Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Public Comment Analysis

Date: December 15, 2015

Topic: The Proposed Opening and Co-Location of Success Academy Charter School – New York 6 (84KTBD) with Existing School P.S. 297 Abraham Stockton (14K297) in Building K297 Beginning in the 2016-2017 School Year

Date of Panel Vote: December 16, 2015

Summary of Proposal

On October 30, 2015, the New York City Department of Education ("DOE") issued an Educational Impact Statement ("EIS") and Building Utilization Plan ("BUP") describing a proposal to open and co-locate Success Academy Charter School – New York 6 (84KTBD, "SA – Bed-Stuy 3) in building K297 ("K297"), located at 700 Park Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11206, in Community School District 14 ("District 14") beginning in the 2016-2017 school year.

The DOE issued a revised EIS and a revised BUP on November 18, 2015. The EIS and BUP for this proposal have been revised to add information about the DOE's methodology for calculating enrollment projections in building K297. The DOE has updated the projections in the EIS and BUP to reflect the fact that the 2015-2016 Unaudited Register became available on October 31, 2015, which is now the most current data available. The BUP has also been revised to adjust the shared space plan to proportionally re-allocate time based on student population of each impacted school in the 2016-17 school year. These revisions do not substantially change the proposal, and do not result in a shift of space allocation in K297.

If this proposal is approved, SA – Bed-Stuy 3 will be co-located in K297 with P.S. 297 Abraham Stockton (14K297, "P.S. 297"), an existing district elementary school that serves students in kindergarten through fifth grades and offers a full-day pre-kindergarten ("Pre-K") program. K297 also houses a community-based organization ("CBO"), Good Shepherd. If this proposal is approved, SA – Bed-Stuy 3 will open in K297 in the 2016-2017 school year, serving approximately 140-160 students in kindergarten and first grade, and will add one grade level each year until it reaches full scale, serving approximately 350-400 students in kindergarten through fourth grades in the 2019-2020 school year.

Pursuant to recent amendments to the Education Law that provide certain new and expanding charter schools with access to facilities, Success Academy Charter Schools ("SACS") made a request to the DOE for co-located space in District 14 to open a new elementary school.

SACS is a charter management organization ("CMO") that currently operates elementary, middle and high schools in New York City. If this proposal is approved, SA – Bed-Stuy 3 would open in building K297 in the 2016-2017 school year and would serve students in kindergarten through fourth grades at scale in the 2019-2020 school year. SA – Bed-Stuy 3's charter was authorized in the 2014-2015 school year by The State University of New York Trustees ("SUNY").

SACS has informed the DOE of its intention to apply to serve pre-kindergarten at SA – Bed-Stuy 3 beginning in the 2016-2017 school year; however, the DOE has not yet released a Request for Proposals for charter schools interested in partnering with the DOE to offer pre-kindergarten for the 2016-2017 school year.

Prior to the 2015-2016 school year, P.S. 297 was co-located with The Ethical Community Charter School ("TECCS") in K297. The TECCS charter expired on June 30, 2015, at which time TECCS formally ceased operations.

According to the 2014-2015 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report ("Blue Book"), K297 has a target capacity to serve 659 students. Currently, the building serves approximately 256 students, yielding a utilization rate of 39%. As noted above, building K297 previously housed P.S. 297 and TECCS. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, as a result of the non-renewal of the TECCS charter, the space previously occupied by TECCS became available, therefore rendering building K297 as "under-utilized," meaning it has space to accommodate additional students. If this proposal is approved by the PEP, in 2019-2020, when SA – Bed-Stuy 3 is at scale serving students in kindergarten through fourth grades at K297, there will be approximately 548-658 total students served in the building, yielding a projected utilization rate of approximately 83%-100%, which demonstrates that there is sufficient space for all school organizations. The revised BUP that accompanies this proposal also demonstrates that there is sufficient space in the building to accommodate this co-location. Thus, the DOE believes that K297 can serve all students that attend SA – Bed-Stuy 3 and P.S. 297.

The details of this proposal have been released within the Revised EIS and Revised BUP which can be accessed here: http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2015-2016/December2015SchoolProposals.

Copies of the Revised EIS and Revised BUP are also available in the main office of P.S. 297.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A Joint Public Hearing for this proposal was held on December 3, 2015 in building K297. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 100 people attended the hearing and 39 people spoke. Present at the meeting were: District 14 Superintendent Alicja Winnicki; Evelyn Cruz, Representative for Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez; P.S. 297's Principal James Brown; P.S. 297's SLT Representatives Diana Romeo, Christine Petito, Jeannette Gonzalez, and UFT Chapter Chair Charles Rabbach; Maureen Murphy from SUNY Charter Schools Institute; The Vice President of CEC 14 Mirian Lopez; Member of CEC 14 Roberto Portillo; and Albery Corona, Jamie Dollinger and Hallie Martin from the DOE.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing on the proposal:

1. CEC 14 Vice President Mirian Lopez stated the following:
    a. P.S. 297 needs the space in the building to serve their students.
    b. A co-location with Success Academy will hurt P.S. 297 because they won't have enough space.
2. CEC 14 Member Roberto Portillo stated the following:
    a. The space that will be removed with this co-location will be Special Education seats.
    b. P.S. 297 will not have enough room to serve their Special Education population.
3. The Parent Teacher Association ("PTA") President of P.S. 297, Diana Romero, stated the following:
    a. She represents the parents and will fight to ensure the needs of the students at P.S. 297 are met.
    b. We need every single room in P.S. 297 to best serve our students.
    c. P.S. 297 cannot give up necessary resources.
4. A PTA Member of P.S. 297, Jeannette Gonzales, stated the following:
    a. Success Academy will take space away from our students.
    b. She has had lots of family members attend P.S. 297 and watched them thrive in this environment.
    c. P.S. 297 serves lots of students with IEPs and the co-location with Success Academy will hinder this.
5. A PTA Member of P.S. 297, Christine Petito, stated the following:
    a. She has family members who had IEPs but no longer needed intervention after the help from P.S. 297.
    b. If P.S. 297 has 256 students, this proposal will take away the cluster room and therapy room.
    c. P.S. 297 helps students with IEPs and P.S. 297 helps students achieve their goals.
6. A PTA Member and UFT Chapter Chair from P.S. 297, Charles Rabbach, stated the following:
    a. P.S. 297 has a diverse student body.
    b. P.S. 297 has a growing ELL population and needs to be able to serve them.
    c. P.S. 297 has partnerships with several CBOs.
    d. The school has made several requests to the Office of District Planning for P.S. 297 to become a PK-8 school but was denied.

   e. P.S. 297 does not need another school that is unable to meet the needs of the current students and community.
7. Evelyn Cruz, representative for Congresswoman Nydia Velazquez, stated the following:
   a. We should stand by the parents and teachers of P.S. 297.
   b. We should give our educators praise and support them.
   c. Success Academy is a business, and it's a shame.
   d. We have learned what comes out about Success in the press and it's not positive.
   e. P.S. 297 is a vibrant community with a large population of Special Education students and students with IEPs.
   f. Congresswoman Velazquez is very concerned about the removal of services that impact our students.
   g. There is serious concern for why Success needs another elementary school within walking distance of existing Success schools.
   h. Placing a school in K297 will negatively impact space.
   i. We should advocate for Success to go to an underutilized building or private space.
   j. Ms. Cruz inquired about the walkthrough of the K297 building.
   k. She stated general opposition to the proposal to site Success in K297.
8. Several students from P.S. 297 stated the following:
   a. Success Academy should not be co-located in the K297 building.
   b. Success Academy already has space in a lot of other buildings.
   c. P.S. 297 feels like my home and helps me with my school work, and Success Academy will take that away.
   d. If Success Academy moves into K297, our special education services like speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy will be taken away.
   e. Success Academy will make our school too crowded.
   f. Success Academy will take away all of our space.
   g. Success Academy will take away our resources.
9. One student from P.S. 297 stated that he used to be a student of Success Academy.
   a. He stated that he was pushed out of that school. He stated that Success Academy did not help him with his reading and writing.
   b. He stated that P.S. 297 has helped him with those subjects.
10. Multiple commenters opposed Success Academy being co-located in the K297 building with P.S. 297.
11. Multiple commenters expressed specific concern for the co-location of P.S. 297 elementary school students and Success Academy students.
12. Multiple commenters expressed the need for P.S. 297 to retain space in order to continue to serve the large population of students at P.S. 297 with special education needs, with or without an IEP.
13. Multiple commenters expressed concern that their space on the second floor used for special education services like speech and occupational therapy would be taken by Success Academy.
14. Multiple commenters stated that if Success Academy moved into the building, there would be an overall shortage of space for P.S. 297's students.
15. Multiple commenters praised the positive school community at P.S. 297 and how it feels like a home away from home for both students and teachers.
16. Multiple commenters stated that the P.S. 297 community among students and teachers felt like a family.
17. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy was not a good fit for the community and would not meet the needs of its special education and English language learner students.
18. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy has already opened elementary schools in close proximity to building K297.
19. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy has schools within the proximity of building K297 that are not filled to capacity.
20. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy discards students with special needs that P.S. 297 will accept.
21. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy does not accept or retain students with special education needs.
22. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy is a business that does not care about students.

23. Multiple commenters stated that Eva Moskowitz, the Chief Executive Officer of Success Academy Charter Schools, had the resources to build a new private school building and does not have a need to co-locate Success Academy in district schools.
24. A commenter stated the following:
    a. If Success Academy is going to come into the building, they should use space on the 3rd floor only because there isn't another room otherwise.
    b. P.S. 297 has been located with a charter school before and it did not work out so a co-location with Success would not work out
25. Multiple commenters expressed support for the academic progress that Principal Brown has been able to make with his students.
26. Multiple commenters stated that Success Academy weeds out all of the students that do not meet their rigorous academic demands.
27. A commenter stated the following:
    a. Students at P.S. 297 thrive because their parents are involved.
    b. P.S. 297 gives students the tools in their classrooms that they need to succeed.
    c. She expressed that students should not live in fear of their classrooms being taken away.
    d. Success will take resources away from P.S. 297.
28. A commenter stated the following:
    a. Success Academy has some of the rudest people she has ever met in her life.
    b. Success Academy teachers do not greet her and act like they are better than others.
    c. She has seen children from Success Academy throw up outside.
    d. Staff from Success Academy has told her to shut up.
    e. Success Academy should not be allowed in K297.
29. A commenter stated the following:
    a. Her child has thrived in reading and writing at P.S. 297.
    b. She stated that P.S. 297 should open more Pre-K and Kindergarten sections and more classes overall.
    c. She expressed desire for P.S. 297 to grow as a school community and that this proposal could hinder this.
30. A commenter stated the following:
    a. His son previously attended Success Academy for 6 months.
    b. His son was broken when he arrived at P.S. 297.
    c. P.S. 297 teachers care about him and his progress.
    d. Success Academy only focuses on money and performance and it is a business.
    e. Success Academy expels students with special needs.
    f. He expressed general opposition to the proposal.
31. A teacher from P.S. 297 stated the following:
    a. Success Academy only serves 93% low income students, but P.S. 297 serves 100%.
    b. Success Academy has thousands of dollars, but P.S. 297 does it on pennies.
    c. Success Academy has no heart.
32. A teacher from P.S. 297 stated the following:
    a. P.S. 297 feels like a home for my students.
    b. This teacher read a letter from her former student, which stated that her teacher was very encouraging and that P.S. 297 is the place to be.
33. A teacher from P.S. 297 stated the following:
    a. 90% of P.S. 297's students come directly from this community, versus only 12% of students that Success enrolls. Success does not serve students from this community.
    b. P.S. 297 has asked to expand our school to become a K-8 for five years in a row.
34. A commenter stated the following:
    a. According to a Washington Post article from February 28, charter schools are not effective.
    b. Charter schools are not interested in a community and are trying to take away our building.
    c. Charter schools are not effective.
    d. Charter schools do not care about the community.
35. A commenter stated the following:
    a. Her son went to Success Academy Bed-Stuy 2.
    b. Her son was suspended twice a month.

c. Success Academy isolated her son during testing time.
d. Success Academy has a school to prison pipeline.

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

The following comments were received via dedicated phone line:

36. One commenter stated general opposition to the proposal.

The following comments were submitted through the dedicated email address:

37. Multiple commenters expressed opposition to siting additional Success Academies in District 14 due to the close proximity of other Success Academies near K297.
38. One commenter expressed concern around the discipline practices in Success Academy schools.
39. Multiple commenters expressed concern that Success Academy would take away resources and space from students attending P.S. 297.
40. Multiple commenters expressed opposition to the proposal to site Success Academy in K297.

The following comments were submitted in a written statement by CEC 14 Member Debbie Feiner:

41. CEC 14 Member Debbie Feiner submitted a written statement to the DOE stating the following:
    a. She opposes the proposal to site another Success in District 14
    b. Serious questions have arisen around Success Academy's discipline policies.
    c. She has concerns around Success Academy's motivation for opening more schools.
    d. Charters like Success Academy weaken the fabric of our public education system and take away resources from schools who really need them.

