Dewey High School. And if you  
6 decide to put another school in here, you'll be  
7 killing all of our AP classes, all of our  
8 specialty classes. All of these schools that  
9 wish they could be like Dewey and there's eve  
10 other schools that have struggled to be like  
11 Dewey, but they just couldn't get it done.

12 And now this is just a big smack in all of  
13 our faces after we were able to stand up against  
14 this after two years. Now look, we want to  
15 close you down anyway. What is Dewey? We're a  
16 quilt. We're a quilt of people from all over  
17 the world that are interested in all different  
18 kinds of things, in photography and visual arts,  
19 in robotics, look our whole robotics team is  
20 still here.

21 Remaining freshman and sophomores that are  
22 still in here, please stand up. Stand up. That  
23 is the John Dewey legacy. It's not about us  
24 seniors and juniors. We'll be out of here  
25 anyway. Even them, the people that come after

1       them, this school will destroy everything that  
2       we got to enjoy, everything that we're trying to  
3       build upon. So those people that just stood up,  
4       they're the ones that are going to lose out and  
5       by putting this school in, you're tearing up  
6       this quilt over more than 40 years that has been  
7       built and you're throwing it all away and that's  
8       just not right.

9                It's not broken. Then don't try to fix it.

10              MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Sadie you  
11              can begin.

12              MS. SADIE ALLISON: Hi my name is Sadie  
13              Allison [phonetic]. I am a senior here. I've  
14              been only here for two years from Jamaica and to  
15              tell you the truth why would me as a student  
16              from Jamaica and be involved in so many things?  
17              When I walked through our hallways everybody's  
18              saying, hi Sadie, what's going on? You would  
19              not expect that from a kid who just came here  
20              two years ago.

21              I'm also on DSO, I'm on DSO 2 team. I have  
22              done many in this school that why would you want  
23              to put a different school in this school that is  
24              the bomb right now and I would not want to come  
25              back here and see a different school. And I

1 would not like to come back here and see Ms.  
2 Elvin arguing with a next principal about what's  
3 going on with this school. And why would we  
4 want to break up our Academy of Finance or chess  
5 team? We have to share everything in this  
6 school where right now we have everything for  
7 ourselves.

8 This morning I was walking in the hallway,  
9 this girl said, could you move out of my way  
10 because it is impossible for her to walk through  
11 the hallways. What would you say if you add a  
12 different school in this school and then you  
13 walking the hallways, you have no space to walk.  
14 You would walk on the walls to get to where  
15 you're going.

16 And right now, to me, if you want to add a  
17 different school in here, it's not going to  
18 work. I would just suggest you leave John Dewey  
19 the way it is. Thank you.

20 MS. GORMAN: Diana?

21 MS. DIANA: Hello my name is Diana and I'm a  
22 senior here.

23 [APPLAUSE]

24 And I'm a senior here. I truly believe that  
25 the environment that we have here at John Dewey

1 with diversity and variety of programs that we  
2 offer it's great for future leaders and putting  
3 another school here will damage our chances of  
4 growing to our full potential to be future  
5 leaders.

6 I can speak on the, I can speak for my team  
7 which is a very tiny part of our school. My  
8 robotics team, it has grown so much over the  
9 years. It has grown so much over the years.  
10 Literally this year alone we have grown almost  
11 three times. We have 23 students and we've  
12 grown to 60 and that's a lot. And that's only a  
13 small part of John Dewey. Imagine how other  
14 programs grown over these years.

15 Putting another school here will limit our  
16 space. How can next year, my mentor, Mr.  
17 Dispanza say no to a student who wants to come  
18 to our club or any other club for that matter,  
19 say no to them knowing that they have the  
20 potential to be future Newtons or Einsteins?  
21 This is why I'm against co-location. Thank you.

22 MS. GORMAN: Number 49 you may begin.

23 MS. BODEN: Hi my name is Boden [phonetic].  
24 I'm currently a freshman in John Dewey and I'm  
25 also in the robotics. I didn't prepare any

1 fancy speech. I'm just talking reality and  
2 when I found out that I was going to John Dewey  
3 I was kind of devastated.

4 And it wasn't because of the content of the  
5 school 'cause nobody talks about that in my  
6 school. Everyone was just talking about the  
7 reputation of the school and how the school was  
8 like, how they had these like beating ups and  
9 everything like that. But when I came to the  
10 school I was really nervous. But literally on  
11 the first day I made so many friends and there  
12 were so many people behind me. And this school  
13 is just like no other school.

14 I don't think Stuyvesant can say the same,  
15 sorry. I don't think Brooklyn Tech can say the  
16 same either. Thank you.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 MS. GORMAN: Mohammed.

19 MR. MOHAMMED KHASL: I'm number 53.

20 MS. GORMAN: Mohammed?

21 MR. LUKE GIDIAN: No. Fifty-three.

22 MS. GORMAN: Fifty what?

23 MR. GIDIAN: Three.

24 MS. GORMAN: Is 50 or 51 or 52 here?

25 Mohammed, Mohammed and S-H-E-H-E-R-Y-A-R? If

1 not, than we can proceed, is it Luke?

2 MR. GIDIAN: Yes ma'am.

3 MS. GORMAN: Please begin.

4 MR. GIDIAN: My name is Luke Gidian

5 [phonetic] and I'm a senior at John Dewey High  
6 School. Hello my name is Luke Gidian and I'm a  
7 senior at John Dewey High School. I would, I've  
8 been fighting to come here ever since I was in  
9 the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. My mom did, really didn't want me  
10 to come here and I sent in my high school  
11 application before she could take a look at it.  
12 And I put John Dewey as my first choice and I  
13 got accepted.

14 So I'm in this school. I've already known  
15 people that went here. So I was pretty familiar  
16 with the place. But it's more than just the  
17 fact that you know people. It's so diverse and  
18 there's so many people that you can meet. So  
19 many things that you can learn from so many  
20 different people. You can't get that anywhere  
21 else.

22 In other schools there's always oh you're a  
23 freshman, this is going to happen to you or  
24 other stuff. But in John Dewey all of that  
25 doesn't happen. They welcome you with open

1 arms. Even before Ms. Elvin was here, and I  
2 love you Miss Elvin. I'm not going to lie. But  
3 even before Ms. Elvin was here, it was very  
4 beautiful and even when she came in it even  
5 enhanced. So to take all of this away from us  
6 just for another school to come here is not  
7 right. I don't like the idea of it at all. No  
8 co-location to the fullest is not really good.

9 There is this program at this school called  
10 the Senior House which is very, very beautiful  
11 because I'm a senior with --

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 I'm a senior and I have 20 credits and I'm  
14 still projected to graduate in June. Where else  
15 can you get that education from? I'm projected  
16 to get 12 credits every semester by the end of  
17 January I will have 32 credits. And then by the  
18 end of that I will have 44 credits and I will be  
19 graduating in June from 20 credits. You can't  
20 get that anywhere else. It's just priceless.  
21 John Dewey is one of the best school, even not  
22 the best school.

23 [APPLAUSE]

24 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Kareem? Kareem you  
25 may begin.

1           MR. KAREEM SMALL: Hello John Dewey.  
2           Good evening. This is Kareem Small [phonetic]  
3           speaking and I'm a super senior in this school  
4           and I'm proud to be a super senior. Why am I  
5           proud? Because I didn't drop out. And this  
6           school is the only school --

7           [APPLAUSE]

8           This school is the only school in New York  
9           that actually gave me the opportunity to try.  
10          If I was to transfer to any other school,  
11          they'll probably just give up on me and I would  
12          be in the streets, probably in a corner smoking  
13          pot and being a no one, selling drugs for a  
14          living or whatever.

15          This is the only school that actually took  
16          the time to like give us choices of colleges.  
17          They sat with us to do our college, our  
18          financial aid funds and everything, like they  
19          did everything for us and I really thank the  
20          Senior House.

21          I thank Ms. Elvin, even though like I had  
22          problems at first when she first came, but she  
23          actually enhanced. Just like Lucas said, she  
24          actually enhanced the school.

25          And before that, in my 9<sup>th</sup> grade the reason

1 to why I'm a super senior is because we had  
2 too much freedom and I messed up on my credits  
3 and all because I was like cutting class. There  
4 was free bands. It wasn't even called periods.  
5 It was called bands. You were able to come into  
6 the lunchrooms any time. We were able to go on  
7 the campus and chill any time. I came when it  
8 was like that. And if anybody else came when it  
9 was like that you guys would have been messed up  
10 as much as I am. But I don't even count myself  
11 as messed up because Dewey is going to get me  
12 out of there.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Are you Chelsea?

15 MS. LAURA: No. I'm 56, Laura.

16 MS. GORMAN: Say that again.

17 MS. LAURA I'm 56, Laura.

18 MS. GORMAN: What number?

19 MS. LAURA: Fifty-six.

20 MS. GORMAN: Oh I'm sorry. Is Chelsea,  
21 number 55?

22 MS. LAURA: No she's not here.

23 MS. GORMAN: You may begin.

24 MS. LAURA: Hi my name is Laura and I'm a  
25 senior at here and I'm graduating early, in

1 January 2014. Now you may be wondering as to  
2 why I'm speaking on behalf of John Dewey when  
3 I'm leaving early and I'm not going to be able,  
4 I'm not going to be effected by the change  
5 that's going to happen.

6 But when I first came here to the meeting I  
7 wasn't going to come because, as I said, I  
8 didn't think I need to say anything. But I've  
9 changed my mind when I stepped through the doors  
10 because I want to be able to come back here and  
11 see Dewey as Dewey.

