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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
New District MS at X144 - 3/5/12**

1 [START MZ000001]

2 MS. ELIZABETH WHITE: So good evening  
3 everyone.

4 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

5 MS. WHITE: So this evening we are all  
6 gathered here because this is a joint public  
7 hearing for the Department of Education, the  
8 Community Education Council, and M.S. 144 School  
9 Leadership Team, all in regards to Junior High  
10 School 144 Michelangelo Middle School.

11 My name is Elizabeth White, Community  
12 Superintendent, District 11.

13 There might be some people who come in later  
14 on in the evening and I will introduce you to  
15 them, we are currently awaiting our CEC  
16 representative, who I'm hoping is on his way.  
17 But next to me we do have the school's SLT  
18 members, and they will also participate in  
19 tonight's event.

20 I'm going to apologize in advance because  
21 I'm not a script reader, but there are certain  
22 things that I want to make sure that everyone  
23 understands, so it's going to be necessary for  
24 me to read certain parts.

25 I would like everyone to know that the

1 hearing is being recorded, and so public  
2 commentary can be taken back for consideration.

3 We also have interpretation services here  
4 for those who may need it.

5 Do you want to ask again please?

6 MALE VOICE: [foreign language]

7 MS. WHITE: Thank you. Okay, so there is a  
8 proposal in reference to Middle School 144, and  
9 the facilities here, and I'm here to describe to  
10 you that proposal. Before I do that, your input  
11 is welcome, and all those who wish to speak,  
12 there is an opportunity to sign up at the sign-  
13 in sheet when you've entered, just located  
14 outside of the auditorium. If you still--if you  
15 would like to speak and have not signed up, you  
16 have an opportunity to do so now, if you'd like  
17 to do that.

18 Speakers will be given access to the floor  
19 in the order in which they signed up, and all  
20 comments will be limited to two minutes.

21 During the evening, during the course of the  
22 evening, there may be community leaders or  
23 elected officials who come in and may want to  
24 make their own comments. If they wish to speak,  
25 then we'll provide them with that opportunity as

1 the moment emerges.

2 All comments will be addressed in the  
3 analysis of public comment to be published and  
4 provided to the Panel for Education Policy on  
5 the evening before the panel votes. That vote  
6 is scheduled for March 21st, 2012 at 6:00 p.m.  
7 The Panel for Education Policy Meeting will take  
8 place at the High School for Fashion Industries,  
9 located at 225 West 24th Street.

10 In addition, we welcome any comments and  
11 feedback you may have at any time before the  
12 panel votes on this proposal.

13 Just pausing a moment, the impact statement  
14 and the proposal has been provided at the front,  
15 if you didn't get one, there's one as you enter.  
16 So the information for contact is also included  
17 here.

18 The email address and phone numbers where  
19 comments can be made are  
20 [d11proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:d11proposals@schools.nyc.gov), and the telephone  
21 number is 212-374-5159.

22 I just want to make a comment as  
23 superintendent, when--in the proposal is a lot  
24 of stuff that goes out into the community as to  
25 what's happening, what's really happening, this

1 is not a meeting for the closure of Middle  
2 School 144. So if you're here because you feel  
3 the school's closing, that's not the purpose of  
4 this meeting.

5 Okay. So I'm going to talk to you now about  
6 the proposal. And again, I'm going to have to  
7 read certain things off of my sheet, so please  
8 forgive me.

9 The New York City Department of Education,  
10 or DOE, is proposing to co-locate a new middle  
11 school, which will be named, if passed, 11X566  
12 in Building 11X144, located at 2345 Gunther  
13 Avenue, Bronx, New York, 10469, in District 11.

14 If this proposal is approved, this new  
15 middle school will be co-located in the Building  
16 11X144 with Junior High School 144 Michelangelo,  
17 an existing middle school that serves students  
18 in grades six through eight.

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

23 In recent years, Junior High School 144 has  
24 received poor progress report grades. In its  
25 most recent progress report, Junior High School

1 144 received a C with a D grade in the student-  
2 -in the school performance and school  
3 environment subsections, and a C grade on the  
4 progress subsection.

5 On the most recent quality review the school  
6 also received an underdeveloped, and that was  
7 the quality review that was done 2010 to '11.

8 The DOE also plans to reduce Junior High  
9 School 144's enrolment as an academic  
10 intervention strategy to help Junior High School  
11 144 improve student performance.

12 This targeted focus on smaller school body  
13 is intended to better position the school to  
14 improve student achievement, particularly for  
15 struggling students, and students with  
16 disabilities.

17 The DOE has initiated the same academic  
18 intervention strategy with other schools, and it  
19 reflects the DOE's continued focus on assisting  
20 144 to improve student performance.

21 The DOE is planning to reduce the enrolment  
22 of Junior High School 144 over a period of three  
23 years. If this proposal is approved, by  
24 2014/2015 school year, enrolment at 144 will  
25 have decreased by approximately 445 to 480

1 students, so that the school will serve  
2 approximately 465 to 495 students at scale, in  
3 sixth through eighth grades.

