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

**Expansion of Icahn
Charter School 7 at X093**

**5/6/15
5:30pm**

1 [START RECORDING 448458MASTER.MP3]

2 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Good evening. This is

3 a joint public hearing of the Department of

4 Education, Community Education Council 8, and

5 the School Leadership Team from PS 93 and the

6 Icahn 7 for the proposed grade expansion of

7 Icahn Charter School 7 in Building X093 and X893

8 and PS 93, the Albert G. Oliver, beginning in

9 the 2016-17 school year. I am Community School

10 District 8 Superintendent Dr. Karen Ames.

11 Welcome. We've asked the District 8 Community

12 Education Council and the School Leadership Team

13 from PS 93 and Icahn 7 to participate in this

14 joint public hearing. And this evening I'm

15 going - - Dr. Kaplan from PS 93, the XLIT

16 [phonetic], the representative - - PS 93, - -

17 from - - , Principal Laura Sullivan from Icahn

18 7, and Mr. Jeffrey Litt from the Icahn - - ; CEC

19 Representative Eduardo Hernandez, the treasurer;

20 and Chancy Marsh IV from our Community Education

21 Council 8 from School District 8; and other

22 members of the community who participate as

23 well. This hearing is being audio and video

24 recorded. The purpose of this hearing will be

25 to provide comments about the proposal. Before

1 I describe the proposal I want to make sure
2 that you're all aware of the opportunity to
3 provide your input. All those who wish to speak
4 must sign up in the speaker sign-up area located
5 just outside the auditorium. The sign-up list
6 will close in about 15 minutes. Speakers will
7 be given the floor in the order that they signed
8 up, and all times are limited to two minutes.
9 If you share a comment, we request that you
10 present your opinion in a respectful tone since
11 these hearings are open to all members of the
12 community, and we want to create an environment
13 that remains respectful to all. The purpose of
14 these hearings is to present feedback and to
15 also have the opportunity to hear your public
16 comments. People can best be accomplished if
17 the tone remains calm and respectful. There may
18 be like - - different times throughout the
19 evening, and if they wish to speak, we do offer
20 our best to accommodate them the first
21 opportunity on the moment. So those who are
22 here to start the public comment segment will be
23 asked to speak first. All comments will be
24 mentioned in the Analysis of Public Comment to
25 be published and provided to the Panel of

1 Education Council the evening before this
2 council votes, and that will be scheduled to
3 take place on Wednesday, May 20th, 2015. In
4 addition, we welcome any comments or feedback
5 that you may have at any time before the council
6 votes on this upcoming proposal. The email
7 address and phone number where comments may be
8 posted is the district's
9 D08proposals@schools.nyc.gov, and the designated
10 phone number is (212) 374-5159. I'll repeat the
11 phone number and we'll have the building
12 principal post this information in the hallway.
13 The phone number is (212) 374-5159, and the
14 email is D08proposals@schools.nyc.gov. Now I'll
15 read the proposal summary. "The purpose of this
16 proposal is to expand the grades served by Icahn
17 Charter School 7 or Icahn 7 to include grades 5
18 and 6 beginning in the 2016-17 school year.
19 Icahn 7 is an existing charter school that
20 currently serves students in Kindergarten
21 through 3rd Grade in building X93 located at 1535
22 Story Ave., Bronx, New York 10473, in District 8
23 where it's collocated in PS 93. PS 93 is an
24 existing zoned elementary school that serves
25 students from Kindergarten through 5th grade in

1 building X93 and mini building X893. As you
2 may be aware, we're - - an amendment to the New
3 York State Education Law that provides certain
4 newly expanded charter schools with access to
5 facilities. In that context, Icahn 7 made a
6 collocation request to the Department of
7 Education of space in District 8 for its 5th
8 through 8th Grades. Although Icahn 7 expected
9 space for its 5th through 8th grades, at this
10 time the Department of Education is proposing
11 that the site of Icahn 7 5th and 6th grades only
12 at X93 and X893. The grade expansion of Icahn 7
13 at X93 and X893 is intended to support the
14 educational continuity of students currently
15 enrolled in Icahn 7. If this proposal is
16 approved, current and future Icahn 7 students
17 who are eligible for promotion will have the
18 opportunity to remain in Icahn 7 at X93 and X893
19 for 5th and 6th grades beginning in 2016-2017.
20 If this proposal is approved, PS 93 will
21 continue to serve Kindergarten through 5th grade
22 students, and the DOE does not anticipate that
23 this proposed expansion of Icahn 7 will impact
24 admissions or - - programming at PS 93. Details
25 of the proposal can be found at Educational

1 Impact Statements and - - Building Utilization
2 Plan, copies of which are available here
3 tonight." Now we'll have presentations by
4 hearing participants. And at this point we'll
5 ask that the CEC elect to make a statement. Do
6 members of the CEC elect to make a statement?

7 MR. CHANCY MARSH: Yes.

8 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Okay. So we'll have
9 Chancy Marsh on behalf of District 8 CEC make a
10 statement.

11 MR. MARSH: - - review that I missed
12 speaking to a few people in the audience. Prior
13 to the meeting started I did speak to a few
14 members of the audience. It appears that at
15 this meeting primarily parents are from the
16 Icahn Charter School, and I haven't spoken to
17 anyone who's from PS 93. Many of our meetings
18 are public meetings. They're usually this way
19 where there aren't many parents, but there are
20 many DOE officials and officials from the Icahn
21 Charter School. So I may want to add to the
22 meeting, how long was this notice up, and has
23 anyone had a chance to review this prior to the
24 meeting, 'cause although you may have questions,
25 but your questions may not be so pertinent

1 because it will be extremely hard for you to go
2 through this while the meeting is going on, and
3 then being able to ask a question. Lastly, I'd
4 like to say I grew up on 950 Evergreen Avenue.
5 The people who put this proposal together
6 probably don't know where that is, but that's
7 the next block over. I attended the trailers
8 outside back in 1976. I do understand that life
9 is about change and I understand there's a
10 charter school in this building, but it's funny
11 that people who are not from this community are
12 making decisions about this community and the
13 school. Unfortunately, we don't have the
14 participation in the audience tonight that may
15 have possibly had an impact or at least a
16 thoughtful dialog as to PS 93. And my time
17 being on the CEC and being involved with
18 schools, this is sort of like a cookie-cutter
19 method. Icahn will expand, and eventually PS 93
20 will dwindle, and then all is fair game because
21 charter schools are under a totally different
22 jurisdiction than the Department of Education
23 schools. As I spoke to this gentleman here
24 earlier, if you are in support of the Icahn
25 Charter School, see to it that any promises that

1 they've made to you and services that they said
2 they were going to provide and support, please
3 hold them accountable to that and don't allow
4 the services to dwindle and things go down. If
5 you come to these meetings long enough and you
6 learn about things, ultimately it's about the
7 money because people make nice salaries here and
8 wear nice clothes, and obviously it comes from
9 somewhere. And it's always about the money.
10 Okay? I only have about two minutes, so that's
11 all I can say. If you'd like to speak to me
12 after the meeting, and I can get a little more
13 in depth, feel free. Again, my name is Chancy
14 Marsh IV. I grew up at 950 Evergreen Ave., down
15 the block. I've been in this building many
16 times. I know many of my friends have been in
17 this building many times. I'm a college
18 graduate. There was no Icahn Charter School
19 back in 1976, and that is my statement. Thank
20 you.

21 [Audience Applause]

22 FEMALE VOICE: - - .

23 MALE VOICE: Say what?

24 FEMALE VOICE: They're not in - - .

25 MALE VOICE: Oh, I know that.

1 FEMALE VOICE: Okay.

2 MALE VOICE: Yeah, we're going to tell - - .

3 FEMALE VOICE: - - .

4 MALE VOICE: Wait. You want to continue?

5 MALE VOICE: - -

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, you made your point.

7 No, I haven't seen the proposal, but once I make
8 my full review I will email the DOE [phonetic]
9 directly even though they're the ones making the
10 decision. One issue I got in all these hearings
11 is the scheduling of it, the days, also the
12 middle school [Background Noise] community
13 schools - - conference. And I'm pretty sure
14 you've got many parents here that have kids from
15 middle schools also, myself included, so I
16 couldn't even attend my daughter's - - . And
17 the DOE [phonetic] would be voting on this
18 proposal in Brooklyn. Just for those of you who
19 want to know, it will be in Brooklyn on the 20th,
20 which happens to be the same day as the CEC
21 meeting, and that was something that I brought
22 directly to the chancellor. The DOE had the
23 schedule of all the CECs, and I don't see the
24 reason why you want to schedule it from the same
25 day of the CEC, not only the same day as the

1 CEC, but in a whole different borough when for
2 this meeting, for this CEC meeting, this is the
3 only proposal. There's no other borough
4 proposal. Why not do it right here in the - -
5 just like you did a few months ago, but a
6 different date? At least you may - - the same
7 date, you can make it everybody and show up over
8 there, at least parents over there. But like I
9 mentioned - - , people from the Bronx are not
10 going to Brooklyn. It's one of those things.
11 It's a long way, a long trip. I did that. I've
12 done that a few times, and the trip back, late
13 at night, is a good couple of hours. So that is
14 something that I'm going to bring it up, and
15 that's something that I will continue to bring
16 up to DOE about this schedule. And as for this
17 specific proposal, I will send my comments
18 straight to the DOE [phonetic] and the
19 chancellor.

20 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Thank you. At this
21 time we'll have SLT [phonetic] representatives
22 from the CUNY School have the opportunity to
23 speak. So at this time we'll have the
24 opportunity for the SLT representative from PS
25 93, which is representatives by the UFT

1 [phonetic] capital chair, Ms. Mathurin. Would
2 you like the opportunity to speak?

3 MS. MATHURIN: Hi. Good evening. I'm from
4 the community, and let me first explain why many
5 of my parents are not here today. Many of them
6 are saying they've had enough of this. This is
7 a done deal, and it's a waste of time in coming
8 here when the deal is already accomplished. I'm
9 living in this community and I work here in this
10 building. I took a note and it said there would
11 be no impact on registration for this school,
12 and it has - - based on what I saw, I saw fliers
13 went out into the community, and that has
14 solicited the students from this community for
15 the Icahn School. But besides that, I'm
16 concerned. I am concerned because there is no
17 equity; meaning the things that I saw with my
18 own two eyes that are at Icahn School, and then
19 the promises that are made to us--sometimes
20 they're not - - --and based on what I
21 understood, they will be making moves to go on
22 the other floors, and we have to, in turn, move
23 our rooms to accommodate Icahn 7. Recently, one
24 encountered was the computer room, for example,
25 that will be moved to the fourth floor. And

1 based on what I was told and understood, the
2 moving has a cost, and the cost has to be
3 covered by PS 93, which is - - . If you're
4 coming into my space and you want to move and
5 you're taking up the space, I would think all
6 responsibility should fall on the person who's
7 making the moves. I am an advocate for good
8 education. I want all students to learn. I
9 want all students to exceed, excel, regardless
10 of Icahn or regardless of Public School 93. We
11 are teachers, but from what I'm seeing, there
12 are other Icahn schools in this building, and we
13 had a wonderful time with them. We
14 collaborated. We worked together. But my only
15 concern, I would love to see some more
16 cohesiveness. And if we don't have that, we are
17 always at each other, not in an argumentative
18 way. We are looking now to each other. We are
19 making comments. I have noticed that - - , each
20 side, both sides. So what I would like to see
21 is even though we're here, for us to work
22 together. Even though this is Icahn 7 and we
23 are PS 93, I would love to see some
24 togetherness. And it's not, "I don't want your
25 kids here right now. You're not in my school."

1 - - and that's - - . Children should not feel
2 less or should not feel as though they're
3 inferior--I don't know if I'm using the right
4 word--or they're less fortunate than others, and
5 that is my feeling or my comment.

6 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Mr. Kaplan, principal
7 of PS 93, from the SLT.

