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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
**Opening and Colocation of a New 9-14
High School @M446**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. ANTHONY LODICO: Okay. Good evening,
3 everyone. This is a joint public hearing of the
4 Department of Education Community Education
5 Council 1 and the University Neighborhood High
6 School Leadership Team for the proposed
7 colocation of a new early college and career
8 technical education high school with University
9 Neighborhood High School beginning in the
10 2014/2015 society. I am Anthony Lodico,
11 superintendent of Manhattan high schools, and I
12 will be serving this evening as the Chancellor's
13 designee for this evening. We have asked the
14 District 1 Community Education Council, the
15 Citywide Council on High Schools and the UNHS
16 School Leadership Team to participate in this
17 joint public hearing. I am joined tonight by
18 Katherine Sovereau from the SLT and Lisa Donalon
19 [phonetic] from the CEC as well as Stanley Eng
20 from the CCHS. I am also joined on the dais by
21 principal Elizabeth Collins of the University
22 Neighborhood High School.

23 The hearing tonight is being recorded. The
24 purpose of this hearing is for you to provide
25 comments about the colocation proposal. I

1 remind you that this is a proposal, and before
2 I go on to describe the proposal, I want to make
3 sure that all of you are aware of the
4 opportunity tonight to provide your input. All
5 of those here who wish to speak must sign up in
6 the speaker sign up area, which is right outside
7 the doors you came in. And I am now letting you
8 know that the speaking--that the sign up list
9 will close 15 minutes from now. So it is now
10 about four minutes after 6:00. Speakers will be
11 given the floor in the order that they signed
12 up, and all comments will be limited to two
13 minutes.

14 There may be elected officials who will
15 arrive at different times throughout the
16 evening. If they wish to speak, we will do our
17 best to accommodate them at the first opportune
18 moment. Those who are here at the start of the
19 public comment segment will be asked to speak
20 first.

21 All your comments tonight, all of the
22 comments this evening, will be included in the
23 analysis of public comment, which will be
24 published and provided to the Panel for
25 Educational Policy. The vote for this proposal

1 is scheduled for October 15, 2013.

2 In addition to the public comments tonight,
3 we welcome any other comments and feedback that
4 you may have at any time before the panel votes
5 on this. Again, in addition to the comments
6 tonight, you can give feedback at any time
7 before the panel votes on the proposal. The
8 email address and phone number where comments
9 may be made are D01proposals@schools.nyc.gov.
10 Again, they can be emailed at
11 D01proposals@schools.nyc.gov, and you can also
12 call and leave your comments, and the phone
13 number is (212) 374-3466. (212) 374-3466.

14 Excuse me. All right. At this time, I'm
15 going to go on to read to you the proposal
16 summary. The New York City Department of
17 Education is proposing to colocate a new
18 district early college and career and technical
19 education, CTE, high school in this school
20 building, Building M446. If the proposal is
21 approved, the new early college and CTE school
22 would be colocated here with University
23 Neighborhood High School and the community-based
24 organization, Grand Street Settlement. If this
25 proposal is approved, students will have access

1 to a new educational option in Manhattan.

2 Students at the new school will have the
3 opportunity to earn a CTE endorsed Regent's
4 diploma, an associate's degree from Borough of
5 Manhattan Community College at no cost to
6 themselves or their families, and industry-
7 recognized credentials. Students at the new
8 early college and CTE school may graduate highs
9 in four years or less, and can choose to remain
10 enrolled in the school in order to earn an
11 associate's degree.

12 Students enrolled in grades 13 and 14 at the
13 new school would primarily be completing
14 internships and taking off-site classes. Not
15 classes in this building. Those students will
16 likely not be in the building full time.

17 The new early college and CTE school would
18 focus on careers in the advertising industry,
19 and partner with the American Association of
20 Advertising Agencies, a national trade
21 association representing the advertising agency
22 businesses in the United States. Students will
23 have the opportunity to intern in areas such as
24 advertising, media management and creative
25 technology at American Association of

1 Advertising Agencies member agencies outside of
2 the school building.

3 The propose colocation of this new early
4 college and CTE high school is not expected to
5 impact the admissions policies or instructional
6 programing at University Neighborhood High
7 School. The school leadership teams of both
8 schools would develop a plan for space sharing,
9 bathroom assignments, building safety and school
10 bell schedules. The leadership of both schools
11 ultimately decides how to allocate space in a
12 way that fits the needs of each school.

13 Many building councils throughout New York
14 City use staggered schedules for student
15 instruction and shared spaces. The DOE has
16 conducted space reviews of this building, and
17 they are confident that if this proposal is
18 approved, both University Neighborhood High
19 School and the new early college and CTE high
20 school will be able to work together to make
21 building M446 an even more successful
22 educational facility for the entire community.

23 That concludes the description of the
24 proposal summary, and next we're going to move
25 onto the presentation by our dais participant.

1 And we will start with Katherine Sovereau,
2 member of the school SLT. Sorry.

3 [Applause]

4 MR. LODICO: Okay. So we're going to
5 proceed with the SLT, and then councilwoman
6 Margaret Chin will--

7 MS. KATHERINE SOVEREAU: Thank you. Okay.
8 Good evening, everybody. Can you hear me? Can
9 you hear me? Okay. All right. Good evening,
10 everybody. All right. First of all, I want to
11 say that over the last three years, University
12 Neighborhood High School has shown steady
13 improvement in its progress report, learning
14 environment survey, and all other indicators
15 that we use to measure progress to student
16 learning. Last year through the college now
17 program, our students earned in excess of 100
18 college credits, so what we don't need is
19 another school coming into our building offering
20 college credits when we already do that, and in
21 fact, some of the courses that this new school
22 would offer are very similar to what we already
23 offer in this school.

24 The assumption is that our space is
25 underutilized. However, our classrooms are used

1 for pull out. They're used for small group
2 instruction, whether it's students who have IEPs
3 or are English language learners. So the space
4 in our school, we need. What would we do
5 without that space if we have to give it up to
6 another school?

7 What should happen is the DOE should come
8 in, and they should upgrade our facilities.
9 They should be looking to expand some of the
10 programs that we currently offer. They should
11 be supporting us, not trying to push us into a
12 corner and bring in another school.

13 As far as I can see, the DOE can give no
14 guarantees whatsoever that the culture, the
15 climate and student progress is not going to be
16 adversely impacted or disrupted without a
17 colocated school. It's just not going to
18 happen.

19 Much of the language in the Educational
20 Impact Statement is maybe, possibly, hopefully.
21 That's not concrete. It seems to me that as the
22 enrollment for UNHS is slated to decrease--if
23 you look at the educational impact statement,
24 year on we're going to be dropping by 20
25 students. Meanwhile, the enrollment for the

1 colocated school is going to stay steady. To
2 me, that's only one indication or the clearest
3 indication that the DOE plans somewhere down the
4 line to phase out UNHS and let this building be
5 the one and only building for M203. Thank you.

6 [Applause]

7 MR. LODICO: We're going to turn the mic to
8 Councilwoman Chin.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. MARGARET CHIN: Thank you. I'm really
11 glad to see so many students and teachers here.
12 During the summer, we had a rally with parents
13 and students to try to fight this. There is no
14 room in this school for another school. Okay?
15 I don't care what DOE says. I wrote a letter to
16 the Chancellor, and then I get back a letter
17 that doesn't say anything. Not from the
18 Chancellor, but from his representative.
19 Saying, oh, yeah, there is school. We came, we
20 did a walkthrough, and there's space. There's
21 space for over 700 students. I say, no, there
22 is no space. The classrooms are not full size
23 classrooms for high school kids, and this week,
24 we had a hearing in city hall, and I raised the
25 same issue. And then the portfolio department

1 told me, well, you know, the CTE school, not
2 all the students are going to be in the school
3 all the time.

4 This school is very old. I think it's over
5 100 years old. And there's so many needs in
6 this school. In my first term in the city
7 council, every year when I look at the needs
8 that this school sent in--they need new wiring.
9 They need upgrade their bathrooms. Library.
10 Well, the library got funded by the city
11 council, and I'm expecting it to be opened up as
12 a library, not to be used as classroom or
13 anything else. Okay?

14 City council have supported this school.
15 There is no gym in this school. There is no
16 auditorium. There's no cafeteria. All right?
17 How can they put more kids here? If we want to
18 support this school, the school is doing better,
19 it's doing well. I remember a couple of years
20 ago, I heard about the school being on the
21 danger list of closing, and the school fought
22 back, and we went there to support you, to fight
23 back, and you're doing well now. And we want
24 you to continue to do well. So that's why we
25 want the PEP to reconsider.

1 If you want to put in a CTE, this career
2 technical school, I have another school in my
3 district. Murray Bertram High School. They got
4 space there. DOE is putting in--DOE is already
5 putting in another career school there, all
6 right? They have room, and I was told that this
7 school that they want to put here is supposed to
8 work together with Borough of Manhattan
9 Community College. Do you know how far it is
10 from here to get to BMCC? It's not that easy.
11 The only bus is M22, and it doesn't run that
12 often. There's no subway that goes to BMCC.

13 It's not that close. So I'm offering
14 another solution. I got Murray Bertram that's
15 closer to BMCC, and it's a high school that has
16 space. That's what DOE told me because they
17 want to put an elementary charter school in
18 there, but in this school, we don't have the
19 space. The space that we have are for the kids
20 who are the language learning kids that needs
21 tutoring, or special education kids. They need
22 extra attention. They need to pull out of their
23 classroom. We don't have room for anything
24 else, okay?

25 And we want to support the neighborhood

1 school to grow. Right now, you're less than
2 300. We want you to grow to be more than 300,
3 right? Support us to grow this school. So I am
4 asking the PEP to reconsider. If DOE needs to
5 open more CTE schools, yeah, give us more
6 opportunity, fine. There's some other space for
7 it, all right? But not here.

8 So we have to continue to support our
9 students, and DOE needs to put funding here to
10 upgrade this school so the kids that we have
11 here who are doing well will continue to do
12 well, and the teachers, and the principal who
13 have been so committed to really bringing this
14 school up to the highest education level that
15 they can achieve, we want to support them. Okay

16 So I'm asking PEP to reconsider. Do not put
17 another school in this building. Thank you.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. LODICO: Thank you, Councilwoman. I'm
20 going to turn it over to Stanley Eng from the
21 CCHS.

22 MR. STANLEY ENG: Mr. Lodico, my comments
23 and position are well documented in my emails to
24 you and the DOE. At this point, I'd like to ask
25 you for permission to allow one of the UN - - on

1 the SLT to speak in my place. Would that be
2 okay?

3 MR. LOTICO: Yes.

4 MR. ENG: Vincent? Come. Young man, speak
5 up. It's all yours.

6 [Applause]

7 MR. VINCENT SHANGLER: Thank you, sir.

8 MR. LODICO: Say your name.

9 MR. SHANGLER: Hello, UNHS, hello parents,
10 students, - - . My name is Vincent Shangler
11 [phonetic], and I am a part of the SLT, a part
12 of student government. Right now I'm the 10th
13 grade class president, and right now I want to
14 say that the proposal for colocation in UNHS
15 isn't fit because of the size of the school.
16 The school is too small, which makes it unsafe,
17 which makes it unsanitary, and it makes it
18 unfair for both sides.

19 I've been here last year with the whole
20 millennium thing during Hurricane Sandy. It was
21 what a lot of people say, a nightmare, a
22 disaster, a lot of other words that just come to
23 mind.

24 We have limited staircases. We have narrow
25 hallways. We don't have enough space for an

1 emergency with other schools to--there's just
2 so many different choreographies that one has to
3 do just to get people outside of the building.
4 First it would be unfair to place this new
5 program in UNHS because they can have their own
6 new campus to start, make their mistakes and
7 grow out of those mistakes so that they can
8 become their own school with their own code,
9 with their own new ideas.

10 As this gentleman said before, the DOE is
11 confident that we will be able to make this
12 building a more successful educational facility.
13 However, there is not so much of a facility to
14 begin with. There are barely facilities, if you
15 know what I mean. There's two bathrooms. Two
16 for boys, two for girls. The one set is on the
17 5th floor, the other set is down here. How much
18 plumbing do you want us to do.

19 And back to safety. How many people are you
20 trying to shove through these exits? I mean, I
21 always have trouble going through exits because
22 you can't go through one because it's unsafe
23 because there's a fire alarm, because this
24 happens, that happens, code, restrictions, so on
25 and so forth.

1 They have predicted that they want 600 new
2 students coming in. They say part time, but
3 what happens in a situation where they all come
4 in. 600 students. You want to shove 600
5 students through, what, four exits? As far as
6 I'm concerned, that's unsafe. I think that
7 violates fire code. Thank you so much for
8 listening.

9 MR. LODICO: Thank you, Vincent. And now
10 I'd like to introduce Lisa Donlan [phonetic],
11 our CEC representative.

12 MS. LISA DONLAN: Thank you. Thank you
13 everybody. I want you to know that I'm here
14 representing the district body that represents
15 parents and community in the East Village on the
16 Lower East Side. How many people who are here
17 are students. Raise your hand. All right.
18 Yay, that's very impressive. Thank you for
19 coming out.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. DONLAN: How many are parents? Thank
22 you, parents, for coming out on a rainy
23 weeknight, when you've got a lot of demands on
24 your time. How about staff? We have any staff
25 here tonight? Thank you for staying late,

1 beginning of the school year. Much
2 appreciated. Do we have anybody from the new
3 CTE school here? Anybody from the 4As, the
4 American Association of Advertising Agencies?
5 Are they here to listen to us tonight or speak
6 tonight? Oh, I guess not.

