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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
Opening and Co-Location
of Coney Island Prep K-4 at K281

October 21, 2013

5:30pm

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. ELIZABETH ROSE: My name is Elizabeth
3 Rose. I am the chief of staff in the division
4 of operations at the Department of Education,
5 and I will be acting as facilitator for this
6 joint public hearing. This is a joint public
7 hearing of the Department of Education,
8 Community Education Council or CEC21, and Small
9 Leadership Teams of IS 281, P811K, and ISS281 to
10 discuss the following proposal:

11 The proposed co-location of Coney Island
12 Preparatory Public Charter School, Grades
13 Kindergarten through--

14 [Boos]

15 [Crosstalk]

16 MS. ROSE: --existing schools IS 281 Joseph
17 B. Cavallaro--

18 [Crosstalk]

19 [Cheers]

20 MS. ROSE: --281 a District 75 School - -
21 K281 beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

22 [Boos]

23 MS. ROSE: We're also inviting the CEC from
24 District 20 to participate in this hearing.

25 FEMALE VOICE 1: Can I get a "Whoop whoop"?

1 [Crosstalk]

2 MS. ROSE: --281--

3 [Crosstalk]

4 [Cheers]

5 MS. ROSE: --will be recorded and
6 transcribed. Before we begin the hearing, we
7 ask that anyone who wishes to speak during the
8 public comment portion of the evening sign up at
9 the table just outside the auditorium in the - -
10 . Signup will end in 15 minutes, so about 6:23
11 by the block in the back of this auditorium.

12 Only people who have signed up to speak will
13 be able to participate in the public comment
14 period. There may be elected officials arriving
15 at different times--

16 [Crosstalk]

17 MS. ROSE: If they wish to speak, we will do
18 our best to accommodate them at the first
19 opportunity. Those who are here at the start of
20 the public comment segment will be asked to
21 speak first. I've heard some of you helping me
22 out with the "shush," and I appreciate that. So
23 please, let's help all the community members who
24 - - and stay as quiet as we can. I know we're a
25 big group.

1 MALE VOICE 1: Keep it quiet.

2 MS. ROSE: Tonight's format will include a
3 presentation of the proposal and presentations
4 by hearing participants, followed by public
5 comment. If you have not yet signed up for
6 public comment, there are 13 minutes remaining.
7 Public comments can be no longer than a two-
8 minute speech. And the time will be followed,
9 and speakers will be informed when their
10 designated time is up. We will also have a time
11 keeper to let you know when there are 30 seconds
12 remaining and when the time is up.

13 I'd like to introduce the people sitting
14 here at the front of the room, the panel for
15 tonight's joint public hearing. First, I would
16 like to note Principal Bender of IS 281.

17 [Cheers]

18 MS. ROSE: - - Principal Rose of PA11 has
19 initially confirmed that she would like--

20 [Cheers]

21 MS. ROSE: - - emergency will prevent her
22 from attending this evening. But members of her
23 SLT will be here.

24 So first to my immediate right, we have our
25 District's 21 Superintendent, Isabel Dimola.

1 [Cheers]

2 MS. ROSE: - - 20 Laurie Windsor

3 [Cheers]

4 MS. ROSE: To her right from the CDC
5 District 21, Heather Fiorica.

6 [Cheers]

7 MS. ROSE: And finally, the executive
8 director of Coney Island Preparatory Charter
9 School--

10 [Cheers]

11 MS. ROSE: --this evening.

12 [Cheers]

13 MS. ROSE: --State Senator Diane Savino.

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. ROSE: State Senator William Cotton

16 [Cheers]

17 MS. ROSE: City Council Member - - .

18 [Cheers]

19 MS. ROSE: At this time, I will now turn the
20 microphone over to Superintendent Isabel Dimola,
21 who will be - - me for this evening's hearing
22 and who will present the proposal.

23 [Crosstalk]

24 MS. ISABEL DIMOLA: Thank you, and good
25 evening everyone. Before I read the proposal, I

1 want to thank everyone for coming in this
2 evening. And I would like to remind everyone
3 that we have a large number of students with us
4 tonight who would like their voices to be heard.
5 It is imperative on us to set an example of how
6 to communicate openly, honestly, and
7 respectfully, even when we may disagree with
8 each other.

9 [Cheers]

10 MS. DIMOLA: - - 21 students that are here
11 this evening. My expectation was - - . I would
12 expect you will conduct yourselves as ladies and
13 gentlemen this evening and may express your - -
14 respectfully. I appreciate that you're here
15 tonight. I know this is not easy timing. And
16 we want to hear everything you have to say. But
17 that will only happen if we do so in a
18 respectful manner.

19 With that being said, I will read the
20 proposal. The Department of Education is
21 proposing to relocate Grades Kindergarten
22 through 4th of the Coney Island Preparatory
23 Public Charter School in Building K281 located
24 at 8787 21st Avenue Brooklyn, NY, 11214, in
25 District 21.

1 Coney Island Prep is an existing public
2 charter school that currently serves students in
3 Grade 5 through 8 in - - located at 501 Crest
4 Avenue, Brooklyn, NY, 11214, in District 21 and
5 9th Grade students in - - .

6 If this proposal is approved, Coney Island
7 Prep will serve students in Kindergarten and 1st
8 Grade at K281 beginning in 2014-15 school year.
9 Coney Island Prep will - - each year until it
10 reaches - - with 2017-18 school year, where it
11 will serve students Grades Kindergarten through
12 4th Grade. Coney Island Prep will be co-
13 locating K281 with IS 281 Joseph B. Cavallaro,
14 an existing district community school that's
15 helped students in 6th through 8th Grade and
16 K281.

17 The District 75 - - which is - - District 75
18 school that services students in 6th through 8th
19 Grade and - - students - - .

20 Coney Island Prep - - 2013 to its charter -
21 - did not - - to extend its parameters to
22 students from Kindergarten through 12th Grade.
23 This - - Coney Island Prep K281 is contingent
24 upon the DOE's approval of Coney Island Prep's
25 application for grade extension. If the - -

1 application is not approved, - - . If the
 2 proposal is approved, Coney Island Prep will
 3 serve approximately 107 to 1040 students from
 4 Kindergarten and 1st Grade in the 2014-15 school
 5 year. - - and approximately 55 to 70
 6 Kindergarten students each subsequent year until
 7 we reach - - in the 2017-18 school year.

8 At that time, Coney Island Prep will serve
 9 approximately 275 to 350 students in
 10 Kindergarten through 4th Grade. The school will
 11 admit students via its charter - - application
 12 process with preference given to District 21
 13 residents. - - K281 has charter capacity at
 14 1,508 students. The 2013-14 PO school - - and PO
 15 - - serving approximately 1,219 students in - -
 16 kids - - .

17 This - - students. This means that - -
 18 additional students. In 2017-18, Conley Island
 19 Prep - - IS 281 - - K281 and Coney Island Prep
 20 will serve - - at 1,466 to 1,973 students - -
 21 230 students. The - - 120 - - suggests that
 22 once - - the fact that - - programs - - as
 23 described in Section 2. In addition, charter
 24 school - - frequently based on larger class
 25 sizes and target capacity in - - will not be - -

1 traditional school. Thank you.

2 MS. ROSE: Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. ROSE: We've been joined by Council
5 Member - - .

6 [Applause]

7 MS. ROSE: I would now like to ask District
8 20 CEC If they would like to make a statement.

9 MS. LAURIE WINDSOR: Good evening, everyone.
10 - - Council District 20 is very concerned about
11 the future of our - - and opposed the proposed
12 co-location of Coney Island Prep.

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. WINDSOR: It's a little known fact that
15 I'm going to correct. The - - IS 281 is more
16 students from District 20 than from District 21.
17 Cavallaro has - - schools District 20
18 elementaries. Currently, approximately 58 - -
19 of IS 281 zone comes from District 20.
20 Therefore, our district has a vested in the
21 future of 281.

22 PS 200 is in District 21, and it is zoned
23 entirely to 281. PS 200 is extremely
24 overcrowded and - - at 112 - - utilization to
25 the third year in a row, and this is - - in

1 2012.

2 District 20 has been and will continue to be
3 in desperate need of more junior high school
4 students. CEC 20 has been relaying this message
5 to the DOE for years - - with the DOE's
6 portfolio - - discussions when held on the
7 subject - - program and another 21 - - school,
8 meaning several - - specifics. Excuse me.

9 It has been documented repeated 20 is
10 extremely overcrowded and - - for years. We've
11 been working with - - and portfolio to resolve
12 our schools. The 2005 to 2009 capital plan had
13 5,448 new seats in District 20. We've had three
14 additions - - 1,500 seats and six new schools
15 over the years with over 3,700 seats. So this -
16 - 3,500 elementary school seats, which is
17 actually - - . So it's even more than that.

18 We have a three-site team construction and -
19 - puts you at another 1,100 elementary school
20 seats. So we're talking over 5,000 elementary
21 new seats for us.

22 So what does that mean? Where are these
23 kids going to junior high? They have to go to
24 junior high after that.

25 [Cheers]

1 MS. WINDSOR: So - - elementary seats, we
2 built the districts - - . We reconfigured two
3 elementaries to make them K to 8. They were - -
4 and 163 to help alleviate the overcrowding and -
5 - . And as of this moment, - - is at - -
6 capacity 163 - - capacity. 221 is 120 some
7 capacity. And again, these numbers don't take
8 into consideration the children who have already
9 entered the system at this point.

10 So what are we asking for from CEC 20? We
11 want - - high school seats. We want--

12 [Cheers]

13 MS. WINDSOR: We don't need another
14 elementary school - - .

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. WINDSOR: - - elementary schools - - two
17 years or less. So where are these kids going to
18 go after 6th Grade? Now, this district, of
19 course, is a great concern to us, and we do look
20 forward to working with you - - solutions which
21 - - right here in appropriate grades and put the
22 elementary level school - - is not the answer
23 for us.

24 [Cheers]

25 MS. ROSE: Thank you. Ms. Fiorica, District

1 21 CEC.

2 [Cheers]

3 MS. HEATHER FIORICA: Good evening,
4 everyone. Community Education Council District
5 21 adamantly opposes to the co-location of Coney
6 Island Prep Public Prep School within IS 281
7 Joseph B. Cavallaro--

8 [Cheers]

9 MS. FIORICA: - - opposing the co-location -
10 - reasons. When multiple schools share - -
11 coordination and schedule, shared space is
12 difficult for students, families, teachers, and
13 staff. IS 281 has had the experience of a
14 temporary co-location with an elementary school
15 during the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. That
16 co-location was done in a state of emergency.

17 And I will say it again. There is no
18 emergency - - this district - - other
19 Kindergarten to 4th Grade elementary school.

20 [Cheers]

21 MS. FIORICA: --281 with PS 188. The
22 coordination schedule and shared space became
23 extremely difficult during the temporary co-
24 location. For example, students who create the
25 school's newspaper were displaced. They had no

1 access to get computers, newspaper files, and
2 classrooms. They spent years creating an award
3 winning newspaper. And as--

4 [Cheers]

5 MS. FIORICA: The coordination of the
6 cafeteria, gymnasium, auditorium, and library
7 become problematic. That's point out the use of
8 the cafeteria inside of IS 281. The building is
9 at 81% capacity. There is over 1,200 students
10 in this building being served breakfast and
11 lunch as well as super to those children who
12 attend after school program.