8 PRINCIPAL KAPLAN: Good evening everyone.
9 As you can imagine, as the principal of PS 93,
10 I've been here for a few years, has watched our
11 school grow. I've watched us grow and grow and
12 grow. My only concern, and we do get along very
13 well with Icahn 7. We've shared space issues
14 and things like that, haven't been an issue.
15 But as we look forward to the proposal, we've
16 noticed, as an administration, that problems
17 will arise when it comes to lunch time. We have
18 a very - - lunch time and we've accommodated
19 Icahn 7. Our lunch period starts at 10:45.
20 With the advent of more classrooms coming in to
21 Icahn 7, lunch conceivably could start as early
22 as 9:30 in the morning. And as you know in
23 elementary school, probably is not conducive to
24 the promulgation of good academics and children
25 learning. Another concern that I have as far as

1 bringing on new grades in the Icahn 7 School
2 is the fact that we're also expanding. PS 93
3 has grown, and I'm going to be looking to
4 possibly opening more sections in some of our
5 grades. So my question is "If I would do that
6 and there was no room because Icahn 7 Charter
7 School had classrooms that they were using,
8 would I have to turn away children that are
9 zoned to my building to go to other schools?"
10 So that's a big concern that I have. So we are
11 growing at PS 93. We've shown ourselves to be
12 an A School. As far as the State report causes
13 concerns, and children and families would like
14 to be part of our community, but if Icahn 7 is
15 going to grow, we're going also need classrooms
16 to grow as well. So I thank everyone for coming
17 out this evening.

18 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: And now from the
19 School Leadership Team of Icahn 7, Laura
20 Sullivan, principal.

21 PRINCIPAL SULLIVAN: - - .

22 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Okay.

23 MR. JEFFREY LITT: Good evening. Thank you
24 for allowing me to attend and to speak.

25 Regarding a couple of comments that were made,

1 first of all, we're very grateful to be here.
2 We had Icahn 2 here years ago. A couple of the
3 speakers made reference to "make sure they keep
4 their promises." Perhaps it's unknown, but we
5 are beginning our 15th year of service in the
6 South Bronx this September. I was the founding
7 principal of the first school, Icahn 1. I
8 haven't heard anything negative about the
9 school, and if you Google the school, you will
10 see nothing but rave reviews, and you'll see the
11 coverage that we've received by TV and the
12 Press. There's been no mention of that.
13 Regarding the papers being passed out in the
14 community, all charter schools, by law, have
15 February and March as the time to apply for what
16 they call *the lottery*. That's how you get in.
17 We had fewer than 200 seats, and we had 16 in
18 all the schools because the law says that if a
19 child is currently in the charter school, his or
20 her brother or sister automatically gets a seat.
21 So instead of having 36 seats in Kindergarten
22 for the following year, you might have 25 if you
23 have a lot of siblings. So we had fewer than
24 200 seats, 16,513 parents applying. To me that
25 doesn't sound like a school that breaks whatever

1 the speakers referred to as *promises*. I'd be
2 the first one to be very curious as to know
3 specifically what promises were violated. I
4 have to tell you that as the former DOE
5 principal and deputy superintendent, the last
6 school I had in Washington Heights had 2,500
7 children. Now obviously that's nuts, but in no
8 time will the school be oversubscribed. I mean
9 they're not crazy, the DOE. They know what
10 they're doing. There are projections on - - and
11 the number of students and so on. They're not
12 going to give away seats to all of us if they
13 know that there's going to be new construction
14 or something like that which is going to yield
15 more children to Mr. Kaplan. They're not moving
16 to take away anything from his school. As far
17 as we're concerned, Mr. Kaplan is one thing to
18 us, and that's - - . He's educating children.
19 We're educating children. He's our host. We
20 appreciate that. He's been very kind to us.
21 The children on my watch will never be
22 discriminated against. So if anybody says,
23 "Well, you're not one of my kids," I'd really
24 like to know who. I want to tell you that when
25 we mention cohesiveness, I'm not quite sure.

1 The school that was here, we built the \$35
2 million building for them. We're out of space.
3 In seven schools, we only have two who only come
4 to the DOE, the two schools, and the DOE has
5 been most gracious: Icahn 6 in District 9 and
6 Icahn 7 here. All the other schools we built.
7 So when you talk about "They're only in this for
8 the money," our building that we house three
9 schools in was purchased for \$19 million--it's
10 not tax money--was rehabbed for just short of
11 \$50 million in private money. We are a proven
12 entity. We are very high achieving. There's
13 another charter organization that's maybe three
14 times our size. Every one of their schools is
15 in a DOE building. Every one of them. We have
16 seven schools; two of them are in a DOE
17 building. We get along. They're welcome to
18 participate in any of our activities. There's
19 been no problem. And we look forward to their
20 continued positive relationship. And again, we
21 thank you.

22 [Audience Applause]

23 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Miss Sullivan, would
24 you like to speak now? Would you like to speak
25 this time? Thank you.

1 PRINCIPAL SULLIVAN: Hi. Good evening. I
2 just really want to welcome the community and I
3 want to thank you for coming out to this public
4 hearing. Icahn Charter School 7 community
5 parents that are here and the families, I want
6 to say I thank you for your ongoing support in
7 our mission and your partnership in educating
8 children. On behalf of Icahn Charter School 7,
9 I want to thank PS 93. I believe that you were
10 very welcoming when we came in, and we've
11 maintained and established a wonderful
12 relationship. Parents, staff, teachers,
13 administration, I want to publicly recognize the
14 manner in which Mr. Kaplan and I serve as a
15 school leadership team. And I want to publicly
16 recognize that he has welcomed us in. And
17 through our relations, through our building
18 council meetings, I believe that we, in this
19 particular building, we are sharing the space
20 appropriately. It's a cohesive shared space.
21 At the end of the day, why are we here? We're
22 here because we want to educate children. We
23 all share a high vision for children. We
24 believe children, and we know children in this
25 community will be successful. Icahn Charter

1 School 7 is looking forward to their continued
2 collocation and their expansion to 6th grade in
3 this building. Again, I'd like to thank you 93
4 and I'd like to thank the audience for coming,
5 and we would like to continue what we're doing
6 well so far.

7 [Audience Applause]

8 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: And I believe Miss
9 Bethany from the School Leadership Team is - - .
10 No? Okay. From Icahn 7 - - . Oh, you don't
11 want to? And I apologize deeply that I missed
12 the introduction. It's when you go to - -
13 instead of the reading glasses from - - . My
14 apology. Okay. So that concluded the formal
15 presentations, and now we're going to move to
16 the Speaker Sign-Up slip and open the floor for
17 the public comments. Speakers will now be given
18 the floor in the order that they signed up, and
19 the public comments are limited to two minutes,
20 and there's microphones set up in the front for
21 you to proceed when your name is called so that
22 you can speak into the microphone and address
23 the public. So our first speaker is Miss
24 Tanisha [phonetic] Williams.

25 MS. TASHANA WILLIAMS: My name is Tashana.

1 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Tashana. Excuse me.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Hi. My name is Tashana
3 Williams. I have a daughter that attends PS 93,
4 and I was - - for the last 16 years. So there's
5 a couple of things that I learned about. The
6 first thing that I would really like to say is
7 that PS 93 is a community school, and I'm sure
8 that there are Icahn campuses that are also
9 community like this here. This is very much a
10 community school. - - come here. And my niece
11 is going to come here because of the community
12 feel of the school and I do not want to lose
13 that. [Background Noise] extra rooms that we
14 have I would like to see PS 93 have the
15 opportunity to grow to include 8th grade. And
16 that is because we do need to have more middle
17 schools, right? I mean the FFP [phonetic] - -
18 and I also teach high school. And you need
19 smaller class sizes. It would be really
20 wonderful to have another community school that
21 includes 8th grade or 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th
22 grades. I am concerned about space, and I've
23 taught with DOE for ten years. I've also taught
24 private education and I've also taught in
25 charter schools. And I also have an

1 understanding of how these things go, and I
2 agree with Mr. Chancy, that there are some
3 problems [phonetic]. Sometimes I think perhaps
4 if I ask - - but I have seen it happen where
5 there are lots of promises that are made and
6 then - - so they don't come through on them.
7 And then so everyone loses out. The school
8 does, the whole - - loses out in addition to the
9 charter school. So that is something to be
10 concerned about. Perhaps not at Icahn at this
11 point in time, but it is something to be
12 concerned about. The other thing too is that I
13 would love to see this community school partner
14 perhaps even with a community-based
15 organization, and that means that we do need to
16 have those rooms. I want them to have a dance
17 program. I want there to be other things that
18 are happening here other than just education; to
19 educate the entire child. There are lots of
20 things that have happen with kids, and you need
21 to have other adults who are not teachers in the
22 building to help and to support what those kids
23 and to help the kids so that those kids can get
24 a better education while they're here. And I
25 think that can happen at this school. So I have

1 nothing against Icahn expanding, but I would
2 like you to consider that PS 93 is here, and
3 there are people who are concerned about that.
4 So I understand, yes, my time is up, but I just
5 want to consider that. It's not personal for
6 me, it's just everyone deserves the right to
7 have a great education. Everyone. And it
8 shouldn't be at the expense. No child should
9 have to have their education opportunities taken
10 away because *another* institution or organization
11 is coming in. So it's just something to
12 consider. Thank you.

13 [Audience Applause]

14 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: And our next speaker
15 will be Joseph Shihab. And my apologies in
16 advance for the mispronunciation. It's really
17 the handwriting. I was reading - - . I
18 actually read well - - .

19 MR. JOSEPH SHIHAB: Good afternoon everyone.
20 My name is Joseph Shihab. My son is David
21 Shihab. He goes to the school, Icahn Charter
22 School 7. He's in Miss Fontaine's [phonetic]
23 class. He's in the audience right here. And
24 I'd like to just say thank you to Miss Sullivan
25 and to the principal of 93 for allowing students

1 to be here also. I really am just going to
2 speak to me having - - of my son coming to this
3 school and now Miss Sullivan and then seeing the
4 results of my son inside Miss Fontaine's class.
5 He's reading on the 1st grade level because they
6 have a great reading program. And he's scoring
7 hundreds on his math test. So I just see the
8 results of him being inside this charter school,
9 and I just love it and I want it to expand. He
10 has a brother who I want him to come to this
11 school also. So I'm - - for the expansion and
12 I'm looking forward to the school expanding, and
13 I love the results that I see inside the school.
14 So I can only speak to that, how it affects my
15 home and my family, and I appreciate the charter
16 school. That's all.

17 [Audience Applause]

18 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker will
19 be Gina Estrada.

20 MS. GINA ESTRADA: Good afternoon. My name
21 is Gina Estrada. I currently have two children
22 coming to the school. They're actually in Miss
23 Fontaine's class, in the same class. They are
24 doing really, really well, and I am really,
25 really proud of the work that Miss Sullivan and

1 her staff have done with my girls. As for
2 being from the neighborhood, yes, I can relate.
3 I am from the neighborhood. Back in '77,
4 education was much different from the eighties
5 and the nineties. We have to acknowledge that
6 things have changed from then to now, and yet
7 these classes are overcrowded when kids are not
8 getting the education they should be getting,
9 and therefore they are looking into charter
10 schools for that education. - - schools are
11 expensive so we looked for something that's - -
12 by children, but by the charter schools. My
13 sister works for the DOE, and the story that I
14 hear--there's a lot of stories that I hear--but
15 I mean what I'm saying to the Department of
16 Education. But again, - - for the teachers.
17 They are reading at 1st grade levels, and
18 everything they do, I mean the work that they
19 give them, they are on point. And yet the
20 parent has to work as a time with them to
21 encourage them to learn. And again, I thank
22 everyone here in 93 for giving the space, and
23 hopefully we can expand to the 6th grade and
24 that's all - - wishes. Thank you.

25 [Audience Applause]

1 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
2 Latoya Redman.

