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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**

**Truncation of the Academy of  
Scholarship and Entrepreneurship**

**1/19/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. ANTHONY SETTLE: Before we begin the  
3 hearing, I ask is there anyone that wishes to  
4 make a public comment during the public comment  
5 phase of tonight's proceedings. If you have not  
6 had a chance to sign in at the sign in table we  
7 ask that you do that now. We will close the  
8 sign in for public comment at 6:15. So if you  
9 wish to make a comment during that phase of the  
10 proceedings, we would ask that you please go to  
11 the back to the sign in table, and place your  
12 name on the list.

13 Good evening, my name is Anthony Settle and  
14 I shall be the acting moderator for tonight's  
15 proceedings. This is a joint public hearing of  
16 the Department of Education, the Community  
17 Education Council for District 11, and the  
18 School Leadership Team of this school. Its  
19 purpose is to discuss the proposed grade  
20 truncation of middle school grades of the  
21 Academy of Scholarships and Entrepreneurship.

22 Before we begin, once again, I would like to  
23 announce that if anyone wishes to make a comment  
24 during the public comment phase of tonight's  
25 proceedings that, they please go to the back of

1 the sign in table, and place their name on the  
2 list. Sign up will end at 6:15 this evening.  
3 If you have question that you want to be  
4 addressed during the Q&A portion of the agenda,  
5 please write the question on an index card  
6 provided either at the back table or please see  
7 on of the volunteers, who has index cards. Only  
8 those who have signed up to speak will  
9 participate in the public comment phase.

10 All panel participants were asked to be here  
11 no later than 5:30, now that we have started if  
12 a panel participant arrives late we will ask  
13 that they be given time to speak at the first  
14 opportune moment. We will be respectful of  
15 everyone's time. There may be elected officials  
16 that may arrive at different times throughout  
17 this evening. If you wish to speak, we will do  
18 our best to accommodate them at the first  
19 opportune moment. And those who are here at the  
20 start of the public comment segment will be  
21 asked to speak first.

22 I ask you now to take a few moments to take  
23 a look at your agendas. The format for tonight  
24 proceedings will include a presentation of the  
25 proposal, and the presentations by hearing

1 participants. Followed by the public comment  
2 and speakers should have already signed up at  
3 the sign in table. Public comments can be no  
4 longer than two minutes in length. And the time  
5 will be strictly followed and speakers will be  
6 informed when their time has come to an end.

7       There will be a question and answer period.  
8 If you have a question, we ask that you write  
9 the question on the public index card that you  
10 can receive on the public comment table, or from  
11 one of the volunteers who are floating on the  
12 floor. Staff members will organize the  
13 questions into categories, and have them ready  
14 for the Q&A. Some questions will be asked  
15 directly and others will be batched together in  
16 a single heading to avoid repetition.

17       Even though all individual questions will  
18 not be addressed in the forum tonight, the  
19 answers will be posted on the website prior to  
20 the panel meeting. If at the end tonight's  
21 hearing you still have questions we encourage  
22 you to direct them to us by calling the number  
23 on the bottom of the fact sheet, or send them to  
24 use via email to the email address, again,  
25 provided at the bottom of your fact sheets.

1           So at this time I would like to introduce  
2           our panel for this evening's joint public  
3           hearing. We are pleased to have the following  
4           individuals. Deputy Chancellor Laura Rodriguez.  
5           Superintendent Geraldine Taylor Brown. Members  
6           of the CEC, Petra Poleon, and Pamela Johnson,  
7           President and Vice President. Do we have  
8           members of the SLT present?

9           MS. DAWN HARRIS: Yes, from ASE.

10          MR. SETTLE: I'm sorry, your name is?

11          MS. HARRIS: Dawn Harris.

12          MR. SETTLE: Dawn Harris from the School  
13          Leadership Team 40270.

14          MR. SETTLE: I will not turn the program  
15          over to our Deputy Chancellor, Ms. Laura  
16          Rodriguez who shall present the proposal.

17          DEPUTY CHANCELLOR RODRIGUEZ: Thank you,  
18          Anthony Settle. Good evening, ladies and  
19          gentlemen. I thank you for being here this  
20          evening. This joint hearing was convened to  
21          discuss the proposed truncation of the Academy  
22          of Scholarship and Entrepreneurship, or ASE.

23          The decision to truncate a school is not an  
24          easy one. We do not take this decision lightly.  
25          We exam many factors, and data, before we

1 propose a court of action. We also reach out  
2 to families and community members. Before I  
3 present ASE proposal, I would like to say a few  
4 words about why we are here. All of us depend  
5 on our schools to provide a high quality to  
6 students. And we must hold all schools to the  
7 same standards of excellence because every child  
8 in this city deserves the best possible  
9 education. When a school isn't getting the job  
10 done, we have to take action to ensure its  
11 current students don't fall even further behind,  
12 and new students will have better options.

13 ASE is located in school building X362,  
14 known as the Bronx Wood campus at 921 East 228  
15 Street in community school district 11 in the  
16 Bronx. ASE currently serves students in 6th  
17 through 12th grades, and admits students through  
18 the district 11 middle school choice process and  
19 the city wide high school admissions process.  
20 On December 12, 2011, the New York City  
21 Department of Education published a proposal to  
22 truncate the middle grades of ASE because of  
23 their low performance and the schools inability  
24 to turn the middle school grades around quickly  
25 to better meet student needs.

1 Under this proposal, the high school grades  
2 would remain open. On January 13, 2012, the DOE  
3 posted an amended EIS, Educational Impact  
4 Statement, for the proposed truncation of ASE.  
5 The amended EIS corrects information about the  
6 capacity of 6th grade seats in district 11,  
7 which I will discuss in detail in a moment. ASE  
8 performance data indicates that the school has  
9 struggled and confirms the DOE's assessment that  
10 the middle schools lack the capacity to turn  
11 around quickly to better support student needs.

12 For example, ASE middle grades earned an  
13 overall D grade on its 2010-2011 progress  
14 report. Including D grades for students in  
15 progress, and student performance. And a C  
16 grade for school environment. Based on ASE's  
17 most recent progress report, the school is in  
18 the bottom 5th percentile of middle schools city  
19 wide. The majority of ASE middle school  
20 students remain with a low grade level in  
21 English and math. Last year 27 percent of  
22 students were performing on grade level in  
23 English, and only 28 percent of students were  
24 performing on grade level in math.

25 ASE is not adequately helping middle school

1 students to make progress. It is in the bottom  
2 36 percent of all middle schools in district 11  
3 in terms of learning growth in English, and is  
4 the lowest performing middle school in district  
5 11 in terms of learning growth in math. Based  
6 on these evaluations the DOE conducted a  
7 comprehensive review of the school to determine  
8 which supports and interventions would best  
9 benefit the students and the community. The DOE  
10 also consulted Superintendents and other  
11 experienced educators who have worked closely  
12 with the school and held community meetings with  
13 parents and school staff to solicit feedback.

14 The comprehensive review has led the DOE to  
15 believe that the gradual truncation of the  
16 middle school grades of ASE would allow ASE to  
17 focus on its high school, and help ASE to serve  
18 current and future students and the broader  
19 community. ASE is currently co-located in  
20 school building X362, also known as the Bronx  
21 Wood Campus. There are two existing high  
22 schools, New World High School, and Bronx Wood  
23 Preparatory Academy. ASE is also co-located on  
24 the Bronx Wood Campus with a district 75  
25 program, P754X.

