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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
Co-Location of Success Academy  
Charter School - Bronx 2, 4/9/13**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. RICK LARIOS: Hello. Good evening,  
3 everyone. If everyone could take their seats,  
4 we can get started now. Thank you. This is a  
5 joint public hearing of the Department of  
6 Education Community Education Council and school  
7 leadership team for the purposed co-location of  
8 grades five through eight of Success Academy  
9 Charter School, Bronx 2, with existing schools  
10 Junior High School 22, Jordan El Motte  
11 [phonetic] and Bronx Writing Academy in Building  
12 X022, beginning in 2014/'15.

13 We are going to begin this hearing with  
14 probably a very entertaining way to begin one  
15 which is we're going to have a presentation by  
16 this middle school band here. Okay. So are we  
17 ready for that? Where's the band? Oh, they're  
18 behind us, okay.

19 Good evening once again. Welcome again to  
20 the joint public hearing here. Before I  
21 introduce the people who are with me and myself,  
22 I just want to give a shout out to Deloris  
23 Esposito, the superintendent number 9, from this  
24 district. She's ignoring doctor's orders,  
25 children, you should never do that. But she did

1 it because she wanted to be here to show her  
2 support for the community, so we're happy she's  
3 here. I'm Richard Larios. I'm with the  
4 Department of Education. I will be facilitating  
5 this hearing tonight. With me we have asked  
6 District 9 Community Educational Council and the  
7 school leadership team in the building to  
8 participate in this joint public hearing. I'm  
9 joined tonight by Marilyn Espada, who is here.  
10 And from the senior—you can't hear me? Sorry.  
11 Okay. All right. They're working on it. So  
12 hopefully you'll hear now, better? No? Sure it  
13 wasn't the drummers that—that sounds better to  
14 me, but how about for you? That's better?  
15 Okay. All right.

16 Also, in addition to Ms. Espada, with us are  
17 the school principals Edgar Lin and Kamar  
18 Samuels from Junior High School 22 and Bronx  
19 Writing Academy, respectively. And we will also  
20 have with us some elected officials, including a  
21 representative from Assemblywoman Vanessa  
22 Gibson's office here. The hearing is being  
23 recorded, so if you want tapes of the band  
24 they'll probably be available on the website  
25 somewhere, I guess. We have asked—the purpose

1 of the hearing is for you to provide comments  
2 about the proposal. Before I describe the  
3 proposal, I want to make sure that we are all  
4 aware of the opportunity to provide your input.  
5 All of those who wish to speak must sign up in  
6 the speaker sign in area located just outside  
7 the auditorium. I believe we have a full list  
8 from that group now or are we still taking  
9 signatures? Still taking signatures. So if you  
10 didn't sign up and you want to speak, please go  
11 to the back and make sure you do sign up. The  
12 signup list will close in 15 minutes. Speakers  
13 will be given the floor in the order that they  
14 signed up and all comments are limited to two  
15 minutes.

16 We already have a fair number of speakers  
17 and there's more coming. So if people who are  
18 signed up to speak, you know, think about what  
19 you want to say, make sure you can express  
20 yourself and also remember that there are other  
21 people behind you, so to the degree you can  
22 stick to your two minutes, that would be great.  
23 There may be elected officials who arrive at  
24 different times throughout the evening. If they  
25 wish to speak, we will do our best to

1 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.  
2 Those who are here at the start of the public  
3 comment segment will be asked to speak first.  
4 In addition, you may submit questions or  
5 comments in writing at the speaker sign up  
6 table. All written comments and questions will  
7 be addressed in the analysis of public comment  
8 to be published and provided to the panel for  
9 educational policy before the panel votes. That  
10 vote is scheduled for May 22, 2013 at the Taft  
11 Educational Campus.

12 So again, the PEP panel vote is scheduled  
13 for May 22nd at Taft Educational Campus. We  
14 welcome any comments and feedback you have—may  
15 have at any time before the panel votes on this  
16 proposal. The email address and phone number  
17 where comments may be made are  
18 d09proposals@schools.nyc.gov. That's  
19 d09proposals, P-R-O-P-S-A-L-S@schools.nyc.gov.  
20 And if you want to phone in your comments,  
21 (212)374-5159 is the number. That's (212)-74-  
22 5159.

23 Proposal summary. The New York City  
24 Department of Education is proposing to co-  
25 locate grades five through eight of Success

1 Academy Charter School Bronx 2 in Building  
2 X022, located at 270 East 167th Street, Bronx,  
3 New York in Community School District 9,  
4 beginning in the 2014/2015 school year. A co-  
5 location means that two or more school  
6 organizations are located in the same building  
7 and may share common spaces like auditoriums,  
8 gymnasiums and cafeteria. Success Academy Bronx  
9 2 is an existing public elementary charter  
10 school that currently serves students in  
11 kindergarten through third grades in Building  
12 X055, located at 450 St. Paul Place, Bronx, New  
13 York also in District 9, where we'll add a  
14 fourth grade next year. The State University of  
15 New York is the authorizer for this charter  
16 school or organization. The SUNY trustees have  
17 authorized Success Academy Bronx 2 to serve  
18 students in kindergarten through fifth grade.  
19 Success Academy Bronx 2's current charter  
20 expires on February 17, 2015 and the school  
21 intends to apply to SUNY to renew its charter  
22 and to expand to serve grades kindergarten  
23 through eight. Should SUNY deny Success Academy  
24 Bronx 2's request to expand, the school's fifth  
25 grade will then be sited at X022 and the DOE

1 will consider alternate options for the  
2 utilization of the remaining space in X022.

3 If this proposal that we're here to comment  
4 on tonight is approved, Success Academy Bronx  
5 2's fifth grade will be sited in the X022  
6 Building, beginning in the 2014/2015 school  
7 year. The school will then add one grade each  
8 year until it's fully phased into X022 in  
9 2017/2018 and serve students in grades five  
10 through eight in the X022 building. The X022  
11 Building has the capacity to accommodate all of  
12 the existing and proposed schools during and  
13 after Success Academy's Bronx 2's proposed phase  
14 in period.

15 In the 2012/2013 school year, the X022  
16 Building has a total enrollment of 1,151  
17 students. The building has the capacity to  
18 serve 1,500 students, meaning the building is  
19 currently underutilized. If this proposal is  
20 approved, once Success Academy Bronx 2 is fully  
21 phased into X022 in the 2017/2018 school year,  
22 the building will serve a total of 1,153  
23 students to about 1,304, so between 1,100 and  
24 1,300 students, yielding a utilization rate of  
25 77% to 87%. As indicated in the building

1 utilization plan, and there are copies  
2 available of that at the front table, all  
3 schools in the building will continue to have  
4 enough space, pursuant to the citywide  
5 instructional footprint. Success Academy Bronx  
6 2 enrolls kindergarteners through third grade  
7 students through a lottery process, giving  
8 preference to students who reside in District 9  
9 and sets aside a certain percentage of seats for  
10 English language learner students. The school  
11 does not admit new students at the middle school  
12 level, meaning that if this proposal is  
13 approved, all of the students who attend middle  
14 school at Success Academy Bronx 2 in the X022  
15 building will come from the Success Academy  
16 Bronx 2 elementary school grades.

17 The proposed co-location of Success Academy  
18 Bronx 2 is not expected to impact the  
19 admissions, enrollment or educational options of  
20 students currently attending Junior High School  
21 22 or Bronx Writing Academy. As described in  
22 the educational impact statement for this  
23 proposal, Junior High School 22 is undergoing an  
24 enrollment reduction which will phase in over  
25 the next three years and will allow the school

1 to improve its student performance by focusing  
2 on supporting the needs of a smaller student  
3 body. The DOE planned this enrollment reduction  
4 during the 2011/2012 school year and the  
5 reduction will take place regardless of whether  
6 this co-location proposal is approved. The DOE  
7 supports Success Academy Bronx 2's placement at  
8 X022 and anticipates that the school will  
9 continue to provide excellent educational  
10 opportunities for students.

11 This proposal is intended to increase the  
12 number of high quality middle school seats in  
13 District 9 and to allow Success Academy Bronx 2  
14 to continue serving the students through middle  
15 school. Although this proposal has not yet been  
16 approved by the Panel for Educational Policy,  
17 SUNY, as the charter school authorizer, is  
18 required to hold a facilities hearing to receive  
19 feedback on the proposed co-location of Success  
20 Academy Bronx 2 with Junior High School 22 and  
21 Bronx Writing Academy. At this point in the  
22 joint public hearing—so as such, this joint  
23 public hearing will also serve as a facilities  
24 hearing for SUNY. There is a representative  
25 from SUNY in attendance. If you have any

1 questions or comments on the charter itself,  
2 Liz Genco of SUNY will tell you how to submit  
3 those questions and comments now.

4 MS. ELIZABETH GENCO: Good evening. My name  
5 is Elizabeth Genco. I'm the director of charter  
6 school information at the SUNY Charter Schools  
7 Institute. And I'm here tonight to hold a  
8 public hearing on behalf of the board of  
9 trustees of the State University of New York.  
10 Education law requires that SUNY hold a public  
11 hearing any time one of the schools it  
12 authorizes might open in an existing public  
13 school building. I'm here tonight specifically  
14 to listen to comments about the proposal to  
15 locate grades five through eight of Success  
16 Academy Bronx 2, an existing public charter  
17 school in part of Building X022 located at 270  
18 East 167th Street, Bronx, New York, 10456 in  
19 CSD9, beginning in the fall of 2014.

20 SUNY is holding its hearing now at the same  
21 time as the DOE so that we don't have to ask  
22 parents and community members to attend two  
23 different hearings on the same topic. I will be  
24 taking notes this evening on all of the comments  
25 made. In addition, you can give me written

1 comments that you may have with you. You can  
2 email comments to charters@suny.edu. You can  
3 mail comments to 41 State Street, Suite 700,  
4 Albany, New York, 12207 or fax comments to  
5 (518)427-6510. I have extra copies of our  
6 notices here with me this evening which has all  
7 of our contact information listed on it. SUNY  
8 will be accepting comments through May 30, 2013,  
9 which is five business days after the Panel for  
10 Educational Policy is anticipating on this  
11 proposed co-location. Thank you in advance for  
12 any comments you may give us this evening.