4 The DOE is committed to supporting the  
5 school 144 as it reduces its enrolment and  
6 focuses on improving.

7 The planned enrolment reduction of Junior  
8 High School 144 will permit the new proposed  
9 school, 11X566 to be located in the 144  
10 building. In other words, this plan does not  
11 propose to bring any additional students to the  
12 building.

13 If this co-location proposal is approved,  
14 11X566 will serve students in sixth grade in  
15 2012 to 2013, and will add one grade level every  
16 year until the school reaches its full grade  
17 span, which would be sixth through eighth grades  
18 in the 2014/2015 school year. At that time, the  
19 school will serve approximately 465 to 495  
20 students at full scale.

21 If this proposal is approved, both schools,  
22 144 and 566 would be a zoned campus choice  
23 middle school. Both 566 and 144 would admit  
24 students through District 11's middle school  
25 choice process and offer priority to students

1 residing in the 144 zone through a campus  
2 choice admissions method.

3 This means all students zoned to the 144  
4 building will have priority for a seat in the  
5 building, and will have the opportunity to rank  
6 the two schools in order of preference.

7 Students will then be matched to one of the  
8 two schools through a zone campus choice  
9 matching process operated by the Office of  
10 Student Enrolment.

11 Building 144 has a target capacity of 1,559  
12 students. In the 2011/2012 school year, 144  
13 enrolled 942 students, yielding a target  
14 building utilization rate of 60%.

15 The 144 building will have adequate capacity  
16 to accommodate the new middle school, 566, at  
17 full operational capacity, and 144 at its  
18 reduced cost [phonetic] in the 2014/2015 school  
19 year, when 566 if approved, completes its phase  
20 in, and 144 completes its enrolment reduction.

21 The 144 building will serve approximately  
22 930 to 990 students, yielding an approximate  
23 utilization rate of 60% to 64%. Okay.

24 So at this point--okay. So at this time  
25 since we have--the CEC member is not here, I'm

1 going to ask the SLT members if they have a  
2 presentation for them to present. But before  
3 they do, I want to introduce Mark Major  
4 [phonetic], pleased to see you. Thank you.  
5 From the Bronx Borough President's Office, and  
6 Jeremy Beneke [phonetic], is he here? From  
7 Community Board--from Community Board 11.

8 So who will be speaking from the SLT?

9 [background conversation]

10 MS. WHITE: Okay, the school leadership team  
11 has decided to go in order of the sheets because  
12 a couple of them have signed up, and we will  
13 then go to the sign-up speaker list.

14 I'm going to remind you that we're going to  
15 keep our commentary to two minutes please, and  
16 we're going to allow people the opportunity to  
17 make their statements.

18 So the first person on the speaker list is  
19 Ida Oliver [phonetic]. Could you please come to  
20 the mic, and make your comments.

21 MS. IDA OLIVER: Good evening Ms. White.  
22 Good evening Ms. White and the panel.

23 My question is, in creating the new school  
24 in our existing school, how is that going to  
25 improve structure if the numbers are still the

1 same? It's not decreasing class size, so how  
2 is it going to improve the structure in our  
3 building?

4 MS. WHITE: We have Mary Barnacles  
5 [phonetic]. And after her, Karia Wisner  
6 [phonetic].

7 FEMALE VOICE: I'm going to make a statement  
8 out of this.

9 MS. WHITE: That's fine.

10 MS. MARY BARNACLES: Good evening everybody.  
11 The DOE proposes to create a second school with  
12 a combined enrolments of 930 to 980 students.  
13 M.S. 144 currently has 942 students.

14 The DOE sentence [phonetic] to offering  
15 parents choice, but the parents in this  
16 community didn't ask for that choice. What is  
17 the benefit to our students? The curriculum  
18 would be the same? So what is the choice being  
19 offered?

20 Michelangelo is fighting to provide our  
21 students with the technology and support that  
22 will allow them to succeed. We want to give  
23 them more, not take things away. But that is  
24 exactly what a co-location would do.

25 If co-location is such a great option, why

1 is it failing so miserably? Approximately  
2 five years ago, M.S. 135 was broken into smaller  
3 schools offering choice, and at least one of  
4 those schools is closing this year.

5 More recently, co-location was touted as the  
6 saving grace for John Philip Sousa, and now that  
7 school is closing.

8 Michelangelo has had 44 years of success as  
9 not just a community school, but family school  
10 that teaches generations.

11 At open school night last week, my  
12 colleagues, some of them Michelangelo graduates,  
13 and I welcomed our students who came with their  
14 parents, former students, and younger siblings'  
15 future students, and that just emphasizes 144's  
16 connection to the community.

17 Under middle school choice, Michelangelo has  
18 over 500 students who chose 144 as their first  
19 choice for this September. Give those students  
20 their choice to attend Michelangelo and continue  
21 its legacy. Thank you.

22 MS. WHITE: Okay, we have Karia Wisner  
23 [phonetic] and next is Dan Adlia [phonetic].

24 FEMALE VOICE: Adlick [phonetic].

25 MS. WHITE: Adlick.

1 MS. KARIA WISNER: Good evening everyone.

2 It is parents, to most who approve 144, that  
3 after this currently organized of course the  
4 ideal work plan to allow for a rich  
5 comprehensive educational program.

6 The school has a wonderful auditorium, it  
7 has a boys and girls gymnasium, a reasonably-  
8 sized cafeteria, a school yard that provides the  
9 school the flexibility to offer its physical  
10 education programs, and a set of laboratories  
11 that enhance the school's science curriculum.

12 By instituting a co-location, you ensure  
13 that neither school can get the full benefit of  
14 any of those facilities. What's the benefit of  
15 that? We have a number of classrooms in this  
16 building that could be used for workshop, music  
17 room, science labs. All of those would then  
18 have to be shared. What is the benefit if  
19 neither school is able to use either of those  
20 facilities to its full capacity?

21 MS. WHITE: Thank you. Dan Adlick, after  
22 him, Dr. Arthur Weiner [phonetic].

23 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

24 MR. DAN ADLICK: Hello everybody. Last year  
25 we had a joint review, part of the joint review

1 said that we needed to improve technology in  
2 the school. And what I don't understand is  
3 we're going to be spending tons of money on a  
4 new administration, on new teachers, on new  
5 equipment, new secretary staff and stuff like  
6 that, and that's all money that we could use for  
7 144 with new computers, with smart boards, just  
8 other--other technology advances, and it just  
9 seems like this is not going to benefit all the  
10 schools, that really only one is going to get  
11 the benefit of this.

12 MS. WHITE: Thank you.

13 [applause]

14 MS. WHITE: Next is--after Dr. Weiner,  
15 Rachel Filburg [phonetic].

16 DR. ARTHUR WEINER: Thank you Ms. White.

17 MS. WHITE: You're welcome.

18 DR. WEINER: Members of the community, we  
19 really appreciate you being here, we value you,  
20 and we couldn't be the success that we are  
21 without you.

22 I'd like to make some comments because I'm  
23 in the school - - . I'd like to make some  
24 comments about the proposal, and not just--well,  
25 not what it says, what it didn't say. Because

1 very often, that's more important.

2 And what the proposal does not talk about,  
3 is that it does not talk about what programs and  
4 what services are going to be provided by the  
5 school if it's co-located to 144.

6 Right now we have a full complement at 144,  
7 a full complement, a central education program  
8 with certified teachers teaching those classes.

9 Now one of the things that worries me is  
10 that we could have a new school moving in here,  
11 and they may decide that they don't want to  
12 have--they want to be able to select certain  
13 students for this school. There are no  
14 guarantees that that won't happen.

15 So the students will come here looking for a  
16 full program, and the school may not have it.  
17 The same is true for the ELL students.

18 Some of you may have been reading the paper,  
19 and we've been reading about some of the schools  
20 that have been closed, like Christopher  
21 Columbus, and how the students who have been  
22 taken to some of the more boutique or upscale  
23 schools, smaller schools, got sent over to  
24 Christopher Columbus. And they were  
25 overcrowded, and they didn't have the resources.

1           Now I'm not saying to you that this school  
2 is going to be overcrowded, I'm not saying that  
3 that's the same thing. But I'm not so sure that  
4 the newly co-located school is going to benefit  
5 from the services that you want your children to  
6 have.

7           Okay. Yes, that's it. Thank you very much,  
8 thank you for being here.

9           [applause]

10          MS. WHITE: Thank you. I just want to note  
11 that we have a CEC member here, I want to  
12 introduce to you, Ali Shakawat, he's here as a  
13 member of the Community Education Council.

14          MR. ALI SHAKAWAT: Yes, thank you.

15          MS. WHITE: I also have a request that the  
16 speakers who come up, could you please identify  
17 whether--what part of the community you're  
18 representing. So are you a parent, are you a  
19 staff member, and the like.

20                 So I believe the first four were staff  
21 members, yes?

22          FEMALE VOICE: Correct.

23          MS. WHITE: Okay. So Rachel Filburg, you're  
24 next, and then James Hicken [phonetic].

25          MS. RACHEL FILBURG: Good evening everyone

1 again, thank you for coming. My name is  
2 Rachel Filburg and I am a staff member here at  
3 144.

4 I'd just like to note--to make notice that  
5 M.S. 144 is not a failing school. We have never  
6 been a failing school. In previous years we  
7 were rated as an A school, and we received a  
8 well-developed--only last year were we not as  
9 successful.

10 We now have a new principal who with the  
11 unwavering support of the neighborhood community  
12 and teachers, has made it his vision to increase  
13 the performance of all students at 144. This is  
14 evident in all of the technology that he has  
15 invested for our students and teachers, and in  
16 the various after-school programs for all types  
17 of learning that he has implemented.

18 We've also incorporated the use of teacher  
19 online grading program, and making spaces for  
20 all students and parents.

21 We had a quality review last month in  
22 January, and the reviewer commented on the  
23 growth that we have made in this school over the  
24 past few months. The students asked the  
25 reviewer what he would the rate the school on a

1 scale of 1 to 10, and he stated the he would  
2 give the school a high 8.

3 Now I ask you, with all the changes that we  
4 are making and the city-trained quality reviewer  
5 rating us so well, why would you consider us a  
6 failing school?

7 MS. WHITE: Mr. Hicken?

8 MR. JAMES HICKEN: Yes.

9 MS. WHITE: And after Mr. Hicken, we have I  
10 believe it says Christine Francis [phonetic].

11 MR. HICKEN: I'm Jim Hicken, I am also a  
12 teacher at the school here.

13 An old better president once said that a  
14 house divided against itself cannot stand. 135  
15 and 142 have proved that. They divided those  
16 schools, and they're having problems at those  
17 schools. And we continue to do that.

18 We had, last year in September, a new--as I  
19 would call him, a young turk principal came  
20 aboard. And he had all these lovely ideas,  
21 great ideas, - - here we go again. But people  
22 implemented his vision, and I watched it  
23 transition. And I watched it--we take steps, we  
24 took strides. We are moving so fast and so  
25 fluid [phonetic] that it's amazing at this

1 point. And this is the time that they're  
2 thinking about changing the school.

3 We take the school, we tried something, it  
4 still has to work, and we say, yes, let's try  
5 something else. That makes absolutely no sense.

6 We have 494 children that chose to come to  
7 our school next year. Now we're talking about  
8 choice here. Well, what's going to happen to  
9 their choice to come here and notice they can't  
10 come to our school here. They chose to come to  
11 the new principal, -to the teachers that are  
12 here, to the programs that are here, and we're  
13 going to turn around and tell them, no, well  
14 your choice doesn't mean anything at this point.  
15 It makes no sense.

16 We have--our sixth grade teachers are all  
17 above the 78 percentile, and that was--before  
18 because everybody was so worried about, we have  
19 no idea, but the sixth grade teachers in the new  
20 school, they--maybe they're number [phonetic]  
21 24, because that very well could happen, is they  
22 might be taking young teachers and paying them  
23 less money, and it's your children involved  
24 [phonetic].

25 We're going to lose our laboratory probably.

1 We have a state-of-the-art lab for our science  
2 department on the fourth floor. That's where  
3 they're going to put the new school.

4 The new school will get a laboratory, but  
5 the sixth grade--the current sixth grade, and  
6 current seventh graders are going to be out of  
7 luck.

8 Well I guess my question is, why would you  
9 change something that's working? You don't fix  
10 something that's not broken.

11 [applause]

12 MS. WHITE: Ms. Francis. And after Ms.  
13 Francis is Alison Mitchell [phonetic].

14 MS. CHRISTINE FRANCIS: Thank you. Good  
15 evening.

16 I am a sixth grade parent, my son chose to  
17 come to Michelangelo. It has been an amazing--  
18 from September to now, I cannot believe the  
19 wonderful academic--the academic of - - and  
20 things that come out of my child.

21 I cannot believe that you want to change  
22 Michelangelo by stuffing, as I look at it,  
23 another school in here and taking away from the  
24 children. Please leave Michelangelo alone.

25 [applause]

1 MS. WHITE: Ms. Mitchell? After Ms.  
2 Mitchell will be Sue Libby [phonetic].

3 MS. ALISON MITCHELL: Good evening, I'm  
4 Alison, a seventh grade in [phonetic] in here.

5 And like the other parent said, it has been  
6 a marvelous experience for him.

7 I was very surprised to hear that we have 8  
8 children in this school, but there are 31  
9 children in the class. How about splitting that  
10 up? How about that? Instead of bringing new  
11 children into the school to say, oh, let's make  
12 a new school, how about dividing it and give the  
13 same children that are here the new school name?  
14 That would be better.

15 Then like she said, start with other  
16 children - - my son is devastated, he dragged  
17 me, I didn't want to come, he was the one that's  
18 called--he's calling Ruben Diaz [phonetic], he's  
19 calling everyone because he doesn't want to be  
20 scared. And he's only 11, he loves his teachers  
21 ever since sixth grade, and I was scared for him  
22 to come, but he's been doing great. Please  
23 don't do this to us.

24 [applause]

25 MS. WHITE: Ms. Libby and then Carey

1 Robertson [phonetic].

2 MS. SUE LIBBY: Hi, my name is Sue Libby,  
3 I'm a staff member here at 144.

4 According to the proposal for - - , 60% of  
5 our building is currently being - - . That's  
6 the statement - - .

7 When X566 is fully integrated in 2014/2015,  
8 it, along with X144 are projected to use 60% to  
9 64% of the available space in the building,  
10 which is just about the same as what we're using  
11 now. Okay?

12 When we were co-located a few years ago,  
13 with another school, scheduling use of commonly  
14 shared areas such as the gym, auditorium,  
15 science lab, cafeteria and school yard, was very  
16 difficult for the students from both schools.  
17 For example, some students had to eat lunch in  
18 eighth period, and the school yard space really  
19 diminished. That situation may not happen for  
20 this co-location but it was [phonetic] specific  
21 to that. Okay?

22 Well we're already sharing stretched  
23 resources with two schools as this proposal  
24 passes, my question really is for the 2014/2015  
25 and other school years, is the DOE considering

1 putting a third school into that available  
2 space that exists? Remember, we're only using  
3 60%, 60 to 64. That leaves us 36% to 40%  
4 unutilized. What's happening with that space?  
5 That's my question.

6 [applause]

7 MS. WHITE: Ms. Robertson and then we'll  
8 have Joan Urino [phonetic].

9 MS. CAREY ROBERTSON: Thank you. Hi  
10 everybody, my name is - - . I'm the Assistant  
11 Principal here at Michelangelo, I've worked here  
12 for 30 years, it's my home - - .

13 One of the reasons stated for the co-  
14 location has been that we've received poor  
15 grades on our progress reports. We have only  
16 received a poor report for the 2010/2011 school  
17 year, we have received no grades lower than  
18 these for any other school year. We have a new  
19 principal, we have received excellent feedback  
20 on our quality review this year and - - are  
21 anticipating a good grade.

22 We are on our way to returning to our normal  
23 solid grades on our progress report. One year  
24 of receiving a low grade on quality review  
25 should not warrant this - - . This is the one

1 middle [phonetic] school that has served the  
2 community well. And many of our teachers have  
3 been students in our building, as well as our  
4 own superintendent, Ms. White.

5 We have received excellent education here.  
6 I don't think we need to change our school, if  
7 we do, my question is, how - - students - - at  
8 Michelangelo certainly as an academic extension  
9 strategy [phonetic]?

10 MS. WHITE: Your name is Urino?

11 MS. JOAN MARINO: Joan Marino [phonetic].

12 MS. WHITE: Oh Marino, sorry. Ms. Marino,  
13 and then we'll have Gloria James [phonetic].

14 MS. MARINO: I'm a teacher at M.S. 144, and  
15 as you can see, the proposal focuses on the co-  
16 location taking place in the 2012 through 2015  
17 timeframe. And Michelangelo, as stated above,  
18 looks to the future.

19 As in its leading statement [phonetic], and  
20 I'm very proud to be a part of a community of--a  
21 community that fosters a long range critical  
22 thinking, and with that I'd like to ask, what  
23 will be taking place in the building in the  
24 2015/2016 school year and beyond?

25 [applause]

1 MS. WHITE: Gloria James?

2 MS. GLORIA JAMES: Yes.

3 MS. WHITE: And then we'll have Angela  
4 Campbell [phonetic].

5 MS. JAMES: Thank you. Hi, my name is  
6 Gloria James, I'm a teacher here at  
7 Michelangelo. I came here in 1996, I live on  
8 the - - , New York which is an hour and a half  
9 away.

10 I came to this community because I saw  
11 something here at Michelangelo that I never  
12 experienced before, even in the small town that  
13 I live in.

14 There was a family camaraderie, the  
15 community welcomes us, the community is kind to  
16 the teachers, they understand us, they speak to  
17 us, when we speak to them about their children,  
18 and sometimes not such nice things, the parents  
19 are willing to work with us. That's not  
20 something you're going to find anywhere else, I  
21 don't think, as much as in Michelangelo.

22 I'm wondering, while we look at our children  
23 that are in middle school, we tell them to  
24 dream, to look to the future, to figure out  
25 goals. And I've had students, - - yesterday,

1 and I tell those students that come back to  
2 me, and say, Ms. James, I have my bachelor's  
3 degree in university. I saw one of my students  
4 driving, I was like, you can drive? How old are  
5 you? I forget time flies, and children grow up  
6 and they bring their children back.

7 And I just don't understand how we can give  
8 them the promise of tomorrow, and then we don't  
9 know what tomorrow's going to bring because  
10 we're putting our school in a very precarious  
11 situation.

12 And just like the others have said, what is  
13 going to happen to Michelangelo? Is the same  
14 thing that's happened to other schools going to  
15 happen here? Am I going to have to say to my  
16 students, remember when we used to have a school  
17 called Michelangelo? And I don't think they  
18 deserve that.

19 I travel an hour and a half one way every  
20 day to make sure that my students have the best  
21 that I can offer them. And they give me the  
22 best of themselves [phonetic]. I really think  
23 we need to keep Michelangelo the way it is, and  
24 use that money for the co-location, for our  
25 students.

1           What makes a new school with new  
2 principals, and new teachers and new  
3 administration and new secretaries, and  
4 everything like that more important than  
5 students from this community that have come  
6 here, and their children have come here? Why  
7 can't we use those funds to help the students  
8 that we already serve?

9           [applause]

10           MS. WHITE: Ms. Campbell from SLT will speak  
11 and then after that Ms. Sonya Kun Jones  
12 [phonetic].

13           MS. ANGELA CAMPBELL: My name is Angela  
14 Campbell, I'm a former student of Middle School  
15 144, and an SLT member, the PA [phonetic]  
16 President, and I have a seventh grader attending  
17 school as well.

18           Now the - - successors to - - inherited a  
19 considerable challenge in raising morale, both  
20 the promise of infusion of new technology into  
21 the school and the promise to confront the  
22 contentious issue in collaborative fashion, - -  
23 was rekindled. Middle School 144 is on the  
24 rebound.

25           Currently, Middle School 144 has three

1 academies. The DOE proposes to create a  
2 second school with combined enrolments of 930 to  
3 980 students. What's the difference? How do  
4 our children - - from this confusion?

5 The DOE stance is to stop building schools.  
6 By co-locating the school, I think you're being  
7 a failure.

8 I have a seventh grade girl right now who's  
9 performing extremely hard, she loves her school,  
10 [background noise] into different programs, and  
11 she loves the friends that she's made here, she  
12 loves her teachers, they have been of great help  
13 to her, I have not been - - school, and right  
14 now all this talk about co-locating the school  
15 is stressing her out, right now she is possibly  
16 going to be if she passes all her State exams,  
17 she will be - - class, and I don't want this  
18 decision to affect my child or anyone else's  
19 child. Please don't destroy our school.

20 [applause]

21 MS. WHITE: Ms. Sonya Kun Jones, and  
22 afterwards, we have Evelyn Rodriguez [phonetic].

23 MS. SONYA JONES: Good evening. I'm a  
24 parent here at 144, I have a grandson too, I'm a  
25 grandparent.

1           My son - - he works and goes to school in  
2 the evening, so I take care of my grandchildren.

3           So I have a grandson who is in seventh  
4 grade, and I have another grandson who is in  
5 sixth grade. Then I have two granddaughters,  
6 twin granddaughters who are expecting to come to  
7 144 next year.

8           Since I have been in this school since last  
9 year, there has been a few - - . I think Mr.  
10 Cavanaugh [phonetic] is really trying very hard  
11 to change the school ground.

12           My only--I mean I have a big concern with  
13 security, I mean I have come to the school  
14 several times, and especially at lunchtime, and  
15 there is a lot of movement, the kids going from  
16 here to there, to lunch, to other classes, and  
17 inevitably [phonetic], every time that I come  
18 there has been some disagreement that turns into  
19 a fight, and there were twice--two times where I  
20 stopped students from getting at each other.

21           So I feel that that is a concern with  
22 another school coming into our school right now.  
23 Our school right now is in transition, it's--I  
24 mean when I go to parent-teacher conferences,  
25 the teachers could be nicer, they welcome kids,

1 they - - and I am very satisfied with the  
2 school as it is right now.

3 I asked my grandson, what do they want me to  
4 say at this meeting, they said, [foreign  
5 language], which means grandma in Spanish,  
6 please, don't let another school come into our  
7 school. So this is what I'm asking.

8 I feel that it will be a terrible injustice  
9 with the school as it is now, and I think that  
10 the problem would get worse in terms of security  
11 and problems going back and forth with the kids.  
12 We don't need any more children in this school.  
13 We have enough.

14 [applause]

15 MS. WHITE: Okay, Evelyn Rodriguez, and then  
16 we'll have Monae Thomas [phonetic].

17 MS. EVELYN RODRIGUEZ: Hello, good evening  
18 everyone.

19 My name's Evelyn Rodriguez, I'm representing  
20 - - High School, and I wanted to support  
21 [phonetic] everyone here for this wonderful  
22 school, my two oldest children graduated from  
23 Michelangelo, and they did wonderful. One is  
24 studying atmospheric science, and the other one  
25 is working with the city.

1           Now, as for atmospheric science, my son  
2           couldn't be interested in air pollution any  
3           better than before he was - - by the teachers.  
4           The teachers did not accept [phonetic] a  
5           completed project as completely completed  
6           [phonetic]. They went back to him and said that  
7           the thing would need to be done over and - - and  
8           because they were annoying to him, he--yes,  
9           because they were annoying, he decided to do  
10          science. And he loves it, he loves it.

11          Okay, this is not about phasing the school -  
12          - by improving the school. We are supporting  
13          improving the schools, especially in the Bronx.

14          But you know, I was a little [phonetic]  
15          concerned about the way sometimes the letter are  
16          distributed to parents. We don't want to  
17          mislead parents, and I have a problem when they  
18          say--like in the first paragraph, where it's  
19          indicated that new school - - 566 be co-located  
20          with Junior High School 144, meaning that the  
21          two schools would be located in the same  
22          building, and may share common spaces like  
23          auditoriums, gymnasiums, cafeterias.

