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

**Opening and Co-Location of a
New District Middle School at M192**

**10/9/13
5:30 p.m.**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. ELSA NUNEZ: Good evening. Good
3 evening, ladies and gentlemen. We are ready to
4 begin. If any SLT members from 192 or 325 who
5 would like to come and sit up with me, you are
6 welcome. SLT members? Okay, so we have the
7 Principal of 192, who is going to sit up here,
8 thank you. We also have the CEC President, who
9 is sitting here with us, and she will introduce
10 herself. Good evening. This is a joint public
11 hearing of the Department of Education Community
12 Education Council and school leadership teams
13 for the proposed co-location of a new district
14 middle school with existing PS192, Jacob H.
15 Schiff, MPS 325, in building M192, beginning in
16 the 2014-2015 school year. I am Community
17 School Superintendent Elsa Nunez. We have asked
18 the District 6 Community Education Council, the
19 school leadership teams in the building to
20 participate in this joint public hearing. I am
21 joined here today by:

22 MS. MIRIAM ARISTY FARER: Miriam Aristy
23 Farer, CC6 President.

24 MS. NUNEZ: From CEC, and we have the
25 Principal of 192.

1 MS. SUSAN RIVERA: Susan Rivera.

2 MS. NUNEZ: This hearing is being recorded.
3 The purpose of this hearing is for you to
4 provide comments about the proposal. Before I
5 describe the proposal, I want to make sure that
6 you are all aware of the opportunity to provide
7 your input. All those who wish to speak must
8 line up in the speakers' line up area located
9 just outside the auditorium. This sign up list
10 will close in 15 minutes. Speakers will be
11 given the floor in the order that they signed
12 up. All comments are limited to two minutes.
13 There may be elected officials who arrive at
14 different times throughout the evening. If they
15 wish to speak, we will do our best to
16 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.
17 Those who are here at the start of the public
18 comment segment will be asked to speak first.
19 All comments will be mentioned in the analysis
20 of public comments to be published and provided
21 to the Panel for Educational Policy the evening
22 before the Panel votes. That vote is scheduled
23 for October 15th, 2013, at 6:00 P. M. at Prospect
24 Heights Campus, 8A3 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn,
25 New York, 11225. In addition, we welcome any

1 comments and feedback you may have at any time
2 before the Panel votes on this proposal. The
3 email address and phone number where comments
4 can be made are: d06proposals@schools.nyc.gov,
5 and 212-374-3466. Proposal summary: The New
6 York City Department of Education, or DOE, is
7 proposing to open and co-locate a new district
8 middle school, or O6M209, in Building M192,
9 beginning in 2014-2015 school year. The co-
10 location means that two or more school
11 organizations are located in the same building
12 and may share common spaces like auditoriums,
13 gymnasiums, and cafeterias. If this proposal is
14 approved, 06M209 will be co-located with two
15 existing elementary schools, PS192, Jacob H.
16 Schiff, or PS192 and PS325. PS192 and 325 serve
17 students in grades kindergarten through 5th
18 grade, and Ps192 offers a pre-kindergarten
19 program. In 2014-2015, the first year of the
20 proposal, 06M209 will serve 75 to 85 6th grade
21 students. In 2016-2017, the final year of the
22 proposal, 06 and 209 will serve 225 to 255 6th
23 through 8th grade students. 06 and 209 will
24 admit students through the middle school
25 application process using limited onscreen

1 admissions method, and will give priority to
2 students zoned to or attending PS192 and 325.
3 Building M192 has a target capacity to serve 937
4 students. During the 2013-2014 school year, the
5 building serves a total of approximately 628
6 students, yielding a building utilization rate
7 of 67 percent. This means that the building is
8 underutilized and has space to accommodate
9 additional students. In 2016-2017, the final
10 year of this proposal, the schools in M192 are
11 projected to enroll 758 to 908 students,
12 yielding a projected utilization rate of 81
13 percent to 97 percent. Thus, building M192 has
14 the capacity and space to accommodate PS192,
15 PS325, and 06M209 at full scale. Although this
16 proposal may have an impact on District 6 Middle
17 School's enrollment, the impact is anticipated
18 to be spread across the middle schools that
19 currently enroll students from PS192 or PS325.
20 Therefore, the DOE does not anticipate a
21 material impact on enrollment to any particular
22 middle school. The proposed co-location of
23 06M209 in M192 is intended to provide an
24 additional middle school option in District 6.
25 06M209 will create approximately 225 to 255 new

1 middle school seats in District 6, when it
2 reaches full scale in 2016-2017. So now, we
3 will give an opportunity to CEC members to make
4 a statement if they would like, and SLT members.
5 Would any of the SLT members from 192 or 325
6 like to make a statement?

7 FEMALE VOICE: We - - the middle school or
8 the community, the SLT, and the - - Community
9 Center, are ready to sign a proposal that
10 implies the reconfiguration of the grades. That
11 means, to integrate 6th, 7th, and 8th grade in
12 that building. This proposal suggests that the
13 PS325 - - to students already - - , - -
14 registration for the active school year, and
15 will open the middle school - - each year - - ,
16 - - . [Interpreter off mic]. - - Department,
17 due to the following - - . The community wasn't
18 consulted - - , and our voices were not heard
19 during the development of the - - . Second, the
20 economic resources to take into account the
21 three schools in the building is a big expense.
22 As we know, a new school requires a new
23 principal, teachers, and new staff. Third, the
24 physical space will be limited, and will alter
25 the school routine, the daily school routine,

1 with three schools functioning in the same
2 building, sharing the common areas, like the
3 auditorium, cafeteria, the library, the
4 gymnasium, the labs, and more. That's all.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. NUNEZ: Would any other SLT members
7 from PS192 or 325 like to make a statement?

8 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

9 MS. MARGARITA PETRI: Hello, hello? You
10 hear me back there? Okay, my name is Ms.
11 Margarita Petri. I am a grandmother of a child
12 at PS192. I have lived in this neighborhood for
13 46 years. I've seen the kids go bussing and
14 train. I am tired, these are my children, I
15 want the school for my 5th graders going into
16 6th. We do need it in District 6. Again, I am
17 tired of seeing them go on the train, fight on
18 the train, fight on the bus. I want my kids
19 back home where they belong. [Foreign audio],
20 and 6 and 209, welcome to 192 and 325.

21 MS. DULCE DESERENO: Good afternoon. My
22 name is Dulce DeSereno [phonetic], and I belong
23 to the Committee of 325. What I'm going to say
24 is really brief, but I'm going to express what
25 we, as parents, need for our children. As

1 parents to the kids that go to school 325, we
2 have the right for you guys to listen to our
3 necessities. As my partner from 192 mentioned
4 before, we are in favor of the initial proposal.
5 It's for an elementary school to disappear and
6 only stay with one. We're not saying no to the
7 intermediate school, but one is the best for our
8 children, and as I said before, we are not
9 saying no to it, so the intermediate school is
10 just that. We want the best for our kids, and
11 we believe that's the best.

12 MS. NUNEZ: Thank you. Any other SLT member
13 from 325 or 192?

14 MS. JOSANA SUASO: Good evening. My name is
15 Josana Suaso [phonetic], and I belong to the SLT
16 for 192. My opinion, what I would like to say
17 is, it's not that we are against another school.
18 Simply, what we just want is that for the first
19 original proposal to be done, because I have
20 kids, I've got children in both of the schools,
21 and there's another third school here, it will
22 be really chaotic to deal with three schools
23 inside the same building. For my opinion, I
24 would like for it—to see it better, the first
25 proposal. Thank you.