13 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Before we hear from  
14 the panel, we'll hear from the representative  
15 from Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson's office so if  
16 that speaker could come up.

17 MS. WENDY GALLEGOS: Hello? Okay. Good  
18 evening, everyone. My name is Windy Gallegos.  
19 I am here on behalf of Assemblywoman Vanessa  
20 Gibson. I'm here because I understand that  
21 there are some concerns regarding the co-  
22 location of Success Academy in MS22 and Bronx  
23 Academy-Bronx Writing Academy, so we're here to  
24 learn as much as we can about the proposal so we  
25 can hopefully address these issues. Thank you.

1 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. All right. Now  
2 we will hear from the CEC 9 president, Marilyn  
3 Espada.

4 MS. MARILYN ESPADA: Good evening, everyone.  
5 First of all, I want to start off by thanking  
6 the band for such a great performance. I  
7 actually attended 22 years ago. I was also in  
8 the band and that was one of the reasons why I  
9 kept coming to school, just to stay in the band.  
10 I also have a 21 year old that actually attended  
11 also 22, A student in 22, graduated, also was in  
12 the band, used to play the triplets. So us  
13 girls, we could do a guy's job. But anyway, it  
14 was a beautiful performance and I'm glad to hear  
15 that the band still exists because I was a  
16 little worried when I wasn't seeing the Marching  
17 Tigers. That's what they were called when I was  
18 in Taft. But you all were awesome and I applaud  
19 you all. That was very great, but back to MS22.

20 To be honest, basically what the—I feel what  
21 the DOE is doing to our schools is basically a  
22 joke because how can our kids learn with poor  
23 literacy programs? How can our kids learn if  
24 there's different things going in and out of the  
25 school building? This is like their second

1 home, so it's basically like inviting other  
2 families to come live in their home. You're  
3 invading their privacy. This is the way they  
4 feel. This is their building. And these little  
5 emails or questions about emailing them, I'm a  
6 CEC president. I attend all of the hearings. I  
7 have not got one response to none of my  
8 questions that I asked. So I will still wait.  
9 You know, we still have a couple of months left  
10 with school for this year so I will continue to  
11 wait to see if I can get the replies to the  
12 questions that I have asked.

13 Now in reference to a charter school, I  
14 would like to ask the DOE, what do they get out  
15 of placing charter schools in a DOE building  
16 when charter schools only accept children's with  
17 level threes and fours. So basically what  
18 you're telling me is that you're setting up your  
19 own public schools to fail because they're going  
20 to remain with the level one and level two  
21 students. And my second question is, is this a  
22 retaliation because of the lawsuit that happened  
23 last year? It's just a question. I'm just  
24 saying, just a question.

25 Also, as a CEC president we had our CEC

1 meeting last month at PWA. We felt very  
2 comfortable, thank you, very good school,  
3 treated us like we were at home. We felt  
4 comfortable. We had a lot of parents that came  
5 to our meetings, concerns about what's going on  
6 in the school. And it's funny that I graduated  
7 from the school and the DOE, it's ready to do  
8 changes. But what happened with the changes of  
9 the light and some windows in this school and  
10 the auditorium? And as a CEC president, I  
11 requested a walkthrough. I'm still waiting for  
12 the approval and I'm still waiting for who's  
13 assigned of the DOE representative to come and  
14 do the walkthrough at Jordan Elmont 22 with the  
15 writing academy.

16 I received this email, maybe about five days  
17 ago. I actually got it from the superintendent  
18 before I got it from downtown. So I'm here as a  
19 CEC president and I'm not here to support the  
20 DOE. I'm against of what the DOE is doing to  
21 our public schools. I'm here to advocate and  
22 support our children and our parents, because at  
23 the ending of the day, the ones that are  
24 struggling and suffering is our children, not  
25 theirs. Thank you.

1 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. We will now hear  
2 from CLT member Principal Edgar Lin.

3 MR. EDGAR LIN: Wow, I know. First of all,  
4 I would like to thank all of those who are here  
5 today, representatives from the District 9  
6 office, Superintendent Esposito, the Bronx  
7 Writing Academy, MS22. You know, today is in  
8 fact the 20th day that I've been on the job here  
9 at MS22. I'm trying. They've been 20 amazing  
10 days. I didn't say they were easy days, but  
11 they were amazing. But I can't imagine anything  
12 good coming out of easy. In many ways, I'm  
13 introducing myself again. There are parents  
14 sitting here that I have yet to meet, community  
15 organizations that I've yet to reach out to,  
16 elected officials of the representatives whom I  
17 will be meeting for the first time, members of  
18 the Department of Education who I still need to  
19 get acquainted with and other constituents of  
20 this great community.

21 Good evening, everybody. My name is Edgar  
22 Lin and I am so privileged and honored to sit—I  
23 said stand, but sitting before you as a  
24 principal of MS22, privileged and honored  
25 because I understand full well the awesome

1 responsibility that has been bestowed upon me.  
2 I understand that in this building are the most  
3 gracious and precious resources of all of us  
4 sitting here tonight, our children. And that  
5 you have trusted me with your hopes and your  
6 dreams and with that, I thank you. I will say  
7 to you what I said to the MS 22 community and  
8 staff when I was introduced a little over a  
9 month ago, that I believe it is my job to work  
10 to solve all of the problems that stand in the  
11 way of student—of our young people's learning.  
12 But it is impossible for me to be in every  
13 classroom, to teach every child.

14 So my work is to create the conditions so  
15 that all of the people sitting over there,  
16 that's back over there. And will the faculty  
17 and staff of MS22 please stand, all of you? For  
18 you to be successful at doing your jobs—you can  
19 all take a seat now--which in fact, is the same  
20 as mine, working to solve problems that stand in  
21 the way of student learning and creating  
22 conditions for student success. And isn't that  
23 essentially the job description of all  
24 educators, that the mission of all of us working  
25 within the Department of Education is to solve

1 problems that stand in the way of student  
2 learning?

3       Tonight I am speaking to advocate for my  
4 job, in part because it would be difficult for  
5 me to come to work tomorrow morning if I didn't.  
6 But also, when I say that, I'm advocating for  
7 the ability to work to create conditions to  
8 solve problems that stand in the way of student  
9 learning and for support for myself and my  
10 fellow educators to create the best possible  
11 conditions for our students' success. If the  
12 proposal to co-locate Success Academy Bronx two  
13 is passed, MS22, I, we, will not be able to  
14 utilize and plan for the use of space as freely  
15 as possible to meet the needs of our children.

16       Space equals options for our children, and  
17 options means possibilities. Less space equals  
18 less options, equals less possibilities. Ask  
19 any tailor to make a shirt or dress with less  
20 material. She or he will do it, but the  
21 possibilities of what that shirt or dress will  
22 look like will be limited. Less space might  
23 mean that students will be programmed in tube  
24 rooms for their math class or English class or  
25 science class. Imagine if you had to move your

1 office every 50 to 100 minutes and start on a  
2 completely different project. That's the life  
3 of a middle schooler as it is. But now imagine  
4 having to move to a different office in the  
5 middle of working on a project. You'll be able  
6 to do it, but I think we can all agree that we  
7 wouldn't be as efficient or as productive in the  
8 work that we do.

9 We need a computer lab where students are  
10 learning HTML to create apps. We need a real  
11 music room where our band and our musicians can  
12 practice and perfect a craft. We need space for  
13 our Girl Scouts as they grow to become leaders.  
14 Tonight, you'll hear from some people about the  
15 amazing work they are doing by having space.  
16 I'm also speaking tonight to advocate for  
17 possibility, the possibility that this building,  
18 the campus we share with the Bronx Writing  
19 Academy, will be the most amazing school in the  
20 neighborhood and a place where every parent in  
21 our zone will want to send their children to.  
22 As you heard, less space also equals less  
23 students. The EIS as explained states that a  
24 previous planned enrollment reduction would  
25 account for less students. That reduction was

1 planned for the new school that was intended  
2 to replace MS22 as a result of the turnaround  
3 process and was slated to take effect this, the  
4 2013—I'm sorry, 2012/2013 school year, according  
5 to the education impact statement released on  
6 3/29/2012.

7 The planned reduction to a number between  
8 595 and 625 did not happen as the current  
9 register of MS22 is 663. In fact, on January  
10 23rd of this year, 2013, when enrollment  
11 projections released the October 23 enrollment  
12 outlook for MS22, the forecasted projections  
13 were 628 students which was larger than the  
14 2011/2012 projections. If the proposal to co-  
15 locate Success Academy Bronx 2 is passed, this  
16 community over the next three years, 70 students  
17 per year and all of the years following will  
18 have 210 less 6th, 7th and 8th graders who will  
19 be able to access incredible teaching and  
20 learning that this building will have to offer.  
21 Middle school aged children in this neighborhood  
22 will not be able to attend Success Academy  
23 because Success Academy will not be admitting  
24 middle schoolers. They will be growing their  
25 current third graders, into fourth graders, into

1 fifth graders, into sixth graders, into  
2 seventh graders, and then into eighth graders  
3 for a program that has yet to be approved and  
4 that gives priority to District 8 families.

5 As you will hear and see tonight, there is  
6 so much potential and possibility in this  
7 building. Co-location of Success Academy will  
8 mean the sons and daughters of this neighborhood  
9 may not be able to experience what this amazing  
10 place is going to be. And this is going to be  
11 an amazing place. I have hope. To quote  
12 Cornell West, "Hope looks at the evidence and  
13 says it doesn't look good at all. We're going  
14 to go beyond the evidence to create new  
15 possibilities based on visions that become  
16 contagious, to allow people to engage in heroic  
17 action, always against the odds, no guarantee  
18 whatsoever." That's hope. I'm a prisoner of  
19 hope. I'm going to die a prisoner of hope.

20 Thank you to the MS22 community for allowing  
21 me to speak before you, to be part of the lives  
22 of your most precious assets, your children.  
23 Thank you.

24 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. We will now hear  
25 from Middle School 22 school leadership team.