7 Anybody from BOCC is here to talk about the
8 new school? Oh, I'm sorry that we won't be
9 hearing from them. But I'm here to listen to
10 you guys speak tonight. Parents, students,
11 staff and community members. About the
12 educational impact of this proposed colocation.
13 As we heard earlier from some earlier speakers
14 and from Councilmember Chin, who I also want to
15 thank for coming and speaking with us tonight,
16 we never get to hear what the impact is going to
17 be of these, never mind the educational impact.

18 They're all very much boilerplate, and they
19 say, there's not going to be any impact.
20 There's plenty of room, and you know what, we'll
21 work it out down the road. You know what,
22 that's not a good plan because the failure to
23 plan is the plan to fail.

24 And we want both of these schools to succeed
25 and to grow and to thrive. We asked the DOE,

1 could you please share that plan with us in
2 some detail? We'd like to know how at capacity,
3 this school building is going to be shared
4 successfully and fairly and in a way that
5 supports all students down the road at capacity.
6 But you know what they said to us? We don't do
7 that. We only put the schools together, and
8 then we tell the principals to work it out.

9 Well, to me that sounds an awful lot like
10 cage fighting. There's not enough room. The
11 facilities are not sufficient, and we're just
12 going to put the two bodies together and let the
13 principals duke it out. You know, I'll bring my
14 management organization, you bring yours. I'll
15 bring my network leader, you bring yours.
16 That's not a good way to promote collaboration
17 in a community, and it's not a good way to set
18 up a fair environment for students and staff to
19 do the tremendous job that you have in front of
20 you.

21 We are afraid in District 1 that we can
22 predict what's going to happen because you know
23 what, in District 1, we invented sharing
24 buildings. We started doing small, intimate
25 school communities years and years ago back in

1 the '80s, and we know there's a right way to
2 do it, and we know there's a wrong way. And the
3 right way means planning out over time and doing
4 it with everyone at the table from the
5 beginning, and really thinking through
6 thoughtfully and having mechanisms for
7 correction along the way. And we're afraid that
8 this is actually going to be the wrong way.

9 We're really concerned about a number of
10 things. I have with me tonight, and I'd like to
11 submit it for the record, a report done by the
12 UFT's Safety Department where they took a look
13 at whether or not these facilities were actually
14 conducive to the project at hand. They've
15 raised a number of things that you've seen and
16 heard before. But basically unless this
17 proposal is modified greatly, we're really
18 concerned that both schools are being set up for
19 failure. And we don't want to see that happen.

20 We know that--and this building is very
21 specific. It was built as an elementary school
22 108 years ago, and that leads to certain
23 constraints. We know that there are not
24 adequate staff and student bathrooms. We know
25 that there's issues around fire resistance and

1 the alarms, that those things if you look in
2 the building condition and assessment survey,
3 they need to be upgraded to be safe. We know
4 that many of the stairs and hallways are
5 insufficiently large for emergency egress, and
6 that could be problematic in the case of some
7 kind of catastrophe.

8 We know there's no gym. I know when I came
9 in, I saw students playing basketball in the
10 lobby, and I know that's not a really good set
11 up for two schools. It's not good for one
12 school, and it's not sufficient. We know that
13 there's only one science lab. We know that this
14 cafeteria spreads into the lobby, and that when
15 the cafeteria's in session in the lobby, that
16 there can't be gym in the lobby, and so that's
17 going to be doubly complicated--as the student
18 said--choreography. It's going to be very
19 difficult to program good lunch times and good
20 gym times with two different buildings.

21 Also the basement floods. We know that
22 that's a problem down here on the Lower East
23 Side, and the building's not handicap
24 accessible, and there's not sufficient
25 electricity currently to run air conditioning

1 and computers. If you're going to now add a
2 bunch more bodies and a program that specializes
3 in advertising and graphics, I'm assuming it's
4 going to require more technology.

5 So we don't think that that's a good set up
6 for both of these programs. We want to see all
7 of the students in this building and in both
8 schools thrive. We don't see how that's
9 possible.

10 I would urge you, if you can, to write or
11 call in your comments to follow up. We all know
12 what's going to happen in January. There's
13 going to be a new mayor, there's going to be a
14 new administration, and we hope that there's
15 going to be a new philosophy for education. So
16 maybe if enough of us make enough reasoned and
17 thoughtful comments about this proposal, which
18 is going to be rubberstamped on October 15 in
19 Brooklyn--that is going to happen--but you can
20 get your comments in, and maybe the new people
21 in charge will have a chance to revisit this,
22 because this is going to happen after they step
23 in.

24 So I'd like to thank you all for being here
25 tonight, and I urge you to follow up. If you

1 don't come to the PEP, at least write and call
2 your comments in. Thank you.

3 MR. LODICO: Thank you. Okay. I want to
4 thank our speakers on the dais. We've now
5 concluded the formal presentations. We're going
6 to move to our speakers. We're going to start
7 with our student speakers. The speakers will
8 come up to the podium. You will be timed.
9 There will be a time keeper letting you know
10 when you have 30 seconds remaining, and when
11 your time is done. So we have a number of
12 students who have signed up, starting with
13 Shavelli Cologne-Santos.

14 And while Shavelli's coming up, I'm just
15 going to read the next few names. We already
16 heard from Vincent. Sara Maya [phonetic]? No,
17 you're not going to--Josiah? If the next
18 speakers could come up and line up. Kevin.
19 Yeah. And then Isaiah, and we'll call the next
20 few students after that.

21 I ask that you introduce--say your name and
22 then begin your comments. Don't be nervous.
23 While we begin--before we begin, I want to echo
24 Ms. Donlan's sentiments. It is wonderful to see
25 so many students here. I want to thank you all

1 for being here. I also want to thank all the
2 staff of University Neighborhood High School
3 here, our parents and guardians and families
4 that also took the time to be here this evening.
5 Thank you. And Shavelli, the floor is yours.

6 MS. SHAVELLI COLOGNE-SANTOS: Thank you.
7 Hello, UNHS. My name is Shavelli. I am a
8 sophomore at the moment. First off, our school
9 is way too small to have the amount of students
10 that we have now. Now, adding an extra school
11 will not benefit us in any type of way. When we
12 have these rapid dismissals and emergency
13 drills, we can't even really fit through the
14 doors, and it makes it so much difficult. So in
15 case of a fire, how would we get out on time?
16 It's just out of line.

17 In addition, adding an extra school is just
18 asking for problems, and we do not have enough
19 security to protect all of these students from
20 chaos. Students in UNHS get along very well, so
21 I'm just like thinking about, like, all these
22 extra students not knowing who we are, and might
23 just want to create problems with us, and it
24 would just, like, be a problem.

25 Summer time will be a hassle as well because

1 I know that when Sandy was here, UNHS had to
2 take their classes in the fourth and fifth
3 floor, and in the morning, nobody likes climbing
4 up four and five floors. Like, it's a hassle
5 for me to go up three floors in the morning.
6 Imagine me in 80 degree weather going up to the
7 fourth and fifth floor. I'm not going to want
8 to do it.

9 So finally, I just wanted to say that I
10 don't think that that would be good for us, that
11 it will benefit us because a lot of students
12 wouldn't want to come, and they're going to be
13 like, all right. So now we got this new, extra
14 school. I don't want to come into school. I
15 don't want to struggle with this hassle and all
16 these extra people. They're not going to want
17 to give in all the effort they're giving in now
18 to participate in their school work. And yeah,
19 that's it.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. LODICO: Please introduce yourself.

22 MS. SARAH MAYA: Hi, I'm Sarah Maya, and I
23 pretty much want to explain--I know a couple
24 weeks ago, we had a lockdown drill, which if
25 anybody doesn't know, it's when a shooter comes,

1 and we're supposed to, in the classroom, go to
2 a certain small area in the classroom. I know I
3 was with Ms. Pentak [phonetic] in our room, and
4 we have about 30 kids. It was hard for us
5 already to fit in a small corner. I know
6 everybody was trying their best, and we couldn't
7 do it. Imagine having one kids in that one
8 classroom that's already so full. We're not
9 going to be able to do any type of drills.
10 We're not going to be able to get out of the
11 building on time, god forbid a fire.

12 The hallways are so narrow. I know we have
13 trouble on the third floor because everybody--
14 our main classes are on the third floor.
15 There's no room in the hallway. We can't get
16 through. I know we have to--like Shevalli
17 mentioned, in Sandy we had to go all the way up
18 to the 5th floor, and so many kids were late
19 because we were all trying to rush in that small
20 staircase. There's a couple staircases, but the
21 fact is that they're all small.

22 Instead of adding a new school, we should be
23 putting that money toward fixing the problems we
24 already have. Putting more students is just
25 going to worsen the problem. It's not going to

1 make anything better. The computer lab, yes,
2 we have a computer lab. It's very small. Some
3 of the computers don't even work, so students
4 don't have time to do their projects, and they
5 have no computers at home to do it.

6 So when we have to go to our teachers and we
7 have to tell them our work isn't complete
8 because we didn't have sufficient time in school
9 to fix that, and there was no computers given to
10 us in order to do the work, that makes us look
11 like we're not trying to put any effort in.
12 Yeah, that's pretty much all I wanted to say.

13 [Applause]

14 ISAIAH: Hello. My name is Isaiah, and I'm
15 currently a sophomore at UNHS, and I personally
16 think that this school is too small to add an
17 extra school. My mom put me in this school
18 because it was a smaller - - and she thought I'd
19 learn more, and to be honest, this school
20 completely changed me for the best, and I can
21 say I'm doing pretty good.

22 For me, I can personally say that when I go
23 to gym and I got upstairs, it's like it's too
24 hot. Just with the little people in the school.
25 Adding more, I think that's going to be too

1 much.

2 Like everybody else said, having other
3 students in here that don't know us, it could
4 cause more problems. Having a lot of people in
5 one school, you can have different types of
6 groups that hang out with each other, and those
7 different types of groups could start following
8 with each other where it creates a safety risk
9 for people that's not even involved in it.

10 That's all I got to say.

11 MR. LODICO: Thank you. Thank you. Josiah
12 or Kevin again? No, I know, Isaiah, but that
13 was a--okay. We'll move to Louis, Elias and
14 then Enrique. Again, Louis, Elias and Enrique,
15 come on up. Thank you.

16 Thank you. Just give your name. Thank you.

17 LOUIS: Hello, people. My name is Louis.
18 I'm currently a senior. One of my comments is
19 for the freshmen, sophomores and the - -
20 incoming, it's not going to be unfair for them.
21 It will have less space for them to learn, and
22 like every one of the speaker that said, there
23 won't be enough space for the special kids that
24 needs the extra help.

25 I also know that some of them--like the

1 building is old, and the top floors, the floor
2 is not even unsafe. At any moment, it could
3 crumble because it's old. The wood is old, and
4 the concrete is old as well. And that's all.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. LODICO: Thank you, Louis. Elias and
7 Enrique? All right. We're going to move on
8 then to Casey and Brittney. Casey and Brittney.
9 All right. If you change your minds and let me
10 know at the end, I'll give you one more chance
11 to come up.

12 We also have Christopher. Is Christopher
13 ready to speak? All right. Christopher, come
14 on up. Thank you.

15 CHRISTOPHER: Hi, my name is Christopher,
16 and I'm currently a freshman here in this
17 school. I've only been here in this school for
18 a couple of weeks, and I can already see how the
19 school is tightly packed. I can barely get from
20 one class to another, and since like the other
21 person said, every class is on the third floor,
22 so it's pretty hard to get through, especially
23 without bumping into people and pushing and
24 shoving and all that.

25 Second, after people get out of gym because

1 since we don't have one, you have to walk and
2 then you have to walk back, and you're hot,
3 sweaty, and there's barely even any ACs that are
4 working because some classes have fans that
5 don't even hit the whole class. So they're all
6 sweating and basically not up to do their work
7 because they're tired.

8 Another reason is if we had another school
9 in here and a bunch of other kids, like
10 everybody else said, there'd probably be more
11 problems, and they might not come and peace, and
12 they might just want to fight with everybody
13 else, which is really bad. It can get other
14 people in trouble, and it can get a lot of
15 problems in because Ms. Collins said there's not
16 room for fighters in here, so fighters will get
17 expelled. So they'd probably get rid of most of
18 our school. Yeah, that's it.

19 MR. LODICO: Thank you, Christopher.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. LODICO: You can take the mic. Just
22 introduce yourself. Thank you.

23 MR. DANILLO CAPISTRANI SABAN: I'll be
24 taking Enrique's place, and I'm Danillo
25 Capistrani Saban [phonetic]. And I'm a freshman

1 at the University Neighborhood High School,
2 and I believe adding a new school to this place
3 would be a horrible decision. This school has
4 capacity for 500 elementary students, which are
5 smaller and even then, you will be hard trouble.

6 Now you want to add 300 high school students
7 to more--300. It's too much people to this
8 small building. The stairs are narrow, the
9 hallways are narrow, the rooms are small.
10 You're just going to be wasting people's
11 education and adding more trouble than it's
12 worth.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. LODICO: Okay. The last student who
15 signed up in Andre. Andre, come on up. Andre,
16 just introduce yourself and begin your comments.
17 Thank you.

18 ANDRE: I'm Andre. I'm a senior at this
19 school, and I would like to talk about when
20 Millennium was in the school, how the hallways
21 were crowded. Since we only had two or three
22 floors to ourselves, students were
23 inconveniently late to classes, and we couldn't
24 really get around like that.