12 I don't want to see it as something else  
13 with a whole bunch of other kids that I don't  
14 know with new teachers that I don't know. They  
15 fired so many teachers that I already love. The  
16 people that are here now today that are still  
17 sitting here even though all the students have  
18 left, show their dedication to this school and  
19 show how much they care.

20 Every single class I go to, whenever a  
21 teacher starts talking about themselves they're  
22 always saying we've been here for years and  
23 years and years and years. They've seen this  
24 school progress. They've been through the most.  
25 They didn't have the greatest principal for so

1 long.

2 Ms. Elvin came. She changed everything.  
3 She made this school beautiful. She made me  
4 happy to come to school. This school became my  
5 escape. I have made the greatest friends. I  
6 have met the greatest friends. I have met the  
7 greatest people. This school has changed my  
8 life.

9 Everyone here is a family and we all love  
10 each other even though we don't get along and we  
11 may talk about each other and we may not say we  
12 don't want to be here. At the end of the day,  
13 this is our escape from every drama outside.

14 I want to be able to come here as an alumni  
15 just like these people and support my school and  
16 know that Ms. Elvin made the school better and  
17 all the teachers that are sitting here today I  
18 want to still see their faces 19 or 20 years  
19 from now.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Excuse me are you  
22 Wilson?

23 MR. WILSON: I'm 57 yes.

24 MS. GORMAN: You may begin. Did you want to  
25 use this mic? This will be our last student

1 speaker.

2 MR. WILSON: John Dewey High School is our  
3 school, our home and our house. Most of the  
4 students have lived here for four years. Our  
5 faculty members, maybe a lot more than us. I on  
6 the other hand, just transferred here and yet  
7 today I'm standing in front of you protesting.

8 We are a family. We are the dragons and now  
9 you're trying to place another school within our  
10 school? That's the same as strangers inviting  
11 other strangers into our house. Sounds wrong  
12 doesn't it? Now you know why we are here today  
13 protesting. And you will understand why we sat  
14 in here today.

15 These strangers are not John Dewey students.  
16 They are not dragons. They don't live here.  
17 They cannot just come in here and be like us.  
18 Worst of all they're not coming to be us. They  
19 can try all they want but we will not let them  
20 take this school from our. We will not let them  
21 take our house.

22 I'm here today not to oppose co-location.  
23 I'm here today to protect my house. To protect  
24 my family from outside invaders. This is an  
25 invasion.

1           If they do come we will fight this. We  
2 will fight this infestation. Ladies and  
3 gentlemen we are here today to protect our cause  
4 and stand together as one. Thank you.

5           MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Before we start  
6 with the adult speakers I do want to commend our  
7 student speakers. They have represented  
8 themselves, their families, their teachers and  
9 their school and I commend them.

10           [APPLAUSE]

11           We have 46 additional speakers signed up.  
12 Would numbers one through six please line up?

13           Lane Rosen is the first speaker. To who?

14           FEMALE VOICE 1: He gave his number to Mr.  
15 Hastings.

16           MS. GORMAN: To who?

17           FEMALE VOICE 1: He gave his number to Mr.  
18 Hastings. Would he be allowed to talk instead?

19           MS. GORMAN: You have number one?

20           MR. HASTINGS: Okay. Thank you. I'm Mr.  
21 Hastings. Rosa had to leave. So I'll be  
22 speaking on his behalf.

23           MS. GORMAN: That's fine. You may begin.

24           MS. HASTINGS: Okay. Perception goes  
25 halfway around the world before reality gets out

1 of bed or set in. Co-location is a bad  
2 experiment for us, especially as a  
3 representative from the Science Department  
4 because the agenda is wrong. We don't have the  
5 space and the kids know it and we definitely  
6 don't have the resources.

7 Co-location supports separate and unequal  
8 culture. It is strategic not just to - - our  
9 school, but to close it. And our students know  
10 it.

11 The process of it is wrong fundamentally.  
12 We weren't even asked. They didn't even respect  
13 us to ask us if we would like to collate or be  
14 together. The entire process is going to create  
15 stress. It's going to be terrible. Just  
16 imagine scanning. Use of the library. Use of  
17 the gym, classroom. If the other school have  
18 all the amenities they need, we don't have it.  
19 Or we have it and they don't have it, that alone  
20 is unequal and we're playing with kid's lives.

21 It is good to know, and I've heard it the  
22 entire night, that it's good that we stand for  
23 something and against this. But let us continue  
24 to focus on what we stand for. Thank you.

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Regina.

1 MS. REGINA CHANASSI: Yes my name is  
2 Regina Chanassi [phonetic] and I've been  
3 teaching here proudly for 16 years. And as you  
4 can see, you heard from the fruits of our labor.  
5 You've heard from these students that come from  
6 all over the world. These are the kids that Mr.  
7 Recchia said, no one else wanted to teach and we  
8 made them successful.

9 So if we co-locate, they will not have the  
10 resources needed to be successful and we will be  
11 doing a disservice to the United States of  
12 America and to the world globally.

13 President Obama has called us as teachers to  
14 educate our children in stem and technology and  
15 as you can see we have a huge robotics team. We  
16 have pre-med programs. We have programs that  
17 President Obama himself would stand by us. So  
18 if we don't stay as John Dewey High School and  
19 we alienate these children that no one else  
20 wants to educate, where are they going to be in  
21 our system? They will be a drain on our system,  
22 instead of being the fruit of our system and our  
23 country will crumble and our democracy will  
24 cease to exist.

25 We have to educate them because if we don't

1 educate them, I'm going to say something very  
2 crude, we are not opening up ovens again. We  
3 have to educate these children. We have to make  
4 them successful and we have to push our country  
5 forward and we have to put children first and  
6 not corporations because John Dewey doesn't want  
7 to be co-located. But if you co-locate you kill  
8 two schools with one stone. And then you put in  
9 a big juicy charter in a beautiful campus, it's  
10 not going to work 'cause we all know.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Phil. So um you  
13 have a video?

14 MR. PHIL: Yea I just want to save it for  
15 evidence over my voice. Let me say one thing to  
16 you. How powerful for a kid to say, this is the  
17 first school I've never been bullied in? I mean  
18 that was amazing.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 MR. GORMAN: So we have a video that we're  
21 going to show in place of the time.

22 VIDEO PRESENTATION: But choosing a high  
23 school is often fraught with uncertainty and  
24 confusion.

25 What if I told you about a high school in

1 Brooklyn with a beautiful 14-acre campus  
2 located in the historic - - second of Brooklyn,  
3 with a diverse, friendly and hard working  
4 student population?

5 With dedicated, talented and passionate  
6 teachers. With a tireless and motivated  
7 administration. With a physics teacher who is  
8 the recipient of [LOUD MUSIC]. An award winning  
9 robotics team. A state-of-the-art athletic  
10 facility and a large offering PS [LOUD MUSIC]  
11 students. With a girls' soccer team bound for  
12 the playoffs. And Academy of Finance Program  
13 second to none. A Mac lab where students learn  
14 industry ready computer animation and graphic  
15 design. A health occupations program. A  
16 modeling club, a dance program and an exciting  
17 country fair, ceramics, sculpture and a  
18 photography program that earned a Metropolitan  
19 Museum of Art Scholarship. A caring guidance  
20 staff. A directed and active student  
21 government. A drama class that features  
22 improvisation, creativity and fun.

23 What if I told you that school is John Dewey  
24 High School? John Dewey High School. Still  
25 innovating after all these years.

1 [END OF VIDEO]

2 MS. GORMAN: Testing. Okay. We will  
3 continue. We had two people switch numbers. So  
4 you may begin, the new number four.

5 MR. ROBERT DESSINA: The new number four.  
6 My name is Robert Dessina [phonetic]. I am the  
7 Founder and President of Council for Unity.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 Which began here in 1975 and is one of the  
10 greatest exports of this school.

11 The alumni here and some of our teachers  
12 from way back then, have a tendency to  
13 romanticize the past and Kathleen I have to tell  
14 you. We all had amazing students and these - -  
15 were the best. The kids that are here today  
16 match them easily. I don't know. It's like  
17 coming back and revisiting everything great that  
18 we used to have. And the tragedy Elaine that  
19 the wrong person is here. It should not be you  
20 because the people that need to hear what has to  
21 be said are not here and they have no interest  
22 in being here.

23 The last time I looked this was the United  
24 State of America and this was a democracy. When  
25 an institutions turns its back on the people,

1 turns it back on students, on faculty and on  
2 the administrators in this school, it's  
3 arrogance and it's tyranny. And I would make a  
4 pledge that we will use all of the influence we  
5 have in this next administration to bury this  
6 proposal and we will fight.

7 And I will make one more, one more  
8 commitment. Based on everything that we heard  
9 tonight, I want to package all of this and go to  
10 our middle schools across this city and get all  
11 those kids here so that Dewey is at capacity and  
12 you do not need this co-location.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would speakers  
15 through number ten please line up at the mic.  
16 Terri you may begin.

17 MS. TERRI BRENNAN: Hi my name's Terri  
18 Brennan [phonetic] and I'm an alum who went here  
19 a millennium ago but I'm here just about every  
20 week, sometimes multiple times a week.

21 And so this is what I see when I'm in this  
22 building. I see teachers who stay after school  
23 without pay to help kids stay on track, to get  
24 caught up on assignments. I see teachers who  
25 spend their own money to feed these kids.

1 I see a parent coordinator who I would  
2 say bleeds red for these kids at a moment's  
3 notice.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 I see a sports program that literally grew  
6 from nothing and kids who had no idea. I saw  
7 teachers who had never coached a sport before  
8 learn how and now there's two soccer teams going  
9 to the playoffs.