1 MS. NUNEZ: We have representatives from
2 Assemblymen's Rights Office who would like to
3 make a statement.

4 MR. MAURICE CUMMINGS: Good evening,
5 everyone. My name is Maurice Cummings. I am
6 here from the office of New York State
7 Assemblyman Keith Wright, and I am here to offer
8 testimony on behalf of the Assemblymen. As the
9 representative for the 70th Assembly District,
10 which includes the proposed location site, co-
11 location site, I find the New York City
12 Department of Education's proposal to
13 incorporate a new district middle school into
14 two existing elementary schools to be deeply
15 concerning and against the best interests of
16 current and prospective students. While I am
17 supportive of the Department's efforts to
18 increase middle school options for the families
19 residing in District 6, I strongly believe that
20 any new proposals should be inclusive of all
21 affected stakeholders, and that includes parents
22 and community members. Co-location is a very
23 divisive matter of education policy, and one
24 which I do not support where inequities are
25 created, as such in this instance. This

1 proposal is particularly disturbing to me, as
2 it seeks to merge students of an entirely
3 different age group into a building currently
4 occupied by not one, but two elementary schools,
5 as well as a number of community-based
6 organizations. I feel it is my duty to question
7 the Department's rationale for this proposal, as
8 I do not agree with the educational impact
9 statement's findings that, if implemented, this
10 plan would have minimal impact on current or
11 future academic performance. It is no secret
12 there are blatant inequities in the education
13 models implemented by charters versus
14 traditional public education institutions.
15 While some may debate the existence of these
16 inequities, I can assure you, they are very
17 real. I do not agree with the Department's view
18 that housing three separately managed and
19 administered schools within a single building,
20 especially when this arrangement would require
21 sharing of common social spaces, would not have
22 an impact on the respective student populations.
23 I do not want to envision a scenario where a
24 student sees a posting for an after-school
25 program or extra-curricular activity on a

1 bulletin board, only to learn that it was not
2 intended for them, and in all likelihood, will
3 not be made available to them, that it was for
4 the other students. These inequities, while
5 they may seem insignificant to some, can affect
6 students' perception of their education, and
7 what's worse, have negative consequences for
8 their performance. The educational impact
9 statement for the proposal cites that the target
10 building's utilization rate is currently only 67
11 percent, and that under the plan, this would be
12 increased to 81 to 97 percent. It remains
13 unknown to me what criteria are used to
14 determine how efficiently a building is being
15 utilized. Furthermore, it begs the question of
16 why the Department has not pursued any
17 administrative or community-based alternatives
18 to maximizing the use of this space. In
19 closing, over the years, I've been an outspoken
20 advocate for the need of quality education
21 options for our youth here in the Harlem
22 Community. I do not view this as a suitable
23 option, especially in light of the fact that
24 PS192 has most recently been assigned a D rating
25 for developing on their last performance report.

1 How the Department plans to improve this
2 rating to satisfactory level while
3 simultaneously managing the incorporation of an
4 additional 200 students in this building has not
5 been clearly demonstrated by this proposal. The
6 primary goal here should be providing new
7 options while improving, or at the very least,
8 minimizing any detriment to the academic
9 standing of the existing schools, ensuring that
10 the needs of the students are prioritized on
11 every level. It is my belief that this proposal
12 fails to meet the standard. Thank you.

13 MS. NUNEZ: Any other SLT members from PS192
14 or 325? Now, would CEC members like to make a
15 comment?

16 MS. FARER: Good evening. My name is Miriam
17 Aristy Farer, and I'm the CEC President for
18 District 6. I've written down some things to
19 highlight. While we acknowledge the community
20 needs of middle school, I, as the CEC President,
21 after meeting with parents and principals, will
22 share with you where I've landed on this. While
23 the community acknowledges the need for middle
24 school in the lower portion of District 6, there
25 have been concerns in the following areas in

1 regards to the proposal. One, the process and
2 timing. Two, the support both schools currently
3 receive from the DOE. Three, cost of new school
4 versus expansion. Four, changing demographics
5 and community. The parents—the SLT parents were
6 informed in the last week of the school year in
7 June. The parents on the SLT were all outgoing,
8 and—outgoing ESL parents, and they did not
9 understand what was presented very clearly. It
10 was not provided in Spanish. Being that it was
11 the last week of school, it was also not the
12 best time to present items of this importance,
13 as schools would be closed for the next two
14 months, and parents would not be accessible. On
15 July 23rd, OPM, Office of Portfolio Management,
16 reached out to myself, the newly elected CEC 6
17 President, for a private meeting regarding this
18 co-location. It was in clear violation, asking
19 that of me, of the Open Meetings Act, to request
20 that conversation. OPM was invited to attend
21 the August 15th CEC 6 Public Meeting to present
22 the proposal. At that time, the CEC requested
23 all materials in Spanish two weeks prior to the
24 meeting. We were amused by what transpired, and
25 disturbed. When OPM presented to CEC 6, they

1 handed out a presentation about who OPM is.
2 As the speaker spoke, which is present in the
3 room, Mira, it became evident that the deck
4 handed out to us was not the co-location
5 proposal that was being dictated. We have a
6 recording of the meeting which proves this, at
7 which point, we were informed of the October 15th
8 PEP date. We were not given any written or
9 emailed information to review until August 29th,
10 when the educational impact statement was
11 released in English only. The CEC attempted to
12 reach out to the schools, but with schools
13 closed, being closed, was not able to make
14 contact with staff or parents. The CEC was able
15 to meet with principals on September 13th for the
16 first time, where we learned neither was in
17 support of the new school. We also learned,
18 PS325 did not have a PTA or SLT, thus no way to
19 engage parents. We advised the President's
20 Council to expedite an election immediately. On
21 September 23rd, we were able to meet with the
22 PS153 parents for the first time to inform them
23 of this co-location. The educational impact
24 statement was made available in Spanish on
25 September the 20th. Today is October 9th. It

1 was our observation that out of 40 plus
2 parents at the meeting, only 3 were English
3 speakers. They were informed of the proposal by
4 the CEC without any support from the DOE on
5 translations at that meeting. At that point, a
6 previous proposal submitted during the tenure of
7 the previous Superintendent, Martha Madera, for
8 an expansion, was mentioned by a former parent,
9 and again, the need for a middle school in the
10 area was emphasized. As you can see by the
11 dates, the CEC has great concern over the lack
12 of Spanish materials provided, and the timing in
13 which this proposal was presented to the
14 schools, as well as the CEC. We do not feel
15 adequate time was given to weigh out options or
16 properly engage the community in this process,
17 thus not allowing for real community engagement,
18 or 45 to 60 days prior to a PEP vote. The CEC
19 acknowledges the schools need more support
20 academically. PS192 has a new principal this
21 year, and PS325 has had a drop in enrollment.
22 After speaking with parents, we learned, parents
23 not happy with class sizes, parents very
24 concerned over the ELL education, children not
25 making progress. We also learned, and this

1 needs further investigation, that the Kip
2 [phonetic] charter on 133rd Street has been
3 soliciting the highest performing students from
4 both schools, thus lowering the enrollment and
5 the academic standing. A concern for many years
6 in the community that lower grades started in
7 the mini-school annex in the parking lot was
8 also brought to light. Issues with young
9 children moving in and out of the building is
10 inefficient education, time, and safety. The
11 drop in enrollment has created a drop in
12 funding, thus creating some of the parental
13 concerns on the quality of education at these
14 schools. 192 is on its third principal in three
15 years. Clearly, these schools need focus.
16 Fiscally, the CEC would like to see a cost
17 analysis of opening a new middle school versus
18 expansion included in a proposal before the PEP.
19 Recalculated space formula, including the annex,
20 as excluding the annex as a primary education
21 site. It has clearly been a negative factor in
22 the community when choosing PS192 or 325 as an
23 elementary school. OPM should take that into
24 consideration. It is a big community concern.
25 The cost to maintain the annex. Currently, the

1 school building has the capacity to house two
2 schools comfortably. What is the cost of
3 security and just logistics of maintaining this
4 annex? Currently, only PS325 has children in
5 the annex. PS192, listening to the community
6 concerns, no longer has students in the annex
7 this year, which also has no AC and is extremely
8 hot. When the CEC, toward the school in
9 September, on a cool day, it was extremely warm
10 in the main building, as it is now. Has DOE
11 considered adding air conditioning to the
12 building? What would be the cost? The CEC has
13 observed a change in the community around the
14 school, which is of no surprise. With the
15 Columbia University expansion, the demographics
16 are changing. Less families, more college
17 students, more single residents and young
18 families, and gentrification. Has OPM
19 considered if the community needs two elementary
20 schools, or would it be better with one very
21 strong elementary school and one very strong
22 middle school? As noted already, with the
23 division of space, also comes the loss in
24 funding, as schools are reduced, resulting in
25 less resources to provide a quality education at

1 the elementary level. The area needs a good
2 quality elementary as well. As a district, we
3 are seeing many students in District 6 entering
4 middle school one to two levels below, even
5 before the curriculum change. This requires
6 some actions focus on the elementary level
7 versus continuing to add schools. District 6
8 needs quality schools, not just seats. PS325,
9 for two years, has applied for pre-K, and there
10 is a need for pre-K in the community as well.
11 They have been denied. Also worth noting is the
12 expansion of the Kip school on 133rd, to grades K
13 to 3. PS325 had 70 K students enroll last year.
14 This year, only 30. Many students in those
15 grades migrated to Kip this year, and the
16 summary, the concern that one is expanded, that
17 schools from one schools would not feed—the
18 concern that if an expansion versus a new school
19 happens, one school would not be able to feed
20 students into the other middle school is
21 unquantified. We already see a trend in many
22 192-325 students entering Kip Academy for middle
23 school and earlier grades, as well as moving out
24 of the community. We do not see that as a
25 problem, based on all the investigations we have

1 conducted, meeting with principals, parents,
2 and living in the community. The 192 building,
3 we feel has the capacity to execute an
4 expansion, and at the same time, improving the
5 educational quality of current elementary
6 schools. Fiscally, we challenge OPM to do the
7 cost and space analysis, excluding the middle
8 school, which the community does not want as an
9 adequate education space. The current principal
10 of PS192 was a former assistant principal at a
11 middle school, and has the experience,
12 professional capacity to grow the school and be
13 the principal. The PS325 principal also seems
14 to be a very qualified principal to lead the
15 elementary school. Both schools would need
16 educational support regardless, to address the
17 concerns of the parents in regards to the
18 quality of education the ELLs are receiving.
19 The CEC would work with other district schools
20 to share what is working within our network in
21 the district of ELL programs in District 6, if
22 the DOE will not address the community's
23 educational needs. If the DOE put more focus
24 into addressing the quality of education in the
25 elementary schools versus adding another, the

1 returns to the community would be greater.
2 Adding a third school will force currently
3 shared spaces to be divided in three versus two,
4 and we suspect, based on our findings, will take
5 more space and more funding. Some might
6 challenge and say, why expand a low-performing
7 school? We challenge back, why not put the
8 funding into improving the schools? Why not
9 focus making the 192 an excellent option for
10 both middle school and elementary for the lower
11 district? Our district lacks quality schools
12 due to poor funding and excessive amount of
13 focus on co-location versus a quality education.
14 We currently have 12 co-located schools, all of
15 which have struggles, but the main factor is the
16 loss of space and funding that impacts a
17 principal with little support from the DOE once
18 a co-location happens, apart from a building
19 council, to make this transition beneficial to
20 the communities. We ask that you reconsider
21 your proposal to site a new middle school, and
22 instead, consider revisiting expanding to go to
23 middle school, while also addressing the
24 inefficiencies and overlap of having two
25 elementary schools in a building with an annex.

1 I have an attached a timeline—below is a
2 timeline. On 7/23, July 23rd, I will reiterate
3 this timeline, because as parents, you were
4 supposed to have 45 to 60 days from receipt of
5 the educational impact statement in Spanish, to
6 review and counter and decide what you as a
7 community want. I don't think you've been given
8 45 to 60 days. Another thing the CEC has done,
9 we started a petition for District 6 against any
10 more co-locations, and we have 926 signatures
11 against this morning, saying no more co-
12 locations in District 6. When we visited the
13 schools for parent meetings, we also handed out
14 surveys, asking what parents thought about co-
15 locations, and about 90 percent of those surveys
16 came back, asking for the expansion, versus a
17 co-location of a new middle school, creating
18 three schools in this site. Thank you.

19 MS. NUNEZ: Would any other CEC members like
20 to make a statement?

21 MS. YYDERKA VALDEZ: Can't hear me? Better?
22 Okay. Can I speak in Spanish? It takes longer?
23 Okay. Alright, so-okay, sorry, I'm going to say
24 it in Spanish, you'll have to translate, sorry.
25 My name is Yyderka Valdez. I'm the Secretary of

1 the CEC. I am from IS52, the middle school.
2 In our school, we are having the same problem
3 that we have in this school. They want to put a
4 new school also there. We have two schools
5 already in the building, and I will add
6 something more as what the President already
7 said. We need quality education. We need our
8 children safe. Before taking any decision, I
9 want you to take into account the parents'
10 considerations. It's very important that when
11 we are at home and the children are in school,
12 we are relaxed, knowing that the children are
13 safe. To get into this point, it's not
14 necessary to put three schools in one building.
15 It's necessary to have the important schools in
16 the neighborhood. If we have an elementary
17 school in good standing, we need a middle school
18 in good standing, too. It's not necessary to
19 put the schools to compete with each other for
20 the students. It's important to have a place
21 for our children to go to study. Then, we have
22 to look at the building and see which is the
23 best way to do this. When this was built, this
24 annex wasn't part of the building, that's why
25 it's called annex. When you come to the

1 building, you see that we have one school on
2 this side, and the other school on the other
3 side. Where are they going to put a third one,
4 where are they going to do the division? We
5 need a middle school, we need an elementary
6 school, we don't need two or three or four in
7 the same building or that type of situation.
8 Having the annex there with no security guard, -
9 - when we need a guard, they take it from
10 anywhere they have it, and they put it in any
11 place. So, thinking that a school with no part
12 of the building, it's not safe for our children.
13 Think what the children need, and the children,
14 our children need is to improve. Our district
15 needs to improve, that we have children ready
16 for college, not parents fighting against each
17 other for the services, because the services
18 that we have-

19 MALE VOICE: - - .

20 MS. VALDEZ: [crosstalk] we have in the
21 Constitution upon education, so [crosstalk]
22 children, to stop people telling us, stop people
23 telling us what to do. Let's go to the original
24 proposal, a new elementary school, and a middle
25 school in the building.

1 MS. MAGGIE VALDEZ: Good evening. I will
2 speak in Spanish. I would like to tell the
3 parents regarding—I respect your opinion and
4 your decision, I would just want to talk about
5 the history of one of the schools that I am a
6 mother, a parent, then it was divided into - -
7 5. Okay, now I understand, sorry. Sorry, I - -
8 that we can do it simultaneously, I'm sorry. I
9 will tell you a little of the history of the
10 school. Originally, it was one school,
11 Salumerena [phonetic] 218. I can tell you what
12 happened before, because my daughter started
13 when the school was already divided in three
14 schools. I have the knowledge that many
15 classrooms were eliminated when the three
16 schools were placed. What happened in that
17 school is that they lost the music room, they
18 lost one classroom for shop, to do the bicycles.
19 There was some [crosstalk] the parents like
20 about the school. During 2005, many of the labs
21 have been eliminated, and what happened is,
22 there is a space now in the auditorium. With
23 three schools, we will be a space. There are
24 three schools, with a space in the cafeteria,
25 with three schools, we want. In the school that

1 I am, lunch starts at 10:00 A. M., to be able
2 to provide the service to the three schools, and
3 for the school, the gym, my school, 293, they
4 can't occupy during gym in the day. They have
5 the gym after the two other schools in the last
6 period, or after the last period, and also, all
7 these decisions have nothing to do with the
8 children, - - , they place three schools with
9 three administrations, and the administration
10 needs space, and we are talking about using
11 three or four rooms for each administration in
12 the building. What's going to happen then?
13 There are three principals, they don't know the
14 community, and many times, they make decisions
15 that impact the other schools, and they put the
16 children, the teachers, and parents against each
17 other. That's what I've seen in other schools.
18 I respect your opinions, but think well what
19 it's going to mean to place another school with
20 an administration in this building. Thank you.

21 MS. NUNEZ: Okay, are there—we will give you
22 all an opportunity to speak. Would any other
23 CEC member like to make a statement? Okay.

24 MS. MIRA COMPREZ: Good evening to everyone.
25 My name is Mira Compmez. Before everything, I

1 would like to welcome and give the thanks to
2 everyone who is present tonight for your
3 participation, and for the opportunity—to grant
4 me the opportunity to talk. Like most of you
5 already know, I use different hats on my
6 community. I would like to establish that my
7 presence in this audience is as a mother, as an
8 ex-president of the Parents' Association from
9 the school. I would like to tell you, based on
10 my experience in this school clientele, around
11 three years ago, I was a witness of the proposal
12 made by parents in the one that I work with,
13 with the lady, Elisa Barbera [phonetic], and
14 Josafina Biez [phonetic]. This proposal, it was
15 declined at that moment after Martha Madera,
16 Elizabeth Rose, they consider a new proposal,
17 where they were going to be either of the
18 schools, the middle school. School 325 was
19 going to be the middle school, and in the one
20 that Mr. Cruz made a proposal, the Director of
21 the School 325, which means that either of the
22 schools was going to increase the grades, it was
23 going to be 325. All the parents, we were all
24 happy, because we were going to have a school,
25 that it was going to be a middle school, but

1 with the proposal made by us, but regardless,
2 I'm ashamed and puzzled that today, we are
3 talking about a new proposal to the one that
4 parents have suggested, and they still continue
5 to suggest, - - in summary, I believe the
6 parents, they still continue to talk - - . As a
7 mother and a member of this community, I hope
8 that they take into consideration in this
9 hearing, the preference of the parents, and not
10 the one that belongs to any institution. Thank
11 you very much.

12 MS. NUNEZ: Does any other CEC member want
13 to make a comment?

14 MS. FE FLORIMON: Good evening, everyone.
15 My name is Fe Florimon. Good evening, everyone.
16 Can you hear me now? Good evening, everyone.
17 Alright, now we're in business. Okay, my name
18 is Fe Florimon. I'm a member, a CEC member.
19 Also, I'm the Treasurer, and also - - President
20 Appointee. I wasn't planning to speak tonight,
21 but in the face of this turmoil that we all are
22 facing, it's really hard to sit here and not to
23 say a word. First of all, and before I continue
24 with my statement, I just want to thank all of
25 you for taking the time to be here, and also

1 members of the Department of Education, as
2 well my colleagues, and a special thanks to my
3 President for such a great statement that she
4 just shared with us. I think that she deserves
5 a round of applause for that great statement
6 that she put together. I really want to say
7 that it is my understanding that this school, or
8 the parents of this school, put a proposal three
9 years ago. This proposal went nowhere, but
10 today, we are listening, or we are learning
11 about a new proposal that the Department of
12 Education is proposing in this school. I am not
13 against this proposal, but knowing that our
14 nation is a nation that believes in democracy,
15 and also that what the people said should be
16 taken into consideration, I honestly believe
17 that it's only fair, if we are going to exercise
18 democracy in this process, that the voice of the
19 parents be heard and given some consideration in
20 this process. I also want to ask, by saying,
21 given the opportunity to the parents, to ask
22 respectfully to the Department of Education to
23 consider, and giving another opportunity to go
24 back to the original proposal that this school
25 submitted three years ago, and really make a

1 fair decision, whether or not it's what they
2 are proposing, or is what the parents want.
3 Thank you very much.

4 MS. NUNEZ: Okay. I understand that Robert
5 Jackson—okay, he's not ready? Okay, and Mark
6 Levin, would you like to make a statement?
7 Alright, would any other CEC members like to
8 make a statement? Can you hear me? Everyone
9 hear me? Can you hear me? Okay, I'm going to
10 speak in English, clearly, slowly. I mean no
11 disrespect to anyone. I know that as a whole,
12 we all want what's best for our children. It
13 just makes logical sense that the first proposal
14 that was brought should be revisited, should be
15 looked at. Why was that pushed aside, and then
16 a school being told that they have to have
17 another school? Parents that are for more than
18 one school, I really wonder if you understand,
19 if you truly understand what it means to have
20 three schools in one building, where you're
21 already struggling with two schools in one
22 building. Does it make sense? Do you truly
23 understand for yourself, not because you've been
24 given a lot of information in a short period of
25 time, but do you truly understand, if two

1 schools are struggling, how do you think three
2 schools are going to do? Do you think any more
3 attention is going to be given to children that
4 already need the help? It does not logically
5 make sense, and people know this. So, why don't
6 we have another—have some more time, I don't see
7 what the rush is, go over the original proposal,
8 expand, do the best for the children that are
9 here now, because we cannot get this time back.
10 Once it is gone, it is gone. We don't go and
11 make room for more people to come in and treat
12 them better than the ones that are already here.
13 Do you understand that? I wonder, and I hope, I
14 hope that you will seek more guidance, more
15 information, more understanding. It is here in
16 Spanish, not to be guided by some other people
17 who may have their own ideas or agenda. Look
18 for yourself. Your children are here. It makes
19 no logical sense, and whether you have the most
20 education or not so much education, three in one
21 building makes no sense. Thank you.

22 FEMALE VOICE: I want to acknowledge that a
23 representative from the Borough President's
24 Office is here, but at this time, she will not
25 be making a statement. Do any other CEC members

1 want to make a statement?

2 MR. TONY KELSO: I don't have so much of a
3 statement, I'm just curious, because as a member
4 of the CEC, I feel like our responsibility is to
5 represent you, and I don't know where the people
6 in this room actually stand. I mean, of all of
7 the parents who have children in one of the two
8 schools here that are under consideration for
9 being co-located with another school, how many
10 of you are in--how many want to see this DOE plan
11 go through? I mean, how many of you want to see
12 this third school go in? If you could--you can't
13 hear? Oh, alright. No, I'm just curious. What
14 I was saying is, I don't have a statement to
15 make, but we're your Community Education
16 Council, we represent you. I mean, regardless
17 of what our opinion is, it's really up to the
18 community, it's up to you to--it's up to you to
19 have your voices heard, and I'm just curious as
20 to where the people in the room stand overall,
21 and so I would like to ask, of all of the
22 parents in this room who have children in either
23 192 or 325, just the parents that have children
24 in the school, not people that don't have
25 children in the school, how many of you are in

1 favor of the DOE's proposal to bring in this
2 third school, this middle school? And I just
3 would like to see a show of hands. But they're
4 not getting the—okay, alright. Does somebody in
5 Spanish want to—I mean, I'd like to see a show
6 of hands of who's for it and who's against it.
7 What, what?

8 MS. NUNEZ: Well, he said it in English.
9 Okay, the question I just asked was, if everyone
10 in here really understood the difference between
11 a grade expansion or the addition of a brand new
12 school. The difference is, you have three
13 independent schools in the building on one side,
14 that's one idea, that's the DOE's proposal. The
15 DOE's proposal is to bring an independent,
16 autonomous new school into the building, with a
17 new principal, new teachers, new administration.
18 The alternative, which is what the CEC has heard
19 coming to meetings, hearing from parents, that
20 what this—the parents and the community
21 originally wanted is the expansion of PS192 to
22 go from pre-kindergarten to 8th grade, thus
23 making it an elementary and middle school, and
24 keeping 325 as a middle school, where you would
25 have two schools in the building, one would be K

1 to 5, and the other one would be K to 8. Any-
2 is that clear, that that is what you're here
3 for? The DOE proposed adding a third school.
4 I'm literally translating what I just said, I'm
5 translating. Okay.

6 FEMALE VOICE: There's a problem with the
7 translation equipment, they're not hearing it.

8 MS. NUNEZ: Okay. Mira? Okay, parents,
9 parents? I just want to know, if it would be
10 helpful if I read the proposal again. Do you
11 want me to read it again, the proposal that's
12 actually on the table, would that be helpful?
13 The one that actually is being proposed. Okay.
14 Okay. But I think, no matter what-no, but this
15 in Spanish. Okay, okay. Parents, I am going to
16 read the proposal in Spanish. Okay. [Foreign
17 audio]. Okay, so now we finalize the formal
18 presentations, and we will open the floor for
19 public comments. Will those that have numbers 1
20 through 5 please line up in order, numerical
21 order? Okay, Councilman Robert Jackson would
22 like to make a statement.

23 MR. ROBERT JACKSON: Is the mike on? Thank
24 you. Good evening, everyone. Let me just give
25 you some comments from my experience. Many of

1 you know that I'm a member of the City
2 Council. I chaired the Education Committee, and
3 this is my district. I represent you at City
4 Hall, and I've been involved in education in
5 this district since 1980, and so let me just
6 speak from a position of knowledge as a parent
7 in this district, and also, by meeting with your
8 Parents' Association some time ago about what
9 their needs were. Many of you know that as a
10 member of the City Council, I met some of the
11 needs—I allocated, I think, 325, \$400,000 for
12 computers and other stuff, listening to what
13 your concerns are, in order to make sure that
14 your children get a very good education, and
15 that's what all of you want. Now, they want to
16 put a new school in here, and that's co-locate a
17 third school, because now, there's two
18 elementary schools. Let me give you my opinion
19 about that, but I want to tell you first, my
20 children went to PSIS187, and that school is
21 three blocks from my house, and it went K to 8,
22 and I tell you from my personal perspective, I
23 like the K to 8 structure, and if some of you
24 have not experienced that, it's continuity.
25 Your children are in one school, the principal,

1 the teachers know your kids from pre-K or K
2 all the way through, and hopefully, when they
3 graduate from intermediate school, they will go
4 straight into high school and do well,
5 hopefully. That's what the aim and goal is, so
6 I'm in favor of a K to 8 structure, based on my
7 personal experience with three children in the K
8 to 8 structure, that's me. Now, as you know
9 right now, one of the complaints over the years
10 that I've heard from this school is that when
11 our kids leave here in elementary school, they
12 have to go way up in Washington Heights - - to
13 go to intermediate school, and I've heard the
14 complaints, our kids are too young to be
15 traveling by themselves all the way up there.
16 I've heard it, okay, because where are they
17 going? They're going to either IS164 or Middle
18 School IS52, right? Those are the options,
19 those are the only options. Okay, so what is-
20 you need to know as far as co-locations, every
21 time there's a co-located school, there's a new
22 administration. There's a new principal, more
23 than likely an assistant principal, there's an
24 office for each school, there's a principal
25 office, and then there's guidance and all the

1 other stuff, that takes space. What they are
2 saying, the Department of Education, in reading
3 the proposal, they say there's enough space in
4 this school. What they say, and I don't know if
5 it's true, but what they say is, they say
6 there's about 930—the capacity is about 930, and
7 you're at about 630, so there's about—space for
8 another 300 students, that's what they're
9 saying. You should know, and the CEC should
10 look at that. You should know that as the Chair
11 of the Education Committee, I put forward a
12 resolution in the City Council, a moratorium on
13 school locations and school closures, basically
14 saying they should put a halt on school
15 locations and school closures, so understanding
16 that I put that forward, because in our opinion,
17 and I had a hearing about that, I think last
18 Monday, Tuesday, the hearing lasted six hours at
19 City Hall, talking about the school
20 configurations, about school closures, and
21 school co-locations, six-hour hearing, so
22 finally, let me just say that from a historical
23 perspective, parents have said that we want our
24 kids to stay here, why can't our school go K to
25 8? You complained about your kids traveling at

1 11 years old, at 12 years old, on the bus, and
2 going all the way up to Washington Heights, so
3 that's what you have to say. You have to input
4 your opinion, and you do that several way. One,
5 you express yourself to your Parents'
6 Association, and let your Parents' Association
7 speak as a body for you. You express yourselves
8 by your leadership at the School Leadership
9 Team. That team, as you know, comprised of the
10 union, UFT, the Principals' Union, the parents,
11 the teachers, and it's a school leadership team
12 that gives guidance and direction of the school,
13 so you express your opinions to them, too, and
14 then the CEC, which is the governing body of
15 District 6, you express your opinion to them,
16 but collectively, you need to have a collective
17 opinion as to what you want to do, and you do
18 that through your Parents' Association. If you
19 go here and there, we want this and we want
20 that, then people are going to say, what do we
21 want? Who do we go to for their opinion? Well,
22 you go to the leadership. Who is the
23 leadership? Your Parents' Association, your
24 School Leadership Team, and your CEC, so that, I
25 wanted to share that with you, knowing that I

1 support a K to 8 structure, knowing that you,
2 meaning the parents of this school, over the
3 years have complained about their children
4 traveling way up there to go to school, and you
5 have to decide what's best overall. The DOE is
6 saying there is enough space for another school,
7 so those that issued the concerns, that you have
8 to express yourself to your Parents'
9 Association, to the School Leadership Team, and
10 the CEC, and I thank you for giving me the
11 opportunity to come in front of you to at least
12 clarify and give my position, and I'm not going
13 to tell you what's best for you, you have to
14 decide what's best for yourself, but you need
15 the information and knowledge in order to do
16 that. Thank you.

17 MS. NUNEZ: Okay, we have one last comment
18 from one of the CEC members.

19 MS. MAGGIE VELEZ: What I would—Spanish,
20 English? What I would like to know is, from the
21 parents of the two schools that are here on the
22 SLT and PTA or PA, when you were told that a
23 middle school might come into this building,
24 what were the conversations as to what kind of
25 middle school did you want? Was there any

1 conversations as to what type of middle school
2 you would like? Because that is the issue, that
3 we are ignored as to what we want. As a
4 community, we are told what we should have, as
5 opposed to having conversations as to what is it
6 that we would like, would it be a good idea to
7 have a middle school that's an art school or a
8 music school or a science middle school, are
9 there conversations where 325 and 192, regarding
10 what kind of middle school you would like, so
11 can anybody that was in those discussions let us
12 know? Were there any conversations?

13 MS. NUNEZ: Alright, thank you. This
14 concludes the formal presentation. We will now
15 open the floor for public comments. Will those
16 that have numbers 1 through 5 please line up in
17 numerical order? Please remember that you have
18 two minutes to make your statement. I have
19 listed as number one Elizabeth Veras.

20 MS. ELIZABETH VERAS: Good evening, my name
21 is Elizabeth Veras. I'm a mother of this
22 community, and also a parent of a child. This
23 school is rich with lots of people tonight.
24 Having here the pioneer of this school, which is
25 Rosa Kitana [phonetic], Louise Gomez, Mira

1 Rosado and Mira Comperez. I got involved with
2 this school for the past 19 years. The lady
3 that belongs to the CEC, she approached me, and
4 we talk about respect. She tells me what I'm
5 doing here tonight with a flyer on my hands
6 because I don't have any kids that belong to
7 this school, and we do have to understand that
8 if we're talking about the Department of
9 Education, that doesn't send us the information
10 in our languages, we first have to respect other
11 people. This proposal about the grades here in
12 our schools comes from the past years. This
13 didn't start last year. Our community, if you
14 guys understand it, if you guys no, doesn't have
15 any intermediate school, so talking about school
16 [crosstalk], but we try to make it brief, we
17 don't have schools in this community. We need
18 an intermediate school, we really need it. The
19 necessity is that our kids, they need to travel
20 far, they need to go out. They're up to 5th
21 grade here in this school, and after 5th grade,
22 our kids, they decline, they don't want to
23 continue with their studies, they don't want to
24 continue with school. This is a space where the
25 Superintendent says is approximately a thousand

1 kids. In the 90 years, this used to be a
2 building with 1,500 kids, and they used to be
3 here, it used to be a rich space, it used to be
4 spacious. We're talking about necessities.
5 Besides the other part, talking about
6 implementing another elementary school and
7 another intermediate school, still, we're going
8 to have space left over. We're still going to
9 have space, so you became [phonetic] the
10 intermediate school, is the importance about the
11 space and the necessities.

12 FEMALE VOICE: She had to go to work, she
13 left. Carol Comprenz?

14 MS. CAROL COMPREZ: As we mentioned before,
15 I am the President of a Parent of 192, a PTA
16 president. I believe it is not regarding about
17 co-location. I think this is about our kids
18 feeling comfortable, because the lady before me,
19 she mentioned before, we do have space, but as I
20 said, that we have an amount of 600 students
21 here, why not be an elementary school and an
22 intermediate school? In reality, I don't
23 believe that we need two schools, we only need
24 an elementary school and an intermediate school.
25 I don't know why the Department of Education—

1 supposedly, they don't have enough funds to
2 raise the schools up, and they insist on
3 bringing another new school inside the building.
4 Thank you, that was all.

5 MS. NUNEZ: Rosa Quintana, number 4?

6 MS. ROSA QUINTANA: Good evening to
7 everyone. There are a lot of new faces here
8 tonight, that they don't know me, but I used to
9 be a really active mother inside this school in
10 the 90s, I used to be the President before of
11 the Parents' Association. I believe that we,
12 mothers, we shouldn't make mistakes. Our goal
13 is to be here tonight, is to inform that our
14 kids here, when they get to 5th grade, they're
15 still babies. To let them go and catch a bus or
16 a train, you've got to watch the news daily, how
17 these are happening, how incidents are
18 occurring, how our kids are being treated, how
19 the bullying is happening here in Washington
20 Heights, Upper Manhattan. I have experience,
21 because I have ten grandkids that study here in
22 this school. One got sent to 250, and he got
23 jumped over there, and I know some, but I didn't
24 come here tonight to give information about
25 these kids. What I want is to give support, one

1 another, for a school tour right here, from
2 kindergarten up to 8th grade, because it's a
3 necessity, and now, do we have the opportunity,
4 that the Department of Education provides us
5 with the opportunity to have an intermediate
6 school here, we are going to appreciate for the
7 rest of our lives, and us, the parents, I'm not
8 a parent, I'm a great grandmother, but yes, I
9 want my community, and I have always been very
10 active in my community, so I have a strength,
11 I'm going to continue doing it, and you can look
12 for me at any time, because this proposal was
13 made in the 90s. Unfortunately, the person that
14 was in charge had to leave, and it was left
15 over, but now is being put in our hands, and we
16 appreciate it. It's just for our parents to be
17 equal, unity.

18 MS. NUNEZ: She's going to give her turn to
19 her, that's fine.

20 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you. Continuing with
21 the three minutes of my colleague, we are very
22 [crosstalk] that the CEC is concerned about us,
23 but our necessity is our space, and to use it
24 with our children, and our necessity is a middle
25 school in our community. We don't care if they

1 have three administrations to share the space.
2 This is really big. We are not going to lose
3 the gym, we are not going to lose the
4 auditorium, this has to be something of the
5 administration to agree in sharing the spaces.
6 When this school was overcrowded in the small
7 building, it was created for the kindergarten.
8 Music, they have two rooms close to the gym that
9 can be used for art. That means that it can be
10 used for our children, for our community. The
11 community needs the middle school.

12 MS. NUNEZ: Thank you. Number six? I have
13 to go to number seven now. Number seven, Rosa
14 Alvarez, Rosa Alvarez?

15 MS. ROSA ALVAREZ: Good evening, parents.
16 My name is Rosa Alvarez. I have a child in this
17 school in 3rd grade, and the school that is
18 coming to 8th grade. I am very happy that my
19 child is here. All the children, because we
20 want our children to stay here until 8th grade,
21 that they don't travel, because I am the mother
22 of two children. One is here, and the other,
23 the girl, is around 191st Street, and I couldn't
24 be able to attend the meetings in my daughter's
25 school. She's in 12th grade, because I have a

1 little child, and because the meetings are at
2 night, so I applaud the new school coming, and
3 on my behalf and the parents' behalf that
4 support the school open until K-8th grade.

5 MS. NUNEZ: Number 8, Mira Compres, Number
6 8, Mira Compres?

7 MS. MIRA COMPRES: Good evening. Good
8 evening, the parents of 325. I am the President
9 of the Association of Parents of 325. I'm here
10 to express what I'm understanding what is the
11 best for our children. As already has been
12 said, this is coming from the past, not from
13 now. I believe that we have to support—okay, a
14 school, coming in school, for the children that
15 we already have here. To support the decision
16 done at time before, that has to be done, but
17 with the children of our community. That's it.

18 MS. NUNEZ: Thank you. Number 9, Carolina
19 Vargas? Carolina? Number 10, Facundo Gregorio
20 [phonetic]?

21 MR. GREGORIO: Good evening, parents. I am
22 truly new in this institution, but I think the
23 children come to receive their education, and it
24 has to be good, but if there is the possibility
25 of the school that they are proposing, if there

1 is a budget, they have to do it. I understand
2 that that takes time, but if they agree, they do
3 it. Thank you. I need to be ready for you.

4 MS. NUNEZ: Number 11, Gloria Jimenez?

5 FEMALE VOICE: Gloria left.

6 MS. NUNEZ: Number 12, Tracy Denton?

7 MS. TRACY TRENTON: I'm going to introduce
8 myself in Spanish, and then I'll speak in
9 English. [Foreign audio]. We live in the
10 neighborhood at 141 and Broadway, and my husband
11 and I have two sons, and we're very happy in
12 this neighborhood, and my son is in Ms. Breeto's
13 [phonetic] pre-K class. I want to thank Miriam
14 Aristy Farer, am I pronouncing that correctly?
15 She worked really hard, and I saw that in a
16 meeting, and on email, to get the word out about
17 this meeting tonight, and also very hard to get
18 a Spanish translation, which is very important,
19 because my husband and I have seen that most of
20 the people, the vast majority of the people at
21 this school and in this community speak Spanish.
22 Our sons are learning Spanish, by the way, and I
23 think I just respectfully disagree with Miriam
24 on this proposal tonight. I agree with the co-
25 location. I think it would be a great idea to

1 have a new middle school here, so I am in
2 agreement with Margarita Petri and the women out
3 there who spoke before me. I just want to
4 address some of the concerns that were raised,
5 because I think that the members of the CEC have
6 looked into this really well, and they're all
7 volunteer, right, and it's very hard when you
8 have kids—oh, sorry, to find the time to
9 volunteer, but it's also when it's most
10 important. I just want to address this issue
11 about an expansion of one school versus having a
12 new school. First of all, I don't think it's an
13 option on the table that the DOE is giving us to
14 expand one school or the other. We could argue
15 about that, we could be upset about it, but I
16 don't think that's actually a choice we have
17 here tonight. The hearing is about whether to
18 welcome this new middle school into this
19 neighborhood, and it's obviously a big concern
20 to have a middle school close by. Another
21 problem with having one school expand really
22 quickly is, when you're choosing, in
23 kindergarten, whether to put your kid in one
24 school or another, it has an unfair advantage to
25 the school that expands, because you have to

1 choose based on whether your kid will be able
2 to go to that school all the way through 8th
3 grade, and so to me, it makes more sense to have
4 one middle school, so that whether your child
5 goes to PS192 or PS325, they have an equal
6 opportunity, in theory, later, to go to that
7 middle school. Thank you. I apologize - - .

8 MS. NUNEZ: Number 13, Luis Tejada, did I
9 say it correctly?

10 MR. LUIS TEJADA: Okay, are you going to
11 translate for me? Good evening, everyone. My
12 name is Luis Tejada. I'm the Director of the -
13 - Center Cultural. Good evening [crosstalk] to
14 this community. I'm kind of worried regarding
15 something. I believe that there is a
16 misunderstanding about the actual proposal,
17 because I have here in my hands the proposal
18 that was made three years ago, and also the
19 proposal that is being done right now by the
20 DOE. First of all, I would like to say—my kids
21 attend the PS75, in that same building, - -
22 located there with an intermediate school, and I
23 also teach in that school in 1999. The
24 advantage that I had back then [crosstalk] pre-K
25 in the same building until they finish the year.

1 Back then, there were two years, but in the
2 same building. The benefit of having one school
3 that goes from pre-K all the way to 8th grade is
4 really big. In psychological terms, for the
5 kids, they're more focused, parents [crosstalk]
6 wherever their kids [crosstalk] school, when
7 parents go to work, and they've got to go out of
8 the area, it [crosstalk] the principal of the
9 school. I talk very fast, I'm sorry for that.
10 It's important, because we need schools close to
11 us, two or three blocks. Kids that are being
12 transported far away, leave us lack of sleep,
13 risk of danger, and I [crosstalk] for them to
14 have better education. Education doesn't simply
15 mean having big space classrooms. It's also to
16 have additional resources. In here, in this
17 building, we have [crosstalk] for art, for
18 theater, for music, and I believe, in reality,
19 the proposal that was made three years ago is
20 the most effective for this community. I want
21 who are in agreement for a school to be
22 established that goes from pre-K to 8th grade,
23 whoever [crosstalk] with this proposal, raise
24 your hands. Very well. That's a [crosstalk]
25 myself, and whoever is in charge, and whoever is

1 in agreement with the proposal of the
2 Department of Education, please raise your
3 hands, whoever is in agreement with this
4 proposal. Whoever is in agreement with the
5 proposal from the Department of Education.

6 MS. NUNEZ: Okay, number 14, Luis Gomez.

7 MR. LUIS GOMEZ: Good evening. My name is
8 Luis Gomez. I'm the President here at this
9 school. My kids, they study here, my kids. The
10 only thing that I ask for is for parents—with us
11 to become a union, and also, to respect the
12 opinion, and to be united with the Parents'
13 Association. I agree with the school to come to
14 this building, and what I need is for parents to
15 become—one, to be united, because we have plenty
16 of space here for everyone, we have space. We
17 got space for any kind of activities.

18 INTERPRETER: I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry,
19 for Lance [phonetic], I would like to say, I'm
20 so sorry.

21 MR. GOMEZ: That I would like for us to have
22 union, good communication. This is a community
23 well united, welcome the new school.

24 MS. NUNEZ: Number 15, Luis Aguas
25 [phonetic]?

1 MR. LUIS AGUAS: Good evening. My name is
2 Luis Aguas. I would like to especially greet
3 all the parents of the School 192, and the same
4 to the panel, and all the parents that are now
5 here. I am a volunteer. I don't have children
6 in this school, but I am a parent in the
7 community. My daughter was here in 1967, then I
8 went to different schools, different districts.
9 I've worked in the School 161. In my home
10 [phonetic] School, I was the President of the
11 PTA. I went to the school—Young Women
12 Leadership, the secondary school, high school, I
13 was the President there also. Then, I was in
14 different districts as a volunteer in the
15 schools that they have. They just have PA,
16 parent associations, not the PTAs, but I used to
17 form that group, the Parents and Teachers'
18 Association. Now, I ask you, parents, who are
19 the first teachers? The parents. Then, the
20 school, the staff. For any solution, the
21 decision is in the parents and the school. One
22 thing that works, the good relationship and good
23 communication, so they can take in effect what
24 you need. The necessity that you have, and you
25 are asking for, in my opinion, is that if they

1 come from kinder to 8th grade, it's your
2 decision, parents, and the school, because
3 traveling to another place, to another school,
4 with the situation in this time, there is a lot
5 of violence, and parents can be all the time in
6 a situation. You decide as parents. Good
7 night, good evening.

8 MS. NUNEZ: Number 16, Jeff Diez.

9 MR. JEFF DIEZ: Can I translate real quick?
10 It's going to be real quick. I've just got a
11 couple things, and I'll translate. I know you
12 guys are tired, so-

13 INTERPRETER: Thank you, it's very nice of
14 you.

15 MR. DIEZ: I know, I know, and a lot of
16 people are. Good evening, ladies, gentlemen,
17 and kids. I'm going to say it in Spanish, and
18 then I'm going to translate real quick. I was
19 against bringing another school in, so I was
20 against the school because you've got kids from
21 8th, 7th graders hanging in the hallways or going
22 to the bathroom with kids that are probably in
23 the 2nd grade, kindergarten, but after listening
24 to the young lady that was over there, the
25 blonde lady, I think she left, if they put PS192

1 to 8th grade, all the kids will go to that
2 school, apply to that school, to PS192, and not
3 go to PS325, so now, it changed my mind, because
4 I agree with CEC, to expand, what's going to
5 happen with the other school? And I know that
6 both schools are outstanding. My two kids go to
7 PS192, and they're great staff, great school,
8 and I bet that the other school has great staff
9 and it's a great school. How about the other
10 school? So, it's hard, it's hard. First, I was
11 going with them, with the CEC, I liked it, and
12 it was nice, their plan was really good, to
13 expand, but then—it's hard, it's really hard, so
14 I think, for the DOE, it's going to be hard.
15 Maybe we could unite, maybe we could just have
16 one school, maybe, I don't know, but it's hard.
17 I would bring in the other school, you know, I'm
18 thinking, and another thing real quick. 7th and
19 8th graders, they like to hang around in school,
20 and then you've got smaller kids coming, it's
21 going to be a safety issue, - - kindergarten or
22 2nd grade with an 8th grader, I don't know, it's
23 something that—I don't know, that's it. Thank
24 you, thank you so much.

25 MS. NUNEZ: Yes, Miriam wants to clarify

1 something.

2 MS. FARER: Yes, I just want to make a point
3 of clarification that what I said is not a
4 proposal. The CEC is not proposing anything.
5 There is only one proposal on the table, and
6 it's from the DOE, to add a third middle school.
7 The only thing we have encouraged, at the
8 request of the parents, is that the DOE
9 reconsider the expansion proposal requested by
10 the parents, but when you have a co-location,
11 the parents have the opportunity to counter what
12 is being proposed, and your counter, the reason
13 we recommended the expansion was because that's
14 what the parents want, but again, the only
15 proposal on the table is from the Department of
16 Education, to add a third middle school. What
17 you do is, what's happened is that we've kind of
18 brought to light is that the parents actually
19 would want an expansion versus another school,
20 but there's no proposal on the table for that
21 expansion. The only thing that is going to be
22 yes or no is adding that school. You're not
23 going to have a choice. It's either that
24 school, or you organize yourselves and you push
25 for the expansion, but there is not a great

1 expansion proposal on the table. It's up to
2 the parents, if you want it, you need to work
3 with your administration very, very fast before
4 the PEP meeting on October 15th and put it
5 together, or build on the proposal that you had
6 from the 90s, but I just wanted to clear that
7 up.

8 MS. NUNEZ: Number 17, Arahisa Pena
9 [phonetic]. Okay, okay, number 18, Sandra
10 Romero, Sandra Romero. Number 19, Dulce
11 Desiderio [phonetic].

12 MS. DULCE DESIDERIO: Good evening again. I
13 just want to tell you, as a parent, think a lot,
14 what we are going to do. All of us have talked
15 about the welcome of the new school, that's what
16 I've heard, but I haven't heard anybody saying
17 that they are concerned about what's going to
18 happen with our children. I believe that the
19 most important is that we worry about what is
20 going to happen about our children. I'm going
21 to give you an example, a quick example. Many
22 of us, we live—overcrowded, together, a lot of
23 people together. Imagine in a school,
24 overcrowded. We have to think a lot, what we
25 are going to do, because at the end, we are the

1 support of our children. If we don't defend
2 them, who is going to defend them. I believe
3 that we are—as parents, we have to be united in
4 both schools. Something else that I think, that
5 if there is bullying and things like that,
6 imagine in three schools together. I support
7 the first proposal, that one elementary school
8 disappears, and one middle schools, that we also
9 need it. That's all.

10 MS. NUNEZ: Number 19, Tori Frye. Okay,
11 thank you, okay, number 20.

12 MS. TORI FRYE: Good evening. My name is
13 Tori Frye, and I'm actually on the CEC, but I'm
14 actually really tired of sitting at the table
15 and making statements about what we, as your
16 representatives think, because frankly, the DOE
17 never listens to us. I'm going to follow up a
18 little bit on some comments about the choices
19 that we have here tonight, and it's true, there
20 is only one option here on the table, but it's
21 also true that this community has been asking
22 for a middle school in this area since the
23 1980s. The parents in these schools want a
24 middle school here, they want their kids not to
25 have to travel to go to middle school. They

1 have been asking the DOE since the 1980s and
2 90s for this, and the DOE has ignored them every
3 single time, so what I want to say to you is,
4 that keep in mind that what you are being
5 offered is only the choice that the DOE wants
6 you to have. It's not your choice, it's not
7 what you wanted, because what you want, in
8 addition to having a middle school here, I
9 imagine is also lower class sizes, because
10 that's actually one of the top priorities of
11 every single school in this district. The DOE
12 has systematically made sure that our class
13 sizes have increased. You also probably want
14 your school to have a bigger budget, so that
15 your teachers could have co-teachers in the
16 classrooms, so your kids don't have to each
17 lunch at 10:30. You also probably don't want a
18 mini-building, as they euphemistically call it.
19 It's a trailer. You don't want your kids being
20 educated in a trailer, but that's not a choice
21 that they offer you. What they are offering you
22 is their version of a choice, and it is a choice
23 that, as we have seen tonight, divides
24 communities, because what this DOE excels at is
25 not giving us what we want and what we know is

1 best for our kids. It excels at dividing us
2 as parents. When you shove three schools into
3 one building, that's what you get, a divided
4 community, so I want to thank you guys for once
5 again dividing our community, pitting us against
6 each other in this way, because that is what
7 this proposal ends up doing. It's not what we
8 wanted, it's not what we want for our kids. It
9 has been made clear that there was a proposal to
10 expand grades, and there are great ways to get
11 around the—oh, this school would have an unfair
12 advantage, and this one wouldn't, but the DOE
13 doesn't do that. That's their choice, it's not
14 our choice.

15 MS. NUNEZ: Mr. Cruz, did you want to make a
16 statement? Did you? The Principal of 325 wants
17 to make a statement.

18 MR. CRUZ: I need a translator. I mean, I
19 can do it in Spanish and English, but I need a
20 translator, I'm sorry. I want to speak in
21 Spanish, and I need someone to translate to
22 English. Fantastic, thank you, thank you very
23 much. Okay, I want to do it in Spanish. Okay,
24 that's fine. Good evening. I'm going to be
25 very, very, brief. [Crosstalk]. In reality, I

1 believe that we have really, really a lot of
2 confusion, and most of the people who left the
3 audience, they left with a lot of confusion in
4 their mind. There is one option. That is the
5 one that belongs to the Department of Education,
6 but I also would like you guys to remember that
7 there is here present tonight, two bodies. One
8 is the Parents' Association from 192 and 325.
9 They are completely against the third school. I
10 don't say this, this is what they said. I
11 believe that we need to clarify this, because
12 they represent us. Not me, the parents. Not
13 me, I'm not a parent at the school, but you guys
14 also have the CEC, that their elected members,
15 and they do understand that what you guys
16 deserve or want from the school is what the
17 Department of Education should take into
18 consideration, besides the option that is
19 already on the table, which is the original, the
20 idea here, no one is against the intermediate
21 school. What we want, probably, some of us,
22 we're not in agreement with the model, not the
23 middle school, and I would like to clarify,
24 because it got lost, kind of, in translation,
25 that the two associations are in favor of the

1 proposal for the past three years, and the CEC
2 recommended the Department of Education cannot
3 impose anything, they should not-to listen to
4 you guys. To listen to you guys and bring, once
5 again, the proposal to the table as an option
6 number 2. Another thing, I wrote the proposal
7 three years ago with the Parents' Association,
8 with their blessing, by the way, and their
9 support. Me, I understand that there is still
10 lots of confusion with the proposal, everything
11 that implements the proposal. What was
12 suggested at that moment three years ago was
13 simply one school, for example, my school, 325,
14 to lose one grade per year, and the 192 absorb
15 these kids the following year. Every year, we'd
16 lose a grade, and we'd add another grade for the
17 middle school. Eventually, I believe in five
18 years, 325 would completely turn into an
19 intermediate school, and 192 would double in
20 size. That was the proposal, simply that, and I
21 would like to clarify that because many people
22 left, and they were confused, and I would also
23 ask, I would also like to ask, because not every
24 year, the parents just leave out of these
25 reunions, and they just say the schools, one of

1 the schools is going to close or phase out,
2 and it's not true. Thank you.

3 MS. NUNEZ: Thank you, Principal Cruz.
4 Again, we welcome any comments and feedback you
5 may have at any time before the Panel for
6 Educational Policy votes on this proposal and
7 its October 15th, 2013 meeting, at 6:00 P. M., at
8 Prospect Heights Campus, 8A3 Classon Avenue,
9 Brooklyn, New York, 11225. The email address
10 and phone number where comments may be made are
11 d06proposals@schools.nyc.gov and 212-374-3466.
12 Thank you for your participation. This joint
13 public hearing is now closed.

14 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the
4 best of my ability.

5
6 Signature

Ben Knowlton

7 Date October 14, 2013
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