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

**Expansion of YWLS
in the X117 Building**

January 15, 2015

5:30 p.m.

1 [START RECORDING - 433661MASTER.MP3]

2 FEMALE VOICE #1: Good evening everyone.

3 I'm going to ask that everyone have a seat
4 please. If everyone would have a seat. If at
5 this time you would bring your attention to the
6 front, if you would refrain from talking. If
7 you are a student representing 117, please make
8 sure you do not have on your head, you do not
9 have on a hat.

10 I recognize that we have a standing room
11 only, which is excellent. That shows our love
12 and our dedication for our schools. That's for
13 both of us and I commend all of you.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 And I just want to remind you that as people
16 come forward to speak, we will not speak while
17 they're speaking. We are being respectful,
18 responsible and we are being safe. That is what
19 I'm going to hold you accountable to especially
20 those students because you represent me. So I
21 know I will not be speaking tonight.

22 This is a joint hearing. The co-directors
23 of the Young Women's Leadership School is also
24 here, if you'd just stand up and turn around.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 And Ms. Mary Anna is also coming forward.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 And I would like to introduce Ms. Delise
4 Jones, the principal from MS 117.

5 [APPLAUSE]

6 MS. DELISE JONES: Thank you. I would also
7 again, before I move from the front at all times
8 please be respectful. Please. Please be
9 respectful. Please be responsible. And that is
10 to all of you. Thank you very much,
11 Superintendent Rosario.

12 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Thank you, Ms.
13 Delise. Good evening everyone.

14 ALL: Good evening.

15 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: It is my honor and
16 pleasure to be here tonight to see how involved
17 the community is in their children's education.
18 So I want to commend all of you sitting here
19 tonight, staff, parents and students. Thank you
20 for being vested in the work that we are doing
21 as a New York City School System. Thank you.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 I want to remind us exactly what Ms. Delise
24 said to you. We are here to show our students
25 and our families that we know how to comport

1 ourselves. So as I know that this can be an
2 emotional issue, I want to make sure that we
3 understand that respect and responsibility that
4 Ms. Delise so eloquently put, that it must
5 uphold. We are going to give everyone the right
6 to speak, the right to be listened to and I will
7 accept nothing less. Are we clear?

8 Both schools are mine. I'm the district
9 superintendent. I represent Chancellor Carmen
10 Farina. I represent my 51 schools, proud to be
11 here. So we are going to listen and we are
12 going to move forward. Thank you again for
13 being here. We are now going to begin.

14 Good evening. This is a joint public
15 hearing of the Department of Education,
16 Community Education Council Nine and school
17 leadership teams for IS 117, Joseph H. Wade
18 Academies and the Young Women's Leadership
19 School of the Bronx. I am the Community School
20 Superintendent, Leticia Rodriguez Rosario.
21 Thank you again for being here.

22 I hope that there will be translation coming
23 soon and it will be in the back. So if you need
24 translation [SPANISH SPOKEN]. All right? Thank
25 you.

1 We have asked the District Nine Community
2 Education Council and school leadership teams of
3 IS 117 and YWLS Bronx to participate in this
4 joint public hearing. I am joined tonight by
5 April Crittenden from the IS 117 SL team and
6 Christina McNamee from the YWLS Bronx SL team,
7 as well as Marilyn Espada, President and Nora
8 McDonald, Treasurer from CEC 9. Okay?

9 This hearing is being recorded. The purpose
10 of this hearing is for you to provide comments
11 about the proposal. Before I describe the
12 proposal, I want to make sure you are all aware
13 of the opportunity to provide your input. All,
14 all those who wish to speak must sign up in the
15 speaker sign up area located just outside the
16 auditorium. The sign up list will close in 15
17 minutes. Speakers will be given the floor in
18 order that they signed up, in the order that
19 they are signed up. All comments are limited to
20 two minutes. Let me say that again. All
21 comments are limited to two minutes.

22 I also want to remind you that if you signed
23 up on a sheet other than the one that says DOE,
24 you must sign up on the DOE sheet. That is the
25 only sheet that we are going to go from. I'll

1 say it again. You must have signed up on the
2 official sheet from the Department of Education
3 to be heard. If you signed a separate sheet,
4 you need to go to the back and re-sign up on the
5 DOE sheet. Okay I want to make sure everybody
6 understand that. Okay.

7 There may be elected officials who arrive at
8 different times throughout the evening. If they
9 wish to speak, we will do our best to
10 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.
11 Those who are here at the start of the public
12 comment segment will be asked to speak first.
13 All comments will be mentioned in the analysis
14 of the public comment to be published and
15 provided to the Panel for Education Policy the
16 evening before the panel votes. That vote is
17 scheduled for January 29, 2015 and will be held
18 at the Taft campus.

19 In addition, we welcome any comments and
20 feedback you may have at any time before the
21 panel votes on both proposals. The e-mail
22 address and phone number where comments may be
23 made are D09proposals@schools.nyc.gov. I'll say
24 that one again, D09proposals@schools.nyc.gov.
25 And the phone number is as follows, 212-374-

1 5159, and I'll say that again, 212-374-5159.

2 The New York City Department of Education or
3 DOE is proposal to expand the grades served by
4 the Young Women's Leadership School of the Bronx
5 in School Building X117 from grades six through
6 eight, to grades six through twelve beginning in
7 2015/2016. Building X117 is located at 1865
8 Morris Avenue, Bronx, New York, 10453 in
9 community school district nine. Building X117
10 currently houses IS117 an exiting district
11 middle school that serves grades six through
12 eight. The YWLS Bronx, an existing all-girls
13 district school, that current serves grades six
14 through eight.

15 If the proposal is approved, beginning in
16 the 2015/2016 school year YWLS Bronx will expand
17 to serve grade nine in the X117 Building. YWLS
18 Bronx will add one additional grade each year
19 until the 2018/2019 school year when it will
20 offer grades six through twelve. YWLS will
21 continue to admit female students through the
22 middle school admissions process and will begin
23 admitting female high school students through
24 the citywide high school admissions process.

25 Concurrently, the DOE is planning an

1 enrollment reduction at IS117. Beginning in
2 September 2015 IS117 will admit a smaller
3 incoming sixth grade class of approximately 155
4 to 165 students as opposed to the approximately
5 205 to 215 students it has served in sixth grade
6 in recent years.

7 The school will continue to take in
8 approximately 155 to 165 sixth grade students in
9 future years until all grades, six through
10 eight, serve fewer students in 2017 through
11 2018.

12 IS117 is part of the school renewal program.
13 This proposal will not impact IS117's
14 participation in the school renewal program. If
15 this proposal is approved, once IS117 reaches a
16 smaller stable enrollment and YWLS Bronx is
17 fully phased into the X117 Building in 2018
18 through 2019, IS117 is projected to serve
19 approximately 465 to 495 students across grades
20 six through eight. And YWLS Bronx is projected
21 to serve approximately 560 through 630 students
22 across grades six through twelve, for a total of
23 1,025 to 1,125 students yielding a building
24 utilization rate of approximately 91% to 100%.

25 The DOE believes that X117 Building has

1 sufficient space to accommodate both schools
2 during and after the proposal. If approved,
3 this proposal is not expected to impact the
4 educational programming available to students
5 currently attending YWLS Bronx and IS117.
6 Enrollment at IS117 will be reduced in
7 accordance with the planned enrollment reduction
8 and over time this may result in a change of
9 some extra curricular activities as the school's
10 population decreases.

11 This proposal is not expected to impact
12 extra curricular offerings at YWLS Bronx, but
13 the way extra curricular programs are configured
14 within the building may be subject to change.
15 And I'm thanking you for your attention. Thank
16 you again, you are wonderful, thank you.

17 Presentation by hearing participants. Thank
18 you if the CC has elected to make a statement,
19 they're going to make presentations, correct?

20 The next presenter will be, you're doing--
21 okay, thank you. The next presenter will be
22 Marilyn Espada of the CEC and she will be
23 speaking to the audience.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 MS. MARILYN ESPADA: Thank you everyone for

1 coming today to support MS 117.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 Okay initially when the Community Education
4 Council was presented with the Young Women's
5 Leadership school proposal, it was just for
6 grades six through eight. Nothing was ever
7 mentioned that there would be an additional
8 proposal three years later to expand to grades
9 nine through twelve.

10 As they occupy the fourth floor, MS 117 is
11 currently without a parent room and our parent
12 coordinator's office is actually a custodian's
13 closet. That is not fair. As the school
14 leadership team sat with Ashley Davis and Bridge
15 Mercier [phonetic] to inform us about the
16 proposal on November 20 2014, we received
17 information that was not accurate.

18 Principal Delise Jones then received the
19 correct numbers of students that she would lose
20 within those three years of the expansion
21 proposal. After Principal Delise Jones looked
22 over the information, she reached out to Bridget
23 Mercer and Ashley Davis and our superintendent,
24 Ms. Rosario in which they all agreed that
25 another meeting should take place at MS 117 with

1 the school leadership team. And share the
2 information was that not presented in the
3 initial meeting.

4 Myself, as a CEC President and the SLT
5 parents felt that we were lied to. We were
6 given false information, false information was
7 given to us in which several times Ms. Davis and
8 Ms. Mercer were asked three different times from
9 parents and myself of the SLT was the
10 information accurate and they responded all
11 three times that the numbers were correct.

12 The SLT team were told that the expansion
13 would be from 30 to 45 students. Later on in
14 the meeting that we had December 8th we were told
15 that it was a mistake, that those were not the
16 numbers. That is unacceptable to use as parents
17 because this is our children that the DOE is
18 playing games with. The DOE should come to
19 address the parents the first time with correct
20 information to begin with. We are not little
21 kids to be played with.

22 MS 117 currently has 620 students in grades
23 six through eight. We are the only zoned middle
24 school in this community serving all students
25 including English language learners and students

1 with disabilities, my son being one of them.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 If the Young Women's Leadership School
4 proposal is granted, our school register will
5 significantly decrease over the time from 620
6 students to 490 students. This means that MS
7 117 will continue to lose building space and
8 therefore, will have to turn away approximately
9 130 community students over the course of the
10 expansion. This means that the DOE will be
11 forcing sixth and eighth grade students from our
12 community to travel a mile or maybe more to
13 attend another school.

14 The Young Women's Leader School does not
15 service students with disabilities. They
16 currently serving about seven to eight English
17 language learners. Why should MS 117 downsize
18 student enrollment when they service all
19 children in the community?

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 I was told, I was told from the DOE that
22 this is not a done deal, that the decision has
23 not yet been made. But my question to the DOE
24 is if the decision is not made yet to expand the
25 Women's Leadership School, where will the eighth

1 grade young ladies go next year in September
2 if they have not yet received their high school
3 book to make the selection of their choice?
4 These ladies were not given the opportunity to
5 explore other high schools. As a parent
6 myself, my understanding was that the parents
7 and their children are the ones to make that
8 choice and that selection of high school and
9 it's not the administration's choice or
10 privilege to assign what school these young
11 ladies attend.

