

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

**New York City Department of  
Education - Division of  
Portfolio Planning  
Fordham Leadership Academy for  
Business and Technology - 3/30/12**

1 [START 290191.MP3]

2 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR MARC STERNBERG: - - and  
3 so - - a conversation about the questions that  
4 have been raised about this proposal and also -  
5 - about the process - - to clarify some of our -  
6 - . We continue to - - your feedback is  
7 important - - record to provide us a chance - -  
8 Department of Education policy - - school.

9 This is not my first time to - - . This is  
10 my first - - school. My first visit was - - for  
11 a conversation - - present - - and the actions  
12 to the possibly of - - in the school - - school  
13 - - school year - - some time on the - - deeply  
14 concerned about that - - performance - - .

15 So when we look at that - - we see - - to  
16 decide - - closure of the school and the  
17 preschool - - schools exactly which school will  
18 be - - structures and - - that - - students  
19 better and - - address concerns if there are any  
20 concerns - - school.

21 What we also saw in the - - and we saw Peter  
22 who demonstrated - - to making - - . And it was  
23 based on those conversations - - to discuss the  
24 - - proposal to - - school and to consider - -  
25 conversation on the turnaround - - school - - as

1 a parent and teacher community deeply committed  
2 to making something - - and to serve students  
3 well deeply committed to the sense of community  
4 and to finding a way to - - school and - - .

5 So one - - here is that in this proposal all  
6 students who attended - - will be - - so we're  
7 very excited about that and - - to assemble both  
8 a program a set of programs and - - this  
9 community forward.

10 So to wrap up very quickly - - that - -  
11 school - - education department - - new school -  
12 - . We also learned that the school funding - -  
13 campus - - added in the future - - . Bronx High  
14 School - - .

15 On February 27th, 2012 - - published overall  
16 - - impact statement which - - the closure of -  
17 - Academy - - new school NS577 [phonetic] - -  
18 new school but significantly increases the money  
19 from - -. All right - - .

20 MS. JENNY SOBELMAN: Thank you so much  
21 Chancellor Sternberg. So the first two - - SLT,  
22 Nola Lightfoot and Donna Enckman. So if you  
23 want make your way over - - .

24 MS. NOLA LIGHTFOOT: My name is Nola  
25 Lightfoot and - - but I do have a statement that

1 I would like to - - this statement - - that the  
2 parents, the staff, the principal are committed  
3 to - - institution. And then - - to tell us - -  
4 she also said that - - .

5 However you determined in February and at  
6 that point you told us that - - turnaround. My  
7 question is did you realize that - - that the  
8 parents and then the principal were committed to  
9 development of students - - this is in the fall  
10 and your February return to the school was - - .

11 MS. SOBELMAN: So I'll just - - public  
12 comment - - .

13 MS. LIGHTFOOT: Okay - - .

14 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you.

15 MS. LIGHTFOOT: So this - - most of us we  
16 have - high school. However the students of - -  
17 the - - the sophomore and the first year - - .  
18 When - - and in conversations with these  
19 students this - - confused - - them and - - and  
20 then - - the school.

21 Today - - parents - - . We were the school  
22 that had the first students at - - in New York  
23 City. - - in addition - - Fordham leadership  
24 Academy for Business and Technology - - school  
25 program because of school technology - - . In

1 addition to that we have - - we also have - -  
2 2007 - - for the regional - - New York - - in  
3 Atlanta.

4 A lot of the students that was the first  
5 time - - science in action - - like engineers,  
6 they built that robot from scratch - - high  
7 school for business and technology, they learn  
8 how to incorporate technology and science into -  
9 - experience. That was our mission, the mission  
10 of the school was to provide students with real  
11 life skills, skills that they could transfer  
12 business world and into the college world, we  
13 provided that for our students.