13 What would be the impact of reprogramming?
14 How would the scheduling affect our children?
15 Will younger children eat first and the older
16 children eat later? And after they eat lunch,
17 almost the last period of the day, the children
18 who attended after school will go directly to
19 super in the cafeteria? How is this healthy for
20 any child? Do we start lunch periods earlier in
21 the day? So now we have children leaving at
22 9:00 in the morning. Or will the children in
23 the charter school be eating - - in their
24 classrooms? Should we even discuss eating in
25 the classroom--

1 [Cheers]

2 MS. FIORICA: The charter school - -
3 children should be treated equal - - eating
4 organic - - should be eating organic.

5 [Cheers]

6 MS. FIORICA: --in this co-location - - IS
7 281 will be devastating to our children already
8 attending the school. We also oppose this co-
9 location of Coney Island Prep Charter School
10 with the existing school. And the basis of the
11 DOE's EIX fails to properly account for future
12 growth capacity of Grades 6 through 8 at
13 Cavallaro, which will increase the building's
14 utilization rate from its current 81%.

15 We believe the DOE should consider a minimum
16 utilization rate before proposing a co-location
17 and an 81% rate seems too high for co-location -
18 - due to - - capacity. We believe the
19 building's 81% total utilization rate - -
20 capacity to the accumulating grades of 6 to 8 at
21 Cavallaro.

22 The EIS's projection of - - to decrease - -
23 EIS's Page 3 is - - considering the growth in
24 District 21's K to 5 student population.
25 According to - - capacity - - utilization for

1 elementary schools are operating at a total
2 building utilization rate of 90% while middle
3 schools are operating at 76%. This implies that
4 middle schools will experience growth in school
5 population over the next five to six years.

6 That will increase the utilization rate due
7 to natural student population growth. However,
8 the EIS projects - - student enrollment at IS
9 281. If this proposal is - - , this will - - IS
10 281 as well as the district considering - - IS
11 186 - - co-location and will be severely
12 limiting space for future Grades 6 through 8.

13 - - EIS projects - - student enrollment - -
14 6th Grade population in District 20 and 21 will
15 proceed Grades 6 through 8 in the future. We
16 would coach the DOE to revisit their utilization
17 and student enrollment calculations for IS 281
18 and District 21 as the EIS fails to conduct the
19 - - population of 22 - - space for Grades 6
20 through 8 zone - - school.

21 On Page 1 of the EIS, it states the DOE
22 supports parents' choice to ensure the families
23 have access to higher quality schools to meet
24 the needs of all children. District 21 has
25 numerous outstanding elementary programs, such

1 as 250 - - programs, PS 95, PS 215, - -
2 programs, PS 189 - - , PS 121 ASDS. - - 181 - -
3 program and PS 101, which is DOE's model for the
4 city just down the street from here to really be
5 - - school - - focus - - just to name a few.

6 Each one of the schools in the district have
7 exceptional programs. These are just a few of
8 them. Also, - - states that the - - mild impact
9 on enrollment of the District 21 school and that
10 - - which schools would be impacted. Let's not
11 use our schools and children to test our - -
12 district will be impacted. How about we - -
13 Coney Island Prep student body in programs - - .

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. FIORICA: --District 21 without the co-
16 locating with Cavallaro. - - academy Coney
17 Island Prep will be joined with the same group
18 of students. And again, District 21 does not -
19 - Kindergarten to 4th Grade school. If the DOE
20 thinks we need more choice of - - academy - - .
21 The DOE paints a poor picture of District 21's
22 performance, stating that we need more choices
23 in addition to place. - - district charter
24 schools? Are they forgetting the state exam
25 when, in fact, District 21 outperformed the city

1 and the state - - exams?

2 [Cheers]

3 MS. FIORICA: --District 21 outperformed the
4 city and state in two most - - due to - -
5 disabilities - - . - - African American
6 students. Joseph B. Cavallaro IS 281 the - - we
7 sit here tonight outperformed the city and state
8 in both - - district needs are 6 to 8 Grade
9 seats. - - co-locating - - academy, reducing
10 seats in the district now placing another
11 elementary school - - will again - - more seats.
12 Where will the children who graduate from
13 elementary schools go? IS 281 Cavallaro is
14 unique, and this building - - .

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. FIORICA: Our community as well as our
17 neighboring community needs - - graduates - -
18 grade seats. Also, - - in these clusters are
19 not always taken into consideration when they do
20 their walk-through. All they see are - - and
21 defeat. They're not looking at the big picture.
22 When the council looks into a cluster room, we
23 see students' dreams of being a dancer - -
24 program - - newspaper - - , professional
25 musician--

1 [Cheers]

2 MS. FIORICA: - - students - - all of our
3 children in this district are being served IEPs-

4 -

5 [Cheers]

6 MS. FIORICA: --equally--

7 [Cheers]

8 MS. FIORICA: - - auditorium - - . What
9 does it say Coney Island - - state of the art
10 science lab - - ? We've had the experience in
11 the district where it was said - - IS - - .

12 [Cheers]

13 MS. FIORICA: --IS 281 - - 2013 - - council
14 - - Coney Island Prep Charter School will be
15 released? We will - - . - - information for
16 us. It doesn't add up. And - - September with
17 IS 281, which is at 81% capacity. - - point out
18 that only translation in the EIS is Chinese and
19 Spanish. Coney Island / Cavallaro has 121
20 Russians--

21 [Cheers]

22 MS. FIORICA: We do give our children in
23 District 21 a public education - - . We have
24 six sites - - district - - . We would like to -
25 - the proposal of co-location Coney Island Prep

1 Public Charter School within Joseph B.
2 Cavallaro - - grade schools - - --

3 [Cheers]

4 MS. ROSE: --that we are now at 6:45. So
5 the signup is now closed. We will be getting to
6 the public comment portion of the evening very
7 shortly. Do I have Ms. Frazee [phonetic] and Ms.
8 Smith from PA 811?

9 [Boos]

10 MS. ROSE: Okay. So we have two
11 representatives from the SLTLP - - expected this
12 evening. If they - - we will give them an
13 opportunity to speak at the first opportunity--

14 [Crosstalk]

15 MS. ROSE: Mr. Minuka.

16 [Cheers]

17 [Boos]

18 MS. ROSE: I just remind everyone as
19 Superintendent - - let's all treat each other
20 with the respect that we wish to receive when
21 it's our turn to speak. Thank you.

22 MR. JACOB MINUKA: Thank you. My name's
23 Jacob Minuka, and I'm the founder and executive
24 director of Coney Island Prep. Thank you very
25 much for coming. - - truly grateful to have the

1 opportunity to speak with you tonight. And to
2 all the Coney Island Prep families coming out
3 tonight, thank you so much for coming. Your
4 support means everything, and we truly would not
5 be here without you. Thank you.

6 [Cheers]

7 MR. MINUKA: I wanted to - - about three
8 things. The first is that we have been and
9 continue to be incredibly honored to be able to
10 serve the families of Community School District
11 21. We opened in August 2009 and now serve 450
12 students in Grades 5 through 9. And we're
13 incredibly proud about our results to date.

14 We've been rated the fifth best grade school
15 in the entire city based on the DOE's progress
16 report. We are consistently ranked in the--

17 [Cheers]

18 MR. MINUKA: --based on the progress--

19 [Crosstalk]

20 MR. MINUKA: And we have also rated amongst
21 the highest performing schools in District 21 on
22 the learning environment--

23 [Cheers]

24 MR. MINUKA: But perhaps we are most proud
25 of our students with IEPs. More than 22% of our

1 students at Coney Island Prep are classified
2 as students with special needs, the second
3 highest percentage of any public school in this
4 district.

5 [Cheers]

6 MR. MINUKA: We are and will always - -
7 Coney Island Prep - - .

8 [Crosstalk]

9 MR. MINUKA: I - -

10 [Crosstalk]

11 MR. MINUKA: --students in this district,
12 because we know there is a growing demand.
13 Across our five years, over 1,400 families have
14 applied for - - at Coney Island Prep - -
15 applications for every - - student. That - -
16 Coney Island Prep - - expand - - elementary
17 school grades, so they - - current Coney Island
18 Prep School - - elementary school.

19 Third, we know that the purpose of the - -
20 is to discuss the proposal to - - our elementary
21 school grades in IS 281.

22 [Boos]

23 MR. MINUKA: --proposal, and we are
24 confident that - - IS 281 and the District 75
25 inclusion school - - .

1 [Boos]

2 MR. MINUKA: --schools - - .

3 [Crosstalk]

4 MR. MINUKA: --and the District 75 inclusion
5 school. That co-location, for those of you who
6 were with us the last time, is a very
7 contentious proposal as well. There are - -
8 throughout the proposal process. And yet, from
9 that difficult experience was born a truly
10 meaningful relationship and partnership.

11 I can also say - - school - - have worked
12 incredibly well together to ensure that every
13 student in the building receives an excellent
14 education.

15 [Crosstalk]

16 MR. MINUKA: I want to take a moment to
17 thank our - - officials - - . I know - - cares
18 very deeply about this community, and I'm
19 honored to work with you to help you serve the
20 students and families of this district. In
21 particular, I want to say thank you to
22 Councilman - - . Coney Island Prep has been - -
23 to receive support from council - - in the past.
24 I recognize that - - best interests of Coney
25 Island Schools - - . And on behalf of all of

1 those schools - - I personally want to thank
2 you for your service.

3 [Cheers]

4 MR. MINUKA: Finally, I want to thank the
5 Coney Island Prep supporters - - this evening.
6 I know that you are all deeply passionate about
7 the education of the children and their right to
8 choose - - public school that they believe will
9 best meet the needs of the students. I also
10 know they are deeply passionate about Coney
11 Island Prep. I would ask that, as we - - this
12 evening, you do so with passion and respect.

13 - - contentious. And I also know that our
14 core, everybody here wants the same thing, an
15 excellent education for the students of District
16 21. It is from that place - - that I hope we're
17 able to conduct this part of the hearing with
18 civility. Thank you.

19 [Cheers]

20 MS. ROSE: --281 student leadership team has
21 chosen to speak during the public comment period
22 rather than with the other members of the panel.
23 We'd now like to invite the elected officials
24 who are here this evening to speak.

25 I know that there are a great many people

1 here who are planning to speak. We have a
2 large audience here. And so we'd like to invite
3 the elected officials to come and speak first.
4 I'm going to ask that you respect the panel who
5 would like to speak themselves. So Ms. Senator
6 Savino please.

7 [Cheers]

8 SENATOR DIANE SAVINO: Thank you. Thank
9 you. I want to say thank you first and foremost
10 to the parents, the students, the educators, and
11 the--

12 [Cheers]

13 SENATOR SAVINO: I imagine I will be the
14 first of several elected officials who are going
15 to get up tonight and ask DOE Panel for
16 Education Policy to vote against this co-
17 location.

18 [Cheers]

19 SENATOR SAVINO: --say in my ten years in
20 the state senate, I have never supported a co-
21 location of schools in any part of my district,
22 not because I don't think that the children of
23 different parts of the city don't deserve the
24 best education, but because this has been a
25 policy that has been - - . It has done nothing

1 to enhance the education environment for
2 students, for educators, for parents, and it is
3 not the direction we should be going.