12 I am pretty sure that administration was not
13 held accountable for these actions and this is
14 unacceptable.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 [OFF MIC DISCUSSION]

17 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Now at this time
18 again, I'm thanking the audience. So far so
19 good. Let's keep up the great work. I
20 appreciate it. Thank you very much. The next
21 presenter will be the two Cole principals of the
22 Young Women's Leadership Academy. Thank you.

23 Again, a reminder, the words respect and
24 responsibility. Thank you.

25 MS. DEVON EISENBERG: Good evening. We also

1 want to thank everyone for coming tonight to
2 have their voices heard in the community. We
3 wanted to start off by showing a brief film that
4 our students made in partnership with Tribeca
5 Film that we feel summarizes who our school
6 really is.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 [FILM STARTED 23:00]

9 [FILM STOPPED 26:04]

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 MS. EISENBERG: So we feel that video
12 describes who we are from our students because
13 they're the ones who made it, to our teachers,
14 to the culture and the community that we have
15 created.

16 At the end of the day though our school has
17 a mission like every other school. And I think
18 that this is something we all have in common.
19 Our goal is very simple. It's to get our kids
20 to college no matter what school you're in,
21 whether you're in 117, whether you're in TYWLS,
22 we have the same mission. It's about helping
23 our children get to college.

24 We live in the Bronx. We are in crisis.
25 Our children are not making it and it is our

1 responsibility to help them make it. And that
2 is the mission of every school and ours is not
3 unique in that. What makes us unique is that we
4 are an all-girls school and we share the space
5 with 117.

6 We have partnerships like any other school.
7 We have three major partnerships that help us
8 achieve what we do. We are partnered with New
9 Visions. We have a partnership with Los Bravos
10 [phonetic] Foundation. And our biggest
11 partnership is with the Young Women's Leadership
12 Network. And they help us with them, they help
13 us do a great deal.

14 MS. LE MARIE LAUREANS: We also want to
15 share some other partnerships we have that we've
16 been fortunate enough to receive through grants
17 we've written to help provide our students with
18 other opportunities.

19 This year we were very fortunate to get
20 partnered with Girls, Inc. through the--

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 Through one of the Chancellor's new
23 initiatives to provide after school programs.
24 Through that grant we're able to provide our
25 girls with 50 different after school programs

1 till 6:00 p.m. every day.

2 Some other partnerships we've been able to
3 obtain this year are Computers for Youth.
4 Through that we worked hard to write a grant so
5 that our sixth grade students coming in could
6 all receive a laptop and learn how to use
7 technology to enhance their learning.

8 Some other big ones we have is for a
9 Teacher's College. We're a demonstrate site for
10 the Bronx. Through that grant we receive
11 consulting. Some other partnerships are through
12 summer camps where we're able to send our girls
13 for free to sleep away camp.

14 There are some other facts about our school
15 that we want to make sure that everyone here is
16 aware of. The first is that we are public
17 school. We are not a charter school. Fifty-
18 three, more than half of our students come from
19 Districts Nine and Ten, right here in the
20 community. Sixty-five percent of our students
21 enter our school with levels below proficiency.
22 Twenty-four percent of our students learn
23 differently and are either special population or
24 L students. Seventy-one percent of our
25 students, when they come this school, they make

1 at least one year's progress on their state
2 exams, which is something we are proud of.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 MS. EISENBERG: But at the end of the day
5 what really matters, why we're here, is about
6 educating children and getting them ready for
7 college. That is the bottom line of everything
8 we do. And we are very pleased with the work
9 that we are doing. So although our kids come
10 from different levels, some with disabilities,
11 some years behind, it does not matter because we
12 work with them and we help them grow.

13 These are the scores that we had last year
14 on the state test. We are the pink bars.
15 District Nine is the red bar. The green bar is
16 the Bronx. The other bars are New York City and
17 New York State. The point that we want to
18 highlight is that we take our students, we make
19 them work really hard and they can tell you that
20 is true.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 We have high expectations of them and
23 because of that we are able to help them move
24 this way. And we take pride in that because if
25 that is the only way, it is not enough to get

1 them to graduate from high school because a
2 high school diploma does not mean anything at
3 all. The only way they can be successful in
4 college is for these scores to continue to go
5 up.

6 So we're happy with the work that we're
7 doing with our students. But helping them be
8 successful in the middle school is not enough
9 because they need to go to high school and
10 continue in the same type of program, which is
11 why we are asking to expand here to continue the
12 good work that we're doing with our students.

13 So we start with them when they're little,
14 sorry--so we start with them when they're little
15 in the sixth grade. They come in very cute,
16 very small, then they start to grow up and we
17 want to continue working with our girls and we
18 want to hold their hands until they get to
19 college.

20 But at the end of the day what does that
21 mean for us in terms of what we're talking about
22 right now? In terms of what we're are
23 discussing here tonight it's about sharing
24 space. We already share space and we've been
25 doing so well for two and a half years. We've

1 had a few bumps in the road as we've been
2 growing. But we work well together and we've
3 resolved them.

4 At the end of the growth it will look
5 something like this. Fifty-five to 56% of the
6 school will TYWLS, that's a little bit more than
7 half, a little tiny bit more than half. The
8 other half will be Wade Academy.

9 All the research shows a smaller school
10 breeds success because you get to give
11 individualized attention. So from our part, we
12 want to stay small. Do not worry. We do not
13 want to take over this building. We want to be
14 small. We want to know our children. It's
15 important to us. And I think it will serve
16 everyone as well.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 MS. LAUREANS: And at the end of the day our
19 whole school community does believe that all of
20 our students, whether they go to TYWLS or
21 whether they go to 117, can be successful. And
22 if we work together, we can insure that all of
23 students are successful in the future. Thank
24 you.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again, I want to
2 thank the audience for the respectful and the
3 responsible way you are comporting yourself. A
4 reminder that let's continue in this fashion. I
5 am very proud of my community at this time,
6 very, very proud.

7 At this time I would now like to present the
8 SLT of IS 117. Please be patient. I think
9 we're having some technical issues. Please be
10 patient. And I want to share this is a
11 wonderful way to see how democracy works. When
12 people listen to each other, they hear each
13 other respectfully and we respectfully agree or
14 disagree. So this is a perfect example to all
15 our community, especially our students.

16 Again, thank you for your patience. We're
17 switching computers. Don't you love technology?

18 Again, I want to thank the entire audience
19 for your patience. I am so proud of my Bronx
20 community. I am so proud of my District Nine
21 community. Thank you again for being patient.
22 We should begin shortly. I think we're
23 starting.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 Thank you again for your respectful and

1 responsible responses. Thank you. I know
2 it's warm but I want to thank you again.

3 At this time we have now concluded the
4 formal presentations. We will now open the
5 floor for public comment. Speakers will be
6 given the floor in the order in that they signed
7 up. All comments are limited to two minutes.
8 We will begin with members of the school
9 leadership teams. First, if any public
10 representative comes in, we will accommodate as
11 best we can.

12 So again, we're going to start with public
13 comment. Formal presentations are now over and
14 we're going to begin with the public comments
15 from the school leadership teams from both
16 schools. The first speaker is Jana Lee.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 MS. JANA LEE: This microphone is perfect
19 for me.

20 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again, I'm going to
21 ask, I am going to ask that we remember the two
22 words that Ms. Delise started us off with,
23 respect, responsibility. We need to listen to
24 one another. I want to remind staff, I want to
25 remind parents that we are setting the example

1 for our students.

2 MS. LEE: This is much easier. All right so
3 hello. Hello ladies. My name is Ms. Lee. I am
4 a literacy and special education teacher. At
5 TYWLS, we--

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 At TYWLS we believe in our students, all of
8 them, disability or not. We treat them all with
9 love and as they know, sometimes it's tough
10 love. Tough love at TYWLS means holding all our
11 of students to the same high expectations and
12 standards. Disability or not we expect our
13 students to be their best and to do their best
14 at all times.

15 Nevertheless, we are aware of our special
16 education needs. We provide the support and
17 scaffolds necessary for our special ed students
18 to academically grow, advocate for themselves
19 and become strong active women in society.

20 Despite our range, wide range of
21 disabilities, we believe in the integrated co-
22 teaching environment. Our students learn best
23 when with all their sisters in the classroom,
24 not just in a room where they are with people
25 like them. Let me tell you the ICT classroom is

1 working for us. I've had the amazing
2 experience of working with the same group of
3 special ed girls for the last three years. I've
4 lived with them from the sixth grade now all the
5 way to the eighth. The ICT classroom with that
6 is working, I've witnessed tremendous grow.
7 Last year, specifically, 13% of our students
8 moved to a less restrictive environment.

9 In closing, our 18% special ed population is
10 comparable to the special ed population for the
11 rest of the district. As we grow, this figure
12 too will growth. However, I have no doubt that
13 we will continue to provide the same services
14 and support that we do now. Thank you.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: The next speaker,
17 Jane O'Connor of TYWLS.

18 [APPLAUSE]

19 MS. JANE O'CONNOR: Good evening everyone.
20 I'm Jane O'Connor. I am a special ed and
21 literacy teacher at, here at TYWLS in the Bronx.
22 Okay sorry and I would just like to talk to you
23 about the experiences of going to an all-girls
24 school. I am a product of an all-girls school
25 and I know the benefits.

1 Girls schools teach girls that there is an
2 enormous potential and power in being a girl.
3 At an all girls school, a girl can find her
4 voice and uncover her capabilities and
5 potential. All girl schools create a culture of
6 achievement, discovery and pure leadership.
7 Collaboration and teamwork are crucial 21st
8 century skills. And at TYWLS we develop these
9 skills with our students.

10 There is a unique sense of community at an
11 all girls school. An atmosphere of respect
12 provides girls, girls school student the
13 opportunity to share their views openly and
14 learn from peers. Girls school students report
15 giving and receiving respect at higher rates
16 than do their female peers at co-ed schools.
17 Girls school students spend more hours a week
18 doing homework, attending study groups, tutoring
19 others and working with their teachers than
20 their female peers at co-ed schools.

21 At TYWLS every girl learns to take on
22 academic challenges, express her thoughts and
23 opinions and participate in new experiences.
24 Girls school students report more engagement
25 with course related speaking and writing than do

1 their female peers at co-ed schools.

2 Eighty-four percent of all girls school
3 graduate feel that they were better prepared for
4 college writing assignments than their co-ed
5 peers. At TYWLS we are committed to excellence
6 in the stem areas, science, technology,
7 engineering and math. Students at all girls
8 school surpass their co-ed peers in reading,
9 writing and science. They demonstrate higher
10 educational aspirations and are more likely to
11 aspire to careers in engineering and science.
12 Three times as many alumni of girls schools plan
13 to become engineers than girls at co-ed schools.

