

### **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: May 17, 2011

Topic: The Revised Proposed Extension and Expansion of the Co-location of Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School (84X461) with P.S. 093 Albert G. Oliver (08X093) in Buildings X093/X893 through the 2012-2013 School Year

Date of Panel Vote: May 18, 2011

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### **Summary of Proposal**

On February 15, 2011, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) and Building Utilization Plan (“BUP”) describing a proposal to extend the duration and expand the scope of the co-location of Metropolitan Lighthouse Charter School (84X461, “Met LCS”), an existing elementary charter school located at 1535 Story Avenue, Bronx, NY 10473 in Community School District 8 (“District 8”), in building X093 and mini-school building X893 (“X093/X893”). Met LCS currently serves students in Kindergarten, First, and Second grade and is co-located with P.S. 093 Albert G. Oliver (08X093, “P.S. 093”), an existing zoned elementary school, which currently serves students in Kindergarten through fifth grade and offers four sections of Pre-Kindergarten. 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.

The Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) approved the proposal to co-locate Met LCS’s Kindergarten, First and Second grades with P.S. 093 on February 24, 2010, and Met LCS opened in X093/X893 in August 2010. Under the proposal approved by the PEP, Met LCS was to be co-located with P.S. 093 for grades Kindergarten, 1 and 2 only. Met LCS is working to secure space in a private facility. The private facility is anticipated to be ready prior to the 2013-2014 school year. Therefore, the DOE proposes that Met LCS remain in X093/X893 for an additional two years as it continues to phase in and adds a third grade in the 2011-2012 school year and a fourth grade in the 2012-2013 school year. This would mean that Met LCS would continue to be co-located with P.S. 093 and grow by one grade each year until it moves into private space prior to the 2013-2014 school year.

The Office of Space Planning reviewed X093/X893 in January 2011. Based on that office’s evaluation, there is sufficient space in X093/X893 to permit P.S. 093 to continue operating at full organizational capacity and to accommodate Met LCS for two additional school years. Importantly, each school will continue to receive their respective baseline allocations of space.

As described in a revised EIS and revised BUP issued on April 18, 2011, the DOE substantially revised this proposal. The revised EIS corrects typographical and formatting errors, clarifies the potential impact on programming offered by P.S. 093 and Met LCS, clarifies the availability of space within X093/X893, and includes information concerning the Chancellor's right to re-site Met LCS should zoned demand for P.S. 093 increase.

Additionally, the BUP has been revised in the following manner:

- Charts summarizing the total number of rooms to be allocated to each school have been added;
- The proposed shared space schedule has been adjusted; and
- The DOE has clarified the rationale for the amount of time that each co-located school is allocated in the shared spaces under this proposal.

X093/ X893 will continue to be occupied by P.S. 093 and Met LCS through the 2012-2013 school year. X093 has the capacity to serve 482 students. X893 has the capacity to serve 160 students and this building is utilized by P.S. 093 only. Because P.S. 093 is located in both X093 and X893, both buildings are included in the evaluation of space available for P.S. 093 and Met LCS. The DOE considers the buildings' combined target capacity to be 642 students. In 2009-2010, P.S. 093 and the Carl C. Icahn Bronx North Charter School II (which was co-located with P.S. 093 in 2009-2010, but re-sited prior to the 2010-2011 school year) served a total of 582 students in X093/X893, yielding a building target utilization rate of 91%. The 2010-2011 audited enrollment at Met LCS and P.S. 093 is 141 and 400 students, respectively, yielding a building utilization rate of 84% of target capacity. Met LCS will add approximately 35-46 students in each of the upcoming two years, and enrollment at P.S. 093 is expected to remain relatively stable, though some fluctuation is to be expected in a zoned elementary school. The projected total enrollment at X093/X893 would be approximately 520-631 students in 2011-2012 and 550-672 students in 2012-2013. The 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 utilization rates of X093/X893 are therefore expected to be approximately 98% and 105% of target capacity, respectively.<sup>1</sup>

Met LCS is chartered to serve grades Kindergarten through Five. The DOE notes that there is not sufficient space in X093 for Met LCS to grow to full scale based on its chartered enrollment plan. As discussed above, the DOE anticipates that Met LCS will move to its private facility prior to the 2013-2014 school year. Any proposal to extend the co-location of Met LCS with P.S. 093 beyond the 2012-2013 school year would be the subject of a subsequent EIS.

The details of this proposal are available in a revised EIS which can be accessed at the following link, along with the revised BUP:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010->

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<sup>1</sup> Although a utilization rate in excess of 100% may suggest that a building will be over-utilized or over-crowded in a given year, this rate does not account for the fact that rooms may be programmed for more efficient or different uses. In addition, charter school enrollment plans are frequently based on larger class sizes than target capacity, contributing to building utilizations above 100% while not impacting the utilization of the space allocated to the traditional public school. Section III.B. of the EIS and the BUP set forth the baseline number of rooms to be allocated to each school pursuant to the Footprint as well as the total number rooms in a building to provide a more complete picture of the availability of space in a building.

[2011/May182011Proposals.htm](http://2011/May182011Proposals.htm). Copies of the revised EIS and revised BUP are also available in the main offices of P.S. 093 and Met LCS.