14 However what happened? Here we are today,  
15 how did this happen and I'm going to - - the  
16 conference that we had, we lost our robotics  
17 team - - robotics team mismanagement, the DOE  
18 was aware of it, the person who responsible for  
19 that, what happens to all of this. - - they  
20 came, they repossessed their furniture, why did  
21 they reposes because the person who in charge  
22 did not follow the rules. The DOE was aware of  
23 that, all - - the DOE were aware of that.

24 The DOE allowed this school to fall apart  
25 because the - - administrators fired and

1 reinstated by Chancellor - - and when he did  
2 that he realized that - - numbers, he decided  
3 that - - . The DOE has stated that they gave us  
4 support, where is the support, where is the  
5 teacher learning. We lost a lot of our good  
6 quality teachers who were first grade [phonetic]  
7 teachers, engaging and enthusiastic because they  
8 had no PTs, no mentoring, no training and under  
9 the Impact statement all of the things the DOE  
10 says that they provided us - - those things.

11 Our teachers - - first grade teachers - -  
12 after two years - - I have no idea where to go  
13 from here, where do I go, I'm stagnant. I have  
14 - - classes, I have - - into the classroom.  
15 What am I going to do now; there is no - - no  
16 one to help me. - - challenges, why? Because  
17 the organization that was supposed to provide  
18 those things for us stood back and allowed for  
19 the - - to fall apart.

20 It's now - - where to go, well you know what  
21 those 50%, those - - we're in the water and - -  
22 the issue. The disproportion we have received  
23 more students with Special Ed, we have  
24 disproportion - - more students then else. We  
25 have more students in our population - - in this

1 school than other schools that are students who  
2 are below the poverty level and in addition a  
3 lot of those students have broken homes,  
4 families that live in shelters. We have been  
5 the nurturing models to those students, not the  
6 DOE.

7 So for the leadership - - nurturing model,  
8 we have been the nurturing model, not the DOE.  
9 The DOE has failed for the leadership and we the  
10 teachers are being blamed for this failure,  
11 thank you.

12 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you - - will be from  
13 Donna Enckman.

14 MS. DONNA ENCKMAN: Good afternoon, my name  
15 is Donna Enckman and I'm going to read a  
16 statement for - - because of his previous  
17 engagements.

18 - - , this is the way the school should be  
19 run. - - this to me made absolutely no sense.  
20 When you close a school, you make the school  
21 students feel guilty and confused. You anger  
22 parents and staff - - students that they are not  
23 responsible for their - - education. They are -  
24 - because the school is not good enough.

25 When they tell the students the performance

1 of the teachers then you lose - - who listened  
2 to their teachers. How is that the best - - .  
3 We are a dedicated staff that - - principal we  
4 have worked extra hard also without pay to help  
5 the students in many different ways. We - -  
6 students, parents and the leadership - - how is  
7 it in the best interest of our students to tell  
8 them that they are failures. Because that is -  
9 - that is what we'll tell them when we are to  
10 close the school.

11 The reality of this - - you are in fact  
12 hurting them in the worst way humanly possible.  
13 We all know the reason for closing the school is  
14 to break the teachers union. It has nothing,  
15 absolutely nothing to do with helping the  
16 students. If you really care - - and be careful  
17 - - you will - - . Thank you, sincerely, Eric -  
18 - teacher, Fordham Leadership Academy for  
19 Business and Technology. Have a good afternoon.

20 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much. So that  
21 concludes our formal presentations for this  
22 evening and we're going to transition to the  
23 public comments. So as I said - - speaker sign  
24 is closed as I said it can't be more than 15  
25 minutes, a bit longer but if you have questions

1 that you'd like to pose please do take  
2 advantage of the opportunity to write them down  
3 on an index card also available at the bank and  
4 if you have additional comments on the questions  
5 that are coming up, feel free to take advantage  
6 of the phone number - - again (212)374-5159 and  
7 d10proposals, that's  
8 d10proposals@schools.nyc.gov.