10 And I see kids that feel loved when they  
11 walk in this building. And I see faulty that  
12 took care of each other after Sandy. Name me  
13 another school where a teacher who lost her home  
14 would be invited to live with another faculty  
15 member for weeks and where students would show  
16 up to class with groceries for that teacher  
17 because they knew she was having a hard time.

18 This is a family in this building. It's a  
19 messy family many of times. But it's a family.  
20 And the DOE is supposed to be the guardian of  
21 this family and they are an abusive parent.  
22 They have beat the crap out of these people for  
23 five years and there is no social agency that  
24 they can go to for help.

25 So they have to ask the parents to please be

1 nice. So please enough is enough. Leave  
2 them alone. If you're not going to help them,  
3 leave them alone.

4 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Edmond.

5 MR. EDMOND UNALANDA: My name is Edmond  
6 Unalanda [phonetic]. I am a member of the Class  
7 of 1981.

8 My job right now is I'm a financial  
9 executive with a Fortune 500 company but I  
10 remember where I came from.

11 When I came to--my mother and father were  
12 immigrants. They came from Norway and they went  
13 through a terrible time during the occupation.  
14 They came to this country but the scars remained  
15 and violence and alcohol abuse were a marked  
16 part of my childhood.

17 Dewey was the place where I could come to  
18 and it tapped into, you know the talents I had  
19 and let me know what I could do with my life.  
20 During the time my mother died and I gave up on  
21 myself, but Dewey did not give up on me. And  
22 that tradition remains. These teachers take  
23 care of their students now the way they took  
24 care of me. That is the essential part of Dewey  
25 that has always been here.

1           And so when I gave up on myself, they  
2 didn't give up on me. They got me to summer day  
3 and evening high school. They got me out on  
4 time. They got me into Baruch and put me on my  
5 adult path now.

6           So Dewey did not give up on me. I'm not  
7 going to give up on Dewey. Co-location will put  
8 Dewey into a, it will be an existential blow to  
9 Dewey. Don't do this. It is not necessary and  
10 it's based on a bad premise.

11           Thanks so much.

12           MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much.

13           Guadeloupe number eight.

14           MS. GUADELOUPE MUNEZ: Yes.

15           MS. GORMAN: You may begin.

16           MS. MUNEZ: Hi. My name is Guadeloupe Munez  
17 [phonetic] and I come here to speak as a Dewey  
18 alumni.

19           Beginning my first four years here I was  
20 very daunted by the fact that I had to get used  
21 to new ideas, new ways of managing classes and  
22 all that. But like everyone has said here  
23 before, Dewey makes you feel welcome and that is  
24 something that sticks with you throughout your  
25 years here until you graduate.

1           And there's something very true about  
2 this school. It is a family and you can't break  
3 up family like that.

4           I tried to, you know, do my best every day  
5 and I just want to say Dewey shaped me to be a  
6 better person. Before I wasn't interested in  
7 academics. I wasn't interested in trying to be  
8 the best that I could. But teachers here at  
9 Dewey do their best every single day to try to  
10 make you realize that you can do something. You  
11 can be interested in something. You can put  
12 your focus in something and you can succeed at  
13 something.

14           And that is very important to me and that is  
15 something that will stick with me the rest of my  
16 life. And I just want to say that co-location  
17 at Dewey is a horrible idea and it will just  
18 ruin all the progress that we have struggled to  
19 come here today to do. And it will send you  
20 into a spiraling abyss of failure. So I'm  
21 really against co-location and I hope it doesn't  
22 come through.

23           MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Naomi.  
24 Would speakers through 17 please line up. Naomi  
25 you can begin.

1           NAOMI NEWBURGER: Good evening. My name  
2 is Naomi Newburger [Phonetic] and I'm a math  
3 teacher in John Dewey High School for the past  
4 20 years. Thank you. I just want to say that I  
5 am so in awe about the fact that so many  
6 students showed up here. They just show us over  
7 and over again how much we mean to them.

8           How much the school means to them and really  
9 they mean a lot to us. They're sign of life,  
10 they are a sign of our future and if they are  
11 not here any longer it's two reasons. We have  
12 students here who travel two hours to get to  
13 John Dewey High School because that's where they  
14 want to be, number one.

15           Number two, some of them still are concerned  
16 about homework tonight even though everybody  
17 knows, including Ms. Elvin, that they spent the  
18 evening here, so they left.

19           I just wanted to add to everything that was  
20 said by the students, by Ms. Elvin and other  
21 people. I'm coming from an open house in Murrow  
22 High School from this past Sunday and I wanted  
23 to offer the Board of Ed some soft evidence that  
24 maybe should be taken into account, into the  
25 future generations of students who are applying

1 to high schools.

2 We were talking to parents who over and over  
3 told us how they are very pleased without  
4 knowing much more at that point about John Dewey  
5 High School, about the fact that we are a single  
6 school in a single building. About the fact  
7 that we are a sort of medium sized big school,  
8 which on one hand makes sure that there will be  
9 individual attention to student's needs and  
10 their talents and interests.

11 And other the other hand, because of that  
12 medium high size, we can offer such variety of  
13 courses from AP this, AP that, club this, club  
14 that and this is really not a place that can be  
15 shared with any other person if we are going to  
16 continue to do this productive job. Thank you.

17 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Number  
18 ten. You may begin.

19 MR. C.D. Share: My name is C.D. Share  
20 [phonetic]. I'm a bilingual teacher here for  
21 something like 16, 17 years. I can't remember.

22 Anyway, I'm here to brag tonight. I want to  
23 brag about my students okay. Some of my former  
24 students are here. They graduate from some of  
25 the best colleges in this country but the thing

1 is I don't want to talk about past.

2 I want to talk about the recent. Let me  
3 see. I picked the year 2012. The reason why I  
4 picked the year 2012 is to let you know that if  
5 you put another school in here what kind of  
6 damages you're going to do, okay, to our  
7 bilingual program.

8 Okay in that year, the year when Ms. Elvin  
9 came to our school and became our new principal.  
10 All right. In that year a total of 61 bilingual  
11 student graduate. Two of them went to Cornell.  
12 One went to Rochester. One to Hamilton. Two to  
13 RPI. One to Lee High. One to Clarkson. One to  
14 Pace. One to Poly NYU. Nine to Syracuse.  
15 Twenty-four to University of Buffalo. It's 24,  
16 not two or four, 24. Out of a total class of  
17 61.

18 Okay? If you and I'm not talking about  
19 ancient history. I'm talking about two years  
20 ago. Okay you want to talk about turnaround.  
21 We already, we already proved to you. Ms. Elvin  
22 was talking about the big picture, about the  
23 graduation rate that is okay we achieved  
24 something like 74%. I don't know. I'm just a  
25 bilingual teacher. I care about my student. I

1 care about my program. Okay tonight I just  
2 show you what my student did in 2012. I hope  
3 that you will give them an opportunity to  
4 continue do whatever they can. So that they can  
5 thrive, they prosper in the future.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Larry you can begin  
8 and you will be followed by Martina.

9 MR. LARRY ROSSINI: Okay. Thank you.  
10 Thanks for giving me the opportunity to speak.  
11 I had a speech but I can't, I don't want to  
12 repeat what has already been said by so many  
13 people.

14 I've been here--my name is Larry Rossini  
15 [phonetic]. I've been here for 25 years as an  
16 educator at John Dewey High School. I spent  
17 more than half my life in this building and I  
18 honestly can say that I've never been more proud  
19 to be a part of this school than I am tonight.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 Just listening--thank you. Just listening  
22 to the testimonials of the students that spoke  
23 before everybody this evening, I don't think you  
24 need to hear anything else. I think just  
25 listening to what these schools have meant to

1 these students over the course of their short  
2 time here. Students who are speaking about the  
3 school who just started in September have spoken  
4 about how much the school means to them.

5         Why would anyone want to take that away from  
6 them? Why would anyone want to deprive them of  
7 what we have here? The family that we've  
8 created for these students, that includes  
9 everybody in the building. I'm dumbfounded by  
10 it and I'm hoping that there is somebody  
11 listening that feels the same way. That sees  
12 what this school has meant to our students, to  
13 our kids and comes to their senses and reverses  
14 this. This is a travesty and we cannot, we  
15 cannot let this happen.

16         So once again, thank you for hearing me and  
17 I wish us all the best of luck. Thank you very  
18 much.

19         MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Martina followed by  
20 Elizabeth.

21         MS. MARTINA HOOKER: Hi I'm Martina Hooker  
22 [phonetic]. I'm a computer design teacher here  
23 at Dewey. I've been here for about 14 years.  
24 When I heard about the co-location proposal I  
25 said to myself, really? After all we've been

1 through, after all we've done, surely this  
2 must be a mistake. Surely this couldn't happen  
3 because as we all know here Dewey has stood up  
4 to the test. We've proven ourselves time after  
5 time but the DOE says we have low enrollment.  
6 We're under capacity. Really?

7 Well the real truth as our principal shared  
8 with us earlier. We're above 80% capacity and  
9 growing. Anyone who looks at the data can see  
10 that. Ms. Elvin told us we have 1,957 students.  
11 That's 327 over what the projection was. And we  
12 did this without being in the high school  
13 directory.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 The DOE needs to take a real look at Dewey  
16 and stop pushing false data to push their  
17 agenda. This co-location should not happen.  
18 See you on Wednesday the 30<sup>th</sup> at the PEP meeting  
19 once again.

20 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Elizabeth followed  
21 by Eric and Bonnie and would the next five  
22 people please line up at the mic?

23 MS. ELIZABETH BOULIUS: Hi I'm Elizabeth  
24 Boulius [phonetic] and I've testified many times  
25 in support of Dewey and I always begin by

1 saying, I'm a proud Dewey teacher and that  
2 may seem ironic because at the moment I'm not at  
3 Dewey. But it is a family. And I believe for  
4 Dewey an expansion, not co-location.