14 Opportunities for girls to learn leadership
15 skills are more plentiful at all girls schools.
16 All leadership roles at an all girls school are
17 held by girls. Eighty percent of girls from
18 girls school hold leadership positions after
19 high school. Ninety percent of those attending
20 girls schools report belonging to a community
21 organization such as a civic or educational
22 group or an arts association. Nearly 100% of
23 girls school graduates go on to college.

24 So single sex education is not merely a
25 matter of separating girls and boys. It's about

1 making sure girls take center stage and apply
2 insights from research on how they grow and
3 learn. The combination of classroom, community
4 and culture makes an all girl education a
5 powerful transformative experience.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: The next speaker is
8 April Crittenden thank you.

9 [APPLAUSE]

10 MS. APRIL CRITTENDEN: I have two minutes.
11 So I have to run through this. Okay. As a
12 renewal school, MS 117 over the course will
13 become a community school The question is how
14 are they expected to serve the community with
15 fewer students and less space to do so?

16 We saw a video in the beginning of our
17 opposing school, kids in the hallway joyous and
18 everything. 117 we don't have space to do that.

19 The word community refers to a neighborhood
20 or a population of people in the area. Well
21 TYWLS only serves girls and those girls are
22 screened and come from all over the boroughs.
23 But this is still a community.

24 The question is how does this benefit the
25 community? The simple answer is, it really

1 doesn't. What happens to the families that
2 have provisions where their children that are in
3 middle school pick up their elementary kids to
4 try to keep the time slot going if they're
5 working? They would have to make other
6 provisions. Therefore, mom would have to leave
7 work early or something else. Money will be
8 lost things have to be done.

9 As a result of the expansion in the year
10 three, MS 117 has had to move 13 classes off the
11 fourth floor. This has resulted in a loss of
12 the parent family room. The parent coordinator
13 meets with the parents in a closet, literally,
14 made into an office.

15 This contradicts the citywide expectations
16 encouraging schools to establish a relationship
17 with the families in the community. This
18 requires a place where they are received and
19 welcomed.

20 For us to be a community we have to work
21 together. But if one side is unequally
22 balanced, it's no way to do that.

23 Last but not least, teamwork makes the dream
24 work. But if we don't have a team, it's never
25 going to work.

1 [APPLAUSE]

2 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: At this time next
3 speaker is Christina McNamee from TYWLS.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 MS. CHRISTINA MCNAMEE: Hi. My name is
6 Christina McNamee and I am the SOT chairperson,
7 the OT chapter leader and I'm the sixth grade
8 math teacher and I've taught sixth grade math
9 for the last three years.

10 When I sat down last night to think about
11 what I was going to say tonight about why our
12 high school expansion would be beneficial to our
13 community I kept coming back to this one thing.
14 That our school has very innovative practices
15 and that those practices have yielded very,
16 success over the last three years. I thought
17 about what the driving force was behind our
18 success and or behind our success and the one
19 thing I kept thinking was that we want what's
20 best for our students.

21 So for example, in our first year we noticed
22 that there was a lack of engagement. So our
23 teachers went out and researched and found PDs
24 and over the last three years we've seen that
25 the girls from sixth to eighth grade have

1 increased their engagement in the classrooms.

2 We know that in the future when they are
3 looking for jobs after college most of the jobs
4 are in the stem fields. We tailor our classroom
5 lessons around web quest, coding with the
6 students, and so forth.

7 We also know that in order to be successful
8 in the future the students need to be well
9 rounded. So besides academics, we have written
10 grants for after school clubs so that the girls
11 are training seeing eye dogs, working in arts
12 and crafts and in science and technology as
13 well.

14 In addition, we also recognize that some of
15 our students might need extra help. So we've
16 set up after school programs and Saturday school
17 programs and homework help available for the
18 students every day after school.

19 We've come up with all these practices and
20 strategies based on our innovation. We know
21 that the girls appreciate and it and we can tell
22 by their participation in class and their
23 enthusiasm and how they come into class school
24 hugging and smiling and being very happy to be
25 in school every day.

1 These innovative practices led to our
2 success and I really look forward to continue to
3 work and grow in building this sense of success
4 in this building in the future. Thank you.

5 [APPLAUSE]

6 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker
7 will be Pedro Lugo of IS 117, Wade Academy.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 MR. PEDRO LUGO: Good evening. My name is
10 Pedro Lugo. I am ESL teacher sixth, seventh and
11 eighth grade and chairman of the SLT team for
12 117.

13 Three years ago when we began sharing space
14 with the Young Women's Leadership Academy the
15 Office of Planning used a formula to determine
16 room usage and building utilization. They did
17 not take into consideration that moving TYWLS to
18 the fourth floor would result in MS 117 having
19 only one bathroom for male students. As a
20 result, all male students had to travel to the
21 first floor to go to the bathroom. This was
22 both unsafe and difficult.

23 In year two, Young Women's Leadership
24 Academy received a brand new bathroom on the
25 fourth floor for their students. However, the

1 boys at 117 still only have one bathroom
2 located on the first floor. It took three years
3 before accommodations were made for the male
4 students at 117.

5 The question is, what will happen with the
6 Young Women's Leadership Academy expands to 600
7 students? And will they be permitted to take
8 another bathroom from our students?

9 [APPLAUSE]

10 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker,
11 excuse me, our next speaker is Jessica Pineda
12 from Wade Academy, 117.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 MS. JESSICA PINEDA: Thank you. [SPANISH
15 SPOKEN]

16 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: I want to remind
17 everyone that we're listening.

18 MS. PINEDA: Okay [SPANISH SPOKEN].

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker is
21 Alphonsa Ponse from IS 117, Wade Academy.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 MS. ALPHONSA PONSE: [SPANISH SPOKEN]

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 [SPANISH SPOKEN]

1 [APPLAUSE]

2 [SPANISH SPOKEN]

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 [SPANISH SPOKEN]

5 [APPLAUSE]

6 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker is
7 Emma Duran [phonetic] from Wade Academy, IS 117.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 MS. EMMA DURAN: [SPANISH SPOKEN]

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 [SPANISH SPOKEN]

12 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker is
13 Darlene and I can't pronounce the last name.
14 What's the last name? Attung. Thank you. So
15 Darlene Attung of the--

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 --of the IS 117, Wade Academy.

18 MS. DARLENE ATTUNG: My name is Darlene
19 Attung. I'm an English teacher here at junior
20 high school 117 and just like the Young Ladies
21 Leadership Academy, where you want your students
22 to success we also do. The only difference,
23 however, is we cater to both boys and girls
24 within our community.

25 So when your leader mentioned that it's

1 going to be just a small percentage, for you
2 it might look like a small percentage. For us
3 it's very large because it means that we're
4 going to have a lot of boys. The young ladies,
5 the Young Women's Leadership, you do maybe some
6 of the community, but how much? You take only
7 the young ladies. Your school is screened. You
8 can refuse people.

9 Junior High School 117--

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 Junior High School 117 is open to our
12 community. Anyone shows up at our doors, we
13 take them in.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 It is on fear that we would bring a school
16 into our community that is eventually going to
17 displace some of our students. So we look at
18 our statistics and it shows that the dropout
19 rates is higher for male students than females.
20 When our male students are forced to travel
21 because we can no long accommodate them, a lot
22 of our students are going to drop out. All
23 right? You're going to lead to truancy. We're
24 the renewal school. What is the planned
25 District Nine? How are you going to accommodate

1 our students? It is our fear that if you talk
2 about equality just how you want your children
3 to succeed, we want. But we work for the entire
4 community, not for some.

5 [APPLAUSE]

6 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker,
7 our next speaker is Charise Lewis from TYWLS.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 A reminder again of respect and
10 responsibility.

11 MS. CHARISE LEWIS: Thank you. Good evening
12 everyone. I'm here as not just a community
13 associate of the Young Women's Leadership School
14 of the Bronx, but more importantly tonight I'm
15 here as a parent.

16 About three years ago my daughter, it was
17 time to make the middle school choice and I was
18 really afraid because the schools in our
19 district were really not the best schools. And
20 I was afraid that my daughter, all the hard work
21 that she put into elementary school would be for
22 naught if she came, went to a school that wasn't
23 worth my daughter.

24 So then I got postcard in the mail. And
25 that postcard was from the Young Women's

1 Leadership School of the Bronx.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 And I went and they gave us a really good
4 presentation and I said, yeah I've seen that
5 before. A lot of schools say a lot of things.
6 They say they're going to do a lot of things and
7 they don't come through what they said.
8 However, here at the school I can tell you we
9 did more and we received more than I ever
10 thought I would for my daughter. And when it
11 comes to a community, a community is not just a
12 location, a community is the people that make it
13 up and our school is a community school.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 We had a parent last year, first year the
16 parent came and that parent was diagnosed with
17 cancer. So our school community came together
18 and provided meals for that family every day
19 that family, the mother had to go for chemo.
20 That's a community.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 Our kids, they come to school every day and
23 they are happy and for sixth to eighth grade
24 they work their butts off and as you can see
25 from the charts, they have succeeded. And it is

1 our right now to fight for our kids to be able
2 to finish this out finish this race and finish
3 at the top. Thank you.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: I want to remind
6 the audience please do not record unless you
7 have permission and you do not. So please no
8 recordings. Also, our next speak is Sonia
9 Villanveva.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 What school? Excuse me what school? From
12 TYWLS.

13 MS. SONIA VILLANVEVA: Hi everybody. Good
14 evening everyone. My name is Sonia Villanveva
15 as they said. I want to share something. I
16 actually came to this school 117 a long time ago
17 and when the opportunity came where I can have
18 my daughter come to a wonderful all girls school
19 I took it. And when I found out it was here at
20 117, I knew it was part of the plan. So as I
21 stand here I know we're all on very
22 uncomfortable with the fact that we're giving,
23 we're removing. But you know what? As we stand
24 here today, we're showing that we can do it
25 because we're standing here nicely, quietly,

1 listening respectfully. Yeah it's going to
2 challenge us. Yeah we don't want to have to
3 give up what we have, but sometimes you have to
4 make the difference and you have to be the
5 difference. So it may be uncomfortable, but who
6 says we can't prove everyone else wrong and make
7 it work? Right?

8 So you may have a few students that can't
9 come, but if you looked at the plans that they
10 talked about, it's not going to make--your
11 students that are here are not going to be
12 removed. The students that we're talking about
13 are the students that are coming in. And there
14 are still possibilities that they're going to be
15 coming in. Everyone is going to be serviced.

16 We're all looking for different things. We
17 shouldn't downplay the fact that you are all boy
18 and girl school. That is awesome. You are
19 doing tremendous work. But some of us, as
20 parents, I want an all girls school for my
21 daughter and that's okay too.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 So as we stand here, all of us together,
24 again, it may be uncomfortable, but what message
25 are we sending to our children as we're sitting

1 here saying, this one is better than this one
2 and this one is better than that one? We can
3 show them all wrong. We can stand--look the
4 choice wasn't ours. But we're here and we can
5 make it work, but it's up to you. Now what are
6 you willing to do to make it work? Thank you.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker is
9 Marilyn Espada from the CEC and Wade Academy.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 MS. ESPADA: I'm going to stand up for this
12 one. As the CEC president I have sat in several
13 public hearings and today I am very disgusted
14 for the simple fact is that there's this young
15 man over here sitting down recording this public
16 hearing. I don't know this young man and I
17 surely don't want my face in his video. So I'm
18 asking the principals of TYWLS to have this
19 young man delete that video. That is
20 unacceptable. I did not give that young man my
21 permission to video record me. He can record
22 your staff and your students, but not me.

23 You don't see anyone from MS 117 doing any
24 recording.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again I want to
2 remind us of respect and responsibility. We
3 have been doing so well. Let's not lose it now.
4 I am very proud of this community right now. We
5 need to hold it together.

6 Our next speaker is Maria Torres from TYWLS.

7 MS. MARIA TORRES: Good afternoon. I'm a
8 sixth grade parent and unlike all of you, I'm
9 not from this community. And I chose to travel
10 to TYWLS to give my daughter the opportunity to
11 have a better education. And I have to say that
12 TYWLS is providing that and I'm pretty sure that
13 this building is big enough to house two schools
14 and be successful in whatever they want to do
15 and bring our kids to where they need to be
16 academically.

17 I think it's a shame that DOE has us batting
18 for a building, but unfortunately that's what we
19 need to do to make sure our kids get the
20 education that they deserve. As a parent from
21 District 12, there are not good schools in
22 District 12. And I could guarantee you that
23 because I had an older child that I had to take
24 out of my district and travel into the city to
25 take him to school. And I have to say the half

1 an hour that I travel to school is more than
2 worth it to give my daughter the opportunity
3 that she deserves.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker,
6 our next speaker is Charise Lewis. She spoke,
7 I'm sorry. Okay. At this time now we're going
8 to begin with our students. I want to remind
9 again our community, especially when our
10 students are speaking, that we are to give them
11 the respect and the responsibility.

12 It's okay. Again, parents, staff and fellow
13 students when our students are speaking again, I
14 am asking for the respect and the
15 responsibility. Again, remember what we're here
16 for. We're here for them. So the first student
17 is Winnifer Pichardo.

18 [APPLAUSE]

19 From 117, Wade Academy. A reminder again
20 that we only have two minutes per speaker
21 because we have over 60 people signed up.

22 MR. WINNIFER PICHARDO: Good afternoon. My
23 name is Winnifer. I am a seventh grade student
24 here at middle school 117 and I'm an English
25 language learner in a bilingual class. I have

1 learned a lot of--I have learned a lot in my
2 two years at 117. By the time the girl school
3 grows I will be in high school but what will
4 happen to the other bilingual students like me?

5 Middle school 117 has a full bilingual
6 program to help the students. The girls school
7 doesn't. So my question is, what will happen to
8 all the boys that live when the girl school
9 grows? Where will they go? What school will
10 they go and also if they go to another school
11 they might have to take buses, trains might be
12 like half and hour, hour to get to their school.

13 So I think that it's not fair that the TYWLS
14 school takes over our school. We came first
15 here and we will not go. Thank you.

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Our next speaker,
18 our next speaker is Daileni Rosario. Again,
19 from 117, Wade Academy.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 A reminder, respect and responsibility.

22 MS. DAILENI ROSARIO: Hi my name is Dileni
23 Rosario and I'm here to say that this is not
24 fair. This school belongs in this community.
25 Kids around here shouldn't need to take a bus or

1 a train to get to school. Even if I'm a
2 senior here, I still want junior high school,
3 117, Wade Academy to stay here. So please let
4 117 stay here. Thank you.

5 [APPLAUSE]

6 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Alberius Braya
7 [phonetic], 117, Wade Academy.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 One moment. I'm going to call a couple of
10 students so that they're ready to speak for the
11 reference of time so that the next student can
12 line up so that we can have them ready to speak.
13 I have Little Breath Duran [phonetic], Duran,
14 117, Wade Academy, I have Destiny Feliciano, I'm
15 not sure which school. They don't have the
16 names of the school--Wade Academy. Alison
17 Perello [phonetic], is that Wade Academy also.
18 Destiny Feliciano and Kailyn Viera and Eleanor
19 Johnson, Eliona Johnson and Aquanti Matthews
20 [phonetic], Wade Academy. And now we will
21 proceed, thank you.

22 MR. ALBERIUS BRAYA: Hello my name is
23 Alberius Braya. I'm here to say no to the all
24 girls school expansion. What I learned recently
25 is that this is the only middle school on - - in

1 this area. So if the all girl school take
2 over, some people are going to have to leave
3 117. Now since they can't enter 117, they're
4 going to have to travel through bus or train.

5 What I also learned through my experience is
6 that everyone in the world is not a good person.
7 Now I say God forbid what if your kid or child
8 on the bus or train is on the bus or train and a
9 stranger comes in and pulls out a weapon. Your
10 kid can't do anything. This is why, this would
11 never happen if the all girls school didn't take
12 up more space.

13 This is why I don't want the all girls
14 school to expand.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 MS. LIDDY BETH DURAN: Hello everyone. I'm
17 student Liddy Beth Duran [phonetic] and I am a
18 seventh grader from the school JHS 117.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 I disagree with the expansion of the school,
21 Young Women's Leadership Academy because I, I
22 don't think that they should take all up all our
23 school. My first reason of disagreeing with the
24 expansion is JHS 117 is the only middle school
25 in District Nine in our community. And if they

1 take away our school we will have to take
2 buses, trains or other type of transits to go to
3 another school.

4 My second reason is there will be no males
5 in this area to go to another school. And if
6 they have to go to another school, they're going
7 to have to go to the worst schools there are.

8 I disagree completely because I think they
9 should not take up our school. And if they do,
10 then we're going to have to fight back and take
11 back our school. It's ours.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again, we want to
14 get through our speakers. We want everyone to
15 be heard. We need everyone to be heard.

16 MS. KAILYN VIERA: Hello my name is Kailyn
17 Mercedes Viera and I'm a student at junior high
18 school 117. I am here to discuss the situation
19 of the Young Women's Leadership School.

20 They're slowly taking over junior high
21 school 117 and I think this isn't fair. If the
22 Young Women's Leadership School keeps expanding
23 at this rate, in three to six years, we won't
24 have the school at all. The students at JHS 117
25 aren't toys or animals. Anyone in the audience

1 who agrees with me, don't stay quiet, speak
2 up. There are Beacon kids who aren't nothing.
3 They care about this school. Girls from the
4 Young Women's Leadership School come to our
5 bathrooms and bully our girls. But if we got to
6 their school we can get detentions, suspended
7 or--

8 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: [Interposing]
9 respect and responsibility everyone. Everyone
10 is entitled to their opinion, again, respect and
11 responsibility. Continue.

12 MS. VIERA: This is not fair. Just because
13 we are students doesn't mean we don't have
14 rights. Can we co-exist without bullying each
15 other?

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 Good evening, my name is Aquanti Matthews.
18 I'm in the eighth grade, I'm an eighth grader at
19 TYWLS Bronx.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 TYWLS should expand because this is the
22 school where I know I can be myself and speak my
23 mind. This school should stay open because it's
24 the one school I know that will get you a
25 college counselor of your liking so your future

1 is going in the right direction.

2 It's the people here that make the school
3 special. Thank you.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 FEMALE VOICE #1: My son, Leona is too shy
6 to say it so I will be saying what she thinks.

7 AUDIENCE: Daughter.

8 FEMALE VOICE #1: Next year the eighth
9 graders won't be in this school, but we will
10 never forget they're people who don't attend
11 this school no more but they came today to show
12 what the school means to them. I would like to
13 say why would you like to give away a school
14 that welcome all types, not only girls, but also
15 boys and even kids with disabilities. Students
16 and even in the video y'all, oh my God, y'all
17 very own teacher said that they wanted to teach
18 young kids, not just girls plus this is the only
19 public - - school in miles. Why would it come
20 to, why would we come to let this go?

21 Also, I don't believe it is our fault they
22 didn't go to the high school fair. Their
23 teachers went, so why didn't they go? Had a
24 chance, they had a chance to like everyone else.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 MS. ALICIA PUELO: I'm Alicia Puelo
2 [phonetic] and I'm from the Wade Academy. We
3 respect all the girls from the girl's school and
4 we gave them their space. We let them expand
5 their classes to sixth grade to eighth. Now
6 they want to build a high school in our middle
7 school and that much space requires us to lose
8 the third floor. But we stopped them there.
9 They are taking over the school and soon the
10 Wade Academy will be an all girls school.
11 That's good for them but not for us.

12 We let them have their space, now they have
13 to give our space back.

14 [APPLAUSE]

15 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: I'm going to call
16 some students while we're waiting for a moment.
17 Madeline Santana, that's the parent coordinator
18 from--wait. That is the main list. Yeah I
19 think we called everyone on here. So now we're
20 up to here?

21 Okay. All right. At this time any student
22 that has signed up, please come to the front and
23 line up so we can hear you speak. Do so quietly
24 so that we can continue with the speakers.
25 Thank you very much. Thank you very much. You

1 can do it.

2 MS. DESTINY FELICIANO: Hi my name is
3 Destiny Feliciano and I am currently attending
4 the school JHS 117. I have been hearing that
5 the Young Women's Leadership Academy--

6 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: [Interposing]
7 again, I want to remind everyone that we need to
8 hear everyone speak. Go ahead young lady.

9 MS. FELICIANO: Okay. Hi my name is Destiny
10 Feliciano and I am currently attending the
11 school Joseph Wade Academy. I have been hearing
12 that the Young Women's Leadership Academies are
13 expanding until they have grades six through
14 twelve.

15 I'm here because I don't agree with this for
16 reasons such as every time they expand we lose
17 more space and more students. We have over 600
18 student attending and after the expansion we
19 will about one-third of the students we have
20 now. So if this does happen, this means that
21 Joseph Wade Academies will no longer exist.

22 Now I ask you, are you willing to take the
23 education from young men and some young women of
24 the future generation?

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Great job. Next
2 speaker.

3 MS. JO KITIES: Good afternoon students and
4 parents who are supporting this very important
5 day for us at IS 177. My name is Jo Kities
6 [phonetic] and I am very proud to attend and
7 represent 117. This is a great school, which
8 many students from elementary school would like
9 to attend. We are all like family at 117 and we
10 work as a family and a community.

11 At 117 we have a lot of activity, which
12 every student enjoys. We also go on many trips.
13 In addition, IS 177 has wonderful teachers that
14 care about us and our education. It's really
15 not fair that they keep taking our space. We
16 need the third floor. It's not possible that
17 all the kids that live around 117 have to be
18 sent to another school. It doesn't make sense
19 that 11 year old kids have a school in front of
20 their homes and they have to take buses to be
21 able to go to school.

22 The Department of Education needs to
23 understand that we were here first. To say the
24 truth it feels like they are kicking us out of
25 this building. This school was built for 117

1 and the community, not just for girls, but for
2 boys too.

