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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
KIPP Washington Heights
MS Grades @ M090**

1 [START 090101_001.MP3]

2 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: We must be respectful of
3 the process. Everyone who signed up will have
4 the opportunity to express their opinion about
5 this proposal. But we must be respectful. We
6 must be able to hear everyone's opinion, so that
7 the Panel for Education could take an
8 appropriate vote. [Foreign language].

9 [END 090101_001.MP3]

10 [START 090101_002.MP3]

11 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language]. Okay,
12 thank you.

13 [Background noise]

14 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: All right, so we could
15 begin. All right. Good evening, once again.
16 This is a joint public hearing of the Department
17 of Education, Community Education Council and
18 School Leadership Team for the proposed opening
19 and co-location of KIPP NYC Washington Heights
20 Academy Charter School, with existing schools
21 M.S. 319, M.S. 324 and P.S. 138M in building
22 M090. I am District 6 Superintendent Elsa
23 Nunez.

24 Tonight, we are offering interpretation for
25 Spanish for those who need interpretation.

1 Please see the table at the back. We have
2 asked the District 6 Community Education Council
3 and School Leadership Teams of M090 Building to
4 participate in this joint public hearing. I
5 will pass the microphone to all those sitting
6 next to me so that they could introduce
7 themselves and what organization they represent.

8 MS. TIFFANY BRABY: My name is Tiffany
9 Braby. I'm the UFT Chapter Leader for M.S. 319.

10 MS. CRYSTAL RINGER: Hello, my name is
11 Crystal Ringer. I'm on the School Leadership
12 Team for M.S. 324.

13 [Cheering]

14 MS. JUDITH AMARO: Hello, [foreign
15 language]. And this is Bryan Davies; he's the
16 Vice President of the CEC. And I think Belkis
17 Poche is around there, who's also a member.

18 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

19 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Good evening one again.
20 This hearing is being recorded. The purpose of
21 this hearing is for you to provide comments
22 about the proposal. Before I describe the
23 proposal, I want to make sure you are all aware
24 of the opportunity of your input. All those who
25 wish to speak must sign up in the speaker signup

1 area, located just outside the auditorium. The
2 signup list will close in 15 minutes. Speakers
3 will be given the floor in the order that they
4 signed up. All comments are limited to two
5 minutes.

6 There may be elected officials who show up
7 at different times throughout the evening. If
8 they wish to speak, we will do our best to
9 accommodate them in the first opportune moment.

10 Those who are here at the start of the
11 public comment segment will be asked to speak
12 first. All comments will be mentioned in the
13 analysis of public comment to be published and
14 provided to the Panel for Educational Policy the
15 evening before the panel votes. The vote is
16 scheduled for November 17th.

17 In addition, we welcome any comments and
18 feedback you may have at any time before the
19 panel votes on both proposals. The email
20 address and phone numbers where comments made be
21 made are: D06Proposals at schools dot NYC dot
22 gov and (212) 374-3466.

23 The proposal summary: the New York City
24 Department of Education is proposing to open and
25 site grades four through eight of KIPP NYC

1 Washington Heights Academy Charter School in
2 building M090, located at 21 Jumel Place, New
3 York, NY 10032, in Community School District 6,
4 beginning in 2012-2013. KIPP will be co-located
5 in M090 with two existing district middle
6 schools serving grades six through eight, M.S.
7 324 Patria Mirabal and M.S. 319 Maria Teresa
8 Mirabal and P.S. 138M, a District 75 program. A
9 co-location means that two or more schools,
10 organizations are located in the same building
11 and may share common spaces like auditoriums,
12 gymnasiums and cafeterias.

13 Both M.S. 319 and M.S. 324 admit students in
14 sixth grade through the District 6 Middle School
15 Choice application process, and are unscreened
16 district choice middle schools. M.S. 319 offers
17 a Spanish dual-language program, which is
18 screened for language requirements. P.S. 138M
19 serves students in grades six through eight who
20 are admitted through the District 75 referral
21 process.

22 KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy will be
23 a new public charter school that will eventually
24 serve students in the fourth through eighth
25 grades. If the proposal is approved, KIPP would

1 begin serving 80-90 fifth graders in the M090
2 building in 2012-2013, and add one grade per
3 year until 2015-16, the final year of expansion
4 when KIPP would add both its eighth grade and
5 its fourth grade. At that point, KIPP would
6 serve approximately 300 to 400 and--390 to 460
7 students in fourth through eighth grade.

8 While KIPP is phasing in, it would enroll
9 fifth grade students through a lottery, giving
10 preference to students who qualify for free and
11 reduced lunch price, residing in District 6.
12 However, once KIPP reaches full scale, it
13 intends to admit fourth grade students from KIPP
14 STAR Elementary Charter School, a K-3 school,
15 also operated by KIPP Charter Management
16 Organization, which opened this year in District
17 6. KIPP NYC Washington Heights Academy would
18 then use its lottery only to fill any remaining
19 seats.

20 M090 has the capacity to serve 1,776
21 students. Currently, the building serves
22 approximately 1,135 students. If this proposal
23 were approved, there will be approximately 1,636
24 students in building by M.S. 319, M.S. 324,
25 P139M and KIPP, still, 140 students below

1 capacity.

2 Is anyone, uh, going to present?

3 MS. JUDITH AMARO: No, we're not.

4 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: We have now concluded the
5 formal presentations. We will now open the
6 floor for public comments. Speakers will be
7 given the floor in the order that they signed
8 up. All comments are limited to two minutes.
9 Will those that have numbers one through five
10 please stand up?

11 [Background noise]

12 MALE VOICE: Elsa?

13 FEMALE VOICE: Do you want to announce that
14 the--

15 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [interposing] Huh?

16 [Background noise]

17 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Okay. Um, those that are
18 coming up to speak, please state the school that
19 your child is attending so that we know. Thank
20 you.

21 MS. ZVIA RATZ: Good evening. My name is
22 Zvia Ratz and I'm a teacher at M.S. 319. And I
23 rise to speak against KIPP coming into this
24 building. Public education is a right that
25 every person has and it shouldn't be used to

1 make--for anybody to make money from. So, if
2 they want to occupy public education, uh, uh,
3 places that belong to public education, that is
4 against what public education is. It's against
5 our kids. Nobody should make money from our
6 kids.

7 In addition, they have not proven that they
8 in any way do a better job than public schools.
9 Our kids deserve education, equal education and
10 education that is given to every person,
11 including the people who need to learn the
12 language.

13 The American educator Eli Siegel asked, what
14 does a person deserve by being a person? Our
15 kids deserve equal public education and nothing
16 else can come into this building.

17 [Cheering]

18 [Applause]

19 [Background noise]

20 MS. GINA BRAVO: My name is Gina Bravo. I
21 am currently in eighth grade in 319. All
22 animals are equal, but some are more equal than
23 others. Good evening, teachers, students and
24 community. In life, you must always preserve,
25 achieve and excel. These are the principles

1 that they teach the students at M.S. 319. Our
2 school has an outstanding reputation. M.S. 319
3 brings many benefits for their students. The
4 Mirabal Sisters campus has a powerful structure.
5 They have earned everything with hard work.

6 Why should KIPP join the Mirabal Sister
7 campus? What benefits will they provide? They
8 don't take special ed students and ELL--ELL
9 students, and only select specific students.
10 Students from our school will feel less than
11 them when they see them. KIPP will only bring
12 problems. If they are doing as wonderful as
13 they say, why do they need to intrude to Mirabal
14 Sisters?

