Department of Education
Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

Gateway School for Environmental Research and Technology (08X295)
Grades 9-12
1980 Lafayette Avenue, Bronx, NY 10473
December 2011

Fact Sheet: Proposed Phase-out and Replacement of Gateway School for Environmental Research and Technology (08X295)

Overview

In a concerted effort to ensure that all students have high-quality educational programs, the Department of Education (DOE) annually reviews the performance of all schools Citywide. Over the past several years, despite the best efforts of the community and the DOE to support Gateway School for Environmental Research and Technology ("Gateway"), the school has struggled to meet basic requirements for student success.

On November 8, 2011, Cluster Leader Jose Ruiz met with Gateway's school leadership team and parents to discuss what is working at the school, what needs to be improved, and how the community can work together to better serve students.

Based on an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative data and community feedback, the DOE has determined that Gateway does not have the capacity to quickly improve and is proposing that the school be phased out.

Proposing to phase out a school is the most difficult decision we make. We are proposing to phase out Gateway because it is the right action for current and future students in this community. If the proposal to phase out Gateway is approved**,** the school would phase out gradually over the next several years. The school would close in June 2015 after its phase-out is complete. A new high school will be proposed to open in September 2012 in the building where Gateway is located.

We hope you share our view that we can—and must—do better for students. The DOE will continue to work closely with Gateway staff and families to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed in school.

Performance Summary

Graduation Rate		Progress Report Grade			Quality Review Rating
2010-2011 (4 year rate)	2010-2011 (6 year rate)	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2010-11
52%	64%	C	B	D	Proficient

- Graduation rates at Gateway have been declining over the last four years. Gateway's four-year graduation rate (including August graduates) of 52% in 2011 was well below the Citywide average of 65.1%. (Citywide average is based on the 2010 New York State reported graduation results for NYCDOE students.)

- If Regents diplomas alone counted toward graduation—as will be the case next school year—the four-year graduation rate at Gateway would drop to just 37%, putting Gateway in the bottom 13% of high schools Citywide and below the Citywide average of 60%.

- First year credit accumulation is a key predictor of student success because students who fall behind early on in high school often have trouble getting back on track to graduate. In 2010-2011, 69% of first-year students at Gateway earned at least 10 credits. This rate of credit accumulation puts Gateway in the bottom 20% of high schools Citywide. (The Progress Report defines students earning at least 10 credits as students who earn at least 6 of those 10 credits in 3 of the following 4 subject areas: Math, English, Science, and/or Social Studies.)

- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. Gateway earned an overall D grade on its 2010-11 annual Progress Report, with a D grade on Student Progress, a C grade on Student Performance and an F grade on School Environment.

- Only 27% of students in the Class of 2010 (students who entered high school in September 2006) enrolled in a two- or four-year college by December 31, 2010. This is 23 percentage points below the Citywide average of 50%.

- The school's attendance rate remains below most other high schools. The 2010-2011 attendance rate was 80% compared to the Citywide high school average of 86%, putting Gateway in the bottom 17% of all high schools Citywide in terms of attendance.

- Safety issues have been a concern at the school. On the 2011 New York City School Survey, only two-thirds of student respondents reported feeling safe in the hallways, bathrooms, and locker rooms at Gateway, and only 38% of teacher respondents agreed that discipline and order were maintained at Gateway.

Overview of Past Strategic Improvement Efforts at Gateway School for Environmental Research and Technology

Staff members have worked hard to improve Gateway School for Environmental Research and Technology but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school's efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports including:

Leadership Support:

- Extensive leadership training for the principal and assistant principals to help them set clear goals for the school while developing the school's Comprehensive Education Plan and Language Allocation Plan.

- Coached and trained leadership on implementing plans in support of citywide instructional initiative.

- Supported leadership and staff in generating meaningful strategies for improving the quality of classroom visitations and instructional feedback, as a way to raise teacher practice and improve student outcomes.

Instructional Support:

- Supported and trained teachers in classroom engagement strategies as a way to deepen instructional expectations, student interest, and classroom rigor.

- Supported the school in assessment design, curriculum mapping, and student feedback as tools aimed at meeting the necessary standards and expected student outcomes.

- Offered training for staff on successful ways to assess student progress through rigorous tasks and use the information to inform and improve teacher practice.

Operational Support:

- Advised school staff on budgeting, human resources, teacher recruitment and building management.

- Supported school staff on developing strategies and practices for improving student attendance and creating strategies for targeting attendance concerns.

- Supported school staff in Special Education compliance issues, including timely writing of Individualized Education Plans, alternative assessments and other supports and strategies for improving instruction and plans for students with disabilities.

Student Support:

- Trained the School Based Support Team in comprehensive guidance programs and evidence based counseling strategies targeted at developing and improving the capacity for social and emotional supports at the school level.

- Facilitated comprehensive supports to review disciplinary and procedural protocols targeted at improving the school learning environment and impacting student outcomes.

What would the proposal mean for current students?

If this proposal is approved, Gateway would gradually phase out over the next several years. Our top priority is ensuring that current Gateway students are supported through graduation. Below are enrollment plans for current Gateway students if the school were to be phased out.

- **Current, first-time ninth grade students** would have the option of completing high school at Gateway if they continue to earn credits on schedule. They may also apply to attend a different high school as a tenth grader for September 2012 by participating in the second round of the High School Admissions Process.

- **Current, repeating ninth grade students** would complete high school at Gateway as long as they earn credits on schedule. As the school becomes smaller, these students would receive more individualized attention to support them toward graduation and to help them prepare for post-secondary education and/or career plans. Students would also be encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to review progress toward graduation.

- **Current 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students who are on track to graduate** would complete high school at Gateway if they continue to earn credits on schedule. As the school becomes smaller, these students would receive more individualized attention to support them toward graduation and to help them prepare for post-secondary education and/or career plans. Students would also be encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to review progress toward graduation.

- **Current 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students who are not on track to graduate** should meet with their guidance counselors to review their progress toward graduation and to discuss their options. Students could complete high school at Gateway or consider applying to a transfer high school.

If the proposal to phase out Gateway is approved, the school would not admit new ninth grade students after the end of this school year. Gateway would continue to serve students currently enrolled in the school. The school would close in June 2015 after its phase-out is complete.

Supporting Current Students

The DOE remains focused on helping Gateway students succeed. If this proposal is approved, Gateway would be provided targeted, customized and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance and enrollment including, but not limited to:

- Helping the school provide students with options that support their advancement and fully prepare students for their next transition point;
- Working with school staff to foster a positive culture; and
- Supporting school leadership in efficiently and strategically allocating resources to ensure a consistent and coherent school environment focused on student outcomes.

Plans for New Schools for the Gateway and the Bronx Community

As we work together to create better options for the Gateway community and the Bronx community, we will keep in mind what has worked at Gateway and do our best to incorporate those positive elements into the plans for a replacement school. For example:

- We will work with the community to retain partnerships with community organizations that are offering valuable services to the school community; and
- We will consider what elements of the school structure are working and do our best to include those features in a replacement school.

Next Steps and What You Can Expect

In January, the DOE will invite the Gateway community to participate in a joint public hearing co-hosted by the DOE, the District 8 Community Education Council and Gateway's school leadership team. As soon as the hearing has been scheduled, we will notify you of the date and also share with you the formal phase-out proposal. During the joint public hearing, community members, including parents and students, will be able to share their thoughts on the phase-out proposal.

The proposal to phase out Gateway will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy, which is composed of members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg and the five Borough Presidents, during a public meeting scheduled for **February 9, 2012.** During this meeting, the public will have another opportunity to comment on the proposal. If the PEP approves the proposal, Gateway would not accept new students next school year. If the proposal to open a new high school in the building where Gateway is located is approved, the new school would open in September.

Sharing Your Concerns and Questions

The DOE is seeking your feedback on the proposal. We will record your comments and include them in our Analysis of Public Comment, which is presented to the PEP prior to the vote on the proposal. Please submit your comments at:

Phone: 212-374-5159
Online: http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/bronx/proposal?id=83