5 Dewey does welcome people in and offers the  
6 choice for the students. It reflects the city  
7 by its diversity and by--well what I want to say  
8 is, we nurture our students and I am so grateful  
9 for this school and for the students here. I  
10 want to be back next year and see Patrick  
11 graduate and help him make the best film for the  
12 graduating class of next year. I came to the  
13 graduation last year and I hope to come to it  
14 again this year.

15 I am here. I'm really tired. I had to be  
16 to work at seven at my other school, but I  
17 believe in Dewey and again I want to say,  
18 expansion, not co-location. Thanks.

19 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Eric followed by  
20 Bonnie.

21 MR. ERIC SHAPIRO: Good evening. My name is  
22 Eric Shapiro [phonetic]. I am the Athletic  
23 Director here at John Dewey High School. We  
24 started a sports program here in 2011 to help  
25 change this school around and it worked. We now

1 have over a dozen different sports for our  
2 students and we are getting new teams every  
3 year. These teams have been the motivating  
4 factor for some students to come to Dewey and do  
5 the right thing while they're here.

6 I go to all of Dewey's home game and some of  
7 the away games. I've spoken to other coaches  
8 and athletic directors and heard the headaches  
9 of dealing with the multiple principals can  
10 cause. Even assuming the DOE finds the rare  
11 oddity that both principals are on the same page  
12 with sports, even then those campus teams are  
13 not real teams. They may play together. They  
14 may even be good. But they pale in comparison  
15 to what we have here at Dewey.

16 When you have only one school in a building  
17 like what we have here at Dewey, the students  
18 have a coach that is easily accessible to  
19 confide in, to seek advice with, to look after  
20 them. Not the coaches in an area building  
21 they're not allowed to be in.

22 There are students that are able to look  
23 after each other because they share the same  
24 classes. Not in another class in another part  
25 of the building. They share the same ups and

1       downs.  There's no competition within the  
2       team about who's in the better school or who's  
3       in the, got the better facility, who's got  
4       better teachers.

5               These students bleed, sweat, cry and cheer  
6       together because they share every part of their  
7       school life together, not just the building.

8               If co-location in John Dewey High School is  
9       allowed to take place, you will be destroying a  
10      family who motivate each other on and off the  
11      field.  And you will be replacing it with a  
12      group of students who just plan a game.  That is  
13      not a team.  Co-location will not help our  
14      students succeed.

15              Thank you.

16              MS. GORMAN:  Thank you.

17              [APPLAUSE]

18              Bonnie.  Are you Bonnie?  Excuse me are you  
19      Bonnie?

20              MS. BONNIE ALTMAN:  Hi.

21              MS. GORMAN:  You may begin.

22              MS. ALTMAN:  My name is Bonnie Altman  
23      [phonetic].  I am an English teacher in this  
24      school.  I also have the privilege of being this  
25      year's Senior Class Coordinator.  Most of my

1 students spoke tonight. I am a District 21  
2 kid. I grew, born and raised in Coney Island.  
3 I went from Pearce [phonetic] 110 to Sphere 3,  
4 graduated from Lincoln High School.

5 My first teaching job was in Lafayette.  
6 That was a failing school. This is not. Year  
7 after year the DOE has tried unsuccessfully to  
8 change us, to close us, to finally co-locate us.  
9 This is unacceptable. All you need to do is  
10 take a look around and see the wonderful  
11 programs we have, the amazing staff that work  
12 here and the students in this school that make  
13 up this incredible place to be.

14 This is the best place I have ever been with  
15 the best students I have ever taught in my 13  
16 years of teaching. If another school is placed  
17 here are once again setting us up for failure.

18 It's time to stop doing that. Leave us  
19 alone. Allow us to succeed.

20 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Is it Ms. Joseph or  
21 Ms. Chan?

22 MS. ELSIE CHAN: Yes.

23 MS. GORMAN: Is Ms. Joseph here? You may  
24 begin.

25 MS. CHAN: Good evening. My name is Elsie

1 Chan [phonetic]. I'm here today as a proud  
2 founding teacher of John Dewey High School in  
3 1969. We were the original 70 teachers who  
4 opened the school. I was also Principal  
5 Emeritus of Lower East Side Prep, a school of  
6 500. And Murray Bertram High School, a large  
7 school of 4,000 and Elaine before you arrived I  
8 was an assistant superintendent and sat on the  
9 Deputy Chancellor's Cabinet. So I well know how  
10 difficult the decision is and I tell you this  
11 only because I am who I am because of this  
12 wonderful school and every student, it wasn't  
13 the teachers, it was the students who told us  
14 and made us the best teachers we could be.

15 But why do they want John Dewey? Political  
16 obviously, charter schools but also because here  
17 this is the best real estate in Brooklyn. You  
18 guys have a campus.

19 The last time I was here to speak it was in  
20 opposition to closing the school. How sad that  
21 after turning the school around once again, a B  
22 report card, U.S. News and World Report. That  
23 we're here again at a public hearing.

24 Kathleen you can be so proud of what you've  
25 done. It's in the legacy and traditions of our

1 school. How unbelievable, and some of you  
2 don't know this, that John Dewey High School,  
3 the birthplace of Edward R. Murrow High School.  
4 They all came from here. Murray Bertram High  
5 School, Manhattan Night and Day Comprehensive  
6 and countless others as well as the alma mater  
7 of Tony, Pulitzer Prize, Emmy Award winners,  
8 Spike Lee, we can name all those famous people  
9 because of the wonderful program. And so many  
10 educators, there must be 50 or 60 of us who  
11 became principals, assistant principals,  
12 superintendents. Some of my students are  
13 principals today. Staten Island Tech, New Jorb  
14 [phonetic] High School, Long Island City and  
15 others.

16 How easy, and I'm ending now, would it be to  
17 take the five hundred students and add them  
18 here? Why create another school? How much  
19 better for the economy of scale not to have as  
20 every said, two principals, and most important,  
21 this is like Yale University and its separate  
22 colleges. A school with separate houses. These  
23 little schools in Florida are all failing my  
24 architect told me. It's only the large ones  
25 that will survive.

1 MS. GORMAN: [Interposing] Thank you very  
2 much.

3 MS. CHAN: So I say in ending do what's  
4 right and good conscious and remove this from  
5 the table. And everyone who is here tonight, as  
6 Dominick Recchia said, it is not over. Every  
7 person who is here tonight should go to Prospect  
8 Heights High School on October 30<sup>th</sup> and not just  
9 hear me, an old teacher and my students. I  
10 think I look younger be all there root your  
11 school on.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. We still have a  
14 good number left and I would ask that you stick  
15 to the two minutes. Number 18 you may begin.

16 MR. BOONEGI FROMARTS: Hi my name is Boonegi  
17 Fromarts [phonetic]. When I went here I went by  
18 the name David. I adopted my family name after.  
19 I graduated in '74. I started here in '70 as a  
20 second year student.

21 The support from this school also got me  
22 going. One of the best things here was the  
23 mixing of the classes of the grades in the  
24 classes because when you took electives anybody  
25 could take electives. And in English you could

1 have a freshman and a senior to be able to  
2 mix those ideas was wonderful.

3 I was also one of the people who started  
4 something call the Free School where actually  
5 students did the teaching. Every week we would  
6 have a program change and the students would be  
7 able to ahead and do it.

8 That kind of freedom and that kind of  
9 encouragement from the teachers allowed us to  
10 expand and go forth.

11 How many schools had their robotics teams  
12 had a robot that could throw out the first ball  
13 at a ballgame? Dewey did that just this year.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 To be able to--the awards of financial Team  
16 One, they beat Stardison [phonetic] High School  
17 in two stock competitions, right? It's amazing.  
18 They still have the fortitude and the knowledge  
19 and the growth and lack of bullying. You don't  
20 hear of that.

21 Discipline problems when you have two  
22 schools cohabiting in the same space are well  
23 known. You have two separate schools and they  
24 can't discipline each other's kids and who knows  
25 what's going to happen. You don't want that to

1 happen.

2 We need to fight the co-lo. It's out. Come  
3 out on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

4 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would speakers  
5 through 25 please come to the mic. Ronald you  
6 may begin.

7 MR. RONALD BROTH: My name is Ronald Broth  
8 [phonetic]. I am the librarian here at John  
9 Dewey. I've been here almost 30 years. I  
10 taught Social Studies. Now I've been the  
11 librarian.

12 And what I'd like to talk about is what's  
13 gone on over at Dewey over these last two years.  
14 The middle of March of 2012 Ms. Elvin arrives at  
15 John Dewey. She implemented various changes in  
16 the school that led us quite rapidly to raise  
17 our report card grade to a B. Curriculum  
18 changes along with the change in school attitude  
19 helped to bring about this higher grade.

20 Now using questionable statistics, the  
21 Department of Education is falsely claiming that  
22 we have enough room to co-locate with another  
23 school. We currently have about 1,950 student  
24 attending Dewey and our facility was built to  
25 hold about 2,500, excuse me, 2,500 students as

1 one school.

2 Ms. Elvin, our staff and students have all  
3 worked hard to revitalize Dewey. This did not  
4 happen over night. We need to have more time  
5 and it is apparent that the DOE is in a rush to  
6 fulfill an agenda.

7 Time is important and we need more time.  
8 Many of the courses and programs that Dewey was  
9 known to have, have come back and are attracting  
10 many more students. We need more time for this  
11 to succeed. The debacle of the last years and  
12 in DOE's attempt to eliminate John Dewey and  
13 create Shaw Front High School was a failure.  
14 And the most recent sign, oh excuse me, the most  
15 recent high school fair has shown an incredible  
16 interest in attending John Dewey. We need more  
17 time.

