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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING
2 (?) New District Schools at
Clinton (TER) - 2/21/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. ELAINE GORMAN: Security will walk
3 around to make sure that you find a seat
4 comfortably. Please, those of you on the right
5 hand side of the stage, standing in the aisles,
6 please take a seat so we can begin. We're
7 asking everyone to please take a seat so we can
8 begin. Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. My
9 name is Elaine Gorman and I'm acting as the
10 facilitator for this joint public hearing. This
11 joint public hearing of the Department of
12 Education, the Community Education Counsel and
13 the school leadership team is to discuss the
14 proposed opening and co-location of two high
15 schools, 10X351 and 10X353 with existing schools
16 Hewitt Clinton High School 10X440 and P168 at
17 10NX440 as well as 75X168 and Building X440,
18 beginning September, 2013/2014. Tonight's
19 proceedings will be recorded and transcribed.
20 We ask that anybody who wishes to speak during
21 public comment portion of the evening sign up at
22 the table at the back of the auditorium. Signup
23 will end promptly at 6:15. Only people who have
24 signed up to speak will be able to participate
25 in the public comment. We will give those

1 coming in just a second to sit down. Please do
2 so quickly. The panel participants will speak
3 first. Those who come in late will be given a
4 chance to speak at the first opportune moment.
5 There are elected officials now and there may be
6 some who arrive at different times. If they
7 wish to speak, we will do our best to
8 accommodate them as early as possible. I'm
9 going to ask the audience to please settle down.
10 It is very noisy and it will be hard for people
11 to hear the proposal, as well as to hear the
12 public comment. Thank you very much. We want
13 to give everybody a voice. We want every voice
14 to be heard and I appreciate you settling down
15 to do so. As you see, we have a full agenda
16 that's described on the poster outside. The
17 format for tonight's hearing will include a
18 presentation of the proposal and presentation by
19 the dais, those—they're hearing participants,
20 followed by public comment. Speakers should
21 have already signed up to speak, at the table in
22 the lobby. Public comment is limited to two
23 minutes a speaker. The time will be strictly
24 followed and speakers will be - -when their
25 designated time has ended. You also will have a

1 30 second notice so that you have an
2 opportunity to finish your thought. At the end
3 of the hearing, you still have an opportunity to
4 give public comment. We encourage you to direct
5 that comment to us by calling the following
6 phone number, (212)374-5159 or to send your
7 comment versus email to D, the number
8 10proposals@schools.nyc.gov. I'll give that
9 again to at the end, so you have it. I would
10 now—I'm now going to take a seat to introduce
11 the panel and give them an opportunity to speak.
12 I want to remind you that the speakers' list
13 will close in about three minutes. I'm not—you
14 can hear me now, right? You can still hear me?
15 I'm going to pass the mike down so people can
16 introduce themselves. They will—we will—they
17 will not be speaking quite at this time. We'll
18 pass the mike down again for them to get a—this
19 is just for introductions.

20 MS. ELAINE LINDSEY: Elaine Lindsey, high
21 school superintendent.

22 MR. MARVIN SHELTON: Marvin Shelton,
23 president of Community District Education
24 Counsel number 10.

25 MS. GERALDINE AMBROSIO: Geraldine Ambrosio,

1 principal, David Clinton High School.

2 MS. ISAURA VALENTIN: Isaura Valentin, PA
3 president representing and SLT representative.

4 MR. DAVID THOMAS: David Thomas, student
5 representative.

6 MS. GORMAN: We also have from the SLT our
7 UFT chapter representative, Allan Ettman. We
8 are also pleased that we have elected officials
9 here tonight. The individuals I've seen so far
10 are Assembly Member Jeffery Dinowitz and a
11 representative from Jeff Klein's office, Mike
12 Grubiak. I probably have not pronounced that
13 correctly. We are also expecting council member
14 Oliver Koppell and when he arrives, we will
15 introduce him as well. If other electeds come,
16 we will allow them to speak at the first
17 opportune moment. I will now turn the program
18 over to Superintendent Elaine Lindsey, who is
19 the chancellor's designee for this public
20 hearing, who will present the proposal to you.

21 MS. LINDSEY: Thank you, Elaine. Good
22 evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for
23 being here this evening. I am Superintendent
24 Elaine Lindsey. This joint public hearing was
25 convened to discuss the proposed co-location of

1 two new high schools, 10X351 and 10X353, with
2 existing school Dewitt Clinton High School and a
3 District 75 inclusion program, P168X at X440.
4 For the purposes of this hearing, I will refer
5 to Dewitt Clinton High School as Clinton. I
6 will refer to the District 75 program as P168X.
7 Students in P168X at X440 program take general
8 education classes at Clinton. After considering
9 feedback from the school's administration, the
10 DOE is planning to reduce enrollment at Clinton
11 over a four year period by reducing the number
12 of programs offered by the school. The
13 enrollment reduction is intended to provide an
14 opportunity for Clinton to improve by narrowing
15 its focus to fewer academic programs and a
16 smaller number of students. The enrollment
17 reduction is not subject to PEP approval and
18 will be implemented regardless of whether the
19 PEP approves the co-location of 10X351 and
20 10X353. The enrollment reduction at Clinton
21 will create sufficient space for 10X351 and
22 10X353 to open in Building X440. As I mentioned
23 earlier, tonight we will be discussing the
24 proposed co-location of 10X351 and 10X353 with
25 Clinton and P168X. Clinton and P168X are

1 located in the school building, X440, which is
2 located at 100 West Motilue [phonetic] Parkway
3 South, Bronx, New York, 10468. Clinton is a
4 district high school, currently serving students
5 in grades 9 through 12 and admits students
6 through the city wide high school admissions
7 process. Clinton currently admits students to
8 six programs, Macy's Honors Gifted program in
9 the sciences and humanities, health professions,
10 public and community service, animal
11 professions, future teachers and business
12 enterprise which is a career and technical
13 education; or CTE program in the information
14 technology career cluster. On January 18, 2013
15 the New York City Department of Education
16 published an educational impact statement or
17 EIS, describing a proposal to cite two new
18 district high schools 10X351 and 10X353 in the
19 X440 building. On February 20, 2013, the DOE
20 issued an amended EIS which provided updated
21 information on the planned enrollment reduction
22 at Clinton, but does not substantially revise
23 the proposal. The enrollment reduction at
24 Clinton will result in the gradual elimination
25 of three existing programs, animal professions,

1 public and community service, and future
2 teachers. These three programs will no longer
3 admit new ninth grade students, beginning in the
4 2013/2014 school year. The three other existing
5 programs at Clinton will continue to admit ninth
6 graders. Clinton's performance data indicates
7 the school has struggled and confirms the DOE's
8 assessment that at its current size, the school
9 lacks the capacity to improve and support
10 student needs. For example, Clinton earned F
11 grades on its 2011/2012 and 2010/2011 annual
12 progress reports. In 2011/2012, although
13 Clinton earned a B grade for college and career
14 readiness, the school earned F grades for
15 student progress, student performance and school
16 environment. Clinton's four year graduation
17 rate was 50% in 2012, well below the most recent
18 city wide average of 65.5%. Clinton was also
19 identified by the New York State Education
20 Department as a priority school, one of the
21 bottom 5% of schools in the state. Given the
22 school's continued decline in performance, the
23 DOE believes that the enrollment reduction will
24 provide Clinton with the opportunity to narrow
25 its focus on both a fewer number of programs and

1 a fewer number of students. The proposed
2 siting will not affect the ability of students
3 in P168X to continue taking classes at Clinton.
4 The DOE has proposed to open and co-locate two
5 new district high schools in the X440 building,
6 beginning in September 2013. If approved, the
7 new district high schools would offer rigorous
8 academic programs that would prepare students
9 for postsecondary education and work. The
10 schools will use limited unscreened admissions
11 methods, with priority given to Bronx residents
12 and students. Before we move to the public
13 comments section of this meeting, I would like
14 to briefly discuss the impact of the proposed
15 siting on current Clinton students and families.
16 If the co-location is approved, all current
17 students may remain at Clinton, and the school
18 will continue offering all necessary classes to
19 support current students as they work to meet
20 graduation requirements and earn their high
21 school diplomas. To separate plan—the separate
22 plan to reduce the enrollment at Clinton will
23 impact the number of seats and the program
24 options for future ninth graders—ninth grade
25 students applying to Clinton. Future ninth

1 grade students who may have otherwise attended
2 the programs that will no longer be offered at
3 Clinton will have opportunity to apply to a
4 different program or high school during the
5 round two of the high school admissions process
6 in March. I want to thank you, and we look
7 forward to hearing your comments and questions.

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. I do want
9 to acknowledge that we have a representative of
10 the citywide counsel on high schools here and
11 she has given her time to one of the student
12 members of the SLT, who will introduce himself
13 when it's time for him to speak. I also want to
14 acknowledge that we have the cluster leader
15 here, and the network leader, and the deputy
16 cluster leader, who support the schools and we
17 thank them for attending as well. At this time,
18 I would like to pass the mike to your CEC
19 president, who has a few words to make. And he
20 will pass the mike subsequently down the dais
21 for those who choose to speak. This will be
22 followed by elected officials who want to speak
23 prior to the public comment. We also have one
24 SLT member not sitting on the dais who will
25 speak right after the dais does.

1 MR. SHELTON: Thank you very much. As
2 regards to the amended educational impact
3 statement regarding the proposed opening
4 statement and co-location of new high schools
5 10X351 and 10X353, with existing school Dewitt
6 Clinton and PXP168X, as president of the
7 Community Education Counsel and in consultation
8 with the Citywide Counsel for High Schools, I
9 oppose this proposal. It does nothing to
10 improve Dewitt Clinton. The reduction and
11 enrollment of over 40% is not a reduction. It's
12 an evisceration of the school. When we were
13 here at early engagement, there was a long list
14 of academic programs, AP courses, electives that
15 are not going to be around if the school shrinks
16 to the proposed size of 2,250. It's just an
17 opportunity for the DOE to put two new high
18 schools in here that have no name, no
19 leadership. There's no description in the
20 impact statement describing what these high
21 schools are going to look like. Not only that,
22 unless it's proposed and approved, the students
23 that are going to be enrolled for ninth grade
24 for next year are going to be coming out of the
25 second round, which means that this is not going

1 to be their first choice to come up to do at
2 Clinton campus. So you're going to have the
3 same situation where you're going to get a ton
4 of over the counter students populating the
5 building, dragging numbers down. And then
6 you're going to have two other institutions in
7 this building already. It's not going to work.
8 At least in the impact statement last month—and
9 I've been at Grace Dodge for the last three
10 years. You know the story. First they're going
11 to shrink it. Then they're going to kill it.
12 At least in their impact statement when they
13 were planning on putting in a replacement career
14 technical, a CTE class, they gave it a cluster
15 and they described exactly what kind of programs
16 they're going to be offering, like robotics and
17 engineering and computer programming. There's
18 nothing like that in this document. I don't
19 know how the Panel for Educational Policy can
20 vote to approve two new schools when you don't
21 even know what they're supposed to be about. So
22 I'm going to recommend that the panel members
23 vote no. We got the high schools and if there's
24 anything else, fill it out and send it in
25 because this is just not going to work. Thank

1 you.

2 MR. AMBROSIO: Okay. Good evening. Thank
3 you to the dais for having this meeting tonight,
4 and also to the members of the audience who
5 constantly support the good work that we do here
6 at Dewitt Clinton High School. We have several
7 initiatives in place aimed at improving our
8 credit accumulation, graduation rates and
9 attendance. We have the Governor's - - program
10 which supports our ninth graders. We have the
11 Achieve Now Academy which supports credit
12 accumulation for over age and under accredited
13 students. We have a Graduation Now academy
14 assisting students who failed to graduate with
15 their cohort. This time we instituted an
16 individualized graduation plan to improve our
17 graduation rate. We have tutoring. We have
18 clubs. We have so many activities for kids.
19 Kids come here. They love the school. We work
20 well with the students. In attendance we've
21 reorganized the attendance office, knowing that
22 if we can get the kids in to school, we know we
23 have a shot at doing great work with our kids.
24 We have constant support from our parent
25 involvement and engagement. They continue to

1 support outreach to parents, monthly meetings
2 focused on initiatives requested by parents, in
3 addition to the activities sponsored by the
4 Parents' Association as classes, ESL classes,
5 GED classes, computer classes. This year
6 they're running too fast for workshops to assist
7 parents with the hard work of getting their
8 students into college. They have planned two
9 college trips for parents and students to see
10 colleges in other places of the country, on the
11 Eastern Seaboard. Okay. Our outside
12 organizations have—we have many dedicated
13 outside organizations in our building, Good
14 Shepherd, Bronx London, Montpelier school based
15 health clinic, Lehman College, and our sports and
16 arts program. Our alumni—over the years,
17 members of our alumni association have always
18 been there for Clinton. They have provided
19 support to our team's activities and the
20 initiatives for college. As you can see, Dewitt
21 Clinton is more than a school. We are a
22 community that provides essential services to
23 our students. The doors at Dewitt Clinton High
24 School are always opened to students, regardless
25 of their needs. While we realize the enormity

1 of challenges we face, we are proud of not
2 giving up on our students and keeping our
3 optimism alive. This meeting tonight is about
4 the proposed co-location of two new schools at
5 Clinton. I ask you to reconsider. The timing
6 for the addition of two new schools this
7 September might make the job for a new principal
8 more difficult. Please consider giving the new
9 principal time to get started and fulfill his or
10 her mission, without the addition of two
11 additional high schools in the building. Thank
12 you.

13 MS. VALENTIN: Would - - do you hear them
14 before me, I'm supporting. As the SLT I know
15 what hard these group work month by month, and I
16 want their support. I know that we need more
17 parent to support our student. I'm proud of the
18 school. I'm really a proud grandmother that my
19 grandson graduate last year and he's right now
20 trying to reach me after 10:00 because he want
21 to know about this meeting. He's right now at -
22 - University and he graduate last year and he
23 was the second grade-best grade at the school.
24 I know that Tory Vasquez is trying to hear about
25 this and I know if I call him right now, he's

1 going to speak. I'm a little bit nervous, but
2 our work is done. We got the decision as SLT do
3 it. Just give us time to do it. I'm against
4 the proposal. I'm sorry, but something that is
5 not going to work. The parent is not going to
6 agree to do that at our school. I know, too
7 that we got a good support from the alumni a
8 person, and we got over here a great leader,
9 future leader that we gave the opportunity as an
10 SLT work with us. David, it's your turn.

11 MR. THOMAS: Good evening. For those who
12 don't know me, my name is David. I am a student
13 obviously in the school. And one thing I have
14 noticed as a student, for those of us who don't
15 have the best grades, we are involved in other
16 activities, such as sports teams, such as clubs.
17 And without those clubs, we would not be able to
18 write on our college essays what competition we
19 have gone through in this high school. Or we
20 would not be able to get through high school at
21 all. And yet, one thing I can't really
22 understand is if you're going to close like half
23 the building, or at least a portion of it and
24 reduce what we have, how will we success? How
25 will we keep moving on, to keep going, to at

1 least get something in our lives to write down
2 a college essay, "I have done this. I have done
3 that," without saying, "My grades are just good.
4 My grades are what keeps me here, keeps me going
5 and keeps me moving up." We need more
6 activities. We need to keep this school alive
7 because without all we have, we're just simply
8 writing a paper. We're just simply moving
9 forward without any conscious of what we're
10 capable of doing, what other leaderships, what
11 other academics, what other potentials we have
12 that we have not yet reached.

13 MS. GORMAN: We have Monica Majors, who has
14 arrived, and we thank her for attending. At
15 this time, Allan Ettman, who sits on the SLT as
16 the UFT chapter leader, and he will speak from
17 the floor.

18 MR. ALLAN ETTMAN: Thank you. I'm Allan
19 Ettman. I'm an English teacher here and the UFT
20 chapter leader at Dewitt Clinton. I'm speaking
21 tonight to implore you to let Clinton remain a
22 large, comprehensive high school. With the
23 downsizing of Clinton and the presumed closing
24 of Lehman High School, there will be no more
25 large high schools left in the Bronx. In a city

1 where the mayor has bleated about choice for
2 more than a decade, it is the height of
3 hypocrisy to eliminate the one choice that has
4 successfully educated millions of New York City
5 kids over the years. Large comprehensive high
6 schools offer a choice of curriculum, a choice
7 of programs, a choice of teams, a choice of
8 services that no small school or campus of small
9 schools can replicate. The campus model has
10 clearly not worked. It is considerably more
11 expensive to have multiple schools with multiple
12 principals operate a building that serves the
13 same number of kids as the large school, but
14 does not offer a full range of classes and
15 options for all of the students in that
16 building. It defies logic to even suggest it.
17 Clearly there are problems here at Clinton,
18 many, but not all of these problems are not a
19 result of DOE policies and statistical metrics.
20 But problems can get fixed when there is
21 support, effort and a real desire to fix them.
22 Schools do not fail. It's policies that fail.
23 It should be clear to everyone that after more
24 than a decade of total mayoral control, with the
25 list of schools facing closure or downsizing

1 getting larger every year, it is the DOE that
2 is failing, not the school, not the teachers and
3 not the kids. Clinton was considered one of the
4 top public high schools in the country, fewer
5 than 15 years ago. It is since the Bloomberg,
6 Klein, Black, Walcott era that the school has
7 suffered. Yet most of the faculty members here
8 know that everything can turn around. In fact,
9 a group of us wrote a plan, outlining some of
10 the things we would like to see happen at
11 Clinton if we had a voice in how the school
12 could run from this point forward. However, we
13 haven't been able to present it to anyone. You
14 see, the school, like all schools, have to pay a
15 network to provide professional development,
16 administrative assistance and whatever else
17 these network system is supposed to provide.
18 But no faculty member at Clinton has met anyone
19 from the network. We have had no help. We have
20 had no input. We have had no advice. We have
21 had no assistance. In fact, in each of the past
22 two years, more than a million dollars has been
23 taken from this school. So as our problems
24 mount, our resources diminish. The network, for
25 all intents and purposes, does not exist except

1 as another mechanism for bleeding the school
2 of much needed resources. I would like to
3 present this plan to somebody tonight if they
4 want it because people had no choice but to show
5 up tonight. The faculty here is not complacent
6 and has not resigned to let the school fade
7 away. The fight to keep Clinton a viable,
8 intact, large comprehensive high school will and
9 must continue. Our students deserve it. They
10 should not be deprived of a quality education.
11 The staff deserves it. They should not be
12 deprived of a fulfilling, productive career.
13 And most of all society in general deserves a
14 high quality, public school system that's free
15 of profiteers, privatizers and political
16 manipulation. Thank you.

17 MS. GORMAN: Allan, we're more than happy to
18 take the proposal—Allan, we're more than happy
19 to accept the proposal and submit it as part of
20 the public record. We have now concluded the
21 formal presentations. What I would like to do
22 at this time is call forward Michael Grubiak,
23 who is representing Senator Jeffery Klein.

24 MR. MIKE GRUBIAK: And thanks, Elaine. Good
25 evening everyone. My name is Mike Grubiak. I'm

1 representing State Senator Jeff Klein tonight.
2 This testimony that I'm going to read was also
3 mailed to the chancellor as well today. I'm
4 testifying on behalf of my constituents who
5 attend the Dewitt Clinton High School, located
6 in School District 10 in the Bronx. As you
7 know, Dewitt Clinton is threatened with two co-
8 locations after receiving a grade of F for the
9 second consecutive year. Founded in 1897,
10 Dewitt Clinton serves almost 3,600 students
11 throughout the city. Its immense size, coupled
12 with a diverse student body and unique standing
13 as one of the few remaining comprehensive high
14 schools in the city, has placed the school under
15 extreme scrutiny by the Department of Education.
16 The Department of Education cites poor
17 graduation rates, low attendance rates, below
18 average region scores and low credit
19 accumulation for two consecutive failing grades.
20 After speaking with the administration, parents,
21 students and members of the Dewitt Clinton
22 school community, I believe that over the past
23 five or six years, the Department of Education
24 has not invested in the necessary supports that
25 would allow Dewitt Clinton to flourish, as it

1 had for over a hundred years prior. Most of
2 the below average statistics do not account for
3 the size of Dewitt Clinton and the large amount
4 of at risk students. 13% of students receive
5 special education services, while 19% of
6 students are English language learners. Of the
7 950 in the current freshman class, more than 100
8 were considered long term absentees in 8th
9 grade, and more than 100 failed a majority of
10 their 8th grade classes. This means over 1,400
11 students, nearly 30% of the entire student body,
12 need extra support in order to succeed. Instead
13 of providing that necessary support, the high
14 school currently has a spending rate of \$15,000
15 per student, due to budget constraints, far
16 lower than the city wide average of nearly
17 \$18,400 per student. The administration's
18 proposal submitted tonight will rework
19 programming and course offerings to target
20 freshman, honor students, special education
21 students and English language learners to help
22 our most vulnerable students excel. This is the
23 proposal that the school administration is
24 proposing. Student activities, such as peer
25 mediation and a peer tutoring program are

1 already in the process of being created.
2 Communication between staff and students will
3 also be revamped, to include targeted assemblies
4 to help create a closer community environment.
5 Instead of addressing the situation by phasing
6 out traditional schools and condemning the
7 remaining students to a sub par education, the
8 Department should stop kicking the can down the
9 road and finally address the need for additional
10 resources for our struggling schools. Tonight's
11 hearing is an opportunity to finally listen and
12 take the considerations and proposals of
13 students, parents and school administration
14 seriously. Now is the time to provide support,
15 not take it away. So please help us make Dewitt
16 Clinton as good as it was before. Thank you.

17 MS. GORMAN: At this time, I would like to
18 call forward assembly member Jeffrey Dinowitz.
19 Please thank Mr. Klein on our behalf.

20 MR. JEFFREY DINOWITZ: Good evening
21 everybody. My name is Assemblyman Jeffery
22 Dinowitz, and I represent this neighborhood. I
23 should start by saying that I oppose this plan.
24 And I really don't like it when the DOE comes
25 into a community, helps create a problem and

1 then wants to eliminate a school, such as
2 Dewitt Clinton. Now I have to admit I'm partial
3 to Clinton. My father, many years ago,
4 graduated from Dewitt Clinton, as did one of my
5 brothers. You know, Clinton is an institution
6 with a great reputation. And as far as I
7 remember, it wasn't so many years ago that
8 things were going really great at Dewitt
9 Clinton, probably in the late '90s, before this
10 administration took over. In fact, there was—
11 what was going on at Clinton was really the talk
12 of the town. It had a reputation that—a
13 positive reputation that extended well beyond
14 the Bronx, well beyond New York City. So what
15 happened since then? Well let's think. We had
16 a new administration that came in, in 2002 and
17 they created the Department of Education. That
18 is what changed. And ever since the Department
19 of Education took over, one school after another
20 has been deemed a failing school. Now this
21 administration and the DOE is addicted to
22 restructuring. They restructured the school
23 boards. They got rid of 32 school boards. They
24 created regional whatever they called it. Then
25 they created county wide boards and they went

1 back and forth because nothing worked, because
2 all they were doing was shifting things around
3 in terms of the structure. And they're doing
4 the same thing with the large high schools. I'm
5 not saying we should not have small high
6 schools. There's a place and there's room for
7 both small and large high schools in this city.
8 But you know, when you take a big school that
9 provides a lot of programs and then you destroy
10 it, which is what this is the first step towards
11 doing, and you create, say, eight little schools
12 with eight little principals running around
13 getting eight salaries, that doesn't necessarily
14 improve education in the building. In fact, I'm
15 trying to envision how these small schools can
16 provide, I don't know, eight P classes, sports
17 teams and have enough kids to do all of the
18 things you need to do. This restructuring, this
19 corporate mentality, maybe that works in another
20 world, but it doesn't work in schools. Schools
21 are not corporations. Schools are not
22 businesses. Now I don't want to use the wrong
23 language, but from my perspective what the DOE
24 has done in recent years amounts to a reign of
25 terror on the large high schools. What they've

1 done, and this is a deliberate plan in my
2 opinion, they've shifted students around. They
3 have, in one school after another, they've
4 deliberately created greater problems so they
5 can say the school is failing, so they can close
6 down the school and they can create little
7 schools. That's exactly what happened to
8 Christopher Columbus High School. Now some of
9 these small schools do really well, you know.
10 You create eight schools. You call them
11 academies and it sounds really nice, like a
12 private school or something, maybe throw a few
13 charter schools into the building, because
14 that's what they want to do in as many places as
15 possible. That's what they did at Kennedy, for
16 example. But that doesn't necessarily improve
17 education. Clinton is one of the few large
18 schools left, and there has to be a place for
19 that. You know, the school report cards, that
20 whole process took millions, in fact, tens of
21 millions of dollars to create. Some company in,
22 I think, in Great Britain had the contract, the
23 no bid contract to create these school report
24 cards. The school report cards are not
25 necessarily objective ways of determining

1 whether a school is doing well. Sometimes the
2 report cards are right on the money. Sometimes
3 they're not. But what they are is a way to give
4 justification to destroying some of the large
5 schools so they can do what they want to do,
6 which is to have all of these little schools
7 with the little principals. So—and the other
8 issue of co-location, we've heard a lot of talk
9 about that around the city. I know that in some
10 of the schools, perhaps the many, many
11 principals in the school getting those many,
12 many salaries can all work together but I don't
13 know that that's a wise corporate structure, to
14 have eight people in charge or ten people in
15 charge of the building. And some buildings,
16 maybe there should be one person in charge, one
17 person that's held responsible, one person that
18 has to get things done and that's what should
19 happen here at Clinton. And I would just close
20 by saying many people are working hard to keep
21 Dewitt Clinton, Dewitt Clinton. We need to give
22 the work that they're doing a chance before we
23 just willy nilly shut down the school because
24 some bureaucrat downtown thinks that that's what
25 should happen. Give Dewitt Clinton a chance.

1 Instead of fighting the school, instead of
2 trying to destroy the school, what the DOE
3 should be doing is trying to make the school a
4 success. So I know there are a lot of speakers,
5 so I'm going to leave it at that. I know a lot
6 of speakers are going to talk about these
7 issues. Give Clinton a chance. Thank you.

8 MS. GORMAN: Assembly member, thank you very
9 much. I noticed that we had Council Member
10 Koppell walk in, if you would like to speak
11 next.

12 MR. OLIVER KOPPELL: Good evening ladies and
13 gentlemen, and all who are here in attendance.
14 I'm City Council Member Oliver Koppell and I'm
15 pleased to be here tonight because this is a
16 very important school in my district. A few
17 months ago we were at a similar meeting, also
18 with a very good crowd, at which the closing of
19 Dewitt Clinton High School was under
20 consideration. And I spoke very strongly
21 against that, believing that Clinton has a
22 wonderful past and can indeed have a bright
23 future, and that we need comprehensive large
24 high schools as part of what we offer students
25 in the City of New York. And I was initially

1 very pleased, after that hearing, at all of
2 the outpouring from students, from current
3 staff, from alumni and others that the DOE, the
4 Department of Education announced that Clinton
5 would not be closed. I thought that was a great
6 victory. Unfortunately, it looks like we're
7 going to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory,
8 and that's a very sad thing because my
9 observation has been when you start introducing
10 small schools into a large, comprehensive
11 school, in the end, the large comprehensive
12 school does not survive. This is what happened
13 at Walton, down the street. This is what
14 happened at Kennedy, not too far from here. And
15 now there's a Walton campus, but there's no
16 Walton High School. There's a Kennedy campus,
17 but there will be no more Kennedy High School.
18 And if this plan is allowed to go into effect, I
19 fear that within a very few years there will be
20 no more Dewitt Clinton High School. That should
21 not be permitted to happen. One of the problems
22 is that sometimes the small schools attract the
23 more motivated students. And then the large
24 comprehensive school attracts those students who
25 need help and we should give them help. But a

1 school full of students who need help is not a
2 school that is likely to succeed. And that's
3 what's happened at too many places, at Walton,
4 at Kennedy, at Columbus, at Lehman. We should
5 not let that happen. What will happen is that
6 the small schools will skim off some of the more
7 motivated students and what will be left will be
8 the students who need the most help. Part of
9 the reason why Clinton has been in such
10 difficulty is that that's what's happened
11 already here. You heard the statistics, Senator
12 Klein's representative, about how many needy
13 students have come to Clinton. It's no wonder
14 that the numbers just aren't that good because
15 it's been an overwhelming number of students who
16 need help. You know, if you look back before
17 many of the people here were born or whether
18 they were young, Clinton was in big trouble.
19 But it got turned around and there's no reason
20 why it cannot be turned around again.

21 Notwithstanding, I also want to say I visit
22 Clinton on a regular basis. The principal knows
23 that. And there are many, many, many students
24 here who achieve, who are getting good
25 educations, who are going to good colleges.

1 Clinton is not a tale of failure. It's a
2 mixed tale, but it's also a tale of many, many,
3 many hundreds of successes. And we should build
4 on the successes and not focus on the failures.
5 I think we want—I went to—I actually went to
6 Clinton for one year, and I went to a
7 comprehensive high school and I think we
8 shouldn't give up on them. What we need to do
9 is focus on improving things that need
10 improvement and making sure that every student
11 who comes to Clinton gets the best education
12 that they can possibly handle, not create a
13 situation where Clinton is going to wither and
14 die. I strongly oppose putting small schools
15 into Clinton. I've opposed it for many years.
16 It was proposed seven or eight years ago. It
17 was proposed then. I opposed it then. I oppose
18 it now. I've scheduled to meet with the
19 chancellor, Dennis Walcott, to discuss these
20 concerns directly with him, because this is a
21 closing part of Clinton. Introducing diversion
22 in Clinton is not the way to go. We can make
23 Dewitt Clinton the great school that it's been
24 and can be in the future. No more schools in
25 Clinton. Let's have one comprehensive high

1 school.

2 MS. GORMAN: And our final elected speaker
3 from the borough president's office, Ms. Majors.
4 Is she here? Thank you.

5 MS. MONICA MAJOR: Well good evening. My
6 name is Monica Major. I'm the director of
7 education and youth services for Bronx Borough
8 president, Ruben Diaz Jr. We are very sad that
9 we're here tonight. We have opposed the closing
10 of Clinton and we've gotten past that. And now
11 we're at the place where we are looking at what
12 do we do next? We do believe that there is a
13 place in the borough for a large high school and
14 we believe that Clinton should be it. We are
15 also asking that you take the comments that you
16 hear here tonight, take them back to the
17 chancellor. We also will be meeting with the
18 chancellor and we will have our Panel of
19 Education policy person sitting down with the
20 borough president and the Department of
21 Education to talk about what we hear tonight.
22 We are only here to hear from the community
23 because we have not had a chance to do that. I
24 have already met with the principal of the
25 school and toured the building, so we are

1 interested in hearing what you have to say and
2 we're here just to support you. So we're hoping
3 that you also will keep your ears open and we'll
4 take that back to the chancellor, thank you.

5 MS. GORMAN: Please thank the borough
6 president on our behalf. At this time we have
7 finished all of the formal presentations and we
8 are ready to begin. Those who signed up to
9 speak, I want to tell you how this will be done.
10 We have a separate list for current students.
11 The current students will speak from the mike on
12 my left. Any other speakers will speak from the
13 mike on the right. We will go back and forth
14 between current students and the other speakers
15 list. We do have a large number of speakers and
16 we will be sticking to the two minute
17 presentations. Who is our timekeeper, please?
18 Okay. Who has the 30 second? Okay. There will
19 be a 30 second sign so you'll have an-plenty of
20 opportunity to finish what you want to say.
21 Security, it will be at the mikes for the
22 purpose of making sure that the next person gets
23 the mike after you. We want to be respectful
24 and we want everyone to have a voice. But what
25 I do want to tell you is unlike those at the

1 dais and unlike the electeds, the applause
2 time—that people at the mike now are timed and
3 the applause time takes from their time. So I
4 just want you to consider that and—because we
5 want to hear all that people have to say. At
6 this time, there is a row on each side for
7 speakers. But what I would like to do is call
8 the first five from each side to come forward.
9 The first—and I want to apologize in advance for
10 any mispronunciations. From our students we
11 have Angel, Larisa, Richard, Genesis. And then
12 we have two people as number five. It looks
13 like it's Andre and Anna. From our regular list
14 we have Norman Wexler, Stuart Olsen, Andrew
15 Cohen, Sydney Valerio. I apologize, sir. And
16 then E-L-I-U-L-A, it looks like R-A. I
17 apologize in advance again. We will start with
18 Angel and then we will be followed by Norman and
19 we will be going back and forth. You have two
20 minutes.

21 MR. ANGEL VISIOSO: Good evening everyone,
22 my name is Angel Visioso. I am a Macy honor
23 student here at Dewitt Clinton. And I would
24 like to address the fact that though you guys
25 come here trying to listen to our concerns and

1 to our problems, and you guys came here
2 earlier on in December to listen to our
3 problems. And even before that, like when you
4 guys tried to close us down many years before,
5 even before I became a student. I feel that you
6 guys aren't doing your job right now because
7 it's sort of like you guys are just sitting here
8 trying to say that, oh, there are problems.
9 Let's just look the other way and try to close
10 the school down or try to re-evaluate the
11 school. But truly, what we should be doing, and
12 us, both Clinton and the DOE, is working
13 together to build a more comprehensive Clinton
14 and to build a Clinton that you can be proud of
15 when you become, you know, to the point where,
16 you know, you're going to give out. But the
17 fact of the matter is that we need to better
18 Clinton, not close it down or re-evaluate it.
19 And if possible, re-evaluate the DOE because we
20 hear all of these things about re-evaluating the
21 schools but what are you guys doing? So in
22 closing, I would like to say that smaller
23 schools aren't the best, either. Because I,
24 from previous experience, my middle school PSM
25 75 who—which is right around here did get re-

1 evaluated and it actually became much worse
2 than it was before. There were many fights and
3 they did get technology, but however, their
4 middle school no longer have the right to go and
5 do trips. So it's pretty pathetic, the fact
6 that we have first graders in PSM 75 right now
7 who still haven't gone to the Bronx Zoo because
8 there's no funding for it and because the
9 smaller schools have basically, you know, upped
10 their technology and things like that, without
11 providing funding for the original school that
12 was there. And that is all.

13 MS. GORMAN: Thank you Angel. Mr. Wexler—
14 Dr. Wexler?

15 DR. NORMAN WEXLER: Ladies and gentlemen, my
16 name is Norman Wexler and I'm proud to be an
17 honorary alumnus of Dewitt Clinton High School.
18 We all learned in our economic classes about
19 false advertising. We were told just a few
20 short weeks ago that Clinton would remain open.
21 We now find out that there were plans all along
22 to place two new schools here in September. So
23 all of the resources that Clinton and all of the
24 students attending Clinton High School so
25 desperately need and deserve will instead be

1 expended to replace and phase out Clinton High
2 School, not improve it, not support it, not
3 strengthen it. None of these new resources will
4 positively impact on even one Dewitt Clinton
5 High School student. We all know that faculty
6 and staff members are mandated reporters. That
7 is we must by law report evidence of educational
8 neglect. We're required to call ACS when the
9 welfare of a child is at stake. But who do we
10 call when the welfare of all of the children at
11 Dewitt Clinton High School have been neglected,
12 when an entire high school is suffering from
13 educational neglect, when all of those at the
14 New York City Department of Education are
15 responsible and accountable for improving and
16 strengthening this school and have failed to
17 ensure its success. We've all heard of benign
18 neglect, a policy proposed by one of President
19 Nixon staff members in 1969 calling for the
20 abandonment of urban neighborhoods. But what
21 should we call the neglect of our high school
22 which was named one of the 96 most outstanding
23 high schools in the country just 13 years ago?
24 Who is responsible for allowing Clinton High
25 School to become overwhelmed with such a huge

1 number and percentage of students so very
2 highly at risk that its performance inevitably
3 suffered? Is it a mere coincidence that Lehman
4 High School, Kennedy and Dewitt Clinton High
5 School, three of the very strongest high schools
6 in the Bronx a decade ago, have suffered
7 egregiously while scores are very small high
8 schools were raced to completion? It's not
9 rocket science to realize that each of these
10 three schools was packed with extremely high
11 risk students who could not be accommodated in
12 these new small schools. The progress report
13 scores earned by these three schools were an
14 inevitability and absolute certainty, given the
15 actions by central board which created the
16 conditions which they've had to face. And
17 Dewitt Clinton High School is a school of
18 choice.

19 MS. GORMAN: Thank you.

20 DR. WEXLER: This is my last paragraph.
21 It's my last paragraph. Okay. It's the last
22 paragraph. We are here tonight to demand that
23 Dewitt Clinton High School remain a large, full
24 service high school, fully intact, fully
25 functioning, uniquely occupying this campus and

1 that all of the resources proposed to be
2 directed to other schools be instead committed
3 to rebuild, repair, reenergize, recommit,
4 reinvigorate, and restore Dewitt Clinton High
5 School to the greatness it knew only a few short
6 years ago. Dewitt Clinton High School, now and
7 forever.

8 MS. GORMAN: Larissa Ramos, followed by
9 Stuart Olsen. Larissa, thank you.

10 MS. LARISSA RAMOS: Hi, my name is Larissa
11 Ramos. I'm a 10th grade sophomore and I take AP
12 world history. And just today I learned that
13 Oshigawa, Japan had many leaders, damios,
14 controlling such a great land as Japan. But
15 then came Takagawa Japan and it was controlled
16 by a Shogun. Now this Shogun united Japan, made
17 it what we know as of today, Ito, the capital,
18 Tokyo, today. Now why can't we do that with
19 Clinton, copy that infrastructure, make it so
20 that there will be only one Dewitt Clinton High
21 School. Make the small learning communities a
22 household, like the dynasties in Japan. Let's
23 copy that. It's—my favorite line to say is
24 history repeats itself, even in such a small
25 scenario as Clinton. But it's—history repeats

1 itself. We have to learn from situations such
2 as that. Now there's a high school in Queens
3 called Forrest Hills. My little brother goes
4 there on weekends to play instruments. Now my
5 little sister is also applying to high schools
6 and we have looked into this wonderful,
7 magnificent high school who has had A's, I
8 believe, three years in a row. Who have not
9 small learning communities, one high school
10 which I propose for this meeting today. Why
11 can't we copy that school, become that A+ school
12 in Queens, okay, why? We could copy that
13 situation or we could learn from our mistakes
14 from our past and live on. Thank you, honorable
15 dais.

