

Public Comment Analysis¹

Date: September 30, 2013 and October 9, 2013

Topic: The Proposed Re-siting and Co-location of The Urban Assembly School for Emergency Management (02M135) with Existing School Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers (02M520) and New Charter Elementary School, Success Academy Charter School – New York 1 (84MTBD) in Building M520 Beginning in the 2014-2015 School Year²

Date of Panel Vote: October 15, 2013

Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to re-site district high school The Urban Assembly School for Emergency Management (02M135, “UA-EM”) to school building M520 (“M520”) beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. M520 is located at 411 Pearl Street, Manhattan, New York 10038, within the geographical confines of Community School District 2 (“District 2”). Currently, UA-EM is housed in building M625, located at 439 West 49th Street, New York, NY 10019, also within the geographical confines of District 2. A “re-siting” means students will attend classes in a different building than the one they attended in previous years. If this proposal is approved, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, UA-EM students will no longer attend classes in M625. Instead, they will attend classes in M520, where UA-EM will be co-located with two other schools: Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers (02M520, “Bergtraum”) and the proposed Success Academy Charter School – New York 1 (84MTBD, “SA – New York 1”), a new public charter elementary school. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, libraries, and cafeterias.

In a separate proposal, the DOE has proposed to open and co-locate SA – New York 1, a new charter elementary school that will phase in to serve students in kindergarten through fourth grade in M520 beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. SA – New York 1 will open in the 2014-2015 school year serving 150-210 students in kindergarten and first grade and will add one grade each year until it reaches full scale grade span in the 2017-2018 school year. SA – New York 1 is

¹ The DOE will continue to accept comments concerning this proposal up to 24 hours prior to the Panel for Educational Policy’s (“PEP”) vote on October 15, 2013. Any additional comments will be addressed in an amended Public Comment Analysis which will be made available to the PEP before it votes on this proposal.

² In addition to the proposal to re-site UA-EM, attendees at the September 30th and October 9th hearings also had an opportunity to provide comments on a related proposal to re-site Mather into M625. Responses to those comments may be found here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/Oct15PublicComment.htm>. Attendees at the October 9th hearing had an opportunity to provide comments on another proposal to co-locate Success Academy Charter School – New York 1 in building M520. Responses to those comments may be found here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/Oct15PublicComment.htm>.

projected to reach stable full scale enrollment one year later, in the 2018-2019 school year, when it is expected to serve 450-600 students in kindergarten through fourth grade. This proposal concerning UA-EM's re-siting is related to, but not dependent on, the proposal to open and co-locate SA – New York 1 in M520 in the 2014-2015 school year. SA – New York 1 will occupy existing under-utilized space in M520, as well as space made available by Bergtraum's enrollment reduction.

On March 11, 2013, the Panel for Educational Policy ("PEP") approved a proposal to site and co-locate Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High School (02M139, "Mather") in M520 with Bergtraum beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. On March 11, 2013, the PEP also approved a proposal to site and co-locate UA-EM within building M625 ("M625") beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. As a result of facilities assessments that occurred after the PEP approved Mather's siting in M520, the United States National Park Service ("NPS"), Mather's industry partner, and the DOE determined that M520 is an inappropriate site for Mather because the building cannot accommodate the lab space that Mather's specialized curriculum requires. Building M625, on the other hand, is able to offer Mather the required lab space. This determination came too late in the year to propose the re-siting of Mather for the 2013-2014 school year. The DOE is therefore proposing to re-site Mather to M625 and UA-EM to M520 for the 2014-2015 school year. UA-EM will receive its required standard lab space in M520. Re-siting UA-EM to M520 and re-siting Mather to M625 will ensure that both schools are located in facilities that can support their respective instructional needs. If both this proposal and the related proposal to re-site UA – EM are approved, in the 2014-2015 school year, Mather and UA-EM will effectively swap spaces in their respective buildings. NPS has worked with Mather to modify the school's curriculum for the 2013-2014 school year in M520 to place more emphasis on coursework that does not require lab space.

UA-EM is a district high school currently sited in building M625, where it will serve ninth grade students in the 2013-2014 school year. UA-EM will offer a rigorous academic program with a career and technical education component that prepares students for post-secondary education and work. UA-EM admits students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process.

If this proposal is approved, UA-EM will be re-sited to M520 where it will be co-located with existing district high school Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers (02M520, "Bergtraum") and the proposed Success Academy Charter School – New York 1 (84MTBD, "SA – New York 1"), a new public charter elementary school. UA-EM will continue to add one grade level per year until it reaches full scale and serves students in grades nine through twelve in the 2016-2017 school year. If approved, this proposed re-siting will require students enrolled at UA-EM in the 2013-2014 school year to travel a potentially farther distance to a different school building in the 2014-2015 school year as M625 and M520 are located 4.3 miles apart. However, the DOE believes that the re-siting will not create significant travel hardships, since both buildings are located close to central public transportation hubs.

Bergtraum is an existing district high school serving students in grades nine through twelve that admits students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process. The DOE is planning to reduce the enrollment at Bergtraum by approximately 400 - 450 students over a period of four

years beginning in September 2014. By 2017-2018, enrollment at Bergtraum will decrease by approximately 400 - 450 students so that it will serve 1,055 - 1,095 students at scale in ninth through twelfth grades. Details of the year-by-year reduction are included in Section III.B below. This enrollment reduction will take place regardless of whether the proposals to re-site Mather to M625, to re-site UA-EM into M520, and to co-locate SA – New York 1 in M520 are approved. The enrollment reduction is intended to provide an opportunity for Bergtraum to improve its performance by narrowing its focus to a smaller number of students and also to allow for new school options to develop in building M520.

If both this proposal and the related Mather re-siting proposal are approved, in the 2014-2015 school year, Mather and UA – EM will effectively swap spaces in their respective buildings. For the purposes of this proposal, it is assumed that the proposal to re-site Mather to M625 will be approved by the PEP. This proposal is dependent on the approval of the Mather re-siting to M625.

According to the 2011-2012 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (“Blue Book”), M520 has a target capacity to serve 2,134 students. However the building is expected to serve approximately 1,614 students in the 2013-2014 school year, yielding a building utilization rate of 76%. This means that the building is “under-utilized” and has space to accommodate additional students.

In addition, M520 houses four community-based organizations (“CBOs”): Young Women's Christian Association (“YWCA NYC”), APEX Inc., SPARK Drug Prevention and Baruch/BMCC College, as well as offices of the United Federation of Teachers (“UFT”). This proposal is not expected to impact the continued siting of the CBOs or the UFT offices. M520 also houses hearing education services, a program that operates self-contained classes and inclusion classes at Bergtraum in consultation with District 75, serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing. This proposal is not expected to impact the hearing education services currently offered in the M520 building.

Beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, the DOE and the School Construction Authority (“SCA”) have planned construction to create a school-based health clinic (“SBHC”) in M520. This proposal is not expected to impact the construction, creation or continued siting of the SBHC in M520, although the SBHC’s ultimate construction, creation and continued siting are dependent on the SCA’s assessment of facilities and funding.

If this proposal is approved, the building will serve approximately 1,925 – 2,155 students and have a utilization rate of 90%–101% in the 2018-2019 school year, when all schools have reached full scale and stable enrollment. As discussed in Section III.B and in the attached Building Utilization Plan (“BUP”), while the utilization rate may be in excess of 100%, all schools will receive space that meets their instructional needs. Therefore, the building has space to accommodate Bergtraum, UA-EM and SA – New York 1.

Summary of Comments Received

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at building M625 on September 30, 2013. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 11 members of the public attended the hearing, and 2 people spoke. Present at the meeting were Rudy Elizondo, principal of the Urban Assembly High School for Emergency Management and member of the school's SLT; Larry Gabbard, principal of the Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High School and member of the school's SLT; Marisol Bradbury, Community District 2 High School Superintendent; Elzora Cleveland, member of Community Education Council 2 ("CEC 2"); and Paola DeKock, president of the Citywide Council of High Schools.

A second joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at building M520 on October 9, 2013. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 75 members of the public attended the hearing, and 28 people spoke. Present at the meeting were Rudy Elizondo, principal of the Urban Assembly High School for Emergency Management and member of the school's SLT; Larry Gabbard, principal of the Stephen T. Mather Building Arts & Craftsmanship High School and member of the school's SLT; Lottie Almonte, principal of Murry Bergtraum High School for Business Careers and member of the school's SLT; Valerie Roman, member of Bergtraum's SLT; Marisol Bradbury, Community District 2 High School Superintendent; Shino Tanikawa, president of CEC 2; and Sonni Mun, member of CEC 2.

Below is a summary of the comments received:

1. Paola deKock, president of CCHS, made the following comments:
 - a. She asserted that it should have been readily apparent that the M520 building lacked adequate woodshops to support Mather's instructional needs.
 - b. She asserted that CCHS is not opposed to the proposals to re-site Mather to M625 and to re-site UA-EM to M520.
2. Elzora Cleveland, member of CEC 2, made the following comments:
 - a. Ms. Cleveland expressed concern about the planning process for Mather and concern for the uprooting of students.
 - b. She asserted that CEC 2 supports the proposals to re-site Mather to M625 and to re-site UA-EM to Bergtraum.
3. Shino Tanikawa, president of CEC 2, noted that Paola deKock had expressed concern about the adequacy of lab the space at Bergtraum for Mather's instructional needs at another joint public hearing in the spring.
4. Council Member Margaret Chin expressed concerns about the planning process that led to Mather's siting in Bergtraum and noted that she supports the proposals to re-site Mather to M520 and to re-site UA-EM to Bergtraum.

The DOE did not receive any comments through its feedback email address.

The DOE received one comment which does not directly relate to the proposal.

5. One commenter questioned the DOE's policy of phasing out under-performing schools and replacing those schools with multiple, smaller schools.

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

Comments 1(a), 2(a), 3 and 4 express concerns about the planning process that allowed Mather to be sited in a building that could not meet its instructional needs. The DOE was aware of Mather's need for CTE lab space prior to proposing M520 as a site for the school, and the DOE assessed building M520 prior to proposing the co-location of Mather in that building. However, only after the Panel for Educational Policy approved the co-location of Mather in M520 did the DOE become aware that issues with drainage and ventilation in the rooms intended for use as Mather's CTE labs would render those spaces inadequate for the specific lab needs of Mather's specialized curriculum. The DOE will continue to make every effort to ensure that new CTE high schools are placed in buildings that accommodate the lab needs unique to each school's specialized curriculum.

Comments 1(b) and 2(b) express support for the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 5 does not relate to the proposal and does not require a response.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal in response to public comment.