The following comments were submitted in a written statement by Assemblyman of the 50th District Joseph Lentol:

42. Assemblyman Joseph Lentol submitted a written statement to the DOE, commenting on the following:
    a. He opposes the proposed opening and co-location of Success Academy Charter in K297.
    b. He expressed concern about placing another charter school in K297, as there was one placed there previously and it failed.
    c. He requested that P.S. 297 be given additional resources and money instead of siting a charter school in K297.
    d. He felt the DOE should invest in the existing school and community.

The following comments were submitted in a written statement by CEC 14 President Maria Farley:

43. CEC 14 President Maria Farley submitted a written statement to the PEP on behalf of CEC 14 stating the following:
    a. The members of CEC 14 are in opposition to the proposal.
    b. Charter schools are taking over District 14 buildings in the area surrounding P.S. 297, including Success Academy schools in close proximity to P.S. 297.
    c. CEC 14 has concerns around Success Academy discipline policies.
    d. District 14 students would be better served in zoned schools because Success Academy does not serve the majority of their students directly from the district where it is located.
    e. P.S. 297 has previously requested a grade expansion and been denied.

The following comments were submitted in a written statement by a District 14 parent and resident:

44. A District 14 resident and parent submitted a written statement to the DOE, addressing the following:
    a. The co-location of Success Academy will result in a loss of space for P.S. 297.
    b. Success Academy does not offer specialized services that the student body requires. A New York Times article discussing students requiring special education services in Success Academy Schools was included.
    c. There are two other Success Academies in close proximity in District 14.

The following comments were submitted in a written statement by a District 14 resident:

45. A District 14 resident submitted a written statement to the DOE, addressing the following:

a. The previously denied request to expand P.S. 297 to serve students through eighth grade would better serve the community.
b. Proximity of additional Success Academies.

Analysis of Issues Raised and Significant Alternatives Proposed

Comments 38, 41(b) and 43(c) are not directly related to the proposal and thus do not require a response.

Comments 7(k), 8(a), 10, 28(a-e), 30(f), 36, 40, 42(a) and 43(a) express general opposition to the proposal within the K297 building and the community.

There are times when the DOE and certain members of the community differ in their opinions about specific projects. This proposal is driven by the DOE's desire to use building capacity to serve students and to respond to SACS' space request pursuant to recent amendments to the New York State Education Law.

Comments 1(a-b), 3(a-c), 4(a), 7(h), 8(e-f), 14, 24(a), 27(c), 39 and 44(a) are related to space issues, including the allocation of space under the proposal, space sharing, and school programming.

There are currently hundreds of schools in buildings across the city that are co-located, which includes district schools with other district schools, district schools with charter schools, and schools with mixed grade levels. In all cases, the Citywide Instructional Footprint ("Footprint") is applied to schools to ensure equitable allocation of classroom, resource, and administrative space. The Footprint sets forth the baseline number of rooms that should be allocated to a school based on the grade levels served by the school and number of classes per grade. For existing schools, the Footprint is applied to the current number of sections per grade, assuming class size will remain constant. A representative from the Office of Space Planning then confirms both the baseline and current space allocation totals during a walk-through of the building, where he/she is accompanied by a school representative.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 297 will receive its adjusted baseline allocations pursuant to the Footprint. SA – Bed-Stuy 3 will receive its adjusted baseline allocations for instructional space and administrative space pursuant to the Footprint for the 2016-2017 through 2018-2019 school years. Beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, SA – Bed-Stuy 3 will not receive certain administrative spaces that it would otherwise receive under the Footprint. As detailed in the BUP that accompanies this proposal, the schools operated by SACS use different space programming assumptions than the Footprint and, thus, SA – Bed-Stuy 3 will be able to operate within the proposed space allocated by the Revised BUP.
The Footprint is available online at: http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/961D691C-641D-4918-9798-8BA2C0A761FF/0/DOEFootprint_91114newlogo.pdf.

In response to Comment 8(f), which suggests that SA – Bed-Stuy 3 would take over the K297 building as a result of the proposed co-location, this is inaccurate. As described in the Revised EIS and Revised BUP, there is sufficient space for all schools throughout the duration of this proposal according to the Footprint. The proposed co-location of SA – Bed-Stuy 3 is not expected to impact current or future student enrollment, admissions, or instructional programming at P.S. 297.

