



Public Comment Analysis

Date: February 23, 2010

Topic: Proposed Re-siting of Emolior Academy (12X383) to School Building X167 and Co-location with P.S. 214

Date of Panel Vote: February 24, 2010

Summary of Proposal

In the 2010-2011 school year, Emolior Academy—an existing District 12 choice middle school that will serve grade 6-8 students at scale—will move to building X167, located at 1970 West Farms Road in the Bronx. Building X167 currently houses P.S. 214, an elementary/middle school serving grades Pre-K-8. Emolior Academy is currently located in the P.S. 134 mini-school building (X834), where it enrolls students in grades 6-7. Emolior Academy will achieve full scale next fall with the addition of its first eighth-grade class, but does not have sufficient space in its current location to achieve full phase-in.

Emolior Academy is a relatively new District 12 middle school that has had success in helping special education students make academic progress. The school currently serves students in grades 6-7 in the P.S. 134 mini-school building (X834), which has a target capacity of 132 students. With Emolior's current enrollment of 153 students, that building is already operating above capacity at 116 percent utilization, and the building does not provide adequate space for Emolior Academy to grow to full scale with the addition of its first eighth grade class in September 2010.

Under this proposal, Emolior Academy would relocate to Building X167, where it would grow to full scale while co-locating with P.S. 214. X167 has the capacity to accommodate Emolior Academy. That building has a target capacity of 1,501 students, but P.S. 214 only enrolls 810 students in Kindergarten through grade 8, yielding a 54 percent target utilization rate. Relocating Emolior Academy into X214 will allow the school to grow to full scale, and to provide even more students—including more special education students—with a high-quality education. The school would remain in District 12, ensuring that local families continue to have access to the school. In addition, X167 is located approximately one mile from Emolior Academy's current site, minimizing transportation difficulties for the school's current students.

In November 2009, the Department of Education raised the issue of space constraints at X834 with the District Planning Committee. At that time, the Superintendent discussed the issue with the CEC president, indicating that we were looking for a potential relocation site for

Emolior Academy. An evaluation of buildings in the District was completed in December 2009. In early January 2010, when the Department of Education determined that Emolior's relocation to X167 would be feasible, the Superintendent reached out to affected Principals to discuss the proposal.

No feedback regarding the proposal was submitted to the Department in advance of the public hearing.

An Educational Impact Statement on this proposal was posted on the Department of Education's Web site on January 8, 2010.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearings

A joint public hearing was held at X134 on February 11, 2010, and all interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Thirty-seventy people attended the hearing, and six people spoke. All spoke in favor of the proposal, noting that Emolior requires space to expand. With more space, Emolior will be able to grow and better serve its students.

A second joint public hearing was held at X167 on February 22, 2010, and all interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Twenty-two people attended the hearing, and four spoke. Two speakers were in favor of the proposal, citing the many opportunities Emolior Academy provides to its teachers and students to learn and grow, and the need for more space to continue providing those opportunities. Two other members of the community asked questions about whether the students at Emolior are in gangs, and whether the staff of Emolior Academy would be able to set a tone and culture that is consistent with the environment P.S. 214 has already created in the building. While these parents expressed their concerns about the impact the addition of another school to the building would have on the safety of P.S. 214 students, either speaker expressed support or opposition to the proposal.

Summary of Issues Raised in Written and Oral Comments and Significant Alternatives Suggested

No written and oral written comments regarding this proposal have been received. No significant alternatives were proposed.

Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal

In response to concerns about safety and culture that were raised by P.S. 214 parents, the principal and staff of Emolior Academy spoke to those present about the students and culture of their school at its present location. The conversation served to assuage the concerns of the parents and everyone was comfortable that the two principals and their staffs would be able to ensure safety in the building and continue the strong cultures of their respective schools. Thus the DOE has made no changes to the proposal and will present the proposal to the Panel for Educational Policy as it is currently posted.

A copy of the educational impact statement for this proposal can be obtained at <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/585A6F4E-316F-45AF-A1C4-0F38AC7260E8/75249/X167EmoliorEISFinal1811.pdf>.

**Prepared by
Department of Education**