3 The girls school has other spaces they could
4 go. We need our space. Our school should not
5 get smaller, it should grow. The community
6 needs the school. IS 117 was built for the
7 community and no one should come and take our
8 space. What would be the next step? Kick us
9 out and they would stay with the whole building.
10 We are all family so support IS 117. Thank you
11 for coming to this important day for us. Hear
12 my voice.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Just hand the mic
15 to each other. Again, a reminder of respect and
16 responsibility please.

17 FEMALE VOICE #2: Good evening all. I speak
18 on behalf of TYWLS as a second year student. I
19 support the expansion of TYWLS in the 117
20 building. I understand that three years ago we
21 were only supposed to expand as a middle school.
22 Right? But now all the great work we're doing,
23 we're going to become a high school.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 Grade schools deserve to expand. One

1 example of us being great we out scored the
2 surrounding areas.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 Although we may be screened and although our
5 students may come from all over the Bronx, it's
6 because of the diversity and that's how we learn
7 best.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 MS. MERCEDES CLARK: Good evening. My name
10 is Mercedes Clark. I am an eighth grader in the
11 Young Women Leadership School of the Bronx.
12 Being at TYWLS is such an honor. There are,
13 there have been many opportunities here for us
14 and being here helps me know I am going to be
15 successful.

16 I came here in sixth grade as a shy quiet
17 girl looking for a better future and being here
18 helped me open up, take leadership roles and
19 prepare for the best. TYWLS function increased
20 because here there's no judgement. There are
21 equal opportunities for everybody. Breaking our
22 school into two is like breaking a family.
23 Moving into high school it is my job to help my
24 younger sisters, sixth, seventh and eighth
25 graders follow the right path and be a role

1 model. We have an unbreakable bond that needs
2 to be kept.

3 Thank you for your time.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 EMILY LUNA: Good evening students, parents
6 and teachers. My name is Emily Luna and I'm
7 also here, and I am from TYWLS. I am here today
8 to explain why we should have a high school here
9 at TYWLS Bronx. Since I have been in this
10 school I've noticed that all teachers are good
11 educators and, sorry, and I know this because
12 teachers help you the best way they can.

13 Also, TYWLS is not doing this for
14 themselves. We are doing this for your
15 daughters. TYWLS just wants the best education
16 for your daughters. I'm a sixth grader right
17 now and I want to go to the high school at
18 TYWLS. Please don't take it away from me.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 MS. EMILY YEBITZ: I'm Emily Yebitz
21 [phonetic] from TYWLS and frankly I love going
22 to this school. I believe we should expand to
23 twelfth grade and we should go through high
24 school. If TYWLS expands to high school, then
25 girls will be able to experience going to this

1 wonderful school and wonderful staff and
2 teachers. This school has one of the best
3 learning environments I have seen. They even
4 have a lot of clubs and homework club to assist
5 kids with their homework when they need it.
6 Don't take high school away from TYWLS because
7 you could be taking away a lot more.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 MR. FUKES: Hello my name is Mr. Fukes
10 [phonetic]. I teach special education and these
11 are three of our students and we spent a lot of
12 time this week researching this issue and
13 getting facts and information and discussing our
14 feelings. This is Tabitha Garcia.

15 [APPLAUSE]

16 MS. TABITHA GARCIA: Will there be a middle
17 school that serves this community?

18 MS. JOSELYN: My name is Joselyn. We are
19 eighth grade students with IAP. We will have
20 the opportunity to go to your high school next
21 year.

22 MR. ISHMEL: My name is Ishmel [phonetic].
23 I am - - in the eighth grade. When I first
24 arrived to Joseph Wade Academy - - I was - - to
25 the staff. I want - - for myself and speak for

1 myself. Even staff member here are attempting
2 to give me a lot of - -. They never give up on
3 me. And the - - that I would like to thank
4 them. My teacher now, Mr. Fukes. He is such a
5 great teacher. I was - - this year but I want
6 to wish - - to go up to fourth grade so I can
7 stay here with my second family for a few more
8 years.

9 MR. FUKES: Ishmel asked me to read his
10 speech and I did not help him prepare this. He
11 did this at home.

12 My name is Ishmel Kensala and I am currently
13 in the eighth grade. When I first arrived to
14 Joseph H. Wade 117 I was shy. But thanks to the
15 staff at 117 I now have a voice and speak for
16 myself. Every staff member here at 117 gave me
17 a lot of support. They never gave up on me.
18 For that I will like to thank them.

19 My teacher now is Mr. Fukes. He is such a
20 great teacher. I will graduate this year, but I
21 wish 117 went up to the twelfth grade so I can
22 stay here with my second family for a few more
23 years.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 MS. ANASTASIA LITTLE: Good evening

1 everyone. My name is Anastasia J. Little. I
2 am here today to debate with the Young Women's
3 Leadership Academy because in the UDHR, which
4 stands for Universal Declaration of Human Rights
5 in 1948 all 30 men came together to make the
6 rule for everyone. The second man, the second
7 men came up with everyone is entitled to all
8 rights and freedom set forth in the declaration
9 with all discussions of any kind such as race,
10 color, sex, language, religion, population or
11 other opinion, natural of social origin,
12 property, birth or status.

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 MS. ANGELICA PEREZ: Good afternoon every.
15 My name is Angelica Perez and I go to 117.
16 Thank you for coming and showing your support.
17 I am here to tell you that we need the space for
18 our school activities. We have pride for our
19 school. We support the school. This school has
20 been here for years. We are not toys.

21 What I'm trying to say is that we fight for
22 what we believe in. So while the all girl
23 school grows, my school is getting smaller. I
24 know that the school has been through a lot but
25 the school is changing a lot. We care for 117.

1 I care for 117, so does the community. Don't
2 let this happen.

3 Our community needs it. Education is a
4 right. That is why we have to fight. I am a
5 girl. When I came to 117 they treated me like a
6 family. An all girl school, but how about the
7 boys? Now that's not being community. Look at
8 the all girl school shirt that says keep come
9 and girl power. That's just wrong. How about
10 the boys?

11 I thank you.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 MR. JASCARDI: Hi my name is Jascardi
14 [phonetic].

15 MR. JUSTIN: And my name is Justin.

16 MR. JASCARDI: If the all girls school goes
17 from six through twelve, 117 will take less
18 students, which will make some kids lose their
19 education.

20 MR. JUSTIN: Also, instead of expanding the
21 all girls school, we should expand junior high
22 school 117 and service the whole community.

23 MR. JASCARDI: Please be safe.

24 MR. JUSTIN: Be responsible.

25 MR. JASCARDI: Be respectful.

1 BOTH: The Wade Way.

2 [APPLAUSE]

3 MS. JANASIA: Hello, good evening. My name
4 is Janasia [phonetic] and I'm an eighth grader.
5 I've been here for three years. TYWLS is good
6 because girls don't get out the Bronx that much.
7 TYWLS show us the world out there. It's a
8 school that loves us and want us to succeed in
9 live.

10 I like being a TYWLS girl because it gives
11 me a chance to be in a better college and expand
12 my thinking. I want to stay here 'cause I want
13 my little sisters to look up to me as their
14 examples. We are a family. We need to stay
15 together. We have great co-directors and
16 teachers. We are a family.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 MS. JANA: Okay good evening. My name is
19 Jana [phonetic] and I go to TYWLS Bronx. I am
20 in the eighth grade. TYWLS should expand at 117
21 because our school is like a family. For
22 example, we have a big sister, little sister
23 program. Breaking us apart is like breaking up
24 a family. Thank you for your time.

25 [APPLAUSE]

1 MS. MILDRED: Good evening ladies and
2 gentlemen. My name is Mildred and I am an
3 eighth grader and I am here to support the Young
4 Women's Leadership School of the Bronx.

5 Now the reason why we are all here today is
6 to discuss the problem with space. But I just
7 wanted to show you that TYWLS Bronx has a lot
8 more to offer and a lot more opportunities to
9 offer as well.

10 I know that I am happy to be in this school
11 because - - have time learning and our education
12 and we are also working together as one big
13 family. But if we are separated, how is our
14 education going to be complete, because without
15 one half the other half would not work as well.
16 But if you look at this way, how are us TYWLS
17 students supposed to do our jobs and help each
18 other when things get tough.

19 Thank you all for your time.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Before we call up
22 the next--two more boys? Go ahead.

23 [RAPPING IN SPANISH]

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Before we continue

1 with the speakers I want to say I am so proud
2 of our students of our community. Please give
3 them a round of applause.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 I am very, very proud and it shows the
6 education that both schools are providing our
7 children. We should all be proud.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 Our next speaker, our next speaker is
10 Anastasia Little, Little, last name Little. I
11 will continue. Sophia Quintero. She went
12 already?

13 Solida Herosima. Excuse me? Sophia's here.
14 Okay. Sophia, I'm sorry. Sophia Quintero.
15 Thank you from TYWLS Academy.

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 MS. SOPHIA QUINTERO: I'm a Bronx girl. I
18 don't need it too much. My name is Sophia
19 Quintero and I'm speaking on behalf of Girls,
20 Inc. of New York City in support of the Young
21 Women's Leadership School of the Bronx. At
22 TYWLS I am proud to serve as the program
23 director of its Sonic after school program,
24 which is funded by the city's Department of
25 Youth and Community Development.

1 At Girls, Inc. our mission is to inspire
2 girls to be strong, smart and bold through
3 programs in 20 locations throughout New York
4 City. Since 1993 we've been advocating for the
5 under served girls of the city. We know what
6 works for girls. The Young Women's Leadership
7 School of the Bronx is not only working it's
8 excelling.

9 My staff and I have been in partnership with
10 TYWLS since the start of the school year. In
11 the short time I can say many positive things
12 about the school. In my limited time I'm going
13 to focus on two.

14 One, the Young Women's Leadership School of
15 the Bronx sets the bar high for all the members
16 of its community; the students, the faculty, and
17 it's partners.

18 Two, this school makes consistent and
19 multiple efforts in supporting the members of
20 its community to surpass the bar it has set like
21 no other public school I have ever witnesses and
22 I have witnessed quite a few.

23 When I was growing up here in the Bronx, I
24 remember the bar being set low for a girl like
25 me. It didn't matter how much I enjoyed

1 learning, how readily I ceased opportunities
2 to better myself, how determined my parents were
3 to make possible for me what had not been
4 available to them. Yet too many of the adults
5 around me saw a Black Latino girl from a working
6 class family headed by immigrant and migrant
7 parents and had already written me off as an
8 inevitable statistic.

9 At TYWLS Bronx new statistics are in the
10 making. This school is the launching pad for
11 the women who are going to invent the next big
12 app, find the cure for that chronic illness,
13 write the next Pulitzer prize winning play.

14 All of us at Girls, Inc. are excited at the
15 possibility of making a contribution to
16 cultivating this generation of trailblazers
17 through that more than 30 after school programs
18 that we offer. Indeed, our hope is that as
19 TYWLS expands into a high school, our
20 partnership will grow as well so that we can
21 offer school programming during the day and
22 greater social emotional support to the girls
23 who attend the school. And they need the
24 support because it's hard to be a trailblazer.
25 It's hard to be a trailblazer because the girls

1 of the Bronx are outnumbered by the naysayers
2 who believe that their hardwire for mediocre if
3 not failure.

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 The Young Women's Leadership School of the
6 Bronx knows that the girls it serves every day
7 are made for greatness. It is only right to
8 allow the school the opportunity to teach as
9 many girls in this community, in this borough,
10 in this city as possible and Girls, Inc. looks
11 forward to supporting them in their mission.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again, respect and
14 responsibility. Thank you.

15 [SPANISH SPOKEN]

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Again, we need to
18 respect the time. I want to remind everyone
19 it's only two minutes. Again, I want to remind
20 our speakers it's only two minutes. We still
21 have to be respectful and all voices must be
22 heard. At this time Jolese Ladson [phonetic]

23 MS. JOLESE LADSON: Thanks. Good evening
24 everyone. My name is Jolese Ladson. I'm a
25 graduate of the Young Women's Leadership School

1 of East Harlem and that's the big sister
2 school of the Young Women's Leadership School of
3 the Bronx. After I left I graduated in 2006 and
4 then I went on to graduate from Smith College in
5 2010. I'm a proud alumni of the Network of
6 Schools and I'm grateful for the opportunities
7 that I had while I was at TYWLS. I consider
8 these girls my little sisters.

9 I remember being in school nearly every day
10 until 6:00 p.m., which is similar to a lot of
11 the students who go TYWLS of the Bronx because
12 of the many after school programs available to
13 the students at my school and that I chose to
14 participate in. I had friends that I value and
15 who are my best friends to this day including my
16 college friends, which is what happens when you
17 go to college friends, which is what happens
18 when you go to college.

19 I had teachers who supported me and my goals
20 inside and outside of the classroom. I learned
21 I had a voice that I used and continue to use
22 and I'm very proud of that. And throughout
23 middle school and high school I was constantly
24 told that I was expected to go to college and
25 myself and all the girls I graduated with went

1 to college as well.

2 And it was really important in that
3 messaging and in my development for me to be
4 able to see the older girls around me do the
5 things that they said they expected for us to
6 do. I don't what that's about.

7 And so it's for those reason, for that
8 reason mainly that I'm support of TYWLS of the
9 Bronx expanding to a high school It's really
10 important that these middle school girls who
11 have achieved so much be able to blaze the trail
12 for the girls who are coming behind them. And
13 that for the girls coming behind them be able to
14 look forward and see the fruition of the work
15 that's being put in by them, by their parents,
16 and by the teachers and the staff. Thank you.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Amanda Rosenblom
19 from TYWLS.

20 MS. AMANDA ROSENBLOM: Hi everybody. My
21 name is Amanda. I am here from the Young
22 Women's Leadership Network in support of TYWLS
23 of the Bronx. TYWLS Bronx is our fifth network
24 school in New York City. We have some of the
25 top schools in New York and it is our only

1 school that is not full-grown. And our other
2 four schools have strong results that our sixth
3 through twelfth model is a model that works and
4 should be replicated and has been replicated in
5 affiliate schools all over the country.

6 We've actually inspired a movement of all
7 girls schools and we have all boys schools, the
8 Eagle Academy has all boy schools that use a
9 very similar model.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 Our middle to high school model not only
12 works, but it allows students to flourish and
13 thrive in a supportive environment that is seven
14 years long. It allows our students to see high
15 school students that actually graduate and go on
16 to college and start their lives outside of
17 public school. And allows our high school
18 students to mentor and tutor our younger
19 students and continue our big sister, little
20 sister program, which is the crux of why our
21 school works. And results in the large
22 majority, over 90% of our student not only
23 graduating from high school but going to college
24 and largely going to four-year colleges.

25 We also have a high retention of our

1 students from eighth grade to ninth grade and
2 the reason for that is that we provide a full-
3 time college counselor in our schools that
4 provide early college awareness starting in the
5 sixth grade. So we start early and we go all
6 the way to twelfth.

7 Just to give you a snapshot our students at
8 TYWLS schools have been published on the pages
9 of the New York Times, they have won national
10 science research competitions, they've been
11 selected as council member of the day for New
12 York City. Though mostly first generation
13 college student, they've graduated college at
14 triple the rate of their peers. This is
15 something we want to continue. We want to
16 continue it here and we want to continue it with
17 117 in the same building. Thank you so much.

18 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Amy Nelson, Amy
19 Nelson.

20 [APPLAUSE]

21 MS. AMY NELSON: Good evening everyone. My
22 name is Ms. Nelson and I'm a sixth grade science
23 teacher at TYWLS Bronx. As a product of the New
24 York City Public School System and a former
25 student of District Nine in the Bronx, I have

1 come full circle because I teach in the same
2 community that I live and has raised me into
3 adulthood.

4 As a resident of the South Bronx, working
5 and living in the same community allows me to
6 serve as both a mentor in the classroom and
7 outside. Mentorship, compassion, academic
8 rigor, love are just a few of the things that
9 piece together the way in which we support and
10 advocate for our children on a daily basis.
11 Advocating for the needs of our student, all
12 students, special ed, ELL and students with
13 disabilities in the classroom is not only our
14 priority, it embodies what we do here.

15 We serve the needs of our students from
16 various backgrounds and diverse needs. We are
17 serving young women in the smaller community of
18 our classroom that's going to impact and enrich
19 the longer context beyond the classroom. Thank
20 you.

21 [APPLAUSE]

22 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Anne Adler. Anne
23 Adler.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 MS. ANNE ADLER: Hello I'm Anne Adler,

1 Executive Director of YWLN. Thank you. We
2 are a not-for-profit organization that exists to
3 support the Young Women's Leadership Schools,
4 five of them in New York City. But we also have
5 a co-ed college access program operating in 24
6 New York City high schools. So we love boys
7 too. And I'm the mother of a boy, by the way.

8 That all said, we, our girls have four
9 existing sister schools in New York City and
10 they have amazing results. A cumulative 95%
11 graduation rate, high school graduation rate,
12 since 2001. Our girls attend four-year colleges
13 at a rate of more than 90%. And 21 million
14 dollars is the amount of financial aid raised
15 for our girls to go to college. And that all
16 means that the girls who go to TYWLS schools
17 achieve college degrees at significantly higher
18 rates.

19 But here's the crux of the matter. We don't
20 want to share this building unequally. We want
21 to share this building in good faith. We want
22 to be great neighbors. So if the PEP vote is
23 approved and this is our permanent home, we want
24 to work with the community at IS 117 to make
25 this building stronger, greater, better as

1 partners. So please, please support our
2 school.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Crystal Rivera,
5 Crystal Rivera.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 MS. CRYSTAL RIVERA: Good evening ladies and
8 gentlemen. I am here today to ask that you
9 allow our school, the Young Women's Leadership
10 School to expand. I fell in love with my
11 daughter's school because of their process of
12 learning, their time and the teachers self-
13 motivating them and encouraging them and
14 promoting their creative and original ideas.
15 They help them realize their strengths and their
16 talents.

17 I can only imagine how PS 117 feels right
18 now. But I came here today to deliver an
19 important message to you. The Young Women's
20 Leadership School teachers are empowered to
21 teach our girls and I ask that you don't take
22 that away from them. Please let our girls stay
23 here. Thank you for listening to me.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Sharon Green,

1 Sharon Green.

2 MS. SHARON GREEN: Good evening. And to the
3 Wade family and for TYWLS, I watched the video
4 earlier with both schools and I found them
5 overwhelming and warm. TYWLS is not here to
6 take over your school. They're here to work
7 with you. You are young women that graduates
8 from Wade Academy can also join the TYWLS
9 family. We are not academy, we are a leadership
10 and with leadership become strong women.

11 Men have opportunities, they grow together
12 and they hold a bond. Women we are still
13 struggling for our rights. We are under paid
14 for the work that we do and men achieve
15 everything. So now we are women that are
16 setting the goals for the future of our
17 daughters and that goes for both schools.

18 [APPLAUSE]

19 So I don't want to hear this sorry this,
20 that we can't achieve. We can achieve because
21 we come from a poor community that they look
22 down on us and that they have no respect for us.
23 So we all have to stand up as parents and say
24 let's move on and let's move forward. Today is
25 our future for our girls and young men to grow.

1 [APPLAUSE]

2 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Madeline Santana,
3 Madeline Santana, from Wade Academy.

4 MS. MADELINE SANTANA: I want to say, no I'm
5 good. Hi good evening everyone. My name is
6 Madeline Santana. I am the parent coordinator
7 at Junior High School 117.

8 [APPLAUSE]

9 One of the great things about the New York
10 City Department of Education is that they listen
11 to parents. Parents have a voice and a choice.
12 Because we are just, because we are having this
13 joint hearing and upcoming vote, TYWLS Bronx was
14 not mentioned in the high school book, an add on
15 sheet had to be included. As a result the girls
16 from TYWLS were not given a high school book
17 when all the other New York City students
18 received their high school books.

19 Giving them the book would have provided the
20 students with choices other than TYWLS. The
21 students were not given the books until right
22 before the winter recess and TYWLS received a
23 two-week extension on submitting the high school
24 application. If there were any girls that were
25 interested in applying to specialized high

1 schools, it is highly probably that they
2 missed audition dates. Is this the new DOE
3 practice?

4 [APPLAUSE]

5 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Addison and Erika
6 Lee, Addison and Erika Lee, Wade Academy 117.

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 MS. LEE: Yes I'm here for 117. Y'all are a
9 nice school I understand by y'all only been here
10 for two years. Y'all want to make y'all school
11 expandable and bigger. There's a school ready
12 for y'all on Jerome and Treemont. We need 117.
13 117 takes care of our community. 117 takes care
14 of all minorities, especial ed and all that. I
15 been here for three years and I'd like to keep
16 on coming to 117 because I got a family with
17 117, teachers and students. So I would like 117
18 to stay thank you.

19 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Jessica Pineda,
20 Jessica Pineda. She spoke. Cynthia Diaz,
21 Cynthia Diaz, Cynthia Diaz. Angelica Perez,
22 Angelica Perez. She spoke. Okay. Darlene
23 Attung. She spoke also. Tahon Naggar. Say
24 that again.

25 MR. TALEN NAGGAR: Naggar.

1 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Naggar. So Tahon
2 Naggar, TYWLS Academy.

3 [APPLAUSE]

4 MR. NAGGAR: Thank you. I had a lot to say
5 and I think I'm going to change it a little bit.
6 So I heard a lot about community and that this
7 is a community school. This is a community
8 building. So both schools are trying to reach
9 out to every member of the community. We have
10 families with students who travel up to two
11 hours each way to come here. So there is choice
12 for every student in New York City, boy or girl.
13 You have all girls schools, you have all boys
14 schools and you have co-ed schools. So the
15 choice is up to every student, every parent and
16 it is your responsibility to make that choice
17 wisely as a family.

