



Notice
December 22, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

The Proposed Grade Truncation of Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts (03M415) to a High School Beginning in 2012-2013

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

Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts (03M415, “Wadleigh”) is an existing secondary school located at 215 West 114th Street, New York, NY 10026, in Community School District 3, in Building M088 (“M088”). It currently serves students in grades 6-12.

The Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to implement a “grade truncation,” which would result in Wadleigh serving only students in the high school grades 9-12. If the proposal is approved, Wadleigh would no longer admit sixth-grade students after the current 2011-2012 school year. One grade would be phased out in each subsequent year until Wadleigh serves only grades nine through twelve in 2014-2015. Current middle school students will continue to be served and supported by Wadleigh 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. Students may continue to choose Wadleigh for high school grades.

The DOE is proposing this grade truncation because of the low enrollment, demand, and performance of the middle school grades at Wadleigh. Very few eighth-grade students continue at Wadleigh for high school, thus limiting the intended goal of a 6th-12th grade school working with students over a seven-year period to create stronger relationships and student support. This grade truncation would also enable Wadleigh’s administration to focus its efforts on improving the performance of its high school grades, which are also experiencing performance declines.

Wadleigh currently serves students in sixth through twelfth grades. It admits rising sixth-grade students through the District 3 Middle School Choice Process and the District 5 Middle School Choice Process, and rising ninth- and tenth-grade students through the Citywide High School Application Process. Wadleigh is currently “co-located” in building M088 with Frederick Douglass Academy II Secondary School (03M860, “FDA II”), which serves students in grade 6-12, and an Alternative Learning Center (“ALC”), where students attend school when they are suspended from their regular school. In 2012-2013, the fifth, sixth, and seventh grades of Harlem Success Academy I (84M351, “HSA1”) will also be located in M088. The co-location of HSA1 middle school grades 5-8 in M088 was approved by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) on February 1, 2011.

Background on the DOE's Decision-Making Process

The DOE undertakes grade truncations for several reasons. In some cases, grade truncations are initiated to create grade alignment across New York City schools. Schools may also be identified for truncation for performance reasons. A performance-related truncation is considered for the same three reasons that drive a “phase-out” decision:

(1) the school received poor grades on their annual Progress Report; (2) the school received a poor rating on their annual Quality Review; or (3) the school has 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 truncation. 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, 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 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.

Wadleigh’s middle school grades earned an overall D grade on its 2010-2011 Progress Report. On the 2009-2010 Progress Report Wadleigh earned a C grade, and on the 2008-2009 Progress Report, Wadleigh earned an A grade.

Wadleigh’s high school grades earned an overall D grade on its 2010-2011 Progress Report. On the 2009-2010 Progress Report Wadleigh earned a B grade, and on the 2008-2009 Progress Report Wadleigh earned an A grade.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of Wadleigh with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit the Wadleigh 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, assessed student demand, and gathered community feedback.

After completing that review, the DOE believes that a grade truncation will best serve students and the community.

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 Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D03Proposals@schools.nyc.gov

Oral comments can be left at 212-374-3466.

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: Elizabeth Rose
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007
Email: D03Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-3466

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

January 26, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts
215 West 14 Street
New York, NY 10026

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