



**Department of
Education**

Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

Public Comment Analysis¹

Date: October 11, 2013

Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of P.S. 084 Jose De Diego (14K084) from a K-5 to a K-8 School Beginning in 2014-2015

Date of Panel Vote: October 15, 2013

Summary of Proposal

On August 29, 2013, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to expand P.S. 084 Jose De Diego (14K084, “P.S. 84”) to serve students in kindergarten through eighth grades. P.S. 84 is housed in Building K084 located at 250 Berry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11211, in Community School District 14 (“District 14”). P.S. 84 currently serves students in kindergarten through fifth grades and offers four sections of a full-day pre-kindergarten program. The proposed middle school grades will also be served in Building K084. Building K084 also houses an Adult and Continuing Education program managed by District 79 (“79K755”). The Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) will vote on this proposal on October 15, 2013.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding the proposal was held at P.S. 84 on October 9, 2013. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 290 members of the public attended the hearing, and 46 people spoke. Present at the meeting were Community School District 14 Superintendent Alicja Winnicki; District 14 Community Education Council (“CEC 14”) President Tesa Wilson; CEC 14 members Elaine Manitu, Dessie Ferrer, Ramon Peguero, and Mario Aguila; P.S. 84 School Leadership Team (“SLT”) representatives Jordan Margolis, Yenny Almonte, Monalisa Colon, and Courtney Smith; New York State Assembly Member Joseph Lentol; New York City Council Member Diana Reyna and her representative Jennifer Gutierrez; New York City Council Member Elect Antonio Reynoso; and Evelyn Cruz, a representative of U.S. Congress Member Nydia Velazquez. Vicki De Javier from the DOE Division of Portfolio Planning was also present.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing on October 9, 2013 on the proposal:

1. Elaine Manitu, member of CEC 14, commented as follows:
 - a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. The CEC has been asking the DOE for more viable middle school choices.
 - c. The students and the ASD Nest program will benefit from the expansion.
2. An SLT member commented as follows:
 - a. She is in favor of the proposal.

¹ This Analysis of Public Comments reflects those public comments received to date. The DOE will continue to accept public comments until Monday, October 14 at 6 p.m. If any additional comments are received, they will be addressed in an amended analysis.

- b. The P.S. 84 staff is dedicated to helping the students.
 - c. She has three brothers who are architects, so she sees the school in terms of construction.
 - d. She believes in the students having continuity in their education.
3. An SLT member commented as follows:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. She has two daughters who were transferred to P.S. 84 seven months ago. The previous school did not adequately teach her two daughters. She believes transferring her daughters to P.S. 84 was the best decision. Before the transfer, her child struggled with writing simple sentences and can now write compound sentences.
4. An SLT member commented as follows:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. The school has achieved great things.
 - c. The expansion will allow P.S. 84 to take additional children, especially during the middle school years.
 - d. Parents of middle school students are distraught over the limited choices in the district.
 - e. The expansion of P.S. 84 will allow the school's Spanish Dual Language program to expand into the middle school grades.
5. An SLT member commented as follows:
- a. He is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. Fourth and fifth grade students would immediately benefit from the proposal.
6. New York State Assembly Member Joseph Lentol commented as follows:
- a. He is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. The student speakers captured the essence of the community's support.
 - c. He remembers growing up in the neighborhood and attending P.S. 137.
 - d. He believes it takes a community-wide effort to educate children.
 - e. "If it ain't broke don't fix it."
 - f. The expansion will allow students to remain a part of the community.
 - g. The expansion will bolster parental involvement. Parent involvement is the most important factor in a child's education and it begins to wane in the middle school years.
7. New York City Council Member Elect Antonio Reynoso commented as follows:
- a. He is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. Education has been the most important platform in his campaign and will remain a top priority when he is in office.
 - c. P.S. 84 is one of the most organized schools in the district.
 - d. The DOE fears organized parents.
 - e. The DOE is not attuned to the community's needs.
 - f. He asks that the DOE stop placing schools in the district without proper community input.
 - g. The expansion proposal demonstrates the DOE's willingness to solicit community input.
 - h. Quality education is important.
 - i. The expansion of P.S. 84 will help alleviate overcrowding in nearby middle schools such as M.S. 318.
 - j. The expansion will give parents more choices.
8. Ramon Peguero, member of CEC 14, commented as follows:
- a. There are good traditional schools in the district, putting the need for additional charter schools in question.
 - b. The proposal reflects and highlights the input of the community.
 - c. He wants quality schools in the district.
 - d. The expansion should take place so that the DOE does not place an unwanted school in the building.
9. A member of P.S. 84 commented as follows:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. Continuity in education is important, especially for the pre-teen years.
 - c. Diversity is present in P.S. 84.
10. A representative for U.S. Congress Member Nydia Velazquez, commented as follows:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. Magnet grants were beneficial for the schools in the district.

- c. P.S. 84 has many amenities.
 - d. Diversity is present in P.S. 84.
11. A commenter stated:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. Students in P.S. 84 have the opportunity to learn English and Spanish.
 - c. The ASD Nest program should expand.
12. A representative for New York City Council Member Diana Reyna, commented as follows:
- a. She is in favor of the proposal.
 - b. The nearby middle schools are overcrowded.
13. A parent commented as follows:
- a. School zones have led to segregation.
 - b. Magnet grants have helped with desegregation.
 - c. She is against the wording of the proposal because it does not explicitly state the DOE's commitment to diversity.
 - d. She is against an enrollment policy that gives first priority to zoned students.
14. Multiple students and parents commented that they were in support of the expansion proposal for the following reasons:
- a. P.S. 84 provides students with a high quality education.
 - b. P.S. 84 has dedicated staff.
 - c. The expansion of P.S. 84 will mitigate bullying.
 - d. The expansion of P.S. 84 will provide its students with continuity in education.
 - e. P.S. 84 is diverse.

Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE regarding the proposal

No written or oral comments were received regarding this proposal.

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

Comments 1-12 and 14 are in favor of the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 13(c) expresses concern about the lack of a statement in the proposal involving school diversity.

The DOE services a diverse population of students, parents, and families. The DOE also employs staff members with diverse backgrounds and perspectives. In recognition of that multi-faceted diversity, the DOE shares a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. For more information on the DOE's Diversity and Inclusion Policy, please visit

<http://schools.nyc.gov/Offices/GeneralCounsel/Investigative/OEO/KeyDocuments/DiversityandInclusionPolicy.htm>

Comment 13(d) expresses opposition to enrollment priority for zoned students.

With regard to elementary school, P.S. 84 will continue to give priority to students who live in its zone, as it has in the past and in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. The full details of Chancellor's Regulation A-101 can be found at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/RulesPolicies/ChancellorsRegulations/default.htm>.

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

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

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

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

Additionally, P.S. 84 currently offers an ASD Nest program. Upon referral, students can apply to ASD Nest programs through a centralized admissions process managed by the Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners (ELL). This proposal is not expected to impact the ASD Nest admissions process.

Elementary school students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), with the exception of those recommended for placement in a District 75 school, are admitted to schools in the same manner as general education students. Schools will ensure that students with disabilities continue to receive mandated services in accordance with their IEPs while also ensuring such students have opportunities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

In accordance with DOE policy, ELL students will also be admitted to elementary schools in the same manner as their peers who are not ELL students. Any students requiring ELL services will continue to receive appropriate services at P.S. 84.

With regard to middle school, beginning in 2014-2015, continuing fifth graders at P.S. 84 will have the opportunity to remain at P.S. 84 for middle school, provided that they satisfy promotional requirements. All students at P.S. 84 will be expected to submit an application for middle school indicating their preference for remaining at P.S. 84 or attending one of the other options for which they are eligible. P.S. 84 students who indicate a preference for remaining at P.S. 84 through the middle school application are guaranteed a seat. Any remaining seats will be filled with other eligible students who indicate a preference for P.S. 84 through the Middle School Admissions Process, which is described in greater detail in the following paragraphs.

P.S. 84 will admit incoming sixth-grade students through the Middle School Admissions Process using a limited unscreened admissions method. Admissions preference for middle school enrollment will be given to students in the following order:

- Continuing fifth graders from P.S. 84
- Students who are zoned for District 14 for middle school or, students who attend a District 14 elementary school and who also attend an information session, school tour, open house event or visiting the school's exhibit at the Middle School Fair
- Other students who are zoned for District 14 for middle school or who attend a District 14 elementary school.

Through the Middle School Admissions Process, students are offered the opportunity to apply to a range of middle schools within their district and/or schools with borough-wide or citywide eligibility. Students may also choose to apply to a number of schools that manage their own admission processes. Information about all of these options is printed in each district's Middle School Choice Directory which can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/Publications/default.htm#Brooklyn>. Please note that this directory is updated yearly.

Under the Middle School Admissions Process, students will rank their preferences from among the options printed on their customized middle school application

These options include:

- Middle schools or programs with a screened admissions method (admission is based on criteria designated by the school);
- Middle schools or programs with an unscreened or limited unscreened admissions method (limited unscreened schools admit students on the same basis as unscreened schools except that they give preference to students who have attended a school information session);
- K-8 schools with a screened, school-based application, or limited unscreened admissions method that have available seats for middle school students;
- 6-12 schools with an unscreened, limited unscreened, or screened admissions method for middle school students; and
- Schools with borough-wide or Citywide eligibility with unscreened, limited unscreened, or screened admissions method.

The Citywide deadline for fifth graders to submit middle school applications for the 2014-2015 school year is in December. Additionally, new middle schools designated to open throughout the City for the 2014-2015 school year will be available for students to consider. After the PEP votes on the proposals to open new schools, eligible students will have the opportunity to submit a "new schools" application. Information about middle school application deadlines will be available at the following link: <http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/Middle/Calendar/default.htm>.

Middle school students with IEPs, with the exception of those recommended for placement in a District 75 school, are admitted to schools in the same manner as general education students. Schools will ensure that students with disabilities continue to receive mandated services in accordance with their IEPs while also ensuring such students have opportunities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers to the greatest extent possible.

In accordance with DOE policy, ELL students are admitted to middle school in the same manner as their peers who are not ELL students. Any students requiring ELL services will continue to receive appropriate services in accordance with DOE policy.

Comments 13(a,b) do not directly relate to the proposal and do not require a response.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal.