

Public Comment Analysis

Date: February 8, 2012

Topic: The Proposed Co-location of New School 31R078 (31R078)
with P.S. 14 Cornelius Vanderbilt (31R014) Beginning in 2012-2013

Date of Panel Vote: February 9, 2012

Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to site a new zoned elementary school, 31R078 (“31R078”), in school building R014 (“R014”), located at 100 Tompkins Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10304, in Community School District 31. If this proposal is approved, 31R078 would be “co-located” with P.S. 14 Cornelius Vanderbilt (31R014, “P.S. 14”) in school building R014 for three school years.¹ In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) that was also published on December 12, 2011, the DOE has proposed that P.S. 14 gradually phase out because of its low performance and its inability to turn around quickly to better support student needs. P.S. 14 is currently a zoned elementary school serving students in grades kindergarten through five and offering a pre-kindergarten program. 31R078 would be a new DOE zoned elementary school serving students in grades kindergarten through five and would offer a pre-kindergarten program (pending continued funding availability).

As noted above, in a separate EIS that was published on December 12, 2011 the DOE has proposed to gradually phase out and eventually close P.S. 14. If that proposal is approved, P.S. 14 would no longer admit kindergarten students and would no longer offer grades one and two or its pre-kindergarten program after the conclusion of the 2011-2012. One grade would be phased out in each of the following three years. During the 2012-2013 school year, P.S. 14 would serve students in grades three, four, and five. Students in grades kindergarten, one, and two would be served at the new school, 31R078, also located in R014. In 2013-2014, P.S. 14 would serve students in grades four and five. In 2014-15, P.S. 14 would serve students in grade five only. P.S. 14 would close after June 2015.

¹ A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

31R078 would open in R014 as a zoned district elementary school serving the same zone as P.S. 14. In the 2012-2013 school year, 31R078 would serve 100-110 students in kindergarten, 95-105 students in first grade, and 110-120 students in second grade. 31R078 would then grow to serve 110-120 third graders in the 2013-2014 school year and 110-120 fourth graders in the 2014-2015 school year. 31R078 is expected to reach full scale in 2015-16 and would serve approximately 653-713 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Beginning in 2012-2013 and continuing in the following years, 31R078 would serve 18 students in a full-day pre-kindergarten program (pending continued funding availability).

31R078 would be co-located with P.S. 14 as P.S. 14 phases out. Once 31R078 has completed its expansion and P.S. 14 has completed its phase-out, 31R078 would be the only school in R014.

In 2010-2011, R014 had a target capacity to serve 694 students, and the building enrolled 662² students, including pre-kindergarten, yielding a building utilization rate of 95%.³ Currently, 684⁴ students are enrolled in building R014, including pre-kindergarten, yielding a building utilization rate of 99%.⁵ In 2015-2016, once P.S. 14 has completed its phase-out and 31R078 has reached full scale, there will be approximately 653-713 students served in the building, yielding a building utilization rate of approximately 94-103%. Please note that building capacity and utilization figures are not always a precise indicator of whether a school is under- or over-utilized. Where appropriate, the Office of Space Planning will conduct a detailed walk-through of the building in order to assess the amount of available space in the building.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearings

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at P.S. 14 on January 25, 2012. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 475 members of the public attended the hearing, and 48 people spoke. Present at the meeting were Deputy Chancellor For Equity and Access Dorita Gibson; Community School District 31 Superintendent Erminia Claudio; District 31 Community Education Council President Sam Pirozzolo; CEC 31 members Tamica Fairley and Franca Okeiche; P.S. 14 School Leadership Team members Harold Williams, Joanne Singer,

² 2010-2011 Audited Register

³ All references to building utilization rates in this document are based on target capacity data from the 2010-2011 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report ("Blue Book"). Utilization rates referenced for the 2010-2011 school year only include the number of students estimated to be regularly attending the school, and do not include Long Term Absences ("LTAs"), students who have been absent continuously for 30 days or more as of October 31, 2010.

⁴ October 31 2011 unaudited register

⁵ The utilization rate reported here may differ from that published in the 2010-2011 Blue Book because the building enrollment figures referenced throughout this document and used in the calculation of utilization rates for the 2012-2013 school year and beyond are based on the unaudited enrollment as of October 31, 2011. This methodology is consistent with the manner in which the DOE conducts planning and calculates space allocations and funding for all schools. In determining the space allocation for co-located schools, the Office of Space Planning will conduct a detailed site survey and space analysis of the building to assess the amount of space available in the building.

Barbara DellaSalla, and J. Wade; CCSE Co-chairperson Mike Reilly; Rebecca Rawlins and Drew Patterson from the Division of Portfolio Planning; Angel Daniels representing Councilwoman Debi Rose; Anthony Reinhart representing State Senator Lanza; Chris Lee representing Assemblyman Cusiuk; and Lonny Baon representing Assemblyman Totone.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing:

1. Sam Pizzorolo, CEC 31 President, suggested a school model where children are grouped by their abilities to learn, offers extended day, and offers more art and music programs.
2. SLT member Harold Williams expressed concerns that “strangers” who are unfamiliar with the P.S. 14 community will come to work at the school.
 - a. He is opposed to changing the name of the school and says that a name change will change the “history” of the community and the people who live in Stapleton.
3. Angel Davis, representing Councilmember Rose, stated that P.S. 14 should be given the same supports and resources as 31R078.
4. Multiple commenters raised concerns about how the phase-out and replacement plan splits the school.
 - a. A commenter inquired why the phase-out and replacement plan does not include all students at P.S. 14. If the school needs change, that change should be applied to all students at the school. This proposal makes it seem that the DOE has given up on students in grades 3-5.
 - b. Another commenter added that bringing in new teachers will be traumatic for current students at P.S. 14.
5. One commenter expressed concern that meals are offered at the school and wanted to know where the children will go for meals if the school closes.
6. A question was submitted that inquired the new school was already given a number (31R078) if this was still a proposal and not final.
7. A question was submitted that inquired whether P.S. 14 will have the same resources as 31R078.
8. One commenter noted a typographical error in the educational impact statement on page 4.

The DOE received comments at the Joint Public Hearing which did not directly relate to the proposal.

9. One commenter spoke in opposition to the Mayor spending funds on the new stadium in the Bronx.
10. Two commenters encouraged people to show their opinions by voting and by contacting their elected officials.

Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE

11. One commenter does not agree with keeping two administrators in shared space.

Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal

Comment 1 suggests a school model in which children are grouped by their abilities to learn, offers extended day, and offers more art and music programs.

The Department of Education supports a model of differentiated instruction which involves providing students with different avenues to acquire content regardless of differences in ability. With regard to extended day, P.S. 14 does have an extended day program. Each teacher selects students most in need in ELA and math. The extended day programs are held 2 times a week on Monday and Tuesday. Letters are sent home to parents strongly encouraging the students to attend. Finally, the commenter suggests that schools offer more art and music programs. It is a goal of the New York City schools to provide all public school students a high-quality arts education. The Department of Education supports universal access to arts education through the ArtsCount initiative, which tracks and reports student participation in arts education and holds schools accountable for meeting New York State Instructional Requirements for the Arts.

The Department supports increased quality in arts education through the curriculum and professional development for teachers of visual art, music, dance, and theater. Working with their partners from the cultural community, DOE staff have developed the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts, preK-12, which outlines what students should know and be able to do in the arts at key grades and at critical junctures in their intellectual, physical, and emotional development. The Blueprint provides teachers with a path to help them determine the work they should be doing in each art form. It also provides school administrators with tools to supervise arts teachers and recognize and share with parents the potential their children have for achievement in the arts.

Comments 2 and 4(b) express concerns regarding the replacement staff in building R014.

All new district schools opening in campuses where an existing school is phasing out must adhere to Article 18-D of the UFT contract. Article 18-D requires that if a sufficient number of displaced staff from the closing or phasing-out school apply, at least 50% of the new schools' pedagogical positions shall be selected from among the appropriately licensed most senior applicants from the closing or phasing-out school—in this case, P.S. 14—who meet the new school's qualifications. Guidance counselor, lab specialist, school secretary, and paraprofessional positions are also subject to Article 18-D.

Comment 4(a) relates to the effects of the phase out and replacement proposals on the remaining students at P.S. 14 and if a support system will be put in place for those students.

The DOE remains focused on helping P.S. 14 students to succeed. If the phase out proposal is approved, P.S. 14 would be provided with targeted, customized, and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance, and enrollment including, but not limited to:

- Helping the school provide students with options that support their advancement, and fully prepare students for their next transition point;
- Working with school staff to foster a positive culture; and
- Supporting school leadership in efficiently and strategically allocating resources to ensure a consistent and coherent school environment focused on student outcomes.

Comment 2(a) expresses opposition to changing the name of the school because it changes the community's history and culture.

The DOE has confidence in the abilities of the new school to create a strong culture supportive of student progress and high quality performance, if the proposals to phase-out and replace P.S. 14 are approved. The DOE understands the emotions involved in the prospect of phasing out a school and that the school has become a home and community for all of its stakeholders. However, this is not a reason not to make changes to a school when it is failing to serve its students. The name of the school would be changed in order to avoid confusion with the existing P.S. 14, which would be co-located with 31R078 in building R014, until the 2015-2016 school year.

Comments 3, 4, 7, and 11 inquired if P.S. 14 will be given the same resources as the proposed replacement school, "31R078," and how the building will be equitably shared.

The DOE remains focused on helping P.S. 14 students to succeed. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 14 would be provided targeted, customized, and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance, and enrollment. If these proposals are approved, P.S. 14 and 31R078 will both be allocated funding based on Fair Student Funding. Furthermore, if this proposal to phase out P.S. 14 and the proposal to open 31R078 are approved, pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint (the "Footprint"), there will be sufficient space to accommodate both P.S. 14 and 31R078's elementary school grades in R014 throughout the period while P.S. 14 phases out and while 31R078 gradually phases in until 2015-2016. In a "co-location," schools may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Comment 5 expresses concern about where meals will be offered if P.S. 14 closes.

The R014 building will remain open and will continue to serve meals. As described in the EIS, if these proposals are approved by the PEP on February 9, 2012, the school organization

of P.S. 14 would be phased-out and replaced by 31R078 beginning in September 2012. The new school would serve the exact same zone as P.S. 14 has and would do so in the R014 building. All current second, third, and fourth grade students will remain in P.S. 14 in the R014 building as the school phases out. All current kindergarten and first grade students, as well as all future students, would attend 31R078 in the R014 building as it phases in. Thus, all students currently guaranteed a seat to the R014 building would continue to have the same seat guarantee and therefore, the co-located schools would serve meals in the same manner it does currently.

Comment 8 noted a typographical error in the Proposed Co-location of New School 31R078 (31R078) with P.S. 14 Cornelius Vanderbilt (31R014) on page 4 of the EIS.

An amendment to the EIS to correct the typographical error was posted on January 27, 2012 and can be viewed on the DOE website:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/Feb2012Proposals>.

Comments 9 and 10 do not directly relate to the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 11 expressed disagreement concerning 2 administrators sharing space.

If this proposal to phase out P.S. 14 and the proposal to open 31R078 are approved, pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint (the “Footprint”), there will be sufficient space to accommodate both P.S. 14 and 31R078’s elementary school grades in R014 throughout the period while P.S. 14 phases out and while 31R078 gradually phases in until 2015-2016. In a “co-location,” schools may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal.