

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 156 Laurelton (29Q156) from a K-8 School to a K-5 School Beginning in 2013-2014

I. Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to implement a “grade truncation” of the middle school grades of P.S. 156 Laurelton (29Q156, “P.S. 156”). P.S. 156 currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade, and is located in building Q156 and its adjacent transportable classroom unit (“TCU”) Q957 at 229-02 137 Avenue, Queens, NY 11413, in Community School District 29. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 would no longer serve students in grades six through eight and would only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade. P.S. 156 is currently the only school organization housed in Q156.¹ The DOE is proposing to truncate P.S. 156 based on its poor performance and the DOE’s assessment that the school lacks the capacity to improve quickly to better support student needs. In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) also posted on January 22, 2013, the DOE is proposing to open and co-locate² a new middle school, 29Q289, in building Q156. That proposal can be found here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 will no longer enroll sixth-grade students after the conclusion of the 2012-2013 school year, will no longer serve seventh-grade students following the 2013-2014 school year, and will no longer serve eighth-grade students following the 2014-2015 school year. In 2015-2016 and beyond, it will continue serving students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Current students in grades six through eight will be served and supported by the DOE as they progress towards the completion of middle school while remaining enrolled at P.S. 156. Current and future P.S. 156 eighth-grade students will be supported through the Citywide High School Admissions Process as they apply to a high school. In cases where students do not meet promotional requirements and must repeat a grade no longer offered by P.S. 156, they will be served in 29Q289.

P.S. 156 is a zoned elementary school that currently admits kindergarten through fifth-grade students in its zone. It also serves sixth- through eighth-grade students, and gives priority for admission to continuing fifth-grade students. A student’s zoned school is determined by his or her home address. If this proposal is approved and P.S. 156 no longer serves middle school grades, P.S. 156 will continue to admit kindergarten through fifth-grade students in its zone. All P.S. 156 fifth-grade students will enroll in their zoned middle school in 2013-2014 as sixth-grade students or apply to one of the district, borough-wide, or Citywide middle school options. As an additional option, current fifth grade students at P.S. 156 will have priority to enroll at new school 29Q289 in building Q156 for the 2013-2014 school year only, should the proposal to open that school be approved. Additional information about the middle school admissions process and P.S. 156 admissions is provided in Section III.A of this proposal.

¹ All references to Q156 refer to both Q156 and TCU Q957.

² A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

In a separate proposal described in another EIS, the DOE is proposing to open and “co-locate” a new middle school, 29Q289, in building Q156 in September 2013. The proposal can be found at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>. If the proposal to co-locate 29Q289 in Q156 is approved, it would provide a new middle school option for District 29 families and would replace seats lost by the proposed grade truncation of P.S. 156’s middle school grades. The new school would open with sixth grade for the 2013-2014 school year, adding one grade annually until it reaches full scale in the 2015-2016 school year, with a grade span of six through eight.

Background on the DOE Decision-Making Process

Schools are identified for possible intervention for any of the following three reasons: (1) they received poor grades on their annual Progress Report; (2) they received a poor score on their most recent Quality Review; or (3) they have been identified by the New York State Education Department (“SED”) as a Priority School, defined by SED as one of the bottom 5% of schools in the state.³ In August 2012, SED identified Priority schools across the State, including 122 in New York City. Elementary and Middle schools are identified as Priority based on the school’s state test performance. Specifically, under the DOE’s accountability framework, all schools that receive a grade of D, F, or a third consecutive C grade or lower on their annual Progress Report and all schools that receive a rating of Underdeveloped on the Quality Review are evaluated for intensive support or intervention, including the possibility of phase-out or grade truncation. Progress Reports are released by the DOE each fall and evaluate schools on a scale of A through F based on Student Progress, Student Performance, School Environment, and, new to the High School Progress Report in 2011-2012, College and Career Readiness. During Quality Reviews, experienced educators visit a school over several days, observing classrooms and talking with students, staff, and families. Schools are rated on the following four-point scale: “Underdeveloped” (the lowest possible rating), “Developing,” “Proficient,” and “Well Developed” (the highest possible rating).

P.S. 156 received an overall D grade on its Progress Report in 2011-2012. On both the 2010-2011 and 2009-2010 Progress Reports, P.S. 156 received overall C grades.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of P.S. 156, with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit its students and the P.S. 156 community. During that review, the DOE looked at recent historical performance and demand data from the school, consulted with superintendents and other experienced educators who have worked closely with the school, and gathered community feedback.

After completing that review, the DOE believes that a grade truncation will best serve students and the community. Truncating P.S. 156’s middle school grades will allow for the school to more fully focus on serving its kindergarten through fifth-grade students. Truncation will also allow for a new school option to open in building Q156, which the DOE believes will better serve future middle school students and the District 29 community.

Performance and School Environment at P.S. 156

As noted above, P.S. 156 has struggled, and the school’s performance during the 2011-2012 school year further demonstrates that the school lacks capacity to improve quickly to better support student needs.

- The overwhelming majority of P.S. 156 students remain below grade level in English Language Arts (“ELA”) and Math. Only 37% of students were performing on grade level in ELA—putting the school in the bottom 35% of K-8 schools Citywide. Only 36% of students were performing on grade level in Math—putting the school in the bottom 11% of K-8 schools Citywide. In both ELA and Math

³ In August 2012, SED identified 221 Priority Schools across the State, including 122 in New York City.

proficiency, P.S. 156 ranks at the bottom of all District 29 K-8 schools.

- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school, as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. P.S. 156 earned a D grade on its 2011-2012 annual Progress Report, including D grades for Student Progress and for Student Performance, and an F grade for School Environment. P.S. 156 has a history of low performance, including a D grade in 2011-2012 on the Progress Report and C grades in both 2010-2011 and 2009-2010.
- The performance of students in grades three through five at P.S. 156 has been consistently higher than the performance of students in grades six through eight, in both ELA and Math. Only 33% of middle school students were performing on grade level in ELA, 8 points below the performance of elementary school students. Only 31% of middle school students were performing on grade level in Math, over 10 points below the performance of elementary school students at the school. The elementary school students have outperformed the middle school students in both ELA and Math in 2010-2011 and 2011-2012.
- P.S. 156 has struggled with helping students pass core courses in the middle school grades. In 2011-2012, the average percentage of students at the school in grades six through eight that passed core courses in English, Math, Science, and Social Studies was 85%, putting the school in the bottom 19% of K-8 schools Citywide.
- Safety issues have been a concern at the school. On the 2011-2012 New York City School Survey, only 26% of teachers believed that discipline and order were maintained at P.S. 156, which puts the school in the bottom 3% of schools Citywide.
- Demand for P.S. 156 has fallen steadily over the past several years: between 2006-2007 and 2011-2012, the number of students fell by 153 students, or 19%. P.S. 156 is a zoned school, but only 47% of students residing in the P.S. 156 zone chose to attend the school, suggesting that families are seeking better options.

The chart below summarizes key performance data for P.S. 156 over the past three years:

P.S. 156 Laurelton	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
School Performance and Progress			
Overall Progress Report Grade	C	C	D
Progress Report Progress Grade	C	C	D
Progress Report Performance Grade	F	D	D
Progress Report Environment Grade	D	C	F
Quality Review Score ⁴	P	N/A ⁵	N/A
Performance Data			
English Language Arts % Proficient (Levels 3 and 4)	39%	39%	37%
Math % Proficient (Levels 3 and 4)	37%	41%	36%
Other Key Performance Indicators			
Attendance Rate	95%	94%	94%
2012-2013 State Accountability Status	In Good Standing ⁶		

Overview of Past Strategic Improvement Efforts at P.S. 156

The DOE acknowledges that staff members have worked hard to improve P.S. 156, but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school’s efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports including:

Leadership Support:

- Assisting school leadership in the development of instructional plans and goals for the school year, in support of the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan.
- Supporting school leadership in aligning curriculum to Citywide instructional expectations to raise standards for teacher practice and student learning.
- Participating in instructional visits with school leadership teams to provide targeted feedback on ways to raise academic rigor and increase student achievement.

Instructional Support:

- Facilitating training for teachers in research-based instructional strategies to increase the academic achievement of students with disabilities.

⁴ For more information about Quality Reviews, please visit the DOE Web site at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/review>.

⁵ Not all schools receive a Quality Review every year.

⁶ This status is determined by SED under the New York State waiver for the No Child Left Behind Act. For more information, please visit the SED Web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEADesignations.html>.

- Providing professional development and coaching for teachers on the development of rigorous literacy and math curriculum that aligns with Citywide instructional expectations.

Operational Support:

- Training school staff in student data tracking systems to ensure efficient and effective monitoring of student attendance and academic programming.
- Advising school staff on budgeting, human resources, staff recruitment and building management.

Student Support:

- Facilitating a town hall meeting and a workshop on safety issues for parents, aimed at fostering support for a positive learning environment among the entire school community.
- Assisting the school in the development of a school safety plan and discipline code, and coaching school staff in best practices for reducing the number of safety incidents and suspensions.

P.S. 156 has received individualized support plans, as well as centralized services that the DOE provides to all schools—yet despite this extensive assistance, the school has failed to meet the needs of its middle school students and families.

Summary of Community Feedback

Prior to issuing this proposal, the DOE sought and received feedback from the P.S. 156 community about strategies to better support students and improve outcomes at the school. This fall, Community School District Superintendent Lenon Murray held separate meetings with parents at the school, with the teachers, and with the School Leadership Team (“SLT”) on October 9, 2012 and October 16, 2012 to discuss what is and is not working at P.S. 156 and how joint efforts could serve students better.

Approximately 25 people attended the SLT meeting. The SLT had some positive feedback about a reduction in discipline occurrences and about support for struggling students. However, the SLT also expressed several concerns:

- There has been a decline in the school’s enrollment and performance over the past three years;
- Some teachers find the curriculum, particularly the English Language Arts curriculum, unclear;
- Attendance at PTA meetings is poor; and
- Concerns remain about the school environment overall, including concerns about safety and respect.

Approximately 35 people attended the staff meeting. Staff of P.S. 156 had some positive feedback about an improvement in school culture. However, the staff also expressed several concerns:

- There has been a decline in the school’s enrollment in recent years and a resulting decrease in budget;
- Concerns remain that the lack of overall parental involvement negatively impacts the school community;
- Some teachers stated that they do not receive sufficient support for curriculum development; and
- Some teachers mentioned insufficient extracurricular offerings at the middle school level.

Approximately 60 people attended the parent meeting. Parents had some positive feedback about a new proactive PTA board. However, parents also expressed several concerns:

- The school does not provide a welcoming environment for parents;
- The curriculum is not sufficiently rigorous, and technology resources are insufficient;
- Some parents stated that the elementary grades are overcrowded and problems exist with student behavior; and
- Parents expressed concern that the K-8 environment has a negative impact on the development of middle school students.

The DOE also solicited community feedback via phone and email, including creation of a dedicated Web page for this purpose at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/queens/feedback?id=247>.

While some members of the P.S. 156 community objected to the possibility of phasing out the school, the DOE believes that truncation is the appropriate action given the school’s performance struggles and the lack of evidence that the school is poised to quickly improve to better support middle school students. The DOE plans to incorporate community feedback as it continues to support current P.S. 156 students working toward middle school completion and as it develops plans to replace the middle school grades at P.S. 156 with a new middle school that better meets student and community needs.

The DOE will also continue to seek and review community feedback while this proposal is under consideration by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”).

II. Proposed or Potential Use of Building

Q156 has the capacity to serve 876 students.⁷ (The concept of “target capacity” is described below.) In 2012-2013, the building is serving 598 total students,⁸ yielding a building utilization rate of 68%.⁹

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 will begin truncating its middle school grades, one grade at a time, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, and would complete the truncation of its middle school grades after the 2014-2015 school year. As part of the replacement strategy for the middle school grades at P.S. 156, the DOE has also issued a separate EIS proposing to co-locate a new middle school, 29Q289, in the

⁷ 2011-2012 Enrollment Capacity Utilization Report (“Blue Book”).

⁸ 2012-2013 Unaudited Register (as of October 26, 2012).

⁹ All references to building utilization rates in this document are based on target capacity data from the 2011-2012 Blue Book and enrollment data from the 2012-2013 Unaudited Register (as of October 26, 2012) or charter headcount as of October 1, 2012. This methodology is consistent with the manner in which the DOE conducts planning and calculates space allocations and funding for all schools. In determining the space allocation for co-located schools, the Office of Space Planning will conduct a detailed site survey and space analysis of the building to assess the amount of space available in the building.

Q156 building, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. If that proposal and this grade truncation proposal are both approved, 29Q289 would phase in one grade at a time and complete phase-in during the 2015-2016 school year. The proposal to co-locate this school is detailed in a separate EIS, also posted on January 22, 2013. The proposal can be found here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>.

Over four years, the proposed grade spans and enrollments for each proposed and existing school and projected building utilization rate are as follows:

Grade Spans					
DBN	School Name	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
29Q156	P.S. 156 Laurelton	K-8	K-5, 7-8	K-5, 8	K-5
29Q289	New School	-	6	6-7	6-8

DBN	School Name	2012-2013 Enrollment	2013-2014 Projected Enrollment	2014-2015 Projected Enrollment	2015-2016 Projected Enrollment
29Q156	P.S. 156 Laurelton	598	465 - 545	380 - 450	270 - 330
29Q289	New School	-	95 - 105	190 - 210	285 - 315
Total Building Enrollment		598	560 - 650	570 - 660	555 - 645
Utilization		68%	64% - 74%	65% - 75%	63% - 74%

If approved, the new middle school, 29Q289, will serve approximately 285-315 students in grades six through eight at full scale.¹⁰ In 2015-2016, once 29Q289 has completed its phase-in and P.S. 156 has implemented its grade truncation and serves kindergarten through fifth grade, there will be approximately 555-645 students served in building Q156, yielding an estimated utilization rate of 63%-74%. Therefore, the building has adequate capacity to accommodate the full expansion 29Q289 during and after the truncation of P.S. 156.

As described in more detail in the Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (“Blue Book”), which is available at http://www.nycsca.org/Community/CapitalPlanManagementReportsData/Enrollment/2011-2012_Classic.pdf a building’s target utilization rate is calculated by dividing the aggregated enrollment of all the school organizations in the building by the aggregated “target capacities” of those organizations.

¹⁰ Enrollment projections at the new school, 29Q289, are based on a phase-in plan of three general education or Integrated Co-Teaching sections and one Self-Contained section per entry grade in the first year. Actual enrollment for 2013-2014, however, depends on applicant demand.

Each school organization's "target capacity" is calculated based upon the scheduled use of individual rooms as reported by principals during an annual facilities survey, the DOE's goals for maximum classroom capacities (which are lower than the United Federation of Teachers ("UFT") contractual class sizes and differ depending on grade level), and the efficiency with which classrooms are programmed (i.e., the frequency with which classes are scheduled in a given classroom).

The most recent year for which target capacity has been calculated for buildings is 2011-2012. As described earlier in the EIS, the DOE's projected utilization rates for the 2012-2013 school year and beyond are based on the 2011-2012 target capacity, which assumes that the components underlying that target capacity (scheduled use of classrooms, maximum classroom capacity, etc.) remain constant. Thus, projected utilization rates for 2012-2013 and beyond provide only an approximation of a building's usage because each of the factors underlying target capacity may be adjusted by principals from year to year to better accommodate students' needs. For example, changing the use of a room from an administrative room to a homeroom at the high school level will increase a building's overall target capacity because for high schools administrative rooms are not assigned a capacity. Holding enrollment constant, this change would result in a lower utilization rate. Similarly, if a room previously used as a kindergarten classroom is subsequently used as a fifth grade classroom, the building's target capacity would increase because we expect that a fifth grade class will have more students than a kindergarten class. This is reflected in the fact that the DOE's goal for maximum classroom capacity is higher for fifth grade classrooms than for kindergarten classrooms. In this example, as well, assuming enrollment is constant, the utilization rate would decrease.

The DOE anticipates that building Q156 will still have excess space once P.S. 156 has completed its truncation and 29Q289 has completed its phase-in. The DOE does not currently have plans for the use of this space. However, any potential changes would be proposed in a separate EIS in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-190.

III. Impact of the Proposal on Affected Students, Schools, and Community

A. Students

Enrollment Options for Current P.S. 156 Students

P.S. 156 currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 will gradually stop serving middle school students in sixth through eighth grades and will no longer admit new sixth-grade students after the end of the 2012-2013 school year. Current sixth- and seventh-grade students will be supported at P.S. 156 as they progress towards completion of middle school and transition to high school. Current eighth-grade students who meet promotional requirements will apply for high school through the Citywide High School Admissions process.

If this proposal is approved, in the 2013-2014 school year, P.S. 156 will only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade and seventh and eighth grades. During the 2014-2015 school year, P.S. 156 will only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade and eighth grade. After the last class of eighth-grade students is promoted in June 2015, P.S. 156 will no longer serve any middle school grades.

In each of those years, there may be students who do not meet promotional standards and are required to repeat a grade that the school will no longer serve. These students will be enrolled in 29Q289 in the grade which the student is repeating.