18 Therefore, I implore the DOE to give Ms.  
19 Elvin, the staff and students the time we so  
20 richly deserve to continue the great work of  
21 rebuilding and restoring our student population.

22 MS. GORMAN: Thank you.

23 MR. BROTH: Thank you and good evening.

24 MS. GORMAN: Scott followed by Joseph and  
25 Robert.

1 MR. SCOTT PROVITSKY: My name is Scott  
2 Provitsky [phonetic]. I'm a teacher at PS188 in  
3 Coney Island. This is a little different  
4 tonight 'cause this is a testimonial to John  
5 Dewey. This is not a closing situation like  
6 that. We're going to rebound the way what we  
7 need to do. CEC 21 we're going to get a new  
8 Chancellor. I met her today, Dorrita Gibson  
9 [phonetic]. Okay. I spoke with her today. I  
10 said there's a tremendous need to bring  
11 communication back in District 21. I met with  
12 Lori Faggio [phonetic]. She loved the idea. I  
13 met with Ernie Logan [phonetic].

14 Antonio, I'm going push you in terms of  
15 getting these programs down because it's not  
16 your fault in terms of the Bloomberg  
17 administration. We need to make changes. This  
18 is a testimonial to John Dewey High School.  
19 Instead of the President visiting P-Tech, they  
20 should come here. But the biggest problem is  
21 we're not promoting District 21 schools. That's  
22 going to change 'cause my goal right now is I  
23 want to have a bigger voice in the community,  
24 especially with the new councilman Mark Treggar  
25 and working with the CEC and also Steve

1 Cymbrowitz. There's too much constant. Not  
2 enough movement. Standardized testing is too  
3 much of an emphasis on that. We need to  
4 showcase education and this is a testimonial to  
5 you and I will make it happen. I promise you.

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Joseph followed by  
7 Robert and then Harold.

8 MR. ROBERT CURSE: Hi my name is Robert  
9 Curse [phonetic]. I'm an alumnist from the  
10 class of '86 and the parent of a current Dewey  
11 freshman. As a family we chose Dewey for my  
12 son. We did our homework. We looked at all the  
13 options. We committed to this school for the  
14 next four years and the school and the DOE were  
15 making the same commitment to us. We feel  
16 misled and lied to by the DOE.

17 The co-location plan feels like a breach of  
18 contract between the DOE and the student body,  
19 parents, teachers and communities. There are  
20 other buildings that could be utilized for your  
21 new school. They are empty that would not  
22 compromise the education of my child and its  
23 classmates.

24 Grady, an actual CTE school which was  
25 originally the plan for this new school stands

1 at 50% capacity. Why not use them? I'm  
2 appalled at the constant threat the DOE bestowed  
3 upon this school. How can you expect any school  
4 to prosper and improve if the DOE makes every  
5 effort to hinder or stop the process for their  
6 own political needs?

7 The DOE's action even sabotaged Dewey's  
8 enrollment. Dewey was not included in the  
9 handbook and middle school guidance counselors  
10 were telling parents and students not to apply.  
11 My son's counselor was one of them. She  
12 returned the application numerous times telling  
13 us to remove Dewey from it.

14 Instead of creating a new school within  
15 Dewey's walls, why not return the programs and  
16 classes that made Dewey what Dewey was.

17 The Mayor and Chancellor will be gone at the  
18 end of this year. Why are they rushing all this  
19 through? Because they know the PEP will not  
20 vote against the Mayor's wishes. It's a lie  
21 that the input from parents, students and  
22 elected officials and the committee will be  
23 taken into consideration. We have all come out  
24 time and time again to speak up to defend, to  
25 plead for this school and others across the

1 district and the city, each time we've been  
2 ignored.

3           You have persecuted Dewey for years when you  
4 should have been supporting it. Instead of  
5 helping hand you should try just knock us down,  
6 but guess what? We will not be knocked down.  
7 We are Dewey.

8           MS. GORMAN: Thank you. I want to thank the  
9 AP for his help in setting up tonight.

10           MR. JOSEPH ANTONUCCI: You're more than  
11 welcome.

12           MS. GORMAN: And you may begin.

13           MR. ANTINUCCI: My name's Joseph Antinucci  
14 [phonetic] but tonight I come to you not only as  
15 a John Dewey High School Assistant Principal,  
16 but as an alumni. I am proud of the fact that I  
17 graduated from this institution way back when in  
18 1989.

19           I've seen the school change tremendously  
20 since I returned here to teach in 1996. When I  
21 returned here it was still the Dewey I knew and  
22 loved. However, the deterioration began once  
23 the present mayoral leadership took control.  
24 Out of nowhere we had students in our building  
25 that said they did not want to be here.

1           We had students saying they never chose  
2 John Dewey High School. And I said to myself,  
3 how can this be? Dewey was a place I loved to  
4 be. Being discontent incidents began happening  
5 that were never the norm here at Dewey. These  
6 incidents continued as more and more students  
7 were placed here against their will.

8           New leadership was put in place in March of  
9 2012. Since then the school is in the throws of  
10 a renaissance. Existing programs have been  
11 strengthened. New programs have been put in  
12 place. A more structured environment is now the  
13 norm.

14           The experiment, which I feel was incredibly  
15 successful, has ended. A new Dewey is on the  
16 horizon. All we need is more time to continue  
17 this growth we have experienced in such a short  
18 time under this new leadership. As testimony to  
19 the success of the new leadership, our school  
20 received a B on our report card. A proficient  
21 on our quality review and the institution of  
22 many, many more AP classes.

23           John Dewey once said, to find out what one  
24 is fitted to do and secure an opportunity to do  
25 it is the key to happiness. The statue on our

1 campus represents that key. To place at  
2 another school in our building would  
3 disenfranchise all that John Dewey stood for.  
4 Placing another school here would destroy all of  
5 the progress we have made.

6 Why do you believe that a school which is  
7 experiencing a renaissance deserves to be co-  
8 located with another school. Through the  
9 struggle after all these years, we are still  
10 innovating. Thank you.

11 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would numbers  
12 through 30 please line up at the mic and Harold  
13 you may begin. Harold.

14 MR. HAROLD KRAMER: Hi I'm Harold Kramer  
15 [phonetic], a member of the board of the John  
16 Dewey Alumni Association and class of 1975.  
17 Back in 1975 things were a little different.  
18 Telephones had dials on them, we spoke to  
19 computers with clunky punch cards and you could  
20 buy quadraphonic eight track tapes at Corvettes  
21 on Bay Parkway.

22 Some things don't change though. Back about  
23 40 years ago the entire school en mass marched  
24 on the offices of the Board of Education to  
25 fight cuts. Back then we were fighting for John

1 Dewey and we are still fighting for John  
2 Dewey and I guess anything worth having is worth  
3 fighting for.

4 John Dewey has risen from the ashes against  
5 all odds with the cards stacked against it. It  
6 has come up. It has improved. It deserves a  
7 chance. It does not need another high school  
8 moving in and taking its resources. I say let  
9 Dewey be Dewey and that's all I have to say.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Christine followed  
11 by Frank and Randy.

12 MS. CHRISTINE GADUSO: My name is Christine  
13 Gaduso [phonetic]. I'm sorry I wrote it really,  
14 really small and I don't have my glasses with  
15 me. And I have been an employee of the DOE for  
16 almost 20 years and I have been an employee in  
17 John Dewey High School for the last ten  
18 wonderful years.

19 I would like to thank my students, my  
20 parents, my colleagues, the alumni for coming  
21 out tonight. Everybody deserves a round of  
22 applause. Those kids were absolutely wonderful  
23 and I'm so proud of them.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 I am not only an employee but I am also a

1 member of this community and have been my  
2 whole life. I really live about five minutes  
3 from here. My son will be coming to this school  
4 in another year and a half when he's ready for  
5 high school and that's my choice. This is where  
6 I want him to be.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 We are asking that you not put another  
9 school in our school. It's supposed to be about  
10 the students and this would not benefit our kids  
11 or our community. John Dewey High School was  
12 hit by super storm Sandy and a lot of our  
13 students and faculty where they call their  
14 homes. Our school was on a generator for almost  
15 a year.

16 What did our students, parents and faculty  
17 do? They were here in their second home. They  
18 were out in the community helping other people.  
19 That's what the students and people at John  
20 Dewey are like.

21 We were not in the high school handbook and  
22 at open house people would say, we thought you  
23 closed. The DOE has invested time and money in  
24 us and we thank you for that. We've had new  
25 programs this year and we are flourishing.

1 Please give us some more time. Please do not  
2 hinder our progress. Please keep Dewey High  
3 School, Dewey High School. Thank you.

4 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Frank, Frank  
5 followed by Randy.

6 MR. FRANK BENPENSADA: Good evening. My  
7 name is Frank Benpensada [phonetic]. I'm an  
8 Assistant Principal here at John Dewey. And my  
9 question is, how do you measure a successful  
10 school? Is it by its graduation rate? John  
11 Dewey has a graduation rate just as good if not  
12 better than the schools the DOE is celebrating  
13 as successful co-located schools.

14 Is it by the opportunity the school gives to  
15 its students? In addition to over 13 advanced  
16 placement courses, an Academy of Finance, award  
17 winning robotics team, pre-med program, health  
18 careers program, theater arts, math team and  
19 over 30 clubs including fashion design and the  
20 model club. John Dewey is the only place where  
21 a student can learn how to be a fashion model, a  
22 cheerleader and take advanced placement  
23 calculus. True.