25 Whenever there was a fire drill, we'd always

1 have to wait for Millennium to exit the
2 building, and me personally, I don't think
3 that's fair to UNHS students or staff, and I
4 think that it shouldn't be right that everything
5 had to do with Millennium in our school
6 building.

7 What else? Because of the lack of space,
8 there were arguments and fights between students
9 on other floors because people don't like being
10 touched, and there's people getting bumped.
11 Therefore, it would be difficult for us
12 University Neighborhood High School students to
13 get around with another school located in our
14 building. We're not going to have enough space
15 for us.

16 Another reason I chose this school is
17 because there's only one school in here, and I'm
18 not going to have to worry about everybody else-
19 -like people I don't know, me getting around and
20 somebody being there I don't know, I don't want
21 to feel uncomfortable in my school. There's a
22 bunch of other females in this school I'm pretty
23 sure wouldn't want to feel uncomfortable with
24 some strange guy walking around. They don't
25 know who he is. That's about it.

1 MR. LODICO: Thank you.

2 [Applause]

3 MR. LODICO: Okay. At this time, I want to
4 give one last chance for any students that
5 signed up to come up to the podium now. Again,
6 we had a number of students signed up. Now's
7 your chance.

8 Okay. We're going to continue--introduce
9 yourself, and then you can give us your
10 comments, thank you.

11 UNITUS: My name's Unitus. Sorry. Not only
12 does this make this--bring this school into our
13 school make this harder for the students, it
14 also makes it harder for the teachers because
15 they already have over 100 students to a grade,
16 and why would you make--why would you bring in
17 600 more students to grade? That's way more
18 people than you need, and it's not necessary.
19 Because if you have the money to build over this
20 school, why don't you just build your own
21 school. Yeah, thank you.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. LODICO: Okay. Our student speaker list
24 is now done, and we're going to continue with
25 our public comments. Our next speaker is Katie

1 Silberies. Thank you. Before you start, I'm
2 just going to give the next few speakers so you
3 can be ready. After Katie, we have Alexa
4 Rodriguez, then Emily Black, and then Alvin Lee.
5 So just be prepared next. Thank you.

6 MS. KATIE SILBERIES: So I wanted to speak a
7 little bit more for the need for a space based
8 off of our special population that we serve. At
9 our school, we have 25% special education
10 students, and 32% English language learners.
11 Given the high need population that we serve at
12 our school, we also need a full time speech
13 teacher, which is unusual for a school of this
14 size. We have written grants to have smaller
15 class sizes for students.

16 It might look on paper like we're not using
17 our classrooms to capacity, but if you look
18 closer, we actually are. Because of the large
19 number of - - classes that we have at our
20 school, we really utilize the fact of having two
21 teachers in the classroom. So while one teacher
22 has maybe 18 of the students, the other teacher
23 might take out eight more students for small
24 group attention, to give testing accommodations
25 like reading questions out loud, or extra time

1 on a test. Our students benefit greatly from
2 having this space, and we can't provide these
3 accommodations if we don't have the extra
4 classrooms to do so.

5 We also have some wonderful programs that
6 serve our high need population. We have - - GPS
7 program, we have full time college office
8 advisors, and we have after school advantage
9 program. Again, we need space to run these
10 programs. Our attendance has gone up this year
11 dramatically largely due to these programs, and
12 as you can see from our report cards over the
13 last few years, these programs have helped our
14 students be successful. But without this space,
15 we can't continue to run these programs the way
16 that we have now.

17 Also, in September 9, 2013, our enrollment
18 is at 335 students, which is what we've had for
19 the last three years. Staff members who have
20 been around for a while remember that at 600
21 students, our school was not safe or conducive
22 to a quality education. Many students were late
23 to class due to overcrowding in the hallways.
24 This was apparent again when Millennium high
25 school colocated to our school in November 2012.

1 The hallways here measure only 52 inches
2 wide. That makes it impossible for more than
3 two students to walk across the hallways
4 simultaneously. It means a single file line
5 would be necessary at all times in the hallway
6 to allow for safe passing conditions. When
7 larger students or students in winter coats are
8 in the hallway, it would be impossible for
9 students to pass by one another without touching
10 each other.

11 Under other conditions, 500 students might
12 be a safe a reasonable number of students for
13 our building. However, given the facts of our
14 high risk populations and the need for our
15 students with disabilities and English language
16 learners to get additional supports, we need
17 additional space to serve them well. Thank you.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. ALEXA RODRIGUEZ: Hi. My name is Alexa
20 Rodriguez. I work for Grant Street GPS program,
21 and I'm also a parent of a senior here at the
22 school. My daughter, Nicole, came in here in
23 2009. It wasn't such a great school back then.
24 Thanks to Ms. Collins and everybody else, the
25 school has definitely improved dramatically.

1 I'm very happy to be part of the UNHS team.

2 Well, are we comfortable here? It's not as
3 bad as it could be if we had all these freshmen
4 or sophomores running around here for their
5 lunch time. We have 12 tables here, 12 students
6 for each table. That's 144 per period. If we
7 get 700 students in here, that's five periods.
8 And when are they going to eat?

9 Anyway, this is an old building. It was
10 made for elementary school students, and I
11 understand if they counted five, six, 700
12 elementary school students, okay, fine. But
13 these are big kids. These are big kids, and at
14 this age, they're not--well, how would I say
15 this? Their hormones are crazy, and you're
16 uncomfortable. You don't have any space to walk
17 around, and it could start a lot of trouble.

18 Anyway, we have up here some air
19 conditioning, some air conditioners, but they
20 can't be plugged in. We don't have the power
21 for them. We have no auditorium, and we have no
22 gym. You know, these are things that should be
23 taken into consideration. Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MR. LODICO: Thank you.

1 MS. EMILY BLACK: Hello. My name's Emily
2 Black. I'm one of the teachers here at UNHS.
3 I've been teaching here for seven years now, so
4 I've seen a lot of changes go on in this school,
5 and one of the things that is consistently being
6 brought up, which they're absolutely right, is
7 the number of students that will be here that
8 you're proposing. Definitely not enough space.
9 The more kids, the more crowding, the more
10 unsafe it becomes. Really need to think about
11 that a whole lot more than just saying that we
12 could split the school into two floors, and
13 everything is going to be okay. And that we
14 won't be impacted. We will be.

15 Safety is a huge issue. Besides the fire
16 drills and the lockdowns, the bathrooms, the
17 lack of facility that we have--we have one
18 science room, we have Grand Street, we have one
19 weight room, one dance room, we have the
20 computer lab on the fourth floor. Besides all
21 of this and how all of this is going to be
22 shared if it's going to be shared, another thing
23 to think about is--sorry. Another thing to
24 think about is intruders and if we don't know
25 the people that are in the other school, then

1 how can we really be--how can we be safe and
2 know who's an intruder in our building, who's
3 not an intruder in our building?

