



Date: March 22, 2010

Topic: Proposed Re-siting of York Early College Academy (28Q284) and Co-location with Existing Schools in School Building Q008

Date of Panel Vote: March 23, 2010

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### **Summary of Proposal**

In the 2010-2011 school year, York Early College Academy (28Q284, “YECA”), an existing secondary school serving grades 6-9, will relocate from its current location to school building Q008 (“Q008”), which is located at 108-35 167th Street in District 28. YECA will be co-located with JHS 8 Richard S. Grossley (28Q008) in Q008. YECA is currently housed in Q072 with JHS 72 and a D75 program. There is no additional space for YECA to grow to serve grades 6-12 in that building. Relocating to Q008 will allow YECA to expand to serve grades 6-12.

YECA opened in 2006 and is currently phasing in one grade per year. It will continue to phase in one grade per year in Q008 until it reaches its intended 6-12 grade scale in 2012-2013. Q008 has the capacity to serve students of both YECA and JHS 8, even when both schools are operating at full capacity. The 2008-2009 target capacity of Q008 was 1,666 students, and P.S. 8 enrolls only 720 students, yielding a target utilization rate of just 49 percent<sup>1</sup>. YECA currently enrolls 328 students in grades 6-9. Next year, the school will add the tenth grade, bringing enrollment to approximately 400-450 students. The school will serve approximately 567 students when it reaches its full capacity, serving students in grades 6-12. Both schools will have adequate space and facilities resources to continue delivering all of their programs, including providing appropriate support to special need students.

The co-location of YECA in Q008 will allow the school to continue growing, thereby ensuring the continued availability of high-quality middle schools while expanding the

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<sup>1</sup> The educational impact statement incorrectly cited the 2008-2009 target utilization and target capacity figures as 1,620 and 67 percent, respectively. The correct figures provided above, 1,666 and 49 percent were used by the DOE in making the decision to propose this co-location and, in fact, indicate that there is more space in the building than the educational impact statement shows. The educational impact statement has been updated to reflect the correct figures.

availability of high-quality high school options for students and their families in District 28. YECA received an A grade on its 2007-08 and 2008-09 progress reports.

At this time, there is no plan for the use of space made available in Q072 by the move of YECA. Any proposal to site an additional school in the building will be addressed in a separate educational impact statement.

An educational impact statement on this proposal was posted on the Department of Education's Web site on February 2, 2010.

### **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearings**

Two joint public hearings were held to receive public comment on this proposal. The first joint public hearing was held at Q072 on March 9, 2010, and all interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. There were 12 attendees at the meeting and there were no speakers who signed up to speak. The second joint public hearing was held at Q008 on March 16, 2010, and all interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. No members of the public spoke in opposition to the proposal. One member of the public spoke in favor of the proposal, stating that, although there were concerns at first, all questions were answered, and the two schools have a great foundation to build a great partnership. This co-location will allow YECA to grow to scale, and both schools have strong leaders that will work together well. The Community Education Council and the Citywide Council on High Schools, as well as the principals of YECA and JHS 8, made statements at this hearing in favor of the co-location proposal.

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

One written comment was submitted to the designated e-mail address for comment. No oral comments were submitted. The one written comment was from an anonymous concerned parent and was in opposition. The written comment did not address the YECA proposal specifically but noted that changes to schools mean that students already at schools do not receive additional support when the new school moves in. The fact that there is no additional support for existing students in the building is detrimental to them.

One advocacy organization submitted general comments objecting to all proposed co-locations of schools being considered by the Panel on March 23, 2010. A summary and analysis of these comments is included in the attached appendix.

No significant alternatives were proposed.

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

YECA is being relocated so that they can continue to grow to serve grades 6-12 as originally planned. Q008 has the capacity to serve students in both YECA and J.H.S 8, even

when both schools are operating at full capacity. The target capacity of Q008 was 1,666 students, and J.H.S. 8 only enrolls 720 students, yielding a target utilization rate of just 49 percent. YECA currently enrolls 328 students in grades 6-9. Next year, the school will add its first tenth-grade class, bringing enrollment to approximately 400-450 students. The school will serve approximately 567 students when it reaches its full capacity, serving students in grades 6-12. Both schools will have adequate space and facilities resources to continue delivering all of their programs, including providing appropriate support to special need students. J.H.S. 8 will continue to receive per capita funding and J.H.S. 8 students will continue to receive the same structure of supports with the move of YECA into the building. The schools are also discussing ways to partner and to work together to provide educational opportunities for their students that would not have been possible with one school to achieve on its own. Both schools recognize ways to learn from one another and to enhance the culture in their own schools that will ultimately provide more support to and will benefit their students.

The CEC, CCHS, and the leadership of YECA and J.H.S. 8 are in favor of the proposal. The proposal will be presented to the Panel for Educational Policy as it is currently posted.

A copy of the educational impact statement for this proposal can be obtained at [http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/676176D9-06BC-42A9-9C45-C5D3C5110CD3/79803/Q008\\_YorkEarlyCollege\\_AmendedEIS\\_Final\\_32210.pdf](http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/676176D9-06BC-42A9-9C45-C5D3C5110CD3/79803/Q008_YorkEarlyCollege_AmendedEIS_Final_32210.pdf).

## **Appendix: Response to General Comments Regarding Proposed Co-locations of Schools**

### **Summary of Issues Raised and Significant Alternatives Suggested**

One advocacy organization submitted general comments objecting to all proposed co-locations of schools. In opposing the DOE's proposed co-locations, the comments cited the following reasons: (1) the DOE did not use accurate data in analyzing the utilization and capacity of school buildings; (2) the utilization formula used by the DOE is inadequate and assumes inappropriate target class sizes; (3) charter schools and the DOE's new small schools enroll fewer high needs students than district and citywide averages, leading to higher concentrations of high needs students in district schools; and (4) the expansion of charters and new small schools has eliminated critical space from existing district schools.

The comments suggest a moratorium on any new co-locations until an independent review is conducted to assess the capacity in existing public school buildings and make determinations about the amount of space required to reduce class size to mandated levels.

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

The comments assert that the DOE did not use accurate data in analyzing utilization and capacity of school buildings. The data used in analyzing the utilization and capacity of school buildings comes from "The Enrollment, Capacity and Utilization Report" (also known as the "Blue Book"), which is the standard by which the DOE measures the maximum capacity of a school building compared to the enrollment. These calculations are based on information provided by principals in the Annual Facilities Survey conducted by the School Construction Authority. In addition to considering the Blue Book information, the DOE conducts a physical survey of school buildings and takes into consideration current programming prior to proposing a change in utilization.

With regard to the comment regarding the use of inappropriate target class sizes, the DOE does use aspirational targets for school buildings but feels that these goals are appropriate for ensuring a quality education for all students. The DOE understands that building usage varies by schools and leaves programming decisions to school leaders. However, it is important to have a standard means of assessing the use of our limited physical plant resources consistently across the city. The class size targets used for the 2008-2009 Blue Book calculations of target capacity and utilization are lower than those used for determining historical capacity and utilization.

Specific reference was made to targets in the City's Contracts for Excellence (CFE) class size reduction plan. DOE proposals for the co-locations of schools are based on current class sizes and the available space in each applicable building according to the citywide instructional footprint which prescribes the number of classrooms needed for each school. Proposals are not based on the space needed for a school to achieve class size reduction targets. The CFE targets are aspirational, are predicated upon levels of State CFE funding that may not occur due to the

national recession, and do not reflect current class sizes. The DOE does not believe that the proposed co-locations will increase class size.

The comments assert that charter schools and the DOE's new small schools enroll fewer high needs students than the citywide and district averages, thereby leading to higher concentrations of high needs students in district schools. It is important to note that charter school admissions are done by lottery as required by State Education Law. Charter schools do in fact serve the full range of public school students as do the DOE's new small schools. The new small schools that have been created over the last six years are serving English language learners and special education students at a higher rate than schools citywide, with better outcomes. On average the new schools have a graduation rate of 75%. During the 2008-2009 school year, ninth-grade enrollment at new schools included 14.2 percent special education students and 13.6 percent English language learners, compared to 12.8 percent special education students and 10.3 percent English language learners citywide. When looking across a school's entire population, they also serve more special education students and ELL students than the citywide average. In 2008-2009, new schools served an average of 12.3 percent special education students and 12.6 percent English language learners compared with 11.6 percent and 10.8 percent, respectively, citywide.