As in other situations where schools are co-located, the schools at K297 will share large common and specialty rooms in the building, which in this case includes an auditorium, a gymnasium, a library, a space for the school-based support team, a space for the nurse's office, and space for the custodian's office. Specific decisions regarding the allocation of the shared spaces are made by the Building Council.

Comment 7(j) inquired about the walk-through of the K297 building.

Public engagement was conducted by the DOE in the course of creating this proposal, which included a walkthrough of K297 with a Deputy Chancellor on October 19, 2015, to discuss the proposal, take questions and concerns from the school community, and determine whether significant logistical or other concerns would prevent the implementation of this proposal if approved by the Panel for Educational Policy ("PEP"). Participants included the principal and School Leadership Team ("SLT") members of P.S. 297, representatives from Community Education

Council 14 ("CEC 14") and other DOE leadership members.

Comments 2(a-b), 4(c), 5(b), 6(b), 7(f), 8(d), 12, 13 and 41(d) express concern about potential changes to or loss of special education programming or English as a Second Language services at P.S. 297 as a result of this proposal. Comment 6(c) expresses that P.S. 297 has partnerships with several CBOs.

As stated in the Revised EIS, the proposed co-location of SA- Bed-Stuy 3 with P.S. 297 in K297 is not expected to impact current or future student enrollment, admissions, or instructional programming at P.S. 297. P.S. 297 will continue to offer current after school programming based on student interests, available resources, and staff support for those programs.

As stated in the Revised EIS, P.S. 297 currently serves general education students and students requiring special education services, including students enrolled in Integrated Co-Teaching ("ICT") and Self-Contained ("SC") special education classes, as well as students receiving Special Education Teacher Support Services ("SETSS"). If this proposal is approved, P.S. 297 will continue to provide ICT, SC, and SETSS classes, and students with disabilities will continue to receive mandated services in accordance with their Individualized Education Program ("IEP"). Services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the students with disabilities attending each school and, as such, may vary from year to year. In addition, English Language Learner ("ELL") students are enrolled at P.S. 297 and receive English as a Second Language ("ESL") services. If this proposal is approved, students at P.S. 297 will continue to receive their mandated services.

As stated above, there is sufficient space for all schools throughout the duration of this proposal according to the Footprint. The Footprint is applied to schools to ensure equitable allocation of classroom, resource, and administrative space.

Comments 7(i) and 23 suggest SA– Bed-Stuy 3 should find another location for the school and should secure its own private space. Additionally, comments 7(g), 8(b), 18, 19, 37, 41(a,c), 43(b), 44(c) and 45(b) suggest that because other Success Academy Schools are within close proximity in District 14, there should not be a need to place another school in K297. Comments 24(b) and 42(b) express concern about siting another charter school in the K297 building after the previous charter school in K297 ceased operations.

Recent amendments to the New York State Education Law provide certain new and expanding charter schools with access to facilities or facilities assistance. SACS requested co-located space within a DOE facility. Pursuant to the Education Law, the DOE explored siting options in response to SACS' request, which resulted in the proposal to co-locate Success Academy in K297.

Comments 6(e), 17, 20, 21, 30(e), 31(a), 33(a) and 44(b) express the belief that Success Academy enrolls fewer English Language Learners, special needs students, and a less diverse student body than district schools. Comments 9(a), 26, and 30(a-b) also state that Success Academy does not enroll students who do not meet their academic requirements and base their acceptance and retention on the students' academic performance. Comment 43(d) expresses the belief that Success Academy would not serve mostly District 14 students.

Success Academy Charter Schools in Brooklyn serve students eligible for free and reduced price lunch, as well as ELL students and students with disabilities. Any child eligible for admission to a district school is eligible for admission to a public charter school. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available seats at a charter school, a random selection process, such as a lottery, must be used. Lotteries select students randomly from among the applicant pool. SA – Bed Stuy 3 will provide the following lottery preferences: (1) siblings of current or accepted students, and (2) applicants who reside within District 14.

Charter schools must admit all students according to their lottery preferences and may not turn away a student because of language ability or services required by an IEP. The New York State Charter Schools Act requires that charter schools demonstrate good faith efforts to attract and retain students with disabilities, English language learners, and students who are eligible applicants for the free and reduced price lunch at rates comparable to those of the Community School District in which the charter school is located, pursuant to enrollment and retention targets established by the Board of Regents or SUNY, as applicable.