16 MS. GORMAN: Stuart Olsen followed by
17 Richard Perez, followed by Andrew Cohen. Mr.
18 Olsen, please.

19 MR. STUART OLSEN: Yes. My name is Stuart
20 Olsen. I'm the—I look around here, I'm the
21 oldest one here. I graduated—three weeks ago
22 was my 57th anniversary of my graduation. I
23 was—okay. I was number two in my class. I was
24 the Gold Board and - - Honor School Society.
25 I'm just—I gave Ms. Ambrosio last week, as a

1 member of the board, a letter to Mayor
2 Bloomberg which I wrote. I said, "I can truly
3 note that this grand 116 year institution is
4 more than a school. It's a landmark. My father
5 graduated in 1927, received scholarships. So
6 it's a continuum of greatness in this school. I
7 know because I was—I taught - - health classes
8 many years ago. All of the students passed. I
9 was a tryouts for Clinton and they all did very
10 well. I know we have great alumni that came
11 from this school, James Baldwin, Gary Marshall.
12 The first member of the Gold Board—what's his
13 name—Elias Liebman [phonetic], who is the first
14 superintendent of schools. We have a list, a
15 continuing growing of greatness. I hope Mayor
16 Bloomberg, please do not close this school or
17 break it in to small schools. Clinton—as a
18 matter of fact, when I went to Clinton High
19 School we had 3,200 students for four years and
20 we did very well. That's all. There's no need
21 to break down the schools. That's—as a member
22 of the school, I taught people there and every
23 person I taught in the French - - class, we
24 passed the regents and the tryouts, won two
25 awards, two journalism awards. We have done—I

1 know when I—50—six and a half years ago, I
2 came back. I sent this letter to Mayor
3 Bloomberg through Ms. Ambrosio and I showed a
4 list of all of the Gold Board members, going
5 back to 1900 on, thousands, ten's of thousands
6 and it wouldn't have been possible without the
7 great administrators, the great educators, the
8 great teachers I had and the continuing, so.
9 And I know, as a member of the board, that Ms.
10 Ambrosio and other members of the teachers, are
11 teaching these other students that are
12 economically disadvantaged and they're teaching
13 on their own time, and their own salary, and the
14 whole thing. And I think it should continue.
15 It's a great school. It's a landmark. It's not
16 just a run of the mill high school. It's a
17 great institution. Thank you.

18 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Richard Perez
19 followed by Andrew Cohen. Richard Perez?

20 MR. RICHARD PEREZ: Good evening, ladies and
21 gentlemen. We are yet again facing the end of
22 Dewitt Clinton as we know it. There are three
23 administrations that will soon be sharing this
24 building. Should this proposal be realized,
25 imagine the quarrels that will result from not

1 just the students, but the faculty as well. I
2 assure you there will be many. By nature,
3 people are territorial except, well, we don't
4 pee on everything. Certainly this act will
5 impede education in the entire complex and
6 shatter the morale of the Clinton community. "A
7 house divided cannot stand," Abraham Lincoln
8 once said. Should this be any different? We
9 should not also forget what there is to be lost
10 at Dewitt Clinton. Sure we might keep our
11 programs, which are still subject to change but
12 how about the funding for them? This school
13 houses 4,000 students. If we lose too many
14 students, we won't be able to afford to keep
15 these programs running. Our diversity will
16 decrease as well, should this proposal come into
17 effect. Overall, this is not the benefits this
18 school is looking for and will only help
19 deteriorate a school that is already broken. My
20 worst fear is moving on from this place, looking
21 back and seeing nothing here because you can
22 lose a lot in your life, but your high school is
23 your alma mater. It's your motto. It's—you
24 keep it forever. And I don't want this to die.
25 This school needs reform from the inside. There

1 are teachers who have a great amount of
2 experience that aren't being voiced. I didn't
3 come up with this myself, in my view. I implore
4 the administration to take these words kindly
5 and I wish you all a good night.

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Andrew Cohen,
7 followed by Genesis.

8 MR. ANDREW COHEN: Thank you. Good evening,
9 my name is Andrew Cohen and I'm here to speak
10 against the co-location and in support of
11 keeping Clinton, Clinton. I know something and
12 in fact, I think most people here do know
13 something. Size is not an impediment to Clinton
14 being successful. Clinton has a long history of
15 success, so it's not the size of the building
16 that is an impediment to being successful. The
17 struggles at Clinton reflect a failure of DOE
18 policy, not a reflection of the Clinton history.
19 It can be replicated, it—Clinton needs support.
20 It needs DOE support. If there's some reason to
21 believe that these small schools could be
22 successful in this building, then Clinton itself
23 could be successful again. I urge you to reject
24 co-location and fight to make Clinton better.
25 Fix Clinton. Don't close it and don't shrink

1 it. Thank you very much.

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Genesis
3 followed by Sydney-

4 MS. VALARIO: Valario.

5 MS. GORMAN: I'm so sorry.

6 MS. VALARIO: There's no accent.

7 GENESIS: My name is Genesis and I'm a
8 Macy's sophomore. And I believe that the
9 proposal to put two new schools within Clinton,
10 it's a horrible idea. And it's a proposal that
11 shouldn't even be second thought of that we have
12 almost 2,000 kids within this school, three
13 floors, including the semi-tower and the tower,
14 three extra classrooms and that's enough for a
15 school. The thing that I don't understand is
16 the Bronx has enough space. New York itself has
17 enough space for two other schools. Why come to
18 this school and destroy our school to put two
19 new schools in it? It makes no sense. And for
20 the sports, that will get destroyed. Kids here
21 come here for the sports. We have one of the
22 best athletes, and that's their life and their
23 future. Are you saying that you want to destroy
24 our future? And I'm nervous. One thing,
25 basically what I'm saying is the Board of

1 Education, aside from the adults, are
2 counselors and our parents. They're the ones
3 that tell us every day that education is key,
4 that without education we can't be successful in
5 life, and that's true. And then for the Board
6 of Education to come here with a proposal of
7 putting two new schools and limiting my
8 education, no disrespect but whoever agrees with
9 the proposal is a hypocrite for limiting my
10 education and saying that it should be the
11 priority of my life. Basically our school
12 shouldn't close. Like this is our territory,
13 our school, our fields and outside is our track.
14 And we have the right to be selfish enough to
15 keep our school, our school. And that's it.

16 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Sydney—

17 MS. SYDNEY VALARIO: Yes.

18 MS. GORMAN: And I want to apologize again
19 for mispronouncing it.

20 MS. VALARIO: It's okay. Good evening
21 everyone. I just note I am the English major in
22 the room, but I could do the math. There were
23 five people on this side. I'm number five.
24 Only four—only three have preceded me so I'm
25 going to go over my two minutes. Just be warned

1 that I'm within the boundaries of your time
2 allocation. I wanted to take off this ring
3 today and it's interesting that I've been asked
4 to speak on this side of the room because this
5 is a ring whose inscription reads, "Dedicado a
6 Alba," dedicated to Alba, my mother. On this
7 side of this auditorium, I told Jostins
8 [phonetic] to put baby blue instead of Clinton
9 red and to put a C for Clinton in my high school
10 graduation ring. Little did I know that six
11 years later the baby blue would also be for
12 lion, Columbia, the C for the school I would
13 graduate from. I speak in front of all of you
14 today as the senior class president of the class
15 of '99, the last year that saw Dr. Norman Wexler
16 as the principal. And so my experience and
17 perspective is very well informed by—as a
18 student here, who was a student leader, student
19 player, resident of the Kings Bridge community,
20 taxpayer of the Norwood community that I reside
21 in today. So I am a taxpayer as well and that's
22 why I came here tonight. I speak to you first
23 and foremost from our motto, - -, without work
24 there is nothing. For every single parent
25 that's in this room, there are at least 100 to

1 300 more who are working right now and could
2 not be here today. As we know, through the
3 social networks, when you have one friend on
4 Facebook, that connects to thousands of others.
5 Everybody in this room connects to thousands
6 upon thousands of others who support this cause
7 that opposes creating two schools and closing
8 down Dewitt Clinton. On page four of this
9 document that was provided—thank you very much—
10 to all of us upon entering, if you read the
11 graph very closely, the population projected in
12 four years for Dewitt Clinton is diminishing
13 while the population listed for the brand new
14 schools that are coming in, in September is
15 increasing. I'm not a math major, but I could
16 do the math. You just have to read. I present
17 myself to you also as a fellow colleague to the—
18 colleagues to the educators in the room. I am a
19 high school English teacher. I know, first and
20 foremost, that as teachers in this school, the
21 pressure to produce educational success must be
22 so palpable, and it must diminish the
23 professional morale, and it must feel absolutely
24 horrible to know that you can't service
25 effectively the student who comes into your

1 classroom, who comes with deficiencies that
2 you're not professionally trained to address.
3 That is huge. And so I propose for the DOE to
4 make sure that they allocate funds for
5 professional development, for training, for the
6 Dewitt Clinton High School staff that's already
7 here and will be here in September. I will
8 start to wrap it up, sir. Thank you very much.
9 Last, but most importantly, I speak to all of
10 you as a community member of the Norwood
11 community. I live in Bedford Park. I might
12 work in the suburbs, but I live and I raise my
13 children in New York City. They go to the
14 public school down the street. I expect them to
15 have Dewitt Clinton High School in the next
16 decade of their life as an option, so that they
17 can play softball on the grounds their mom did,
18 so that they can watch baseball games on the
19 grounds on which their dad played baseball, so
20 that they can come to the rainbow show and see
21 the local talent of most importantly this
22 immigrant, working class community. that it is
23 tough to live in this neighborhood. It is
24 expensive to live in this neighborhood and our
25 choice should be as good as any other choice in

1 New York.

2 MS. GORMAN: Andre and Anna, followed by
3 Elu, followed by Cameron, followed by Bill
4 Wagner.

5 MS. ANNA PARA: My name is Anna Para. I'm a
6 guidance counselor in the Macy Honors program
7 here. I am reading this on behalf of one of our
8 students, Andrew Anderson. "We are here to
9 discuss a situation pertaining to Dewitt Clinton
10 High School. We have held an assembly prior to
11 this one to discuss what shall be done to this
12 high school, and I thought we approached a
13 ground of mutual understanding. However, I was
14 astonished to discover that there was a plan to
15 integrate two high schools within the campus.
16 If you will allow me, I would like to share my
17 experience, not only as a Macys student, but a
18 student of Dewitt Clinton as well. Before I
19 attended Clinton, I can humbly say I was not
20 academically challenged very often. I strongly
21 believe hard work and dedication are the
22 greatest methods to achieving a difficult goal.
23 Disbelief was immediately put into practice when
24 I entered the Macy program. The curriculum was
25 a daunting task to overcome at times. I

1 persevered through the obstacles so far and it
2 has allowed me to become stronger because of it.
3 Dewitt Clinton High School has an enriching
4 history that stems back to over a century ago.
5 We, as the current generation, must continue the
6 great tradition known as Dewitt Clinton High
7 School. The integration of two additional
8 schools will not only stifle this community, but
9 push it to further deterioration. Hesitation
10 leads to procrastination. Procrastination leads
11 to complications. We, the people of Dewitt
12 Clinton, will find a solution to this situation.
13 Keep the spirit of Dewitt Clinton High School
14 alive. Thank you, Andrew Anderson. And I say
15 shame on the New York City Department of
16 Education. The current circumstances were
17 created with the ultimate goal of taking over
18 this building and breaking down the legacy and
19 success of Dewitt Clinton High School.

20 MS. GORMAN: Elu Lara.

21 FEMALE VOICE: That's not fair. The
22 Department of Education - -.

23 MS. GORMAN: And Cameron Williams. Elu,
24 followed by Cameron. Thank you very much, sir.

25 MR. ELU LARA: Thank you. Good evening

1 everyone. My name Elu Lara, Bronx High School
2 District representative for the United
3 Federation of Teachers. I am here tonight to
4 support the Dewitt Clinton High School family
5 and let DOE know that what they plan to do is
6 totally wrong. We all know that bringing
7 visitors into your house voluntarily is always a
8 pleasure. On the other hand, bringing visitors
9 to stay in your house without your permission,
10 that is called trespassing and - - very
11 disappointed and uncomfortable. Who doesn't
12 understand that the DOE first step when they
13 want to phase out a school is to co-locate other
14 school into the building. This is what you have
15 done in the past. You did it at - - High
16 School, where I'm coming from, as a teacher for
17 20 years. You did it at Maurice High School.
18 You did at - - Kennedy High School, you did it
19 at Stevenson High School. You did it at
20 Rosemary High School and now you are doing at
21 Lehman High School. That give us the
22 opportunity to believe that you will try to do
23 the same here at the Dewitt Clinton High School.
24 But this community will show you that you are
25 wrong. We all know that this initiative only

1 increase the bureaucracy at the school level,
2 meaning more principals, more secretaries, more
3 assistant principals. Less resources are placed
4 into the classroom. This is wrong and shouldn't
5 be done. We hope that this will not happen at
6 Dewitt Clinton High School. Please stop co-
7 location and leave Dewitt Clinton High School
8 alone. The United Federation of Teachers is
9 against this initiative.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Cameron
11 Williams, followed by Bill Wagner. Cameron,
12 please. Please give Cameron your attention,
13 please. Cameron, please start your-

14 MS. CAMERON WILLIAMS: I just wanted to say
15 that the Department of Education adding new
16 schools to Dewitt Clinton doesn't really make
17 much sense because I think someone here said it,
18 but I forgot who. You do have a lot more
19 salaries to pay. That's kind of a waste of
20 money when you already have teachers and other
21 adults that are willing to help us. You're
22 giving things that are necessary to us to other
23 people. You expect us to do better but you're
24 not helping us get better. And like there's a
25 lot of programs here, like I'm in the Macy

1 Honors program. And there's a lot of programs
2 here too, like the AP classes that we have, that
3 we might not be able to get because they're
4 bringing these new schools here. And our
5 library is on the third floor. You want to put
6 new schools on the third floor. How are we
7 supposed to gain access to the library that we
8 need to, you know, help us with our work? We're
9 supposed to—you're supposed to try and help us,
10 but in—I don't know if you realize it, but
11 you're kind of like—you're backing us into a
12 corner into which we won't do well. I don't
13 know what else to say. I just think that it
14 makes no sense. You should be trying to help us
15 instead of trying to downgrade us, and kind of
16 shut us up and put us into a corner. There's a
17 lot of sports teams at Dewitt Clinton, like the
18 cheering team, the football team, the track
19 team, the step team, which is very good. We do
20 a lot here, and you know, we work hard so we can
21 get scholarships. And if you shut that down,
22 most of these teams, they will get shut down and
23 we won't be able to work hard for our athletic
24 scholarships. And like I said before, a lot of
25 AP classes will be not available to us. And

1 most colleges look for students who have taken
2 like the most difficult classes. That's what
3 they want. That's who they accept. But we
4 won't be able to take those classes, so we most
5 likely—we'll just—won't really get into a
6 college that maybe that we want to.

7 MS. GORMAN: Thank you, Cameron. Bill
8 Wagner, followed by Jonathan.

9 MR. BILL WAGNER: My time doesn't start
10 until it's—

11 MS. GORMAN: Bill Wagner, please start.

12 MR. WAGNER: Hi, my name is Bill Wagner. I
13 have been a teacher and coach at Dewitt Clinton
14 for the past 29 years and I have been an
15 employee of the Board of Education, now the
16 Department of Education, for the past 49 years.
17 My father graduated from Dewitt Clinton in 1929
18 and I was made an honorary graduate in 2005.
19 It's the only diploma that hangs in my house.
20 The New York Times on February 15th quoted City
21 Comptroller, John Lew. This is a quote,
22 "Bloomberg's third term was a great mistake and
23 this entire city is paying the price for that
24 act of hubris." So are we. We would not be
25 standing here tonight if the city charter had

1 followed its rules of term limits. The DOE
2 has lost its sense of history or it has no sense
3 of history. Legendary schools like Andrew
4 Jackson, Benjamin Franklin have been eradicated.
5 Dewitt Clinton is 116 years old this year. We
6 deserve to live on. Our graduates cover every
7 field of endeavor in great depth. We even have
8 five Tuskegee airmen among our graduates. In
9 closing, I would like to congratulate my friends
10 at Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn.
11 Their grades, despite the fact that they are
12 lower than ours, they remain intact, a single
13 school. Is the Bedford Stuyvesant community
14 stronger than the Bronx community, I ask you?
15 Thank you.

16 MS. GORMAN: I want to ask the next five
17 students to come down and be ready to speak on
18 the left, and the next five adults on the right.
19 Let me read those names and again, I apologize
20 for any mispronunciations. Jonathan, Daniela,
21 Jose, Y-A-K-A-I-N-Y, I believe, and A-L-B-U-T-E-
22 N-A, are the five on the student side. Charles
23 Evans, Jocelyn Boyd, Liz Banaker, Katie Martin-
24 Bridge and Edie Holmes, please be on deck.
25 Jonathan, please begin.

1 MR. JONATHAN FILIBIRDY: My name is
2 Jonathan Filibirdy [phonetic], and I've noticed
3 a few things. The DOE says that we cannot—that
4 we are not succeeding as a school. But how can
5 we succeed when we are given children with
6 special needs and teachers that are not trained
7 to teach them. What gives you this
8 insurmountable amount of audacity to think that
9 you can judge us, when we have a special
10 education school within Dewitt Clinton. And how
11 dare you silence the teachers when they are just
12 as much the life and blood of this school as the
13 students themselves? One thing that has also
14 been bothering me is why are you trying to
15 micromanage? Why are you trying to break them
16 into—the large schools into small schools when
17 you can't even macro manage? You can't organize
18 the big schools, so what makes you think you can
19 organize the small ones? And if Bloomberg
20 thinks his education system works so well, why
21 can't he just sit in a classroom and see it for
22 himself? One thing that we need is the
23 establishment of equality because the lack of
24 equality is so obvious that we can literally see
25 it across the street. If we had equality within

1 this school, we would be seeing results
2 similar to that of Bronx Science. I'm going to
3 close with this. Even without your support,
4 Dewitt Clinton has given me the best experience
5 that I could have hoped for. Me and many others
6 feel that—feel now, have felt, and always will
7 feel, that Dewitt Clinton is the best school in
8 the country and that we will cherish these
9 memories forever.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Charles Evans
11 followed by Daniela. I'm sorry? I have that
12 you were going to go with Gil at number 17, but
13 please go ahead.

14 MR. GIL WALTON: Okay, thank you. Yes, much
15 better. Good evening. My name is Gil Walton.
16 I'm a proud past president of the Dewitt Clinton
17 Alumni Association and proud member of the Board
18 of the Alumni Association. This statement is on
19 behalf of the Alumni Association. The
20 association requests that the Department of
21 Education withdraw its proposal to create a
22 Clinton Education campus. The Clinton community
23 has developed a plan that will improve academic
24 performance and result in a higher grade for the
25 next Department of Education progress report.

1 The details of this plan will be presented to
2 the Department of Education in written form.
3 For now, I want to measure—mention several key
4 components. One, the administration and
5 teachers are working together to improve the
6 teaching strategies and to develop counseling
7 strategies that will quickly identify students
8 in need and provide them with the appropriate
9 support. The Alumni Association has always been
10 an important part of Dewitt Clinton High School.
11 At this point, the association will be
12 redirecting its traditional financial support of
13 clubs, teams and school events and put it to a
14 greater involvement in providing academic
15 tutoring and other support. Lehman College, our
16 neighbor and a place where many Clinton
17 graduates have gone for higher learning, will
18 increase its academic support for present
19 Clinton students with its existing staff and
20 secure a significant grant this summer to assist
21 the students academically. We welcome that
22 partnership. The Clinton community is confident
23 that the school can successfully implement these
24 plans. Your proposal to create a Clinton
25 educational campus would put Clinton in an

1 unfortunate position of being a host school in
2 a building that it has called its own for over
3 80 years. The evidence is quite clear that host
4 schools rarely prosper and many have already
5 closed. We ask you to withdraw your proposal
6 and to allow this great school to continue.
7 This educational legacy, this school, it would
8 be a terrible thing to waste at this time.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Daniela,
11 followed by Bill Wagner.

12 MS. DANIELA HERNANDEZ: Hello. My name is
13 Daniela Hernandez and I am a junior of the Macys
14 program, by the way. I am here not only just to
15 speak for myself, but to speak for my brother
16 and my sister, who are also alumni's of the
17 school, and have graduated and are attending a
18 great college in this state. Now I understand
19 that Clinton has had very bad grades recently,
20 but you have to understand that Clinton is the
21 school for those in need. It is where we come
22 for when we need help. It is our source of help
23 in this community. And you know for sure that
24 this community needs that type of help. We need
25 a shoulder to lean on and that's what Dewitt

1 Clinton is for us students. I understand that
2 I'm hearing that you just want to keep just the
3 Macys program. Well Dewitt Clinton isn't just
4 Macys program. It is more than that. It is so
5 much more than that. And I want you to know
6 that you guys say that by adding more schools
7 you guys are adding more money, trying to get
8 more money just to add more schools into here,
9 money that you could use on other students here
10 in this school. Now I understand this. I
11 understand you guys completely, but how and why
12 would you give up money, so much money, to add
13 schools even though you know for sure that this
14 school will close down just by adding those
15 schools? Why waste the money when you could use
16 it somewhere else? Become productive with the
17 money that you guys are willing to use for
18 schools. You all call yourselves the DOE. You
19 guys—your job is to get better education for
20 students. Don't take that education away from
21 us. Don't take our AP classes. Don't take out
22 our extra circulars because right now that's all
23 you're doing. You're taking away our chances.
24 And I'm telling you right now, if you give
25 Dewitt Clinton a chance, you will be surprised

1 how far we can get.

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Charles Evans,
3 followed by Jose.

4 MR. CHARLES EVANS: Okay. Is that good?
5 All right. Good evening. My name is Charles
6 Evans. I am a proud alumni of Dewitt Clinton
7 High School, class of '98. I also taught at
8 Clinton for five years, from 2003 until 2008. I
9 speak tonight in strong opposition to the
10 Department of Education's reorganization plan.
11 For all of us gathered here tonight, Clinton
12 High School means so much. This is the place we
13 came of age, that helped us grow, that shaped
14 our lives. A large urban high school in the
15 Bronx recognized as one of the top 100 schools
16 in the nation only a decade ago. How did we get
17 to the point where our beloved school could be
18 on the verge of being split up? Unfortunately,
19 I think most of us know the answer to that
20 question. When the DOE embarked in their small
21 school crusade, large city high schools which
22 serve such an important role in our city's
23 educational life were left with numbers of low
24 achieving students from around the city that
25 could potentially disrupt all of the new smaller

1 schools that are being created. Is it any
2 surprise then that Clinton is the largest high
3 school left in the Bronx, was left with so many
4 students that it made it impossible to meet the
5 new benchmarks that were being created? It
6 became a self-fulfilling prophecy on the part of
7 the DOE. "Large schools don't work," they said,
8 so impossibly high numbers of low achieving
9 students were left on the doorstep of Clinton
10 and many large schools like it. And then low
11 and behold, the schools began failing. This is
12 a crisis created by the DOE, in order to justify
13 a conclusion that had already been reached. For
14 those who think, "Well at least Clinton is not
15 closing," can there be any doubt as to what the
16 future will hold with two new schools in the
17 building draining resources and the best
18 students from the school, Clinton will be left
19 with the most difficult students without the
20 proper resources and support. This policy has
21 never worked. Every large school that has had
22 this implemented eventually began an inevitable
23 decline. Will this be any different? The heart
24 of the school will be taken out. Clinton will
25 become the poor relation, left to wither, a

1 casualty of a grander design that has no place
2 for a school like Dewitt Clinton. We cannot let
3 this happen. This plan will not work and it's
4 fair to ask ourselves, is it even designed to
5 work? This is not the way to go. This is not
6 right. Let's give Dewitt Clinton, one Dewitt
7 Clinton, the chance that it has given so many of
8 us. We must continue to keep the faith and
9 fight hard for our school to survive intact.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Jose, followed by
12 Jocelyn. Jose, please begin. Jose, thank you,
13 followed by Jocelyn.

14 MR. JOSE MEJIA: Good evening ladies and
15 gentlemen, my name is Jose Mejia. I'm a JROTC
16 cadet. I am in the Macys program and I am also
17 a member of the track and field team. I am not
18 just any regular student here at Dewitt Clinton.
19 I can proudly say that I am a senior and will be
20 graduating at the class of 2013. Here at
21 Clinton, the programs provided allow students
22 like me to get an excellent education with
23 teachers who not only show us academic work, but
24 life lessons. Sports teams like track and
25 field, baseball, football and many more help our

1 students stay out of the rough community and
2 trouble that is out in the streets. But the
3 relocation of two new high schools in our
4 building are going to do nothing but take
5 resources away from the students and staff that
6 we barely have now. If you reduce the number of
7 student enrollment at Dewitt Clinton High School
8 and bring new educational institutions into the
9 building, the number of resources will diminish.
10 I'm a high school senior. I only have a very
11 small education. But the—Mayor Bloomberg and
12 you guys at the DOE have been around three times
13 as many years as I have. I know that getting
14 eight smaller schools into Dewitt Clinton High
15 School means that you have to pay eight times as
16 much for a principal, you know. You have to get
17 those programs running and it's going to cost
18 just eight times as much. So all of that money,
19 I know a principal makes what, like \$100,000?
20 That's \$800,000 that you can put into Dewitt
21 Clinton High School and rebuild. Taking out
22 programs is not going to do anything but hurt
23 the children. Just like Daniela said, our
24 school isn't just the Macys program. It's much
25 more. And by taking away more programs and

1 adding in new schools, you're not just going
2 to kill the resources, but you're going to kill
3 Dewitt Clinton spirit and then that's not what's
4 going to last on. Our legacy is going to die.
5 Good night.

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Jocelyn
7 Boyd, followed by—the last name is Ortiz,
8 followed by Liz Banaker.

9 MS. JOCELYN BOYD: Good evening, ladies and
10 gentlemen. My name is Jocelyn Boyd. I'm a
11 teacher here, under the special education
12 department. I'm also the step team coach and
13 the assistant cheerleading coach. Tonight I
14 come to you as none. I come to you as a parent
15 who graduated two sons from this school. I have
16 been a member of the Dewitt Clinton family since
17 1988, in several capacities. When Dr. Wexler
18 entrusted my skills and professionalism to
19 become a teacher in 1980—in 1990—whenever. I
20 have witnessed firsthand the transformation of
21 this school and the emergence of a failing
22 school to the fine institution we became. Thus,
23 I entrusted Clinton to educate two of my sons,
24 one from the class of 2000, the other from the
25 class of 2010. I feel that the son who was in

1 the class of 2000 received the better
2 education. At that time, Clinton was able to
3 educate him socially and academically, and thus
4 developed a well-rounded student. They allowed
5 him to reach his fullest potential. However, my
6 son—my other son fell prey to the DOE and
7 Bloomberg's policies, due to limitations and
8 lack of choices. Not all students want to go to
9 college. My son wanted to do something
10 different and thus today I'm paying the price
11 for re-educating my son. All right. Having
12 friends who work in small schools have told me
13 of the difficulties and the challenges that they
14 face and the displeasure of being a teacher to
15 this day. I, as well as the Clinton family,
16 implore you to reconsider this co-existence and
17 allow us the time and resources, and let our own
18 community restructure and redevelop our home
19 away from home. Because of a true family knows
20 how to find and fix our own problems. Our work
21 is not done yet and we ask you to give us more
22 time. Thank you.

23 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Is there
24 a student, last name Ortiz? In that case, I'll
25 call up the remaining students. Oh, I'm sorry.

1 Go ahead. I apologize.

2 MS. JICATE ORTIZ: Hi, thank you. My name
3 is Jicate Ortiz [phonetic], and I am a proud
4 alumni of Dewitt Clinton High School. I
5 graduated in June 2012 from the Macy Honors
6 program. And thanks to all of the loving, also,
7 students, the staff—the counselors are amazing.
8 The teachers, their hard work—I was able to go
9 to college, and I was able to get full financial
10 aid, and even more than what I imagined I could
11 get. I got an amazing education and I loved
12 being here. This was my home. It wasn't just a
13 place that I came from 8:00 to 5:00, 8:00 to
14 4:00. They're my family. Excuse me. So I
15 don't think that splitting up the school, adding
16 new schools into it, is a good idea. You take
17 away money and funds and opportunities for all
18 of these students that attend here, all of these
19 students that take AP classes like myself, all
20 of these students that have extracurricular
21 activities like myself. I know what it's like
22 to be a student and I know how hard it is to
23 attend this school, but it's a challenge that we
24 all have accepted and we all can complete with
25 the help of this community. Thank you.

1 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. At this
2 time, I would like to call the remaining
3 students in the following order. We will still
4 alternate, but I would like to call all of them
5 to be ready to be online. I will spell the next
6 couple of names. A-L-B-U-L-E-N-A and that's
7 followed by last name Proctor, Dimitri Tremaine.
8 And our last speaker is J-A-is Jay, actually.
9 So would those young people come forward? The
10 first one, last name-first name is A-L-B-U-L-E-
11 N-A. I would like to also call up the following
12 adults on this side, not that you aren't adult
13 students by the way. Liz Banaker, Kate Martin-
14 Bridge, Eddie Holmes, Meesha Blake, Audi and
15 Timmy Trusdale. Yes please.

16 MS. ALBULENA LIMEJA: Hi, my name is
17 Albulena Limeja [phonetic], and I'm also an
18 alumni and I graduated in June, 2012. I was a
19 part of the Macy Honors program for all four
20 years. I just wanted to say that the reason I'm
21 here today is because we, as students, want to
22 be heard. We as teachers and everybody else
23 here is here for a reason, because this school
24 means so much to us. This school has so much
25 history behind it that breaking it down into two

1 smaller schools is not going to help what you
2 guys are trying to solve. This school has so
3 many different programs that is going to help us
4 advance in the future. Nowadays, students from
5 China come here because they get more jobs and
6 because they're more advanced in what they're
7 learning. And you breaking down this school is
8 going to take us way back, instead of bringing
9 us forward into learning new, different things.
10 Dewitt Clinton, it has so many different sports,
11 so many different programs and I was a part of
12 all of those programs, and I was proud to say
13 that I'm from Dewitt Clinton. Yes, it may have
14 a bad reputation once in a while, but that
15 doesn't stop it from being such a great school.
16 Dewitt Clinton is like your second home. You go
17 to school. You come home. You do your
18 homework. You go in social networks and you're
19 still talking about how your day was. You guys
20 come and evaluate our school for three to four
21 days, maybe a week tops. That right there,
22 you're not going to see the full effect that
23 Dewitt Clinton is bringing upon us. Our school
24 is so much more than what you guys evaluate in
25 one week. There's so many different things that

1 go on the whole entire semester and within
2 that week. You think that one grade is really
3 like showing what this whole school is about,
4 the whole entire year. There's so much more
5 behind what you guys just see, and if you guys
6 give us the opportunity and evaluate the school
7 more, you'll see how great this school is and
8 should still remain the same. Thank you.

9 MS. GORMAN: Liz Banaker, followed by last
10 name Proctor.

11 MS. LIZETTE BANEGAS: Okay, I'm sorry. By
12 the way, for those of you who know me, hi. Good
13 evening. My name is Lizette Banegas. I am—

14 MS. GORMAN: I am so sorry.

15 MS. BANEGAS: It's okay, honey. Okay. So
16 first of all, I am a Clinton Alum, class of
17 1993. I have an extensive resume as a former
18 student of Dewitt Clinton High School. Not only
19 being part of the Macy program, I also
20 participated in four teams—varsity teams. That
21 is unheard of. I also participated in the
22 Student Government Association, okay, of Dewitt
23 Clinton. I was part of COSA, etcetera,
24 etcetera. I graduated college, came right back
25 to this beautiful high school that not only

1 showed me how to become a very well developed
2 individual, but as well as providing me with all
3 of the skills and all—everything that I could
4 possibly need, not just to survive in that
5 competitive society that's out there, but to
6 also to come back and want to give back to the
7 same community that gave to me. Now as an
8 educator, I've been here for 11 years, okay.
9 And I've taught everything from living
10 environment, to anatomy and physiology, to
11 general science, to environmental science. You
12 name it, I've done it. I've also tutored after
13 school from 3:00 to 6:00, okay. I've tutored,
14 not only in the living environment level, but
15 I've already tutored in chemistry, physics, even
16 math, even Spanish, even art, even music. Okay.
17 As an educator, I have a lot to offer, as well
18 as many of the educators who are here that are
19 partaking in this high school. And we offer
20 every single energy. We offer everything
21 possible to help the types of students that are
22 being rejected from the small learning
23 communities that the DOE has decided to open up.
24 Yet they don't want them in there, including
25 bilingual students, including special ed,

1 including the students with the horrible
2 attendance, for example, maybe a student that
3 has missed maybe about 160 days out of 163 days.
4 Okay. All right. So we are doing the best that
5 we possibly can to help the students that we are
6 being handed. We love our school and we give
7 our time. We even give our money, our earned
8 money from our pockets, to buy the projectors
9 that DOE is not giving us funding for.

10 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much.

11 MS. BANEJAS: Thank you for your time. And
12 I hope that you reconsider the proposal. Love
13 you guys.

14 MS. GORMAN: Mr. Procter, please begin,
15 followed by Kate Martin-Bridge.

16 MR. TEDDY REYES: Good evening, my name is
17 Teddy Reyes and I'm speaking on behalf of
18 Jermaine Nate. He had to leave early. I just
19 want to point exactly what Ms. Banegas just
20 said. This school has wonderful staff. Each
21 and every single one of the teachers that I've
22 come into contact with has helped me, not only
23 to become educated, and outspoken and the leader
24 that I am today, but they've pushed me to do
25 more than I thought I ever could possibly do.

1 These people here are more than just teachers.
2 They are a family. We may fight. We may argue.
3 We may go through everything in the world, but
4 these people here are more than just teachers.
5 They treat us like adults. They give us what
6 others schools can't give us. They give us the
7 education, as well as life skills that we need
8 to succeed in life. We don't just come to
9 school to say, "Hey, let me learn these few
10 things for these couple of hours." We come
11 here. We greet the teachers. We say, "Hi, how
12 are you?" We have a good conversation and then
13 we get on with our day. We learn and we leave
14 successful. I left this school last year
15 successful. I'm now joining college, doing what
16 I have to do, full time job, all of the above.
17 And that's what this school prepared me for.
18 They said, "You know what? You need to do
19 something with your life. Your life is going to
20 mean something. It's not just going to be
21 you're going to drop out and you're not going to
22 do anything. You're going to go forward." And
23 exactly what they said I'll going to do, I'm
24 going to do. And that's why I'm here speaking
25 on behalf of all of the students. Most of the

1 people left, but look at the crowd. What
2 other high school can you go to that you offer
3 this proposal to that you see a crowd? We come
4 together as a family. This big room is a
5 family. I really hope you guys reconsider,
6 because having other schools in this building is
7 going to kill it. The spirit in this school is
8 alive. If you come here and you evaluate the
9 school, give it more than just a week. Come
10 here more often. See what they have to offer.
11 Go to the different programs. Go to each and
12 every single one of the athletic teams. Go to
13 the extra curricular activities. You need to
14 see what they do. They offer a lot and they're
15 really underestimated. If you put your time,
16 your money and your effort into helping this
17 school instead of putting other schools, this
18 school I see has the potential to go as far as
19 you want it to go.

20 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Kate
21 Martin-Bridge, followed by Dimitri.

22 MS. KATE MARTIN-BRIDGE: Good evening. My
23 name is Kate Martin-Bridge. I am a math teacher
24 here. I did my first three years at Kennedy as
25 it was invaded. And now I've done my last six

1 years here at Clinton. Based on what I saw at
2 Kennedy, co-locations don't work. I remember
3 being moved around the building, the floors
4 being separated. It gets us nowhere. But more
5 importantly, I took a look at the educational
6 impact statement. Nowhere in this document did
7 the DOE say, "Here is what we're going to do to
8 help Dewitt Clinton." Remember all of those
9 questions and all of those programs we talked
10 about? I want to know right now, in this room,
11 what student, what parent, what teacher, what
12 administrator said, "Oh yeah, open up two new
13 high schools to help us"? Did anybody ask for
14 that? No community feedback gave you that. You
15 said we're at 112% capacity, at 3,800 students.
16 Where were you last year at 4,400, the year
17 before at 4,700 and the past six years where
18 it's been 168? Let us operate at your target of
19 3,400, which is less than 100%. Why not let
20 DeWitt Clinton, as one school, operate once with
21 the required—with the total number of students
22 that you call a target here. You don't need two
23 new schools in here to bring this school down to
24 the proper size. This is nonsense. You know
25 it. We know it. We're sick. We're tired, and

1 we won't stop telling you so.

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Dimitri, followed
3 by Eddie Holmes. Dimitri, please begin.

4 Dimitri.

5 MR. JAVONI PROCTOR: Sorry.

6 MS. GORMAN: Please begin.

7 MR. PROCTOR: Good evening, ladies and
8 gentlemen. My name is Javoni Proctor, who
9 attends DeWitt Clinton High School as a
10 sophomore. I have a lot of friends who go to
11 Bronx Science, Stuyvesant, and Townsend Harris,
12 who are shocked because I go to DeWitt Clinton
13 High School. Why were they shocked? Because
14 they were listening to other people, who say
15 it's a horrible school. But I have been going
16 to this high school for three semesters, am on
17 my fourth, and I have to say I love this high
18 school. This high—I love this high school
19 because I have made a family with my track team,
20 my friends, and my family, and the faculty.
21 There's no reason for the DOE to come into our
22 house and try to demolish our culture and
23 legacy. Your plan will fail, just like the
24 other schools who have smaller schools put into
25 them because the experience they have in this

1 school is no longer what it used to be. I
2 have been at a track camp last year in
3 Massachusetts, and I was wearing my track
4 Clinton hoodie, and she—and this lady saw me
5 wearing it. And when she saw me wearing it, she
6 was surprised and shocked because she hadn't met
7 anyone that went to DeWitt Clinton High School
8 in years. And we sat down about—for like an
9 hour, talking about how great the school is and
10 how they're saying the school is bad. And she
11 said that she went to this—her whole family went
12 to this high school and they loved it. And she
13 hasn't met anyone other than me that goes to
14 this high school. And she was completely
15 shocked, and she lived in Massachusetts. And I
16 want to say that we are DeWitt Clinton and we
17 will stand our ground. Thank you.

18 MS. GORMAN: What was his name?

19 MR. EDDIE HOLMES: Good evening, everyone.
20 My name is Eddie Holmes. I am attendance
21 teacher here at DeWitt Clinton High School. You
22 guys want to talk data? I'll give you data. We
23 have 3,514 students currently enrolled, as of
24 today. We usually have close to 5,000. Now
25 that we have our numbers low, you decide to put

1 another two schools in our building? I don't
2 like this. Let me tell you why. We're down to
3 3,500. Two new schools, that means 200 to 500
4 students each school. Sweetheart, my people, we
5 are back at 5,000 kids. We don't need that.
6 This school holds 30 to—about 3,000 to 3,400
7 students. That's where we are at right now. We
8 don't need any other people in here. We are a
9 great school. We are strong. We are proud.
10 More data—you want to put two new schools in
11 here? Yeah, our graduation rate is at 50%, but
12 guess what? That's 600 to 700 students more
13 than the two new schools you will put in this
14 building. How about that? You don't think
15 about that. We still graduate them. And the
16 ones that we don't graduate, I personally send
17 them to YABCs to GEDs, to wherever they need,
18 because they don't want to be here. That's up
19 to them, but we built this strong. We built
20 this building. It is strong. It's pride. In
21 this seven years that I've been here, I've
22 worked hard, very hard, and we do graduate our
23 students. It is a disgrace that you want to put
24 these people in this building. Bloomberg, ha,
25 he's been here 12 years. Do the math. 12 years

1 Bloomberg has been here. We used to be one of
2 the top hundred schools in the state, in the
3 country, now in the country. Since Bloomberg
4 came in, we have went down. Whose fault is
5 that? It's Bloomberg. We don't have the money
6 to buy an election. We don't have the money to
7 buy this building. But what we do have is
8 courage, will, strength, and love for us and our
9 children. Take that to the bank.

10 MS. GORMAN: Dimitri. Is Dimitri here?

11 Thank you.

12 FEMALE VOICE: Work it, baby. Speak from
13 the heart.

14 MR. DIMITRI PAYNE: Okay.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Speak from the heart. Let
16 them feel it.

17 MR. PAYNE: All right. Oh my gosh. Wow.
18 I'm nervous. I don't even know what to say
19 anymore. Hello. Good evening. My name is
20 Dimitri Payne [phonetic], and I take a bunch of
21 classes with Macy students. But the funny thing
22 is, I'm not a Macy student myself. I'm actually
23 a public student, a public service student. And
24 basically ever since I came—when I first walked
25 into Clinton, I honestly was scared of this

1 school. After hearing the rumors about, "Oh,
2 there's fights every day, people doing this, da,
3 da, da." And then after being here for three
4 years, I've actually grown to love this school
5 because the teachers care about us. They
6 actually put their time into our learning. And
7 even though they don't have the funds, they
8 still do what they have to do to get us the
9 stuff we need. And basically, I don't
10 understand why the DOE wants to shut down such a
11 glorious school like Clinton, or not even shut
12 down, my mistake. Put two new schools in here
13 while we can barely fend for ourselves right
14 now. It wouldn't make any sense. It's very
15 illogical. So I'm basically saying, why can't
16 you just provide us with the funds so we can
17 support our school and flourish more, and
18 continue on for years, because this legacy has
19 been going on for 116 years, and we don't want
20 it to end here and now by just putting two new
21 schools in here and just become another label.
22 And as they said before, this school, DeWitt
23 Clinton is a landmark in this country. So
24 basically all I have to say is I highly disagree
25 with putting two new schools in here. It's very

1 illogical.

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you, Dimitri. Meesha
3 Blagati [phonetic], followed by Tremaine Smith.

4 MS. MEESHA BLAGATI: It's good to be home,
5 Clinton. Thank you for having me here. My name
6 is not important. My story is not
7 extraordinary, but my message is critical. I
8 stand here before you today as a community
9 member, as a business owner, as a taxpayer, as
10 somebody who studied at both Cornell University
11 and went on to NYU University, and who happened
12 to write a thesis in public policy economics,
13 specifically on school finance structures and
14 return to education. I am also a proud alumni
15 member of the class of 1997, not the Macy house,
16 but the royal house. And I was former senior
17 class president, as well. I went on, not just
18 studying, but to own my own successful small
19 business, to run a \$900 million portfolio of
20 institutional investments, to be the director of
21 a very well-known private equity owned bank, to
22 sit as a member of the New York Planning
23 Committee of the CFA Board and to chair the
24 women. And I'm here today because I want every
25 single child in this room to have the same

1 chance at success that I did, every single one
2 of them. There are a few truths. There are few
3 absolutes in life, but I know from my studies
4 and my experience, that one size fits all
5 economics does not work. And one size fits all
6 approach to education does not, either. This
7 school has a 100 track year record of success.
8 I'll hold that against any potential change with
9 a mere track record of several years. This
10 school—as an investor, I wouldn't make that an
11 investment, and I'm sure parents wouldn't trust
12 their children with that record, either. So
13 respectfully, give DeWitt Clinton the chance
14 that it deserves. Give these children the
15 future that they deserve and our community a
16 better life. Save DeWitt Clinton High School.
17 Let it be won. Give us another chance. Thank
18 you.

19 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Tremaine
20 Smith. Is Tremaine here? Tremaine Smith, is he
21 here? Then we'll go to the next student. And
22 the last student, actually, is Jay Perez,
23 followed by Tammy Truesdale on the right.

24 MR. JAY PEREZ: Okay. My name is Jay Perez.
25 I am a freshman in Dewitt Clinton High School.

1 And first of all, how dare you try to silence
2 voices like Ms. Para and others, who are trying
3 to save this school. You may just care about
4 grades, but people like her actually care about
5 the students. As a freshman, this may be just
6 my first year in this high school, but I'm
7 definitely looking forward to the next three
8 years here. Like assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz
9 said, the DOE is just creating problems while
10 they believe they're preventing them. Adding
11 more schools in the school while we lack
12 resources is not a bright choice. We're given
13 work off a textbook that are over five years
14 old. One of the textbooks was published in
15 1999, and the other in 2008. I'm in the Macys
16 ISM program. Taking away our advantages like AP
17 courses and access to all floors, especially the
18 third floor with the library, will only limit
19 our access to education. Taking away Clinton is
20 like taking a child from its mother. I thought
21 this great nation was to keep families together,
22 not to break them apart. And Clinton, overall,
23 is a family. Mr. Ballerini [phonetic], my AP
24 Global teacher, is one of the best history
25 teachers I have ever had. He introduced me to

1 college level exams. He has higher
2 expectations from us to exceed in life.
3 Currently I am a part of the Clinton news and
4 debate team. We had to forfeit several
5 tournaments just because we didn't have funding
6 to support our team. If the DOE were able to
7 support our endeavors, we would be able to
8 glorify Dewitt Clinton High School's name
9 through their extracurricular activities. Is
10 there anyone here who really wants two new
11 schools to come to Dewitt Clinton High School?
12 And is there anyone here who doesn't want two
13 new schools to come to Dewitt Clinton High
14 School? Yes. What are you all talking about?
15 Yes. We should all close the doors from letting
16 other schools to enter Dewitt Clinton High
17 School. And basically you see that this crowd
18 does not want these two schools to come into
19 this school. Basically, Dewitt Clinton High
20 School is a family, and you should not break
21 that apart.

22 MS. GORMAN: Since our students have
23 completed speaking, I just want to say before
24 they exit, I want to thank you for
25 participating. Your voices are taped and will

1 become part of the public record. You have
2 represented yourself, your school, and your
3 community very well. And we thank you and
4 congratulate you. Tammy Truesdale, followed by
5 Angel Gerard, and Sheila.

6 MS. TAMMY TRUESDALE: Good Evening. My name
7 is Tammy Truesdale, and I'm a proud parent of a
8 student at Dewitt Clinton High School. I take
9 responsibility for my child by sending him to
10 school every single day. When will Department
11 of Education take responsibility for the child
12 that I send to DeWitt Clinton every day? I make
13 sure my child is well prepared with pen and
14 paper. When will DOE be prepared as well as my
15 child? I oppose co-location. It's another slap
16 in the face to say, "Yes, your children are not
17 worth a proper education." I had to remove one
18 of my children out of the public education
19 system because of failure. Now I'm being told
20 to worry about my oldest child future here at
21 Dewitt Clinton? I was hoping for one day, my
22 smaller child would follow his big brother into
23 Dewitt Clinton, where he has learned to become a
24 gentleman, kind, caring person, and responsible
25 for his community. When will DOE take

1 responsibility, accountability for our
2 children's education? I oppose this co-
3 location. It does not work. We know this. We
4 know they will bring problems into the school
5 where we'll be segregated. One side of our
6 building will be fixed while our children still
7 live in deplorable condition. We also will be
8 overcrowded once again, so how do you propose to
9 put two schools that nobody knows nothing about
10 into our building? I would wish that DOE
11 reconsider co-location and give us another year
12 to turn what's need to be turned around. We
13 earned that right.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Angel.
15 Angel? Is Angel V-I-C-I-O-S-O here? Then we'll
16 follow with Gerard P-E-L-I-S-S-A-O.

17 MR. GERARD PELISSAO: Good evening,
18 everyone. My name is Gerard Pelissao. I taught
19 here for quite a number of years. I was
20 reminded of one of my favorite movies when the
21 proposal was being read earlier in the evening.
22 The movie is "The History of the World, Part 1,"
23 and in that movie, Mel Brooks plays the king of
24 France, and he gets to say a great line. "It's
25 good to be the king." Well, it's good to be the

1 Department of Education, and it's good to be a
2 billionaire mayor, because they are about as
3 responsible and responsive to us as Louis XVI
4 was to the people of his country. We are told
5 that they would just like to hear what we have
6 to say, that they don't want to talk. But the
7 fact is, we never hear what they have to say.
8 When I think of all the messages that went to
9 them, how many people got a real answer back?
10 And so I have a question that really puts at
11 heart the entire moral aspect of what you're
12 doing. And I think it shows the fake in all of
13 this. Here is my question. Boys and girls High
14 School received its second F in two years in the
15 progress report. Its overall school score was
16 33.4, to Clinton's 37.2. Its attendance was 71%
17 to Clinton's 78%. Its college and career
18 readiness grade was F to Clinton's B. Its
19 enrollment dropped in six years from 4,000 to
20 1,600, and yet it will remain one school in its
21 own building. In plain English, a school of
22 3,600 students with a B rating in college
23 readiness will be divided, but a school of 1,600
24 with an F rating in the same all important
25 category would be left alone. There isn't a

1 jury of 12 anywhere in the free world who
2 would judge that fair. Okay?

3 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much.

4 MR. PELISSAO: As usual, you have no answer.
5 Thank you.

6 MS. GORMAN: Sheila, followed by Natasha,
7 followed by Tim. Who-what-can you tell me who
8 it is you're-

9 MS. LUZ FRITO: Luz Frito. Luz.

10 MS. GORMAN: Do you know what number they
11 were? Okay. Please go first. Then we'll be
12 followed by Sheila, Natasha, and Tim.

13 MS. FRITO: Okay. New York City is the
14 melting pot and city of immigrants. And Dewitt
15 Clinton for many years has been a melting pot
16 and a high school for immigrants. Dewitt
17 Clinton High School has welcomed with open arms,
18 immigrant students and their families, who have
19 come to this country to make their American
20 dream come true. If you drastically reduce the
21 student population at Dewitt Clinton High
22 School, what you also do is reduce the seats in
23 programs that immigrant students deserve to
24 have. The programs I'm talking about are the
25 bilingual and ESL programs, very well-structured

1 programs that we have at this institution.
2 The small schools you want to co-locate within
3 this building will not have enough student body
4 to have a well-structured bilingual and ESL
5 program. The bilingual program we have at
6 Dewitt Clinton helps our immigrant Hispanic
7 students to learn academic content as they learn
8 English. Those two small schools will not do
9 that. Even if they accept English language
10 learners, they won't be able to provide a
11 complete ESL program, very well structured by
12 proficiency level like we have here. I'm sure
13 neither you nor your children—and I'm talking
14 about those in the DOE, will want to take a
15 language course with a mix of beginners,
16 intermediate, and advanced students all in one
17 classroom, would you? Why? - -. Are you then
18 doing this to our immigrant population as you
19 phase out big comprehensive high schools, and
20 replace them with little ones? The immigrant
21 community of the Bronx deserves opportunity and
22 respect. Thank you.

23 MS. GORMAN: The remaining speakers can use
24 either mike, but we will go in order, Sheila,
25 Natasha, Tim, Susie, Louise and Melanie are the

1 next group.

2 MS. SHEILA KASOY-KERSTEPSKI: Okay. My name
3 is Sheila Kasoy-Kerstepski. Dewitt Clinton has
4 been a large, comprehensive high school for more
5 than a hundred years. And during that hundred
6 years, my grandfather taught here. My father
7 taught here. My mother taught here, and I've
8 been teaching here for more than 22 years.
9 Okay. We were at our pinnacle before the
10 Bloomberg administration came to power. And the
11 Bloomberg administration forced schools all over
12 the city to change from the goal of academic
13 rigor to a goal of credit accumulation. Okay.
14 This forced us--this forced a loss of academic
15 rigor as schools were afraid of closure. Now a
16 couple of months ago you sat here and you told
17 us that we needed to do something about our
18 ninth grade passing rate, yet you admitted that
19 you sent us an inordinate number of at risk
20 students, long term absence students, special ed
21 students, and English language learners. How do
22 you expect us to do something to our ninth grade
23 passing rate for students who didn't pass their
24 classes in seventh grade, didn't pass their
25 classes in eighth grade, or didn't even go? Yet

1 somehow social promotion has put them in high
2 school. Your policy of social promotion is
3 harming our students and it's harming our
4 schools. Okay. And if the amount of support
5 that they get in the junior high schools and
6 elementary schools is anything like what we're
7 given by you here, you need to do something to
8 help those students before they get to high
9 school. They can't—we can drop academic rigor
10 and give everybody a passing grade, but I don't
11 think anyone on our staff would agree to do
12 that. Okay. And you have asked us about our
13 passing rate. You've sent us students, flooded
14 us with 11th graders who don't speak a word of
15 English, and then penalize the school because
16 they can't graduate on time. This is not
17 logical. We need a—to return to logic in the
18 school system in New York City. Thank you.

19 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Natasha
20 Green, Tim Bayless, Susie Aveccio, and Louis
21 Guiterro.

