



Notice
December 19, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

The Proposed Phase-out of The Anna Gonzalez Community School (32K296) 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 phase-out and close The Anna Gonzalez Community School (32K296, “The Anna Gonzalez Community School”), an existing zoned middle school located at 125 Covert Street, Brooklyn, NY 11207, in Community School District 32, in Building K296 (“K296”) because of its low performance and inability to turn around quickly to better support student needs. The Anna Gonzalez Community School currently serves students in sixth through eighth grades. If this phase-out proposal is approved, The Anna Gonzalez Community School would no longer admit sixth grade students after the conclusion of the 2011-2012 school year. One grade will then be phased out in each subsequent year. The Anna Gonzalez Community School will close after June 2014. Current students will continue to be served and supported by The Anna Gonzalez Community School as they progress toward completion of middle school. Current eighth grade students will be supported through the Citywide High School Admissions Process (“High School Admissions Process”) as they select a high school.

The Anna Gonzalez Community School is currently “co-located” in building K296 with the following schools: P053K@I296K, a District 75 school (75K053, “P053K@I296K”), and Achievement First Bushwick Charter School (84K538, “Achievement First Bushwick”). P053K@I296K serves students who are autistic or intellectually disabled in grades four through eight. Achievement First Bushwick serves students in grades kindergarten through nine, but only serves students in grades kindergarten through four at the K296 building.

In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) posted on December 19, 2011, the DOE has also proposed to co-locate a new middle school, (32K562, “I.S. 562”), which would serve students in sixth through eighth grade when it reaches full scale in K296 in 2014-2015. This new middle school would serve students in the existing middle school zone for The Anna Gonzalez Community School. If the proposal to co-locate I.S. 562 in K296 is approved, it would provide a new middle school option for District 32 families and replace the seats lost by the proposed phase out of The Anna Gonzalez Community School. I.S. 562 would be co-located in K296 with The Anna Gonzalez Community School, P053K@I296K, and Achievement First Bushwick as The Anna Gonzalez Community School phases out and I.S. 562 phases in.

Background on the DOE’s Decision-Making Process

Schools are identified for possible phase-out 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. Progress Reports are released by the DOE each fall and evaluate schools based on Student Progress, Student Performance, and School Environment, which includes attendance and survey feedback from parents and teachers, and from 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 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, and gathers community feedback.

The Anna Gonzalez Community School earned an overall F grade on its 2010-2011 Progress Report. On the 2009-2010 Progress Report, The Anna Gonzalez Community School earned a C grade, and on the 2008-2009 Progress Report, The Anna Gonzalez Community School earned an A grade.

Additionally, The Anna Gonzalez Community School has been identified by New York State as Persistently Low Achieving.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of The Anna Gonzalez Community School with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit The Anna Gonzalez Community School 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 only the most serious intervention—the gradual phase-out and eventual closure of The Anna Gonzalez Community School —will best serve students and the community. Phasing out and closing The Anna Gonzalez Community School will allow for new school options to develop in the K296 building that are intended to provide better options for families.

I. 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 The Anna Gonzalez Community School’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D32Proposals@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: Toby Shepherd
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007
Email: D32Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-0208

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

February 1, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
The Anna Gonzalez Community School
125 Covert Street
Brooklyn, NY 11207

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