The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth- grade seats lost as a result of P.S. 156's truncation will be replaced by 29Q289 and by the existing capacity at the other District 29 middle schools.

Fifth-grade students at P.S. 156 are currently given priority to continue at P.S. 156 for sixth through eighth grade. If this proposal is approved, all current P.S. 156 fifth-grade students would apply to middle school and those who meet promotional requirements would start middle school in 2013-2014 as sixth-grade students. All P.S. 156 fifth-grade students would enroll in their zoned middle school in 2013-2014 as sixth-grade students or would apply to one of the district, borough-wide, or Citywide middle school options. No fifth-grade students would be able to enroll in P.S. 156 for middle school.

29Q289 will serve students in sixth through eighth grade and will admit students through the middle school application process administered by the Office of Student Enrollment. As an additional option for the 2013-2014 school year, current fifth-grade students at P.S. 156 will have priority to enroll at new school 29Q289 in building Q156, should the proposal to open that school be approved. For the 2014-2015 school year and beyond, fifth-grade students at P.S. 156 will no longer have priority to enroll at 29Q289. More detailed information about the middle school admissions process is provided below, under "Enrollment Impact for Future Middle School Students." If a P.S. 156 fifth-grade student does not meet promotional standards at the conclusion of a school year, then the student will be retained at P.S. 156 as in the past.

P.S. 156 fifth-grade students with Individualized Educational Programs ("IEPs"), with the exception of those recommending placement in a District 75 school, are admitted to schools in the same manner as general education students. Schools will create programs that meet the needs of all students, ensuring students with IEPs access to learn alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

In accordance with DOE policy, English Language Learner ("ELL") students are admitted to schools in the same manner as their non-ELL peers. Thus, ELL students are placed according to the same placement criteria as their English-speaking peers.

Impact on Academic and Extra-Curricular Offerings at P.S. 156

The DOE does not anticipate that this proposal will prevent P.S. 156 from continuing to offer any particular academic or extra-curricular programs currently offered at the school. That said, the availability of certain offerings at the school will inevitably be impacted as the school implements its grade truncation and serves a smaller student population.

With respect to academics, P.S. 156 will continue to offer all necessary classes to support current students as they work to meet promotional requirements. As total enrollment at the school shrinks, the school may scale back its special programs and initiatives or enrichment classes. It is difficult to predict how those changes might be implemented as decisions will rest with school administrators and will be made based on student demand as well as staff and budget conditions at the school.

The DOE remains focused on helping P.S. 156 students to succeed. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 will be provided targeted, customized, and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support will be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance, and enrollment.

P.S. 156 currently offers Integrated Co-Teaching ("ICT") classes, Self-Contained ("SC") classes, and Special Education Teacher Support Services ("SETSS"). It also has an English as a Second Language ("ESL") program for English Language Learner ("ELL") students. Current students will be able to continue in their existing ICT and SC classes and SETSS will continue to be provided as P.S. 156 truncates, and students with disabilities will continue to receive mandated services in accordance with their Individualized Education Programs ("IEPs"). Current students at P.S. 156 who receive ELL services will continue to receive their mandated services as the school truncates.

According to the P.S. 156 Web site and 2011-2012 Comprehensive Educational Plan, P.S. 156 currently offers the following special programs, extra-curricular activities, and partnerships:^{11,12}

- **Special Programs:** CCC Computer Lab, After School Science Explorers, After School Literacy and Math
- **Extra-curricular Activities:** Basketball, Cheerleading, Clarinet and Recorder clubs, Chorus, Step Team, Chess Club
- **Partnerships:** Artists in Residence, Learning Leaders Volunteer Program, Community Workshop Presenters, National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa, Inc., Beta Omicron Chapter Senior Volunteers, Girl Scouts of NYC, Ridgewood Saving Bank, Roy Wilkins Park

This proposal will not prevent P.S. 156 from continuing to offer any of these options, but the number and range of programs offered may gradually diminish due to declining student enrollment as the school truncates its middle school grades. Again, it is difficult to predict precisely how those changes might be implemented as decisions will rest with school administrators and will be made based on student interests and available resources. That is true for any City school as all schools modify extra-curricular offerings annually based on student demand and available resources.

As P.S. 156 truncates its middle school grades, the DOE will work with P.S. 156 staff to enhance existing partnerships or develop new partnerships if specific, new student needs emerge during or after the truncation period. The DOE will work with 29Q289 to foster opportunities for them to work with the community organizations that have supported P.S. 156 middle school students in the past.

Enrollment Impact for Future Elementary School Students

P.S. 156 is a kindergarten through eighth-grade school that admits kindergarten through fifth-grade students in its zone. If this proposal is approved and P.S. 156 no longer serves middle school grades, P.S. 156's elementary grades will continue to give priority to students who live in the P.S. 156 zone, as it has in the past and in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. The full details of A-101 can be found at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ChancellorsRegulations/default.htm>.

Zoned schools are obligated to serve all students residing in their zone, space permitting, regardless of when families show up to register. Applicants must be admitted to zoned schools in the following order of priority:

- a. Zoned students whose verified siblings are pre-registered or enrolled at the time of application submission and will be enrolled in grades K-5 in the school at the start of the following school year in September;
- b. Zoned students other than those in (a) above applying to the zoned school;

If space allows, and if the Office of Student Enrollment deems appropriate based on district needs, offers may be authorized for the following priority groups, in the below order. Only the Office of Student Enrollment may authorize the placement of non-zoned students out of this priority order; for example, for students who cannot be accommodated at their zoned school, or for special programs such as dual language or inclusion classes for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

¹¹ The P.S. 156 Web site link is <http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/29/Q156/AboutUs/Overview/default.htm>.

¹² The 2011-2012 Comprehensive Educational Plan can be found at http://schools.nyc.gov/documents/oaosi/cep/2011-12/cep_Q156.pdf.