18 I've worked in co-ed schools in this city
19 and in an all girls school. When I got the
20 offer to come here I thought, it's a pretty
21 unique experience and it has been far beyond my
22 wildest dreams of how enjoyable it is to teach
23 here. These girls get opportunities that girls
24 not only in this neighborhood, in this
25 community, in this district, in this country

1 don't get, they get opportunities that girls
2 around the world do not get.

3 There are schools for boys to go to. Eagle
4 Academy is an excellent opportunity. So I
5 encourage you if you are looking for your own
6 opportunities in your lives, go look for them.
7 Don't just say well this school is closest and
8 this building is closest. I want to tell you
9 also that I fortunately, I am the child of
10 immigrants. And we were fortunate when we grew
11 up in a neighborhood that was very small in
12 Connecticut and we had the benefit of a large
13 school system that all of us went through from
14 kindergarten through high school.

15 Our students have that opportunity that most
16 students in New York City do not have. They
17 know each other from the time they are ten,
18 eleven years old all the way up till high school
19 and that builds community. It's not just about
20 the building and where you are. It's about the
21 feeling and the activities and the caring that
22 people have for each other and they have that
23 here. And it doesn't matter if the school is
24 60/40 percent, 50/50 that is community and I'm
25 glad to be part of it.

1 [APPLAUSE]

2 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Jennifer Pena,
3 Jennifer Pena, Jennifer Pena. Okay. Okay.
4 Catherine and I can't see the last name,
5 Montera?

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 MS. CATHERINE MONTERA: Thanks. I think
8 this is good. My name is Catherine Montera and
9 I'm an eighth grade literacy and special ed
10 teacher at the Young Women's Leadership School
11 of the Bronx. I am also the Girls, Inc.
12 education specialist at this school.

13 In addition to educating our girls in the
14 classroom as you have heard a lot about tonight,
15 we work hard to educate the whole girl through
16 our advisory and after school programs.
17 Advisory is one of the pillars of our schools
18 supporting the girls social and emotional
19 development and helping them navigate through
20 adolescents.

21 This class enables the girls to explore a
22 variety of issues including health, bullying,
23 decision making, college readiness and making
24 change through volunteering. This class gives
25 them a safe space to voice their opinions and

1 understand the complexities of the wider world
2 while creating a sense of community and familiar
3 atmosphere.

4 We also offer an extensive after school
5 program, which gives, in conjunction with our
6 CBL Girls, Inc. This year we're offer 50
7 different after school programs for our girls to
8 choose from. All of which are based in stem,
9 literacy or leadership. Our club facilitators
10 work with the school liaison to make connections
11 between what's going on in the classroom and
12 what is going on in the clubs in order to insure
13 a success and strength in what is being taught
14 in a new and exciting way.

15 Our girls can apply the skills they learn in
16 these classes and clubs while deepening their
17 breath of knowledge. These programs are a part
18 of what help us excel. We look forward to
19 providing these opportunities in a fluid grade
20 six through twelve school on this campus in
21 order to insure their long-term success. Thank
22 you.

23 [APPLAUSE]

24 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Carlos Cruz, Carlos
25 Cruz. Teacher speaking on his behalf.

1 MS. CALDERO: Good evening. My name is
2 Ms. Caldero [phonetic]. I am a special
3 education teacher at 117. I teach both ICT and
4 self-contained classroom. I'm speaking on
5 behalf of Mr. Cruz who is also a teacher at 117.

6 So MS 117X has seven self-contained special
7 education classes. These classes consist of
8 twelve to one, twelve to one to one and a class
9 of twelve to one to one bilingual special
10 education class.

11 These classes used to occupy some of the
12 smaller rooms on the fourth floor, 429, 433,
13 433-a, 432 and 432-A. All of these rooms are
14 configured differently from the standard size
15 classrooms and easily accommodate 12 students.
16 Since TYWLS is on the fourth floor, they occupy
17 those rooms. However, they do not have any
18 self-contained special education classes. They
19 only have 16 students with IEPs. As they grow,
20 those small classrooms will be a hindrance as
21 they will not accommodate a class of 30
22 students.

23 My statement and question is, they will need
24 SCA to break the wall in between two rooms to
25 make one large classroom to accommodate their

1 students. This process takes approximately a
2 year. While they're expanding and breaking down
3 walls to accommodate their students, what impact
4 will that have on our students and their
5 learning community? Thank you.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Iana Miranda
8 [phonetic], teacher, TYWLS Academy.

9 MS. IANA MIRANDA: I know you did all that
10 for nothing. Hi My name is Iana Miranda. I'm
11 an eighth grade math special education teacher.
12 This is my first year teaching at TYWLS Bronx,
13 but it's my 15-year teaching as a whole. I can
14 celebrate the fact that I finally have joined my
15 sisters this year. Three years ago I was
16 working with the co-directors when they were
17 trying to establish a girl's school of their
18 own. And this isn't even what I wrote, but this
19 is how I feel.

20 I could share with you how they wanted to
21 design a school that built a foundation on the
22 whole student, academically, socially, for the
23 community and also for their college readiness.
24 Joining this year this I have seen that their
25 dreams have become a reality and they celebrate

1 that every day. And their dream was not to
2 just make it a six to eight school. It was to
3 see these students grow up from six to twelfth
4 grade and watch how they grow as individuals.
5 I'm shaking.

6 They begin preparing the students for
7 college by taking them on trips to college
8 starting in sixth grade and every grade after.
9 They inspire these students by seeing the
10 campuses, by talking to college students and
11 asking them questions about how they can help
12 them become members of that college community.

13 I can also share with you how the parents
14 and the student have enjoyed being part of this
15 community and it being in this school. They've
16 responded to the school survey in great numbers,
17 large percentages and have spoken about how they
18 agree that the school provides them with a
19 meaningful education.

20 So I'm a mother of a son and I'm not worried
21 because if they can provide this opportunity for
22 girls, I know there's a school there for my son.
23 Thank you.

24 [APPLAUSE]

25 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Tabitha Garcia,

1 Tabitha Garcia. Oh she went already. Okay.
2 Jessica Maken, teacher, Makin, Jessica Makin,
3 teacher, TYWLS.

4 MS. JESSICA MAKIN: Good evening. My name
5 is Jessica Makin and I'm an eighth grade math
6 teacher at the Young Women's Leadership School
7 of the Bronx. I'm currently in my fifth year of
8 teaching and have taught at three different
9 schools in the Bronx. This is the second school
10 I've taught at in District Nine.

11 Every day I am proud and grateful to come to
12 work at the Young Women's Leadership School of
13 the Bronx. In the morning, I am greeted by
14 smiles and hugs from teenage girls. The culture
15 fostered at TYWLS Bronx allows our students a
16 safe, engaging and rigorous education.

17 Walking down the halls at TYWLS you can pop
18 your head into any classroom and see
19 collaborative engaged learning happening for
20 girls from the Bronx including English language
21 learners and special education students.

22 After school, girls from the Bronx continue
23 learning in addition to playing, exploring and
24 creating. When our students walk through the
25 doors, they know they are with family.

1 We want to keep our family together as we
2 continue to grow into a high school. Keeping
3 our middle and high schools together will allow
4 us to keep the strong culture we have cultivated
5 in this building.

6 I also am an advisory teacher and I want to
7 make it very clear, we told our girls they could
8 go to other high schools. We told them where to
9 find the information about the other high
10 schools.

11 [APPLAUSE]

12 So we have computers for every student in
13 our classrooms. So they were able to look at
14 them during our class and they had that
15 opportunity.

16 Lastly, our high school students will set an
17 example for our middle schoolers and I want to
18 thank you for your time.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Emma Durand, Emma
21 Durand, Emma Durand. Danielle Beaumont or
22 Bumont, Beaumont? Beaumont, 117 Wade Academy.

23 MS. DANIELLE BEAUMONT: Hi, hello my name's
24 Danielle Beaumont and I'm an ESL teacher at 117.
25 I just would like to say I also get hugged by

1 teenage girls every morning and also by boys.

2 So we've been talking a lot about the word
3 community here. The word community is inclusive
4 of all people. This includes all students such
5 as English language learners, students with
6 disabilities, over age students, hold overs, SIF
7 [phonetic] students and students in temporary
8 housing. All of which are students at MS 117.

9 Currently these categories include we have
10 40% English language learners. This is 246
11 students. We have 26% student with
12 disabilities. This is 146 students. We have
13 91% free lunch eligible. We have 19 different
14 temporary housing facilities that feed into MS
15 117 reflecting 33 different families.
16 Additionally, we have 86 families doubled up,
17 which is also considered temporary housing. This
18 results in a total of 119 families in this
19 community that are in some form of temporary
20 housing.

21 Our school serves the community. So where
22 will our kids go when they're not eligible to
23 attend MS 117 because of the TYWLS expansion?
24 And also I'd like to say that, yes students from
25 both schools will have to travel. Student

1 travel to TYWLS and students from our
2 community will be traveling somewhere else. The
3 difference is the choice. Who is choosing to
4 travel and who is being forced to travel? Thank
5 you.

6 [APPLAUSE]

7 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Dercuris Liz,
8 Dercuris Liz. Decorus Liz? She spoke. Also
9 Alphonso Ponset, I think she spoke also. Nicky
10 Sing?

11 [APPLAUSE]

12 MS. NICKY SING: Good evening. Thank you
13 all for being here this late. I am a teacher, a
14 new teacher at TYWLS. I taught somewhere else.
15 This is my 20th year as an educator and I thank
16 you for letting me speak here.

17 I have been at TYWLS for just four months,
18 so I am not responsible for this amazing culture
19 that exists. I happen in my other jobs as an
20 educator to have visited more than 200 schools
21 all over the world and the culture that has been
22 built here is incredibly impressive. The girls
23 have a strong identity as students of TYWLS.
24 They might not be best friends, but they work
25 together in this community and we are here to

1 learn together and to support each other.

2 Being in this powerful positive culture will
3 serve them well academically as they grow from
4 sixth to twelfth grade. And there will be many
5 opportunities for them to learn from each other
6 that do not happen in just a middle school or
7 just a high school. This is also an opportunity
8 for us as teachers to really be able to work
9 with our students' strengths and to be able to
10 work with them for a long time.

11 Since many of our students, like many of the
12 students in New York City, for them sending them
13 to college will be an achievement for their
14 families, a first time achievement for their
15 families as for any other students.

16 New York City offers choice for students.
17 This is a choice that has been granted by the
18 DOE. It is a choice that I fully support, again
19 as the mother of a daughter and a son. The
20 choice to stay in a girls school and the choice
21 to stay in a school from sixth to twelfth grade
22 where there is strong support, where there is
23 academic as well as emotional support. Thank
24 you.