1 Will the folks who are doing that presentation  
2 come down and introduce themselves?

3 MS. MICHELLE BARROW: Good evening ladies  
4 and gentlemen, 22 and BWA, I am Michelle Barrow,  
5 Junior High School 22 for 22 odd years here.  
6 This is my community. So the SLT team, both  
7 from BWA and 22, we are—it's simple. Our school  
8 is for everyone. It is not choosing, and pick  
9 and choose and refuse. We are this community.  
10 We are the ones that are here 24/7, Saturdays,  
11 late nights. We're the ones that the students  
12 can depend on. In the morning, when there's a  
13 bad morning with their parents and they come to  
14 us, we are their family. This school has always  
15 been a family. It has always worked together  
16 and strived to do the best.

17 But with a co-location of a charter school  
18 and those kids that don't meet to their  
19 standards, where do those kids come to? Where  
20 should we put those kids? We have strived and  
21 we have made great movements towards being the  
22 best that we can be and we know we have more  
23 room and we know we have things that we need to  
24 do. But I'm not working in a classroom, if  
25 there's so much space in our school. I travel

1 from place to place, okay. Our students,  
2 there's no space for them to breathe when we  
3 have to stay indoors because it's raining or  
4 snowing, and it's dangerous for them to be  
5 outside. So where's the space that the co-  
6 location will take? Where will our students be?

7 Reduction of size means reduction of  
8 services. We service our students multiple  
9 ways. You know and us as teachers, we're not  
10 just teachers. We're their parent. We're their  
11 counselor. Sometimes we're their priest. You  
12 know that. And our students know that we're  
13 here for them. Their parents know that they can  
14 call us in the middle of the night and say,  
15 "Hey, I need help. Can you help me?" So  
16 please, take into consideration that this  
17 community is a community already, we don't need  
18 a third or a fourth to take over space that is  
19 not here.

20 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Okay. All right.  
21 Could the BWA, the Bronx Writing Academy senior  
22 leadership team come up? I understand they  
23 would like to make a presentation. All right.  
24 Thank you.

25 MR. DANIEL LEVIN: Good evening. My name is

1 Daniel Levin. For the past four years, I have  
2 taught math at the Bronx Writing Academy.  
3 Tonight I'm unbelievably proud to be speaking on  
4 behalf of my students and my school. While it  
5 is true that the Bronx Writing Academy and MS22  
6 are two separate schools, it is false to say  
7 that the two schools are divided. We are  
8 united, not only by sharing a building, but also  
9 by sharing the belief that we are here, working  
10 day in, day out, to provide the best education  
11 possible to this community. We share pride in  
12 always striving to improve the quality of  
13 learning and opportunities to provide to every  
14 single student who walks through our doors.

15 The Success Academy also works hard to  
16 provide the best education possible for their  
17 students, but the truth of this—the truth of the  
18 matter is they will not serve this community.  
19 If the Success Academy were to co-locate into  
20 the building, there would be many students in  
21 this community, including some of those who  
22 require the greatest support, who would be  
23 unable to attend any school in the building and  
24 would miss out on the amazing learning  
25 opportunities we provide here.

1           In the 2011/2012 school year, around 16%  
2 of the students in MS22 and 18% of the students  
3 in BWA received special services to help support  
4 their education. That means for every six  
5 students who walked through our doors, one  
6 student was receiving extra support in the form  
7 of counseling, speech therapy, literacy  
8 intervention, or a dedicated learning  
9 environment meeting their IEP needs. Last year  
10 around 8% of the students at Success Academy  
11 Bronx 2, the elementary school that would be  
12 sending students to this building received  
13 special services. The Success Academy  
14 Elementary School only served half of the  
15 special education population that would be  
16 comparable at BWA and MS22.

17           The population taught by Success Academy is  
18 not representative of the educational needs  
19 found in this community. Looking at the  
20 historical data of the makeup of students who  
21 come into this building, there is no reason to  
22 think that will change in 2014. Last year  
23 around 28% of the students at BWA and around 29%  
24 of the students in MS22 were classified as  
25 English language learners. That's almost 30% of

1 this entire building. I wish I could be more  
2 specific about these numbers, but I have to say  
3 words like around and almost for a specific  
4 reason. The population in this building is  
5 constantly changing. I spoke earlier about the  
6 pride felt in both schools. Let me be a little  
7 more specific in this instance. We are proud to  
8 accept each and every student who walks into  
9 this building, no matter where they're coming  
10 from, the time of year they arrive or the  
11 resources that will be necessary to support  
12 them.

13 That means every single week new students  
14 are coming from in from different boroughs,  
15 states, countries and even continents. Many of  
16 these new students are already rooted in our  
17 community. They are the brothers, the sisters  
18 and the cousins of current students. Just today  
19 a new student from Ghana entered the 8th grade  
20 at BWA. In BWA, 67%--let me repeat that, 67% of  
21 the students were classified as L's or  
22 newcomers, meaning that they have less than  
23 three years of service. These students, they're  
24 the ones that are coming in the door. Many of  
25 whom are coming in mid-year. Currently the

1 Success Academy Bronx 2 has only 11% of its  
2 students classified as English language  
3 learners. By the time these students reach  
4 fifth grade and potential to come into this  
5 building, I predict their L population will be  
6 significantly less than 11%.

7 Unlike MS22 and BWA, the Success Academy  
8 will not take newly arrived walk in students  
9 mid-year. Many of the students at the Success  
10 Academy will transition out of the ELL program  
11 just as many will transition out of the ELL  
12 program at non-charter elementary schools.  
13 However, the Success Academy will not repopulate  
14 that population nearly as much or as often as we  
15 do. For this reason, we see schools like  
16 Success Academy - - with an ELL population of  
17 2.2%, versus a district wide population of 14.8%  
18 and Success Academy Bronx 1 with an ELL  
19 population of 3.2%, versus a district wide  
20 population of 20.2%. By the time the Success  
21 Academy Bronx 2 elementary school students come  
22 into this building, we can expect to see a  
23 similar situation where BWA and MS22 have  
24 upwards of six times the ELL population of the  
25 Success Academy.

1           The proposal for co-location states that  
2 by 2017, the year when the co-location is  
3 completed, BWA and MS22 will lose around 300  
4 total students. This number is an  
5 understatement. The proposal says that BWA has  
6 488 students, but as a result of our policy of  
7 taking in the walk in midyear students, as of  
8 today we have 512 students. If we assume MS22  
9 has a similarly unrepresented population, then  
10 the two schools would be losing around 350  
11 students by the time co-location is complete.  
12 Actually, let me rephrase that. The schools  
13 would not be losing 350 students. This  
14 community would be losing 350 seats for its  
15 children in this building.

16           When students who might have brothers,  
17 sisters or cousins of current students come to  
18 either BWA or MS22 they will be faced with one  
19 of two realities. Either there will be no place  
20 for them or they will be shoved into an already  
21 overcrowded classroom because there will  
22 definitely be no place for them at the Success  
23 Academy. Neither of these two options help that  
24 child, and neither of those two options benefit  
25 this community. The Bronx Writing Academy and

1 MS22 work tirelessly to teach the students of  
2 this community. While I'm sure that the Success  
3 Academy works equally as hard to teach their  
4 students, it is clear to me that if they co-  
5 locate in this building, they will not only not  
6 be teaching this community, but they will also  
7 be taking from it. Thank you very much.

8 MR. LARIOS: Assemblywoman Vanessa Gibson  
9 has arrived and she would like to make a  
10 comment.

11 MS. VANESSA GIBSON: Thank you. How do I  
12 follow that? Oh, my goodness. Good evening,  
13 ladies and gentlemen. Good evening, Middle  
14 School 22. Good evening, Bronx Writing Academy,  
15 and good evening to all of my parents, my  
16 advocates, my CEC rep, my school superintendent,  
17 Department of Ed, State Ed, all of my union  
18 reps, UFT. Good evening, and thank you so much  
19 for being here. So I will be extremely quick,  
20 and I know you heard from my wonderful staffer,  
21 Wendy, who outlined what our issue has been.  
22 But let me just first thank all of you for being  
23 here this evening, because this type of forum is  
24 truly, truly important for the future of  
25 education in our community. I want to thank all

1 of the parents and leaders that came to my  
2 office over the past several months.

3 Thank you so much for letting me know how  
4 important this proposal is, how important it is  
5 to speak up and make sure that your voices are  
6 heard. So you have heard many different  
7 testimonies that are submitted into the record.  
8 And I just simply have to ask a very rhetorical  
9 question. After all that you have heard this  
10 evening, why should this proposal move forward?  
11 You have heard from countless representatives  
12 from MS22, and let me first give a huge shout  
13 out to the amazing marching band at MS22.  
14 Sorry. I had to do that, because I have been  
15 elected. I've been your assemblywoman for  
16 almost four years, and in that four years, I  
17 have seen the talent at this school, with regard  
18 to the wonderful marching band. So I want to  
19 first thank them for their performance this  
20 evening, and thank them for the work that  
21 they're doing.

22 So you have heard a couple of different  
23 stories, and simply put, we know that this  
24 proposal that's currently before us is going to  
25 have a weighing effect on the future of

1 education. When you talk about public  
2 education, public means everyone, right? Public  
3 means everyone, regardless of your circumstance,  
4 any barrier, any challenge that you face, any  
5 disability. Any obstacle that you have to  
6 receive an education, it means that you deserve  
7 access to quality. And so, we're looking at a  
8 proposal that's going to inhibit that access to  
9 public. We're looking at a proposal that's  
10 going to have an effect on BWA, as well as MS22.

11 Now I know all of you are truly concerned,  
12 and you have every right to be. When you look  
13 at 22, and you look at the generations of  
14 students, and countless families that have come  
15 through this institution, we know that we have  
16 made great strides of progress, and we have had  
17 many successful students that have walked  
18 through these school doors. So we know that  
19 we're doing something right. Now moving  
20 forward, we know that we have many, many  
21 challenges that we must address. When you talk  
22 about academic excellence, quality, and  
23 standards, we know that our children have a lot  
24 to accomplish. But what are we doing as leaders  
25 to make sure that they actually get the

1 education that they need? And so I am here to  
2 support all of you, because as this proposal is  
3 moving forward, we must make sure that everyone  
4 has access.

5         What would be the benefit of the Success  
6 Academy moving into this building if you're  
7 telling me that the students at 22 and BWA, and  
8 the students in District 9 in this community,  
9 will not have their access to this school?  
10 That's not equal. That says to me that there's  
11 a disparity when you talk about public access to  
12 education. And so I am truly as concerned as  
13 all of you are. And now I know I can speak for  
14 many of you when I say that as leaders in this  
15 community, we are not anti-charter school, but  
16 we are simply about equal access for everyone,  
17 access for schools for everyone.

18         And so we have to make our voices heard, and  
19 we have to make sure that the Department of Ed  
20 understands our concerns, because these are our  
21 children. They're not anyone else's children,  
22 but they belong to us. And we must make sure  
23 that we have a true role and are truly  
24 stakeholders in this process. While class size  
25 is extremely important, reducing class size at

1 BWA and 22 is important. But with that class  
2 size reduction, what happens to those students  
3 that are now no longer at these two schools?  
4 Where do they go? And I know I have an issue in  
5 High Bridge, and for many, many years, students  
6 at the five elementary schools in High Bridge,  
7 when they graduated from the fifth grade, they  
8 had to travel across town to go to their local  
9 middle school. And finally this year, after ten  
10 years, we will have a brand new middle school in  
11 High Bridge for everyone, right?

12 So that same type of message is what we have  
13 to have in this particular forum, that schools  
14 have to be for everyone. With the challenges we  
15 face with so many ELL students in our  
16 population, and students with special needs,  
17 it's unacceptable that charter schools have not  
18 been educating this special needs population,  
19 and that must be addressed. If you talk about  
20 serving everyone, students with special needs  
21 are a part of that, as well. And that has to be  
22 the message. For those of you that know me, you  
23 know that I am supportive, and I have been in  
24 the past, of charter schools. But I am equally  
25 as supportive of traditional public schools, as

1 well, because I was educated in a traditional  
2 public school. And I need to make sure that  
3 resources are still available for our schools,  
4 to make sure that they educate each and every  
5 one of our children.

6 So again, I thank all of you for being here,  
7 and I truly hope that the panel will listen to  
8 the concerns of all of you, because at the end  
9 of the day, at the end of this process, when our  
10 children are looking for leadership, they're  
11 going to look at all of us, and say what have we  
12 done to move education forward? What have we  
13 done to educate our next generation of leaders  
14 that are coming through our communities? We  
15 have to send a different message. We have to  
16 have a better standard, and by doing so, we can  
17 truly have a school system that is equal to  
18 everyone. So thank you so much for being here,  
19 and continue to do the work that you're doing,  
20 and I'm here for you. Thank you.

21 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Thank you,  
22 Assemblywoman. Thank you, CEC and the SLTs for  
23 their comments, as well. This concludes the  
24 sort of formal presentation part of the program,  
25 so we will now move on to open the floor for

1 public comment. Speakers will be given the  
2 floor in the order they signed up. Again, all  
3 comments are limited to two minutes. Are we  
4 fixing a mike here? Okay. So we're going to  
5 start. Until we get the other mike set up,  
6 we'll use this mike. So the first sign up  
7 speaker is--

8 MS. MONIQUE JARVIS: Is your mike back on?  
9 Okay. Good afternoon, MS22 staff, Leap After  
10 School, and good afternoon, BWA. In my  
11 comments, I'd like to state for the record that  
12 I'm directly addressing the Panel for Education  
13 Policy, the mayor's office, DOE, and  
14 particularly, Success Academies. I just want to  
15 say right off the bat that we've heard the data.  
16 We know that our children--the best interest of  
17 our children and our community is not theirs.  
18 So I'm not going to reiterate data that you've  
19 already heard. I just want to state clearly and  
20 succinctly that basically, Success Academy's  
21 attempt to push into this school and the whole  
22 charter school movement, to push into other  
23 schools, and make existing schools squander for  
24 limited resources, thereby violating the rights  
25 of special education needs students, violating

1 the rights of community—the students in the  
2 community for quality education, is nothing but  
3 a hostile, financially backed move, to basically  
4 line the pockets of consultants and Bloomberg's  
5 cronies, if you will.

6 It's not about choice. This is about choice  
7 without equity. This is separate and unequal.  
8 To me, this is nothing other than a new Jim  
9 Crow. That being said, we are not, as State  
10 Assemblywoman Gibson said, against charter  
11 schools, but when you, a charter school  
12 organization, is lining the pockets of its CEO  
13 with \$336,000, when a charter school is spending  
14 upwards of \$1 million on marketing, when a  
15 charter school organization is spending \$250,000  
16 on lobbying, while talking about taking away  
17 resources, sorely needed resources from our  
18 students, then it's not about anti-charter.  
19 It's about why don't you take that money and  
20 find your own space to do what you claim you can  
21 do?

22 In ending, I would just like to say, as the  
23 director of the after school program, on behalf  
24 of myself and my amazing staff, I would like to  
25 say on behalf of MS22 and BWA, we have been in

1 this building for eight years. We approach  
2 the child as a holistic human being, and not a  
3 dollar sign or test score. And I have to say,  
4 what we need to do, in conclusion, what we need  
5 to do is we need to do what Bronxville High  
6 School Academy did. We need to wage a lawsuit.  
7 We need to get our resources together. We  
8 already know the data. We already know our  
9 children are not—the best interests of our  
10 children are not what they are concerned about.  
11 This is business, so we need to get off of the  
12 tyranny of shoulds, and do something about it.

13 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. All right. The  
14 mike is now working. I believe the hip hop  
15 group is supposed to be the next speaker here,  
16 or is that—hip hop? That all—that's off the—  
17 okay. So the next speaker, if we could have the  
18 next three speakers come up, Esteban Estevez,  
19 Barbara Estevez, and Steven Mitchell. Come up  
20 here, and the mike is now working. Test. Okay.  
21 So Esteban is first, then Barbara, and then  
22 Steven.

23 MR. ESTEBAN ESTEVEZ: Hello. Okay. My name  
24 is Esteban Estevez. I am a high school mentor  
25 institute. I'm from the High School Mentor

1 Institute. And to leave out the—what? I am  
2 from the High School Mentor Institute and the  
3 Leap After School Program at MS22, also,  
4 graduating class of 2010. I was the member of  
5 the band since 2005, and became the captain in  
6 2012. I have a lot of history in MS22. I  
7 remember when I used to be the biggest nuisance,  
8 always giving the teachers a hard time. But  
9 when I met the MS22 staff, my life changed.  
10 They helped me become a better student and a—  
11 they helped me become a better person. And to  
12 think 200 students won't have the same chance of  
13 experience that I had in the Leap After School  
14 Program at 22 that they gave me, isn't fair to  
15 those students. They school provides necessary  
16 education and experience for students, so why  
17 change that? Thank you.

18 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Barbara Estevez.

19 MS. BARBARA ESTEVEZ: Hello. My name is  
20 Barbara Estevez. I work here at Leap as a high  
21 school mentor. I just wanted to say that both  
22 the school and the Leap After School Program  
23 here at MS22 has offered me a variety of  
24 activities and learning opportunities that has  
25 been opened up to both high and low level

1 students. I, as a former student, was  
2 introduced to the flute in band, and the violin  
3 in after school. And I was also introduced in  
4 math to advanced math in 8th grade, to learn  
5 algebra for 9th grade. The main thing that the  
6 charters do—the charter school is going to do by  
7 entering our building is that they're going to  
8 break up the family that we have. Students here  
9 have friends and teachers that helps them. You  
10 know, it gives them—ay, ay, ay. It's just a  
11 beautiful family that we have, and it shouldn't  
12 be broken up. We shouldn't have strangers in  
13 our home.

14 The charter school, by entering, would have—  
15 would make—would be overcrowded. Two is a  
16 company, and three is a crowd. It would only be  
17 accepting good students, which doesn't give an  
18 opportunity for low performing students to  
19 learn. And the assumption is that learning is  
20 not what was happening here. But that is wrong.  
21 What Leap After School teaches their students is  
22 the work that I'm learning in 9th grade. We  
23 have this program called Stem in Leap After  
24 School, which is a program where they do—they  
25 conduct experiments at a 9th grade level. This—

1 all these experiments has even helped me to,  
2 you know, review for my tests and stuff like  
3 that. Denying the community denies growth, and  
4 denies the opportunity for these students to  
5 become competitors in a global society. And I'm  
6 proud to say that I'm a straight A student in  
7 high school, and I wouldn't have accomplished  
8 this without the help of the teachers and staff  
9 here at MS22. Thank you.

10 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Steven Mitchell,  
11 Younglesys Hilario [phonetic], Brandy Franklin,  
12 and Alberta Martin. If the next speakers could  
13 come up, please.

14 MR. LARIOS: So Steven Mitchell is six,  
15 Younglesys Hilario, Brandy Franklin, and Alberta  
16 Martin.

17 MALE VOICE: Guys. First of all, I want to  
18 explain something real quick. He's not Steven  
19 Mitchell. He's Joshua Glover, but I want to  
20 make sure they get home so they can do their  
21 homework, so we switched numbers with Steven  
22 Mitchell, so he's going to be speaking, okay?  
23 Joshua.

24 MR. JOSHUA GLOVER: Hi. My name is Joshua  
25 Glover, and I'm from the MS22 varsity team, and

1 we recently won a championship, and if the  
2 charter school come in here, it's going to be  
3 chaotic. If I remember, Mr. Rick said that'll  
4 be 1,300 students in here, and imagine if BWA is  
5 on the fourth floor. Imagine if BWA's on the  
6 third floor and a fire broke out. There's too  
7 much people to get out, and as Mr. Lynch said,  
8 we must be safe, organized, responsible, and  
9 respectful. And we can't be safe if there's too  
10 much people in here and a fire breaks out. And  
11 I just want to thank BWA, 22, and thank  
12 everybody who came here to support us, to make  
13 sure the charter school don't come here, and  
14 have a nice day.

15 MR. LARIOS: Thank you and congratulations.  
16 Oh, okay. Yes, the hip hop performance is going  
17 to happen now, apparently. So I'm going back to  
18 number three, here. That's right, and then if  
19 Ms. Hilario, Ms. Franklin, and Ms. Martin could  
20 get ready, that would help move things along, as  
21 well. All right. Speaker number seven, Ms.  
22 Hilario. Thank you.

23 MS. YOUNGLESYS HILARIO: Good evening,  
24 everyone. My name is Younglesys Hilario  
25 [phonetic]. I'm 17 and I graduated from Bronx

1 Writing Academy in 2009. Let's start by  
2 saying that I came to this country without  
3 knowing English, and the teachers, most of them  
4 are sitting right there, they helped me develop  
5 the skills necessary to be successful in high  
6 school. Everyone in the school were always  
7 leading the students through the right path by  
8 giving them advice and telling them that  
9 education leads to success. I graduated from  
10 the school with honors four years ago, and I am  
11 extremely grateful that I received this  
12 bilingual education, because now I speak English  
13 and Spanish fluently. I feel comfortable  
14 speaking both languages. Thanks to the math  
15 skills I developed in this school, I am now a  
16 senior in high school taking AP calculus. I was  
17 on honor roll in this school, and I'm still on  
18 honor roll in high school I'm attending right  
19 now. This school should not be changed. You  
20 know why, because I'm going to graduate from  
21 high school in June, and it all started with  
22 this school. Thank you, Bronx Writing Academy.

23 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Speaker number  
24 eight, Brandy Franklin.

25 MS. BRANDY FRANKLIN: Hi neighbors. My name

1 is Brandy Franklin, and some of you may know  
2 me as Brandy Bonneface, because I've been  
3 serving in this community and teaching in this  
4 building for 20 years. This co-location is  
5 seriously disruptive. When Success Academy  
6 joined Urban Assembly in 2010, Urban Assembly's  
7 school environment score fell from an A to a B,  
8 and still hasn't recuperated, receiving another  
9 B. When Success Academy co-located with MS 203,  
10 their survey fell from a B in 2009, 2010, to a  
11 C. And last year, they received yet another C.  
12 PS 30's co-location with Success Academy in 2008  
13 moved their survey score from an A to a C, and  
14 four years later, they're still recovering, and  
15 only earned a B. That's four years of  
16 destabilization. We don't want that for any of  
17 our children.

18 The data says that children are negatively  
19 affected by co-location. MS22 and BWA share two  
20 gyms, one auditorium, and one cafeteria. Some  
21 of our students have lunch as early as 10:00  
22 a.m., and others don't eat until 1:15. A third  
23 school would further strain our resources and  
24 space, and this logistical strain causes the  
25 perception of overcrowding. Overcrowding causes

1 known psychological strain on students and  
2 their learning. I mention this because we  
3 started with 489 students. We now have 512. If  
4 co-location occurs, they say they'll cut our  
5 numbers, but who do we send away when they come  
6 to us in mid year? I say no one. So children  
7 of our community need space to learn and grow.  
8 Allow our students this space. No to co-  
9 location.

10 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Alberta Martin is  
11 speaker number nine, and if Dawn Nolan and  
12 Alyssa Negrón can come up, that would be great.

13 MS. MARTIN: Hello. My name is Alberta  
14 Martin. I'm the teacher at the Bronx Writing  
15 Academy, and a UFT chapter leader. But today  
16 I'm here as an educator, and also as a parent.  
17 Okay. This Bronx Writing Academy and CIS 22 are  
18 community schools. Okay. These are schools  
19 that serve everybody in the community. We are  
20 not serving the community when we cut spaces  
21 that are sorely needed by members of the  
22 community. As you have heard from speakers so  
23 far this evening, everybody that walks through  
24 the doors of either of our schools are welcome.  
25 Okay. We do not need to lose resources in this

1 community. Our students face enough  
2 challenges.

3 We don't have to talk about the demographics  
4 of District 9. We know what they are, and we  
5 know that when our kids walk out this building,  
6 we don't know what they're walking into. But  
7 they do know what they're walking into when they  
8 come here. And as you have heard some of them  
9 say, and you will hear more of them say, this  
10 place, these places are needed. We need open  
11 access to education for all in the community,  
12 not just a select few, you understand, who are  
13 pick and choose, who's going to make their  
14 school look good. We don't do that. We don't  
15 care whether it's going to make us look good.  
16 Whoever comes through that door, we're prepared  
17 to serve them. And so I say no to co-location.

18 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Dawn Nolan, Alyssa  
19 Negrón is next.

20 MS. DAWN NOLAN: Good evening. I'm Dawn  
21 Nolan, and I'm with the Girl Scout Council of  
22 Greater New York, and I'm here to plead for our  
23 Girl Scout program in MS22. We have been in  
24 MS22 for five years, and served over five  
25 hundred girls with girl scouting, girl scouting,

1 the premiere leadership development program  
2 for girls. Five years ago, when we started out  
3 career exploration program, we came to five  
4 schools in the Bronx, because girls weren't  
5 getting the girl scout experience. We brought  
6 our staff and our resources, and MS22 is one of  
7 those schools that opened their doors and gave  
8 our program a home so we can serve girls here  
9 where there is a great need. We know that  
10 research shows 90% of girls will eventually be  
11 women who need to be financially responsible,  
12 and will have responsibility for themselves or  
13 their households in their lifetime. Girls need  
14 the skills, the life skills and the career  
15 knowledge so that they can make wise choices for  
16 their future.

17 The program comes into the school and  
18 teaches girls in six, seventh, and eighth grade  
19 all of the benefits of girl scouting, the values  
20 that we espouse, but also teaches them and  
21 exposes them to career speakers, takes them on  
22 workplace visits, takes them to camp to develop  
23 their leadership skills. And the results are  
24 in. After being four years through the program  
25 and now in our fifth year, girls have learned in

1 11 out of 12 of our curriculums, touching on  
2 careers in medicine, law, business, and science.  
3 They have learned about careers, and what it  
4 takes to follow those careers and those dreams.  
5 They have shown improvement in goal setting,  
6 conflict resolution, and also building healthy  
7 relationships.

8 This is opposed to girls in other schools  
9 that did not have the benefit of this program.  
10 There have been academic improvements, and we  
11 hear from teachers and administrators how it's  
12 making a difference in these girls' lives.  
13 We've even seen in high school, our first alumni  
14 classes have shown improvement in their  
15 attendance, as well as their credits earned, and  
16 their algebra regents, both taking and passing  
17 compared to other schools. This program is  
18 making a difference in the home, the classroom,  
19 and the support of MS 22 is critical for girls  
20 to continue in this program. Thank you.

21 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Alyssa Negron and  
22 Diana and Jessica I guess are co-speakers,  
23 numbers 12. All right.

24 MS. ALYSSA NEGRON: Hi. My name is Alyssa  
25 Negron. Good evening, and I'm just here to

1 speak on behalf of our fabulous Girl Scouts  
2 here at MS22. Five years of doing wonderful  
3 things right here. 91% of our girls say that  
4 they feel prepared to succeed in life. 88% say  
5 that they have developed real leadership skills.  
6 87% say that they have learned how to develop  
7 healthy relationships as opposed to unhealthy  
8 ones. 87% have learned to avoid harmful  
9 behaviors of all kinds. 87% have learned goal  
10 setting and now have a high self esteem. These  
11 girls are succeeding and learning the tools that  
12 they need to become successful women right here  
13 in MS22. They are being supported by their  
14 administration and the school staff, and they  
15 deserve to have a space needed to learn in a  
16 focused and undivided way.

17 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Diana and Jessica.

18 DIANA: Hi. My name Diana, and I'm also one  
19 of the teachers here at MS22. I just wanted to  
20 say that the girls here participate in many  
21 career visits. They get to hear from  
22 professional speakers, and they really  
23 participate in investor ceremonies and summer  
24 youth employment workshops that happen here. So  
25 the girls really do get to develop and, you

1 know, learn what it is to be outside of  
2 school, and what that is like. And we have a  
3 student here who would like to talk about her  
4 experience.

5 MS. MELODY DEVON: Hi. My name is—okay.  
6 Hi. My name is Melody Devon, and I'm also part  
7 of the girls' basketball team which is right  
8 next to me right here. What we talk about in  
9 Girl Scouts is law and order, and how we can—  
10 well, law and order, and how we learn about the  
11 law and stuff like that. What we do in class is  
12 we talk about our problems and how girls—and how  
13 we can make them better, and how we can just  
14 trust the Girl Scout teachers to help us with  
15 our problems and make things better.

16 JESSICA: My name is Jessica and I just  
17 wanted to add something to that. We build girls  
18 of courage, confidence and character. That is  
19 what we are here to do. I have girls on trips  
20 that told me that they have never been out of  
21 the Bronx. And we motivate our girls to dream.  
22 We motivate them to become professional,  
23 independent women. That is what we are here to  
24 do. With the charter school in the building,  
25 there is no space for us. And I just wanted to

1 appreciate everyone's help and support. And  
2 hopefully we can continue to service our girls  
3 in the future. Thank you.

4 MR. LARIOS: Thank you, Diana, Jessica and  
5 Melanie. The next five speakers are--number 13  
6 is Merilee Pray, then Robert Brasel, Rolando  
7 Secarma, Kevin Fry and then Steven Mitchell.

8 MS. MERILEE PRAY: Hi. My name is Merilee  
9 Pray, and I'm a special education teacher, here  
10 at MS22. I teach three grades, three subjects,  
11 in three different settings. That's a total of  
12 six classes and I don't even have a desk. I see  
13 my colleagues who teach science carting science  
14 labs around with them all day long. All of us  
15 have to clamor for empty rooms to administer  
16 exams for those students who need  
17 accommodations. So I saw on the impact  
18 statement that any modification in enrollment  
19 won't effect services to those students with  
20 IEPs and those L students. But if you look at  
21 the data from other schools that get these kind  
22 of collocations, the percentage--the proportions  
23 of their IEP and L students increase  
24 exponentially. That necessarily means that  
25 opportunity for inclusion is drastically

1 lessened. We will effectively be segregating  
2 these students preventing them from the  
3 acclimation that is so vital to their growth.