4 [Cheers]

5 SENATOR SAVINO: --Coney Island Preparatory.
6 I have supported your school in Coney Island. I
7 know what you can do. And to the parents and
8 children that go to Coney Island Prep, this is
9 not about you. This is about--

10 [Cheers]

11 SENATOR SAVINO: --because everyone wants to
12 be heard, but there's another time that you are
13 all aware of. And that's the time when - -
14 administration. It's 72 days.

15 [Cheers]

16 SENATOR SAVINO: --through co-locations that
17 are - - that are going to put children into - -
18 parents against each other, communities against
19 each other. It is the wrong way to go, and--

20 [Cheers]

21 SENATOR SAVINO: --to go against this co-
22 location. And I would ask you - - to - - your
23 application - - .

24 [Cheers]

25 MR. WILLIAM COTTON: Thank you. - -

1 supports this application that DOE - - .

2 [Cheers]

3 MR. COTTON: And this is an injustice - -

4 281 and the children--

5 [Cheers]

6 MR. COTTON: --school that is at 81% but is

7 utilizing its space well. And when schools - -

8 100% - - . This school - - 100%.

9 [Cheers]

10 MR. COTTON: It makes no sense. It is

11 wrong. It is wrong for the children at 281. It

12 is wrong for the children at Coney Island--

13 [Cheers]

14 MR. COTTON: This plan clearly must be

15 rejected.

16 [Cheers]

17 MR. COTTON: This plan makes no sense.

18 [Cheers]

19 MR. COTTON: And I would implore you - - .

20 [Cheers]

21 MR. COTTON: --our children receive - - . -

22 - that we must protect.

23 [Cheers]

24 MR. COTTON: And when a public education is

25 - - and district - - numbers, then it must be

1 rejected and - - .

2 [Cheers]

3 MR. COTTON: - - 281 must be considered,
4 because - - children and the programs that - -
5 Coney Island Prep must be considered, because it
6 isn't that - - .

7 [Cheers]

8 MR. COTTON: So the--

9 [Cheers]

10 MR. COTTON: --students - - right now that
11 the - - right now and - - years.

12 [Cheers]

13 MR. COTTON: There's not going to be space -
14 - children - - education without - - without - -
15 programs - - that is excellent, that is - - .

16 [Cheers]

17 MR. COTTON: - - policy. Speak through your
18 conscience. - - with your conscience. - -

19 [Cheers]

20 MR. COTTON: --children's education - - .
21 So I really - - successfully - - adopt an
22 education policy that puts children first - - .

23 [Cheers]

24 MS. ROSE: Council Member - - .

25 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: - - District 21 - - .

1 [Cheers]

2 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: What I'm about to say is
3 very, very important, because I don't think
4 people in this community know the - - . - - be
5 here today. Let me tell you why. When Coney
6 Island Prep first came to Coney Island - - in 19
7 - - . And I said, "What happens when you grow?"
8 And he says, "We will find - - building to put
9 the school in."

10 Then the school started to grow. Then there
11 came a time they had to leave the - - . And at
12 that time, we had to find a new home for them.
13 We did find a new home for them. It's - - that
14 was really big. And - - Department of
15 Education, the New York City Council, and Coney
16 Island Prep all sat around a table to figure out
17 to make the school - - .

18 The Department of Education put up \$20
19 million. The City Council put up \$5 million. -
20 - and Coney Island Prep had to come up with \$6
21 million as - - . They - - . They cannot say -
22 - . They - - because what's the - - and not a -
23 - . So - - Coney Island Prep - - DOE. That - -
24 .

25 [Cheers]

1 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: This - - . And I - -
2 Coney Island Prep, I would be - - to know that
3 this school - - .

4 [Cheers]

5 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: So - - .

6 [Crosstalk]

7 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: - - location - -
8 elementary school. - - 72 days - - and you - -
9 . Okay? Everything is going to be - - . I'm
10 going to tell you right now, not me - - Council
11 Member - - Council Member - - .

12 [Cheers]

13 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: This is - - . - -
14 everyone's - - . We shouldn't have to - - .
15 And it's only - - to do. And - - we can get
16 this deal done. But I was - - .

17 [Cheers]

18 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: So - - . Don't - -
19 doing what's right - - .

20 [Cheers]

21 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: --Coney Island Prep - -
22 our location and - - , because - - . - -

23 [Cheers]

24 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 1: - - DOE says - - . But
25 I want to - - the DOE - - .

1 [Cheers]

2 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: Thank you. Thank you.

3 [Cheers]

4 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: District 21 has made out
5 a strong - - .

6 [Cheers]

7 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - traditional schools
8 in District 21 as well as schools that I am
9 proud to represent in the New York City Council
10 this year - - .

11 [Cheers]

12 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: --grade school - - 281.
13 Why - - ? - -

14 [Cheers]

15 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - elementary school in
16 the building - - to middle school students.

17 [Cheers]

18 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - raised \$125,000 of
19 capital money to upgrade the - - year - - .

20 [Cheers]

21 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - teachers and staff -
22 - students of IS 281.

23 [Cheers]

24 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: Each year - - and I
25 invite the group of students at IS 281 to be - -

1 . - - smartest and most respectful young men
2 and women that I have had the privilege--

3 [Cheers]

4 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: --281.

5 [Cheers]

6 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - District 21
7 elementary schools - - District 20 - - . So - -
8 doesn't alleviate any of the problems in
9 District 21 or District 20. In fact, it only
10 makes them worse. District 21 needs a - - .

11 [Cheers]

12 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - here tonight - -
13 unique opportunity to build up the existing - -
14 schools - - specifically needed in this system.
15 It's sad the DOE's asking us to open the doors
16 for a charter school that is not - - and will
17 not help any of the - - problems we face as a
18 school district. So we need to focus on our
19 children and their educations.

20 As stated previously, the urgency - - leads
21 me to believe that there's a non-educational
22 reason here that they're doing this. Maybe
23 it's--

24 [Cheers]

25 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: --or maybe for financial

1 - - also.

2 [Cheers]

3 PUBLIC OFFICIAL 2: - - We - - our schools.

4 If we - - school year - - no co-location.

5 [Cheers]

6 MS. ROSE: We have - - presentations this
7 evening. And you're about to begin the public
8 comment period. We're going to start this
9 evening with our students.

10 [Crosstalk]

11 MS. ROSE: I stand corrected. I apologize.
12 We are first going to invite the following
13 members of the IS 281 leadership team to make
14 their public comment. Anthony Selino--

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. ROSE: Also--

17 [Cheers]

18 MS. ROSE: I'm going to--

19 [Crosstalk]

20 MS. ROSE: --and Theresa Cardazong. So I'm
21 going to ask that you--

22 [Cheers]

23 MS. ROSE: - - Selino.

24 [Cheers]

25 MS. ROSE: Now--

1 [Crosstalk]

2 MS. ROSE: --team members--

3 [Crosstalk]

4 MS. ROSE: Where is my--where are the team
5 members? Okay. So this is just for everybody
6 who is signed up to speak. Sitting right up
7 here in the first row right next to the
8 microphone is our time keeper for the evening.
9 When you have 30 seconds left, she will hold up
10 a sign saying "30 seconds" so that you can begin
11 to wrap up your remarks. And then, when your
12 time is up, she will hold up a sign saying,
13 "Time is up."

14 And again, out of respect to all the people
15 who wish to speak tonight, we ask you to please
16 wrap up when you see those signs.

17 [Crosstalk]

18 MS. ROSE: --a lot of people--

19 [Crosstalk]

20 MS. ROSE: We want everybody to please be
21 seated. Only when - - . So - - .

22 [Crosstalk]

23 MS. ROSE: - - please. - -

24 [Crosstalk]

25 TEACHER 1: Good evening, everyone. - -

1 [Cheers]

2 TEACHER 1: - -

3 [Cheers]

4 TEACHER 1: --about this co-location since
5 September. And quite frankly, I have been here
6 for 16 years. - - here has been here even more
7 than 16 years or more than five years.

8 [Cheers]

9 TEACHER 1: - - We know how we - - . We - -
10 . We - - . We - - charter schools.

11 [Cheers]

12 TEACHER 1: - - program, I ask - - . I do
13 not know who they are at the present moment--to
14 remove themselves from the building - - . We
15 have regulations. We are here to keep our
16 children safe.

17 [Cheers]

18 TEACHER 1: - - understanding. But my - -
19 to keep my children safe, not that they were
20 going to harm them, but because - - .

21 [Cheers]

22 TEACHER 1: - -

23 [Cheers]

24 TEACHER 1: - - walking around the school
25 building with students who are 11 to 14-year-

1 olds. That's not safe in my - - .

2 [Cheers]

3 TEACHER 1: - - to which no one - - that
4 situation - - what we were called to do. And I
5 want to help and open our doors to another
6 school in our district who needed us at that
7 present time. But I'm going to ask Coney Island
8 Prep if - - situation like this again. We're
9 going to - - students who meet our - - . And in
10 this building is our full capacity - - school -
11 - .

12 [Cheers]

13 TEACHER 1: - - a lot of schools need - - .
14 So - - if we are at full capacity, if this
15 emergency arises again, we are - - students.
16 Thank you.

17 [Cheers]

18 MS. ROSE: Mr. Selino. Anthony Selino--

19 [Cheers]

20 MR. ANTHONY SELINO: - - some things from my
21 speech that matched what Ms. - - . It sounds a
22 little choppy. I don't want to waste any of
23 your time repeating things that you already
24 know. Just because you can finish - - school in
25 IS 281 doesn't mean you should.

1 [Cheers]

2 MR. SELINO: Available - - and - -
3 classrooms should not be to an - - education to
4 take over - - from - - schools. When you - -
5 city with thousands of IRS departments, you can
6 fit the entire 7 billion people on earth into an
7 area the size of Texas, but you wouldn't want to
8 live there. If you print it small enough, you
9 can fit an entire Bible on the head of a pin.
10 But you wouldn't want to try to read it.

11 Under our new leadership, we had a lot of us
12 implementing several programs to attract new
13 students. We want to grow slowly within - - our
14 existing school. The final plans with a one-
15 third to two-third split of the charter schools
16 will squash those dreams. If you go around our
17 school, you'll see classrooms proudly decorated
18 with student work. During prep periods, you
19 will see teachers collaborating, discussing new
20 lesson ideas, marking tests and projects, and
21 hanging up the wonderful work produced by our
22 students.

23 If we are segregated with our - - it is the
24 children who will be hurt. There will be
25 neither time nor space for those things to go

1 on. Teachers and students will be shifted
2 around to - - rooms. If our students - -
3 schools are overcrowded, how can adding an
4 additional 350 kids to our building make sense?

5 We have worked hard to make this an A
6 school. We are not failing. We do not need a
7 co-location. We need - - practice - - charter
8 schools into public schools. Students need to
9 go to their own school, where they can feel
10 comfortable, cared for, and proud of their
11 achievements.

12 If you truly care about children, don't
13 force our 1,200 plus students to share their
14 home. Separate but equal is not equal.

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. ROSE: Theresa Cardazong - - minutes.

17 [Cheers]

18 MS. THERESA CARDAZONG: Hi, hello. I cannot
19 even believe we have to fight this. It's
20 unbelievable that they think that we have enough
21 room in Cavallaro. We have students, 1,200 of
22 them, - - .