- c. Students whose verified siblings are pre-registered or enrolled at the time of application submission and will be enrolled in grades K-5 in the school at the start of the following school year in September who are not zoned to the school but are residents of that district;
- d. Students whose verified siblings are pre-registered or enrolled at the time of application submission and will be enrolled in grades K-5 at the start of the following school year in September who are residents of another district;
- e. Students currently attending the school's pre-kindergarten program who reside outside the school's zone but in the school's district, *without* a sibling who will be in grades K-5 at the school in the following school year;
- f. Students currently attending the school's pre-kindergarten program who reside outside the school's zone and district, *without* a sibling who will be in grades K-5 at the school in the following school year;
- g. Students other than those in (c) and (e) above who are residents of that district; and
- h. Students other than those in (d) and (f) who are residents of another district.

Elementary school students with IEPs, with the exception of those recommending placement in a District 75 school, are admitted to schools in the same manner as general education students. Schools will create programs that meet the needs of all students, ensuring students with IEPs access to learn alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

In accordance with DOE policy, ELL students will also be admitted to elementary schools in the same manner as their peers who are not ELL students. Any students requiring ELL services will continue to receive appropriate services at P.S. 156.

Enrollment Impact for Future Middle School Students

Existing fifth-grade students at P.S. 156 are given priority to continue to attend P.S. 156 for middle school. The school manages admissions for new students to sixth grade, and very few new students enter after fifth grade.

If this proposal is approved by the PEP on March 11, 2013, P.S. 156 will not admit any new sixth-grade students beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. Instead, fifth graders at P.S. 156 will be expected to enroll in their zoned school or submit a "new schools" application to new middle schools designated to open in throughout the City for the 2013-2014 school year, as described below. As part of that application, current fifth-grade students at P.S. 156 will have priority to attend 29Q289 for the 2013-2014 school year only.

Currently, District 29 does not participate in the Middle School Choice Process. Students typically enroll in their zoned middle school, continue in their K-8 school, or apply to one of the district, borough-wide or Citywide options through the Centralized middle school application process.

For those students who submitted an application for district, borough-wide, or Citywide options, middle school admissions applications were due on December 21, 2012.¹³ Students may also consider new middle schools designated to open throughout the City for the 2013-2014 school year. After the PEP votes on the proposals to open new schools, eligible students will have the opportunity to submit a "new schools" application.

¹³ The Middle School Choice Calendar for 2012-2013 can be found here:
<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/Calendar/default.htm>.

Students may also choose to apply to a number of schools that manage their own admission processes. Information about all of these options is printed in each district's Middle School Choice Directory, which can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/Publications/default.htm>. Please note that this directory is updated yearly.

Additional information on the school options available to students is provided in the charts below.

Middle school students with IEPs, with the exception of those recommending placement in a District 75 school, are admitted to schools in the same manner as general education students. Schools will create programs that meet the needs of all students, ensuring students with IEPs access to learn alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

Future sixth-grade students will continue to have access to their zoned school, to continue in their K-8 school, or to borough-wide or Citywide middle school options. The table below outlines information about these options, including the District 29, borough-wide, and Citywide middle schools' Progress Report grade, the percentage of special education students ("SE"), the percentage of ELL students, the admissions process, building utilization rate, and site accessibility. Additional information regarding special programs and courses offered by the schools listed here is available in the Middle School Directory, which is updated yearly.¹⁴

¹⁴The Middle School Directory is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle>.

District Options

DBN	School Name	Address	Building Code	Building Utilization ¹⁵	Grade Span 2012-2013	Grade Span at Scale	2011-2012 Progress Report Grade	2012 % SE	2012 % ELL	Admissions Method	Site Accessibility ¹⁶
DISTRICT Choice											
29Q259	Pathways College Preparatory School: A College Board School	109-89 204 Street	Q192	84%	6-12	6-12	C	11%	2%	School Based Application	Not functionally accessible
29Q268	PS/IS 268	92-07 175 Street	Q268	99%	K-8	K-8	C	10%	4%	School Based Application	Functionally accessible
29Q295	P.S./I.S. 295	222-14 Jamaica Avenue	Q263	103%	K-8	K-8	C	6%	6%	School Based Application	Not functionally accessible
BOROUGH-WIDE Choice											
28Q896	Young Women's Leadership School, Queens	150-91 87 Road	Q680	102%	6-12	6-12	C	0%	2%	Screened	Not functionally accessible
29Q283	Preparatory Academy for Writers: A College Board School	143-10 Springfield Boulevard	Q420	79%	6-12	6-12	B	8%	2%	School Based Application	Not functionally accessible
29Q327	EAGLE ACADEMY FOR YOUNG MEN III	171-10 Linden Boulevard	Q633	-%	6-8	6-12	C	11%	0%	Limited Unscreened	Functionally accessible
30Q227	I.S. 227 Louis Armstrong	32-02 Junction Boulevard	Q227	94%	5-8	5-8	B	11%	5%	School Based Application	Functionally accessible
30Q286	Young Women's Leadership	23-15 Newtown	Q739	86%	6-12	6-12	C	2%	4%	-	Partially Accessible

¹⁵ Target building capacity and target building utilization rates are from the 2011-2012 Blue Book.

¹⁶ A code of "Functionally Accessible" indicates that all schools/programs located in the building are fully accessible. A code of "1st Floor Functionally Accessible" indicates that the school is functionally accessible, but only on the first floor; a school has this designation only if, among other things, an accessible bathroom is available to those on the first floor. A code of "Partially Accessible" indicates that a school might be functionally accessible on more than one floor but not for all relevant spaces in the school.