15 In the Mirabal Sister campus, all students
16 learn perfectly. They do as amazing as other
17 schools and as KIPP. There is no reason why
18 there must be separation. The Mirabal Sister
19 campus is doing as wonderful as they are. They
20 don't need KIPP to intrude them and disable that
21 structure that we have worked so hard for so
22 many years to work on. Thank you for listening
23 and have an--and have a nice evening.

24 [Cheering]

25 [Applause]

1 MS. MERY MELENDEZ: [Foreign language].

2 Oh, okay.

3 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

4 MS. MERY MELENDEZ: Thank you.

5 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

6 MS. MERY MELENDEZ: No, no, [foreign
7 language].

8 MR. BRYAN DAVIES: The young lady here has a
9 letter in Spanish that she would like to read
10 out, so, uh, this interpreter over here is going
11 to translate it out to the rest of the English
12 speaking public, okay?

13 FEMALE VOICE: No, we want her to read it in
14 Spanish.

15 MR. BRYAN DAVIES: Fair enough, fair enough.
16 Then, uh--

17 MS. MERY MELENDEZ: Okay.

18 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

19 [Background noise]

20 MS. MERY MELENDEZ: [Foreign language].

21 Good evening everyone. I am Brianni's
22 [phonetic] mother. This is her first year in
23 kindergarten, KIPP STAR Elementary. [Foreign
24 language] I'm a very fortunate mother to have my
25 child go to school where she is treated as a

1 family member. [Foreign language] My daughter
2 was having behavior problems and in less than
3 two months, she's doing wonderful. [Foreign
4 language].

5 [Background noise]

6 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

7 [Applause]

8 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

9 Please, I'm just reminding everyone to be
10 respectful of the speaker. Everyone has the
11 right to express their opinion, but we must
12 listen with respect. Thank you.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Okay. One more thing, the
15 signup list at this point has closed. Thank
16 you.

17 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language] We are
18 here today for our child, and I would love for
19 my, my nephew to be able to come here with also
20 three--more than 300 families are on a waiting
21 list to be able to become a KIPPster, or a KIPP
22 STAR member. And it would be very--they would
23 be very fortunate is this school will be
24 available for next year. [Foreign language].
25 I'm almost done.

1 MR. BRYAN DAVIES: She was interrupting
2 and she's translating in Spanish, so she could
3 get double time on it.

4 [Background noise]

5 MR. BRYAN DAVIES: We're going to go another
6 20 seconds for the translation and
7 interruptions, 20 seconds more.

8 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

9 [Cheering]

10 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

11 [Background noise]

12 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: No?

14 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

15 INTERPRETER: Okay. So I'm speaking to you-
16 -go ahead. I'm speaking to you in Spanish
17 because they told me KIPP Infinity [phonetic],
18 the people who explain--the parents who speak
19 Spanish don't get there. I don't speak English
20 and my child has been in KIPP for two years and
21 they can come with [foreign language] with
22 papers that you're going to a special place,
23 school, and I said no. I come--I'm in a public-
24 -I'm in a Catholic school but I didn't have any
25 money to pay for it. God gave me the biggest

1 blessing which KIPP Infinity--

2 [Cheering]

3 INTERPRETER: I'm, I'm not here to sacrifice
4 herself because I have to--I'm a single mother
5 and--but I guarantee you when, whenever you want
6 to talk to my son, who had a problem, he had a
7 speech impediment. My child is responsible,
8 he's educated. My child wasn't like that. You
9 can go to Fordham, where my child is. They
10 wanted to give him special, they wanted to give
11 him special classes and they couldn't give them.
12 Here KIPP, here in KIPP Infinity, my child
13 didn't need, he didn't need that special class.

14 [Cheering]

15 INTERPRETER: It's not, it's not politics,
16 it's, uh, it's an education for your children.

17 [Cheering]

18 [Background noise]

19 MS. ASHLY CASTILLO: Hello, my name is Ashly
20 Castillo. I am an eighth grade student in M.S.
21 319. And I believe that KIPP shouldn't come to
22 our building because I think that it would just
23 be too much--it would be too full. We wouldn't
24 have enough space. Like last year, um, this
25 year we started using, um, the other side of the

1 school, and now we have more space. Last
2 year, we had almost no space. It was crowded.
3 And if KIPP comes and take that space that we
4 just gained, it wouldn't be fair for us, because
5 we would have less space, like we did before.
6 And also, it wouldn't be fair because, like she
7 stated, it would be after all the years, after
8 four through eight came, there would be over 140
9 over capacity and that isn't fair to our
10 schools.

11 And also, Tommy Hilfiger, Michael Phelps and
12 Bruce Jenner are only some examples of famous
13 people that were born with learning
14 disabilities. Schools like KIPP don't accept
15 students who take special ed and yellow into
16 their schools. They don't give kids the chance
17 to try to be successful and try their best.
18 They're very ignorant and stereotypical,
19 believing that just because you don't speak
20 English or have a disability you can't be as
21 good or as smart as an average student.

22 Furthermore, studies have shown that public
23 school students and others--and charter school
24 students are at about the same academic level,
25 meaning that they are no better than public

1 schools. Say not to KIPP and what they stand
2 for: unfair people.

3 [Cheering]

4 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language] We want
5 to hear everyone's opinion. Will six through
6 ten please stand up?

7 [Background noise]

8 MR. JUAN PEREZ: [Foreign language].

9 INTERPRETER: Good afternoon, good evening.
10 I am the son of two children that came from the-
11 -recently from Dominican Republic. Oh, the
12 father of the two children. And the change they
13 have done in this school is incredible, it's
14 super. And we need to be together so they don't
15 displace this school that is a grade A, it's
16 number one.

17 [Cheering]

18 MR. JUAN PEREZ: [Foreign language].

19 INTERPRETER: The kids come from one grade,
20 they use two or three rooms, but next year, they
21 multiply for the next year, so that it displace
22 the schools where they are going. Don't allow
23 them to take us out. There are a lot of
24 buildings empty here in Manhattan and the Bronx.
25 They have money, they can take a building. They

1 have money to do it. Okay?

2 [Cheering]

3 MR. JUAN PEREZ: [Foreign language].

4 INTERPRETER: We don't have the resources
5 they have because they have private and they
6 have--they have also. And with the time it's
7 going to happen what happen in our country. The
8 schools are going to take all the schools and
9 they are going to put them private and they are
10 going to charge for the education.

11 [Cheering]

12 MS. MELISSA SERRA: Hi, my name is Melissa.
13 I'm in the eighth grade in M.S. 319. Persevere,
14 achieve and excel. These are the mottos of our
15 school, M.S. 319; also know as the Mirabal
16 Sisters campus. Good evening parents, teachers
17 and students and our community. I am here to
18 stand up for what I believe in, and I believe
19 that KIPP should not join M.S. 319. KIPP must
20 have enough money to open their own school.
21 These are the reasons. We have worked hard to
22 build this school into an asset that meets the
23 needs of this community. This school meets the
24 need of this--I mean this school is
25 representative of the three Mirabal system:

1 Maria Teresa, Minerva, Patria Mirabal, which
2 stands for freedom. KIPP should get their own
3 school, so let's say no to KIPP. Thank you.

4 [Cheering]

5 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

6 INTERPRETER: Go ahead.

7 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

8 INTERPRETER: We're here representing our
9 families. We're here representing the schools.

10 [Background noise]

11 FEMALE VOICE: Okay, okay, okay, okay.

12 [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: I'm here representing the
14 Washington Heights schools.

15 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: What I'd like to say is over
17 here P.S., uh, P.S., M.S. 24 is one of the best
18 schools over here in Washington Heights.

