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RESOLUTION #47
Lower Manhattan Rezoning

WHEREAS, the Department of Education (DOE) has committed to opening a new zoned elementary school at the site of the Peck Slip Post Office in September 2015;

WHEREAS, the DOE plans to incubate the new zoned school at Peck Slip (the Peck Slip School) in the Tweed Courthouse starting in September 2012;

WHEREAS, the CECD2, with the DOE, held numerous zoning committee meetings to solicit feedback, reached out to preschools in District 2 using the best available list and created opportunities for families to provide input via email and a social networking web site;

WHEREAS, the DOE will only incubate two sections per grade in the Tweed Courthouse despite the fact that the DOE announced its commitment to expand the capacity of the Peck Slip School to 656 seats (4 sections per grade);

WHEREAS, to accommodate the growing population in Lower Manhattan, PS 397 and PS 276 have had to accept more kindergarten sections than the schools were designed to hold and are borrowing classrooms from future generations of zoned students,

WHEREAS, the Community Education Council District 2 (CECD2) believes that the projections by the School Construction Authority and the DOE are based on inappropriate assumptions and are not at the scale adequate for school rezoning, making it difficult to render decisions;

WHEREAS, the analysis by the CECD2 Zoning Committee indicates there will likely be waitlists in some if not all of the schools in Lower Manhattan;

WHEREAS, the CECD2 recognizes the concerns raised by some families for the length of incubation (three years) and the commute distance to the Tweed Courthouse;

WHEREAS, the CECD2 is committed to creating a zone for the Peck Slip School because starting a school with its own zone is critical in building a community before the school opens in September;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Community Education Council District 2 approves the Lower Manhattan zoning proposal dated November 28th, 2011;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 urges the DOE to incubate three sections of Kindergarten classes at the Tweed Courthouse starting September 2012;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 urges the DOE to allow waitlisted families to express their preference in school assignments and that the DOE honor such preferences (see Resolution #40);

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 urges the DOE to ensure that students at the Peck Slip School housed in the Tweed Courthouse have adequate facilities, such as indoor and outdoor play space or physical education space;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 urges the DOE to work with the community to finalize the grade configuration at the Spruce Street School;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 requests the DOE to give families who are currently zoned for the Spruce Street School but will be zoned for the Peck Slip School a choice to apply to the Spruce Street School if there are seats available after students from the new zone are accommodated;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 requests the DOE to notify the families of the Peck Slip School of the status of the relocation plan by Innovate Manhattan and guarantee the availability of the Tweed Courthouse for the Peck Slip school by February;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 urges the DOE and the SCA to work with the CECD2 to improve the enrollment projection process to allow for an accurate assessment of capacity needs; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the CECD2 has documented and shown that significant additional capacity is required downtown and demands that the DOE and the SCA site at a minimum another school in Lower Manhattan.

Adopted and approved by CECD2 on December 14, 2011.