



Notice
December 22, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

The Proposed Truncation of the Middle School Grades of Frederick Douglass Academy IV Secondary School (16K393) 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 truncate the middle school grades (six through eight) of Frederick Douglass Academy IV Secondary School (16K393, “Frederick Douglass Academy IV”), an existing secondary school located at 1010 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221 in Community School District 16, in Building K026 (“K026”) because of its low performance and inability to turn around quickly to better support student needs. Frederick Douglass Academy IV currently serves students in sixth through twelfth grades. If this truncation proposal is approved, Frederick Douglass Academy IV would no longer admit sixth grade students after the conclusion of the 2011-2012 school year. One middle school grade at Frederick Douglass Academy IV will then be truncated in each subsequent year. Frederick Douglass Academy IV will no longer serve middle school students after June 2014. Current middle school students will continue to be served and supported by Frederick Douglass Academy IV 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, one choice for which is to remain at Frederick Douglass Academy IV.

Frederick Douglass Academy IV is currently “co-located” in building K026 with P.S. 026 Jesse Owens (16K026, “P.S. 026”), an existing zoned elementary school serving students in grades kindergarten through five. P.S. 026 also offers a pre-kindergarten program. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building, and may share large, common spaces like the auditoriums, gymnasiums and cafeterias.

In a separate EIS posted on December 22, 2011, the DOE has also proposed to co-locate a new choice middle school, (16K681, “I.S. 681”) in K026, which would serve students in sixth through eighth grades when it reaches full scale in 2014-2015. I.S. 681 would admit students through the District 16 Middle School Choice process using a limited unscreened selection method. This new middle school would provide another middle school option for District 16 families and would replace the seats lost by the truncation of the middle school grades of Frederick Douglass Academy IV. I.S. 681 would be co-located in K026 with Frederick Douglass Academy IV and with P.S. 026.

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 are also identified for truncation for performance reasons. A performance-related truncation is considered for the same three reasons that drive a “phase-out” decision: (1) they received poor grades on their annual Progress Report; (2) they received a poor rating on their most recent 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 grade 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 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 criteria 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.

Frederick Douglass Academy IV’s middle school earned an overall F grade on its 2010-2011 Progress Report and on its 2009-2010 Progress Report. On the 2008-2009 Progress Report, Frederick Douglass Academy IV’s middle school earned a C grade.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of the middle school grades of Frederick Douglass Academy IV with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit the Frederick Douglass Academy IV 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 truncation of Frederick Douglass Academy IV’s middle school— will best serve students and the community. Truncating the middle school grades at Frederick Douglass Academy IV will allow for new middle school options to develop in the K026 building that will provide better options for families.

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 Frederick Douglass Academy IV Secondary School’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D16Proposals@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: D16Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-0208

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

January 30, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.
Frederick Douglass Academy IV Secondary School
1010 Lafayette Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221

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 9th 2012 at 6:00 p.m.

Brooklyn Technical High School
29 Fort Greene Place
Brooklyn, NY 11217