1           A co-location means that two or more school  
2 organizations are located in the same building,  
3 and they share large common spaces, like the  
4 auditorium, gymnasiums, libraries, and  
5 cafeterias. The DOE does not have plans to open  
6 up another middle school in the building because  
7 there are enough existing middle schools seats  
8 in district 11 to accommodate middle school  
9 students. Specifically, excluding the seats  
10 available here at ASE, there are 3827 total 6th  
11 grade seats in district 11 middle schools.  
12 There are only 3255 total 6th grade students  
13 enrolled in district 11 middle schools. This  
14 means that if this proposal is approved, there  
15 would still be an excess of 472 total 6th grade  
16 seats.

17           The Department of Education evaluates excess  
18 seat capacity on a yearly basis, and would in  
19 future propose to open a new middle school in  
20 district 11 if additional seats were needed.  
21 The DOE does not anticipate that the proposed  
22 truncation of ASE would impact the permanent co-  
23 location of New World High School, Bronx Wood  
24 Preparatory Academy, and the district 75 program  
25 in school building X362.

1           Before we move to the public comment  
2 section of this meeting, I would like to briefly  
3 discuss the impact of this proposal, if it is  
4 approve, on current ASE students and families.  
5 If this proposal is approved, the middle school  
6 grades of ASE would be truncated gradually over  
7 the next several years. ASE would no longer  
8 admit new 6th grade students after the end of  
9 this school year. Current 6th and 7th grade  
10 students would be supported at ASE as they  
11 progressed toward completion of middle school  
12 and transition to high school either at ASE or  
13 another high school through the City Wide High  
14 Admissions' process.

15           Students who do not meet promotional  
16 requirements during the truncation would  
17 continue to be enrolled at ASE and will continue  
18 to have access to appropriate courses to support  
19 their progress toward promotion. In June 2014  
20 when the truncation will be complete, any  
21 student who did not meet 8th grade promotion  
22 requirements, would be placed at another  
23 district 11 middle school, or a middle school in  
24 the district in which the student resides.  
25 Beginning in September 2014, ASE would only

1 server high school students. Thank you, we  
2 look forward to hearing your comments and your  
3 questions.

4 MR. SETTLE: The following members of the  
5 Schools Leadership Team, John C. Farley, Arlene  
6 Whiteman, Emily Tronasko, and Amanda Perry. The  
7 students are here. John C. Farley is present  
8 and Arlene Whiteman is also present. And the  
9 CEC President, Petra Poleon is also with us.  
10 [Background conversation]. At this time I'd  
11 like to invite the CEC President, Ms. Petra  
12 Poleon to make her statement.

13 MS. POLEON: Good evening, parents,  
14 students, Department of Education, personnel.  
15 My name is Petra Poleon and I'm the CEC  
16 President for this district school 11. And I'm  
17 here to really represent you, and listen to what  
18 you as parents and students have to say about  
19 this proposal. I'm also a Bronx Borough  
20 President appointee, and so your comments are  
21 really important for me to hear tonight. So  
22 that I can, not only express your opinion to the  
23 rest of my counsel members, but also to the  
24 Bronx Borough President.

25 So I'm just really here to listen to what

1 you have to say. I have my own feelings about  
2 the proposal, but it's more important to hear  
3 what you have to say because I can't go based on  
4 what I think, or what I feel. I have to do  
5 what's in--speak what's in the best interests of  
6 the students here and also the community and how  
7 they feel about this proposal. So thank you for  
8 your time tonight. I know that this is probably  
9 not a happy occasion for most of you, but I'm  
10 very interested in listening to what you have to  
11 say. Thank you.

12 MR. SETTLE: Our next presenter is Ms.  
13 Zinobia White, Principal of ASE.

14 MS. ZINOBIA WHITE: Good evening. Welcome  
15 to the public hearing. I realize that seven is  
16 usually a tradition of luck, but in recognition  
17 of the propose truncation, I will speak to you  
18 today about the number three. For the 6th  
19 grade, the 7th grade, and the 8th grade. And  
20 three for hope, endurance, and faith. Some have  
21 said about me, she doesn't care, she still has a  
22 job, she will be alright. I'm not alright, I do  
23 care. I'm going to share with you some real  
24 private thoughts that normally would be limited  
25 to my closest friends and family.

1           So if you're not, just pretend for a  
2 moment that you are. I want you to know that I  
3 am devastated by this proposed truncation. When  
4 I got the news of the proposed truncation and I  
5 read the statements, which said over the last  
6 several years, despite our best effort. The  
7 students still struggle to meet basic  
8 requirements. In a very slight way, it reminded  
9 me of the time I sat in my hospital room with my  
10 mother, and the doctors said although all hope  
11 is not lost, she has had many challenges. Her  
12 situation is very complicated. We don't think  
13 she's going to make it. I'm the founding  
14 Principal of ASE, and it is looking like I will  
15 be losing a portion of my baby. I am  
16 devastated, but I had another thought. And it  
17 went something like this; hold fast to what you  
18 have for that, too, can be lost. It will not be  
19 easy to keep that which we have, so we have to  
20 begin to shift our focus.

21           To the teachers and staff, and parents, and  
22 the community at large, I'd like to share a  
23 quote from Martin Luther King, Jr. "Whatever  
24 your life's work do it well. A man should do  
25 this job so well that the living, ASE scholars,

1 the dead, and the unborn could do it no  
2 better. This is not the time to retreat; this  
3 is the time to endure until the end." This is  
4 the time for all of us to come together.  
5 Teachers, staff, parents, and the community, and  
6 do all in our powers to ensure that our children  
7 are successful in the middle school, and the  
8 high school.

9 Another quick story and I will take my seat.  
10 About six and half years ago, I sat around the  
11 table with representatives from the College  
12 Board and representatives from the DOE, and I  
13 believed Ms. Rodriguez was chairing the meeting.  
14 It was about two or three months before ASE was  
15 scheduled to open. And proclaimed in my most  
16 professional voice, I am six months pregnant and  
17 I will be the Principal of the Academy for  
18 Scholarship and Entrepreneurship this year.

19 Well, I won't bore you with all the details,  
20 but three months later on September 1, 2005 my  
21 second--no actually my combined family, makes my  
22 sixth child was born. Then on September 5th, I  
23 was there to open my school. The Academy for  
24 Scholarship and Entrepreneurship is my baby. I  
25 hunger in thirst for the opportunity to serve as

1 your Principal. And because I had the faith,  
2 the desires of my heart were granted. So in  
3 closing, I will quote Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.,  
4 and say, "Keep the faith baby, hold fast to what  
5 you have. Whatever your life works up, do it  
6 well, and ye will be successful." Thank you.

7 MR. SETTLE: Thank you, Ms. White. I'd also  
8 like to announce that at this time, sign up for  
9 the public comment is not close. I'd like to  
10 call to the podium, Ms. Amanda Perry, and Ms.  
11 Emily Tronasko. I didn't say that correctly,  
12 did I?

13 MS. AMANDA PERRY: Good evening, my name is  
14 Amanda Perry. I'm a junior at ASE. My  
15 graduation year is 2013. I've been attending  
16 this school since 6th grade, so this is my sixth  
17 academic year, and I chose to continue my high  
18 school education here because ASE offers a lot  
19 of opportunities that I feel I could only find  
20 here. Including AVID, Credit Recovery,  
21 Tutoring, SAT Prep, Regents Prep, College  
22 Preparation, and much more. I think these are  
23 important for all students to have in their high  
24 school education because it prepares them for  
25 the future.

1 I also chose to stay at ASE because I  
2 honestly like the family feel that you get at  
3 the student environment. There's a close knit  
4 with the students and the staff. And I feel  
5 like you won't really get that at a lot of high  
6 school campuses. And that was a really major  
7 reason I decided to stay at ASE.

8 MS. EMILY TRONASKO: Hi, my name is Emily  
9 Tronasko. I'm a junior and I will be graduating  
10 in 2013. Since I've been at ASE it has been a  
11 great experience for me personally because  
12 everybody is so close together. And they want  
13 to help you and be in the class. They want you  
14 to come to tutoring and come in the morning.  
15 They want you to stay after school. Everybody  
16 here cares, and wants to help one another.  
17 Nobody wants to see each other fail, but the  
18 AVID program is really a big advantage because  
19 after school you get to stay with our AVID  
20 teacher or whomever you need help with tutoring.  
21 And they really focus on trying to get you  
22 better to progress in the school.

23 Also, SAT Prep is really good, and the  
24 guidance counselors because they help you with  
25 your whole college process, financial aid, what

1 colleges you want to go to, your major, and  
2 your main focuses. For me, that's a big part  
3 because I will be going to college next year, so  
4 that's a big part.

5 MR. SETTLE: Thank you. We've now concluded  
6 the formal presentations. We shall begin with  
7 the public comment phase of this evening's  
8 program. I'm asked to remind everyone that the  
9 public comments are limited to two minutes in  
10 length, and we ask that the time be kept. And  
11 when you are signaled, that you please bring  
12 your comments to a close. We ask that all  
13 commenters will line up on the far side of the  
14 auditorium in front of the microphone. And I  
15 will call the following commenters to proceed.  
16 Dr. Carrera number one, number two, Jamie  
17 Matthews, number three, Allison Tuitt, number  
18 four, William McField, number five, Martin  
19 Fiescanero.

20 DR. MICHAEL CARRERA: Don't start the clock  
21 yet. Good evening, my name is Michael Carrera.  
22 I'm the Director of the Children's Aid Society  
23 Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program. We've  
24 been a community partner at ASE for the last six  
25 years. We're privileged to join the School

1 Leadership six years ago, and have been  
2 working with the middle school through the 11th  
3 grade now. We're trying to help young people  
4 develop fully. Developing fully is not simply a  
5 function of superior education. ASE leadership  
6 and faculty recognize that the young people that  
7 they serve deserve a rich and deep support  
8 necessary to over come many of the life  
9 circumstances that they experience. With the  
10 extraordinary leadership of the Principal,  
11 Zinobia White, we've been able to achieve a  
12 great deal. As a community partner we have  
13 provided over four million dollars of services  
14 in the last six years. Some of the things that  
15 have occurred, in terms of our youth development  
16 work; over 140 young people, have gotten no cost  
17 glasses. 200 students have had an annual  
18 physical, 51 students have received no cost  
19 braces. Zero percent of the 6th graders have  
20 carried a weapon over the past year compared to  
21 22 percent 6th graders nationally. Twenty  
22 percent of ASE 7th graders have used alcohol  
23 versus 45 percent of 7th graders nationally.  
24 This is the middle school that we're talking  
25 about. Over 35 percent of ASE 6th graders have

1 had a physical fight this past year versus 70  
2 percent of 8th graders nationally. When we came  
3 to ASE, 31 percent of the students used  
4 emergency room for primary care, 2 percent do so  
5 now. That's middle school.

6 MR. SETTLE: Please wrap up.

7 DR. CARRERA: The truncation interferes with  
8 a process that we think is a fruitful process,  
9 and I am for ASE continuing the way it has been  
10 for these years, and I'm in full support of  
11 Zinobia White.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. MARIA DIAZ: Good evening, Deputy  
14 Chancellor Rodriguez. I am not Jamie Matthews,  
15 I was asked to switch my number so I just want  
16 you to understand that I am Marie Diaz. I am  
17 representing the College Board on behalf of  
18 Helen Santiago, and Gastin Caperton who is the  
19 President of the College Board. For the past  
20 six years the College Board has been associated  
21 with the Academy for Scholarship  
22 Entrepreneurship. Even after our formal period  
23 of funding, which is only four years, that's the  
24 only amount of time that we were formally  
25 committed to the school, we have continued being

1 aligned to the school, mostly, because we were  
2 welcomed here. The principal and the faculty,  
3 and this community know the value of a college  
4 education. And yes, I'm not here to say what  
5 has gone wrong, but rather I would like to say  
6 what has gone right. This community has enjoyed  
7 three high school graduations and the students  
8 that have graduated and walked across this stage  
9 are now in colleges. And I would venture to  
10 say, without the intervention of this school in  
11 this community, this would not have happened.  
12 One of the challenges that this school has  
13 faced, and I know you know that, within in three  
14 years it moved to three different buildings.  
15 That is a very, very big challenge. One of the  
16 things that I do want to say is that if the  
17 truncation is inevitable, we are concerned that  
18 the vacating of middle school seats may mean  
19 that those seats may be filled by high school  
20 students, who later on may not share the same  
21 mission and vision as the existing students, and  
22 community of this school. In addition, in order  
23 to have a vibrant high school, we need a library  
24 that is presently not existing. [Applause]. We  
25 also need access to high school science

1 laboratory, which is not happening. A last  
2 statement, please--I know about diminishing  
3 resources, if that were to happen, it would be a  
4 devastation. So I'm asking that resources be  
5 amplified so that two or three years from now we  
6 will be celebrating rather than lamenting again.  
7 Thank you, very much.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. ALLISON TUITT: Good evening, I am  
10 Allison Tuitt, the Honorable Allison Tuitt. I'm  
11 a Justice of the Supreme Court, Bronx County.  
12 I'm here to speak on behalf of the Tuitt family,  
13 as well as, I dare say the community. I'd like  
14 to echo the sentiments of the previous two  
15 speakers. I think that Ms. White is doing a  
16 terrific job. I am privileged to speak as  
17 number three in her theme of dedication,  
18 endurance, and fortitude. I want to applaud her  
19 performance here. I think that the truncation  
20 is a devastating affect. Also, my father was  
21 very committed to this community, and I take  
22 umbrage and I don't mean to disrespect you Dr.  
23 Chancellor, but this is the Albert V. Tuitt  
24 campus, not the Bronx Wood campus. So you need  
25 to make note of that in your proposal. The

1 community shared a special respect for my  
2 father. And we feel special respect for this  
3 school, since it is named on his behalf. I  
4 think that the school had an up hill battle.  
5 Echoing the sentiment it has moved several times  
6 in the last six years. They don't have access  
7 to library facilities. The safety is an issue,  
8 the students are in fighting. The physical  
9 location was going to be on one floor, and it  
10 has not been. There's no CFO in the building.  
11 There are a lot of different problems that the  
12 community was not made aware of, and now that we  
13 have been made aware of I can assure you that  
14 the community will be coming out in full support  
15 of this school, and in full support of the  
16 middle school, as well as, making the high  
17 school success. Thank you.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. WILLIAM MCFIELD: Good evening,  
20 everyone. My name is William McField, and I  
21 just wanted to take a minute to share a personal  
22 thought or two. So here it is. I've been  
23 privileged to be a part of the ASE family from  
24 the day the doors opened in 2005. I was part of  
25 the staff of a new school. As an educator, I

1 knew that the school would have its changes  
2 and challenges. Among them were space or  
3 physical issues and community issues. However,  
4 they committed to building this school that we  
5 could be proud of was very strong. We had a  
6 family like staff, and a highly professional  
7 view point to accompany the support of the  
8 College Board and the DOE. It saddens me deeply  
9 to witness and observe the current affair of  
10 things because I know what effort has gone into  
11 the establishment of this school. I've never  
12 waivered in that commitment to the point that I  
13 have two children here. I have one in the  
14 middle school, and one in the high school. It  
15 indeed takes a village to raise a child, but our  
16 village is under siege constantly. As a parent  
17 I need to know that my voice, our voice makes a  
18 difference and will not be over shadowed by post  
19 new political agendas, and other outside  
20 pressures. Help us to reestablish our village,  
21 our moral support in the community for our  
22 parents, businesses, churches, and other  
23 community organizations. Police our village  
24 with care, observation and support, and plenty  
25 of prayer and love. The village, our community

1 recognizes addition by subtraction. The  
2 subtraction through addition is something we  
3 ought to think about. Thank you.

4 [Applause]

5 MR. MARTIN FIESCANERO: Good evening, my  
6 name is Martin Fiescanero. I'm making two  
7 statements. One, as a representative of CSA,  
8 and one as a former principal of a 6th through  
9 12th school. The DOE has scheduled 25 more  
10 schools for this phase out and closure. It is  
11 said that the new schools opened under Mayor  
12 Bloomberg are better than they replace. Yet, in  
13 this latest round of closing 11 schools were  
14 opened during this Mayor's administration.  
15 Ironically, 11 of the 25 schools were open  
16 during this Mayor's administration.

17 Ironically, some of the Mayor's new schools  
18 are usually among those that are closed and  
19 become part of the vicious cycle of failure.  
20 New York City Public School System is not a  
21 place for experimentation, where we open and  
22 close schools for students that have already  
23 been dramatized by previous school closings.

24 Then there is the tragedy of the young  
25 people who have not been saved, even briefly, by

1 this new school safety net, but have been  
2 turned away from new schools for reasons of poor  
3 academic achievement, or for other reasons and  
4 sent to be warehoused in other low performing  
5 schools that may someday be closed also. This  
6 is a losing strategy for turning around low  
7 performing schools, which are variably attended  
8 by children of color, economically disadvantaged  
9 communities.

10 The end game in the strategy is to eliminate  
11 schools that the administration has had at least  
12 a decade to fix, and to approve it's data by  
13 creating new schools that won't have its own  
14 data for as long as four years. The fact is  
15 that closures, or in this case truncations is an  
16 admission of failure by City Hall. To  
17 Bloomberg, the administration needs to take more  
18 responsibility not less for schools that are  
19 doing well.

20 Rather than the private entities like EPO,  
21 or closing them, and washing their hands of a  
22 deep rooted problem that has been unsuccessful  
23 in remedying, I personally echo the words of  
24 Principal White. Please remember the need to  
25 support the remaining grades and respect the

1 spatial integrity of ASE or we might be  
2 repeating this sad forum again.

3 The statistical data presented is what it  
4 is, but it doesn't measure the spirit that  
5 exists within the school. Let Ms. White  
6 continue to work to make this secondary school  
7 successful.

8 [Applause]

9 MR. SETTLE: At this time, I'd like to call  
10 the following to the microphone. Mary Conway  
11 Spiegel, number 6, Kallicharan Balkaran, Maria  
12 Diaz, Tiffany Robertson, and Bobbet Simson.

13 MS. MARY CONWAY SPIEGAL: My name is Mary  
14 Conway Spiegel, and I'm the founder of  
15 Partnership for Student Advocacy. And this  
16 evening I'm going to discuss numbers and words.  
17 The number 16, the number 9, and the number 4.  
18 Early this week the Mayor was quoted as saying  
19 we have no choice but to close the schools. The  
20 schools are so ineffective.

21 The Leadership at the Academy for  
22 Scholarship and Entrepreneurship has implemented  
23 16 new initiatives over the last year. Has nine  
24 concrete initiatives planned for its future.  
25 The DOE can't get the four things on their to do

1 list done in six to eight years. It makes me  
2 wonder who the ineffective party is. ASE has  
3 moved three times, endured multiple failed co-  
4 locations, and is currently living through  
5 another failed co-location. This is from a five  
6 page document on the challenges faced by the  
7 school. If you would like a copy of it, I have  
8 it. We were initially informed that ASE would  
9 be co-located with two other schools, and that  
10 we would occupy the second floor. And that all  
11 four floors were virtually the same. We  
12 discovered that we were one of four schools in  
13 the building and we would occupy the entire  
14 second floor, and two rooms on the third and  
15 fourth floors. And that the second floor was  
16 built for middle school, not even a high school.

17 Our school did not have a full compliment as  
18 such specialized learning facilities for  
19 commuter or distance learning lab, programming  
20 rooms, student governments, space or fully  
21 equipped tri-facial science labs. With limited  
22 staff and multiple grades scattered throughout  
23 three floors, leadership encouraged other  
24 schools' principals to compromise and enable ASE  
25 staff and students to consolidate on two floors.

1 No cooperation was forthcoming.

2       Number two on the DOE's list, I'm going to  
3 finish. DOE has not assisted ASE at all with  
4 its past and current safety issues. When a  
5 school is in an unsafe neighborhood, children  
6 get hurt or killed. Neighborhood safety issues  
7 effect enrollment, student outcomes, and  
8 attendance. Yet somehow the safety information  
9 regarding the surrounding neighborhood gets  
10 translated to the actual school itself not being  
11 safe. This misinformation gets reported into  
12 the media, and in addition, to the school  
13 struggling it is now unsafe.

14       The DOE number three is not provided proper  
15 classroom facilities to students.

16       MR. SETTLE: Thank you.

17       MS. CONWAY SPIEGAL: How are ASE students  
18 supposed to learn, thrive, or compete when  
19 they're not given what they need? The final  
20 fourth, I'll wrap it up, the final fourth on the  
21 list is that ASE has not assisted in completing  
22 the buildings permanent certificate of  
23 occupancy. Now I understand this to mean, no  
24 new construction can happen in the building a  
25 new science lab for the students who don't have

1 one in the high school.

2 MR. SETTLE: Please conclude.

3 MS. CONWAY SPIEGAL: I will. It means that  
4 principals, who I believe are not supposed to be  
5 general contractors or building engineers, are  
6 expected to do so. All of this to say, there  
7 are 16 initiatives, 19 needs for the future, not  
8 wants these are needs. And four things that  
9 still are not complete. Thank you.

10 MR. SETTLE: Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. SETTLE: I liked to please remind that  
13 commenters, that do to time and we wish to hear  
14 from everyone this evening, so in order to be  
15 respectful of everyone's opportunity to speak,  
16 would ask that all comments be kept to two  
17 minutes. Thank you.

18 MR. KALLICHARAN BALKARAN: I'm thankful to  
19 have this opportunity to address my colleagues,  
20 administration, the Regent Department of  
21 Education, other personnel, and most  
22 importantly, the parents and families of this  
23 community. Our school ASE has been on  
24 everyone's mind for the past couple of weeks or  
25 months. My name is Mr. Balkaran, and I teach

1 8th grade English at ASE. Today, I speak for  
2 all of the committed and determined middle  
3 school teachers at ASE. We are all concerned  
4 about all of the attention that has been given  
5 to our wonderful school. Here are a couple of  
6 things to consider about our middle school that  
7 may have been overlooked. One, teachers here at  
8 ASE rely on a heavy dose of data for  
9 instruction. Two, parents and family can keep  
10 up with their child's progress with an online  
11 grading system called - - . Three, in  
12 partnership with Montefiore, ASE offers  
13 enrichment classes and academic classes four  
14 days a week, and even during vacations for the  
15 middle school. Four, middle school students  
16 have an advisory period added onto their regular  
17 schedule that teaches personal responsibility  
18 and citizenship skills. Middle staff  
19 participate in weekly inquiry based meetings to  
20 discuss and manage student progress. Middle  
21 school staff participate in weekly curriculum  
22 based meetings to manage curriculum. All staff  
23 participate in monthly professional development  
24 training. I can keep going, ASE offers two  
25 regent based classes, math and earth science for

1 8th graders. And this is unprecedented. We  
2 haven't done that before. ASE has moved to a  
3 least restrictive environment for our students  
4 with learning disabilities creating  
5 collaborative teaching classes. Experience and  
6 the last thing that I want to say, and qualified  
7 teachers who work countless hours in school and  
8 at home to ensure that our students receive an  
9 exceptional education. I just want to mention  
10 these few points to remind everyone involved  
11 here tonight that there's lots happening here at  
12 our school. At ASE we work hard and your  
13 children always come first.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. SETTLE: Thank you.

16 MS. JAMIE MATTHEWS: I'm Jamie Matthews. I  
17 switched with Ms. Diaz. I don't have a speech.  
18 All I want to know is, every time a new school  
19 is open, we are always closing them. What do we  
20 do to help our community, and what do the Board  
21 of Ed do to help the teachers that they put into  
22 play. Do they always come back to help them, or  
23 are they destroying them, by saying you all  
24 close the school, and put them in another  
25 section. We need help, we don't need closing

1 schools. We need some way of making things  
2 work. We have to come together as a community,  
3 and make things work. You don't have to hold  
4 the 30 second sign, I'm finished, that's it.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. TIFFANY ROBERTSON: Good evening, my  
7 name is Tiffany Robertson. I'm the PTA  
8 President here. And this is really emotional  
9 for me and I'm trying to fight back the tears.  
10 But this school is like a family, and it's one  
11 of the reasons why I brought my son to this  
12 school. And my tears are not even so much for  
13 my son because he's here. My tears are for the  
14 kids in the community who will never get a  
15 chance to experience this family oriented  
16 environment. The staff here is great. I could  
17 call anyone at any time. I could call the  
18 principal, her door is always open. I could  
19 call Ms. Harris. I could call - - . I could  
20 call anyone [crying]. I just wish there were  
21 more options for the kids in this community  
22 because not only as PTA President, I'm also a  
23 mentor and I have an organization called  
24 Chances, not only in this school, but in other  
25 schools within district 11. And I see the kids

1 in this community, and when I walk into those  
2 buildings I just say thank God my son does not  
3 attend this school because I don't know how he  
4 would be able to function in those types of  
5 environments. I remember when I walked into one  
6 school the very first day. There was a kid  
7 choking another kid up against the wall until he  
8 almost passed out, and this is in our community.  
9 And I just wish you could just let us know what  
10 we can do more to fight for this school because  
11 I support this school 125 percent. I am an  
12 involved parent and as parents, community, as  
13 staff, what can we do because the only people  
14 who are going to hurt are the children in this  
15 community. Thank you.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. BOBBET SIMSON: Hi, my name is Bobbet  
18 Simson. I have a son that goes to this school.  
19 And as she was saying, I have another boy who  
20 going to attend in September, but now he can't  
21 because he's going to be in 6th grade. And it  
22 hurts so bad. He was telling me the other night  
23 that, oh Mom can't go to school with my brother,  
24 and that's not right. It's so wrong. And I  
25 wish the parents, and everyone could just--I

1 don't know what to say anymore. I don't and  
2 that's it.

3 [Applause]

4 MR. SETTLE: If there are any members of the  
5 SLT that are present with us tonight from New  
6 World High School, or Bronx Wood Preparatory  
7 Academy, I would ask that you please check in  
8 with the back for the official record. At this  
9 time I would like to call to the microphone  
10 number 11 Reamer Warner, number 12, Sharon  
11 Anthony Hackman, number 13 Johnnie Goff, number  
12 14 Nichole Campbell, number 15, Arlene Whiteman.

13 MS. REAMER WARNER: Good evening everyone,  
14 my name is Reamer Warner. My daughter is Amanda  
15 Perry and she started here at 6<sup>th</sup> grade, down at  
16 174 and Boston Road. She's in the 11 grade now.  
17 And I'm just wondering, this school was an A  
18 school. We didn't here from DOE. It went to a  
19 B, no word from DOE. It went to a C, and  
20 nothing. Now it's a C or D, and now I'm hearing  
21 it's closed. When it was failing, why didn't  
22 you all jump in when it started slipping.  
23 That's when DOE was supposed to jump in and say,  
24 okay, I noticed this, so let's do this. There  
25 was no word.

1 I'm just wondering; was it DOE's plan all  
2 along that they wanted to close it up? So when  
3 they had all the information and the data, then  
4 we have no choice. There's no excuse. They are  
5 not thinking about the community, and what they  
6 are doing to the community. Don't you want to  
7 put things in place to help the school? It is  
8 so unfair.

9 Yes, we are from a poor neighborhood, but  
10 what DOE is doing is not right. It is criminal  
11 action. I am so mad. Ms. White and the parents  
12 put everything, and instead of working with us  
13 and say this is what happened. We're going to  
14 give you a deadline, and if you don't meet that  
15 deadline, then--but nothing, not one word. It's  
16 just closed. So to me, it doesn't matter what  
17 we say here because it doesn't matter, they have  
18 already made their decision. It is not right.

19 It is time that DOE stop treating us as if  
20 we're second class citizens. We're not second  
21 class citizens. It is not fair. I am so mad.  
22 My daughter graduates next year. She goes to  
23 ASE, but what is the legacy of ASE? These  
24 people, the teachers and the staff put  
25 everything--I'm a parent, and I put everything

1 in it. I don't miss any kind of meeting that  
2 they have here. I live all the way down on - -  
3 , just off of East Freeman [phonetic], and I  
4 have to come up here. My knees are not good,  
5 but I climb the stairs to get up here.

6 I know that you all are telling us that you  
7 are closing without giving us a chance. Tell us  
8 that you're giving us four more years, or six  
9 years and if you all don't make it, then that's  
10 it. But to close just like that, it's criminal  
11 action, and I want pray that God put this upon  
12 you all because it is not right.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. SHARON ANTHONY HACKMAN: My name is  
15 Sharon Anthony Hackman, and I teach at ASE. I  
16 teach 9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> grade English, and I  
17 would like to talk a little bit about why I  
18 think it's really important that we fight for  
19 ASE middle school and the high school. The best  
20 story I think is this week--and I've raised six  
21 children. I'm from North Carolina, and this is  
22 my first year here in the Bronx.

23 But the best story, I think, came this week.  
24 It's when teachers volunteered their time,  
25 during their lunch period, to bring in seniors

1 that had been failing in each of their  
2 classes. Now picture, if you will, a group of  
3 teachers who are looking at a student who either  
4 has not come or has not done the work. And they  
5 have worked and worked, but this child still at  
6 this point is failing. And the child is brought  
7 to the room. And we are interviewing the child,  
8 and not one teacher in any of the interviews  
9 that I participate in said, oh this is a lost  
10 cause. Not one teacher said; I have nothing to  
11 say to this child. Every teacher in every  
12 subject area was looking at a student and  
13 saying; here's what you need to do; here's how  
14 we can help; here's remediation; here's SAT  
15 Prep. Here's one more chance.

16 That's why kids come to ASE. I live in this  
17 segregated South, where Brown vs. The Board of  
18 Education from 1954 is a distant memory. It is  
19 completely re-segregated, and it is not  
20 separate, and it is not equal. You want an  
21 equal education, open our library. You want an  
22 equal education, then give us some science labs.  
23 You want an equal education, then come see--give  
24 us the numbers that say, this amount of kids are  
25 starting so far below proficiency, and yes it is

1 difficult to get them to go to the - - .

2 But we are working, and we are collecting  
3 the data. You ask my 18 seniors about their SAT  
4 scores before four months of my class, and then  
5 ask them what their reading and writing SAT  
6 scores are right now. It has gone up by  
7 hundreds. That is certifiable data. Come  
8 collect that stuff, and tell us we are a failing  
9 school. I ask you to support ASE for the  
10 community and for our kids. Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. JOHNNIE GOFF: Good evening everyone.  
13 My name is Johnnie Goff, and I'm sure most of  
14 you know me, including the Deputy Chancellor,  
15 Laura, and the young student that I taught with,  
16 Petra, the Superintendent, and the Assistant  
17 Principal. Community, I taught for 31 years in  
18 this community, right here. I retired in 2003,  
19 but I never left my community. When our - -  
20 senior wrote - - express paper, he expressed  
21 himself and came to every Board of Ed meeting,  
22 which was called Community Board, and he wrote  
23 all the information we needed to know, and he  
24 took care of us and our kids.

25 His daughter is now a Supreme Court Judge

1 that we look up to, and these children's role  
2 model. - - Judge Tabby [phonetic], Judge Miles,  
3 all of these people are role models for our  
4 kids. This school was built with a lot of  
5 sweat. This school we strived for, for many  
6 years to get. This school was opened in 2005,  
7 and when we cut the ribbon I still hold a piece  
8 of the ribbon.

9 Our junior high school and high school, we  
10 all embraced. This school was set up for  
11 failure when you didn't give us all of the  
12 necessary things we needed to have. Our  
13 librarian, science lab, and all the necessary  
14 equipment, including our CFO--we have a  
15 temporary CFO in this school, which means to me,  
16 is unsafe and everything is not up to par.

17 We have a person here, that when she first  
18 came here to our community, and I introduce to  
19 the community, both - - . We are a collective,  
20 collaborative group of people that support each  
21 other. If you give us the opportunity to let us  
22 keep our junior high school in tact, we could  
23 continue to give them the support and love that  
24 they need. I will close by saying these words  
25 here.

1           When I went to Trinity Baptist Church on  
2           the 16<sup>th</sup> Martin Luther King celebration, Dr.  
3           Tekarry [phonetic] preached, let us keep an open  
4           window, and an open mind that all of us can grow  
5           up together and one day, look back and say, I  
6           picked up somebody, and brought them up front.  
7           Ms. White, we are with you all the way. CEC,  
8           you might as well look for a big fight. DOE,  
9           you might as well look for a big fight because  
10          if we have to walk around this school, we would  
11          like it to remain the kind of school that our  
12          seniors would want it to be. Thank you.

13          MS. NICHOLE CAMPBELL: Good evening, my name  
14          is Nichole Campbell. I am a science teacher  
15          here at ASE. I teach 9<sup>th</sup> grade and 8<sup>th</sup> grade.  
16          One of my experiences growing up--I grew up in  
17          Jamaica. One of the things that I learned about  
18          was neighborhood schools. I've lived in this  
19          neighborhood for 20 years, and I watched my  
20          sister travel so far, all the way down to 113.  
21          Now, 113 is four schools. It is demoralizing  
22          for this neighborhood to put a school, a middle  
23          school, in this area that doesn't have a middle  
24          school. And then say after three years, we're  
25          closing the doors. It is demoralizing, to not

1     only the community, but to the teachers that  
2     are in this school. Most of my colleagues are  
3     not here today because they feel like it is  
4     something that has failed because you have come  
5     in and said; you guys have failed. And you've  
6     said; you guys are not doing what you're  
7     supposed to do. Well, have you come in and  
8     walked through our classrooms, and seen what  
9     we've done. It's so demoralizing for us to  
10    stand here and say; we didn't even get a chance  
11    to do anything. We got an action plan in  
12    November, and in December we were told that the  
13    school was being truncated. How is that fair?

14           The second thing, where was the support for  
15    this school? If you guys realize that the  
16    school was failing, where was the support? I've  
17    been here for three years, and I haven't seen  
18    that much support. This is a family oriented  
19    school. I've watched parents, their sisters,  
20    their brothers, and generations of kids come  
21    through this school. And they are still coming.  
22    And they want to come, and we want to educate  
23    those children. Please give us a chance to  
24    educate those children.

25           [Applause]

1 MS. ARLENE WHITEMAN: Good evening  
2 everyone, my name is Arlene Whiteman. I am the  
3 UFT Chapter Leader, and I'm also an assigned  
4 teacher here at ASE. When we think about  
5 everything that was said here tonight, and we  
6 think about Ms. White, the Principal who founded  
7 this school, and who has a real passion for the  
8 school, we think about how she would be running  
9 down the street in high heels when kids would be  
10 having some type of uproar. When we think about  
11 these things, I'm sure Ms. White sitting there  
12 as the founder, does not really want to see the  
13 doors close. The place she started; just to end  
14 it. Do we ever think about that? And when we  
15 reflect on Ms. Gerry Taylor Brown's words  
16 tonight, that she said we want all of the  
17 students to have the best possible experience.

18 I believe education is experience, but what  
19 are the experiences. I also teach science, but  
20 they cannot get all of the activities because we  
21 do not have a full state lab. And the question  
22 I want to ask the DOE tonight is, is that what  
23 you call experience? When they can't even  
24 experience hands on lab, even though it's right  
25 here in the building.

1 Tell us please, is this experience.

2 MR. SETTLE: I'd ask the next commentators  
3 to come and approach the microphone. Zarah  
4 Vinola, Omara Santiago, and Todd Gray.

5 MS. ZARAH VINOLA: Good evening, my name is  
6 Zarah Vinola. I'm a 12<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at ASE.  
7 This is my third year teacher at ASE, and I've  
8 always been working with the seniors. So I'm  
9 actually here on behalf of the seniors that we  
10 have, as well as, the alumni that we have. Some  
11 of them couldn't attend because some of them are  
12 doing some activities with President Obama being  
13 in Polo, actually. At this point, what I wanted  
14 to point out is that many of our seniors have  
15 graduated with good grades, and have been  
16 accepted in great Universities and Colleges.  
17 They are all on their way to doing great things  
18 out their. Some of the seniors that I have  
19 right now are the by product of the continuation  
20 of middle school to high school education that  
21 they have been receiving at ASE.

22 And these students will be graduating this  
23 June, and they will be going to great Colleges  
24 and Universities, and they will be serving the  
25 rest our society. I graduated from a small high

1 school, as well, and I've always believed in  
2 small schools. As well as, the idea of  
3 continuing middle school to high school  
4 continuation and see how students develop in  
5 that way.

6 So it breaks my heart to see the middle  
7 school truncation happen because, as I said  
8 before, this is something that I've always  
9 believed in my teaching. But one of the things  
10 that I did see, coming into ASE, is that we were  
11 set up to fail.

12 Although, ideally, middle school to high  
13 school should have been - - . We didn't have  
14 the spacing or the other resources. But many of  
15 the resources that should have been in place,  
16 and right now we can't see that result because  
17 of the truncation. That's all.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. OMARA SANTIAGO: Good evening, my name  
20 is Omara Santiago. I'm a parent of a senior, -  
21 - Sedina [phonetic], who's not here right now  
22 because he's in an option thing right now.  
23 Thanks for Ms. White, and I want to take this  
24 opportunity for every ASE staff to please stand  
25 because as a parent I want to tell this staff

1 that my son is going to succeed in college  
2 because of the family that we have here in ASE.

3 The staff here works so hard, and as a  
4 parent I want to tell you, before you make a  
5 decision, think about our children. Our  
6 children are the future. And you should not be  
7 taking away from these children. I took a risk  
8 in 2008 to put Julia Sedina in this school. I  
9 do not regret one minute in my life, and in my  
10 son to be an ASE scholar. I'm a parent here to  
11 tell you, that if not for these teachers,  
12 principals, PTA, Ms. White, counselors, Mr. - -  
13 , and every staff here, this school would not  
14 be what it is, and they are doing what they are  
15 supposed to do. Thank God for those staff  
16 members, my family, and my son's family. My son  
17 is going to be an ASE scholar. Thanks to ASE.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. TODD GRAY: Good evening, my name is  
20 Todd Gray, and I'm a parent of one of the  
21 students here, Kendra Gray. My first comment is  
22 my conclusion. - - truncation is not acceptable  
23 for this school because you're not supporting  
24 the teachers that are here, and the  
25 administration working with the teachers and the

1 students that we support. My question is to  
2 the district. How is the district going to help  
3 the students and the administration here, where  
4 they have previously failed us? The reason I  
5 say this is because we have these reports that  
6 you put out on an annual basis of school surveys  
7 showing how the school has been failing all  
8 along. What have you done? What changes in  
9 administration from the district are you going  
10 to give to the school to help the school succeed  
11 in this truncation period? If you're going to  
12 keep the same administration, then you will keep  
13 the same problems. Nothing personal, Ms. White,  
14 but this--you stated at the last meeting, that  
15 you came into school a day or two after having  
16 birth. I feel for you that you didn't have  
17 enough courage and support in your  
18 administration that was under you to help you.  
19 And that you felt that you had to come to school  
20 two or three days after. To me that's very  
21 disheartening to me as a parent. Overall these  
22 surveys that the board puts out--and they ask  
23 the students, and all of the teachers questions,  
24 where they have high percentages where it shows  
25 communication is poor between administration and

1 teachers, and between the students and  
2 administration. This is supposed to be looked  
3 at by the district, and addressed by the  
4 district. And then bring it down to the school  
5 so that it can be addressed. If the teachers  
6 don't feel they are being heard by the  
7 administration, whomever that may be; whether it  
8 be the principal or assistant principal, how can  
9 they teach effectively to our students. That's  
10 all that I want to know. And as I said from the  
11 beginning, truncation is not acceptable.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. SETTLE: Thank you. This concludes the  
14 public comment portion of tonight's proceedings.  
15 Before we move on, if any members of any of the  
16 faculties of the various schools of the building  
17 who are present and have not checked in, we ask  
18 that you do so for the public record. Thank  
19 you.

20 We will now begin the question and answer  
21 portion of our evening's program. Remember,  
22 there will be some individual questions and  
23 others that have been bucketed into categories.  
24 We will have a representative ask the questions.  
25 Any question that is not answered here this

1 evening is on our website. If you have  
2 additional questions at the conclusion of  
3 tonight's proceedings we ask that you direct  
4 them to us via our phone number, which can be  
5 located at the bottom of your fact sheet, or by  
6 email.

7 MS. AMANDA KHAN: Thanks, Anthony. We have  
8 received several questions this evening. And  
9 many of them were similar to one another, so we  
10 are going to answer all of those that were  
11 similar together at the same time. The first  
12 question we received is: what would happen to  
13 the space that the grades that would be  
14 truncated are currently allocated? I'm sorry,  
15 my name is Amanda Khan. I work for the DOE in  
16 the Office of Portfolio Management.

17 So the question about what would happen to  
18 the space. Every school, would at a minimum,  
19 continue to be allocated the number of rooms it  
20 needs to serve the number of students it has,  
21 which we refer to as the footprint. Above and  
22 beyond that, if there are additional rooms as we  
23 expect there will be, they will be divided  
24 between the schools in the building, and that  
25 would be done by the building counsel. It

1 includes representatives from all four  
2 schools, with assistance as needed, from the  
3 office of space planning.

4 That's consistent with the way rooms are  
5 allocated in school buildings across the board  
6 and across the city. We also received a  
7 question about what support will be given to the  
8 middle school students after the grades are  
9 phased out. And I just want to re-iterate that  
10 they will be phased out one grade at a time, so  
11 that all of the students that are currently at  
12 the middle school would continue to be served in  
13 this school. We would continue to allocate  
14 resources for all of those students.

15 The network would provide support that is  
16 tailored to a school undergoing that kind of  
17 change. And what we have seen in schools where  
18 they have over a set number of years, a narrowed  
19 focus, that they are able, also, to increase the  
20 attention given to each individual student.

21 And we would help and support that to make  
22 sure that all students who are currently in this  
23 school, including the middle school grades would  
24 succeed. All of them will also have the  
25 opportunity to remain in this school for high

1 school because, as our Deputy Chancellor  
2 stated, the high school would remain open. So  
3 all of our middle school students would have the  
4 opportunity and would continue to have the  
5 priority into the middle school grades.

6 We also got a question about the middle  
7 school seats, and would they be replaced. We  
8 want to reiterate what Deputy Chancellor  
9 Rodriguez spoke about earlier, that as or right  
10 now we have a surplus in this district of almost  
11 500 middle school seats. However, we look at  
12 this every single year, and if we see that this  
13 start to increase, we would look to open a new  
14 middle school to make sure all of those students  
15 would have all of the opportunities and options  
16 into that school that would meet their needs.