23 [Cheers]

24 MS. CARDAZONG: And we do not have the room.
25 This is unbelievable. It's a nightmare. The

1 cafeteria does not have enough space. The
2 gymnasium there's not enough space. - -
3 bathrooms. We don't have enough room. Coney
4 Island Prep, it just makes me so sad. We all
5 are in agreement about what's important, our
6 children. And we're going to fight it in here.

7 We're fighting - - Mayor Bloomberg, Dennis -
8 - and education policy. So please help us.
9 This is not fair to our students and our
10 teachers and our community. Okay? We want you
11 to have the best school. We already have the
12 best school. - -

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. CARDAZONG: - -

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. ROSE: Thank you. - - education - - .
17 First - - CEC - - . - - Randy Baray [phonetic],
18 Anna - - , Evangeline Queue, and Mariana Bluso
19 [phonetic]. Can I have those five speakers
20 please line up at this microphone? Ms.
21 Graballano, please go ahead.

22 MS. GRABALLANO: As everybody knows, I'm - -
23 president - - President's Council. And I've
24 been to Cavallaro, and I've seen the hearts of
25 the parents, the students, the administration,

1 the teachers, and especially our good
2 principal Ms. - - . They're struggling, and
3 they're trying to make dreams come true.

4 It's about heart. Statistics, all of that
5 doesn't matter. It's the parents - - PTA - -
6 PTA - - .

7 [Cheers]

8 MS. GRABALLANO: --education - - of District
9 21 and - - District 21. I will fight for
10 District 21.

11 [Cheers]

12 MS. GRABALLANO: --give them their own
13 building, but don't ruin what we already have
14 and cause the segregation and our children see
15 what they're lacking - - lack of interests - -.

16 [Cheers]

17 MS. ROSE: Please introduce yourself.

18 TEACHER 2: My name is Miranda - - . I'm
19 from District 21. I - - proposed - - Coney
20 Island Prep to Cavallaro. There's no - -
21 parents need options for their children. And if
22 parents choose to send their children to a
23 charter school, that is their choice.

24 The problem is when you co-locate the
25 charter school with a traditional public school

1 - - . There is no - - . Cavallaro is an A
2 school, which means they're already receiving a
3 high quality education.

4 Last year, Principal Bender was appointed to
5 Cavallaro, and she has great visions for this
6 school. I feel that if this co-location is
7 approved, Principal Bender will be at a
8 disadvantage - - student enrollment - -
9 Cavallaro because of - - states.

10 Also, this building wasn't built to be an -
11 - school. The resources - - make the
12 appropriate changes to the - - Coney Island Prep
13 - - would be better spent in Cavallaro,
14 supporting their programs to increase their
15 enrollment. I - - . I think that better - -
16 Coney Island Prep is to be placed in - - where -
17 - located. Coney Island Prep has been
18 renovating the building already, so they can - -
19 use their resources to - - appropriate for the -
20 - .

21 [Cheers]

22 TEACHER 3: It's becoming evidence that the
23 council chancellor - - school - - charters.
24 There are no - - support the economic and moral
25 - - of the - - . Cavallaro is a middle school.

1 And placing youngsters throughout K to 4 is
2 simply again - - and children's safety. Instead
3 of co-locating to Cavallaro, - - schools - - get
4 the - - students.

5 [Cheers]

6 TEACHER 3: - - into the school when the
7 middle school process has begun. - - support -
8 - utilization turn, which is - - only a DOE - -
9 and not - - in reality. - - you stated that you
10 have high ratings. Sure. You stole our
11 children with - - and sent them back - - . More
12 than that, you do the same thing - - and other
13 charters by sending - - children back in public
14 school - - . So - - .

15 [Cheers]

16 TEACHER 2: - - You are not welcome in our
17 district. We - - . Leave our school and our
18 kids alone.

19 [Cheers]

20 PARENT 2: My name is - - Hughes. I've had
21 children in most of the schools in District 21.
22 I have seven kids. So you can - - every time
23 one of these hearings comes up. It should not
24 have to be this way. We're fighting the same
25 fight over and over and over again. There's

1 real stuff going on down here in the world
2 that we should be fighting for, not the same old
3 thing over and over again.

4 We need to handle this on a legislative
5 level. We need to be going to Albany. We need
6 to be talking to people who make the decisions
7 on this thing. It really shouldn't have to come
8 down to this. We need to go to Albany and start
9 fighting on a legislative level. Thank you.

10 [Cheers]

11 MIRIAM: - - I am a - - Cavallaro graduate.

12 [Cheers]

13 MIRIAM: I am also working on the - -
14 council of my school represented in Brooklyn. -
15 - written by DOE's utilization plan - - DOE.
16 They are the ones sponsoring these schools - -
17 and adjusted to - - are trying to achieve, to
18 find space. The reality is - - Cavallaro. But
19 the rules - - Cavallaro - - . And other - -
20 specialty - - are not - - as rules we use by the
21 school, even though - - rule - - . So it's - -
22 ? Yes, because - - you have to increase class
23 size.

24 So again, environmental impacts - - does not
25 clearly state how it's going to impact - -

1 impact students in District 21 - - Cavallaro.
2 The person who's actually, Mr. Bloomberg and his
3 administration sponsor these charter schools - -
4 . So - - statements are invalid - - . So - -
5 be allowed to take up space. No one consulted
6 with the staff on how to use the space.

7 [Cheers]

8 MIRIAM: This is not about choice. You have
9 the choice to exist but not the co-location,
10 especially in a school that does not have
11 additional space. And I - - Cavallaro - - in
12 fact the students of District 21 - - . Thank
13 you.

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. ROSE: Thank you. I want to thank
16 everybody for their patience this evening. We
17 would like to ask the students who signed up to
18 speak - - .

19 [Cheers]

20 MS. ROSE: --the first six students: Mohamed
21 Kaalil, Alexis Fernandez, Rona Mohamed, Aeryn
22 Massensa, Nicole Rizzi, and Sharon Chen.

23 [Cheers]

24 [Crosstalk]

25 MR. MOHAMED KAALIL: - - school - - . And

1 honestly, I really don't think--like everyone
2 else said, I really don't think we should be
3 here, because this is honestly the most
4 outrageous plan I've heard in my entire life.
5 Why would they put a charter school with a
6 school where everyone treats each other like
7 family?

8 [Cheers]

9 MR. KAALIL: - - honesty, I've never felt
10 more safe. Every time I came here, I knew I was
11 welcome. I knew that I had people - - my back,
12 people that wanted me to see the light. And
13 everyone treats each other like family, all the
14 students, all the teachers, everyone here. But
15 if we add another school here and try to make it
16 into our family, I don't think that's going to
17 work. Because we're a very strong family. And
18 even though - - school three or four years, even
19 though I come back, - - still the same.

20 [Cheers]

21 MR. KAALIL: I'm against this plan, and I'm
22 sorry for Coney Island Prep - - . - -

23 [Cheers]

24 MS. ALEXIS FERNANDEZ: Good evening,
25 everyone. I'm Alexis Fernandez, a former

1 student of Cavallaro. I graduated in 2011. -
2 - school coming - - today. I'm an 11th Grader
3 at - - High School with a 95 average and - - in
4 psychology. According to the DOE, Cavallaro's
5 only 81% utilized, which I know is not true,
6 because we don't have the space in the hallways,
7 the classrooms. You can ask the students that
8 go here, we're freaking squeezed together.

9 If Coney Island Prep comes into our school,
10 this is another 360 new students that we just
11 don't have the space for. Sharing the space
12 would definitely be a disadvantage. How do you
13 expect to share the lunchroom, the library, the
14 cafeteria with two schools and get things done
15 effectively?

16 This will affect many teachers and classes
17 and the talents especially. I think that
18 talents are affected so much - - . We look
19 forward to our dance class and our singing
20 classes and our technology classes. If someone-
21 -

22 [Applause]

23 MS. FERNANDEZ: --this year at the dance.
24 The school itself is an overall loving, safe,
25 and caring environment. And I think that Coney

1 Island Prep should - - . Thank you.

2 [Cheers]

3 MS. RONA MOHAMED: Good evening. I'm - -
4 school - - . - - science - - music. I am - - .
5 I've been - - . Not only do I care about my
6 talent, but I care about everybody else's
7 talent. Many people do not have their talent -
8 - .

9 The second reason I have to disagree with
10 this proposal is that the students will have to
11 wait longer - - have to wait - - . Don't forget
12 - - students - - students have to wait longer -
13 - .

14 [Background Noise]

15 [Crosstalk]

16 MS. MOHAMED: And finally--

17 [Crosstalk]

18 MS. MOHAMED: --teachers have to share
19 rooms. - - crowded. It will be chaotic with
20 eight grades in the school. With only three
21 grades in the school, it's already pretty
22 crowded. How - - eight grades? - - our school.
23 Our school does not have enough room for - -
24 students - - school. - - school every period.
25 - - it will impact - - our school and - - .

1 Thank you.

2 [Cheers]

3 MS. AERYN MASSENSA: Hi. My name is Aeryn
4 Massensa. I'm--

5 [Crosstalk]

6 MS. MASSENSA: I've been at the school for
7 three years, and I'm graduating this year.
8 Although I'm graduating, many of the outcomes of
9 this charter school - - Cavallaro affect me and
10 the other 8th Graders now. The - - . And this
11 will affect the 6th Graders - - parents. - -
12 band, science, and art. - - being moved from
13 the - - . There'll be more - - other grades.

14 That won't work, because - - . The school
15 is already crowded - - . There has to be
16 another solution. - -

17 [Cheers]

18 MS. NICOLE RIZZI: Good evening. My name
19 is Nicole Rizzi, and I'm a 7th Grade Vice-
20 President here at Cavallaro. Cavallaro is a
21 great school. Not only - - as well. - -
22 periods - - specifically - - . There's dance,
23 vocal, science, math, band, and so many more.
24 We also have - - periods - - classes. - - But
25 our newly - - .

1 If the charter school comes, how can
2 classes with two periods be accommodated?

3 [Background Noise]

4 MS. RIZZI: --grow. If the charter school
5 comes - - happen. We don't have enough space.
6 We do have - - . Thank you.

7 [Cheers]

8 MS. SHARON CHEN: - - My name is Sharon
9 Chen, and I am an 8th Grade - - Cavallaro. - -
10 Let's imagine this. If the charter school moved
11 in, more teachers would have to park in the
12 parking lot, and it would be packed. Hallways
13 would be - - . - - there would be a lot of
14 pushing and shoving. - - cannot be controlled
15 as well, because there will be - - numbers of
16 students.

17 At the - - PS 188 - - . - - In addition,
18 schedules have to be adjusted to fit all the
19 students. Thus, it is not a good idea to bring
20 the charter school students into Cavallaro.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. ROSE: I'd like to invite the next--

23 [Background Noise]

24 MS. ROSE: --students--

25 [Background Noise]

1 MS. ROSE: Cabrina Astoto, Cheyene Mark,
2 Victoria Azarkina, - - Butch, and Dafne Socis.

3 [Cheers]

4 [Crosstalk]

5 MS. CABRINA ASTOTO: My name is Cabrina
6 Astoto - - . - - charter school come in, it
7 will not be fair. A charter school - - work
8 closely with - - .

9 [Crosstalk]

10 MS. ASTOTO: - - It will - - the younger
11 students as they come in, because I will - - and
12 I will - - . Imagine how the younger kids, who
13 are 5 to 9 years old, will feel - - pushed - -
14 and pushed in the hallway. - - students who are
15 - - . I - - next year. And - - I believe - -
16 all the - - programs and all the things that - -
17 .