25 [APPLAUSE}

1 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Jonazia Green
2 [phonetic], Jonazia Green. She spoke. Okay. I
3 can't even pronounce, Torres is a student, Liana
4 Torres. She left. Luce Lugo [phonetic]? Luce
5 Lugo? Andrea Vasquez [phonetic]. Mercedes
6 Clark, Mercedes Clark? Emily Luna? Joschardi
7 Diaz [phonetic] spoke. Gref Fukes, Fukes, I'm
8 sorry, Fukes. Okay. Jana Deramin [phonetic]
9 Dramin. Okay. Jada Beret [phonetic]. Okay
10 Mildred Green spoke? Oh this is the one I
11 already started to call right? Mercedes Castro
12 [phonetic], Mercedes Castro. Charles Lee?

13 [APPLAUSE]

14 Okay. Mercedes Castro? Mercedes Castro
15 will speak first.

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 MS. MERCEDES CASTRO: [SPANISH SPOKEN]

18 [APPLAUSE]

19 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Charles Lee?

20 MR. CHARLES LEE: Good evening. I'm Charles
21 Lee. I'm reading this on behalf of a parent,
22 Rosa Rodriguez. My child is, my name is Rosa
23 Rodriguez and my daughter is Brittany, who? I'm
24 sorry, I'm sorry, Brittany Rodriguez. She's in
25 seventh grade currently attending the Young

1 Women's Leadership School of the Bronx. I
2 have done my diligence in searching for the
3 appropriate academy for my daughter to attend
4 and I am extremely content to have chosen TYWLS
5 for my daughter's choice in her academies.

6 Through many obstacles and patiently waiting
7 for any update regarding Brittany's enrollment
8 process, I was finally able to enroll her in
9 TYWLS successfully. For the first few months, I
10 was having second thoughts. Brittany was not
11 doing well academically. I did not hesitate and
12 got in contact with TYWLS administrators who
13 supported my concerns and took action to help my
14 daughter succeed as a student in TYWLS.

15 With our combined concern regarding Brittany
16 and lack of progress we have had a meeting and
17 came up with a plan to enhance her ability to
18 perform and meet New York State academic
19 standards. One of the plans were for her to
20 receive one to one tutoring. For me to sit with
21 her and show her support while she did her
22 homework. Tutoring was a success as well as the
23 smaller classroom radius as suggested.

24 From that point on Brittany flourished and
25 she built self-confidence that - - her to

1 display in all the aspects of her studies, as
2 well as extra curricular activities. Brittany
3 is now part of the basketball team and track and
4 dance club.

5 The sky is the limit for Brittany and I am
6 very proud of her and grateful for TYWLS staff
7 for helping my daughter reach her goals and
8 beyond. Given this experience I would
9 absolutely be in total support of TYWLS
10 expanding to a high school.

11 [APPLAUSE]

12 Also--

13 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Melinda--time's up.

14 MR. LEE: Hun?

15 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Time's up.

16 MR. LEE: Time's up? Thank you.

17 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Melinda Barcene.

18 MS. MELINDA BARCENE: Good evening everyone.
19 My name is Melinda Barcene. My daughter attends
20 TYWLS. What I see most from all the staff of
21 the TYWLS and I think Devon and Ms. Loriano
22 [phonetic] for being humble. The staff that
23 they created over the last three years has
24 showed my daughter much love that I truthfully I
25 haven't even seen in my own community and yes, I

1 am a part of District Nine.

2 When they were looking to open up this
3 school, I saw all over the Bronx flyers on the
4 floor, in my building, in all areas and I used
5 to work an armored truck. And trust me when I
6 tell you, I've seen the flyers everywhere within
7 the Bronx. But it was a choice for me to pick
8 it up, take heed, read it and say, this look
9 like a great opportunity for my daughter. And
10 it was one that I leaped at. I am sorry that
11 unfortunately doesn't have for me truthfully,
12 the support and the family oriented environment
13 that our school is trying to create in this
14 building.

15 It's sad that we were being bullied by
16 children from your school. And I am one that
17 went through the trial--

18 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: [Interposing]
19 respect.

20 MS. BARCENE: I am respecting.

21 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Respect.

22 MS. BARCENE: I am sorry that my daughter
23 had to endure that in her school. This year my
24 daughter was on the verge of not going to
25 continue in this building. But I refused

1 because the education that's she's been
2 learning with them has been tremendous that I
3 know that in my own community where I reside she
4 will not get it. We commute 40 minutes every
5 day to get to this school and I think,
6 regardless of being across the street or taking
7 two buses, I think it's important for her to
8 attend this school, to get educated.

9 When her counselors call me 8:00, 9:00,
10 10:00 at night, when her principals call me and
11 say Melinda how is your child doing? I
12 appreciate it and I love it and I look forward
13 to continuing all the way to twelfth grade. And
14 anybody who looks forward to trying to give
15 something to their daughters, unfortunately our
16 brother school is Eagle. More than welcome to
17 apply to our school and we will open the door.
18 Thank you.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Vanessa Paul,
21 Vanessa Paul.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 MS. VANESSA PAUL: Okay so it is with pride
24 that I announce that I am a teacher at TYWLS
25 Bronx. Every day it's an honor to be part of

1 such a nurturing supportive environment filled
2 with passionate people that truly inspire our
3 Bronx girls to succeed. That is very rare at a
4 public school.

5 You see survival of the fittest is the
6 common theme of people who come from this
7 community and I say myself, 'cause I'm a product
8 of the South Bronx. Every day we're constantly
9 fighting a battle, a battle against many
10 negative stereotypes, achievement and
11 opportunity gaps and discrimination due to
12 gender and economic status.

13 Through providing our girls with the high
14 quality, data driven, personalized instruction
15 we provide them with limitless opportunities to
16 be able to success, that college becomes a
17 reality and not a far fetched dream.

18 It is important that we expand our high
19 school because our girls need us. It is like
20 abandoning them when they need us the most.

21 I just want to put out there. We do have
22 97% poverty rate. So we are able to get an
23 access to everyone in our community. In our
24 second year, 45% of our students were at and
25 above grade level compared to 21% in the entire

1 District Nine. That was only year two. So
2 imagine what we're going to accomplish when we
3 open our high school?

4 Another true measure of a school is whether
5 a teacher will send her own child here. As a
6 parent, I wholeheartedly without a doubt in my
7 mind will send my daughter to this school
8 because this is the best school in the Bronx
9 that any girl can ever get.

10 [APPLAUSE]

11 So with a strong emphasis of educating the
12 whole girl, college becomes a reality and I just
13 want to say that our girls deserve this
14 opportunity. And it doesn't matter if they come
15 from the Bronx.

16 [APPLAUSE]

17 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Emily Nieves
18 [phonetic], Emily Nieves. She spoke? Okay. I
19 think that Cynthia. It looks like Cynthia
20 Harris, but I'm not clear. Okay. Ebony Hughes.
21 Ebony Hughes.

22 [APPLAUSE]

23 MS. EBONY HUGHES: Thank you good evening
24 everyone, TYWLS and Wade. I'm just here because
25 I think that TYWLS is doing a great job with

1 their girls and I don't negate that. However,
2 in the beginning of your proposal you said that
3 you would expand by 30 to 45 students and as a
4 woman of my word, I think that it's important to
5 keep your word. If in the ninth hour you want
6 to now expand to the twelfth grade at the
7 expense of our students and incoming students,
8 it's unfortunately.

9 Do I think you should expand? Yes. But
10 just some place else because you're impacting
11 our community and our students. Thank you.

12 [APPLAUSE]

13 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Samaya, Samaya
14 what's the - - here? Thank you Samaya, Samaya,
15 Samaya, I got it representing 117, Wade Academy.

16 MS. SAMAYA WILLIAMS: So Wade I'm here to
17 represent for you and on behalf of past classes,
18 I am the class of '89. So I say to you good
19 evening.

20 Please bear with me. I'm not really much of
21 a public speaker. As I said I'm from the class
22 of '89 and I speak on behalf of the classes
23 before me and after me.

24 117 means a great deal to me and obviously
25 to you because you're here tonight. Wade 117 is

1 not just a school that we're, it's not just a
2 school where we had teachers that taught so many
3 things, lessons in life, how to prepare for our
4 future. Teachers like Ms. Maxi [phonetic] and
5 Mr. Lugo [phonetic]. We had so many other
6 teachers that are no longer here with us.
7 Teachers that molded us into the strong, smart
8 and brave men and women that we are today. Some
9 of my brothers and sisters are teachers,
10 engineers, police officers. We also save lives.
11 A number of us also served our country.

12 I called the other sisters, I'm sorry, I
13 called the other students my brothers and
14 sisters because Wade wasn't just a school for
15 us, it was our home and it will forever be a
16 part of us. Thank you.

17 [APPLAUSE]

18 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: Colin Dunkley
19 [phonetic], Colin Dunkley. Yep I think I went
20 through everybody right?

21 MR. COLIN DUNKLEY: Good evening. My name
22 is Colin Dunkley and I'm a pastor and I serve in
23 this community. And I like to hear the facts.
24 As everything was being read in the beginning
25 about this school. Let me commend you guys

1 first. You're doing an excellent job. And
2 I'm listening to what everybody's saying.
3 You're doing an excellent job. But as I was
4 hearing everything it sounds like you guys are
5 forcing 117 out and that's a form of bullying.

6 Then let me say this--

7 [APPLAUSE]

8 I have a son that graduated from here with
9 honors. I had a niece that graduated from here.
10 I have another son that is here and I have
11 another son that is going to come here. But
12 because of everything you're doing, you might
13 cut my youngest son's opportunity to get here.

14 So I stand with what the young lady just
15 said and I know about grants and foundations and
16 so on and so forth. So continue to do the work
17 that you're doing, but if you're going to expand
18 into high school, get your own building.

19 [APPLAUSE]

20 SUPERINTENDENT ROSARIO: I want, that was
21 our last speaker. I want to say something
22 before I conclude this meeting, before I close
23 this meeting. As a Bronx kid myself, born and
24 bred in New York public schools, I am proud of
25 our community today because there were times

1 when we would sit in this auditorium by
2 ourselves. I've sat in an auditorium waiting
3 for someone to show up. And today I am so proud
4 to know that our community cares, our community
5 stands united, and we stand for the education of
6 our children.

7 So thank you one, for being here. Thank you
8 two, for caring and representing our community
9 the way you did today. Thank you for fostering
10 education for our youth. So whatever side we
11 sat on and I'm going to tell you that I'm going
12 to promise that we will work together to make
13 whatever decision is made work because we care.

14 So I want to thank you again for showing us,
15 our community, that we can speak, we speak
16 respectfully, we can speak responsibly for what
17 we believe and we will at the end stand
18 together.

19 So I want to thank our leaders from 117,
20 from Young Women's Academy. I am so proud of
21 what went on today and as a Bronx person who has
22 been in education for 34 years, I have not had a
23 prouder moment. Thank you for everyone being as
24 cordial and respectful and responsible. Have a
25 wonderful evening.

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[APPLAUSE]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim Perret".

Date: January 20, 2015