3 MS. LATOYA REDMAN: My name is Latoya
4 Redman, and my son is - - , and he's in 2nd
5 grade. And the first thing that I want to say
6 is that every child that comes into this school
7 is important. It does not matter if they go to
8 Icahn Charter School 7 or if they go to PS 93 as
9 a part of the public school system, and - - used
10 to go to a public school, and I wanted Icahn
11 Charter School, for him to be challenged. And
12 he is being challenged and he's also being
13 supported [Background Noise]. And I find it a
14 privilege to be for my son to be in this school.
15 I find it a privilege for us to be in this
16 building, - - for everyone especially for
17 children, and for me to have to change my son to
18 a new school, that would be a difficult
19 transition for us. I - - goes on all the time,
20 but from what I see, what I can observe,
21 especially to the other parents, from - - , it's
22 also the certainty that I speak with, I say
23 *hello* to whoever's in the common area. And I
24 feel like as long as we can continue to be
25 respectful, and I think there should be a

1 cohesiveness because we are a community even
2 though our children go to Icahn Charter School
3 and some of the children go to the public
4 school, a lot of us have the same kind of
5 background, the same people - - to be - - and
6 every child does deserve to have the greatest
7 education possible because these kids are worth
8 it. Every child that comes through this door is
9 important. And I just feel like--I'm sorry--
10 like I said, every child is important. And for
11 our children to be able to continue to - - so
12 that they can contribute and not have any
13 disruption in their education that will be in
14 the best - - . But again, every child that
15 comes through these doors is important.

16 [Audience Applause]

17 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
18 Susan Oyola.

19 MS. SUSAN OYOLA: Good evening. My name is
20 Susan Oyola. I am, like Mr. Chancy said, I went
21 to the school. My son graduated from this
22 school. My daughter just graduated from this
23 school. So this school means a lot to me. I
24 live across the street from this school so I see
25 every kid that comes in and out of these doors.

1 Most of the parents do see me every day in the
2 parking region. But my problem is if you extend
3 it to other grades or older grades, I feel it's
4 going to be complete [phonetic] because one,
5 this school is 86 years old, our bathrooms do
6 not accommodate what we have in here now. So
7 you're talking about bringing older kids in here
8 who could barely fit in the toilets that we have
9 in the bathrooms. Two, we have a science
10 program here. We have an art program here. Are
11 you telling us that we have to get rid of that?
12 Are you telling me I have to get rid of that?
13 And also, I work in an afterschool program for
14 the school. What happens to us? What happens
15 to the jobs that we have that - - brought to the
16 community? So you're going to tell me that I
17 have to leave come September because we can't
18 accommodate what we have now? And, too, like I
19 said, our lunchroom. I work the lunchroom. I
20 want to see volunteers - - every day. I've been
21 here for five years and volunteer at this school
22 because I love this school. I don't care about
23 not receiving a paycheck. This building means a
24 lot. The teachers are wonderful and I think the
25 administration has been wonderful to me, but to

1 extend the school, you need to look at what's
2 going on - - about the school. We need a water
3 closet. We need teachers that are going to be
4 here and - - . And we need rooms. We need the
5 social - - put back into the school. So you're
6 taking away our science. You're taking away our
7 art. And you're taking away our technology
8 room. I don't think that's fair if you're
9 asking older children to come in here with the
10 babies that are here now. Thank you.

11 [Audience Applause]

12 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
13 Kisha Meyers.

14 MS. KISHA MEYERS: Good evening everyone.
15 I'm Kisha Meyers. I have four children. Two
16 have graduated from PS 93 and two are still
17 currently attending PS 93. I believe PS 93 is
18 an excellent school, and with one school
19 expanding, will force another school to decrease
20 in size. And we can't afford that because we
21 were already existing here, and I think it was
22 nice of Mr. Kaplan to allow Icahn 7 to co-
23 habitat the building. We share the playground,
24 that time accommodation, the lunchroom
25 accommodation is pressuring for the children and

1 condensing their time to eat and to play, and
2 in order for Icahn 7 to expand to more grade
3 levels, - - and being competitors instead of as
4 being co-habitators of the same building. And I
5 don't think that we should have to compete with
6 anyone being that we were here first. And in
7 addition to that, this meeting may be important
8 for everyone 'cause everyone has one goal, but
9 ideally charter schools have more access to
10 funding which should allow them to have their
11 own location to expand to whatever size they're
12 interested in expanding up to.

13 [Audience Applause]

14 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
15 Joel Taylor.

16 MR. JOEL TAYLOR: Thank you, and good
17 evening. I'm Joel, and I have my son Michael's
18 right here - - . I brought my kids right here
19 from the private - - and he and his sister were
20 both in private school. So before - - I did - -
21 and I just brought Michael here first because I
22 want to see what was really going on with what I
23 heard and what I saw outside before bringing my
24 children [Background Noise]. I came to realize
25 that Icahn [phonetic] does have some sort of

1 standard which probably was in the private
2 school. If you don't - - , he was not pushed as
3 much as he was being pushed - - that school. So
4 Icahn 7 is - - for Icahn to increase or to have
5 kids up to the 8th grade - - and are breaking up
6 the rest of my - - to make up for that grade
7 push. But - - . I believe that from - - that
8 there are promises that Icahn makes, Icahn
9 should help or we should all help Icahn - - .
10 If from the get-go who - - agreed upon, and - -
11 should continue - - . And - - that I could
12 continue on - - and I believe the city should
13 also - - . Thank you. And I hope...

14 [Audience Applause]

15 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker, I
16 believe it's Kadelah Dupo [phonetic].

17 MR. KADELAH DUPO: Good evening ladies and
18 gentlemen. My name is Kadelah Dupo. What I
19 just wanted to say is Icahn Charter School and
20 PS 93, they're both public schools. There's no
21 difference. But that's the one thing one of my
22 - - attending Catholic school, which is a very
23 expensive school, and that - - so one of my
24 friends asked me [phonetic] to apply for Icahn
25 Charter School because I'm not - - to take my

1 kids to Catholic school. So I applied for
2 charter school. To be honest with you, now my
3 kids--I have two--Lookman [phonetic] Abdulah
4 [phonetic] and Eliham [phonetic] Abdulah
5 [phonetic]. Both of them, what they're doing is
6 almost equivalent to what my cousins who is
7 going at this school. So that is why I need to
8 support this. Please, we have to share this - -
9 and be able to understand each other - - .
10 Thank you very much.

11 [Audience Applause]

12 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
13 Aida Figueroa.

14 MS. AIDA FIGUEROA: Good evening everyone.
15 My name is Aida Figueroa. My daughter attends
16 here from last year. She's in 2nd grade with
17 Miss - - . She was here from 1st grade. One of
18 the things that I remember coming here to
19 orientation, Miss - - and she says "We are here
20 to prepare your children for college." And
21 that's been my goal since deciding that if I
22 ever had a child I would just - - with those
23 things that are in the plan for their vision.
24 And I know that - - the same vision, but because
25 of my child - - that I need to support her. I

1 am a community member. I live in the
2 neighborhood. Having my daughter attend here is
3 wonderful. In case she gets sick or something
4 and somebody needs to come and pick her up, just
5 being in the community and being close is
6 awesome. As a taxpayer - - we pay our taxes to
7 have these buildings available to us, whether
8 you call it 93 or Icahn 7 or anything, it's
9 really our children. It's our children, and
10 planning a place and having a good education
11 that yes, we cannot necessarily always afford
12 private education on some Catholic environment
13 or some other independent schools, but here we
14 are receiving in our communities that same
15 basis. As for the purpose of my being here, it
16 helps our community. It helps my daughter
17 personally. It helps a lot of the children that
18 are here. We hope that we are bringing to our
19 community not just leaders for today, but
20 leaders for tomorrow that will be sitting in
21 your seats and doing the same things, advocating
22 for children's education. And that's the
23 purpose of my being here. I believe that Icahn
24 Charter School 7 expanding would be a benefit to
25 not just the children of today, but the children

1 of tomorrow.

2 [Audience Applause]

3 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
4 Edith Chaquehuamani.

5 MS. EDITH CHAQUEHUAMANI: Hi. Obviously I'm
6 a translator. Hello. My name is Edith
7 Chaquehuamani. My son is Andreas [phonetic]
8 Chaquehuamani. He is - - he's very, very happy.
9 Thank you for the support for my son. And he is
10 a little nervous because he is starting Monday
11 [phonetic] and he is happy where he - - school.
12 He come and say, "Mamma, everything's okay. I
13 love [phonetic] my new teachers." He is very -
14 - and I have my - - . So thank you so much,
15 Icahn 7.

16 [Audience Applause]

17 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
18 Kimberly Mina.

19 MS. KIMBERLY MINA: I have been a teacher at
20 Icahn 7 and also at - - in the Bronx. I think
21 our shared goal is to educate all of the
22 students that live in the Bronx. That is what
23 Icahn 7 is doing as well as PS 93. I think it's
24 important to realize that I don't think anyone's
25 intention is to take away space or resources

1 from another school. We just want all of our
2 students to get the best education. I think the
3 way our school runs and also the way PS 93 runs,
4 it runs very smooth. There's always - - to a
5 school and it would never come to the point
6 where any student is without space or without a
7 program that would benefit them. I think
8 working together is the way to go, and if we do
9 - - right now and we will continue to do it in
10 the future. Thank you.

11 [Audience Applause]

12 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
13 Shakina Foventain [phonetic].

14 MS. SHAKINA FOVENTAIN: Good evening
15 everyone to hear my voice. I thank you so much
16 for being here tonight, and I'm really happy
17 about everyone sharing and giving their input
18 because it's enlightening and it's informative
19 and it helps us to reach our goals. Everyone
20 said some really informative and profound
21 things, and I hear a lot of talk about
22 community; people concerned about the impact
23 that this school is going to have on the
24 community. And I believe when we have a shared
25 or a common goal, we work together. As my

1 colleague said, Miss Mina, we work really
2 smooth together. There's a lot of
3 communication. All of the educators in this
4 building are determined, and I see a lot of
5 passion - - could say about passion about what
6 we do, and we put our best foot forward, and we
7 have a common goal, and that's to teach the
8 children. And since everyone said something so
9 informative and profound, it's been really very
10 helpful to me. I have one question, and that
11 question would be "What are the promises that
12 have gone unanswered? And what are the promises
13 that we are concerned about that won't be met?"
14 That's my only question because I think that's
15 really what the districts - - is be sincere and
16 honest. I think the concern is not which ones
17 [phonetic] or with how [phonetic], and that's
18 what I want to - - . I want to know what are
19 the promises that are going back to - - ?

20 [Audience Applause]

21 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
22 Dana Pompa.

23 MS. DANA POMPA: Good evening. I'm
24 currently a teacher here at Icahn 7, and I just
25 wanted to speak on the concern of loss of space

1 that PS 93 has. I teach 3rd grade, and with
2 that I teach art, I teach music, I teach
3 technology, and I teach dance inside my room.
4 I'm not taking any extra space. I'm not taking
5 space away from anyone else. It is possible
6 that both schools can have the extracurricular
7 activities and not take up any more space. I've
8 been doing it for two years now, so I do know
9 that it is possible to do without expanding and
10 taking up more space than needed. Thank you.

11 [Audience Applause]

12 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Our next speaker is
13 Rebecca Tavarez.

14 MS. REBECCA TUVAREZ: Hi. My daughter
15 attends 1st grade here at Icahn 7. I was not
16 born here. I was born in the Bedford Park
17 section of the Bronx. My husband was born in
18 the University section of the Bronx. We are
19 both University Heights section of the Bronx.
20 We are both products of a public school
21 education. We are both college educated. My
22 child and subsequent three, they are complete
23 products of this environment. We moved down
24 here ten years ago. We are - - . My oldest
25 child getting into Icahn 7 has allowed us to

1 make the decision to remain in this community.
2 I believe in the Bronx. I believe in this city.
3 I believe in public education, and that includes
4 charter school education. My daughter has
5 noticed the other school that is here. She's
6 six years old, but she notices. She has not
7 once said that her school's better than the
8 other school. She has not once said that her
9 school is worse than the other school. She just
10 knows that there are other kids who don't wear
11 the same uniform as her. She's happy. She's
12 smart. She's challenged. So basically that's
13 my only hope for her. I want her to be safe and
14 happy and it means, for a reason, - - two
15 schools. I believe in that. I believe in
16 education for every kid--equal, beautiful
17 education. I want every kid to have the same
18 happiness that my kids have. So my main goal is
19 for these two schools to be happy together
20 because a happy school environment means a happy
21 kid for me. That's all any parent could ever
22 ask for. All right? Thank you.

23 [Audience Applause]

24 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: The next speaker is
25 Ingrid Almonte.

1 MS. INGRID ALMONTE: Good evening all.
2 Thank you very much. My name is Ingrid. I have
3 a six-year-old daughter in 1st grade at Icahn.
4 It's great to meet most of you members which
5 I've never seen before, so it's very good. And
6 four of you parents had very, very good points.
7 It's kind of sad that there's not enough PS 93
8 parents here. I am a Bronx resident all my
9 life. I have a son who has gone to a Catholic
10 school, a private school. I see the difference
11 between what Icahn and charter schools have
12 done. I know public schools are divided, and I
13 have decided that as a public school growing up,
14 I know that they're saying that public school
15 can teach. There's passionate teachers and
16 there are students who are creative and really
17 want things done. I'm also a college graduate,
18 and I want to let you all know that--I think you
19 mentioned it before--admissions would not be
20 impacted. I'm a financial person, so revenue I
21 don't think is the issue in this case. I'm also
22 a taxpayer and a Bronx resident, so I pay
23 Federal taxes. I pay State taxes and I pay City
24 taxes. And it should go to wherever they need
25 to go, whether it's the Bronx or New York, I

1 should be able to help my children and myself
2 - - . So thank you.

3 [Audience Applause]

4 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: And our final public
5 speaker is Stella O'Fainey [phonetic]? O'Bain
6 [phonetic]. Sorry.

7 MS. STELLA O'BAIN: Good evening. My name
8 is Stella O'Bain [phonetic], a parent from PS
9 93. I have two kids - - and I'm planning to
10 make another one here. I have so many issues,
11 and I've - - so I don't - - . My niece and
12 nephews used to be at this school. I used to
13 pick them up. And then I tried to remember,
14 here is - - safe. That's when I came to this
15 country what I saw. And then all of a sudden -
16 - . It's up to - - now. But my issue is this
17 is - - this school since I started coming here.
18 Before coming - - why - - 5th grade over here,
19 and why isn't PS 93 getting 5th grade over here.
20 I mean we'll love it if our kids have to go up
21 to 8th grade - - . So if we should give up on
22 our space and everything the Icahn - - it's like
23 giving someone the space to come and sit beside
24 when - - pushing away from the chair. It's not
25 being fair to us at all. And then my other - -

1 . I remember my - - last year in
2 Kindergarten, and then - - I mean some issues.
3 There's a lot more - - control him because like
4 - - . When my son started here in - - the class
5 was just 11 kids [phonetic]. There were so many
6 - - I mean much space to go around. Now they
7 have it. And then one other thing. The last
8 time I went to - - and update. My kids wanted
9 to go to the bathroom. We had to go to big
10 bathroom. And then - - just so many - - issues
11 over here. There's so many - - if you're
12 looking at these things that the kids are
13 sharing together, I don't think there'd be - - .
14 And then they're going to have water fountains
15 on both floors. My son is on the 4th floor. He
16 always has to come to the 1st floor to get water.
17 And then - - pushing all these kids in here will
18 be - - all these kids in the community. We are
19 not going to - - but it's all updated. They
20 came here - - like maybe move forward or take -
21 - what the other schools are doing, but they're
22 not being referred to as PS 93. Our kids love
23 this school. My children, I was just - - them
24 up this afternoon to bring them here, and I was
25 - - oh, we have to go - - and my - -, my - - ,

1 "Mom, I love my school. I love - - . I don't
2 want to lose - - ." These kids think there's
3 something else going on. - - , but please, we
4 need this - - PS 93, not for Icahn.

5 [Audience Applause]

6 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Thank you. At this
7 time the Speaker List is now exhausted, and we
8 will now go to any closing remarks that's
9 desired by the SLC or the representatives. Are
10 there any closing remarks by the members of the
11 SLC? We'll go forth around the table. Mr.
12 Litt? We'll pass the microphone down.

13 MR. LITT: Excuse me for jumping up every
14 couple of minutes. I'm suffering from a bad
15 back and I can't sit too long. Once again I
16 thank you for the opportunity that we have here
17 to have our school here, and I thank you for
18 this evening. Please let me clarify something.
19 Again, I really would like to know if and when
20 any promise was made that was not kept. Because
21 I'm saying publicly, and I know this meeting is
22 being audio and videotaped, I would personally
23 take responsibility for that. If a promise was
24 made in any of - - Icahn Schools, and that
25 promise was not made, Jeff Litt is going to take

1 personal responsibility for that. Please
2 allow me to explain something. I came from - -
3 . They know what they do. Each school
4 building has a certain number of seats in it
5 based upon the size and the configuration of
6 rooms. Let's say this building was built for
7 1,500 seats, and we were over here. Mr. Kaplan
8 would have 1,500 students. Unfortunately,
9 sometimes the DOE goes above it. We are not
10 here. I'm giving you my word, and I want you to
11 hold me accountable. We are not here to take
12 away a science program, an art program, a music
13 program. That is not going to happen. DOE
14 would not allow it to happen. And when we
15 requested to have our school here, they go
16 through a very extensive study. I am not
17 involved in it. They're not involved in it.
18 There's a whole new committee that looks to see
19 what happens if we put a charter school there.
20 Is there room to grow? We currently have an
21 allocation of 14 rooms. We only have K through
22 3 right now. K to 3 is four grades. That's
23 eight classes. Those rooms were already
24 allocated to us. They were already set aside
25 for us. If Mr. Kaplan and his team and his

1 colleagues and his superintendent want to go
2 to 6th grade or whatever grade they want to go
3 to, that has nothing to do with us. They've
4 already set aside those rooms. Icahn children
5 will never take any program away from PS 93
6 children. It's not going to happen. It hasn't
7 happened when we had Icahn 2 here. It hasn't
8 happened when we were collocated in PS 146 in
9 District 8. It doesn't happen in PS 4 in
10 District 9 where we're collocated. And I would
11 be very happy to join Miss Sullivan and her team
12 and Mr. Kaplan in regard to the lunch issue.
13 From the last school that I was principal of in
14 Washington Heights had 2,500 children. That's a
15 lot. And we worked out lunch, and I'd be very
16 happy to assist them and join with them and do
17 whatever we can to make what is called a
18 cohesive school. We'd like to have our
19 wonderful relationship continue. Thank you.
20 Have a good evening.