18 So - - . - - and we allow them to use our
19 first floor, our auditorium, our gym, and our
20 cafeteria, but - - . It was because their
21 school was destroyed by Hurricane Sandy. There
22 is no - - reason for the charter school to come
23 - - . Thank you.

24 [Cheers]

25 MS. CHEYENE MARK: Hi. My name is Cheyene.

1 I'm a 7th Grade - - at Joseph B. Cavallaro.
2 About two years ago, I tested into this school -
3 - . The reason why I - - school is because it
4 seems like a second home to me. It was a very -
5 - advanced community. I was very - - Cavallaro
6 - - school.

7 [Crosstalk]

8 MS. MARK: --school. Next year, I'm going
9 to be a teacher. I look forward to having a fun
10 and exciting year - - . Coney Island
11 Preparatory Public Charter School has 355
12 children enrolled and - - are present every day.
13 - - our schools are overcrowded, and 355 more
14 kids to the building is ridiculous.

15 Co-locating Coney Island Prep - - . It's
16 dangerous for Cavallaro students as well as
17 charter school students. To all the parents of
18 the children who go to Coney Island Prep, think
19 about the dangers of putting little kids with
20 6th, 7th, and 8th Graders. They can get pushed
21 and shoved in the hallways. They can get
22 bullied.

23 Currently, I'm an honor roll student. I'm
24 very focused on my work. So are all the kids.
25 How will we get the proper education - - if

1 we're sharing our school, but not just that.

2 We're sharing our classrooms with 1st Graders?

3 I can tell you right now I'm not so fond of
4 the idea and many others aren't either. I
5 honestly can't imagine having 355 more kids in
6 my school, especially - - . Coney Island Prep -
7 - school. So Cavallaro students, staff, and
8 faculty, we are family, and we have to fight
9 this together.

10 [Cheers]

11 MS. ROSE: - - please, please - - and I'm
12 standing right next to them. Let's go on.

13 STUDENT 1: My name is - - and I'm - - .
14 And I would like to say that this school is - -
15 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade, and we don't have room
16 anymore. - - do not - - . - - little kids - -
17 their classes. - -

18 MS. ROSE: Excuse me. Excuse me.

19 [Background Noise]

20 MS. ROSE: --trying to speak.

21 STUDENT 1: - - students and teachers and
22 other staff. - - not be the right thing. And I
23 know that - - . - -

24 [Applause]

25 MS. VICTORIA AZARKINA: Hi. Joseph B.

1 Cavallaro has grown to be - - school. My name
2 is Victoria Azarkina - - . Joseph B. Cavallaro
3 has grown to be - - school, but there are - - .
4 The proposal by the NYC's Department of
5 Education to put a charter school - - should be
6 done.

7 Our school is a loving and selfless school
8 that contributes to the community and as much as
9 we want to help, we simply do not have enough
10 room. After Hurricane Sandy struck last year,
11 we took - - school building - - . It wasn't - -
12 students at Joseph B. Cavallaro, but we did not
13 blink because the cause was honorable and just.

14 The first - - was taken - - occupied - -
15 classrooms. After - - the children of our
16 school were relieved. Some of us we welcome - -
17 for temporary amounts of time. We know what
18 it's like to be crowded at the school. We have
19 dealt with situations like this before. But
20 this time, it's different.

21 The charter schools cannot stay here
22 forever. The - - of our students will be
23 changed - - . And our school environment - - .
24 Our teachers and staff - - of the students in
25 our school deserve to have room to park their

1 vehicles. A charter school will be a huge
2 permanent inconvenience.

3 Cavallaro deserves an environment that
4 provides all students with a great education so
5 they can build a successful future. We cannot
6 allow - - . Please reconsider having the
7 charter school here.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. DAFNE SOCIS: My name is Dafne Socis,
10 and I remember when I came to this school. It
11 was fun, and all of our teachers had time for us
12 and were able to learn our names and had - - .
13 I remember having my own work hung up in the
14 classrooms.

15 Now, if teachers had to share rooms, what's
16 - - . My home room teacher travels from one
17 room to another. She comes into home room tired
18 and sometimes late. I can't imagine that I'm
19 even standing here talking about this.

20 We took care of the school as a favor
21 because of the tragic event of Sandy. We cared
22 for them. But as a Cavallaro family, we're very
23 big. We don't have any space at all. My class
24 is crowded. We have 31 children in our class.

25 So I don't know where there's room. They

1 would take away our talents, vocal, band,
2 science, and art. These are one of our biggest
3 talents. So many kids come and feel safe with
4 their talent. It's something that they love,
5 that it's their own, that they're special for.
6 This is actually very important.

7 Some people just go - - right now. This is
8 the most important - - ever happened. I am
9 against charter schools, always will be.

10 [Cheers]

11 MS. ROSE: - - students - - . Anthony
12 Supyan, Nathan Mizahardov, Iris Silogu, Janice -
13 - , Julia Bobu please come to the microphone.
14 No, we need to go in the order of the - -
15 please.

16 [Crosstalk]

17 MR. ANTHONY SUPYAN: Hello. My name is
18 Anthony Supyan - - . I - - science - - . - -
19 Also, this will increase the number of 5th
20 Graders that are applying. Coney Island Prep
21 should get their own school. - - Coney Island
22 Prep - - . Thank you for your time.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. NATHAN MIZAHARDOV: Hello. My name is
25 Nathan Mizahardov from Cavallaro school. And I

1 think the charter school is a very bad idea.
2 If we really have enough space - - and my - -
3 teacher Ms. Muzzo [phonetic] - -
4 Kindergarteners, 1st Graders, 2nd Graders, 3rd
5 and 4th - - . This school is not - - high
6 school.

7 Also, it is not - - someone will get hurt or
8 - - . Please don't - - . - - not able to
9 breathe. - - schedules are going to be
10 completely changed. - - Please do not - - .
11 When I got put into - - I was very healthy - - .
12 - - I don't understand why we're going to share
13 rooms with a big school. This isn't fair to
14 Joseph B. Cavallaro. - - and to keep Cavallaro
15 and Coney Island Prep separated - - get to
16 classes on time.

17 As you can see, this will - - . Cavallaro -
18 - Coney Island Prep - - school. So please make
19 the right decision - - .

20 [Cheers]

21 JANICE: I feel that--

22 MS. ROSE: [interposing] State your name for
23 us.

24 JANICE: My name is Janice - - . I don't
25 think that Coney Island Prep should be here,

1 because we have no space. There are so many
2 people in the school. I know - - have trouble
3 trying to find the school, but it - - to us. We
4 don't deserve it. And I think that they don't
5 deserve it either, because I'm pretty sure they
6 want their own space.

7 I don't think that - - also be here, because
8 we deserve our own--yikes, we deserve our own
9 space and our own--

10 MALE VOICE 2: [interposing] Identity.

11 JANICE: Yeah, our own identity to have the
12 school - - another school and have it all mixed
13 up and the school's so crowded. We have so many
14 people. The bottom line is, I don't think - -
15 be here. I think we should have our own space
16 and our own identity. We should have our own -
17 - . We shouldn't have another school here to
18 bother us. We already have so many people.

19 We want talents, of course. Our 6th Graders
20 who have this torture of having other kids be
21 here - - here - - Kindergarteners, 1st Graders,
22 and all these other kids here. I think we
23 deserve our own space. I think we deserve our
24 own identity. And we deserve everything except
25 all this, because we don't--I don't think we

1 deserve - - should have - - deserve just our
2 own space.

3 [Cheers]

4 MS. IRIS SILOGU: Hi. My name is Iris
5 Silogu. I'm - - . Friends, parents, and staff,
6 I ask what you want. As we all - - . In my
7 opinion, we should not have the charter school
8 come. We don't have any more space in our
9 cafeteria, gym, or class rooms. If the charter
10 school comes, we have to go down to the third
11 floor, where the 2nd Graders are - - lesser
12 spaces and sharing classrooms.

13 Also, we'd have to share - - cafeteria. In
14 my - - , no charter school. Cavallaro - - stand
15 strong and stand together. This is - - .

16 [Cheers]

17 STUDENT 2: Hi, hello. - - So I - - and
18 that's okay. What's not okay is - - . I'm not
19 open to - - . We already know what's going on.
20 Coney Island Prep - - here. This is a horrid
21 idea. It will - - discomfort - - space. The
22 charter school will suffer as well.

23 My sister is a 1st Grader, and I know how
24 small and fragile children her age are. Being
25 in the same confined space as 8th Graders will

1 become a safety hazard for them. Because of
2 this and all the other reasons mentioned before,
3 - - . Okay. That's it.

4 [Cheers]

5 MS. JULIA BOBU: Hello. My name is Julia
6 Bobu, and Cavallaro is my home and everybody
7 else's home. This is where we belong. Coney
8 Island Prep does not belong here. This is our
9 home. We all deserve our own home. They
10 deserve their own home. But a crowded space is
11 not a home. It's just crowds and too much.

12 Coney Island Prep does not belong here. It
13 is our school, and it's ours. Cavallaro - - .

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. ROSE: Before we go on, I just want to
16 acknowledge all the students who have spoken
17 this evening and who have appeared this evening.
18 Thank you for participating.

19 [Cheers]

20 MS. ROSE: - - either Ms. Perez [phonetic]
21 or Ms. - - Smith from the SLT of PA 11K here.
22 Since I don't know you personally, I just want
23 to make sure you have the opportunity to speak.
24 Okay. We are now moving on to - - adult general
25 public speakers, general speakers. May we have

1 the first five speakers line up here? Mr. Joe
2 Herdera, Nicole Pacheco, Zafar Ralpar, Maureen
3 Sauphy, David Santos.

4 MR. JOE HERDERA: Good evening, everybody.
5 My name is Joe Herdera. And before we start, I
6 would like to say thank you to the Community and
7 Education Council District 20 and District 21.
8 Thank you to the elected officials - - and
9 gentile. Thank you so much to the parents,
10 teachers, and the courageous students who spoke
11 tonight who go to this school.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. HERDERA: My name is Joe Herdera. I am
14 a parent of - - Coney Island Prep Charter
15 School, and I have a daughter attending Brooklyn
16 Tech Judicial Public School High School in
17 downtown Brooklyn. I've come up tonight to
18 support the co-location of Coney Island Prep to
19 Cavallaro. Let me explain a little bit about
20 charter schools.

21 See, charter schools do not receive funding
22 for school buildings. So they receive - -
23 funding of every school, yes. But what they
24 don't receive is an actual school building. So
25 my child actually receives about 25% less - -

1 than an ordinary traditional public school
2 child. My daughter who attends Brooklyn Tech,
3 she has a free education, never - - to pay - - .

4 But in the case of my son, who had an IEP,
5 who - - who I struggled to find the best fit for
6 him, I put him into Coney Island Prep because I
7 knew of nowhere else to put him. And today, my
8 son's been declassified for his IEP.

9 I can't just thank Coney Island Prep and the
10 wonderful teachers and the hard work that they
11 put in. But I have to say thank you to my - -
12 and Rachel Carson that provided a home for my
13 child.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. HERDERA: - - community. I - - I went
16 to the - - . I went to 247. I went to Maxim
17 High School. - - in this community. Many
18 people in this audience are my neighbors. I
19 just hugged one of the teachers, Theresa from
20 Cavallaro. We grew up together. You've got to
21 understand that we're not invaders. We're just
22 kids and parents that want the same as you do.
23 Cavallaro is an excellent school. I think we
24 all agree it is an excellent school.