4 Now I've read that the Harlem Success  
5 Academy's director of instruction, quote,  
6 unquote, "Doesn't believe in special education,"  
7 but I do. Harlem Success stops accepting  
8 students after third grade, once they've  
9 demonstrated what their testing ability is.  
10 Students, once they start to show those  
11 symptoms, those signs of having learning  
12 disabilities or emotional disturbances, they  
13 start to counsel them out of our schools. That  
14 is not something that we do. If a society can  
15 be judge by how it treats those who have the  
16 greatest need, the co-location would be a sign  
17 of our total willingness to sequester these  
18 people away, setting up to fail in a school that  
19 we design to fail.

20 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Robert Brasel.

21 MR. ROBERT BRASEL: Seems the microphone  
22 moves when I don't--good evening. My name is  
23 Robert Brasel. I am a science and math teacher  
24 here at MS22 this year. 50 years ago, my father  
25 co-founded Sullivan County Community College in

1 the State University of New York system on  
2 paper. I'm well aware of what will work, in  
3 terms of space. And I tell you right now, from  
4 my own experience, this proposal will not work.  
5 First of all, only a short time ago, a new  
6 principal, Edgar Lin [phonetic], arrived at  
7 Middle School 22 with the goal of bringing the  
8 school to a higher level of learning, with new  
9 direction and creative ideas. The young man has  
10 given his commitment to the students and  
11 families of this community. He deserves a fair  
12 chance to accomplish his objectives. Less than  
13 that would not be right. The key to winning  
14 this argument is in the failure of the  
15 Department of Education to do its homework. The  
16 DOE knows there are a number of school buildings  
17 in the vicinity which have more space available  
18 within. The rules state, if a school with  
19 larger space is available, the Department of  
20 Education must remove its charter proposal from  
21 MS22 to the larger building. The DOE's numeric  
22 projections are grossly understated in the  
23 literature presented. Putting over 1,500  
24 students in this building will throw it into  
25 chaos in September 2014, and the impact of the

1 charter will destroy both of our other schools  
2 of learning.

3 More importantly, students and families of  
4 this community, who rely on Middle School 22 and  
5 the Bronx Writing Academy as the safe place they  
6 send their children to learn will be denied what  
7 little they have. The charter's sole purpose is  
8 to take away the school building and destroy it.  
9 I call on everyone here to stand together in the  
10 community and fight the Department of  
11 Education's repeated ruthless attempts to take  
12 possession of this building by any means  
13 necessary. The Department of Education must  
14 know our children learn here and will neither  
15 learn nor have a place to go if a charter school  
16 is placed here. Make your voice heard. And I  
17 say to you, Mayor Mike Bloomberg, tear up this  
18 charter proposal.

19 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Rolando Secarma and  
20 then Kevin Fry.

21 MR. ROLANDO SECARMA: Hi. My name is  
22 Rolando Secarma. I am currently a student here  
23 at MS22. I've been here for--since 5th grade.  
24 This school should stay here because it is part  
25 of the history of this community. A lot of kids

1 from this community came here. If this school  
2 shrinks down, then more than half the students  
3 here will have to go to a different school.  
4 Programs and activities will probably be cut,  
5 such as baseball, football, basketball and  
6 dance. And last, but not least, the band will  
7 not be the same.

8 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Kevin Fry.

9 MR. KEVIN FRY: Hi. My name is Kevin Fry.  
10 And I am a student of MS22. And I go to  
11 Columbia Academy. I have only been in this  
12 academy for a year and I've already grown  
13 attached to the teachers and my fellow scholars.  
14 If another charter--if another school was to  
15 come in this building, it would not only take  
16 away what we have worked so hard for and build,  
17 it would also take away our activities and  
18 plans. Also, it is very hard to move your kids  
19 to other schools because I have--when I was  
20 younger, I used to go to a school called PS94.  
21 And I have been switched. And it was very hard  
22 for my mother to find me another school because  
23 of a charter school. The charter school was  
24 called Village Academy. They had kicked us out.  
25 And we was not be able to do certain things.

1 Also, parents are satisfied with this school  
2 now. They are satisfied with the children are  
3 going there. They are satisfied how the teacher  
4 are teaching them. And the grades here is  
5 excellent. The teachers are excellent. The  
6 students are excellent. We get along here. And  
7 also it's just like a very good community to be  
8 in. Also, and like other people has said, like  
9 she had said and other people who had came here  
10 with the speech, the charter school would be  
11 invading our privacy, our space and our home.  
12 We would not like this because that's like  
13 somebody coming into your house and invading  
14 your house, just sleeping on your stuff, eating  
15 up your food and just taking up your space. And  
16 I'm quite sure you wouldn't like that. Also, it  
17 seemed--we will not express--or we will not  
18 tolerate this. We will not let other people  
19 come into our school and try to kick us out. We  
20 will fight and we will keep fighting until we  
21 get what we would like. Thank you.

22 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Steven Mitchell.

23 MR. STEVEN MITCHELL: Screw it. Good  
24 evening. My name is Steven Charles Mitchell.  
25 I'm a graduate of Lincoln University of

1 Pennsylvania. I am a native Harlemite who  
2 spent about a third of his life living in this  
3 area, growing up as a child. I spent some time  
4 on Freeman Street and Prospect Avenue. And it  
5 wasn't that long ago, when you think of time as  
6 it is. And basically I'm here to give something  
7 back. I've come disguised as the soccer coach,  
8 based out of the Leap Program, benefiting  
9 everyone attending in this building, everyone.  
10 I have serious issues with the concept of co-  
11 location of charter schools in public buildings,  
12 buildings that are paid for with our taxpayer  
13 dollars.

14 The concept basically does not work. It  
15 does not benefit who it's purported to help. It  
16 doesn't work. All it does is create instability  
17 where there is present stable conditions in the  
18 building. You add one element to a building  
19 that's already overtaxed, it's already  
20 overcrowded. And then you're tipping the  
21 balance by bringing in a charter school in here  
22 that will not even serve everyone in this  
23 community. It's not fair and it isn't right.  
24 This is not a product of the community, plain  
25 and simple. And for you to stop this thing, I

1 will say this and then I'm going to go.  
2 Community activism, strong community activism,  
3 trumps corporate influence at a return. We have  
4 the civil rights movement and the women's rights  
5 movement as living proof. Go for it. Thank  
6 you.

7 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. I'd like to call  
8 Magaly Cordova, Mr. Detwieler, Mr. Tejada, and  
9 Tina Young.

10 MS. MAGALY CORDOVA: Hi. My name is Magaly  
11 Cordova. I am an SLT member at 22. I am proud  
12 to say that my daughter, Natasha Kates  
13 [phonetic], is here. When Natasha walked in  
14 through these doors, Natasha's scores were very  
15 low. Today I am proud to say that my daughter  
16 is on the honor roll in this school. This is  
17 why I feel that they should vote no, against  
18 coalition for this school. And that's all I got  
19 to say. I am a proud mother of this school. I  
20 went to 22. I was a flag girl, a majorette.  
21 And I was here since 1978.

22 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Mr. Detweiler, Mr.  
23 Tejada and Tina Young.

24 MR. DETWEILER: It seems to me our school  
25 and our community is being attacked. Last year,

1 MS22 was a turnaround school. And after the  
2 DOE's failed attempt to excess half of our  
3 staff, many excellent teachers chose not to come  
4 back to a destabilized work environment. As a  
5 result, a significant portion of our staff is  
6 made up of new teachers. This would have also  
7 been the reality if turnaround had succeeded.  
8 If the size of our school is reduced, that means  
9 that a significant portion of these teachers  
10 will lose their jobs in 2014. In the span of  
11 three years, our school will have undergone two  
12 large changes in the makeup of our staff. By  
13 approving the plan for co-location, you are  
14 setting our students up to fail. You are  
15 setting our teachers up to fail. And you are  
16 setting our school up to fail. We are not a  
17 failing school. We have made tremendous gains  
18 under the leadership of Principal Rosenbury.  
19 I'd like to continue to build on that, under the  
20 leadership of Principal Lin.

21 It's not a secret that 8 out of 13 members  
22 of the Panel for Educational Policy are  
23 appointed by the mayor. I'm worried that  
24 regardless of what we do, say or think, the  
25 panel will move ahead with co-locating a charter

1 school. This all seems part of a war on  
2 public education being waged to benefit large  
3 educational corporations and for profit charter  
4 schools. You're doing what the mayor tells you  
5 to do, without regard to common sense or  
6 conscience. I challenge this panel to prove me  
7 wrong and vote no on co-location.

8 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Mr. Tejada.

9 MR. TEJEDA: Hi. My name is Mr. Tejada.  
10 Everything has started like in a school aide.  
11 Then I was a paraprofessional for 15 years. And  
12 now I am a proud, responsible visual art teacher  
13 that have been responsible for more than 1,200  
14 student in less than two years. My students are  
15 located in five different visual arts school.  
16 And now I got to go a little back, since that  
17 this school was open in 1947/1948 by Fiorello La  
18 Guardia--by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia. Five  
19 years ago, there was an alumni association  
20 established in this school. And we have  
21 professional from Monteiroe Hospital, Bronx-  
22 Lebanon Hospital, professional lawyers over here  
23 in this building, proud of the history of this  
24 school. And ladies and gentlemen, picture the  
25 story in your mind. We are just facing

1 elimination, like in a painting, like in a  
2 movie. We are just facing elimination. A  
3 popular Puerto Rican phrase states that there is  
4 no room for so many people. In Spanish, it is -  
5 -. In Spanish that means - -. I am part of the  
6 community too. I am part of the community too.  
7 This is like Nelson Mandela facing Africa, we -  
8 -. This is what my diluted - - with the racials  
9 issue. And now you are doing that in this poor  
10 south Bronx community? - -. I'm sorry.

11 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Ms. Young.

12 MS. CONWAY-SPIEGEL: Can you hear me? I am  
13 not Ms. Young. I am Ms. Conway-Spiegel. I  
14 jumped the line. Thank you, Ms. Young. Does  
15 everybody have a pencil and a paper? I want to  
16 give you a phone number. This is the phone  
17 number of the Archdiocese of the Catholic  
18 Church. It's (212)371-1000. 1.9 miles from  
19 this very spot are two catholic schools that are  
20 closing. Now we all know, empathetically, in  
21 our heart, and soul and core, that these poor  
22 people, who are losing their school, are  
23 suffering. But I was not the very first person  
24 to call the archdiocese on behalf of this  
25 community that I love and that has adopted me.

1 I'm an advocate for this campus and I love you  
2 all. But the campus asked me to call the  
3 archdiocese and I did.

4 If you speak to the real estate department  
5 and ask for Mr. Ed Newman - - SUNY  
6 representative, he will tell you there is  
7 indeed--there are two buildings, Holy Spirit  
8 Elementary School on Dr. Martin Luther King  
9 Boulevard is open and available for rent, as is  
10 the St. Jerome School. These are full  
11 buildings, ready to house a K through eight  
12 school because we all know that's what's coming.  
13 We do not presume to poach upon the pain of  
14 Catholic school students. Thank you. I'll wrap  
15 it up. But this is the reality. There are  
16 rumors that this charter has not been approved  
17 yet. So we know you're jumping the gun 18  
18 months in, trying to shove this in before the  
19 election of the new mayor. But if you are going  
20 to do this and you are going to spend so much  
21 money on marketing, then you can afford to pay  
22 rent in an empty building nestled in a community  
23 and serve those kids.

24 Charter schools are good. They provide  
25 jobs. I will finish up. They generate revenue.

1 They are good for the economy. They produce  
2 good outcomes. They are good for the children  
3 that go to them. I have nothing against  
4 charters. No one in this whole auditorium is  
5 against charters. What we are against is co-  
6 location that affects the outcomes of students  
7 that they frankly feed off of. This is a fact.  
8 If it's such good business and it generates such  
9 amazing revenue, then rent your own space and  
10 grow the model in a free market situation.  
11 Thank you.

12 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Mr. Christopher  
13 Sullivan, Ms. Carol Harrison and I'm not sure of  
14 the first name but Halloway is the last name--  
15 Edit Halloway. Thank you.

16 MR. CHRISTOPHER SULLIVAN: Can everyone hear  
17 me? I'm tired of this. First of all, I just  
18 want everybody to know, no, I'm not against  
19 charter schools. I'm like everyone else, not  
20 against anything that has anything to do with  
21 education. However, I've been in this building  
22 nine years. I was here a year before the Leap  
23 [phonetic] program came in. I was here as an  
24 independent after school program guy, by myself.  
25 Then Jim Puyesi [phonetic] came in and said,

1 "Yeah, you want to come with us?" And I said,  
2 "Of course." I am the counseling consultant for  
3 the Leap after school program. And the whole  
4 idea here is to work closely with teachers in  
5 this community. When I came into this  
6 community, it was crazy. However, with the  
7 staff of teachers from BWA in 22, from the Leap  
8 program, we were able to come together and pull  
9 a concept that will take mental slavery out of  
10 our students who have--the majority of them have  
11 no clue where they came from. And now you want  
12 to bring something in here that's going to  
13 eliminate with the work we've done, and then  
14 continue to perpetuate this ideology of  
15 separation. This I cannot tolerate, I will not  
16 tolerate. There is something that I do to the  
17 students when I say to them, "When I meet your  
18 parents, we are family." Some don't want me to  
19 meet their family. But once I do, they're even  
20 feeling safer. I say to them, "When you point  
21 at somebody, look at the three fingers pointing  
22 at you. Why are you pointing at this school  
23 without looking at the three fingers pointing  
24 back at you, because obviously three is a  
25 greater number than one. You're the larger

1 problem."

2 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Ms. Harrison.

3 MS. CAROL HARRISON: I face my audience.  
4 Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Carol  
5 Harrison, the UFT district rep for District 9.  
6 First I want to say to the kids that performed  
7 tonight, what a wonderful performance. I'm sure  
8 the DOE doesn't know that's going on here. So  
9 here we are again. The DOE doesn't get it. For  
10 them, it's not about the children, and the staff  
11 and the community of 22 and BWA. It's about a  
12 certain individual who is leaving office and  
13 wants his minions taken care of before he  
14 leaves. We couldn't close 22 last year. So  
15 here we come with another angle. Why don't you  
16 just leave us alone? Give us the resources that  
17 we need to continue being successful and charter  
18 Eva [phonetic] somewhere else. Vote this  
19 proposal down, when it goes to the PEP. And  
20 please, let them know that it's not over till  
21 it's over.

22 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Edith Halloway.

23 MS. EDITH HALLOWAY: Hi. My name is Ms.  
24 Halloway. I also work for MS22. And I'm just  
25 giving a couple of comments. So I believe in a

1 quality education for all kids, and especially  
2 for our community, jobs and space are--would be  
3 an issue if that new school come in here.  
4 Public school--I believe in public school. I  
5 went through the public school system. My son  
6 also graduated from the school, so I do have a  
7 history in this school. Public school, I  
8 believe, is a neighborhood based school. So  
9 with a charter school coming in and being  
10 selective of the kids in the community, it would  
11 be unfair to me, to the community and to our  
12 families, and to the teachers and everyone  
13 that's involved in our school. Like she said,  
14 we've been through many hurdles. We came out of  
15 that hurdle. And I want to see 22 as a whole,  
16 with the community. We understand our kids. We  
17 understand the families where the kids come  
18 from. We have private time with the kids.

19 The kids are our family. They are our  
20 everything, to me. I have some more - -. So on  
21 that note, I say we're not separate but we're  
22 all equal when it comes to public school. I  
23 stand united. And I want MS22, BWA, to be our  
24 school in our community.

25 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Tabitha Allen,

1 Marissa Bradock, Edwin George and Crystal  
2 Tejada.

3 MS. TABITHA ALLEN: I'm Tabitha and this is  
4 Tiana. And we are students at MS22. And we are  
5 totally against this co-location. All right.  
6 We don't have space to another school. What are  
7 we going to do, cut out our MS22 and BWA  
8 students because there is no space for them in  
9 their building? As an eighth grader, three  
10 years of a close school helped me personally. I  
11 can't imagine a sixth grader having to go to the  
12 school at 6:00 a.m. to come home at 8:00 p.m.  
13 and have to do that every day for three years.  
14 That's not going to help them succeed, as  
15 they're too tired to do the work. The space is  
16 small already. And they don't have--and you  
17 don't have the right to take our freedom.

18 MS. MARISSA BRADOCK: The charter school  
19 will affect MS22's education because MS22 will  
20 be comparing themselves to the charter school  
21 instead of focusing on their studies. And we  
22 need the education for high school and beyond.  
23 This is our school and they have no right to  
24 take that from us.

25 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Edwin George and

1 then Crystal Tejada.

2 MR. EDWIN GEORGE: Hello. My name is Edwin  
3 George. Currently I'm a student in Bronx  
4 Writing Academy, class 804. Ever since I  
5 entered the Bronx Writing Academy, the Bronx  
6 Writing Academy has given me the support to  
7 excel and overcome weaknesses and plenty of  
8 situations, education wise. When I entered BWA  
9 in sixth grade, I could say that my English  
10 wasn't very good. But now it's a different  
11 story. My English has improved significantly.  
12 Writing has been something that I always wanted  
13 to do. My writing has taken a big, dramatical  
14 change. I remember when I was in sixth grade,  
15 where I was placed in an ESL class. I would  
16 write papers with very intense length. And the  
17 teacher, Ms. Garcio [phonetic] would say that I  
18 need to elaborate more about the topic. Five  
19 minutes later, I would go up to her with more  
20 than what I previously had on my paper.

21 Now, in the eighth grade, I have the ability  
22 to say that I have made a huge improvement, and  
23 it's all to my social studies teacher, Ms. Munoz  
24 and my English teacher, Ms. Jaybricker Johnson  
25 [phonetic]. They have provided me with the

1 ability to write and be heard, not only to  
2 write, but they have helped me improve my  
3 speech. Recently there was a contest where  
4 students had to write an extensive poem or an  
5 essay about the Tuskegee airmen, where I won  
6 second place. I feel that everything I was able  
7 to accomplish was due to the time and space  
8 teachers took out of their schedule.

9         The BWA has also helped me discover a new  
10 talent, and that's acting. Ever since I joined  
11 the drama crew, I've been able to realize how  
12 important and necessary is space. We never have  
13 a stable place to practice. And they are  
14 planning to bring another school into the  
15 building, meaning that we will have less space?  
16 We are not sardines. We don't belong all  
17 together.

18         MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Marissa Braddock.  
19 Sorry about that.

20         MS. MARISSA BRADDOCK: Good evening,  
21 everybody. Thank you so much for coming. I  
22 know we've heard a lot of people speak, and I  
23 want to be real right now. I'm a teacher at 22.  
24 And it's tough teaching at 22, in this building.  
25 But it's not tough because of what's happening

1 outside. It's what's happening--I'm sorry.  
2 It's - - happening because of what's outside of  
3 the school. Our community is continually  
4 receiving the same message. We are not  
5 succeeding. I find this interesting because we  
6 are labeled as a priority school, yet we are not  
7 receiving any sort of prioritization here. This  
8 year's disheartening message manifests itself in  
9 a threat of co-location, an option that the  
10 Success Academies have yet to show helps a host  
11 school. I find this particularly interesting  
12 because there is nobody here from the Success  
13 Academy coming to tell us how this will help our  
14 building.

15 In spite of these actions and threats that  
16 are often sent our way, what continues to amaze  
17 me is how abundant our progress actually is in  
18 this building. An educator for six years now,  
19 three of them have been spent here, witnessing  
20 every day the astonishing growth and progress  
21 our community is still making. One crucial  
22 example is our teacher retention rate in my  
23 college. A key component of long-term  
24 turnaround success for any school is stability.  
25 This is the first time I have seen students have

1 a three years of exemplary teachers, all in a  
2 row. My students in 605 are now setting the  
3 model in John J., and it makes me very proud  
4 coming to work every day.