24          That word right there, 'may', I mean may be  
25          a parent might have difficulty understanding,

1 what does that mean. Because we're saying  
2 that we're co-locating and that we're sharing  
3 spaces, - - one of the teachers had pointed out,  
4 and we will have--we'll be sharing auditoriums  
5 and other things. So I want them to tell--I  
6 want to DOE to let parents know what co-location  
7 actually means, and not may. The word 'may' is  
8 a problem for me, I think that most parents - -  
9 .

10 I think maybe--I'm not too sure if adding  
11 another school is a good tactic for improving a  
12 school. I'm not here to say it is or it isn't,  
13 but I do have a problem honestly with that, and  
14 I wanted to be certain about what exactly is  
15 going on.

16 Maybe--because I--one of the teachers  
17 pointed out, one of parents pointed out, the  
18 scheduling is a problem, maybe schools--pitting  
19 one school against the other, because that can  
20 happen as well, in high school I see that going  
21 on, and sometimes one school is not fairing as  
22 well as the other is pushed out, transferred to  
23 another school or phased out. And that's  
24 happening right now.

25 Right here in District 8--I mean District--

1 well you know some of the schools that are - -  
2 . So that's a big problem for us. So we want  
3 healthy competition, we want improvement in the  
4 school and for all our students - - . Thank  
5 you.

6 MS. WHITE: Monae Thomas [phonetic] please.  
7 [applause]

8 MS. MONAE THOMAS: Good evening, my name is  
9 Monae Thomas, I'm a former student at - -  
10 Michelangelo, and my experience here, we had  
11 three academies and it's like they want to see  
12 who is greater. If you put another school in -  
13 - going to be extreme, it's going to be up and  
14 down.

15 They're going to say our school is the best  
16 or that school is the best, it's going to be  
17 more dangerous - - that's my decision. Because  
18 what's going on now, I'm not saying it's bad but  
19 it could become bad if you put another school.  
20 That's all I have to say.

21 MR. WHITE: Therese River [phonetic] and  
22 then we'll have Ron Paulman [phonetic].

23 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening everybody, I'm a  
24 student at Michelangelo 144 and I'm at the  
25 Academy of Math and Science. And - - this

1 academy that they're trying to close the whole  
2 school then. And so in my opinion, they're  
3 putting so much time into the new school and  
4 trying to help the new school out and give them  
5 a whole bunch of new stuff and new teachers and  
6 all that, instead of trying--they said that  
7 they're trying to improve our grade and improve  
8 our - - and stuff like that instead of putting  
9 enough effort into us and they are trying to put  
10 in a new school into our school.

11 And it can--it's not only for the benefit--  
12 it's not benefiting us with a new school coming  
13 in. And then there's the new technology, the  
14 new teachers, they need more help and that's  
15 what basically is going to happen. They're  
16 going to get more help than we are because - -  
17 teach them, getting new technology, smart - -  
18 and all that, but then they're trying to put  
19 that time [phonetic] on us.

20 So my question to you is, instead of putting  
21 so much time into the new school, how about you  
22 try to put some time into 144?

23 [applause]

24 MR. RON PAULMAN: Good evening.

25 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

1           MR. PAULMAN: My name is Ron Paulman.  
2 I've lived in this community over 50 years, I  
3 was here when they opened this school. My  
4 goddaughter graduated from this school. Her  
5 mother was the first PTA President of the  
6 school. Loise Park [phonetic], that park was  
7 named after her.

8           This school has a rich tradition, it's a  
9 neighborhood school, and we want to keep it a  
10 neighborhood school.

11           [applause]

12           MR. PAULMAN: You can't tell us that you're  
13 going to pick the children that are going to  
14 stay in the schools and that sending others  
15 elsewhere, and you're not telling us where  
16 you're going to send them.

17           This school has people who have rich  
18 traditions. Jeff Kline [phonetic] graduated  
19 from this school, Hasty [phonetic] graduated  
20 from this school, and we are still producing  
21 good leaders in this school.

22           [applause]

23           MR. PAULMAN: - - so therefore, I don't  
24 believe in this, we had this sharing schools  
25 before, we're not talking about that. They put

1 a high school here and the community remembers  
2 what it did to the students, so why are we going  
3 to try it again? We didn't ask for it, we don't  
4 need it.

5 [applause]

6 MR. PAULMAN: I'd like [phonetic] everyone  
7 who has a voice to stand up and vote against  
8 this. Thank you.

9 [applause]

10 MR. WHITE: Forgive me if I pronounce this  
11 name wrong, I think it says A. Fonda [phonetic]?

12 MALE VOICE: Fonda.

13 MS. WHITE: Fonda?

14 FEMALE VOICE: Fonda.

15 MS. WHITE: Yes, Mr. Fonda, and then we'll  
16 have Kay Turner [phonetic].

17 MS. A. FONDA: Good evening. I'm a teacher  
18 here at Middle School 144 and I also live in the  
19 community so I've been here quite a long time.

20 There were a lot of questions put out today  
21 and points made, so all the my questions and  
22 points have been put out there, but I do still  
23 have one.

24 One of the things that I've learned as a  
25 teacher is that children, students need

1 consistency, okay? And when I look around the  
2 city and I see all of the schools trying to do  
3 this co-location intervention, I'm wondering now  
4 how is that benefiting my children? How is that  
5 showing them consistency? How is that going to  
6 better help them to learn, okay?

7 The last thing I wanted to say, you may look  
8 at me, I'm old and black. And we might say, she  
9 might be in mourning. Yes, I am. I'm in  
10 mourning but not for this school because this  
11 school is not dying.

12 [applause]

13 MS. KAY TURNER: Good evening ladies and  
14 gentlemen. First let me start with when we were  
15 told that we're going to have a co-location--

16 MS. WHITE: [interposing] Introduce yourself  
17 first.

18 MS. TURNER: I'm Ms. Turner, I'm a teacher  
19 here at this school and a member of the SLT and  
20 I'm a Chapter [phonetic] leader.

21 When we were told that there's going to be a  
22 co-located school, the - - told us that this co-  
23 location school coming in would be just like  
24 Souza [phonetic]. Right now, if we look what's  
25 happening to Souza, we don't want that.

1           Again, we were also looking at low grades.  
2           We were told that we have one-year ago grades,  
3           then what happened? The new principal tried  
4           that, we had a very prominent principal here,  
5           and that principal was yes, I don't think I can  
6           help here [phonetic], she decided to retire.  
7           After she retired, her retirement was  
8           announcement a few weeks before school closed.

9           The principal that came in, she was the  
10          assistant principal for the year [phonetic], but  
11          she was told about the position and few weeks or  
12          days I think before school opened.

13          While she was hearing [phonetic] that, she  
14          became ill and she had to go to on her medical  
15          leave, she was in a hospital. Along with that,  
16          we had - - . Not only that, we had an assistant  
17          principal who had to go on a medical leave.

18          So there are two administrators out at the  
19          time, we did not get - - with that. So that's  
20          one of the reasons why we have the low grade,  
21          because even then, although - - the assistant  
22          principal, although she was out there, on  
23          medical leave, in the hospital, on that same  
24          bed, that she wanted to speak, she was not given  
25          that opportunity. She did not get that chance

1 to say, this is what is happening in my  
2 department, this is what we've done, the others  
3 refused [phonetic]. Nothing was up there  
4 [phonetic].

5 So this is why one of the reasons why last  
6 year, the only year that we got such a very low  
7 grade. We are a great school, we work together  
8 because we want every child be it general ed or  
9 special ed to be the best. Because they have  
10 that chance, we give them an opportunity every  
11 single day. And it would be so incredible if we  
12 let these children tell themselves no, fail  
13 because what they're - - a co-located school.  
14 Thank you very much.

15 [applause]

16 MR. WHITE: Thank you, - - . Sandra Clark  
17 [phonetic].

18 MS. SANDRA CLARK: Good evening everybody.  
19 I'm a parent of an outgoing student, eighth  
20 grader. And I am here this evening just  
21 listening to all the comments that is going on  
22 in our community.

23 I could say to myself, I don't want to be  
24 here this evening because my son is leaving.  
25 No, that's not the case. I have done the - - on

1 high school, I see where some schools  
2 sometimes are A, some school is B, this year  
3 it's developed, well developed, underdeveloped.  
4 Well, for every school, M.S. 144 has a tie  
5 [phonetic], it's up and it's down, this is--and  
6 it's no. This is the community, I want to tell  
7 the people we put - - in M.S. 144, not in  
8 another school.

9 The community here love the staff, love the  
10 school, give us better technology, we are the  
11 community. We don't want a new school, we want  
12 M.S. 144. My son--

13 [applause]

14 MS. CLARK: --school, told M.S. 144. I  
15 don't know what school we're now going to or  
16 we'll be going to, I love M.S. 144. Thank you.

17 [applause]

18 FEMALE VOICE: All right. So we have  
19 exhausted the speaker list, and I'd like to  
20 remind everyone that on the sheet with the  
21 proposal, there are specific dates. A date for  
22 the - - education policy who will be voting on  
23 this proposal. There will be an opportunity at  
24 that meeting also to present to the actual panel  
25 who is voting your concerns or your comments on

1 the school. The information here will also be  
2 forwarded to the members who vote.

3 The meeting will take place on March 21st,  
4 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the High School of Fashion  
5 Industries located at 225 West 24th Street in  
6 Manhattan.

7 You can also send an email or make a call to  
8 express your comments about this proposal. The  
9 email address is [d11proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:d11proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
10 and the telephone number is 212-374-5159.

11 I would like to thank the Michelangelo  
12 community for their participation in this  
13 evening's joint public hearing and the hearing  
14 is now formally closed. Thank you.

15 [END MZ000001]  
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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

Handwritten signature of Carille Clarke in cursive script.

7           Date March 8, 2012  
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