25 When were co-located to 303, they told us

1 about the academic integrity and fire hazard
2 and how the building would be over populated.
3 Today, Coney Island Prep is an A school. 303 is
4 an A school, and - - improved to a B school.

5 I promise we have not come here to take
6 anything away. We've come here to share, grow,
7 and share the best education possible for all
8 children in this community, and I really hope
9 that you will treat us as - - as we would treat
10 you. Thank you so much.

11 [Cheers]

12 MS. NICOLE PACHECO: Good evening, everyone.
13 Good evening. My name is Nicole Pacheco, and
14 I'm here in support of the co-location of Coney
15 Island Prep with Cavallaro. First, I want to
16 say this - - dare - - .

17 [Applause]

18 MS. PACHECO: I want to speak to you as a
19 parent, not as - - , not of this, not of that.
20 This is just about my kids, because I've been a
21 very - - . All right.

22 When I found out about Coney Island Prep, my
23 daughter went into 5th Grade on a 1st Grade
24 academic level. She's moved several grades now
25 and is doing absolutely amazing. She's now on a

1 7th Grade level. And - - . She's - - . For
2 a child with special needs - - , if ever - - you
3 know what I'm talking about. They can't stand
4 school.

5 Now, I have another 5th Grader that they
6 don't know who's getting - - because they're
7 competing with each other, because they like the
8 fact that they're actually understanding the
9 lessons.

10 Let me tell you something. I wish - - and I
11 know about them in Kindergarten. I wish - -
12 because - - hardship and my daughter wouldn't
13 have to - - the hardship that she's been going
14 through. No, she's not - - IEP like - - .
15 She's definitely - - .

16 [Applause]

17 MR. ZAFAR RALPAR: Hi. My name is Zafar
18 Ralpar, and I'm the parent at Coney Island Prep
19 Charter School. And I'm here today to support
20 Coney Island. I'm honored to be here today.
21 The few things that I want to share, Coney
22 Island has - - system. And to - - Coney Island
23 - - serve - - every walks of life. And their -
24 - and their educational needs. Whoever comes -
25 - system. I my son - - Coney Island. My son -

1 - . That's the most important - - this year.
2 He was in public schools before.

3 That - - he's taking his time playing
4 outside. And whatever we tell him to do that
5 he's saying - - do my homework - - teachers at
6 the school - - once a week - - . But not - - .
7 But here at Coney Island, they take every day,
8 and they - - year. And they - - us. In that
9 process, they involve the students - - .

10 I was lucky when I found that my children's
11 name got into the - - system, because - - a lot
12 of students are waiting to go to the public
13 schools and have their educations that they're
14 used to.

15 We need - - that kids have - - in their
16 life. - - outside, but thank you to Coney
17 Island Prep that he's listening now, and he's
18 doing well. He does his homework properly and
19 calmly each and every day. It doesn't matter if
20 it's a Friday or Monday.

21 So to finish this off, one thing I want to
22 assure you--one thing I want that how - - the
23 kids - - school--

24 MS. ROSE: [interposing] Sir, can you finish
25 up?

1 MR. RALPAR: - - learn and experience the
2 feelings that they have - - . Now, they come
3 home and talk to me - - before.

4 [Crosstalk]

5 MR. RALPAR: --Coney Island to serve the
6 whole community. Thank you.

7 [Cheers]

8 MS. ROSE: Please speak into the mic.

9 MS. MAUREEN SAUPHY: Good evening. My name
10 is Maureen Sauphy, and I'm here tonight to
11 support the co-location of Coney Island Prep
12 with Joseph B. Cavallaro.

13 Coney Island Prep is not only a school. It
14 a community. Its greatest strength lies in the
15 unique ability of its educators and founder to
16 empower its students - - scholars and - -
17 academics.

18 Coney Island Prep consists of a community of
19 educators who empower their scholars to become
20 hopefully the future leaders of the City of New
21 York and community. I am confident that all
22 members of the Coney Island Prep team, family,
23 teachers, administrators, and people like myself
24 are truly committed to working together with
25 Joseph B. Cavallaro to - - the best of both

1 worlds for our community working together.
2 Everyone will be concerned about the education
3 of all students in this building.

4 From my personal experience, I have two sons
5 enrolled in Coney Island Prep. The school
6 embodies my - - of respect, integrity, and
7 academic excellence.

8 When one of my sons entered Coney Island
9 Prep last year in 5th Grade, he - - to call his
10 previous public school, which was also - - . He
11 was doing better than they expected. After one
12 year at Coney Island Prep--

13 [Crosstalk]

14 MS. SAUPHY: To some of you, this may not
15 seem extraordinary, but this was a child adopted
16 from China and who did not come to this country
17 until Age 6 and who was in an orphanage for six
18 years. I think Coney Island speaks for itself.

19 To sum up, I believe - - elementary school
20 here who allow the parents who want options. -
21 - is our future - - our children. Thank you
22 very much.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. DAVID SANTOS: Good evening. I'm a
25 parent in support of Coney Island Prep--

1 [Crosstalk]

2 MS. ROSE: Introduce yourself please.

3 MR. SANTOS: Hello. My name is David
4 Santos, as I was saying. The main reason I came
5 here is because my 3-year-old son is going to be
6 participant in Coney Island Prep - - . And it
7 is extremely important to me, because my
8 daughter - - . And she went from - - her
9 academics - - .

10 We sent her to tutoring just to get her
11 grades up. We sent her to countless tutors.
12 She got - - . Now, my daughter's grade levels
13 are sky high. She's interested in school. She
14 is interested in interacting with her teachers
15 more. She's learning things that I never got to
16 learn. And - - .

17 I went to PSD - - . And then, I went to IS
18 227 - - high school. And there I want to - -
19 school. - - And I tell - - please do not treat
20 - - . Do not - - . Do not say no to my son.
21 And this is the - - say no to my son. Other
22 than that, I'd like to thank you all for your
23 time and have a good night.

24 [Cheers]

25 MS. ROSE: The next set of speakers.

1 Stephanie Diaz, Alyssa Cabrera, Shamona
2 Kirkland, - - , and Peter Groseti.

3 MS. STEPHANIE DIAZ: Good evening. I'm
4 Stephanie Diaz. My son - - Coney Island Prep.
5 I love the school, and you guys are going to
6 love it even more. I'm here tonight to support
7 the co-location, obviously. And - - Coney
8 Island Prep, the experience, the staff, the
9 teachers, administration, they focus on building
10 great character and respectable relationships,
11 while delivering superb education. Superb.

12 I say superb, because my son, being in
13 District 21, which is the same district some of
14 you are in, we're already - - . So just - - .
15 So being at District 21 at a different school--I
16 won't say the school--he was below average as
17 well, and now he's doing better. Now, he's
18 going to be the next president. Listen to the
19 name. - - Diaz.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. DIAZ: --past weekend - - Dylan Cabrera
22 invited my family to - - Park to support him in
23 his fight against Crohn's Disease. Dylan had to
24 fight this disease since 2008. Throughout the
25 course of this disease, he has been hospitalized

1 and unable to walk, causing him to miss
2 several months of school.

3 But with the support of Coney Island Prep
4 staff, eh was able to - - into class and keep up
5 with his grades while socializing with - - .
6 Coney Island Prep--

7 [Applause]

8 MS. DIAZ: They made that possible. They
9 made that possible. Coney Island Prep teachers
10 and administrators made that possible. He was
11 able to fight this disease and feel like a
12 normal child by taking part in classroom
13 activities. I don't know about you, but that
14 makes me feel all warm and fuzzy inside.

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. DIAZ: We are all - - .

17 [Crosstalk]

18 MS. DIAZ: And to our community to have
19 great schools and - - schools such as Coney
20 Island Prep - - because you've got equally great
21 and excellent education.

22 [Crosstalk]

23 FEMALE VOICE 1: Your time is up.

24 [Crosstalk]

25 MS. DIAZ: We want the best. We all want

1 the best for our children, so let's just get
2 along.

3 [Cheers]

4 [Crosstalk]

5 MS. ALYSSA CABRERA: Good evening, everyone.
6 My name is Alyssa Cabrera, and I'm a parent at
7 Coney Island Prep and mother of a child - - in
8 high school. I'm here in support of Coney
9 Island Prep Charter School with Joseph B.
10 Cavallaro.

11 The students, teachers, families, and staff
12 members - - as Cavallaro - - . I can promise
13 you that Coney Island Prep will join Cavallaro
14 responsibly to build a great sense of community
15 as we did with IS 303. Many oppose the co-
16 location, as you all - - . However, - - need to
17 learn this is a way.

18 Parents, we should work together. We showed
19 students that we can make it work. When Sandy
20 hit, we partnered with IS 303 and got - - in
21 need. We look out for one another. There is no
22 - - behavior. I have two boys - - Coney Island
23 Prep and a daughter - - every day. But she
24 loves it - - . I miss the community - - Coney
25 Island Prep.

1 College is - - as you guys have posted
2 outside. Let us share that - - with you. Thank
3 you all for your time.

4 MS. SHAMONA KIRKLAND: Good evening. I'm
5 Shamona, and I am a parent of a child--

6 [Crosstalk]

7 MS. KIRKLAND: --public charter schools.
8 And both of our children are in schools that are
9 - - an excellent education. But I want to
10 address one small - - . We're being asked or
11 the school is being asked to fundraise to get
12 money to pay for a school building. But - - get
13 a public education, do you suggest that - -
14 fundraise - - building or is that a public
15 building for both schools?

16 I'm here today to say that, as a member of
17 the Brooklyn community, as a New York resident,
18 as a bred and born Brooklyn person, I believe
19 that our - - goal should be to educate the
20 children and - - every city in this country.
21 Every school should be provided with - -
22 resource - - education, and our children should
23 not be taught to be separate. They should be
24 taught to share with each other and be together.

25 Our children will rise to the expectation.

1 If we expect them to do great, they will do
2 great, because we have to have respect,
3 enthusiasm. Be achieving and a citizen and do
4 hard work. Together, we will rise, as a city,
5 as a community, and as a borough. Thank you.

6 PARENT 3: Hello. My name is - - . I have
7 two children attending Coney Island Prep, one is
8 afterschool and one is middle school. I have
9 two younger kids that need to go to Kindergarten
10 and 2nd Grade next year. Right now, what I am
11 doing, I'm traveling a whole hour away to
12 Williamsburg just so they can get the education.

13 All the schools are in this, but I did not
14 choose for my child. There is no other school.
15 They have to - - . What I'm saying to you - -
16 and I hope you do not put Coney Island - - . I
17 choose where my children go to. I am a part of
18 this community just as well as any of these
19 other children may have been. So my children -
20 - deserve to be in Coney Island - - .

21 MR. PETER GROSETI: Thank you. My name is
22 Peter Groseti. As a proud partner of several
23 schools in Districts 20 and 21, the NIA
24 Community Services Network would like to express
25 its opposition to the proposed plan to--

1 [Cheers]

2 MR. GROSETI: - - charter school in several
3 instances. We do not feel that they are
4 appropriate and necessary, and this - - . We
5 see charter school as a valuable alternative
6 education opportunity for family with children
7 in low performing schools. In many cases,
8 charter schools provide only - - opportunity for
9 their children to receive a high quality
10 education.