24 Is it by what a school does for its  
25 community? John Dewey has helped clean Kaiser

1 Park, sponsored numerous blood drives,  
2 delivered toys to shelters and hospitals during  
3 the holidays.

4 Is it by the wonderful alumni of the school?  
5 John Dewey alumni have gone on to become  
6 lawyers, principals, teachers, CEOs of multi-  
7 million dollar companies, politicians and film  
8 makers. Dewey's college and career index is one  
9 of the highest in the city.

10 Is it by the number of obstacles a school  
11 has to overcome? John Dewey has had the cloud  
12 of closure over it for years. We were not in  
13 the high school handbook, there was false  
14 information in the press regarding damage  
15 sustained by Hurricane Sandy.

16 After super storm Sandy many of our students  
17 and staff were relocated to shelters and the  
18 school was on a generator for almost a year. In  
19 spite of this, we are over 80% capacity and  
20 growing. And we have thousands of people visit  
21 our table at the high school fairs the past two  
22 months.

23 As you can clearly see John Dewey is a  
24 successful school. It will continue being a  
25 successful school, not by putting another school

1 in the building and dividing resources, but  
2 by supporting our existing programs and letting  
3 Dewey be Dewey. Thank you.

4 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Randy Herman.  
5 Randy Herman.

6 MS. RANDY HERMAN: Thank you for lowering  
7 it. My name is Randy Herman [phonetic]. I've  
8 been a special education assistant principal at  
9 John Dewey High School for over 20 years.

10 I have seen John Dewey High School go  
11 through many changes. And with the changes that  
12 we've made, more students are applying to our  
13 school and our register has increased.

14 A large comprehensive high school offers  
15 students with special needs the flexibility to  
16 implement the new special education reform.  
17 Currently we have self-contained classes,  
18 integrated co-teaching and SETS classes. We  
19 also have related services only students. These  
20 students are programmed for all general Ed  
21 classes but are mandated for counseling, speech,  
22 physical therapy, occupational therapy and  
23 hearing services.

24 In addition we already have a District 75  
25 inclusion program with SET PS721 at our school.

1 If our numbers are downsized due to co-  
2 location, we would not be able to offer all the  
3 services and programs that we are now offering.  
4 Large comprehensive high schools with diverse  
5 programs allow for the flexibility of movement  
6 to meet those students' individual needs. This  
7 is especially important for implementing the new  
8 special education reform.

9 We have programmed students with dual  
10 recommendations for years prior to the reform.  
11 We have always programmed each student  
12 individually according to how they learn best,  
13 since we know that all students do not fit into  
14 one category.

15 Smaller programs do not have the ability to  
16 offer dual recommendations. Our students have  
17 been successful because of our ability to offer  
18 a variety of program and services. We have had  
19 students that have started out in self-contained  
20 classes, moved onto Team Teaching classes, then  
21 moved to SETS classes and graduated and went on  
22 to four year universities. We have one student  
23 that is even at medical school now.

24 To be honest, not all students graduated  
25 with high school diplomas because we're a large

1 comprehensive high school. We're able to  
2 offer programs, deport students who graduate  
3 with IAP diplomas.

4 After graduations our students have enrolled  
5 in post-secondary programs and have been able to  
6 be independent, find jobs and be successful in  
7 all different fields.

8 I have spoken to parents and students who  
9 have transferred to smaller programs in co-  
10 located schools and they have all told me that  
11 they--I have one paragraph left. Thank you.  
12 That they wished they had remained in John Dewey  
13 High School because they received more support  
14 and were able to be programmed for different  
15 types of classes.

16 In conclusion, if our numbers are downsized,  
17 we would not be able to offer all the services  
18 and programs that we are now offering. Co-  
19 location would not allow us to offer to meet our  
20 student needs. Thank you.

21 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Dr. Delorenza. We  
22 have 20 additional speakers. If there's anybody  
23 at the end of the list who cannot stay but wants  
24 to turn in their comments for the public record,  
25 I'm happy to collect them. We will stay until

1 everybody has a chance to speak.

2 Dr. Delorenza.

3 DR. MADELINE DELORENZA COSHA: Good evening.

4 My name is Dr. Madeline Delorenza Cosha

5 [phonetic] and I am the Assistant Principal of

6 foreign languages at John Dewey High School and

7 very proud to be here this evening.

8 I've been the Assistant Principal for 11

9 years and I represent the foreign language

10 students as well as the English language

11 students, the English language learners.

12 Our colleagues and our principal have spoke

13 very eloquently about most aspects of life at

14 Dewey. But one aspect that I don't think anyone

15 has spoken about yet are our Title 3 Programs

16 where our English language learners spend most

17 of their time, after school hours and on the

18 weekends.

19 Our Saturday Academy has been very

20 successful. Our students come here on Saturday

21 mornings and they love being here even though

22 it's the sixth day of the week that they're

23 here. They're loved, they're nurtured, they

24 receive breakfast, they receive lunch, they go

25 upstairs to their classes. The teachers take

1 excellent care of them. They feel a  
2 camaraderie and a warmth that they, that they do  
3 feel during the week, but during the weekend  
4 this is something a special bonding that they  
5 have.

6 They are also able to go upstairs to the  
7 computer room and even though they are in a  
8 large school, they feel as if they're in a  
9 private school when they're here on the  
10 weekends.

11 I would also like to say that our after  
12 school programs we have for the parents as well  
13 as tutoring programs for the adults. For the  
14 parents we have intergenerational programs and  
15 again, these are programs which would not be  
16 able to be here were it not for the Title 3  
17 programs.

18 Last but not least, I would like to say our  
19 foreign language programs have gone through  
20 declines over the last year due to budget cuts.  
21 If there were co-location we would probably lose  
22 even more funding, our students would be even  
23 more crowded, they would lose time and place on  
24 Saturdays as well as during the week and it  
25 would be to the detriment to everyone here. So

1 please help us to keep our programs in tact.

2 Thank you and good evening.

3 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Andrew you may  
4 begin.

5 MR. ANDREW KENNY: Good evening. My name is  
6 Andrew Kenny. I'm an Assistant Principal here  
7 at John Dewey High School.

8 As someone who has worked in a co-location  
9 from 2004 to 2011 I do truly recognize the  
10 benefits of working in a small school  
11 environment. However, I could not be more  
12 against this co-location that is proposed for  
13 John Dewey High School.

14 There are so many opportunities in a large  
15 comprehensive school that students and staff  
16 have spoken about that just do not exist in co-  
17 locations.

18 Something special that I have seen working  
19 here at Dewey compared to where I worked  
20 previously is that John Dewey may be large in  
21 size, but it has the culture and warmth of a  
22 small school. The personal connections that I  
23 see here make me feel that I once again work in  
24 a small school. We do not let students fall  
25 through the cracks and we make sure that every

1 student's needs are met.

2 A co-location will diminish the resources  
3 that we have available to our growing student  
4 enrollment. Like we said earlier, despite not  
5 being in the high school handbook, our 9<sup>th</sup> grade  
6 class has grown by 15% from the year before and  
7 we anticipate an even larger freshman class next  
8 year with the positive reception we have  
9 received at open houses and high school fairs.

10 The progress at John Dewey High School  
11 should not be ignored. Give this campus the  
12 opportunity to continue on its path of  
13 excellence and do not put another school in this  
14 building.

15 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Emily  
16 followed by John.

17 MS. EMILY CREVELIN: Hi Emily Crevlin, I'm  
18 the Assistant Principal of English.

19 I've been working in education for almost 15  
20 years. During eight of those years I worked at  
21 two schools that were co-located and I saw first  
22 hand the detrimental side effects of sharing  
23 space.

24 First and foremost there's competition for  
25 resources. As any biology teacher will tell

1 you, when you have several groups grappling  
2 for limited resources, competition ensues.

3       The co-located schools in which I have had  
4 to work had to compete for every single  
5 resource. Who is using the gym today? Is the  
6 auditorium available for assembly? Can the  
7 biology students use the lab on Friday? When  
8 can we use the computer room? And as each  
9 school grew we saw the space in our community  
10 cordoned off like we were being quarantined.

11       You can't use this hallway. It belongs to  
12 the other school. Don't use that staircase.  
13 You'll have to walk around. Your students can't  
14 come in at 8:00 a.m. because that's when the  
15 other school starts.

16       There was constant competition for  
17 resources. We don't want to compete for  
18 resources. Furthermore, there is a veteran  
19 staff here at John Dewey High School. These  
20 staff members have helped to create the John  
21 Dewey community that we have today. Every  
22 classroom, hallway, athletic court and office is  
23 ripe with history. These spaces belong to us.  
24 Co-locating John Dewey High School would destroy  
25 this history.

1           And as for our students, we are a Title I  
2 school. The John Dewey students who live below  
3 the poverty line are already living with limited  
4 resources. Many of our students live in  
5 apartments that are shared by multiple families.  
6 Many of them sleep on living room couches or  
7 share bedrooms with siblings or other relatives.  
8 Their school should be one place where they  
9 don't have to fight for space. Their school  
10 should be one place where the resources they  
11 need are bountiful.

12           Co-locating John Dewey High School would  
13 essentially say to our students, you will not  
14 only have limited resources at home, you will  
15 also have them in your school. You will have to  
16 share your hallways, your classrooms, your  
17 athletic fields and your auditorium. Your  
18 spaces will be over crowded. This won't happen  
19 if we are co-located, therefore, we're here  
20 tonight to say no co-location. Thank you.

21           MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would speakers up  
22 to 38 please line up at the mic. Jon you may  
23 begin.

24           MR. JON MESSLAQER [PHONETIC]: Well I can't  
25 really say anything that hasn't been said

1 already. I think Ms. Crevelin stole most of  
2 my speech.

3 I can only speak from my own perspective. I  
4 worked in a large comprehensive school for ten  
5 years as an Assistant Principal that was co-  
6 located and well eventually closed.

7 I know how bad co-location can be and what  
8 it's going to do to this school. I know that  
9 the school that I worked in probably deserved  
10 it. I know this school does not. I know these  
11 students do not. I know this community does  
12 not. There's no reason to co-locate or ruin  
13 John Dewey High School for the future.

14 For the future of our students, for the  
15 future of our community. It's unfair. Thank  
16 you.

17 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Adam followed by  
18 Eunice.

19 MR. ADAM LUSTIG: My name's Adam Lustig  
20 [phonetic]. I'm another Assistant Principal  
21 here at John Dewey High School. The staff along  
22 with students here at John Dewey have been  
23 working tirelessly to create a culture that is  
24 John Dewey.

25 One specific instance that I'm able to see

1 each and every morning representing this is  
2 that the students come through scanning, they're  
3 greeted routinely not only by our lovely Level 3  
4 and all of our school safety agents, but also  
5 teachers, administration, Ms. Elvin herself and  
6 many other school professionals. It's not  
7 uncommon to see seven, eight, nine staff members  
8 at the door greeting students on their way,  
9 saying good morning, ushering them in, encourage  
10 them to be successful throughout the day. It  
11 really sets the tone and it's kind of the  
12 culture that we strive for here.

13 The tone is set from the moment students  
14 arrive on campus that is warm, inviting and this  
15 is a safety place to promote student learning  
16 and the full high school experience.

17 Unfortunately, with different schools come  
18 different - - and different values. We work to  
19 make this a place that the students and staff  
20 are proud to take ownership of. This  
21 unfortunately can all be undone through the  
22 process of co-location. This campus that is so  
23 unique within New York City schools allows us to  
24 create a college type atmosphere at the high  
25 school level.

1 I've worked also in a co-located school  
2 and unfortunately when spaces are shared, such  
3 as the gym, auditorium, cafeteria, library,  
4 labs, fields and so on, as those spaces become  
5 everyone's, they also become no ones. Students  
6 lose a sense of accountability and are shut out  
7 of resources that can only add to their growth  
8 and the high school experience.

9 Countless time and effort are spent trying  
10 to keep your students in and other students out.  
11 - - as a standard culture that others in the  
12 same building don't embody. Trying to maintain  
13 a safe environment surrounded by students who  
14 are not directly accountable to your rules and  
15 procedures. All this time and effort that  
16 should be spent supporting our own students and  
17 foster their development and success.

18 John Dewey is truly unique and special space  
19 in New York City education for what it is  
20 provide to a school. A school, one school. Co-  
21 location will only take away from our stuff,  
22 students and community and what makes it such a  
23 special place. Thank you.

24 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Eunice followed by  
25 Jessie. Eunice you can begin.

1 MS. EUNICE CHOW: Thank you for  
2 pronouncing my name correctly. Hi everyone I'm  
3 Eunice Chow. I'm one of the Assistant  
4 Principals here.

5 So there's so many, so many reasons why we  
6 should not co-locate. I'm going to name two  
7 right now.

8 One it's been such a pleasure working here.  
9 In the last two months it's been so evident at  
10 Dewey that this is a, there's a college going  
11 culture here. The countless opportunities here  
12 as well as the rigorous academic program truly,  
13 truly prepare students not just for acceptance  
14 into college, but for success in college and  
15 beyond that. It's inspiring to see in the last  
16 two months the teachers working super hard in  
17 preparing students to become scholars,  
18 professionals and leaders in their field.

19 So we need to keep this culture going. We  
20 need to do it as Dewey High School without  
21 another school here.

22 Second, I've had the pleasure and privilege  
23 of working along side Ms. Elvin in the past.  
24 And I've seen, she's too humble to admit this,  
25 but I will today, I've seen first hand what Ms.

1 Elvin created in the high school where I  
2 taught. She created a high school that became  
3 one of the highest performing high schools,  
4 actually schools in New York City. Let me just  
5 pause with that. That's incredible. And I have  
6 full confidence and I hope you all do too, that  
7 Ms. Elvin's leadership and the relentless team  
8 she has behind her will do the same.

9 Give us the opportunity to become the best.  
10 Thank you.

11 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Jessie followed by  
12 Donovan.

13 MR. JESSIE CUFFERMAN: Hi thank you. Good  
14 evening. My name is Jessie Cufferman and I've  
15 been an Assistant Principal, wait for this, at  
16 John Dewey High School for seven weeks. I guess  
17 that's why I'm going last year. I know this  
18 makes things seem like here, but listen,  
19 sometimes fresh eyes are the best eyes.

20 All right so here's the thing. Before I  
21 came to Dewey I spent the first six years of my  
22 DOE career at one of the most success small  
23 schools in this city. I won't say which one.  
24 And I don't mean to brag, but the work I did  
25 there with the pedagogues we had, well it was a

1 powerhouse. And this new little school you  
2 want to stick here, well I hate to tell you, it  
3 will never be the equal of that place. Sorry  
4 it's true.

5 But here's a bigger truth. For all the love  
6 I have for my former school, I would never send  
7 my own child there. Here's what most people are  
8 afraid to say about little schools like the one  
9 they want to force on us.

10 Number one, small schools offer little to no  
11 interest for real learners. The same kids take  
12 the same narrow program year after year.

13 Two, small schools make an imbalanced,  
14 inequitable system even more segregated. And if  
15 you don't think this is a major problem in this  
16 country, you better wake up.

17 And three, I'm regressing here, but little  
18 schools, small schools they're boring. Who do  
19 you hang out with? What about a robotics team?  
20 What about weirdoes like me when I was 16? What  
21 if you don't like the two clubs you don't have  
22 to offer? What if I don't play basketball?

23 So this is not the way forward. I also  
24 teach a freshman English class here at Dewey and  
25 when I look at my students I see faces of all

1 colors and races. I see my own high school  
2 experience, large, diverse, elite. This is the  
3 American, this is the classroom American  
4 education needs. John Dewey High School a  
5 comprehensive marvel stuffed with courses and  
6 clubs and teams and love.

7 This is what this country needs. Not small  
8 schools with low ceilings. Big schools with big  
9 skies and big choice. Thank you.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Donovan followed by  
11 Manana.

12 MR. DONOVAN SANTIAGO: Hi how's it going?  
13 My name is Donovan Santiago, Class of 2009  
14 Alumni and I love John Dewey High School. When  
15 I was in Dewey I was involved with the Student  
16 Organization. I was the college - -  
17 representative and I've been multiple other  
18 things. As a matter of fact, as an alumni I've  
19 even help out at high school fair and many other  
20 varies events thanks to Frank Benpensada over  
21 there and also I've graduated college recently.  
22 I'm a film and video major. Currently right now  
23 I intern at Tribeca Film Institute. That's  
24 right, Robert Di Niro's headquarters. I  
25 actually came right from there delivering Robert

1 Di Niro's package to here to basically speak  
2 about John Dewey High School.

3 And John Dewey High School basically  
4 inspired me, you know, to do film making and be  
5 a leader and all this stuff and now here I am,  
6 you know, so many years later and I've produced  
7 a variety of films at my college. I was a  
8 resident assistant at my college, freshman  
9 orientation leader at my college and now like I  
10 said I'm interning at Robert Di Niro's  
11 headquarters all because I started at Dewey.

12 Dewey made me a leader and I love that  
13 model, how it goes --

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 Thank you, thank you. And like I said, I'm  
16 still involved with Dewey, you know. Like I  
17 said, I help with High School Fair. I help with  
18 all these events. I come to the events and I  
19 don't want to see Dewey let go. You know, I  
20 love visiting all the teachers here. They're  
21 always happy to see me. I always keep in  
22 contact with and essentially it is a family.

23 And if you add in another school,  
24 essentially like everybody said, you're going  
25 change that. You're not going to really have a

1 family. It's going to become a sort of  
2 separated family and there's going to be arguing  
3 and bickering all the time and you don't really  
4 want that in a family. You want to be able to  
5 get along. And that's what I do with my Dewey  
6 family. You know Dewey's just a great school.  
7 I don't think you should change it. keep it the  
8 same. It's improving and yes, Dewey.

9 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would the remaining  
10 speakers please line up at the mic, the  
11 remaining speakers. Manana, I know I'm  
12 pronouncing --

13 MS. MARIANNA WORTH:

14 MS. GORMAN: I'm sorry. Please begin.

15 MS. WORTH: That's quite all right. Good  
16 evening. My name is Marianna Worth [phonetic]  
17 and I am another Assistant Principal at John  
18 Dewey High School. I'm Assistant Principal of  
19 Special Education along with Ms. Randy Herman  
20 who spoke earlier today on behalf of our  
21 department.

22 I have not been at Dewey long but I have  
23 been here long enough to know that Dewey is a  
24 unique and amazing school. There's a lot of  
25 talk of school choice in the Department of

1 Education, particularly when the Department  
2 of Education talks about co-location.

3 School choice is supposed to give students  
4 and families an opportunity to cater to their  
5 unique interests and needs. I challenge the  
6 Department of Education to find a school that  
7 offers more student's choice than does John  
8 Dewey High School.

9 As my colleagues and students have discussed  
10 John Dewey High Schools offers students a myriad  
11 of advanced placement classes, after school  
12 programs and types of clubs and various other  
13 opportunities.

14 John Dewey High School offers its students  
15 choice. This is particularly evident in the  
16 Special Education Department where Special  
17 Education students take electives, participate  
18 in clubs and have integrative co-teaching, self-  
19 contained and SETS programming. This would not  
20 an opportunity for these Special Education  
21 students if John Dewey High School were a co-  
22 located school.

23 We are a flourishing, unique school in the  
24 throws of a period of growth. Let us continue  
25 to growth.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Martin.