22 FEMALE VOICE 1: Hi. All right. My name is
23 actually not Natasha Green, but she gave me her
24 spot. I am actually speaking. I am a resident
25 of the community that surrounds Dewitt High

1 School, and I have come here as a participant
2 in New York City Teaching Fellows program. I
3 didn't choose Clinton. Clinton chose me, and
4 I'm so glad that it did because I live in this
5 neighborhood. And it's been my great pleasure
6 and my fortune in these four years—I'm in the
7 middle of my fourth year—to have taught every
8 student population in the school, from the
9 lowest third, students with academic challenges,
10 emotional behavioral disorder disturbances. I
11 have taught the after school program for Achieve
12 Now. I have taught Governor's during the day
13 for the students that present challenges when
14 they come in. I have had the opportunity to
15 teach self contained inclusion class. I've
16 taught ESL bilingual in conjunction for health.
17 I've taught general science, living environment.
18 I've even taught the Macy honor students in the
19 science program at Lehman College. That's why
20 they know me. And I only said that to say that
21 I applied to get into Clinton High School. I
22 would have been a graduate of the class of '96,
23 and I was accepted into the Macy Einstein
24 program. So the legacy of Clinton has been a
25 part of my understanding from growing up as a

1 public school student, all the way from
2 kindergarten to getting my Master's degree in
3 special education with honors, so I know public
4 education works. What I also know is that when
5 a school decides everybody has a part that they
6 want to play and everyone decides if they're
7 going to roll up their sleeves, things happen,
8 because everyone is pulling. So this mountain
9 gets to move, because we're all pulling it. And
10 that's what these red pieces of paper are.
11 There are slots for student, guardian, advocate,
12 teacher, alumni, and pledges to actually do more
13 than just talk about what's wrong because we
14 know, because we're here with these students.
15 A, they're worth fighting for. B, things can be
16 done. And C, teamwork and unity are effective
17 beyond any speech, any proposal, but it's not
18 effective without resources. We are pledging
19 the human resource to make this school what it's
20 supposed to be. On the back there's contact
21 information, social media. Everybody is in it.
22 We're asking for you to support us and give us
23 the time we need to be successful. Thank you.

24 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Tim
25 Bayless, Susan Aveccio. Is Tim Bayless here?

1 Tim Bayless?

2 MR. TIM BAYLESS: Hi. I'm Tim Bayless. I
3 teach music here. Thanks. All right. Maybe a
4 specific example of what the reduction in size
5 might do. Let me use an example from my
6 department, what it would do to our department.
7 A couple of years ago, we had essentially five
8 music teachers. This year we have essentially
9 three because our administration hasn't hired
10 more because they've seen trouble coming and
11 they didn't want to hire anybody who would get
12 laid off. So they did not replace people who
13 retired and people who went to other jobs. Now
14 we're barely keeping everything going with what
15 we have, but we're keeping it all going. What
16 do we have? We have beginning and advanced
17 piano, beginning and advanced guitar, beginning
18 and advanced band, beginning and advanced
19 chorus. Our choruses have been award winning,
20 multiple award winning, so have our bands. Next
21 year, with a new principal, they're going to lay
22 off a music teacher because music teachers
23 always go first, and art teachers. And when
24 they do, because they have to reduce the size of
25 the faculty, you're going to lose either the

1 band or the chorus, depending on who they lay
2 off. Now, this is the only place where somebody
3 can walk in off the street, not knowing what
4 they want to do, and explore so many different
5 things in all of these areas. They have all the
6 AP courses. They have all of the different
7 arts, sports teams, and everything that has been
8 spoken about so far. This is the only place
9 where they can get this, and they're going to
10 cut it probably in half with this reduction
11 because we have to go down to a three quarter
12 size. And that's what I have to say. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Susie
15 Aveccio. Is Susie here? Next speaker, then, is
16 Louise. Is Louise here? Next speaker, Melanie.
17 Is Melanie here?

18 MS. MELANIE DELPRET: Thank you. Hello,
19 everybody. I think I might be the last one, so
20 thank you all for coming and waiting. So I'm
21 Melanie Delpret. I'm a high school English
22 teacher here for eight years. I've taught it
23 all. I'm presently a college advisor so I know
24 the students, I know the building. We need
25 help. Needless to say, I think you all heard

1 that. How is putting new schools going to
2 help our students? New schools get new
3 equipment. They get renovated classrooms. Our
4 desks are falling apart and our computers have
5 mouse droppings on them. What message does that
6 send to our students? I actually asked that to
7 a student today, what message does that send?
8 And she said, quote, "That we don't matter."
9 She said that. I interned at Kings Bridge
10 Heights Community Center, and while I was there,
11 I was working with the college center. And I
12 worked with a young student who came from JFK
13 when they were getting phased out. She had no
14 one to go to. She had no counselor because
15 everybody left. And she had no AP classes
16 because they weren't offered anymore, and she
17 needed help. She needed help to get into
18 college, and we helped her at the community
19 center. That is what's going to happen here.
20 The students are going to drop out because they
21 don't feel like they matter, and the teachers
22 are going to drop out because they don't feel
23 like they matter. What's going to happen to the
24 moral? You've heard this before. We're
25 criticized for being overpopulated. We got our

1 numbers down. What are you going to do?
2 You're going to put more in them from another
3 school. How does that make sense? Oh God. You
4 guys are killing me. Give us the equipment.
5 Give us the renovations. Give us a chance.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Our last
8 three speakers, please line up. Ms. Diaz,
9 Dorothy Lily, and Cornelia Crum, our last three
10 speakers in that order. Ms. Diaz, welcome.

11 MS. DIAZ: Welcome. Good evening. I come
12 to you today as a teacher, a parent, and a
13 community member. I've been in this community
14 for over 25 years. My son is a senior in this
15 school today, graduating, and very honest at
16 that. He says, "Mommy, the teachers care about
17 me and they want me to do well. And the grades
18 that I'm getting are the ones that I deserve,"
19 and I can say that's giving me the courage to
20 stand in front of you because it's not about
21 just change. It's about providing the resources
22 that we need to succeed. And if a child doesn't
23 do well in that timing, give them extra time.
24 Give them extra resources as a teacher. I have
25 that resource that Mel was talking about. She

1 helped my kids at Kings Bridge Heights
2 Community Center, but we need the school to
3 continue to give the things it's been giving
4 thus far. And if we have a few kids that are
5 not doing what they have to do, they have the
6 mamas and the papas that stay after school and
7 help, that call the parents, that say, "Look.
8 Your child is off track and we want them here.
9 We need them here." So attrition has been a big
10 issue in our school. And as a parent and a
11 teacher, no, my child is not one of them. I
12 accept it? No. Tolerance is not acceptance.
13 We're working on it. We work on it every day,
14 and you need to give these kids the motivation,
15 as the DOE plan. The trips that other schools
16 provide, their outlet, so that they can see that
17 it's not all just this neighborhood, that even
18 though some of them are afraid maybe to go to
19 another school outside of the Bronx, they're
20 here now. And we should make this haven for
21 them. Okay. I teach my kids one rule, the
22 golden rule. Give respect, even when you're
23 being denied. Don't be afraid to give it. In
24 the end, like a boomerang, it will come back to
25 you, and we're asking for that respect. I don't

1 have ten rules in my classroom. I have one.
2 And when I don't get it, I wait and I stay
3 quiet. And guess who brings them in? Each
4 other. It's called peer pressure and they're
5 asking for another chance. Thank you.

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Dorothy
7 Lily and Camelia Crum.

8 MS. DOROTHY LILY: Good evening, ladies and
9 gentlemen, and thank you to everyone who's here.
10 If the Mayor Bloomberg was here this evening, I
11 would direct my message to him. I hope somehow
12 he gets to hear the message. I guess we are all
13 next on the chopping block of schools, at the
14 guillotine. Unfortunately if you look around,
15 you'll see a lot fewer people than were here the
16 last time we had a speak out, and I wonder why.
17 Is it possibly because people are discouraged?
18 Is that what happens to schools when people come
19 in and say other people are going to come in and
20 represent us? Is it something that we did
21 wrong, or is it something that you all did
22 wrong, because I think this society is the type
23 of society that we have given children all the
24 wrong messages. We have taught them that they
25 could do whatever they want. The mayor has

1 given children the thought that they can walk
2 around in schools with their behinds out,
3 disrespecting each other, disrespecting
4 themselves, disrespecting children younger than
5 them. We have bombarded children with
6 information that they don't need to have. They
7 are overwhelmed with information about sex, and
8 drugs, and crime, and gangs. And they have
9 access to things that are destroying them, and
10 you wonder why. You wonder why children are not
11 doing good in school? Is it possible that we
12 played a part in it, society? Because we are
13 all part of the society, and if you think coming
14 into the school and bringing money into the
15 school is going to change something, you've got
16 it all wrong. The students that we have, a lot
17 of the students that we have are students who
18 are high risk and underprivileged, and we need
19 help. The kind of help we need is counseling.
20 We need therapists. We need social workers. We
21 need people who care, not people who cut. And I
22 just want to say something real quick about what
23 teachers do, because I could never speak for
24 anyone better than I could speak for a teacher
25 because I have lived it for 12 years. Teachers

1 are caretakers, motivators, counselors,
2 police, parents, referees, coaches, role models,
3 sometimes doormats, sometimes victims, sometimes
4 dumping grounds for students who are having a
5 bad day. Students, teachers have to sit down
6 sometimes and they have to write lesson plans.
7 And they have to make tests up, and they have to
8 neglect themselves because they have to give so
9 much to this job in order for them to really
10 make a difference. And I just want to say—I
11 wrote it down on a card because sometimes we all
12 forget how much teachers do to make a
13 difference. Thank you.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Is
15 Camille Crum here? Camille Crum? Camille, you
16 are our last speaker.

17 MS. CAMILLE CRUM: Good evening, everyone,
18 or should I say goodnight? It is quite late.
19 And I am here to say, you know at this time it's
20 8:30 on a Thursday night, and there's still
21 people here. And I know that students would
22 still be here, if it were not for them to go
23 home and do their homework, and probably baby
24 sit their siblings, and other responsibilities,
25 or go to work. Our DeWitt high school students,

1 they matter. They are important. I am an
2 alum of Dewitt Clinton High School. Okay. I am
3 a product of Dewitt Clinton High School. When I
4 came here, I didn't know a lot about DeWitt
5 Clinton. My mother did because my cousin went
6 here, and she said, "You're going to Clinton."
7 I had no idea. I am going to sidetrack a little
8 bit. I met Warren Buffet a couple of years ago.
9 And in his speech to the students that he talked
10 to, he said, "People are born lucky sometimes,
11 depending on where they're from and what kind of
12 family they are brought into." For a lot of
13 these students, this is their family. So
14 sometimes, when you are a Dewitt Clinton High
15 School student, you are lucky to be here—to be
16 here. I was lucky to be here. I was lucky to
17 be a student athlete. I had opportunities that
18 I probably never would have gotten in any other
19 high school in New York City. Yes, I am a
20 product of the public school system of New York
21 City, but I am a Dewitt Clinton alum who
22 excelled and did well. and if it were not for
23 the teachers who cared, if it were not for the
24 coaches who cared, if it were not for the
25 principal who really took a lot of the students

1 under his wing and said, "You're going to be
2 successful," in a world where urban students are
3 told that they're nothing, that they don't
4 deserve to have anything because that's the
5 story you're telling them. When you put two
6 schools in this institution in the fall, you're
7 telling the students who remain that they're not
8 important, that they don't have a legacy
9 anymore, that they don't have a history anymore.
10 Dewitt Clinton is 116 years old. That is
11 history. That is legacy that can never be
12 replaced. And when you put small schools in
13 this institution, you're destroying the spirit
14 of an institution that has a legacy for over a
15 century, and that, that is appalling. Okay.
16 That is appalling. Your—I don't know how many
17 of your children, if you have children, are
18 going to high schools right now. I don't know
19 where Mayor Bloomberg's children went to high
20 school. I don't know where Joe Klein's
21 students—where his kids went to high school.
22 But I'm sure that high school that their
23 students went to has a legacy and a history that
24 they're so proud of. They would never dare,
25 never dare let anybody come in and say, "Cut it

1 up. Put in new schools. It doesn't really
2 matter. The spirit of the institution doesn't
3 matter. It doesn't matter what happens to the
4 kids that remain." I understand that maybe you
5 think this will improve, but what will really
6 improve these students is providing the
7 resources, providing them with resources, with
8 people who care about them, not people who are
9 going to just tear it apart into little itty
10 bitty pieces. There is a legacy here, and you
11 have to think about what you're destroying
12 because you're not uplifting anything here.
13 You're tearing it apart, and I oppose the
14 closing of Dewitt Clinton, and I oppose the
15 installation of two new schools in this
16 institution in the fall. Thank you for your
17 time.

18 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. That is
19 our last speaker. I want to thank so many
20 students, alumni, parents, teachers, and
21 community members for their comments this
22 evening that have been recorded and will be part
23 of the public comment. We want you to know that
24 the-

25 MALE VOICE: - - .

1 MS. GORMAN: I appreciate that. If you
2 want to give it to me for the record, I'll be
3 glad to accept it. The information will be
4 shared with the panel, which will have their
5 hearing on the proposal to co-locate two schools
6 on March 11, 2013, at Brooklyn Tech High School,
7 29 Fort Green Place, Brooklyn, New York. Public
8 comment can also be submitted via email and/or
9 phone until March 10th until 12:00 a.m. You may
10 submit feedback by phone. That number is 212-
11 374-5159, or by emailing
12 d10proposals@schools.nyc.gov. I appreciate you
13 all for coming. This joint public hearing is
14 officially adjourned.

15 [END RECORDING]

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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 *Michelle R Killen*

Date February 25, 2013