11 However, our public schools are - -
12 performing and provide excellent educational and
13 enrichment opportunities - - .

14 [Applause]

15 MR. GROSETI: - - and athletic activities
16 already available in our schools. We do not see
17 a need for a charter school option in our area.
18 Instead, we - - the intrusion of charter schools
19 will have a negative impact on local schools be
20 decreasing their enrollment and subsequently
21 their budgets.

22 [Cheers]

23 MR. GROSETI: - - continue offering the
24 enrichment and educational opportunities that
25 currently make them what they are. I - -

1 children were not selected for the charter
2 schools would be fewer options than before.

3 [Cheers]

4 MS. ROSE: The next set of speakers.

5 Yeiladerna Chefban, David Silverstein, Mark
6 Hayden, Jody Gerowitz, Lilien Astoto. Do I have
7 Yeiladerna Chefban? David Silverstein? Mark
8 Hayden, please Mr. Hayden.

9 [Cheers]

10 MR. MARK HAYDEN: Good evening. My name is
11 Mark Hayden, and I'm an assistant principal here
12 IS 281. I've been here for 29 years and would
13 like to share - - . When I first got here in
14 1984, this was a school with a less than
15 positive reputation regarding safety and
16 education. Parents from this community did not
17 choose to send their children here. Our yellow
18 school buses only accommodated students at four
19 stops.

20 This was unacceptable. Over these past 29
21 years of school - - parents, teachers,
22 administrators, and most importantly children
23 have worked endlessly to change the perception
24 of this school.

25 We now have almost 1,200 students that call

1 IS 281 home. We now have accommodate students
2 at 14 bus stops, because parents from within and
3 outside this community want to send their
4 children here. We now have a safe school that
5 students learn in and succeed after graduating
6 in it.

7 We - - from outside 281 does not - - go into
8 281. You cannot tell me that our school--

9 [Applause]

10 MR. HAYDEN: --students will not be impacted
11 in any way by allowing a charter school to co-
12 locate in this building. You can't tell me that
13 our - - staircases won't become - - . - -
14 crowded - - safety and security determine - - is
15 not synonymous - - . You can't tell me - - more
16 teachers and students - - due to less space will
17 not have an impact on learning. You can't tell
18 me these things, because you do not - - . I do.

19 [Cheers]

20 MR. HAYDEN: This is not about - - . By the
21 way, the gentleman - - relationship between
22 Coney Island Prep and - - . My - -
23 administration - - teach it to the parents - -
24 community, and they - - choices.

25 [Cheers]

1 MR. HAYDEN: I'm sure that - - Coney
2 Island Prep - - and I'm sure - - parents - - do
3 propose to be dangerous here. - - Our students
4 will be less safe, and their education will be
5 compromised, meaning both schools that do not
6 have - - will be more sensible options. It's
7 quite simple. Less space equals less safety,
8 both - - here.

9 [Cheers]

10 MS. JODY GEROWITZ: My name is Jody
11 Gerowitz, and I am a District 21 UFT
12 representative.

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. GEROWITZ: - - of IS 281 - - this
15 evening. I - - focus on Coney Island Prep. How
16 do they justify - - on ELA and math test
17 results? In actuality, District 21 students - -
18 at this charter school. The only - -
19 achievement was - - . - - schools is misstated
20 on the CIP website. I don't think so, Jacob.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. GEROWITZ: - - do not include - - .

23 [Cheers]

24 MS. GEROWITZ: Why - - I never - - . - -
25 support and - - October and mandate students and

1 faculty - - .

2 [Cheers]

3 MS. GEROWITZ: How do they justify - - co-
4 location - - with - - ? By rebuilding
5 classrooms and adding new - - to those
6 classrooms. How do they serve - - food and
7 meals to those students while all - - students -
8 - ? - -

9 [Cheers]

10 MS. GEROWITZ: - - I ask - - community - -
11 only when necessary. Why - - District 21
12 school? I guess - - the stability in our
13 school. - - 303 and - - ?

14 MS. ROSE: Ms. Gerowitz, please wrap up.

15 MS. GEROWITZ: I am wrapping up.

16 MS. ROSE: I apologize - - .

17 MS. GEROWITZ: I'm sorry.

18 MS. ROSE: I apologize - - .

19 MS. GEROWITZ: Thank you. - - statements -
20 - will not be permitted to attend class.
21 Really? A missing garment denies a child a
22 classroom - - ?

23 [Applause]

24 MS. GEROWITZ: And finally, on Page 18 of
25 the handbook, how in the world does Coney Island

1 Prep justify - - use of corporal and verbal
2 abuse by making the students who violate their -
3 - code wear orange T-shirts over - - ?

4 [Applause]

5 MS. GEROWITZ: --of two public schools.

6 [Cheers]

7 MS. LILIEN ASTOTO: Good evening, all. And
8 - - . My name is Lilien Astoto. I am the PTA
9 president--sorry, the PTA treasurer of
10 Cavallaro.

11 [Cheers]

12 MS. ASTOTO: - - She's a 7th Grader. I've
13 lived in this community - - my life. I am - -
14 IS 281.

15 [Cheers]

16 MS. ASTOTO: My daughter is a happy student.
17 Every morning, she gets up and is eager to come
18 to school. I don't know how that's going to be
19 for other students down the line. She - -
20 affected by this. It's our staff and our future
21 students.

22 I've become a family to the staff here. And
23 to see any of them lose their positions because
24 there's not going to be enough students is
25 entirely unfortunate and horrible.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. ASTOTO: - - Is it fair if my neighbor
3 wants to bring a child to IS 281, and she can't
4 because there's no longer - - ? That's totally
5 unfair. Or maybe she'll get enrolled here, and
6 she'll be put in a school building that has a
7 classroom with 40 kids, maybe 45 kids, both
8 unfair to both students and staff members.

9 There's so many vacant buildings. There's
10 one right here on 23rd Avenue - - .

11 [Applause]

12 MS. ASTOTO: We are--

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. ASTOTO: The teachers here, they work
15 hard. The kids here, they - - enough to have
16 these wonderful educators. Let's leave it like
17 that. Don't move.

18 MS. ROSE: The next set of speakers. John
19 Talmady, Maria Talmdea, Littan Stile, Virginia
20 Chung, Leena Jebait.

21 MR. JOHN TALMADY: Good evening, everyone.
22 I'm John Talmady. I had a lot of things to say,
23 but - - I think Mr. Jacob - - ?

24 MR. MINUKA: Minuka.

25 MR. TALMADY: Okay. I'm - - administration

1 - - very - - . You see, we all waited to
2 speak. We allowed our children to voice their
3 opinions. When you open this door about the
4 administration that's trying to throw out every
5 - - .

6 [Cheers]

7 MR. TALMADY: And you - - . Okay. And the
8 saddest thing is the children, you're using the
9 children in every asset. Okay? You see this -
10 - Coney Island Prep? We don't have - - like
11 that. We have a problem with wasting - - .
12 This is the - - .

13 [Cheers]

14 MR. TALMADY: - - when someone smirks at me
15 like you are like it's a joke, it ain't a joke.
16 This is reality. What bothers me - - schools,
17 schedule for charter school, and for some
18 reason, - - 6th Grade is - - with schools. Why?
19 Who's playing games?

20 [Cheers]

21 MR. TALMADY: - - This school has always
22 been a caring school. But you know what? If
23 you listen to the children, they're very hurt.
24 I'm a parent. I'm hurt. I'm a strong man. But
25 when I see the children here and these teachers

1 that get up early in the morning and travel
2 one to two hours to get here to take care of our
3 children, you want to take away their school?

4 Listen to me. We're not going to go down
5 without a fight. And if you--

6 [Cheers]

7 MR. TALMADY: - - who has to answer our
8 questions. Why? Tell me why - - and why we
9 have to - - and watch - - in the back - - .
10 It's really selfish when you sit there - - .
11 It's not - - . It's - - .

12 [Background Noise]

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. MARIA TALMDEA: My name is Maria
15 Talmdea. I am the cast co-president of the PTA
16 here at Cavallaro. I am here tonight in support
17 of Cavallaro. Even though my child is no longer
18 here, this is a family. We are a family here.
19 We do not want people coming into our home and
20 being disrespectful. We sat here and listened
21 to every one of them speak. And we are being
22 very respectful of that. We started speaking -
23 - .

24 [Cheers]

25 MS. TALMDEA: This is how your parents say -

1 - and they want to co-locate with us and they
2 want to take care of us and they - - . They
3 don't.

4 [Cheers]

5 MS. TALMDEA: Children come here to learn.
6 My son is a freshman in high school, and he
7 thinks about all the teachers here all the time.
8 I come in and I visit. Why? Because I miss
9 that. I miss the love I feel for every student,
10 every teacher, every - - whether it's - -
11 custodial, security, principal, everyone. Every
12 - - .

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. TALMDEA: --12 or 15? We have 30
15 children in our classroom. You want to come in
16 and take our space? That - - now instead of
17 having 30 children. Now we have to split that
18 other classroom into three other classrooms - -
19 class. Is that fair to us?

20 CROWD: No.

21 MS. TALMDEA: I say there are plenty of
22 empty buildings, like Ms. Astoto said. There is
23 empty building right across the area. Go over
24 there. You say, "Why should we raise funds?"
25 You know what? We raised funds last year.

1 [Cheers]

2 MS. TALMDEA: You are not welcome - - .

3 [Cheers]

4 MS. LITTAN STILE: Hi. My name is Littan
5 Stile. I have - - another - - District 21
6 school. My children now - - 7th Grade here at
7 Cavallaro. When I came to - - the one - - in
8 this building. The staff made me feel welcome.
9 - - my children's dad - - . No one has - - . I
10 - - already - - .

11 But I do--we weren't here to argue Coney
12 Island Prep and Cavallaro. We were here to
13 argue about the space. We do not have the
14 space. What do we tell the children next year?
15 That they are not accepted here, because we
16 don't have the room? We utilize every space in
17 this building.

18 I came here with a long speech, although a
19 lot of it the people here have already stated -
20 - . We don't want you guys here. You lied to
21 303. You lied to the 303. You're not welcome.

22 [Cheers]

23 MS. VIRINIA CHUNG: I don't - - know me. -
24 - really loud - - .

25 [Cheers]

1 MS. CHUNG: My name is Virginia Chung, and
2 I'm a teacher here at Cavallaro. And I had a
3 speech prepared, but everybody has said it over
4 and over and over again. I just want you to
5 know that what everybody said here is the
6 absolute truth. We have nothing against you,
7 your students, your school.

8 But the feeling here is very heated. Do you
9 really want 350 of your kids coming in here?
10 The community is divided over it. Please,
11 there's spaces available for you. Use it. No
12 hard feelings. Use it. As I say all the time,
13 "It's not personal. It's business." Okay?

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. ROSE: - - Our next speakers are Scott
16 Kawinsky? I'm probably not getting this
17 correct.

18 MR. SCOTT KAWINSKY: Kawinsky.

19 MS. ROSE: Kawinsky and Mr. Lois Vega, Jason
20 Provoset, and Louri Chadour.

21 MR. KAWINSKY: My name is Scott Kawinsky
22 from PS 188. Cavallaro, 281, we're so grateful.
23 - - that they took us in as - - . And I have
24 nothing against Coney Island. I know you from
25 many, many years. It's not your fault - - come

1 into this school. Basically, whatever was
2 said in here, and like Dominique said, it's not
3 going to - - because she has a very good
4 relationship with Mayor Bloomberg. And Mayor
5 Bloomberg said it's not going to happen to her.