21 [Audience Applause]

22 MR. MARSH: So one of the major focuses was
23 that guaranteeing that everyone--all of the
24 children--have a quality and equal education.
25 So the gentleman, he mentioned that PS 93 is the

1 host. So is Icahn 7 the parasite because
2 they're getting - - funds that are not extended
3 to PS 93 because if they weren't here, all of
4 the children would be receiving those funds. Is
5 Icahn 7 paying rent to be in this building? The
6 answer to that is no. So they're staying here
7 for free while they're building \$35 million
8 schools. So if he wants to see the deeper issue
9 about what's going on, Icahn is providing good
10 service because they don't have classroom with
11 32 students like PS 93 does. Why is that?
12 Because that's the true essence of the matter.
13 We're talking about equal education--not
14 separate, but equal. We all know what that is,
15 right? 1954, Brown vs. Board of Education.

16 MALE VOICE: DOE.

17 MR. MARSH: And I know - - and this
18 gentleman, he said that he came from the
19 Department of Education. So now he has a second
20 career where they're getting private funds. At
21 this point I don't want to go there because I
22 think you understand where I'm going with this,
23 and this is what charter schools are getting
24 while the Department of Education schools are
25 basically the second-class citizens in the

1 building that was his at one point in time.
2 So when you all leave, go look at numbers,
3 please, 'cause I'm not speaking of conjecture or
4 pulling this out of the sky. Look at the
5 numbers. Look at how much people are getting
6 paid. Look at what donations they're getting,
7 what grants they're getting, what funding
8 they're getting. Look at how much the
9 Department of Education is giving them to
10 provide the service they provide, and look at
11 how much PS 93 is getting to provide the same
12 service. Okay? Look at are they - - common
13 core or are they - - new aspects of the common
14 core. Let's get to the real issues here. It's
15 not about kicking anyone out. This has
16 absolutely nothing to do with kicking anyone
17 out. Okay? What it has to do with is fair and
18 quality education for the children. And if
19 you're going to stand up here and get on the
20 microphone and say to people, "Please, look up
21 the facts." And before I leave, again, if
22 you're in the building and you're housing and
23 you're educating children, and you're paying no
24 rent, okay, because it costs money to run this
25 building, and teach children. And also the last

1 thing with Google, there are other reviews
2 besides Google reviews. So if Google has only
3 good reviews, please look at some other reviews.
4 Okay? Thank you.

5 [Audience Applause]

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: Just a quick comment because
7 we've got to move on. Regarding the building -
8 - , the DOE for years has been using - - formula
9 building - - . It doesn't matter that there was
10 a blue book working group that started working -
11 - and their recommendation - - legal since
12 December. Okay? The DOE hasn't had to explain
13 - - the building - - claiming that there was
14 more room than there actually is. And that's -
15 - in all collocation schools--magnet, charter,
16 even DOE collocated schools. And so that's been
17 sitting there. So - - that the book said this.
18 No, that's not a legitimate statement. And
19 lastly, I'm going to ask you maybe one - - . I
20 would like to know what is the percentage of
21 students from this room, from this district,
22 from Icahn that belongs? What is the
23 percentage? Because you say over 60,000
24 applicants - - . Where are these kids coming
25 from? Because I know they're not coming from

1 this area. And this area has a very
2 overcrowding issue. We've had that problem for
3 years. All the private - - schools around this
4 area are overcrowded. And every school that had
5 a little space, they shoved and shoved the
6 school right into it instead of expanding.
7 Meanwhile everybody else is busting at the
8 seams. And that's an issue that's been going on
9 for years. So that's just - - I needed for the
10 - - . Maybe next week because I'd hate - -
11 that's going to be part of my - - .

12 [Audience Applause]

13 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Mr. Kaplan just wants
14 to make a clarifying comment that was brought up
15 in terms of grade configurations.

16 PRINCIPAL KAPLAN: Yes, I just want to talk
17 about - - proposal. But PS 93 is a K through 5
18 school. And we do pride ourselves on turning
19 out excellent students. And I - - as well as my
20 administration, the building, my cabinet, and
21 we've spoken about expanding our school. We've
22 spoken about expanding our Pre-K according to
23 the Mayor's initiative as well as our
24 Chancellor's initiative. So we have a vision as
25 well, and I want to make it very clear to

1 everyone that we are looking to grow, and we
2 do turn out an excellent student here at PS 93.
3 And you made an excellent comment, and I know I
4 shouldn't take much time. When they talk about
5 the building utilization plan, I mean they're
6 looking at rooms, but there's also the quality
7 of life at our school. PS 93 has had a
8 successful past, and we look forward to a
9 successful future, growing and growing and
10 growing as we welcome Pre-K through 5 students
11 to our building. And I thank everyone for
12 coming out this evening.

13 [Audience Applause]

14 SUPERINTENDANT AMES: Again, we welcome any
15 comments and feedback prior to 24 hours before
16 the - - policy votes on this proposal. And that
17 meeting again will take place on Wednesday, May
18 20th. That will be held at 6 p.m. at the
19 Prospect Heights campus located at 883 Classon
20 Ave. in Brooklyn, New York 11225, and we will
21 post that information publicly. The email
22 address, again, and phone number where comments
23 can be made are at D08proposals@schools.NYC.gov,
24 and the dedicated line for comment is (212) 374-
25 5159. Thank you for your participation. This

1 joint public hearing is now closed.

2 [END RECORDING 448458MASTER.MP3]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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3 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
4 audio files and have been transcribed to the
5 best of my ability. I further certify that I am
6 not connected by blood, marriage or employment
7 with any of the parties herein nor interested
8 directly or indirectly in the matter
9 transcribed.

10
11
12 Signature:

Judy Hamilton

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14 Date: May 10, 2015
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