4 It's another thing to think about and take
5 into consideration. The limited storage space.
6 Obviously we need space to store the stuff that
7 we need to supply the school. Storage is a big
8 problem as well, and we need to think about
9 storage space, not only for teachers but for
10 students as well. So lockers. We only have
11 lockers on the first floor. Where can students
12 put their stuff safely? Lockers is a big issue
13 in this school alone, and never mind for another
14 school as well.

15 Keeping the number at 500 or below is really
16 the best way to go. We are a community here,
17 and we need to remember that the students are
18 supposed to be thought of first. That's it.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. LODICO: Thank you. Okay. Next speaker
21 is Alvin Lee, and while Alvin's coming up, we
22 have Carolyn Mindich [phonetic], Jean Wright,
23 and Molagros [phonetic]. So after Alvin,
24 Carolyn, Jean and Molagros.

25 MR. ALVIN LEE: Hello? All right. Hi, my

1 name is Alvin Lee, I'm the DM [phonetic]
2 teacher here. I have something written out, so
3 just bear with me here a little bit, all right?
4 When I started out here four years ago, we were
5 a failing school. We worked our butts off, and
6 we improved all of the subjective empirical data
7 measures that the DOE has thrown at us.

8 Today we are looking at a B, missing an A by
9 a fraction of a point. Our enrollment has
10 increased yearly, albeit miniscule by your
11 standards, but we have been getting better
12 quality students for the first time in years, no
13 offense to everybody else.

14 Our freshmen this year has me excited in
15 anticipation teaching them in four years, but
16 let's not sit here and waste our time. Let's
17 call a spade a spade. Judging by the data
18 you've provided for our projected growth or lack
19 thereof, UNHS is about to be phased out. We are
20 the DOE equivalent of the Miami Marlins. Years
21 of building and noted improvement just to be
22 knocked down through ineffective management.

23 Central planning can sit there and crunch
24 numbers behind the data projections, but I'm on
25 the front lines every, single day, and I can

1 tell you two things. Number one, there simply
2 is no room. Number two, UNHS will not last with
3 another school.

4 Look around you. We have a gym and a - -
5 outside. That is our common space. Hardly one
6 that can accommodate one school, let alone two.
7 Our hallways are narrow, our classrooms have
8 high ceilings that are great for an NYC
9 apartment, but horrible for high school
10 students.

11 Our staircase comes straight from an Escher
12 painting, we have one cafeteria that becomes
13 crowded, and two sets of bathrooms that can't
14 accommodate all of our students. After super
15 storm Sandy when we saw Millennium come into our
16 building, I said, watch, this is the rationale
17 they're going to be using to put another school
18 in our building, but if you look back at the
19 tapes, look at the measurements, go back to any
20 of the interviews to all the parents from
21 Millennium, they all hated it. All right?

22 You can see the negative reactions from
23 Millennium parents to their kids being here.
24 Speaking on the CTE itself, I personally think
25 that CTE schools can work under the right

1 conditions. I think the schools can provide
2 an invaluable service to those without the
3 necessary funds to afford college, but it
4 doesn't work.

5 The fact of the matter is we're attaching
6 the CTE school to the four As, and BMCC. Let me
7 throw some numbers back at you because you like
8 throwing numbers at us. 6.4, 6.2, 5.9. These
9 three numbers refer to unemployment rates of
10 graduates holding degrees in commercial arts,
11 mass media, marketing, each respectively which I
12 assume would be associated with advertisement.
13 In a recent study by Georgetown, they said that
14 these three majors are the top ten in useless
15 majors in America.

16 Speaking of the CTEs, BMCC, are we really
17 asking our kids to go to BMCC? No offense to
18 BMCC because it's a great idea, it's a great
19 school. Community college is great, education
20 is amazing. However, the fact of the matter is,
21 it's not promoting college readiness. It's
22 promoting high school complacency.

23 The fact of the matter is ultimately this
24 sounds like another knee-jerk reaction to the
25 DOE to fix things with one size fits all

1 bandaids. The bottom line is we are in
2 America. One size does not fit all.

3 I want to a pretty - - high school. I need
4 two seconds. Let me finish, please. I spent
5 some time on this, all right? I went to a
6 pretty damn good high school, all right? And I
7 can even tell you I wasn't prepared for college.
8 You know what did prepare me? Experience, hard
9 work and taking chances. How about trying to
10 take us--how about instead of trying to tear us
11 down, how about taking a chance and help build
12 us up. Bring in some of those partnerships and
13 money here to UNHS. Give our students the
14 experience they deserve so they, too, can
15 succeed.

16 [Applause]

17 How about we focus on the now instead of the
18 what if and look in front of you to all these
19 young men and women, to all the parents out here
20 giving up their time on a Monday, on a Monday,
21 to fight the good fight? I have been on the
22 front lines. We have all been there, and I know
23 what's happening. We've all seen it. You have
24 an important job to do, and I do not envy your
25 position one bit, but I want you to think back

1 to when you were in school. Did you have to
2 deal with any of this? Were you able to get
3 where you are in life without dealing with this?
4 Why were you able to succeed?

5 And I bet you it wasn't because you needed
6 some politicals to intervene on your education
7 and decide for you what is best for you. At the
8 end of the day, I think you owe it to yourselves
9 and this community to give us a fighting chance.

10 [Applause]

11 Speaking as a teacher, this may just be lip
12 service at this point, but there is at least a
13 silver lining. Everything is a teachable
14 moment, and we lead by example. If you vote for
15 colocation, at least I've shown our students to
16 fight the good fight and fight for what you
17 believe in.

18 If you choose not to colocate, our students
19 will have witnesses a grassroots movement at
20 best, and you will have led by example by
21 showing our students that their future is one to
22 be believed in. Thank you.

23 MR. LODICO: Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. CAROLYN MINDICH: That's hard to follow.

1 Hi, my name is Carolyn Mindich, and I'm a
2 teacher here at UNHS. One of the things we
3 learned with common - - with everything is to
4 teach by example, teach through real life
5 examples. So I'm going to talk about one of the
6 places I go in the summer, which is our friend's
7 cabin in upstate New York. It has a really old
8 septic system. It's like 60 years old. It's a
9 wonderful place. We love being there.

10 But because of that, you have issues with
11 bathrooms, right? With the septic system, if
12 too many people use it, if too many people
13 flush, it fails, and then you're up a creek
14 without a paddle. The reason I'm explaining
15 this is because we talked about possibilities of
16 alternating start times, alternating when
17 students are in school. However, a spade is a
18 spade. If you up the number of people in this
19 building, you're upping the number of usage on
20 an already failing system.

21 So it's all well and good to say not every
22 student will be in this building, not every
23 person will be using it at the same time, but
24 the resources will still be taxes, no matter the
25 time of day that they're used.

1 Also, one thing that was brought to my
2 attention was that there is no exhaust system in
3 the school. Not in the kitchens, not in the
4 labs, not in the bathrooms, so adding in more
5 students, adding in--no offense, guys--more
6 sprays, more perfumes, more everything just
7 isn't really a good environment physically or
8 for the health of our students.

9 Also, I wanted to just point out some
10 contradictory terms that are in the proposal.
11 It talks about that--thank you. That because
12 available seats for early college programs will
13 be offset by an equal reduction in the available
14 seats for the University Neighborhood High
15 School program, neither program is expected to
16 be impacted by this proposal and total
17 enrollment of UNHS is not expected to change.

18 Within those two sentences on page two,
19 you're really contradicting yourself. You're
20 saying the number of increase in students will
21 be offset by the reduction of our students, and
22 at the same time saying there will be no
23 reduction. You're also projecting that there
24 will only be 255 students next year at UNHS.
25 That's the projection on the proposal, and we've

1 been showing throughout the years that we've
2 been improving the quality of our students as
3 well as the number, we've increased our rating,
4 and we really do deserve to have a fighting
5 chance.

6 I saw this happen in my home district where
7 I grew up, and they're being totally overcome by
8 an entirely different population, and it's
9 really not fair. I received a wonderful
10 education in my district, and I really want my
11 students to have that same opportunity. So
12 thank you.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. LODICO: Thank you. So Jean Wright?
15 Okay. So when she comes back--Molagras?

16 MS. MOLAGRAS CHANDLER: Good evening,
17 everybody. My name is Molagras - - Chandler.
18 I'm your vice president, and I'm here to
19 represent not only my students, my teachers and
20 my family, also my community. The first time I
21 came to this school, I came to this school
22 because it was a family, it was small, it was
23 good. Not only that, I have to thank Ms.
24 Collins tonight because she did a wonderful
25 effort with each one of these kids that are here

1 right now. We came from D to A minus
2 something. But we can do better, and she make
3 it better. You know how she make it better?
4 She pull kids out of the class and say, you need
5 a - - . We have Chinese students. We have
6 Spanish students. People speak another language
7 - - not their primary language as me, but they
8 receive help.

9 When they are failing, they get help. It's
10 very difficult for them, but they're doing it
11 because she encourage it. She encourage my son
12 to come to this school. I know - - for those
13 kids that need help that they need space to
14 listen. You need to go see your teacher, not
15 extra hour. What we do? We put three or four
16 in the class, and they get taught for that
17 particular area.

18 Please don't take that from us. We are
19 doing great, and we're going to do it better
20 because we have a strong PTA. More than ever,
21 we have a strong principal. We have the best
22 principal ever. I can say that.

23 [Applause]

24 And we have a support from Mr. Lee and Mr. -
25 - and all the teachers that we have here. We

1 have great people in here, but also I want to
2 bring something very critical to me. The
3 safety. Everybody's talking about safety.
4 Everybody's talking about the hallways are very
5 bad, the bathroom are very bad. But let me tell
6 you, if it was your kid, your 13-year-old
7 daughter with a 23-year-old man in the school,
8 you will like that? Because I don't like it.

9 You know why? Because there are girls and
10 there are boys and you don't know what's going
11 to happen. You're going to put it here. Some
12 of the time people that are 20, 23 years old
13 with a 13 and 14, 15 years old, that is not a
14 good idea.

15 If you have problem with them, 15 and 16, 13
16 and 14, you know you have to tell them about you
17 have to be safe, you have to respect. But what
18 happen when you come in from the street and I
19 don't know you? What happen with my kids is
20 going around with another kid, another man--
21 sorry, another man, 20, 23 years old that I
22 don't know? You know, they don't know the
23 difference, but we, as a parent, know the
24 difference.

25 Thank you so much, and I hope that this not

1 happen.

2 [Applause]

3 MR. LODICO: Thank you. Thank you. Thank
4 you. I thank everyone for speaking thus far.
5 Is Jean Wright back? Let's move on. Shanying
6 Wang will be our next speaker, then Hatie
7 Rodriguez, Robert Mary, Filicita Rodriguez, and
8 Fintak--I can't read the last name. Julia.
9 Okay. So those will be our next round of
10 speakers. Thank you.

11 So the next speaker will be Shanying Wang.
12 Thank you.

13 MS. SHANYING WANG: Hi, how are you? I'm
14 one of the parents in this group. I really
15 appreciate the school give me the help. This
16 school is just like a family. And my son, he
17 has some of the mental problem. He cannot be
18 well in the school, but the school has given me
19 lots of help and support. Before, I chose this
20 school because this school is small, and they
21 can be in the fully to support my son and help
22 my son.

23 And also, I don't know how to say that.
24 Before my daughter in 138 school, and then they
25 transfer to 134 school and combine together, and

1 then my daughter cannot get enough support and
2 help, and that's why I transfer my daughter to
3 another school.

4 That's why I'm afraid the school is combined
5 to another school. My son has mental problem.
6 It's possible he can't communicate with the
7 different people, and the more student in the
8 same school. That's the reason why I'm afraid.
9 I don't think my son can get enough support in
10 here. Thank you so much.

11 MR. LODICO: Thank you.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. LODICO: Who's next? Okay. Whoever's
14 ready.

15 MS. HATIE RODRIGUEZ: Good evening,
16 everyone. My name is Hatie Rodriguez. I'm PTA
17 president of UNHS. I have a senior here. I
18 have one that graduated back in 2009. The
19 school is a very good school. That's the reason
20 why I chose this school, because my daughter
21 graduate. When my daughter entered this school
22 in 2009, it was a D. I was PTA president for
23 the past three years. I try to get out, but no.
24 I hang in there with the parents, the staff, the
25 principal, the students. This school has

1 improved. Every staff in here, teachers,
2 principal, assistant, has assisted all these
3 children to focus on their Regent's diploma.
4 Not a regular high school diploma, a Regent's
5 diploma, and make sure they all attend college.

6 Not military, but college. At this time, I
7 was on vacation, came back. The first phone
8 call I received, I found out that the school was
9 going to have a colocation. I said, how could
10 that happen? No problem. Came in. We did the
11 rally. I was not aware of it. I came in. We
12 did the rally.

13 Then the Board of Education did not give
14 enough time for the parents to find out what's
15 going on in the community, and the time for the
16 support for everyone in the school, especially
17 our students.

18 Myself as a parent, I felt it was my
19 responsibility to let the parents be aware of
20 what's going on. Right now, my mother just
21 passed away last week, Tuesday. I'm here today
22 to support this school, to support the students
23 that worked very hard, and the staff. That's
24 why I'm here. UNHS, and Margaret - - , thank
25 you very much. Let's make this a better and

1 successful year. Every year, please recommend
2 UNHS because we are a family.

3 [Applause]

4 MR. ROBERT MAURY: Good evening. My name is
5 Robert Maury. I'm a teacher here at UNHS. I
6 currently am working with college now program
7 partnered with Baruch College, and am quite
8 proud to also be teaching an AP world class here
9 as well.

