



**Dennis M. Walcott**  
*Chancellor*

### **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: December 13, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of P.S. 5 Port Morris (07X005)

Date of Panel Vote: December 14, 2011

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### **Summary of Proposal**

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to expand P.S. 5 Port Morris (07X005, “P.S. 5”) to serve students in kindergarten through eighth grades by 2014-2015. P.S. 5 is located in building X005 at 564 Jackson Avenue, Bronx, New York 10455, in Community School District 7 (“District 7”). P.S. 5 is an existing zoned elementary school, and it serves approximately 530 students, including 494 students in kindergarten through fifth grades and 36 students in its pre-kindergarten program. This proposal is not anticipated to impact P.S. 5’s pre-kindergarten program.

If this proposal is approved by the Panel for Educational Policy, P.S. 5 will begin to serve students in sixth grade in 2012-2013. P.S. 5 will add one grade level each year over a three-year period until it reaches its full grade-span of kindergarten through eighth grades in 2014-2015.

If approved, students will apply to attend middle school at P.S. 5 through the Middle School Choice Process. Students enrolled at P.S. 5 will have admissions priority if they wish to remain for sixth grade. Other eligible fifth graders in District 7 will have the opportunity to apply to attend middle school at P.S. 5 should additional seats remain available.

The proposal to expand P.S. 5 was initiated by the school community. In March 2011, the principal of P.S. 5 submitted a letter of intent to apply for a grade expansion, and in July 2011, a team composed of teachers and administrators submitted a formal application to the DOE. That application was supported by parents and the broader school community. This suggests a high level of satisfaction within the school and its parent body, and the expectation that an expanded P.S. 5 will suit the needs of the children in District 7. In September 2011, DOE officials visited P.S. 5 and conducted interviews with the applicant team, concluding that the school is well-positioned to successfully begin a grade expansion.

The DOE believes that the grade expansion of P.S. 5 will increase access to high-quality middle school seats in District 7. Such an expansion will build upon the growing success of P.S. 5, which has demonstrated a strong record of improving student performance in the district. In 2010-2011, for

example, P.S. 5 ranked in the 71<sup>st</sup> percentile and 64<sup>th</sup> percentile amongst elementary schools in District 7 in terms of the number of students scoring at Levels 3 or 4 on State English Language Arts (“ELA”) and Mathematics tests, respectively. In addition, on the 2010-2011 Learning Environment Survey, the school ranked in the 74<sup>th</sup> percentile Citywide in parent satisfaction, indicating a high level of parent satisfaction with the school.

Under this proposal, P.S. 5 will continue to offer a pre-kindergarten program, subject to continued funding and demand. Additionally, P.S. 5 will continue to serve elementary school students residing in its zone.

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

A Joint Public Hearing regarding this proposal was held at building X005 on December 5, 2011. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately four members of the public attended the hearing; none of these four spoke. Also present at the meeting were: Yolanda Torres, District 7 Community Superintendent; Tanya Jones, First Vice-President of District 7 Community Education Council; Mary Padilla, Principal of P.S. 5; P.S. 5 School Leadership Team representatives Roselyn Leuzzi, Carol Clarke, Efigenia Cedeño, Theresa Medina, and Blanca Delgado; Network Leader Margaret Struk; and Amanda Cahn and Stephanie Crane from the Division of Portfolio Planning.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing:

1. Mary Padilla, Principal of P.S. 5, expressed her support for the proposal and excitement about the opportunity to provide a seamless K-8 education to District 7 children. She stated that the school’s decision to apply for a grade expansion came as a result of parent demand. Several P.S. 5 parents had expressed their wish to keep their children in the school for middle school because they felt their children were in a safe and rigorous learning environment.

### **Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE**

The DOE received no written or oral comments through the dedicated phone line and Web site for this proposal.

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

Comment 1 is in favor of the proposal and does not require a response.

### **Changes Made to the Proposal**

No changes have been made to this proposal.