19 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language]

20 INTERPRETER: I can't complain because, uh,
21 two years ago, I, uh, I applied for, for over,
22 for over achieve--for, um, for, for talented,
23 uh, for talented and special children for my
24 children two years ago.

25 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

1 INTERPRETER: And it was--and it wasn't
2 because of his grades because which were
3 excellent, it was--they didn't accept him
4 because he only missed two days of school.
5 Three days, [foreign language].

6 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

7 [Cheering]

8 INTERPRETER: And, uh, and if they need a--
9 if they need a building to move into, there's
10 one right on 181st Street between Audubon and
11 Amsterdam.

12 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

13 [Cheering]

14 INTERPRETER: I used to go to that school.
15 It was called Gregorio Luperon School and the
16 place was called, uh, the Gregorio Luperon
17 School and it's up for rent right now. It's
18 available to you.

19 [Background noise]

20 MALE VOICE: Good afternoon, parents and
21 guardians of kids of 319 and 324 and KIPP. Um,
22 our students from 319 and 324, we don't want
23 KIPP because we don't have the, um, um, the, uh,
24 available amount of space for, for you because
25 we already took up the space. And also, then we

1 have to give up, uh, our schedule of the gym
2 and lunch. And we, and we, um, 324 has lunch
3 in--at sixth period and 319 has lunch double
4 period for eighth grade and then sixth and
5 seventh grade. So, also we, we wouldn't want
6 your school here because we got five straight
7 A's for five years. And so if you come into our
8 school, you're going to mess us up.

9 [Cheering]

10 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening, everyone. I am
11 a student from M.S. 319, and I believe that it
12 is not fair for KIPP to just take the school
13 away from us. Do you know that they don't
14 accept ELL students of special education
15 students? Here in the Mirabal Sister campus, we
16 have a special education program and we have
17 many ELL students. They will not bring benefits
18 to the Mirabal Campus Sister--Sister campus,
19 sorry. Studies show that students from public
20 and private schools are about in the same
21 levels. So KIPP, why don't you build your own
22 school and leave ours alone.

23 [Cheering]

24 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Numbers 11 through 15 can
25 come down.

1 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
2 language].

3 [Background noise]

4 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: Okay.

5 INTERPRETER: Representing my daughter.

6 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
7 language].

8 INTERPRETER: Minelli De Los Santos
9 [phonetic].

10 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
11 language].

12 INTERPRETER: This is a good school. I
13 stand guard [phonetic].

14 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
15 language].

16 INTERPRETER: We used to live in Puerto
17 Rico. This is the first, the first year for my
18 daughter.

19 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
20 language].

21 INTERPRETER: We have to translate.

22 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
23 language]

24 [Background noise]

25 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: Okay. [Foreign

1 language].

2 INTERPRETER: I'm very standful for this
3 school.

4 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
5 language].

6 INTERPRETER: Because they support my
7 daughter.

8 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
9 language].

10 INTERPRETER: It's her first time studying
11 here. I'm very proud.

12 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
13 language].

14 INTERPRETER: She was studying in Puerto
15 Rico and she's having a new experience in her
16 class.

17 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
18 language].

19 INTERPRETER: I have a good testimony that
20 the staff of this school, that this is one of
21 the best schools in the area.

22 MR. MANUEL DE LOS SANTOS: [Foreign
23 language]. God bless you. [Foreign language].
24 Thank you.

25 INTERPRETER: You're welcome.

1 [Cheering]

2 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Uh, number 12, please come
3 up. Juan Martinez.

4 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Thirteen through 20 can
5 come down as well please.

6 [Background noise]

7 MR. JUAN MARTINEZ: [Foreign language].

8 [Cheering]

9 INTERPRETER: The kids from, from KIPP, they
10 don't have the space, so you can move and go.

11 [Background noise]

12 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Number--Mayra, you're not--
13 number 14, 15, 16, and 17? Fourteen: Jose
14 Gonzalez, 15: Amarilis Velasquez, 16: Paula
15 Mota--got it? Okay.

16 MS. PAULA MOTA: [Foreign language]. I am a
17 teacher at M.S. 319, a special education teacher
18 who teaches emotionally disturbed student. I am
19 also a graduate from public, um, school. I
20 graduated from Brandeis, and I am a parent of
21 three student that attend public school in New
22 York City. Also, I have a student that attend
23 M.S. 319 because I believe in the school and I
24 think we can function if we have the resources.
25 So, the reason why I'm here supporting the--not

1 only M.S. 319, also M.S. 324, because when I
2 came to the United States, I didn't know a word
3 in English. It is difficult coming to a
4 different country. Can you imagine if you don't
5 understand the language? That's why I'm here,
6 because I'm here to support my community, my
7 English language learner and the special
8 education student.

9 [Cheering]

10 MS. AMARILIS VELAZQUEZ: [Foreign language].

11 [Background noise]

12 MS. AMARILIS VELAZQUEZ: [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: I am Amarilis Velasquez. Good
14 afternoon all the parents.

15 MS. AMARILIS VELAZQUEZ: [Foreign language].

16 [Crosstalk]

17 INTERPRETER: - - came recently from
18 Dominican Republic, even though he was born
19 here, I took it to--I took him to Dominican
20 Republic because of personal issues.

21 MS. AMARILIS VELAZQUEZ: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: I'm very standful of the
23 school because he came with big gaps, um, not
24 only with the math but also with the language.

25 MS. AMARILIS VELAZQUEZ: [Foreign language].

1 [Cheering]

2 INTERPRETER: I'm very standful because his
3 behavior was also a little hyper. He's more
4 quiet. And in the name of the three Mirabal
5 sister, we don't want KIPP here.

6 [Background noise]

7 MR. GEOMARIS MARTINEZ: My name is Geomaris
8 Martinez. I am a student at M.S. 319. I have
9 always been in public school. I did not speak
10 English when I entered school. Now I speak both
11 English and Spanish. I, I always get 4's on my
12 state tests. Being in public school does not
13 affect my grade. I was in bilingual class until
14 I took the NYSESLAT test. I don't want KIPP
15 Academy to take over of our space because I want
16 to keep participating the activities I do now.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. DARITIA VIDAL: Hi, my name is Daritia
19 Vidal [phonetic], and I'm in the eighth grade.
20 When I, I came into sixth grade and this school
21 is very--is a very good school and the teachers
22 help us a lot. We don't need to get, um, get
23 our space taken away to get KIPP inside the
24 school.

25 [Applause]

1 [Background noise]

2 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

3 INTERPRETER: My name is Vuika and I'm the,
4 uh, PTA, and I'm the PTA, uh, president over
5 here for, uh--

6 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [interposing] [Foreign
7 language].

8 INTERPRETER: --for P.S. 324.

9 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

10 INTERPRETER: About KIPP school, I'm really
11 not, uh, I'm really not opposed to having a
12 KIPP, uh, to having KIPP opening up over here,
13 because you need a--you need a good school
14 anywhere.

15 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: Yeah. But, uh, there isn't
17 any available--there isn't really any available
18 space because our children are using that space.
19 There really isn't that much space.

20 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

21 INTERPRETER: You can look, uh, you can look
22 for, um, you can look for more space elsewhere
23 but we can't give up this.

24 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

25 INTERPRETER: We can't, uh, we can't bundle

1 them all up, over populate.

2 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

3 INTERPRETER: We want this space for our
4 children. We want it because we already have
5 it.

6 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

7 INTERPRETER: What's more, uh, what's more,
8 very proudly, this is a, it's a number A school.

9 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

10 INTERPRETER: We accept children from, uh,
11 from Latin American countries who don't speak
12 one speck of English when they come in here.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

15 INTERPRETER: What's more, we expect--we
16 accept children for our special--for our special
17 classes, for education classes which not all--
18 which not many other schools offer.

19 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

20 INTERPRETER: So, we have--we don't have
21 want of many--of, uh, of many other schools over
22 because our, because our children get very good
23 grades over here and this is also an A school.

24 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

25 [Cheering]

1 INTERPRETER: So we don't have any space
2 in this school, plus the other, uh, the other
3 school over--Mirabal middle school is part of
4 our heritage.

5 MS. VUIKA YATTO: [Foreign language].

6 INTERPRETER: Thank you.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Numbers 21, 22, 23, 24 and
9 25 can come down.

10 [Background noise]

11 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

12 INTERPRETER: Good evening to all, to all
13 present parents.

14 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

15 INTERPRETER: I am one of the mothers of,
16 uh, of child in, uh, school 319.

17 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

18 INTERPRETER: I'm not opposed in any way to
19 KIPP school wanting to open up schools.

20 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

21 INTERPRETER: But I will say that 319 has an
22 A, uh, has an A average, has an A grade.

23 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

24 INTERPRETER: There are other schools that
25 have, that have very low grades, whose, whose

1 children don't get--have very low grades.

2 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

3 INTERPRETER: Who don't have--who have--who
4 don't, uh, teachers that are very well prepared.

5 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

6 INTERPRETER: That doesn't have--

7 [Cheering]

8 INTERPRETER: That doesn't have a--that
9 doesn't have a principal who has the same kind
10 of capability as our, as our principal over here
11 at 319.

12 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: That's why I believe that the
14 KIPP school--

15 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: KIPP can get another that, uh,
17 can get another school that doesn't have the
18 same kind of, uh, have the same kind of
19 qualifications or qualities that, uh, this
20 school has.

21 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: And occupy one of those
23 buildings.

24 [Applause]

25 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

1 [Cheering]

2 INTERPRETER: We parents, we feel, we feel
3 very proud about this and we want to take this
4 all the way, whatever the consequences may be.

5 [Background noise]

6 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

7 INTERPRETER: Good evening parents, I'd just
8 like to share some ideas with you.

9 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

10 INTERPRETER: This school, the [foreign
11 language] Mirabal, it's an historic cultural
12 heritage.

13 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

14 INTERPRETER: Cultural, too, yeah.

15 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: Okay. This school doesn't
17 have any available space right now. What was,
18 but what was once for 324 is, is now being used
19 by 319 and 324.

20 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

21 INTERPRETER: Finally, this, uh, this, uh,
22 school has had, uh, has had an A grade for five
23 years in a row. That's s prestige for this--not
24 just this community but also for this, but also
25 for this city.

1 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

2 INTERPRETER: Therefore, there is no space
3 over there. Whatever space there is here are
4 for our, are for our boys and girls. Thank you.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. ALEJANDRO RIVERA: Good evening. My
7 name is Alejandro Rivera and we are here not to
8 debate--we are not here to debate whether KIPP
9 is an excellent school. We know it is an
10 excellent school. We are not here to debate
11 whether KIPP is doing a great job with the, uh,
12 with the students and parents. We're--we know
13 they're doing an excellent job with students and
14 parent. The question we are here to debate is
15 whether KIPP belong in this school, in this
16 building. Um, 319 is doing an outstanding,
17 excellent job. We are rated A. 324 is, is
18 doing an, an outstanding job, it is rated A. So
19 what's the difference between KIPP, 319 and 324?
20 And I'm going to tell you what the difference
21 is. The difference is 319 and 324 say no, they
22 cannot say no to special education student.
23 They cannot say no to English language learners.
24 They cannot say no to behavior problem students.
25 Because if we have a behavior problem student,

1 we have to teach them, we have to keep them,
2 we have to feed them, we have to educate them.

3 [Cheering]

4 MR. ALEJANDRO RIVERA: However, do you know
5 what KIPP does with ELA and special education
6 students and misbehaving students? They send
7 them to us.

8 [Background noise]

9 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

10 MR. ALEJANDRO RIVERA: If they have a
11 student that misbehave, they brush them away and
12 we inherit them. However, there are A and we
13 are A. But they only teach level four, level
14 three and level four. We have to teach
15 everyone. Yet, we are all hold to the same
16 standards. We have to make a YP [phonetic],
17 KIPP has to make a YP. The difference is,
18 ladies and gentlemen, KIPP doesn't have to worry
19 about making a YP, they're already there. They
20 have level threes and four. We have one, two,
21 three and four and we have to work for it.

22 [Cheering]

23 MS. KIM BURKE: Ready? Good evening. My
24 name is Kim Burke. My son Mikai [phonetic] is a
25 student at KIPP STAR Middle School, a charter

1 public school. A few years ago my son uttered
2 the words that no parent wants to hear their
3 child say. "Mommy, why do I have to go to
4 school."

5 My son Mikai has an IEP. He has a learning
6 disability and school does not come easy for
7 him. He has to work hard, very hard just to
8 earn a passing grade. KIPP has been an
9 unbelievable support to my son and I in making
10 sure that he, um, nonetheless reaches his full
11 potential. Mikai's teachers go through
12 extraordinary lengths to make sure that I am
13 informed of everything that happens with my son
14 during the day. I am in constant communication
15 with his teachers. They email me, text me, meet
16 with me, cry with me and celebrate with me.

17 Today, I can say that my son is doing better
18 in his classes. He understands KIPP STAR's
19 model: work hard, be nice. And for Mikai, it is
20 a challenge, but I see him working hard, being
21 serious about his studies and taking pride in
22 his work. I credit this to his teachers
23 believing and not giving up on him. Mikai may
24 not make the honor roll, but he is an A student
25 to me.

1 Remember that charter schools are public
2 schools, and I feel fortunate to make--to have
3 my son in one. Please make sure that other
4 students with IEPs have the opportunity to
5 receive the same support that my son does.

6 [Cheering]

7 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language]

8 [Cheering]

9 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language]

10 Fidelina Baez [phonetic]. [Foreign language].

11 INTERPRETER: I work for 319 school.

12 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: In registration.

14 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

15 INTERPRETER: We don't have the space.

16 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

17 INTERPRETER: We have 300 students.

18 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

19 INTERPRETER: That we pick them up from the
20 community.

21 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: That they don't know English.

23 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

24 INTERPRETER: Special education.

25 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

1 INTERPRETER: And we take them when they
2 are graduated, they graduate from here with
3 honors.

4 MS. FIDELINA BAEZ: [Foreign language].

5 INTERPRETER: We have nothing, nothing, uh,
6 to envy for a charter school because a lot of
7 charter school students that have registered
8 here in our school when they--well you don't
9 want them.

10 [Cheering]

11 INTERPRETER: So, no.

12 [Cheering]

13 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening. Uh, I, too, am
14 here to represent my community, because I live
15 in Washington Heights as well.

16 [Cheering]

17 FEMALE VOICE: My kids were born and raised
18 right here in Washington Heights. And I am a
19 parent of two twins. They go to KIPP STAR
20 middle school, and it has been a godsend to me
21 and my children. And I want to say my daughter-
22 -both my son and my daughter are on different
23 academic levels. My daughter is very
24 intelligent. She needs to be challenged and she
25 is definitely being challenged at KIPP and she

1 is loving it.

2 My son--let me clear up this misconception--
3 he has an IEP. He has special needs. He does.
4 So they have accepted him and he, too, is also
5 being challenged at KIPP. But the difference is
6 he--not only is he being challenged at KIPP,
7 he's being given the tools to succeed at KIPP.
8 So, after the day, after the day ends and school
9 is out, if he needs tutoring, he gets tutoring.
10 Uh, if we're at home, he has all his teachers'
11 phone number, he can call the teacher at any
12 time, up until 9:00 at night.

13 [Cheering]

14 FEMALE VOICE: So I think it's a--I, what I
15 love about KIPP and that is for me, I can speak
16 for myself, it is challenging both of my
17 children, both my, my special needs child and my
18 daughter. So that's why I'm very happy that I
19 chose Skip, uh, KIPP for my, my kids. Thank
20 you.

21 [Cheering]

22 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Numbers 26 through 35, 26
23 through 35, please come down and line up.

24 INTERPRETER: [Foreign language].

25 [Background noise]

1 MS. NAOMI GARCIA: Hi, my name is Naomi
2 Garcia and I'm a parent of a child at KIPP STAR.
3 Tatiana [phonetic] has been at KIPP STAR since
4 fifth grade. This will be her last year. She
5 is currently applying to LaGuardia, Bronx
6 Science, um, PPAS.

7 I just wanted to say that KIPP STAR has been
8 a blessing to me, my daughter and my family.
9 Being a single parent, I don't feel like I'm
10 alone, because once you're in the KIPP
11 community, you have a family for life. And she
12 recently had an accident with her elbow. Um,
13 KIPP was there 100 percent. I had a phone call
14 from the, from the vice principal here.

15 KIPP is a lottery, so, you know, we don't
16 choose who comes in. It's just a lottery, it's
17 by luck and we take all the students that are
18 chosen. Um, as far as space is concerned, I
19 understand what you're saying, but we have
20 opened up eight schools and somehow we have
21 managed to live together as a community. That's
22 all I have to say.

23 [Cheering]

24 MS. DULCE ALVARADO: Good evening everyone.
25 My name is Dulce Alvarado, and my daughter

1 attends KIPP STAR Elementary. My daughter
2 receives a world class education at KIPP. I
3 consider myself incredibly fortunate that my
4 child was admitted to KIPP. As the
5 superintendent has informed us, building M090 is
6 being underutilized. The Department of
7 Education wants to be sure that all school
8 buildings are used as efficiently as possible,
9 as it says in this fact sheet. It is not about
10 public schools versus charter schools. It's
11 about having a choice to attend the best
12 possible school, a choice I didn't have growing
13 up. KIPP is one of the best charter schools in
14 the nation, and all of our schools have earned
15 an A or B on their progress reports. So why not
16 allow a great school in building M090? Our
17 children are taught character and they are well
18 behaved. If KIPP does not occupy the building,
19 then another school will.

20 [Cheering]

21 MS. DIANA DISLER: My name is Diana Disler
22 [phonetic] and I'm a seventh grader at M.S. 319.
23 And I would like to state that if KIPP is so
24 good as it says it is, um, why don't they have
25 their own school and do their own activities? I

1 would also like to say why are they invading
2 our, um, um, property, because, um, 319 and 324
3 is for the Mirabal Sisters only? And I would
4 also like to state that M.S. 319 has a academic,
5 um, level that, um, KIPP will never have.

6 [Cheering]

7 MS. RONETTE SUMMERS: Good evening. My name
8 is Ronette Summers [phonetic] and I've been a
9 part of the KIPP team and family for five years.

10 [Cheering]

11 MS. RONETTE SUMMERS: My daughter Jasmine is
12 a graduate of KIPP STAR and now attends KIPP NYC
13 College Prep High School and my nephew Rodney
14 attends KIPP STAR. I'm here today because
15 families in District 6 deserve access to KIPP.
16 The children in District 6 will not only get
17 access to a school with proven academic success,
18 but they will also get access to an amazing
19 leader. KIPP is an excellent choice for every
20 child, including children with special needs.
21 Wow, what a difference a year makes in a KIPP
22 school. My nephew has made huge gains in
23 reading, character strengths and confidence
24 since he's been at KIPP STAR. He has ADHD, a
25 learning disability and behavioral problems, and

1 yes, he has an IEP. Mr. Swersky [phonetic]
2 was my nephew's math teacher and fifth grade
3 chair. Mr. Swersky worked with my--with me
4 every week, including speaking to me just about
5 every Sunday to plan for the week and figure out
6 methods that worked for Rodney, to help him stay
7 focused and on task. He understands that one
8 size does not fit all and that every child
9 learns differently. When something didn't work,
10 he came up with alternatives. He really
11 tailored Rodney's education to fit his needs. I
12 cannot tell you how much invaluable advice and
13 encouragement he gave me and Rodney. And I
14 don't think I would have made it through the
15 year without him.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. DULCE ALVARADO: There are--these are
18 the types of amazing and dedicated teachers
19 every student who enters a KIPP school gets
20 access to. I work in partnership with all his
21 teachers and they continue to find ways to work
22 with him to ensure that despite his learning
23 disability, he, too, will go to college. And
24 now he comes home feeling confident. Thank you.

25 [Cheering]

1 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language]
2 Carmen Madera.

3 INTERPRETER: Good evening, my name is
4 Carmen Madera.

5 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

6 INTERPRETER: I have two children KIPP. I
7 have a good experience.

8 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

9 INTERPRETER: Somebody say that KIPP doesn't
10 help with emotional problems.

11 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

12 INTERPRETER: And my daughter.

13 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

14 INTERPRETER: She had a lot of, a lot of
15 emotional problems.

16 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

17 INTERPRETER: I had, I had her in a
18 traditional school.

19 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

20 INTERPRETER: And nobody helped me.

21 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: I looked for help.

23 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

24 INTERPRETER: What the traditional school
25 did was to refer my child.

1 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

2 INTERPRETER: For a psychologist because she
3 had a lot of problems.

4 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

5 INTERPRETER: And she was sent to the
6 district.

7 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

8 INTERPRETER: I didn't come here because
9 nobody picked me up.

10 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

11 INTERPRETER: I look for help.

12 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

13 INTERPRETER: I didn't have any problem in
14 KIPP with my daughter.

15 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: The contrary.

17 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

18 INTERPRETER: When some--something happen,
19 they call me.

20 [Background noise]

21 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: They call me. They don't send
23 my daughter for a psychologist or to the
24 district.

25 MS. CARMEN MADERA: [Foreign language].

1 INTERPRETER: I'm very standful, KIPP has
2 already helped me and I want a KIPP here.

3 [Background noise]

4 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language]
5 community, please, we want to hear everyone's
6 opinion. Please be respectful. Two minutes.

7 [Background noise]

8 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: All right, let's keep
9 going. Yes, we're ready?

10 [Background noise]

11 STEVEN: Hi, good evening, everybody. My
12 name is Steven and I am a former student of Mr.
13 Swersky. And he was my teacher in sixth grade,
14 um, from the Bronx, actually C.S. 67. And in
15 the beginning, uh, of the year, I was a bad
16 student. I really didn't know that much. I'm
17 surprised I even got to the sixth grade. And I
18 gave Mr. Swersky a hard time. Um, I didn't know
19 he was actually a good teacher, but little by
20 little, um, I started noticing that and he
21 actually taught me stuff that I didn't know. I
22 was really bad in math and reading and other
23 stuff. But, um, him, Mr. Swersky, he taught me
24 all of this and he actually, like, he got me
25 from the point that I didn't even like to go to

1 school and then I started to actually be
2 really interested and, like, liking it. I, I
3 had joy for it. And, um, he also taught us
4 respect. Every day in the morning, he would
5 shake our hand, he would make all of us, like,
6 hold the door, teach us the right thing from
7 wrong. And, every morning, he was, uh, give us
8 the pick of a morning meeting and he also told
9 us to write a goal, set a goal for our self, for
10 2012, I mean 2013 to write in center page,
11 meaning that when high school, we graduate,
12 that's the, that's the year we graduate from
13 high school and enter college and that's our
14 goal ever since then. So, I'd just like to say
15 that Mr. Swersky student--uh, I mean teacher and
16 I was, uh--he got--he made me become a good
17 student. He helped me in so many ways and I, I
18 could say he's the best teacher I ever had.

19 [Cheering]

20 STEVEN: And I just think he's--he deserves
21 the right to bring his school in, KIPP, because
22 he's a great student. He could, uh, if he was
23 able to handle, he's able to handle a whole
24 school, a whole building. He's, he's capable of
25 doing that. Um, he helped, even in class before

1 me, all of the, um, all the students, my
2 friends from back then, still talk about him.
3 We like him. And we wish we had a teacher like
4 him today in our school.

5 [Cheering]

6 MR. DANNY SWERSKY: Good evening all. Um,
7 so, my name is Danny Swersky, and I will be the
8 school leader, um, of our KIPP school in
9 Washington Heights.

10 [Cheering]

11 MR. DANNY SWERSKY: I stand, I stand in
12 front of you with a ton of gratitude. Um, to
13 people holding signs that say "say no to KIPP"
14 and to folks that are holding up KIPP signs as
15 well, the fact that there are so many people so
16 passionate about education is really, really
17 important. And so, so I really, really
18 appreciate the fact that people took time to
19 come out.

20 Um, I'm here in front of you because I'm,
21 I'm excited to collaborate and to work together
22 to make sure that the needs of our students are
23 met, to make sure that the needs of the
24 community in Washington Heights are met. And
25 so, I'm incredibly, incredibly excited. Please

1 stop me afterwards, come talk to me. I'm
2 here. My name is Danny Swersky and I look
3 forward to, to building a community together.
4 Thank you.

5 [Cheering]

6 [Background noise]

7 MR. ALEX DEROSARIO: Good evening ladies and
8 gentlemen. My name is Alex DeRosario. Um,
9 ladies and gentlemen and others [phonetic] just
10 in case. Um, my son is a freshman at 319. As a
11 freshman, he tells me that there's so little
12 room right now, he's sharing a locker with
13 somebody else. Um, I don't know how in the
14 world the, the city was able to conduct the
15 numbers where they actually show there was
16 enough room here, but from what I hear from
17 other students that are up above, there isn't.
18 Um, I'm going to be a little curious about those
19 numbers.

20 Um, I don't have anything against KIPPs, but
21 I do foresee what KIPPs would do to the, uh,
22 education system and the teachers, including the
23 unions which protect our systems against
24 government manipulation. Um, they're both
25 great. Uh, at M.S. 319, my kids, uh, learn a

1 lot. Uh, I like the teachers. I really like
2 what KIPP's been doing. Um, I think you guys
3 should get together maybe into change, get a
4 better education system going. And, um, I think
5 you should just let the government worry about
6 getting you guys a new building. I mean there's
7 so much room available, I mean, I mean how bad
8 is it? I mean we have the government for other
9 things, why not, you know? Thank you.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Numbers 35 through 40, 35
12 through 40.

13 [Background noise]

14 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

15 [Background noise]

16 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

17 INTERPRETER: Today--goodnight--good
18 evening, my name is.

19 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

20 INTERPRETER: Andolina Callado [phonetic],
21 mother--

22 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

23 INTERPRETER: --mother of Ambis Palino
24 [phonetic]. Uh-huh.

25 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

1 INTERPRETER: And I, and I believe that,
2 uh, more KIPP schools should be opened.

3 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

4 INTERPRETER: Because their discipline is
5 excellent.

6 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

7 INTERPRETER: My child--I discipline my
8 child, but there are other children who need to
9 be disciplined at school because their parents
10 don't discipline them at home.

11 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

12 INTERPRETER: I don't know any English but
13 with the--but I learn with, with the, uh, with
14 the homework that they're giving her at home.

15 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

16 [Cheering]

17 INTERPRETER: And they also accept special
18 needs children. If you don't believe it, go
19 over to the school, uh, some time and ask them
20 yourselves.

21 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: Something else, we can call up
23 to 9:00 at night in order to have the, to have
24 the teachers explain the lessons to us.

25 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

1 INTERPRETER: Uh, the, the homework.

2 MS. ANDOLINA COLLADO: [Foreign language].

3 [Cheering]

4 [Background noise]

5 INTERPRETER: It makes me ashamed sometimes

6 when I see some other public school children,

7 they get into--they get onto the train because--

8 [Background noise]

9 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Okay. Okay. [Foreign

10 language]. Yeah, yeah.

11 [Background noise]

12 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

13 [Background noise]

14 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

15 [Background noise]

16 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

17 [Background noise]

18 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Okay. [Foreign language].

19 [Background noise]

20 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

21 [Background noise]

22 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

23 [Background noise]

24 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

25 [Background noise]

1 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Okay. Okay.

2 [Background noise]

3 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

4 [Background noise]

5 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: All right, that's it. No.

6 [Background noise]

7 FEMALE VOICE: Excuse me, ladies and
8 gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen, this is a
9 public meeting. We understand that everybody
10 want to voice their opinion, however, I'm going
11 to ask those if you have, you're going to have
12 to ask to be leave. So we're asking to please
13 let everybody have their chance to voice their
14 opinion. Thank you.

15 [Background noise]

16 [Cheering]

17 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

18 [Background noise]

19 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: [Foreign language].

20 [Background noise]

21 MS. REBECCA MCMERTY: Hi, thank you. My
22 name is Rebecca McMerty and I am a founding
23 teacher at KIPP STAR Elementary School, ten
24 blocks north of here on 177th Street. And I am
25 so glad that there are so many people in this

1 room that share my passion for teaching
2 English language learners and special ed
3 students, because that is exactly why I teach at
4 KIPP STAR Elementary School.

5 At KIPP STAR Elementary School, we proudly
6 serve L's and special ed students. In fact, in
7 our founding year, we have 23 percent English
8 language learners, 8 percent special ed
9 students, and we are looking to increase those
10 numbers in future years as we grow as a school.

11 Starting in kindergarten, we put all of our
12 students on a track of success, where they will
13 climb to and through college, starting in
14 kindergarten.

15 And I am so excited about the prospect of my
16 students attending middle school, a KIPP middle
17 school here in this building in their very own
18 community. And we want to share this building
19 with you to make sure that families in
20 Washington Heights have the very best choices
21 for their students' education. So, thank you so
22 much.

23 [Cheering]

24 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

25 INTERPRETER: Good evening, I am a parent of

1 KIPP. I'm here to represent my daughter, who
2 is a KIPP scholar. I'm not only here because we
3 just want to take over the building. I'm here
4 because it is an honor for us to be here in
5 Washington Heights and be a partner with this
6 community.

7 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

8 INTERPRETER: I have teachers who are
9 available to me and my daughter--

10 [Background noise]

11 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

12 INTERPRETER: I have teachers who are
13 available to myself and my daughter 24 hours a
14 day, 7 days a week.

15 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

16 INTERPRETER: So I, I--my--regardless of the
17 time, regardless of the time, if I call my, my
18 daughter's teacher at 11:00 at night to say that
19 my daughter is sick and will not be to school or
20 will be there late, that teacher will pick up
21 the phone for me, uh, to, to hear this news.

22 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

23 [Background noise]

24 INTERPRETER: The teachers at KIPP, the
25 teachers at KIPP worry about the children and

1 me--and worry about the children getting the
2 education that they need.

3 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

4 [Cheering]

5 INTERPRETER: Ninety-percent--99 percent of
6 children that go to a KIPP academy go, go on to
7 college. This is something that I want for my
8 child and hope that this community wants it for
9 their children also. Thank you.

10 [Background noise]

11 MS. NATASHA MUNOS: Hi, my name is Natasha
12 Munos, and my daughter--

13 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] Quiet.

14 MS. NATASHA MUNOS: And my daughter Isabella
15 Check [phonetic], who attends KIPP STAR
16 Elementary School not too far from here. She is
17 part of the founding class. I love the school
18 culture and family involvement that the staff
19 encourages. I understand that the schools
20 located in this complex are A rated schools, and
21 I believe that KIPP can add to this greatness.
22 Why not coexist and help more children receive
23 the education they deserve? The school has
24 space to provide more children with a great
25 learning experience. We wouldn't be here

1 fighting today if there was not space in this
2 building.

3 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

4 MS. NATASHA MUNOS: We should occupy this
5 space with another great public school because
6 charter schools are also public schools. Um,
7 opening a KIPP middle school in this community
8 will help give more opportunities to kids in
9 Washington Heights, which is the main goal of
10 all parents. If charter schools were
11 stereotypical, they wouldn't open up a charter
12 school in underserved minority communities such
13 as these. They are helping children like ours
14 advance in life. Many kids from my daughter's
15 school come from Spanish speaking homes and were
16 not only accepted into the school with open arms
17 but are excelling in their studies. I am
18 advocating for a quality education and better
19 schools for our children and that's what KIPP
20 stands for. And just a note for misinformed
21 parents, the only requirement to enter a charter
22 school is your name and your address, not if
23 you're an ELL learner or if you have an IEP.
24 Thank you.

25 [Cheering]

1 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

2 INTERPRETER: First of all, good evening.

3 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

4 INTERPRETER: To guests and people who, uh,

5 work in here too.

6 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

7 INTERPRETER: Allow me to, allow me to

8 introduce myself, along with, uh, Minerva,

9 Patria, [foreign language].

10 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

11 INTERPRETER: And Maria Teresa who were the,

12 uh--

13 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

14 INTERPRETER: --the Mirabal Sisters who came

15 from the same, uh, who came from the same little

16 countryside that I did.

17 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

18 INTERPRETER: For which we're very proud

19 that this school, uh, has its name on it--has

20 their name on it.

21 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

22 INTERPRETER: I want to be brief with what

23 I'm going to say, but I'd like to advise KIPP.

24 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

25 [Cheering]

1 INTERPRETER: That we're, we're here to
2 build, not invade.

3 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

4 INTERPRETER: Uh, progressive government
5 builds, does not--but doesn't invade.

6 MALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

7 [Cheering]

8 INTERPRETER: That's why we gave you a
9 welcome this evening, but we don't have any
10 housing for you. So, thank you.

11 [Background noise]

12 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Would numbers 42 through
13 50 please come line up, 42 through 50?

14 [Background noise]

15 INTERPRETER: [Foreign language].

16 MR. THOMAS KIRBY: Hi, good evening
17 everyone. My name is Thomas Kirby. I have a 5-
18 year-old that goes to KIPP Elementary Academy.
19 He's in kindergarten. Um, I'm going to be
20 really brief, but one, I want to commend the
21 children from this school that came up here. I
22 mean, what I was listening to, what I heard,
23 they're very intelligent. You can tell that the
24 school is providing them everything that they
25 need and they are going to excel. But that's

1 exactly what KIPP does too. They're doing the
2 same thing that this school is doing. I heard
3 some people say about, um, KIPP earns their
4 money, like it's a school for--I don't pay for
5 my child to go to this school.

6 FEMALE VOICE: Yuh-huh.

7 MR. THOMAS KIRBY: Nobody here that's
8 representing KIPP pays for their child to go to
9 that school. This school is free to us. They
10 have to generate money just like the public
11 schools, everybody does. We're all public
12 schools. Um, my, my 5-year-old child comes to
13 me and says "serenity, daddy, serenity," when I--
14 --I become upset, like a parent, I do, and I
15 become frustrated. But that's one of the things
16 that KIPP is teaching my son, to be more calm,
17 to be more just understanding of differences,
18 and I think that's what we need to do.

19 Don't necessarily say KIPP is bad and
20 shouldn't come in a school. Give them an
21 opportunity to come in the school and then if
22 they're not good, then you can come back and say
23 listen, they're not doing what they're supposed
24 to do. You need to get them out of here.
25 That's what I think. That's just what I think.

1 [END 090101_002.MP3]

2 [START 259067.MP3]

3 MR. THOMAS KIRBY: All right. So you said
4 you don't have the space, but I read briefly
5 that there was another school here, and then
6 that school closed down. Now you said that for
7 three to five years it's been, you've been
8 making A's. I don't think that'll change if
9 KIPP comes into the school. Okay. Listen, I
10 just think that we should be understanding. I
11 appreciate everything you said. I'm a KIPP, I'm
12 a KIPPster. I'm for my school, KIPP, KIPP,
13 KIPP, KIPP. Just give us a chance. That's all
14 we ask. Give us a chance.

15 [Cheering]

16 MS. RENOKI SURAYA: Good evening. My name
17 is Renoki Suraya. I'm the Principal of KIPP
18 Star Elementary School. I also started my
19 teaching career next door at PS-8, and I see
20 some of the students that I used to teach in
21 this room. And I am so proud that I was able to
22 send my students to 319 and 324. Very proud. I
23 ran into a parent outside whose--one of my
24 former students is now on his way to college.
25 I'm very proud of that. I learned so much in my

1 time working at PS-8, and I know that I learn
2 so much every day working with the Principal at,
3 um, PS-115, that we work together to make sure
4 that our schools are both excelling. And the
5 goal here is for KIPP to be another place for
6 our students to go to school; that our students
7 in Washington Heights have many different places
8 to go to school, that our students from KIPP
9 Star Elementary School have a place to go when
10 they go to middle school, that the students at
11 319 and 324 and KIPP all work together, and our
12 teachers all learn from each other. My
13 greatest, greatest thing that I take away from
14 KIPP is the collaboration that I have learned as
15 I've been here, and I've been working with
16 public--um, with the school that I work with,
17 and with everyone that I meet. Every person I
18 meet in an audience, every person that I meet,
19 all the families that we work with, our goal is
20 team and family. That's not just team and
21 family KIPP, that's team and family for all of
22 our schools together. Thank you.

23 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

24 FEMALE VOICE: Shh. Can you translate? Can
25 you get the--can you get the gist? Can you

1 translate quickly?

2 INTERPRETER: I'm just going to translate as
3 quickly as possible. I just wanted to say I am
4 a Hispanic woman. I grew up in very poor. I
5 grew up struggling. I couldn't speak English,
6 all of those things. At the end of the day, I
7 had to work my butt off to get to where I have
8 been. As a teacher, I would never teach in an
9 organization, never teach in an organization
10 that does not accept anyone of Hispanic
11 heritage, does not accept special-education
12 students, and that's why I teach at KIPP. And I
13 know that the concern is space. I'm telling
14 you, we just want more opportunities because at
15 the end of the day, this is our community and we
16 want more, more for all of you, that's all.
17 That's all.

18 [Yelling]

19 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Can we please get numbers
20 50 through 60? If anybody here still has a
21 speaker number 50 through 60, please come down
22 now.

23 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

24 JOHN: Hi. My name is John, and I'm from
25 M.S. 319. All I want to say is that KIPP, if

1 you're good, why do you have to pick kids
2 without even knowing if they're good or bad?
3 You just pick 'em by lottery. So why do you
4 pick 'em? That's all I have to say.

5 [Applause]

6 CARMEN: [Foreign language].

7 INTERPRETER: My name is Carmen. He's my
8 son. I'm very proud of 319. Talking about the
9 teachers, they are excellent. When the kids are
10 out of school, they have a lot of control of the
11 students, the kids, of everybody. We are
12 working and we are defending the space of our
13 children. Thank you.

14 MS. CARMEN ROJAS: [Foreign language].

15 INTERPRETER: Good evening. My name is
16 Carmen Rojas. I say welcome to my - -
17 superintendent, Elsa Nuñez, the union
18 representative, and the DOE representative, and
19 my - - Brian, CC members [phonetic]. And Mr.
20 Abreau [phonetic], Principal of PS-319. I feel
21 very happy with my - - seat [phonetic] because
22 for me, it's the--it's sacred. The school 319
23 and 324 they are scoring A. They are - -
24 school. They are the letter A, not only parent
25 involvement and student progress, in everything

1 they are an A. The charter school in the city
2 level they have 60 [phonetic] A school, charter
3 school. And we have 1,000 A school traditional
4 school. If you compare the schools within the
5 different charter with a charter school, you're
6 doing better because in their school, you are
7 succeeding [phonetic] for any, any group, any--
8 any group. Thank you.

9 MS. MONSERAT PEREZ: [Foreign language].

10 INTERPRETER: Good evening everybody. My
11 name is Monserat Perez, my daughter is Natalie
12 Perez, she's a sixth grader in 319 school. I'm
13 here to tell the other school we have no space
14 for them. If they say that they are one of the
15 best schools--the better schools, that they have
16 good school teachers, what do they want to do
17 here? We have no space for them. If they are
18 saying that our kids have the bad behaviors,
19 what are they doing here? My family for
20 generations has studied here. My nieces have
21 studied here and they have scholarships in
22 Columbia University. We're not going to give
23 our space to that school or to the other school.
24 We're going to defend our children's space, the
25 space of our children, not for anybody else.

1 What they want here if they're a good school?
2 Why they don't rent another building and go to
3 another school? There is another building, big
4 building, go on, rent it, and leave the space
5 for our children so they can study and do well.
6 Don't waste your time here, leave us alone.
7 Bye.

8 CHILD: First I would like to say that I'm
9 proud to be a KIPP Star student, and that we are
10 a public school, so that's why we try to
11 generate our own money. And we would be proud
12 to go with you guys, but we're not trying to
13 invade your space. We don't want to take the
14 school, we just want to come in and--well, we
15 heard about all your A's and we believe about
16 that. And we want you to actually understand us
17 too that we do also have students that are
18 succeeding, and that not, not the whole KIPP
19 Star system is not--is bad. But like KIPP Star
20 will make it through a lot of struggles, 'cause
21 we have grit, and that's why we want to be part
22 of your community. And it would be really proud
23 for us--I mean, I would be really proud if you
24 guys would actually let us go through and let
25 KIPP actually go into this school.

1 MS. BELKIS POCHE: [Foreign language]. You
2 are welcome here today but that's it. Bye-bye.
3 We don't want you here.

4 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

5 MS. ROSA NUNEZ: Hi. My name is Rosa Nuñez,
6 I'm one of the math teachers at M.S. 319. I'm
7 going to say it in English, and I'm going to say
8 it in Spanish again. I have nothing against any
9 school, I'm pretty sure they're great, but I'm
10 going to say just one word, "Capacity."

11 Capacidad. We are talking about the capacity.
12 I don't know what formula the DOE is using, I'm
13 not sure what it is, but just off the top of my
14 head, when I think about 1,800 students coming
15 into this building, and I think about how many
16 teachers we're going to have, I think about one
17 period, just think about first period, 1,800
18 students. Every room in the building will be
19 used with how many students, 30, 35, 40? What
20 are we going to do when there are 60 teachers
21 teaching and there are 60 other teachers who are
22 going to stand in the hallway? [Foreign
23 language]. Thank you.

24 MS. MEG BARBOZA: If anyone has number 61,
25 please come down now. Number 61 is the last

1 number on our list.

2 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign language].

3 JACQUELINE: Hi. My name is Jacqueline.
4 I'm from M.S. 324. This is my first year
5 starting M.S. 324, and I'm really proud of this
6 school. I really love this school, and I don't
7 want kids to come inside our school because we
8 don't have space. If they come in, then we
9 won't be able to move from class to classroom.
10 So I don't want them to come inside, so they
11 have to find a spot, and a place to live, 'cause
12 we're not giving out space.

13 JOSE: [Foreign language].

14 INTERPRETER: What I want to tell you is
15 right now we don't have space, space for KIPPs.
16 We have no space for KIPP. The only thing I
17 want to say that we the Dominicans and the
18 Mexicans we are together. We're united together
19 and we are not going to let the school to be
20 here. Nothing else.

21 ERICA: Good evening, all. I am the parent
22 of a KIPP student, and I just--I want to say a
23 couple of things first of all. I appreciate you
24 guys letting me speak, 'cause I know that I am
25 in a different school. Also I just want to say

1 that there has to be mutual respect. The
2 entire event you're being judged, okay? People
3 are listening to both sides of the spectrum, and
4 determining what's going to ultimately happen in
5 your school. KIPP has been very quiet, they
6 have applauded people but they have not
7 interrupted, they have not disrespected.
8 Translators are here to help English non-
9 Spanish-speaking people understand what's going
10 on, and I've actually seen hands go up in
11 people's faces. I've seen children disrespect
12 adults, okay? In KIPP children learn to
13 respect, children learn to listen, yes.
14 Absolutely. They don't stand on chairs, they
15 sit down when adults are speaking because you're
16 giving off a bad example. Okay? People, adult,
17 parents are supposed to instruct their children.
18 I've seen parents yell blatantly disregard other
19 people's opinions, and that's highly, highly
20 inadequate. No, I'm not speaking to you
21 directly, but I'm speaking to the group as a
22 whole. It's not about

23 MALE VOICE: We don't have any space.

24 ERICA: It's not about space. You know
25 what? This isn't about space. This is going to

1 be the determined whether a person agrees or
2 disagrees. This is about education, quality
3 education for your children. Okay? I am happy
4 that my son is receiving quality education. My
5 cousin called me, who is of Dominican descent,
6 and told me--called me from San Francisco and
7 said, "Erica, if you want your son to receive an
8 optimum education, you better try that KIPP
9 lottery," and I'm thankful to God that I did.
10 Okay? Everyone that stands before you isn't
11 here to be argumentative, we're here to have
12 mutual respect, and to make proper decisions,
13 and you've done nothing but blatantly disregard
14 another side. No worries. In Dominican
15 Republic, a person can have a shack - - and they
16 - -

17 [Heckling/chanting]

18 AUDIENCE: No KIPP, no KIPP, no KIPP...

19 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Parents, let's give me the
20 opportunity to finish this discussion. So that
21 was the last testimony of the night. Again, we
22 welcome any comments and feedback you may have
23 at any time before the Panel for Education
24 Policy votes on this proposal at its November
25 17th meeting. The e-mail address and phone

1 number where comments can be made are:
2 D06proposals@school.nyc.gov, and the number:
3 (212) 374-3466. Thank you for your
4 participation. The joint public hearing is now
5 closed.

6 [END 259067.MP3]

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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 *Dana Lutz*

Date: November 3, 2011