10 So looking at actually our academics here,
11 you can see that we strive for excellence and
12 rigor, both increasing year and year and year
13 out. So that's not even a question. I look at
14 the proposal from the proposed high school, and
15 yes, it looks great, and I actually do think
16 they have the right to become a high school.
17 However, this is not the proper building to do
18 it in. Absolutely not.

19 We are a small school. I come from a school
20 previous to this one. I started a school as the
21 founding teacher of - - High School in Queens.
22 I was quite proud to start that school with
23 Krisheed Abdul Mutagabir [phonetic]. However,
24 the difference lies that the school we were
25 collocating with, Queens Metropolitan High

1 school, was much larger facility. It had
2 gated walls to actually close up the school.

3 What would happen here if we actually
4 colocated with another high school. One floor
5 might be used from another school? That
6 problem, it bothers me. Bathrooms don't exist
7 on every, single floor. Students would have to
8 roll throughout the building. You don't know
9 which student actually belongs to which school.
10 We operate like a family here. We operate like
11 a family.

12 I know pretty much grades ten through 12.
13 I'm still working on the ninth graders, but I do
14 know a good, substantial amount of our students.
15 If another school enters our building, what is
16 there to say there won't be some major security
17 concern. What are the teachers supposed to do
18 to actually understand which students are ours
19 and which are theirs?

20 My argument is not that they shouldn't exist
21 as a school. This just isn't the proper
22 building to do it in. If you want to build
23 another school, I'm sure the DOE would love to
24 fund a new project somewhere else, okay? And
25 you know what, we all make mistakes. We all

1 makes mistakes, and this proposal is a
2 mistake. However, with a new administration,
3 with the backing of our city council, and our
4 new public advocate, hopefully it'll be Laticia
5 James, but with their backing, we can do this.

6 We can overcome.

7 [Applause]

8 MR. LODICO: Thank you. We have Felicita
9 and Julia Fintak.

10 MS. FELICITA RODRIGUEZ: Hi, my name is
11 Felicita Rodriguez. I'm the mother of Anthony
12 Rodriguez. He's a senior here. As a parent,
13 I've been sitting here just jotting notes. This
14 is pretty much new to me.

15 My main question is, after hearing what
16 everybody has to say, the question is why
17 separate, and why can't we just integrate the
18 new programs into University High School to
19 improve the school facilities, to improve what's
20 going on now? My first issue is safety. The
21 school is already overcrowded as it is. Many
22 times I visit a school how crowded--it's hard to
23 get upstairs. Especially I'm handicapped.

24 Secondly, being comfortable. The teacher
25 and student relationships. I see a very close

1 and personalized, and because of that, my
2 son's grades have improved greatly.

3 Security. Is it safe to have all those
4 people in one small building? Cameras. Are we
5 going to have cameras everywhere? How much
6 money is that going to cost? Over crowding,
7 that's going to cause sanitation problems,
8 maintenance problems. Is it cost effective to
9 bring another school into this building? I
10 don't think so.

11 Common sense, it doesn't make any sense to
12 spend more money to bring another school into
13 the school that's existing already and
14 struggling to make these students go to a better
15 place. Most important, the last thing I'm going
16 to say, is personalization. That's what this
17 school has. They gave me a lot of
18 personalization, my son and a lot of other
19 students. With his grades have picked up
20 dramatically. I feel another school coming here
21 will affect that, not only just for my son, but
22 for other students in the future. Thank you.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. LODICO: Thank you. Julia and Jean,
25 we're still waiting for Jean Wright. Julia, and

1 Jean Wright.

2 MS. JEAN FINTAK: I'm a teacher here at
3 UNHS, and I mean, everyone has said it. There's
4 probably not a lot more that I can add. It's
5 about safety, it's about crowded hallways, it's
6 about bathrooms, it's about being able to serve
7 kids with special needs. But Jesus, it's about
8 soul. This is not--I've been teaching for 18
9 years, and I've seen a lot of shuffling that
10 goes on, and I have never seen it cater to
11 what's really important.

12 I started my career at Humanities High
13 School. A big school. That was when a big
14 school could still feel like a family. There
15 was soul in that building. There was community,
16 and then it got really big.

17 Some of us old-timers talk about the days of
18 when you were designated as a dumping ground,
19 and we kind of became that dumping ground, and
20 believe me, to use that term when you're talking
21 about children, when you're saying you're going
22 to take children and put them into a building
23 that is not capable of holding that, it was a
24 mess.

25 I broke up a lot of fights, and not really

1 fights. I'm talking about like ten on one.
2 And that was a school that had a soul that got
3 broken from too much shuffling around, and then
4 the new schools came in. And that didn't work
5 very well either, and I'm going fast now because
6 I only got 30 seconds remaining. That's what it
7 says.

8 I ended up at Murray Bergtrum [phonetic] for
9 one year, one long--too long year. And if you--
10 this school is working. This school has gotten
11 better. You've heard it. Many people have said
12 it already. So why not, instead of saying we're
13 going to get phased out if this school comes in
14 here. There's no doubt in my mind.

15 I've seen it happen too many times. So why
16 not add the students to this school? We get
17 bigger, we continue doing what we're doing, our
18 soul feeds our students' souls, and we all
19 prosper. How many times are you going to shake
20 it up and shuffle it around and start over and
21 start anew and do this and do that? You don't
22 even have to fail to get closed down apparently
23 anymore.

24 I don't know what it's about. All I do, I
25 say, just I'm going to do my thing, I'm going to

1 teach. I'm just going to keep teaching. I'm
2 just going to think about my kids. I'm just
3 going to teach and let all chaos go on around
4 me, but I don't really want that.

5 This school is so unique with its one school
6 in one building. It is a community. There is
7 love and education here, and it has to go on
8 that way because it won't. You bring another
9 school in here, it's not going to work.

10 MR. LODICO: Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. LODICO: This is the last call for Jean
13 Wright. Okay. The speaker list is now
14 exhausted. So again, I want to remind you that
15 the DOE welcomes any comments and feedback
16 additional to the comments and feedback we got
17 tonight, and you may send that to the DOE at any
18 time before the panel for educational policy,
19 when they vote on October 15. I'm going to give
20 you the email address again and phone number
21 where those additional comments may be made.

22 The email is D01proposals@schools.nyc.gov,
23 and the phone number again is (212) 374-3466.
24 It's also on a handout that went out as well, so
25 it's important to get those additional comments

1 in. I thank everyone.

2 MALE VOICE: - - .

3 MR. LODICO: That's why we have the sign up
4 time, and the comments can be sent to--

5 MALE VOICE: - - .

6 MR. LODICO: They're out there, they're not
7 in here.

8 MALE VOICE: - - .

9 MR. LODICO: Again, please send your
10 additional comments in through either that phone
11 number or the email. I thank everyone for their
12 participation. The joint public hearing is now
13 closed. Thank you.

14 [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 10, 2013_____