### **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing on the Original Proposal**

A Joint Public Hearing regarding the original proposal was held at X093 on March 24, 2011. At the hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the hearing and 11 people spoke. Present at the meeting were: District 8 Superintendent Timothy Behr; District 8 Community Education Council (“CEC”) members Bob Franklin, Frank Dinardo, and Norma Cruz Mendez; P.S. 093 Principal and School Leadership Team (“SLT”) representative Donald Mattson; Met LCS Principal Courtney Russell; and Met LCS Director of Instruction Danny Etcheverry.

#### **The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing on the original proposal:**

1. Danny Etcheverry of Met LCS spoke in support of the proposal, citing the success of the current partnership between Met LCS and P.S. 093.
2. Principal Courtney Russell of Met LCS said she supported the proposal because it will allow Met LCS to serve new classes of students and to continue the positive relationship between the two schools. Moreover, the proposal will not negatively impact P.S. 093. Met LCS is in the process of securing private space for their school.
3. Principal Donald Mattson said that P.S. 093 has successfully shared space with two charter schools, including Met LCS. He shared a concern over potential growth in P.S. 093’s Kindergarten enrollment. Overall, however, he said the two schools have worked harmoniously to share space and believes that the relationship will continue to be satisfactory for the next year or two.
4. Multiple commenters said they supported the proposal, citing the growth of their students at Met LCS, the ability of charter schools to provide a quality education for their children, the dedication of the Met LCS faculty and staff, the positive relationship between Met LCS and P.S. 093, and the shared community that has been created in the building.

### **Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE Regarding the Original Proposal**

The DOE received one written comment on the original proposal.

5. CEC 8 President Bob Franklin expressed his support for the temporary extension and expansion of Met LCS.

### **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing on the Revised Proposal**

A Joint Public Hearing regarding the revised proposal was held at X093 on May 11, 2011. At the hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 20 members of the public attended the hearing and 10 people spoke. Present at

the meeting were: District 8 Superintendent Timothy Behr; District 8 CEC member Bob Franklin; P.S. 093 Principal and SLT representative Donald Mattson; and Met LCS Principal Courtney Russell.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing:

6. Principal Mattson stated the following:
  - a. He has concerns about the proposed Shared Space Plan. He stated that P.S. 093 and Met LCS have successfully shared space in the past and that they would like to continue having a similar schedule.
  - b. There are additional classrooms that have been identified for Met LCS to use if the proposal is approved. He is also happy that the mini-school will continue to house the Early Childhood Center program.
  - c. He still has some concern about the impact of space allocation if there is a major increase in Kindergarten enrollment in future years.
7. Principal Russell reiterated the positive relationship between Met LCS and P.S. 093 and thanked Met LCS parents who came to the hearing to support the school. He also stated that Met LCS is trying to obtain a private facility for the school and that the revised proposal would not negatively impact P.S. 093.
8. Multiple commenters stated they supported the proposal, citing the dedication of the Met LCS faculty and leadership, the growth of their students at Met LCS, the positive impact Met LCS has had on them as parents, the feeling of safety and community at Met LCS, the positive relationship between Met LCS and P.S. 093, and the shared community that has been created in the building.

**Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE Regarding the Revised Proposal**

No written or oral comments were received via the dedicated e-mail address or voicemail number concerning the revised proposal.

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

Comments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6(b), 7 and 8 are all in favor of the proposal and do not require a response.

With regard to comments 3 and 6(c) which express concern about potential growth in zoned Kindergarten enrollment at P.S. 093: Every year, the DOE makes enrollment projections for each school for the following year based on current enrollment numbers, history of returns, and trends for Kindergarten enrollment throughout the district. Based on these factors, the DOE expects the enrollment of P.S. 093 to remain stable over the next two years. Last year, P.S. 093 enrolled 62 Kindergarten students. In 2010-2011, P.S. 093 serves 52 students in Kindergarten. In light of the historical patterns in kindergarten enrollment, P.S. 093 is projected to enroll approximately 55-65 Kindergarten students in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. Currently, there are only 34 students registered for Kindergarten at P.S. 093. The DOE will continue to monitor P.S. 093's

Kindergarten enrollment throughout the enrollment projections process after the 2011-2012 school year begins and throughout the continued co-location of Met LCS with P.S. 093 in X093/X893. Moreover, as noted in the revised EIS on p.7, if there is an increase in student enrollment resulting from demand greater than current projections for P.S. 093, or an increase in the number of families residing in the zoned area, the Chancellor reserves the right to relocate Met LCS to an alternate location geographically proximate to X093/X893.

With regard to comment 6(a) which relates to the proposed Shared Space Plan: The Shared Space Plan contained in the revised BUP is only a proposal. As indicated in the revised BUP, the final shared space schedule will be collaboratively finalized by the Building Council, consisting of principals from all co-located schools. The Building Council is free to adhere to a shared space schedule similar to the one currently in use at the building.

### **Changes Made to the Proposal**

Upon further consideration of the BUP, among other things, the DOE substantially revised the original proposal.

The revised EIS corrects typographical and formatting errors, clarifies the potential impact on programming offered by P.S. 093 and Met LCS, clarifies the availability of space within X093/X893, and includes information concerning the Chancellor's right to re-site Met LCS should zoned demand for P.S. 093 increase.

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