9 So now I'm just going to call up our speaker  
10 list and I apologize if I get your name wrong  
11 but hopefully you'll hear number as well. And  
12 we have a lady in front here who's going - - few  
13 minutes, so she'll hold a sign that says 30  
14 seconds and then you'll know how much time is  
15 left and I'm going to call out the list we have  
16 speaker number one, Martin Fiasconaro, number  
17 two is Robert Roche, number three is Leo Casey,  
18 number four Daniel Smith, number five is Adhim  
19 Deveraux, number six Elio Laura, number seven  
20 Jose Vargas and number eight Anthony Santiago.

21 MR. MARTIN FIASCONARO: Good evening my name  
22 is Martin Fiasconaro. I have - - CSA and I also  
23 have some - - . The - - education - - is  
24 already in the process - - is a maneuver that is  
25 not - - and UFP - - teacher evaluation systems.

1 The - - was to follow - -. What else do we do  
2 about it? 50% of the teachers we knew all - -  
3 excess - - .

4 There's nothing - - not to their children.  
5 They were not - - teacher evaluation - - .  
6 Furthermore - - the DOE destabilizes the system  
7 one end or the other - - . While - - costs also  
8 - - removing 1800 teachers and tossing them - -  
9 salary will cost the city approximately \$180  
10 million annually. On a personal note I was  
11 gratified to hear you - - that you will be  
12 selecting the - - where you recommend - -  
13 continue that choice really - - make a  
14 difference with the school - - thank you.

15 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir. Speaker  
16 number two, Robert Roche. Is he unavailable?

17 MR. LEO CASEY: - - .

18 MS. SOBELMAN: Okay.

19 MR. CASEY: My name is Leo Casey and I am  
20 vice president of the United Federation of  
21 Teachers. And I am here tonight to say  
22 something that I've never come to say any other  
23 meeting like this. It is not simply the case  
24 here that this school doesn't deserve to be  
25 closed. What is more - - is that the Department

1 of Education for three years in a row let a  
2 man and the principal of this school that was  
3 not - - unfit to sit in any principalship.

4 In the first year his own superintendant  
5 held a hearing and found that he had engaged in  
6 sexual harassment against the staff in this  
7 school and recommended that he be removed,  
8 transferred - - they gave him political  
9 protection and they extended his tenure.

10 In the second year a police report was filed  
11 and I personally informed a deputy chancellor of  
12 this and he remained in office. In the third  
13 year a parent submitted a complaint about sexual  
14 harassment and I then personally sent it to a  
15 deputy chancellor and he remained in the office.  
16 Finally at the beginning of this year, the  
17 Department of Education finally put - -  
18 principalship a person who is fit to lead this  
19 school and now it's going to close. That is  
20 without honor in the way, with no - - closing  
21 that is going on in - - schools is without honor  
22 and I will speak that truth to anybody who will  
23 listen.

24 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you - - Robert Roche.

25 MR. ROBERT ROCHE: Hey - - my name is Robert

1 Roche - - academy is - - state closure and  
2 we're into our second year. - - academy - -  
3 school - - these hearings that we're having.  
4 Once a school is - - for closure the idea of the  
5 commitment to educating those students - -  
6 trying to educate them, we're really more  
7 concerned with their recovery.

8 We have students in our school that are  
9 already 12, 13, 14 - - education - - they  
10 recover - - in one week, they earn some credits  
11 and that falls very short of what student  
12 education is about. And so when we close  
13 schools to a degree - - students that were  
14 really taking a beating on a subject that - -  
15 education and - - .

16 I would also like to mention there aren't  
17 any - - who - - credit report and everything is  
18 just about - - afterschool programs just to - -  
19 to catch up so that they'll be able to graduate  
20 in that four years, that is our main concern.  
21 And so just in closing today I would like to say  
22 that these students deserve real education, I  
23 mean they recommend - - schools they're actually  
24 - - and I see this everyday in the school that I  
25 am in - - . Thank you.

1 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir. - - Daniel  
2 Smith.

3 MR. DANIEL SMITH: Good evening. I - -  
4 close but the main question I had was why and -  
5 - that the - - but I just want to - - is based  
6 on a previous administration and previous  
7 statistics that - - visits and a full winter and  
8 once again, we're optimistic about - - but what  
9 - - is that we failed and we need to be  
10 replaced.

11 So I just want to speak a little bit about  
12 what's happening, the past is a good teacher - -  
13 and we have a VP - - he moved on when he came  
14 into the original school - - . And he worked  
15 with the original - - then in both he was the  
16 dean - - that - - years and then came and  
17 suddenly - - improvements - - .

18 The DOE brought - - chose a principal who -  
19 - and all the statistics are based on that. So  
20 we've been going - - what's going on. Before we  
21 used to have students - - parents - - parent  
22 conferences, what resolutions - - anticipate - -  
23 in the classroom finally able to - - chance  
24 statistics - - . Thank you.

25 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir. And the

1 speaker on this side is Adhim Deveraux. Mr.  
2 Deveraux.

3 MR. ADHIM DEVERAUX: Good evening - - . My  
4 name is--personally I would like to thank - -  
5 for giving us positive qualities in the school -  
6 - of academy - - negative and it was my duty  
7 then also to check the positive, so I'd like - -  
8 how the school lives. You know at that time - -  
9 presentation of - - school - - city - - New York  
10 and educate black - - and of course you'll still  
11 close the school because - - it had to do with  
12 one particular - - schools. - - makes it an  
13 education and so that's the reason for - -  
14 school.

15 It is contrary to talk about this - - as  
16 part of the agenda. So - - the DOE to back this  
17 policy? They're always demanding - - from the  
18 teacher, where is it - - that this policy works?  
19 Where do the guys study? What system have you  
20 used to show that closing 100 schools, I think -  
21 - somehow improves the educational system, we  
22 need to see that.

23 Let me go now to--well - - . We're not  
24 closing schools to help children, we're  
25 destroying children - - and therefore I just - -

1 because what kind of sick system will - -  
2 children - - . All right, children deserve the  
3 best now, - - we'll help the children if we do  
4 this, we'll the children - - . Who does that to  
5 children? Children deserve - - .

6 We just had a town hall in the last school  
7 and I felt so badly in my heart that - - and it  
8 broke my heart to see the children, - - told the  
9 school - - that somehow - - they did something  
10 wrong it's really embarrassing - - . Make sure  
11 you take the time to encourage and build up your  
12 children, many of them think somehow this is  
13 their fault. I ask you please be there for the  
14 children because clearly the DOE won't. Thank  
15 you.

16 MS. SOBELMAN: - - . Elio Laura. I  
17 apologize if I mispronounced, may - - .

18 MR. ELIO LAURA: - - Bronx. I am here - - .  
19 It is sad that we all have to be here before the  
20 DOE representative. We are asking them to read  
21 the school proposal it is very sad. It is sad  
22 that the DOE should understand that this school  
23 doesn't deserve to be closed. What this school  
24 needs - - and - - let me be honest I believe - -  
25 the school doesn't have a lot of support and the

1 main reason why this school is. Close this  
2 school and - - what we do then, only we can have  
3 - - please understand closing the school is not  
4 the answer. Don't waste our time, do not waste  
5 on our time. Closing the school makes no sense  
6 at all. Closing the school is not the answer.  
7 Thank you.

8 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir, speaker number  
9 seven Jose Vargas and then speaker number eight  
10 Anthony Santiago.

11 MR. JOSE VARGAS: Good evening everyone. My  
12 name is Jose Vargas and I am the - - so this is  
13 about - - . Today basically in - - and we have  
14 been through this over and over again and  
15 nothing has changed. Today - - the DOE has  
16 abdicated its responsibility to ensure that  
17 resources - - .