5 The impact of this cannot be understated.  
6 And it's really hard to replicate in high needs  
7 schools. Indeed, it's often impossible for such  
8 a collaborative environment to thrive. Allowing  
9 us to keep our campus as is means that our  
10 students will continue to be taught by  
11 professionals who carry the sophisticated,  
12 unique knowledge of what the diversities of our  
13 students are and how to help the community at  
14 large. Co-location would only hurt our campus  
15 by further dividing our shared resources,  
16 severely limiting our schedules, and eventually  
17 displacing our academies and our cohesive teams.  
18 Thus, it will destroy our tight knit community.  
19 Of course this will be felt most deeply by those  
20 you say you are trying to help, our learners.

21 Members of the panel, I implore you, instead  
22 of voting yes on co-location and placing another  
23 obstacle in our path, please allow us to  
24 continue on our trajectory, as being one of New  
25 York City's persistently most improving schools.

1           MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Crystal Tejada.  
2           And then if we could have Giordani Jimenez,  
3           Milea Guzman and Tina Young.

4           MS. CRYSTAL TEJADA: Good evening. My name  
5           is Crystal Tejada. I'm part of 805 class, which  
6           means I'm an English language learner. I  
7           started attending BWA when I was in sixth grade.  
8           In these three years, I have learned how to  
9           write, speak and read English. Space has been a  
10          critical factor in this progress. When I needed  
11          extra help, the teachers provided me with  
12          individual attention. Because we continue with  
13          space, such as the lab, the teachers' lounge and  
14          the copy room to conference and attend to  
15          individual academic needs of the students.

16          Last year, we visited the labs every Friday.  
17          This helped me learn--this helped me how to  
18          connect my new vocabulary with hands-on  
19          practice. Thinking that we could lose this  
20          space makes me feel sad, as I have a lot of  
21          learning memories in these rooms. BWA has given  
22          me lots of opportunity, such as learning  
23          English. The school has provided me with the  
24          opportunity to learn art, technology, drama and  
25          hands-on science. But most important, BWA has

1 helped me become an A-plus student.

2 If the lab and the technology room is taken  
3 away from us, we will not have a place to carry  
4 on our experiments to sharpen our science  
5 skills, a place to practice our drama rehearsal  
6 or a place we learn how to protect ourselves  
7 from cyber bullying, as we do in our technology  
8 class. We need our space. We need our drama  
9 club. We need our technology room. Please,  
10 don't take this precious space from us.

11 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Very nicely done.  
12 Giordani Jimenez, Milea Guzman.

13 MR. GIORDANI JIMENEZ: Hi. My name is  
14 Giordano Jimenez. I have been attending BWA  
15 since sixth grade. When I came to BWA, I did  
16 not speak any English. Thanks to the bilingual  
17 brethren at this school, I have improved my  
18 English tremendously. Other students have  
19 improved their English skills as well. This is  
20 one very important reason why we need to keep  
21 our space. If the school is not able to receive  
22 a student who just arrived to the country, like  
23 I did three years ago, because of a space  
24 limitation, these newcomers will not have the  
25 opportunity to be part of this BWA community and

1 learn English with the help of such amazing  
2 teachers, as I did when I first arrived at BWA.  
3 We need our space so that these students who are  
4 just entering the U.S. school system, can feel  
5 welcome, knowing that our doors are always open  
6 to them.

7 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Milca Guzman and  
8 Jocelyn Reyes.

9 MS. MILCA GUZMAN: Good afternoon. My name  
10 is Milca Guzman. I am a part of the general  
11 education class, 804. Ever since I started in  
12 the Bronx Writing Academy, I have been able to  
13 interact with bilingual students. With the help  
14 of the bilingual education and the school, I was  
15 able to acquire the knowledge to be transferred  
16 to the general education program. The bilingual  
17 education program is very helpful and important.  
18 Here at BWA, we count with about 23 of our  
19 bilingual population. This month, for example,  
20 we received two new students from Central  
21 America. If we cannot take these students  
22 because of our space limitation, they will not  
23 be able to have the opportunity to be part of  
24 the BWA community today.

25 Teachers have the clear expectation for the

1 students. They struggle to prepare us for the  
2 future. The space from the school helps us with  
3 the learning. One of the resources of the  
4 school space is the lab. This helps us with the  
5 science skills as well as practice earth and  
6 chemical sciences. For bilingual students, as  
7 well as for general language students, these are  
8 very helpful resources because we can help--we  
9 can do hands on experiments. If we are deprived  
10 from this space, our education will be affected.  
11 We need our lab, as well as all the rooms in  
12 this school.

13 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Jocelyn Reyes, Ruby  
14 Ventura, Pasqual Ventura.

15 MS. JOCELYN REYES: Good evening. My name  
16 is Jocelyn Reyes, mother of Justin Delgadido  
17 [phonetic], for those who don't know me. As we  
18 all know, there is no space for charter school.  
19 There is no gym. There is no cafeteria. Bottom  
20 line, there is no space at all for no charter  
21 school, okay? It takes a lot of work and effort  
22 for us to help our kids make it to high school.  
23 So there is no reason for us to allow no one to  
24 come and take our space from our kids to make it  
25 to high school. There is no reason for that to

1       happen. The only one who can fight for them  
2       is us. We can fight for the school. Thank you.

3               MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Ruby Ventura and  
4       then Pasqual Ventura.

5               MS. RUBY VENTURA: Hello. I graduated Bronx  
6       Writing Academy in 2009. When entering middle  
7       school, one of my biggest fears was not being  
8       able to understand or pass any of my classes.  
9       Finding out that this school had a bilingual  
10       program helped me feel much better. Once I was  
11       in the school, all my teachers made sure I was  
12       not only passing my classes but I understood  
13       exactly what I was learning. Most importantly,  
14       yes, I understood what I was learning but I was  
15       also given the opportunity to grow as a person.  
16       I was able to work with the principal to make  
17       our school the best it could be, and was part of  
18       a junior achievement program which taught all of  
19       us all about business. My eighth grade year I  
20       was placed in an all English class. Was I  
21       scared? Yes. But did I know I was more than  
22       ready to tackle the upcoming year? Absolutely.

23               Today, four years later, I am the - - of my  
24       high school, Manhattan Business Academy. And  
25       I've gotten accepted to Penn State's Medical

1 School, which is one of my top schools.  
2 However, all of this wouldn't have been possible  
3 if I didn't attend Bronx Writing Academy because  
4 they allowed me to become the person who I am  
5 today. Walking into this building every day and  
6 seeing how many people cared about me and how  
7 much time and effort they put into me encouraged  
8 me to work my hardest. I didn't know everything  
9 and I wasn't the best, but no one cared about  
10 that. All they did care about was making sure I  
11 did become the best in the future. One of my  
12 teachers here in BWA always told me, "The sky is  
13 the limit." Well now I understand exactly what  
14 she was talking about. And it's all thanks to  
15 MBA--I mean BWA.

16 MR. LARIOS: Thank you. Pascal Ventura.

17 MR. PASCAL VENTURA: Hey, my name is Pascal  
18 Ventura and I attend MBA, Manhattan Business  
19 Academy. Well, I want to start off by telling  
20 you a little bit of the story that I had in BWA  
21 and how I developed to be such a great student.  
22 So when I came to BWA, I had about, what, two  
23 years in this country. I didn't really know,  
24 you know, what was this all about. And I wasn't  
25 really confident about what I was being offered.

1 And so I started to my teachers, Ms. Martin,  
2 Mr. Samuels. And I saw, you know, - -. Sorry.  
3 And as I started gaining confidence, you know, I  
4 realized the potential that I had. And all my  
5 teachers, you know, always supported me and  
6 given me the best education they could. I came  
7 to be, you know, the best student I can. Now I  
8 have the third highest average in my school.  
9 I'm actually a sophomore right now. And I'm  
10 being offered--sorry, I'm kind of nervous--I'm  
11 being offered scholarships and internships to  
12 MIT for automotive engineering. And I don't  
13 think that none of this could have been possible  
14 if I didn't have the support that I had from all  
15 the teachers in BWA. And now I'm very confident  
16 that I could achieve all the dreams that maybe  
17 once I thought that I would never be able to  
18 achieve. And that's all thanks to MB--sorry,  
19 BWA. So thanks a lot.

20 MR. LARIOS: We have four more speakers,  
21 Pamela Camejo, Pamela Cruz, Sonya Camejo and  
22 Yolanda Jennings.

23 MS. YOLANDA JENNINGS: Hello. My name is  
24 Yolanda Jennings. I'm PTA president for MS22.  
25 And I'm here to tell you that my daughter, she's

1       been going here for two years. And she's  
2       been--this school has been a wonderful job doing  
3       with her. And I'm just saying that we don't  
4       need to put a charter school in here because we  
5       don't have enough space. BWA don't have enough  
6       space. 22 don't have enough space. And wow, I  
7       just forgot. Well we just don't have enough  
8       space to put a charter school here. And I just  
9       want to say thank you for having everybody here.

10           MR. LARIOS: All right. Thank you. Pamela  
11       Camejo, Pamela Cruz, Sonya Camejo. Okay. I  
12       think they're not here. I want to thank  
13       everybody for their participation in the public  
14       comment section. The kids who performed, the  
15       kids who spoke most impressively. I also want  
16       to thank the panel up here for their patience.  
17       I want to thank Superintendent Esposito for  
18       making it through the whole thing, still against  
19       her doctor's advice. I hope you go home and get  
20       some rest soon. And to the assemblywoman's  
21       representative, who also is still here.

22           Again, if there are any comments or  
23       questions that were submitted in writing today,  
24       they will be addressed in the analysis of public  
25       comment, which will be published online and

1 provided to members of the Panel for  
2 Educational Policy. As a reminder, the Panel  
3 for Educational Policy is voting on May 22nd at  
4 the Taft Educational Campus. We welcome any  
5 comments and feedback you may have at any time  
6 before the Panel for Educational Policy votes on  
7 this proposal at its May 22nd meeting. The  
8 email address, again, is  
9 d09proposals@schools.nyc.gov. And the phone  
10 number is (212)374-5159. Thank you, everyone,  
11 for your participation, your patience. And all  
12 those of you who stayed so long, this joint  
13 public hearing is now closed.

14 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature *Michelle R Killen*

Date April 11, 2013