6 So I really believe that. But you have
7 other options. You have West 8th Street, like
8 they mentioned before. How about the new YMCA
9 that's - - ? And then, you have the area - -
10 location. This is not the location - - . I - -
11 have all these people here. And I'd rather you
12 focus on a gift and talent program to come to
13 District 21.

14 We only have three gifted and talented
15 programs for the whole district. I'd rather
16 have everyone focus on that than worrying about
17 having a school co-locate to another school.
18 It's not going to happen here. That's a
19 promise. Dominique, if he says it, he means it.
20 Especially with the new council person - - .
21 It's not going to happen.

22 [Cheers]

23 MR. KAWINSKY: We need to have - - programs,
24 gifted and talented programs. They have an
25 unbelievable program here for 281 - - . We

1 definitely want to partner with you at PS 188.
2 We have an unbelievable LEGO robotics program,
3 and we want to build, and we want gifted and
4 talented into our schools.

5 So after - - all this nonsense is over, I'm
6 going to speak to the DOE. And I'm going to
7 say, "Come to our school, and we need more
8 gifted and talented programs." Okay. Thank
9 you.

10 MS. ROSE: Mr. Lois Vega? Jason Provoset?
11 And Louri Chadour? Carmine Santamaria?

12 [Cheers]

13 MS. ROSE: Okay. - - coming over or do you
14 want us to bring the mic over to you?

15 FEMALE VOICE 2: Bring it to him.

16 [Crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE 3: Bring him the mic.

18 [Crosstalk]

19 MS. ROSE: - -

20 FEMALE VOICE 3: Yeah.

21 [Crosstalk]

22 MR. SANTAMARIA: - - Santamaria.

23 [Cheers]

24 MR. SANTAMARIA: I - - . - - And to my - -
25 these people - - .

1 [Cheers]

2 MR. SANTAMARIA: - - and who - - . This - -

3 .

4 [Cheers]

5 MR. SANTAMARIA: - -

6 [Cheers]

7 MR. SANTAMARIA: - - out - - .

8 [Cheers]

9 MS. ROSE: Okay. Just a few more speakers -
10 - . I'm going to call the next five. Camile
11 Sperazza, Tara--

12 [Applause]

13 MS. ROSE: --AM Goodridge, Martin Truger.

14 [Cheers]

15 MS. CAMILE SPERAZZA: Good evening. I'm
16 Camile Sperazza - - teaching here. But just as
17 important I think is community. And I've lived
18 here for decades. And I can verify what Mr.
19 Hayden said earlier. No one wanted to come to
20 Cavallaro at one point. Now everybody wants to
21 come to Cavallaro.

22 [Cheers]

23 MS. SPERAZZA: - - work that the teachers in
24 this school have done to turn this school into
25 an A school.

1 [Cheers]

2 MS. SPERAZZA: I take my children to this
3 school, and I will not take my children to this
4 school if I don't believe that every single one
5 of them went on to graduate from college and
6 would be more productive members of this
7 community too.

8 We can't allow any other school to come in
9 here, because we know first-hand what happened
10 when PS 188 was here. I gave up my room, and I
11 was running around the building carrying books,
12 carrying newspapers - - . And don't any parent
13 here think that your child is not going to be
14 affected, because it certainly is. Your child
15 will be affected, because all those teachers who
16 are displaced are going to - - the classrooms of
17 your children, your children's teachers.

18 They're not going to have their rooms for - -
19 for planning. They're not going to have their
20 space, because everything is going to be shared.

21 Last week, there was a great - - in the New
22 York Daily News. It talked about - - school in
23 New York. Little by little, the charter school
24 took their - - . And guess what? Now, the
25 school that was there doesn't have access to the

1 rooms they need. They take it piece by piece,
2 and that's what will happen to Cavallaro too.
3 We can't let it happen.

4 [Cheers]

5 MS. TARA RIZZI: My name is Tara Rizzi, and
6 I'm a proud graduate from Cavallaro. I sent my
7 both my children to this school. My older
8 daughter now is doing very well in high school,
9 and my younger daughter is Nicole Rizzi, who you
10 just heard speak.

11 [Cheers]

12 MS. RIZZI: Now, when my daughter was in - -
13 she was already receiving - - . I got an
14 invitation to your charter school. Your charter
15 school sent - - twos and threes. Why would I
16 send my child there? My child was already a
17 four. Lo and behold, charter schools are
18 getting fours. It's not fair, but we're not
19 here to discuss that.

20 There's a building on the street - -
21 abandoned for 20 years. I'm sure you'll get a
22 very good price for it.

23 [Cheers]

24 PARENT 4: - - Cavallaro - - . - - That's
25 crazy. We never - - . - -

1 [Cheers]

2 PARENT 4: - -

3 MR. MARTIN TRUGER: I will try. My name is
4 Martin Truger. I'm--

5 [Cheers]

6 MR. TRUGER: I'm a proud father of - - 21.
7 I'm also an educator. I teach history at - -
8 high school. And I just want to say that the
9 DOE is really getting a taste of its own
10 medicine tonight, because I'm a certified
11 teacher. I also have a license to be an
12 administrator.

13 It's a common theme that I have heard
14 throughout all my - - is to take ownership of
15 your work and by extension take ownership of
16 your school. Judging by tonight, Cavallaro has
17 done that.

18 [Cheers]

19 MR. TRUGER: And what we've seen is the last
20 decade of parents - - parents and children - -
21 children, and that ends on 12/31/13.

22 [Cheers]

23 MR. TRUGER: It all started when - - months
24 ago the DOE should be preparing to make it, not
25 - - at this time. This is a time for us now to

1 begin to transition, to give a new
2 administration its time and its work to begin to
3 prepare. Let me explain. We've heard from - -
4 next mayor who is - - .

5 [Crosstalk]

6 MR. TRUGER: - - put on hold and - - . So -
7 - hope he's serious - - mayor - - . And - - to
8 be a person who truly cares about our public
9 school system. And I believe that to have a
10 policy of just simply co-locating and closing
11 schools, that's not an educational - - . So I
12 will also oppose this co-location.

13 [Cheers]

14 MS. ROSE: Next set of speakers. - -
15 William - - Goldman, and Daniel - - .

16 [Cheers]

17 TEACHER 4: I guess I'm - - .

18 [Cheers]

19 MS. WILIMINA NORMAN: Hi. My name is
20 Wilimina Norman [phonetic]. I'm the mom - - to
21 the 7th Grader here at Joseph B. Cavallaro.
22 This is a classic case of - - . I mean, last
23 year, they experienced PS 188 - - school, and it
24 seemed like it opened up the floodgates for the
25 idea for a charter school - - . I would be

1 opposed to this. That's my baby's school. My
2 baby's got big dreams.

3 And this is--from the moment the children
4 start - - elementary school to junior high
5 school, it's changed the - - and the foundation
6 of - - the people they're going to become. It's
7 the first - - community. It doesn't seem like
8 Coney Island Prep has that sense of community.

9 I wish I could address those parents that
10 were here, because they cleared out of the room.
11 - - stay here. Why? This is what we want. We
12 care. I mean, Joseph Cavallaro is the very
13 definition of a caring school. I've had
14 experiences with Principal Bender, where we feel
15 the students - - literally - - .

16 [Applause]

17 MS. NORMAN: --24,000 over here to - - take
18 a car, take a cab, - - there as well. I mean,
19 you cannot buy this. Every single staff member
20 here is - - fathers and mothers. These are the
21 people that I trust my children to to be safe,
22 happy. A young 5-year-old, 8th-year-old, 10-
23 year-old in the same space as children that are
24 in junior high school, they have very different
25 needs.

1 And this is not something--this is basic.
2 As people who are educators, everybody's got up
3 here to talk about how it benefits Coney Island
4 Prep. How does it benefit Joseph Cavallaro?

5 [Cheers]

6 MS. NORMAN: - - come in and take up your
7 rooms - - . Okay. We live in New York. This
8 is a very, very competitive state. This is a
9 very, very competitive city. I have to fight
10 for the job that I need to get. Imagine what
11 it's going to be for these little children that
12 are our children. They need this time.

13 MS. ROSE: Ms. Norman--

14 [Crosstalk]

15 MS. NORMAN: They need a safe place. They
16 need for the teachers who--every single one of
17 them know every single one of these children's
18 names. And that to me is priceless. You cannot
19 buy that. Thank you.

20 MS. ROSE: Thank you.

21 [Applause]

22 TEACHER 4: Good evening. My name is - - .
23 I thank those who did stay - - time. I wish
24 that they did stay, because I had a lot of
25 things to say about some things that they said.

1 I'm a special case - - special Ed provider for
2 16 years. And no one here is denying that they
3 have a good school or that they are two great
4 schools.

5 But many of them mentioned how they left
6 their public schools to get that education.
7 Then why come back to a public school you didn't
8 like - - ?

9 [Cheers]

10 TEACHER 4: They're still not even - - .
11 Let's just talk about some of the - - children.
12 We have 15%. That's 200 children - - . 15% are
13 English language learners. And our service
14 providers are running around - - . They are - -
15 . They are literally in classes - - behavior
16 like - - . It - - . It does not make sense in
17 reality. We are all impacted. - - classrooms
18 put two teachers and 24 students - - in rooms.
19 We don't have - - that we need. We are over
20 packed. So if this is about space, we don't
21 have it.

22 Let's talk about - - because no - - . My
23 kids--I have 200 kids - - accommodations. Where
24 do we put that? They are - - location. The
25 testing - - are working with myself looking for

1 rooms for these kids. Where do they go? They
2 don't have space now. Where do you move the
3 children? Outside? To a basement - - ? I'm
4 very sorry - - children. They just don't fit.
5 And - - but I can see - - 15-year-olds and - - .

6 [Cheers]

7 MS. ROSE: I want to thank everybody here.
8 We've heard a lot of significant and important
9 feedback on this proposal and contributions to -
10 - . All of the information that you shared with
11 us tonight will be shared with the Panel for
12 Educational Policy.

13 After a meeting, they will have their
14 meeting on October 30th, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.
15 That meeting will be held at - - high school
16 campus at 883 - - in Brooklyn to go over this
17 proposal.

18 [Crosstalk]

19 MS. ROSE: We will also continue to accept
20 comments on this proposal via email or via
21 telephone. The email address where you can send
22 comments is d21proposals@schools.nyc.gov. The
23 phone number where you can call to leave a
24 comment is (212)374-0208. And we welcome any
25 additional comments received that you might have

1 at any time before the Panel of Education
2 Policy goes - - proposal.

3 I want to thank you all for coming and for
4 staying.

5 FEMALE VOICE 4: - - folks at that meeting -
6 - .

7 MS. ROSE: So at the meeting--

8 [Crosstalk]

9 MS. ROSE: Let me finish. At that meeting,
10 the Panel for Educational Policy will vote on
11 this proposal as well as - - . There will be an
12 opportunity for public comment at that meeting
13 before the vote.

14 FEMALE VOICE 4: Thank you.

15 MS. ROSE: So we thank you all for coming.
16 Thank you for staying. - -

17 [Crosstalk]

18 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability.

Signature 

Date October 24, 2013