18 The DOE is well aware that - - we have  
19 spoken to the Department of Ed on numerous  
20 occasions - - Department of Ed on numerous  
21 occasions - - we met countless officials at the  
22 Department of Education about the harassment day  
23 to day that staff at this school endure and yet  
24 they fell on deaf ears. Why - - and they needed  
25 to institute some - - they didn't institute that

1 - - . You said in the statement - - they  
2 couldn't being new structures. What new  
3 structures? If you don't - - why are you not -  
4 - for something that's - - . I heard - - staff  
5 to work together with the administration so you  
6 - - ready to work with staff and - - it was  
7 about time that - - . I find tremendous - - as  
8 I sat there and listened. - - they could bring  
9 new structures and you opposed - - how dare you.  
10 There people - - even though - - they are  
11 because the problem - - .

12 MR. ANTHONY SANTIAGO: Good evening  
13 everyone, my name is Mr. Anthony Santiago a  
14 teacher at Fordham Leadership Academy. Fordham  
15 Leadership Academy is one of the most talented  
16 public schools in New York City. We doubled the  
17 number of - - grade students in - - . Many  
18 schools decided to come - - . The top - -  
19 teachers. To be a teacher - - eight to ten  
20 certification - - many students come to school  
21 to learn, while others come to school - - .  
22 Parents - - two jobs - - . Too much - -  
23 teachers. Teachers see schools for close to  
24 seven, eight - - and do their shift for the rest  
25 of the day. Schools need smaller class sizes.

1 In these tough economic times, - - are  
2 essential to survival - - . A few years ago  
3 Fordham Leadership Academy was the school at  
4 101st - - . Students managed - - and enable our  
5 students once again - - work together for the  
6 role of - - . Our - - to register - - and not  
7 only is it fun, they work - - . Students - -  
8 and - - . We must find a way to give our  
9 students a fair chance - - . Closing schools is  
10 not a solution.

11 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir. So that is  
12 the end of our speaker signup list members and  
13 the Deputy Chancellor Sternberg to respond to  
14 the questions that were posed.

15 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR STERNBERG: Okay, thank  
16 you, Jenny. No formal questions submitted - -  
17 of course, we encourage you all to do that. And  
18 specifically appear on--by email or by  
19 voicemail. I did hear a number of questions  
20 that I'll respond to very quickly and then - -  
21 the meeting can adjourn.

22 There were a series of questions one from  
23 the - - leader, sorry for the - - , which will  
24 be indicated here in our - -. - - was repeated  
25 by a few others, they were highly - - statement

1 acknowledge sincere - - data that we've  
2 received in the last several years. That is in  
3 family and sort of cross the - - acknowledge  
4 some strengths. And the specific questions what  
5 what's going to change between - - decision, the  
6 decision not to - - the school - - and the  
7 decision to in fact close the school and was a  
8 basic as - - .

9 And actually, I remember a conversation at  
10 the original meeting was one of the teachers at  
11 the school I think she started to receive  
12 initiatives. Talked about being happy, I think  
13 that phrase was happy house, reference to a  
14 commercial - - a certain popular commercial as  
15 part of the name, and the teachers weren't  
16 happy. And my response to that question, - -  
17 we're going to ask sort of leaders are going to  
18 do that sort of thing, probably we should do  
19 that.

20 - - my answer to that certain question - -  
21 to this question. It is not enough to be happy,  
22 I'm not interested in guaranteeing happy  
23 teachers. I'm interested in student teaching,  
24 I'm interested in advancing and progressing  
25 students through innovation and to have equal -

1 - experience. And that often involves having  
2 a passionate community team of teachers but it  
3 is not supposed to have minimized - - on team of  
4 teachers if you're good at - - get it going and  
5 pass it down - - .

6 And what we have seen in this school,  
7 despite how - - a big deal. How adults - - big  
8 deal, we have seen it happen underperformance.  
9 And I mentioned some of the data - - you find  
10 most, you found them - - . The graduation rates  
11 in the low 50s, high 40s, well above same - -  
12 average. The - - the - - these issues. So, it  
13 is how that--

14 These problems cannot be referenced without  
15 serious conventions, the exposure to closing the  
16 school will offer a new structure - - .

17 We've also listed several people that the  
18 school service - - student population, and we  
19 know it. - - for the Bronx, I understand that,  
20 I understand that the job means how schools and  
21 are each going to be - - . But I want to  
22 clarify the greatest schools - - for as far as  
23 they're - - accounts for the difficult student  
24 population that the school serves. In fact,  
25 encourages that performance against a peer

1 group. 39 middle students across the city, so  
2 the Bronx - - Campus and citywide, 39 other  
3 schools that serve very similar populations.  
4 Some of those schools serve higher percentage of  
5 students learning English as a second language,  
6 some of them serve fewer students who are self-  
7 contained - - students. But overall, a  
8 population that is very similar to the one that  
9 this school has served.

10 And what we know as a result of the rate of  
11 students to seek, we know that other schools  
12 receive the same supports, receive the same  
13 funding, are producing dramatic - - . It means  
14 that analysis then leads us to the conclusion  
15 that the kind of provision that is required here  
16 is the one - - that - - impact statements - - .  
17 I will bear with me for a second--I'm sorry.

18 Two other - -, comments made about phasing  
19 out and the impact that would have to students -  
20 - the phase out. I want to clarify that  
21 students currently enrolled at Fordham  
22 Leadership will be guaranteed to seek at which  
23 school they will have an opportunity to select  
24 another school - - enrolment protocols. In - -  
25 state middle school, they're guaranteed - -

1 middle school and those for 100 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and  
2 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. - - who is not a successful  
3 graduate - - this year also - - students who  
4 apply to the school to be encouraged to - - and  
5 they will be notified of their status - - in the  
6 new school with opportunities to seek alternate  
7 places in - - . This is not a phase out  
8 scenario and I wanted to make that clear.

9 Finally, I wanted to address some of the  
10 questions around how staff will be selected for  
11 the new school. This process is governed by the  
12 provision - - and the department's - - for you,  
13 that articulates a process for identification  
14 and selection of staff in a new school placing a  
15 school that is closed - - criteria would be - -  
16 that will be informed decisions, those criteria  
17 are developed by - - and in consultation with  
18 the school community.

19 A personnel committee is brought together,  
20 that personnel committee includes five - - ,  
21 propose the leader of the school, two committee  
22 members appointed by the chancellor and two  
23 committee members appointed by - - president.  
24 Those five people individual being interviewed,  
25 anyone interested and we're turning--and in

1 working at the new school from the old school.  
2 Anyone who applies from the school that is  
3 closing will be considered and will be offered  
4 an interview. Article 18D of the contract  
5 articulates that a minimum of 50% of qualified  
6 staff as determined by the committee according  
7 to the criteria developed here at the school for  
8 the new school will be hired back.

9 Our - - what we have said, the department  
10 has said, the - - the chancellor has said is  
11 that - - likely to propose the leaders because  
12 they are to bring back or they are to develop,  
13 put together the strongest and best faculty that  
14 they can. And that they should in every  
15 consideration, every advocate from the school  
16 that is closing. Even if they are to receive  
17 the minimum 50%, our priority here is to work  
18 close to leaders, put together the strongest  
19 faculty possible. Jenny.

20 MS. SOBELMAN: Great. Excuse me. So, I  
21 just wanted to thank everyone for joining us  
22 this evening and remind you again on behalf of  
23 the hearing for the panel for education policy  
24 taking place on April 26<sup>th</sup> and if you have  
25 additional comments or questions that come up

1 between now and the hearing, please do utilize  
2 the email which I'll share again. It's  
3 d10proposals@schools.nyc.gov and the phone  
4 number is (212)374-5159. And all the comments  
5 from this evening and from the email and phone  
6 calls included and the announcements and public  
7 comments which will be published online and  
8 emailed to the panel members. And thank you  
9 again for coming and the joint public hearing is  
10 officially adjourned.

11 [END 290191.MP3]

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability.

Signature *Carille Clarke*

Date April 4, 2012