	School, Astoria	Avenue									
CITYWIDE Choice											
01M539	New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School	111 Columbia Street	M022	101%	K-12	K-12	A	0%	0%	SB Application	Not functionally accessible
02M407	Institute for Collaborative Education	345 East 15th Street	M475	145%	6-12	6-12	C	0%	0%	SB Application	Not functionally accessible
02M408	Professional Performing Arts School	328 West 48th Street	M017	97%	6-12	6-12	B	0%	2%	SB Application	Not functionally accessible
02M442	Ballet Tech / NYC Public School for Dance	890 Broadway	M905	70%	4-8	4-8	B	0%	3%	SB Application	Not functionally accessible
03M334	The Anderson School (P.S. 334)	100 West 77th Street	M044	88%	K-8	K-8	A	0%	0%	SB Application	Functionally accessible
03M859*	Special Music School	129 West 67th Street	M932	66%	K-8	K-12	A	0%	1%	SB Application	Not functionally accessible
04M012	Talented and Gifted School for Young Scholars	240 East 109th Street	M117	71%	K-8	K-8	A	0%	0%	SB Application	Functionally accessible
ZONED											
29Q059	I.S. 059 Springfield Gardens	132-55 Ridgedale Street	Q059	64%	6-8	6-8	C	11%	2%	Zoned	Functionally accessible
29Q109	Jean Nuzzi Intermediate School	213-10 92 Avenue	Q109	79%	6-8	6-8	B	7%	5%	Zoned	Not functionally accessible
29Q116	PS/IS 116 William C. Hughley	107-25 Wren Place	Q116	93%	K-8	K-8	B	9%	7%	Zoned	Not functionally accessible
29Q138	P.S./ M.S.138 Sunrise	251-11 Weller Avenue	Q138	84%	K-8	K-8	D	8%	3%	Zoned	Partially Accessible
29Q147	PS/MS 147 Ronald McNair	218-01 116 Avenue	Q147	66%	K-8	K-8	C	8%	4%	Zoned	Partially Accessible
29Q156	P.S. 156 Laurelton	229-02 137 Avenue	Q156	80%	K-8	K-8	D	11%	3%	Zoned	Not functionally accessible

29Q192	I.S. 192 The Linden	109-89 204 Street	Q192	84%	6-8	6-8	A	17%	5%	Zoned	Not functionally accessible
29Q208	P.S. / I.S. 208	74-30 Commonwealth Blvd	Q208	84%	K-8	K-8	B	8%	1%	Unscreened	Functionally accessible
29Q238	I.S 238 - Susan B. Anthony Academy	88-15 182 Street	Q238	94%	6-8	6-8	C	8%	11%	Zoned	Functionally accessible
29Q270	The Gordon Parks School	233-15 Merrick Boulevard	Q270	107%	K-8	K-8	B	10%	0%	Unscreened	Functionally accessible
29Q355*	Collaborative Arts Middle School	145-00 Springfield Boulevard	Q231	79%	6-7	6-8	-	15%	2%	Zoned: Campus Choice	Not functionally accessible
29Q356*	Community Voices Middle School	145-00 Springfield Boulevard	Q231	79%	6-7	6-8	-	12%	4%	Zoned: Campus Choice	Not functionally accessible

Charter Options

DBN	School Name	Address	Grade Span 2012-2013	Grade Span at Scale	Admissions Method ¹⁷
84Q341*	Riverton Street Charter School	118-34 Riverton St.	K-5	K-7	Lottery
84Q704	Merrick Academy - Queens Public Charter School	207-01 Jamaica Ave.	K-6	K-6	Lottery

* Signifies a school that is currently phasing in.

¹⁷ For more information about the charter school lottery application process, please consult the DOE's Directory of NYC Charter Schools, which can be accessed on the DOE's Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/charters/For+Parents>.

Enrollment Impact for Over-the-Counter Students

P.S. 156 also admits middle school students through the over-the-counter (“OTC”) process. OTC placement is a term that refers to the method of enrolling students who need a school assignment because they were not part of any admissions process for entry grades and/or were not enrolled in a New York City school at the time school started. These students fall into one of four categories:

- New to the New York City school system;
- Left the New York City school system and have returned;¹⁸
- Are seeking transfers (based on the guidelines outlined in Chancellor’s Regulation A-101); or
- Students who did not participate in the elementary or middle school admissions process for some other reason.

When a middle-school eligible student arrives for an OTC placement, his or her school assignment is determined by his or her interest, his or her home address, which schools have available seats, and, where applicable, transfer guidelines. Students are eligible to attend middle school based on the district of elementary school attendance or the district to which the student’s address is zoned for middle school. In un-zoned districts, the student visits a Borough Enrollment Office where he or she meets with a counselor who reviews options that will meet the student’s needs. However, in many districts, students may simply report to their zoned middle school at the start of the year.

If the Division of Portfolio Planning determines that additional OTC seats may be needed, the number of available seats is reviewed and, if space allows, adjusted in those schools where the admissions methods are limited unscreened, or unscreened. Should a zoned school reach capacity, the school may be “capped,” in which case OTC arrivals may be directed to a different district middle school. Should sufficient space open at the capped school, the student may return if the student so chooses.

A small number of new students were admitted to sixth grade at P.S. 156 during the 2011-2012 school year for September 2012 enrollment. A small number of students were held over from the previous year, and approximately 14 sixth-grade students were admitted to P.S. 156 through the OTC placement process. Similarly, a small number of OTC students were admitted to P.S. 156 for seventh and eighth grade.¹⁹

During the 2012-2013 school year, 18 schools in District 29 accepted a total of 858 students in grades six through eight through the OTC placement process, reflecting an average of approximately 48 students per 18 schools, including P.S. 156. Since 29Q289 will also accept OTC students, all OTC arrivals will continue to be accommodated.

The proposal to truncate the middle school grades of P.S. 156 is not expected to impact the placement of OTC students in building Q156. P.S. 156 may continue to receive OTC students in the grades it serves depending on the needs of the community, preference of parents, and availability of seats.

B. Schools

If this proposal is approved, there will be sufficient space in Q156 to accommodate P.S. 156 and 29Q289, pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint (the “Footprint”), throughout the period during which P.S. 156 truncates its middle school grades and as 29Q289 phases in (if that proposal is also approved). In 2015-2016, once P.S. 156 has truncated, and 29Q289 is at full scale, there will be approximately 555-645 total students served in the building. Please visit the New York City Department of Education Web site to access the Instructional Footprint, which guides space allocation and use in City schools:
http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/78D715EA-EC50-4AD1-82D1-1CAC544F5D30/DOEFOOTPRINTSConsolidatedVersion2011_FINAL.pdf.

¹⁸ Per Chancellor's Regulation A-101, students have the “right to return” to their prior school following discharge within one calendar year of discharge, subject to available seats. Therefore, it is possible that non-zoned students arriving for an OTC placement may be granted admission to a zoned school.

¹⁹ The exact number of students admitted to sixth grade at P.S. 156, held over, and admitted through OTC for seventh and eighth grade is being withheld, consistent with federal student privacy laws.

The Footprint sets forth the baseline number of rooms that should be allocated to a school based on the grade levels served by the school and number of classes per grade. For existing schools, the Footprint is applied to the current number of classes and class size a school has programmed and is confirmed by a walk-through of the building by the Borough Director of Space Planning and the school's principal.

For elementary schools serving grades kindergarten through five the Footprint assumes that classes are self-contained. Therefore, the Footprint allocates one full-size room for each general education or Integrated Co-Teaching ("ICT") section and a full-size or half-size room to accommodate each Self Contained ("SC") special education section served by the school. In addition to these rooms, schools serving grades kindergarten through five receive an allocation of cluster or specialty rooms proportionate to the number of students enrolled. These spaces can be used at the principal's discretion for purposes such as art and/or music instruction, among other things.

For grades six through twelve, the Footprint assumes that students move from class to class and that classrooms should be programmed at maximum efficiency. The Footprint does not require that every teacher have his or her own designated classroom. Principals are asked to program their schools efficiently so that classrooms can be used for multiple purposes throughout the course of the school day. The Footprint allocates the number of baseline classrooms for student support services, resource rooms, and administrative space based on the grades a school serves and its enrollment at scale.

As in other situations where schools are co-located, the schools will share large common and specialty rooms in the building, such as the cafeteria, the gymnasium, and the library. Specific decisions regarding the allocation of the shared spaces are made by the Building Council, consisting of principals from all co-located schools, in conjunction with the DOE's Office of Space Planning.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 would serve fewer grades and fewer students. As such, the baseline footprint for P.S. 156 would decrease accordingly. Similarly, as 29Q289 phases in and serves additional grades, its baseline Footprint would increase accordingly. The space details of the proposal to open and co-locate 29Q289 in Q156 are discussed in a separate EIS that is available at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>.

C. Community

The DOE supports parent choice and strives to ensure that all families have access to high-quality schools that meet their children's needs. P.S. 156 has struggled with low performance despite the considerable support that the DOE has offered to the school. As a result, there is a need to provide better options for families in the community. Under this proposal, P.S. 156 will be truncated so that it serves only kindergarten through fifth grade, but the Q156 building will offer a new educational option that is intended to better support the learning needs of future middle school students in District 29 and replace seats lost by the truncation of P.S. 156. As a result, the proposal to truncate P.S. 156 is not expected to yield a net loss of middle school seats in building Q156 or in District 29.

- In 2012-2013, there are only 2,387 sixth-grade students enrolled in District 29 middle schools. Including the seats currently available at P.S. 156, there are 2,682 total sixth-grade seats in District 29 middle schools. Therefore, there is an excess of 295 sixth-grade seats in the district.
- Excluding the seats currently available at P.S. 156, there are 2,560 total sixth-grade seats in District 29 middle schools. Therefore, even after excluding the seats that would have been offered at P.S. 156, there are still 173 excess sixth-grade seats in District 29 middle schools.
- Based on the 2012-2013 unaudited enrollment register, as of October 26, 2012, P.S. 156 is currently serving 83 sixth-grade students. The proposed opening of 29Q289 in building Q156 is projected to

create 95-105 sixth-grade seats in District 29. The sixth-grade seats in District 29 eliminated by P.S. 156's truncation would be recovered through the phase-in of 29Q289.

As indicated in the chart in Section III.A, the Riverton Street Charter School is phasing in to serve middle school grades, resulting in an increase of approximately 78 sixth-grade seats in District 29:

- Therefore, there would still be an excess of at least 353 sixth-grade seats in District 29 middle schools.

P.S. 156 is the only school in District 29 serving elementary and middle school students impacted by a phase out or grade truncation proposal.

This proposal is not expected to impact the ability of community members to apply for or receive permits to use the building outside of school hours.

IV. Enrollment, Admissions, and School Performance Information

P.S. 156

Admissions Data

Current Admissions	Grades K-5: Zoned Grades 6-8: Priority to continuing fifth-grade students
Admissions During and After Proposed Truncation of P.S. 156	Grades K-5: Zoned Grades 6-8: N/A

Enrollment Data²⁰

	Grade KG	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Total Enrollment
2012-2013 (unaudited)	50	50	49	79	57	54	83	86	90	598
2013-2014 (projections)	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	75-85	50-60	-	80-90	80-90	465-545
2014-2015 (projections)	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	75-85	-	-	80-90	380-450
2015-2016 (projections)	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	45-55	-	-	-	270-330

²⁰ All figures are from the 2012-2013 Unaudited Register (as of October 26, 2012).

Demographic Data²¹

Percentage of Students Receiving ICT or SC Services	11%
Percentage of Students with Individualized Education Programs	16%
Percentage of English Language Learner Students	3%
Percentage of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Lunch	37%

School Performance Data

P.S. 156 Laurelton	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012
School Performance and Progress			
Overall Progress Report Grade	C	C	D
Quality Review Score ²²	P	N/A ²³	N/A
Performance Data			
English Language Arts % Proficient (Levels 3 and 4)	39%	39%	37%
Math % Proficient (Levels 3 and 4)	37%	41%	36%
Other Key Performance Indicators			
Attendance Rate	95%	94%	94%
2012-2013 State Accountability Status	In Good Standing ²⁴		

V. Initial Impact on Budget and Cost of Instruction

If this proposal is approved, once the truncation of P.S. 156’s middle school grades is fully implemented, the DOE will cease to allocate funds to P.S. 156 for grades six through eight.

Most funding in schools’ budgets is allocated on a per-pupil basis, based on current Fair Student Funding (“FSF”) per capita allocation levels, which are subject to annual variation. FSF covers basic instructional expenses and FSF funds may, at the school’s discretion, be used to hire staff, purchase supplies and materials, or implement instructional programs.

As a result of the proposed truncation, the total number of students enrolled at P.S. 156 would decline each year, meaning that the school’s budget would decrease each year, and the school would need fewer teachers and fewer supplies to meet the needs of its smaller student population. If for some reason the overall school enrollment grows again, the overall budget would increase accordingly. In any case, funding will be provided in accordance with enrollment levels, allowing the school to meet the instructional needs of its student population.

²¹ All figures are as a percentage of total students from the 2012-2013 Unaudited Register (as of October 26, 2012).

²² For more information about Quality Reviews, please visit the DOE Web site at <http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/review>.

²³ Not all schools receive a Quality Review every year.

²⁴ This status is determined by SED under the New York State waiver for the No Child Left Behind Act. For more information, please visit the SED Web site at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/ESEADesignations.html>.

This is how funding is awarded to all schools throughout the City, with budgets naturally increasing or decreasing as enrollment fluctuates from year to year.

Please refer to the FSF Guide and FY13 School Allocation Memoranda for additional information on cost of instruction and how the changes to FSF funding and other school allocations will be impacted as a result of register changes at P.S. 156. The FSF Guide is available at:
http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/d_chanc_oper/budget/dbor/allocationmemo/fy12_13/FY13_PDF/FSF_Guide.pdf.

The FY13 School Allocation Memoranda is available at:
http://schools.nyc.gov/offices/d_chanc_oper/budget/dbor/allocationmemo/fy12_13/AM_FY13_CAT.html.

VI. Effect on Personnel Needs, Administration, Transportation, and Other Support Services

A. Personnel

If this proposal is approved, some teachers, administrative, and non-pedagogical staff at P.S. 156 will be excessed over the course of the truncation.²⁵ This process will take place gradually as student enrollment declines with each successive graduating class. With fewer students, the school's staffing needs will naturally be reduced.

All excessing will be conducted in accordance with existing labor contracts. For example, the current UFT contract would require excessing to take place in reverse seniority order within each given teaching license area.

Barring system-wide layoffs, excessed teachers will be eligible to apply for other City positions, and any teacher who does not find a permanent position will be placed in the Absent Teacher Reserve ("ATR") pool, meaning that they will continue to earn their salary while serving as substitute teachers in other City schools. Should there be a vacancy in the school in a teacher's license area within one year of the teacher being excessed, the teacher will have a right of return to the school, consistent with applicable contractual provisions regarding teachers' seniority.

Students who would otherwise have enrolled in P.S. 156 may now enroll in new school 29Q289 which the DOE has proposed to phase into the Q156 building, or in other new schools opening borough-wide, and those schools might need to hire additional staff. That replacement school would follow the hiring process consistent with the procedures set forth in the collective bargaining agreement between the DOE and UFT, and hire no less than 50% of their staff from the most senior qualified staff from P.S. 156, if sufficient number of staff apply, until the impacted school has completed its truncation.

New staff positions will also be created due to the phase-in of new or replacement schools Citywide. Consequently, this proposal would not necessarily result in an overall loss of teaching positions within the Citywide system.

B. Administration

If this proposal is approved, some positions will likely be excessed as the school gradually truncates its middle school grades, as administrative needs may decrease as the school serves a decreasing student population. Again, all excessing will take place in accordance with existing labor contracts.

²⁵ Excessing of staff occurs when a school requires fewer positions than the number of staff currently in the license area or job title.

C. Transportation

If this proposal is approved, transportation would continue to be provided according to Chancellor’s Regulation A-801: <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/21A1B11A-886B-4F74-9546-E875EE82A14C/40303/A801.pdf>. There will be no change to existing transportation practices at P.S. 156 as a result of this proposal.

D. Other Support Services

The provision of certain support services is described above. Other support services will continue to be provided consistent with Citywide policy if this proposal is approved.

VII. Building Information

Building		Q156
Type of Building		PS
Year Built		1931
Overall BCAS rating		2.82
2011-2012 Target Building Utilization		80%
2011-2012 Target Building Capacity		820
FY 2012 Maintenance Costs	Labor	\$36,932
	Materials	\$22,210
	Maintenance and repair contracts	\$1,493
	Service contracts	\$0
	Custodial operations costs— Materials	\$5,804
	Custodial operations costs— Custodial Allocation	\$250,132
FY 2012 Energy Costs	Electric	\$128,409
	Gas	\$61,573
	Oil	n/a
Projects completed during the current or prior school year		Low-volt Elec System, Auditorium Upgrade, FY12 Reso A Technology, FY13 Reso A Technology
Projects proposed in the capital plan		Flood Elimination, Low-volt Electrical System, Exterior Masonry, Parapets, Windows, Classroom Connectivity
Accessibility of the building		Building is not functionally programmatically accessible
Building attributes		Auditorium, Cafeteria, Computer Rooms, Gymnasium, Library, Multi-purpose Room, Nurse's Office, Science Lab