2 MR. MARTIN FIESCANERO: Good evening. My  
3 name is Marty Fiescanero [phonetic]. I'm here  
4 representing CSA and I was also a principal of a  
5 secondary school right here in District 21.

6 Just a little bit of what I know about the  
7 history of John Dewey. It was a special place  
8 when it opened 40 years ago with a different  
9 type of schedule. Then about 12 years ago  
10 coincidentally, about 12 years ago, Lafayette  
11 began a snowball of larger schools that weren't  
12 doing well. Lafayette was followed by schools  
13 like Prospect and Wingate and Erasmus and  
14 Tilden. They were all closing. Students were  
15 moved against their will to other schools like  
16 Dewey and they weren't always students that  
17 prospered in a less structured setting like  
18 Dewey did.

19 These factors contributed to behavioral  
20 challenges, poor attendance, a gradual lowering  
21 of graduation rates and a diminution of  
22 reputation for Dewey that led to a lowering of  
23 register. And then, of course, as we've heard  
24 before, keeping them out of the high school  
25 directly didn't help. That resulted in exactly

1 what the Mayor wanted. This meeting here  
2 tonight. And coincidentally more jobs that he  
3 can control.

4 Co-location in this case is code word for  
5 get out of the way. Dewey should not get out of  
6 the way. Dewey is a pillar of this community.  
7 Please resist this co-location.

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Are you  
9 Ray?

10 MR. HASTINGS: No.

11 MS. GORMAN: Oh you went already. Okay.  
12 Are you number 38?

13 MR. HASTINGS: Correct.

14 MS. GORMAN: You may begin. But you didn't  
15 get to speak for yourself? Okay you can, you  
16 can go. I'm sorry sir.

17 MR. HASTINGS: All right. I'm Mr. Hastings  
18 from the Science Department and I just want to  
19 make this a very teachable moment for the  
20 Department of Education. I am going to  
21 recommend a framework for, this is going to make  
22 it about co-location in this country.

23 Number one, get help. The kids gave you  
24 that today as they speak.

25 Number two, count the cost of co-location

1 and be honest about it. Can we really afford  
2 this emotionally, societal and in terms of the  
3 future. Learn from the mistakes of all the  
4 schools that experience it. Do some research.  
5 Check the motive. Check the agenda. Could it  
6 be greed?

7 All relationships go through stages and our  
8 students are going through a vigorous stage. We  
9 know these kids are poor and they don't deserve  
10 this. There were students celebrate our school,  
11 revealing how hopeful and thankful and grateful  
12 they are. Please don't let them regret being  
13 here. Thank you.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Number 38. I can't  
15 pronounce your name. I apologize.

16 MR. NAZIA ABDONA: That's all right. My  
17 name is Nazia Abdona [phonetic]. I'm a math  
18 teacher at John Dewey High School. I'm also was  
19 advisor for Council for Unity for many years.

20 And one of the things that we did in Council  
21 for Unity was Christians, Jews, Muslims were  
22 celebrating all the holidays together,  
23 exchanging gifts, the student were exchanging  
24 gifts and celebrating. So we were celebrating  
25 our differences more than we fighting over our

1 differences.

2           There was one time that I was really think  
3 and I spoke to Bob Dessina that I need to invite  
4 all the leaders of the Middle East so they could  
5 come, not to join, because if they joined they  
6 would mess it up, but to observe and see how  
7 things are done here at John Dewey.

8           Another thing I want to also speak about is  
9 one of the things that I want to add here is  
10 does the Department of Education really realize  
11 that having one high school will have a lot less  
12 problems than having two high schools in one  
13 location.

14           My understanding is when principals are  
15 hired they are supposed to monitor the staff,  
16 teachers and the students. The creation of two  
17 schools in one campus will create more problems  
18 for and headache for principals. This will take  
19 their time from observing classrooms and  
20 supporting teachers and serving their students  
21 better.

22           Two weeks ago I was passing by in the house  
23 and my wife on Twitter. So I said, what are you  
24 doing and then she was just joking with me and  
25 she said, I was following Ms. Elvin. I said,

1 just be careful 'cause you follow Ms. Elvin  
2 you're going to end up in a classroom. So and  
3 isn't that what principal is supposed to be  
4 doing?

5 Please let principal do their job by having  
6 less problems, not adding more problems, but  
7 have them really less problems where they could  
8 be doing their job right. Please no to co-  
9 locations.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Can you  
11 tell me what number you are sir? Sir, what  
12 number?

13 MR. WADE GORIA: I had a student write down  
14 an appointment. I've come a bit late. So --

15 MS. GORMAN: What is your name?

16 MR. GORIA: Wade Goria.

17 MS. GORMAN: Actually they didn't put you  
18 on. So let's do this list and is number 41  
19 here? Number 41? Number 43? 44? Are you  
20 David?

21 MR. JON NORDON: No. I'm number 46.

22 MS. GORMAN: Is 45 here. Jon you may begin  
23 and then we will let you be the last speaker.

24 MR. NORDON: Okay my name is Jon Nordon  
25 [phonetic]. I'm from the Internationalist Group

1 and supporter of the Class Struggle Education  
2 Workers. My wife is a teacher in the New York  
3 City schools, Marjorie Stamberg [phonetic],  
4 she's a delegate in the UFT. So she called me  
5 up and told me to get my butt out here.

6 I was here last year when they were trying  
7 to close John Dewey and I came back because John  
8 Dewey is a special school. And I think we've  
9 all heard that here today. And I have a lot to  
10 say. I don't have time to say it all.

11 But if you listen to these students, almost  
12 60 students here pouring their hearts out trying  
13 to save their school. You know teachers, we  
14 also have a fair number of administrators. The  
15 faculty is saying obvious things.

16 Obviously co-location is going create a  
17 mess. Obviously it's going to mean that  
18 programs are going to be cut. Obviously it's  
19 going to destroy the spirit of the school.  
20 These things are all obvious. They're so  
21 obvious that you have to ask yourself, well  
22 what's going on here in reality? Do they not  
23 know that up at TWEED?

24 The answer is yes, they do know that. They  
25 know that perfectly well. I was Robeson. They

1 closed Robeson down. They said it wasn't  
2 succeeding. They had a get up from Rutger's  
3 University saying they had a tremendous program  
4 there. They don't care. They wanted to shut it  
5 down. Why? They don't, they aren't listening  
6 because they don't care. And they don't care  
7 because they opposed everything that John Dewey  
8 stood for.

9 We've had 20 years in this city of the  
10 public schools run by people who want to destroy  
11 public schools. They want to privatize it.  
12 They want to turn it into a platform for  
13 profits. And they want to go after the union,  
14 the teachers who have shown that they are  
15 dedicated that have created a welcoming school  
16 where people can friends and so on.

17 Now look, it's very important that everybody  
18 be out there on October 30<sup>th</sup> but there should be  
19 no illusions. The PEP, you know I have PEP  
20 fatigue. I've been there so many times. They  
21 always vote what the mayor wants and there's a  
22 rush on to do this before the mayor goes out.  
23 The thing is, they're not going to do anything  
24 unless we raise Holy Hell there and if they pass  
25 it anyway you're going to have to move your own

1 forces and occupy this school with the  
2 community to prevent them from tearing this out.

3 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Would you please  
4 spell your last name sir?

5 MR. GORIA: G-O-R-I-A.

6 MS. GORMAN: You may begin.

7 MR. GORIA: Thank you I'm Wade Goria. I've  
8 been a Social Studies teacher at John Dewey for  
9 a bit over 18 years. It's been an absolutely  
10 wonderful experience for me. I simultaneously  
11 teaching at Dewey I've taught at New York  
12 University and I have to say that I found many  
13 more interesting people here at John Dewey than  
14 I did at NYU.

15 The faculty here is quite amazing. We've  
16 had a remarkable transformation the last two  
17 years under the superb guidance of Principal  
18 Elvin. Why would we want to change that by  
19 ruining the school? This is something that, of  
20 course, a lot of people can't figure out.

21 I'd just like to leave, thank everyone for  
22 their wonderful comments, thank Ms. Elvin for  
23 her leadership, but at the same time I'd like to  
24 ask a question. There seems to be differing  
25 views about how one should run a school. Should

1 you have a school with three to five hundred  
2 people? That seems to be very effective  
3 according to the educational journals. Or  
4 should you have a large school that has very  
5 large facilities that allow the students to do  
6 everything?

7 The policy that's being conducted here is  
8 destroying both schools. If you expect a small  
9 school, well what's happening is you're adding  
10 3,000 people to the 500 people that are being  
11 proposed to add into our school. If you want a  
12 small school, that's being ruined.

13 So really they're falling between two  
14 schools and the price to pay is the wonderful  
15 educational attainment that has been achieved at  
16 this school since it's inception. Thank you  
17 very much.

18 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. That concludes our  
19 speaker's list. I do want to tell you we've  
20 heard many sincere, passionate and significant  
21 comments this evening.

22 We appreciate your feedback and your  
23 contributions and I guarantee you that the  
24 comments you've made will be summarized and will  
25 be seen by the Panel for Educational Policy

1 before they meet on October 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.  
2 at Prospect Heights Campus, 883 Classon Avenue,  
3 Brooklyn to vote on this proposal.

4 In case you didn't get a chance to speak  
5 tonight or you know people who would like to or  
6 they're not people who come to a mic, they may  
7 contribute their comments at the following  
8 website: D21proposals@schools.nyc.gov. Or they  
9 can call 212-374-0208.

10 I thank you very much for coming. This  
11 joint public hearing is officially adjourned.

12 [END RECORDING 368281\_master]  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

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: *Kim Perrot*

7           Date October 28, 2013

8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25