17 The final question we received was about  
18 what supports have been provided to the school,  
19 and Larry is going to answer that particular  
20 question.

21 MR. LAWRENCE PENDERGRASS: Thank you. I'm  
22 Lawrence Pendergrass. I'm Network Leader for  
23 CFN [phonetic] 603. I work with closely with  
24 Ms. White to support the school. The question  
25 is about the structure of support, and there is-

1 -the way it works is that there are 16 team  
2 members, we have 26 schools--this is one of our  
3 schools.

4         And the nature of it--we've known each other  
5 now for about 6 months. The way we have  
6 structured is that we here--we have an  
7 instructional point person that is here a day a  
8 week, a day and a half a week, who works closely  
9 with a number of teams. And one of the teams  
10 is, for example, the inquiry teams look at  
11 students' data. They look at--the do item  
12 analysis of regents exams.

13         They do curriculum development and  
14 modification. When we got the data results in  
15 October, we put together the targeted action  
16 plan, which guides every step now that we take.  
17 Whether that is the development of the new  
18 Special Education Inquiry Team, whether that is  
19 taking together the guidance department, and  
20 saying what is our plan for looking at seniors,  
21 and 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and 11<sup>th</sup> graders.

22         I've seen the enormous amount of work that  
23 goes into it. Last two Saturdays ago, I was  
24 here with Mr. Savage, who was here on a Saturday  
25 all day long looking through transcripts of 10<sup>th</sup>

1 and 11<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. It has been  
2 wonderful working with Ms. White, and thank you.

3 [Background conversation]

4 MR. SETTLE: If there are further questions,  
5 we ask that you please fill those out and we  
6 will place them on our website.

7 [Crosstalk]

8 [Background conversation]

9 MR. GRAY: You were supposed to answer the  
10 question. You were supposed to answer, where  
11 was the support? He never answered the  
12 question, other than he's been there for six  
13 months with Ms. Zinobia White. What has he  
14 given the school? The support--what has he  
15 supported? I mean, you get paid for what?

16 [Background conversation]

17 MR. PENDERGRASS: Okay. The structured  
18 support is divided into two big sections. One  
19 is operational, and one is instructional. It's  
20 everything from processing of hiring, and  
21 budget, and compliance issues. Two, there's  
22 instructional; planning and support. There are  
23 the new academically instructional expectations  
24 in New York City with the common core learning  
25 standards. There is the introduction of--

1 research based instructional framework. There  
2 is taking a look, if the question is about  
3 student achievement, not just at overall did a  
4 student pass a test or did a student fail a  
5 test, but which particular skills, and which  
6 overall content are students struggling with,  
7 and then, how to set up a plan for targeting  
8 those specific skills, and that content.

9 That's the challenge that the teachers in  
10 the school have to face. It's the challenge  
11 they have to put together. So there are all of  
12 the weekly meetings that the school sets up, and  
13 the heavy lifting that the teacher teams put  
14 together. And then we support Ms. White, the  
15 administrative team, and the teacher teams in  
16 trying to do that work together. It was 6<sup>th</sup> to  
17 12<sup>th</sup>. That was the question.

18 [Background conversation]

19 MS. SETTLE: I'm sorry, what we ask that you  
20 do is for further question is that you please  
21 take an index card and fill it out. Place your  
22 question on the index card.

23 MR. GRAY: We had this meeting two months  
24 ago about this school closing--possibilities of  
25 the school closing, and they come with these

1 generalized answers that apply to nothing. We  
2 the parents - - , the teachers are out here.  
3 They want to know where the hell their jobs are  
4 going. The parents want to know where the hell  
5 their students are going. That's what we want  
6 to know, and you're not answering the question.

7 The district has had time, the DOE has had  
8 time through their service that they put before  
9 the students, they put before the teachers, they  
10 put before the parents. The parents are  
11 clueless because they think this is a perfect  
12 school. They think this is an A school, and  
13 they find out it's a D school. What are we  
14 supposed to know? What are you telling us,  
15 other than; we have the possibility of closing?

16 Help us understand, please. How are you  
17 going to support Ms. White? How are you going  
18 to support the teachers? I know that I'm  
19 talking out of turn, but you're not answering  
20 the question that everybody wants to know.

21 [Background conversation]

22 MR. SETTLE: Laura?

23 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR RODRIGUEZ: All of the  
24 questions that have been asked, some of them  
25 have been repeated publicly, and some of answers

1 have been provided. The first thing that I'm  
2 going to say is that, any question that has not  
3 been answered publicly we receive an answer that  
4 will be posted. That's number one.

5 Number two, the proposal as you heard it  
6 today is about a truncation, and with the  
7 proposal was sited the data that drove the  
8 Department of Education to make that decision.  
9 I think you also heard in all the presentation,  
10 that from the inception of the school, there has  
11 been support given to the school by partners, by  
12 community, and you just heard about the support  
13 from the network that that the school has chosen  
14 to be a part of.

15 Support that went to all seven grades that  
16 went to teacher teams, and that went to the  
17 administration. We also just heard a lot of  
18 commentary about the fact that some of this you  
19 didn't know. I think moving forward that it is  
20 important that parents, families, and the  
21 students be well aware of how the school is  
22 doing, as the years progress, not as you have  
23 indicated.

24 And so, we will post our responses to all of  
25 your questions. If there are remaining

1 questions, you have the ability to send us  
2 those questions and we will respond to those  
3 questions, and they will be posted publically  
4 and you will have the opportunity to see those  
5 responses.

6 MS. JOHNSON CLARK: I want to know why  
7 you're having this meeting today. Are you  
8 having this meeting to prolong it to say come up  
9 with - - ? Where are the answers? My name is  
10 Ms. Johnson Clark. I am a teacher in this  
11 school. You guys are coming up and telling us  
12 stuff without answers. Where are the answers?  
13 Why do we have to read a paper to find the  
14 answers? [Applause].

15 Why are you making us read about it? We are  
16 here to find out what's going on. I am a  
17 teacher. I've been a teacher for three years in  
18 this building, and I want to know to have  
19 answers. I have been a teacher. I have a 6<sup>th</sup>  
20 grade student there. Amanda was my former  
21 student, and I would really appreciate it if we  
22 find out the answers tonight, instead of on  
23 paper - - .

24 [Applause]

25 MR. SETTLE: At this time, we have heard

1 many significant comments and questions. We  
2 appreciate your feedback and your contributions  
3 this evening. The information will be shared  
4 with the panel of Education Policy, which will  
5 have its hearing on Thursday February 9, 2012,  
6 in which the vote will be made.

7 The panel for Education Policy will meet on  
8 Thursday February 9 to vote on the proposal that  
9 was read this evening. We ask that you please  
10 use the phone number or the website on the  
11 bottom of the fact sheet if you have any other  
12 questions or concerns. We thank you for coming.  
13 This joint public hearing is not official  
14 adjourned

15 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1  
2           The prior proceedings were transcribed from  
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the  
4 best of my ability.

5  
6           Signature

7           *Shirley Lyle*

8           January 20, 2012  
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