



Notice
December 19, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz (23K298) from K-8 to K-5 Beginning in 2012-2013

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

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to implement a “grade truncation” of the middle school grade levels of P.S. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz (23K298, “P.S. 298”), located in building K298, at 85 Watkins Street, Brooklyn, NY 11212, in Community School District 23 that currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. This means that P.S. 298 would no longer serve students in grades six through eight and would only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade. P.S. 298 is currently the only school organization housed in K298.

P.S. 298 currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. P.S. 298 also offers three sections of a full-day pre-kindergarten program. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 298 will no longer enroll sixth grade students after the 2011-2012 school year. All current eighth grade students who meet promotional standards will apply to high school through the Citywide High School Admissions Process and enter ninth grade, as planned, in September 2012. Students currently in the sixth and seventh grades at P.S. 298 will continue at the school for seventh and eighth grade, provided they meet promotional requirements.

During the 2012-2013 school year, P.S. 298 would serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade and seventh and eighth grade. During the 2013-2014 school year, P.S. 298 would serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade and eighth grade. After the last class of eighth grade students graduates in June 2014, P.S. 298 would no longer serve any middle school grades. Students who do not meet promotional requirements and must repeat a grade no longer offered by P.S. 298 would be provided with an alternative placement in a District 23 middle school.

All P.S. 298 fifth grade students would apply to start middle school in 2012-2013 as sixth grade students through the Middle School Choice Process. More detailed information about the District 23 Middle School Choice Process is provided in section III, under “Impact for Future Middle School Students.”

In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) posted in December 2011, the DOE has also proposed to open and “co-locate” a new middle school, (23K423, “23K423”) in K298, which would serve students in sixth through eighth grade when it reaches full scale in 2014-2015. This

new middle school would admit sixth grade students through the District 23 Middle School Choice Process with a limited unscreened admissions method. If the proposal to co-locate 23K423 in K298 is approved, it would provide a new middle school option for District 23 families and would replace the seats lost by the proposed grade truncation of P.S. 298's middle school grades. 23K423 would be co-located in K298 with P.S. 298 as it phases in.

Background on the DOE's Decision-Making Process

Schools are identified for possible intervention for the following three reasons: (1) they received poor grades on their annual Progress Report; (2) they received a poor rating on their annual Quality Review; or (3) they have been identified by the New York State Education Department ("SED") as Persistently Low Achieving ("PLA"). Specifically, under the DOE's accountability framework, all schools that receive a D or F, or a third consecutive grade of C or lower on their annual Progress Report and all schools that received a rating of Underdeveloped on their most recent Quality Review are evaluated for intensive support or intervention, including the possibility of phase-out or other intervention. Progress Reports are released by the DOE each fall and evaluate schools based on Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment, which includes safety, attendance and survey feedback from parents, teachers, and sixth- to twelfth-grade students, where applicable. During Quality Reviews, experienced educators visit a school over several days, observe classrooms and talk with students, staff and families. Schools are rated on a four-point scale, with "Underdeveloped" as the lowest possible rating and "Well Developed" as the highest.

A school's Progress Report and its Quality Review may initially suggest a school should be considered for intervention but no single criterion leads to a phase-out or truncation decision. To identify the appropriate action that will best serve the student community, the DOE reviews school data, consults with superintendents and other experienced educators who have worked closely with the school, as well as gathers community feedback.

P.S. 298 earned an overall F grade on its 2010-2011 Progress Report. On the 2009-2010 Progress Report, P.S. 298 earned a C grade, and on the 2008-2009 Progress Report, P.S. 298 earned an A grade.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of P.S. 298 with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit the P.S. 298 community. During that review, the DOE looked at recent and historical performance, consulted with superintendents and other experienced educators who have worked closely with the school, and gathered community feedback.

After completing that review, the DOE believes that a grade truncation will best serve students and the community. Truncating P.S. 298's middle school grades will allow for the school to more fully focus on serving its kindergarten through fifth grade students.

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

The Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) can be found on the Department of Education’s Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/Feb2012Proposals>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in P.S. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D23Proposals@schools.nyc.gov

Oral comments can be left at 212-374-0208.

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

Name: Jeanie Baik
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007
Email: D23Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-0208

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

January 20, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
P.S. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz
85 Watkins Street
Brooklyn, NY 11212

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

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

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

February 9, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Brooklyn Technical High School
29 Fort Greene Place
Brooklyn, NY 11217