Comments 7(d), 34(a-d) and 35(a-d) expresses opposition to the growth of charter schools, in particular Success Academy Charter Schools. Additionally, Comments 7(c), 22, 30(d), 31(b-c) expressed that Success Academy is a business and is not dedicated to the best interest of students. Comment 11 expresses specific concern about Success Academy students sharing K297 with P.S. 297 students.

The DOE understands that members of the public have a wide range of opinions with regards to the use of charter schools as alternative learning environments offered in conjunction with traditional district public schools. Charter schools became a component of New York State's public education offerings with the enactment of the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998. Charter schools in New York City are authorized by three entities, the Chancellor of the NYC DOE, the New York State Department of Education, and the SUNY Board of Trustees. The New York Charter Schools Act guides the accountability for charter schools.

That said, there are times when the DOE and certain members of the community differ in their opinions about specific projects. This proposal is driven by the DOE's desire to use building capacity to serve students, to respond to SA – Bed-Stuy 3's space request pursuant to recent amendments to the New York State Education Law, and to enable SA – Bed-Stuy 3 to serve students in kindergarten through fourth grade.

Co-location is common in New York City schools, with 44% of all DOE buildings housing more than one school organization. This includes co-location of district schools with charter schools and district schools with other district schools and in some instances, Success Academy Charter Schools with district schools. While schools share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias, each school is allocated particular classrooms and spaces for its own students' use. Though disagreement may exist as to whether this particular proposal will yield a successful co-location between students from P.S. 297 and Success Academy, the DOE has found that after a proposal passes most school communities are able to successfully come together with amicable relationships and collaborative agreements.

Comments 6(a) 7(a-b), 9(b), 25, 27(a-b), 29(a) and 32(a) express support for P.S. 297 and the principal of the school. Additionally, comments 4(b), 5(a, c), 7(e), 8(c), 15, 16, 30(c) and 32(b) recognize the positive school culture at P.S. 297.

The DOE recognizes the praise for P.S. 297 and commends the principal for his hard work and dedication. The Community Superintendent will continue to support P.S. 297 and the District 14 families.

Comment 29(c) express concern over P.S. 297's ability to grow and flourish with the implementation of the proposal. Comment 42(c-d) also expresses that the community should invest in the existing P.S. 297 community.

The DOE recognizes the praise for P.S. 297 and commends the school community for its hard work and dedication. The DOE is committed to supporting each school in K297 and assisting with the co-location, if this proposal is approved. The DOE does not anticipate that this proposal will preclude P.S. 297's ability to grow and thrive and pledges to work with the principals to support both schools, if this proposal is approved. The DOE aims to build the capacity of school communities to support interschool collaboration, leadership development, and resource sharing. The DOE has programs that foster environments where innovation and critical thinking can thrive, enabling schools to better prepare students to be college and career-ready. More information can be found online at: http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/InterschoolCollaboration/default.htm.

Principals of co-located schools are encouraged to collaborate and can use the Building Council as a forum for doing so.

Comments 8(g) and 27(d) pertain to resources and concern about a loss of resources as a result of this proposal.

In terms of financial resources, this proposal is not expected to impact initial costs or allocations at P.S. 297 in building K297. In other words, the DOE does not anticipate that the school organizations in the K297 building would lose any resources as a result of this proposal.

In accordance with the New York State Charter Schools Act of 1998 (as amended), the Chancellor or his/her designee must first authorize in writing any proposed capital improvement or facility upgrade in excess of five thousand dollars, regardless of the source of funding, made to accommodate the co-location of a charter school

within a public school building. For any such improvements or upgrades that have been approved by the Chancellor, capital improvements or facility upgrades shall be made in an amount equal to the expenditure of the charter school for each non-charter school within the public school building. The DOE has been informed by SACS that it may seek permission for certain capital improvements or facilities upgrades. These capital improvements or facilities upgrades would be subject to the New York State Charter School Act of 1998 (as amended May 2010).

Comment 29(b) states a preference to add additional seats to the K297 building. Specifically, Comments 6(d), 33(b), 43(e) and 45(a) reference a previous request made to the DOE to expand P.S. 297 to serve middle school grades in the building as well.

The application from P.S. 297 to expand to serve students in kindergarten through eighth grade for the 2015-2016 school year was rejected due to district-wide planning and enrollment considerations. The DOE assesses all grade reconfiguration requests through an analysis of resources (budget, space), performance, organizational capacity, alignment with Chancellor's priorities and enrollment demand in addition to available capital dollars. Since capital dollars are a limited resource, grade reconfigurations cannot be contingent on facilities investment.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal.