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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**

**Expansion of 14K084
from K-5 to K-8 at K084**

**10/9/13
5:30 p.m.**

1 [START 368254]

2 MS. ALICIA WINNICKI: Good. Good evening,
3 everyone.

4 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

5 MS. WINNICKI: Good evening, boys and girls.

6 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

7 MS. WINNICKI: Beautiful. This is a joint
8 public hearing of the Department of Education,
9 Community Education Council, and the School
10 Leadership Team concerning the proposed grade
11 expansion of PS 84, Jose De Diego, from a K-to-5
12 to a K-to-8 school beginning in 2014/2015 school
13 year.

14 I am Superintendent Alicia Winnicki. We
15 have asked the District 14 Community Education
16 Council and the School Leadership Team of PS 84
17 to participate in this joint public hearing.

18 I'm joined tonight by Jordan Margolis,
19 Courtney Smith, and Jenny Alante from the School
20 Leadership Team and by Ramon Peguero, Debby
21 Feiner, and Elaine Manatu from the Community
22 Educational Council, as well as by the principal
23 of 84, Ms. Sereida Rodriguez.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. WINNICKI: This hearing is being

1 recorded. The purpose of this hearing is for
2 you to provide comments about the proposal.

3 Before I describe the proposal, I want to
4 make sure you are all aware of the opportunity
5 to provide your input. All those who wish to
6 speak must sign up in the speaker sign-up area
7 located just outside of the auditorium. The
8 sign-up list will close in 15 minutes. Speakers
9 will be given the floor in the order that they
10 signed up. All comments are limited to two
11 minutes. There may be elected officials who
12 arrive at different times throughout the
13 evening. If they wish to speak, we will do our
14 best to accommodate them at the first moment,
15 opportunity. Those who are here at the start of
16 the public comment segment will be asked to
17 speak first. In addition, we welcome any
18 comments and feedback you may have at any time
19 before the panel votes on this proposal. All
20 comments will be included in the public comment
21 analysis to be published and provided to the
22 Panel for Educational Policy the evening before
23 the panel votes. That vote is scheduled for
24 October 15th, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at the Prospect
25 Heights Campus located at 883 Classon Avenue in

1 Brooklyn. The email address and phone number
2 where comments may be made are at
3 d14proposals@schools.nyc.gov or at the phone
4 number (212) 374-0208.

5 This is the proposal summary. The New York
6 City Department of Education is proposing to
7 expand PS 84 to serve students in kindergarten
8 through eighth grade beginning in the 2014/2015
9 school year. PS 84 is an existing zoned
10 elementary school located in Building K084. It
11 is located at 250 Berry Street, Brooklyn, New
12 York, 11211 in the community, School District
13 14.

14 If this proposal is approved, PS 84 will
15 serve students in sixth grade in the 2014/2015
16 school year and will add one grade per year
17 until it reach-reaches full scale, serving
18 kindergarten through eighth grade in 2016/2017.

19 PS 84 will admit incoming sixth grade
20 students through the middle school admissions
21 process using a limited, unscreened admissions
22 method. Beginning in 2014/2015, continuing
23 fifth graders at PS 84 will have the opportunity
24 to remain at PS 84 for middle school provided
25 that they satisfy promotional requirements.

1 All students at PS 84 will be expected to
2 submit an application for middle school
3 indicating their preference for remaining at PS
4 84 or attending one of the other options for
5 which they are eligible.

6 PS 84 students who indicate a preference for
7 remaining at PS 84 through the middle school
8 application are guaranteed a seat. Any
9 remaining seats will be filled with other
10 eligible students who indicate a preference for
11 PS 84 through the middle school admissions
12 process.

13 The DoE has identified the K084 building as
14 an underutilized building. According to the
15 2011/2012 enrollment capacity utilization report
16 or blue book, Building K244-K084, I'm sorry, has
17 the capacity to serve 1,085 students. In the
18 current 2013/2014 school year, PS 84 is serving
19 approximately 589 students. This yields a
20 utilization rate of approximately 54%, which
21 indicates that the building is underutilized and
22 has space to accommodate additional students.
23 If this proposal is approved, in 2016 and 2017,
24 once PS 84's middle school grades have fully
25 phased in, the school is projected to serve

1 approximately between 917 to 1,007 students in
2 kindergarten through eight grades, yielding a
3 building utilization rate of approximately
4 between 85% and 93%.

5 PS 84 offers an ASD Nest program available
6 currently for kindergarten and first grade
7 students. The program will expand to serve an
8 additional grade each year to serve grades
9 kindergarten through five in 2017/2018. If the
10 proposal to expand PS 84 is approved, this ASD
11 Nest program will additionally be offered in the
12 middle school grades starting in 2018/2019
13 school year after the program is fully phased in
14 at the kindergarten through fifth grade levels.

15 Thank you. And now we will open it to the
16 presenters. And I was just informed that the
17 President of the CEC has arrived and she is
18 going to join us. Ms. Wilson, please come and
19 join us here. This is the CEC President for
20 District 14.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. WINNICKI: Yes, there is—we have
23 interpretation services, right? Can you please
24 identify yourself? If anybody needs any Spanish
25 interpretation, we have the interpreter here.

1 [Spanish spoken]

2 MS. WINNICKI: So I'm going—thank you.

3 [Spanish spoken]. And the next presenter, I

4 don't know if Ms. Wilson is ready. Not yet.

5 That's okay. The—anyone from the CEC would like

6 to speak? Ms. Manatu? Ms. Elaine Manatu?

7 MS. ELAINE MANATU: Well, I'm all for the

8 proposal to expand the school from a K through

9 eight.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. MANATU: Okay? And I'm for it for

12 several reasons. Selfishly, here in the

13 district, we've been asking for more viable

14 middle school choices, okay? And we really

15 haven't gotten that cry answered. So I think PS

16 84 expanding through eight will be an answer to

17 that demand. Also, I think that it truly

18 benefits the children of this school. You know,

19 in this school, you know, we've seen greatness.

20 We've seen greatness. You guys are a school

21 community that really pulls together and really

22 works together. And I can only see that

23 expanding through middle school, which many of

24 our children need. I also when it comes to the

25 ASD program, I think this is a tremendous

1 opportunity to expand that as well. So, you
2 know, I think this is the best move that could
3 happen in this district.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Ms. Manatu. And I
6 see we are just joined by Mario Aguila, the CEC
7 Vice President, Mario, along-

8 [Applause]

9 MS. WINNICKI: Very well-known to all of us,
10 so. And once again, thank you, Ms. Manatu. And
11 the next presenter will be Ms. Jenny Alante of
12 the PS 84 School Leadership Team.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. JENNY ALANTE: [0:11:32] [Spanish
15 spoken].

16 [Applause]

17 MS. ALANTE: [0:11:55] [Spanish spoken].

18 [Applause]

19 MS. ALANTE: [0:13:22] [Spanish spoken].

20 [Applause]

21 MS. ALANTE: [0:14:00] [Spanish spoken].

22 MS. WINNICKI: I am going to ask now Ms.
23 Mona Lisa Colon from the PS 84 School Leadership
24 Team to please take the floor.

25 [Applause]

1 MS. MONA LISA COLON: Good evening,
2 everyone. And I don't speak as good as her, so
3 had to write little notes. And first of all, I
4 want to welcome everyone here to our home
5 because that's what I feel towards this school.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. COLON: I currently have two daughters
8 attending the school. And we only been here
9 seven months. We started in December. And the
10 reason why I came to this school is because I
11 did my homework and I did my search and stuff
12 like that. Her prior school, they were having
13 difficulties understanding basic stuff in
14 reading and comprehending, grammar, and stuff
15 like that. So it's like it's time for a change.
16 And I tell you, I had endless nights. I didn't
17 sleep for like three days. I cried, like oh my
18 God, is this the right decision I'm going to do
19 in December. I decided to do this change. And
20 it was the best thing that I did. And I'm
21 talking from my heart. My child had struggles
22 with just writing her sentences and because
23 something that, you know, you just naturally say
24 okay, my name is Mona, whatever. And she
25 couldn't understand. She couldn't understand to

1 say I like this because. And she came her and
2 one day her little sister was doing homework and
3 she was helping her complete a sentence
4 surprisingly. And my daughter write a sentence
5 and my daughter, other daughter, says you have
6 to write because. And that, when she said that,
7 I was in the other room. And when I heard that,
8 I got like oh, she got it, she finally got it.
9 And I'm so happy I did this change and I'm 110%
10 for this expansion.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. COLON: Thank you.

13 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. And I—now I would
14 like to invite Ms. Courtney Smith, PS 84 School
15 Leadership Team, too.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. COURTNEY SMITH: Okay. Good evening,
18 everyone. It's so great to see this room so
19 full of great energy. I feel I've been to many
20 hearings in the past year or two years. And
21 this is the first that's really a cause for
22 celebration. And I'm so happy to be here to
23 give my, you know, full-throated support to this
24 expansion that is really going to be the
25 greatest advance for all of us together as a

1 school, as a community, as a neighborhood, and
2 even bigger as a city for what we represent, for
3 what we have been able to achieve at this
4 school.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. SMITH: The expansion of PS 84 is
7 really—it really symbolizes our growing but also
8 becoming a school that will now no longer just
9 serve us, but will also be able to take in other
10 children, especially at the middle school years
11 that are the years that parents are so
12 distraught because there are so limited options.
13 It's very difficult. So I hear already from
14 other parents who aren't parents at the school
15 now how exciting it is for them beyond all of us
16 here that are really happy to be able to give
17 continuation to the incredible experience that
18 our children are having on so many levels, both
19 educationally and socially. And I feel
20 particularly in my case that the dual language,
21 which I'm very invested in, which is now
22 becoming an extremely rigorous 50/50 English and
23 Spanish program, the fact that we'll be able to
24 continue that for sixth through eighth grade is
25 an enormous asset because the idea of being so

1 devoted to this and becoming so bilingual and
2 then having to not be able to continue that in
3 sixth grade was incredibly frustrating. So I
4 think it's all wonderful all of us—

5 [Applause]

6 MS. COLON: —and I support it passionately.

7 [Applause]

8 FEMALE VOICE: Sorry, thank you.

9 MS. WINNICKI: I see we will just—we are
10 just being joined by Mr. Antonio Reynoso
11 representing the office of Diana Reyna
12 [phonetic].

13 [Applause]

14 MS. WINNICKI: So please, let's now—let us
15 now if you would like to speak. Oh. And now I
16 would like to introduce Mr. Jordan Margolis from
17 the School Leadership Team, PS 84, with his
18 special guests I understand.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. JORDAN MARGOLIS: Thank you,
21 Superintendent Winnicki. Thank you, everyone.
22 It's really a privilege to be here tonight. I
23 could go on and on about why this expansion
24 makes a lot of sense on so many reasons, but I
25 would just be repeating what my esteemed

1 colleagues up here and the CEC 14 and SLT have
2 already said and will go ahead and say. So it
3 really means a lot to me to be able to actually
4 invite the voices of those who we really need to
5 hear tonight because this is going to be what
6 impacts them more than anybody else and that is
7 the fourth and fifth graders of PS 84. So I
8 know that we have some of you here tonight who
9 are ready to speak, so if anybody would like to
10 come and be the brave first student to share
11 with everyone.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. MARGOLIS: Hi, thank you. So go ahead
14 and introduce yourself.

15 HEAVEN: My name is Heaven. I am a student
16 from Ms. James's class. There are lots of
17 reasons why PS 84 should have a junior high
18 school because I can talk to my teacher and they
19 will make time for me, because they already know
20 me and care about me. Also PS 84—also at PS 84,
21 I feel supported by my teachers and Principal
22 Rodriguez and my friends. I also feel safe
23 around this school because it is—it's different
24 from my old school where I was bullied, made fun
25 or, and laughed at. But when I came to this

1 school, I could be myself and no one would
2 laugh at me. I could be the real me. That is
3 why PS 84 could expand to junior high school.

4 [Applause]

5 MR. MARGOLIS: Thank you. Who would like—
6 oh, yeah, yeah. Okay, thank you so much. Who
7 is the next student who would like to speak?

8 MS. WINNICKI: Jordan, we have to move it,
9 so.

10 MR. MARGOLIS: Don't be shy.

11 MS. WINNICKI: Tell them to come quickly.
12 Yeah.

13 MR. MARGOLIS: Okay, thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. ENIRA DIAZ: My name is Enira [phonetic]
16 Diaz. I think PS 84 should expand because I
17 feel safe with the teachers that I know and I
18 feel like I won't get bullied by kids that I
19 don't get along with. At PS 84, I had good
20 experiments with Ms. Valentino because I came to
21 this school, I did not know English at all.
22 With her help, I learned it.

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MR. MARGOLIS: That's great. Good. Okay,
25 next one. Quick, quick, who's ready, who's

1 ready.

2 FEMALE VOICE: I remember him from the - -

3 JALEN: Hi. My name is Jalen [phonetic].

4 I'm from Ms. James's class. And I think that PS
5 84 should have a junior high school because we
6 will feel more comfortable if we will have our
7 same teachers from the fifth grade for the sixth
8 grade. We have music, computers, physical
9 education, science, art, and that would help us
10 in the future when we grow up.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. MARGOLIS: All right, thank you.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Madison?

14 MR. MARGOLIS: Okay, you - - you're next.

15 Thank you.

16 MADISON: My name is Madison and I think
17 that the school should expand because we don't
18 have to get used to knowing a whole new group of
19 kids. We already know and love our friends.
20 And I also like how the school is going to get a
21 greenhouse on the roof so we can learn about how
22 to take care of plants and grow plants.

23 [Applause]

24 MADISON: And I also like how we have the
25 fitness room and the school health says how to

1 say fit and healthy.

2 [Applause]

3 MR. MARGOLIS: That's great, thank you.

4 Okay, who is the next one?

5 [Crosstalk]

6 MS. WINNICKI: Jordan, Jordan, one more.

7 MR. MARGOLIS: Just one more? Okay. This
8 is going to be the last one for now, thank you.

9 MS. WINNICKI: For now.

10 MS. ALISA MORALES: My name is Alisa
11 Morales. I have been in PS 84 since pre-K. The
12 school is special to me because I like all of
13 the teachers and my friends that I grew up with.
14 I want PS 84 to go up to middle school because
15 in the greenhouse I could learn more things
16 about plants so I could find out how to make
17 plants stay alive and learn more about pollution
18 and saving soil and water.

19 [Applause]

20 MR. MARGOLIS: Okay, another round of
21 applause for all of the students. Thank you.

22 MS. WINNICKI: A round of applause for PS 84
23 students.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Mr. Margolis and

1 PS 84 students. I would like to also
2 acknowledge the fact that we were just joined by
3 our assemblyman, Mr. Joseph Lentol.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. WINNICKI: Welcome.

6 ASSEMBLYMAN JOSEPH LENTOL: - - to speak - -

7 MS. WINNICKI: [Interposing] Sure.

8 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: All right.

9 MS. WINNICKI: We have a microphone here.

10 Maybe we can pass this to-

11 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: [Interposing] It works.

12 It works.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Oh, it works.

14 MS. WINNICKI: Okay.

15 [Laughter]

16 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: I have a very hard act
17 to follow. So I'm not going to try because I
18 want to hear it again for those kids. They said
19 it all.

20 [Applause]

21 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: Right? Yes, you did.

22 So when I was coming over here, I remember
23 growing up on South Second Street and coming to
24 school at PS 37, which was the school that was
25 replaced by PS 84.

1 FEMALE VOICE: That's interesting.

2 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: On the south side. I
3 can't even remember what block it was on.
4 However, the thought occurred to me because I
5 heard it much later that you've heard the
6 expression that it takes a village to raise a
7 child. Well, I think I'm going to paraphrase or
8 change that expression to it also takes a
9 village to educate a child. And we have a
10 village right here. It's all of you, the
11 community.

12 [Applause]

13 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: And there's another
14 expression. I hate to use these expressions,
15 but they fit so well. If it ain't broke, don't
16 fix it.

17 [Applause, laughter]

18 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: And what I mean by that
19 is we really have a golden opportunity here to
20 go from K to 8 and to have kids raised in the
21 same community. It's an opportunity for us
22 community members. I remember sitting outside
23 in the hot sun with the parents and all of your
24 teachers and your excellent teacher, your
25 excellent teachers that you have here at 84 and

1 your principal, who's the greatest—

2 [Applause]

3 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: Sereida Rodriguez.

4 [Laughter, applause, cheering]

5 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: And so let me just
6 finish. I've already talked too long.

7 [Laughter]

8 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: But let me just finish
9 by telling you this—that all of the educational
10 experts say that parent involvement is the most
11 important thing that we can do in education.
12 And what happens? What happens? You got
13 parents involved. And where is there a gap?
14 It's in middle school, isn't it? When you go to
15 a different middle school and the parents or the
16 kids lose interest and involvement in their
17 kids' education. Well, I think this is the
18 solution to the problem. You keep the parents
19 involved.

20 [Applause, cheering]

21 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: So I think the DoA can—
22 the DoE, excuse me, can learn something from
23 this proposal and will learn something from this
24 proposal when they adopt it. And they will,
25 they should, and it will happen. Thank you.

1 [Applause, cheering]

2 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: And last but not least,
3 I want to congratulate all of you for coming out
4 and voting in the last election and electing a
5 young man who's going to make a real different
6 in education.

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: Give a nice—another
9 hand to Antonio Reynoso.

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MR. ANTONIO REYNOSO: Thank you.

12 ASSEMBLYMAN LENTOL: Thank you very much.

13 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Mr. Lentol. And
14 now we'll turn the microphone to Mr. Reynoso.

15 [Applause]

16 MR. REYNOSO: Hello. How is everybody doing
17 today?

18 AUDIENCE: Good.

19 MR. REYNOSO: I might be the person that's
20 most excited in this room, let me tell you. I
21 do want to say, I want to thank you as well. I
22 am the councilman-elect of the 34th District.
23 And 84 is in my district and it's going to stay
24 that say way for a long time.

25 [Applause]

1 MR. REYNOSO: My commitment during the
2 campaign and throughout my tenure as
3 councilmember is going to be to education first.
4 It absolutely is going to be about you, everyone
5 here. I went to public school just like you
6 guys did. I went to elementary school and
7 junior high school in the district. And it was
8 extremely important that I got a quality
9 education. And the reason I got a quality
10 education was because of how involved my parents
11 were in my education. And what you have here in
12 PS 84 is probably the most organized and
13 strongest parent coalition and parent-teacher
14 association in the district. And you guys got
15 to give yourselves a round of applause for that.

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MR. REYNOSO: The Department of Education's
18 greatest fear is organized parents. That's
19 their greatest fear.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. REYNOSO: And I want to say and this is
22 a little bit of sweet and sour for the DoE I
23 want to tell you. The DoE doesn't listen to us
24 very often. The DoE doesn't pay attention to us
25 very often. The DoE turns their back on this

1 community constantly when it comes to the
2 educational progress that we need to make. They
3 make a lot of decisions unilaterally and don't
4 involve the community. We at this point asked
5 that the stop putting schools in this district
6 without the recommendation and the involvement
7 of parents. This school expansion was brought
8 before the DoE by the parents and they finally
9 listened. And that is extremely important
10 because we can not let this opportunity go. Let
11 me tell you that if you don't have it, it's not
12 about protecting 84 and thinking a charter
13 school might replace it or come here in the
14 future. It's not about that because we're not
15 going to let it happen. What it is about, it is
16 about promoting quality education and being
17 invested in public education. And that is what
18 they're doing here. So I want you to know that
19 we have to stand united as one school, as one
20 community in letting them know thank you very
21 much for listening to us. Now let's move
22 forward and make sure that we educate these kids
23 continually with high quality. And that's very
24 important.

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MR. REYNOSO: We have several schools
2 right now, PS 17 and MS 577, are in a school
3 building, which is currently overcrowded.
4 They're—the space is an issue. PS 84 is going
5 to allow for them to have less students in the
6 classroom. It's going to allow for relief in
7 that school. One school's progress is going to
8 be another school's progress. We're going to
9 help each other. This is a district. This is
10 not just—we're not just educating one person.
11 We're educating an entire district.

12 [Applause, cheering]

13 FEMALE VOICE: - -

14 [Laughter]

15 MR. REYNOSO: We have a great middle school
16 called 318 that's busting at the seams right now
17 because it's so good. And they want to mirror
18 those type of programs. They want to mirror
19 what 84 is doing. And what we have now is an
20 opportunity to give your families choices.
21 They're going to have quality middle schools
22 throughout the district that they're going to be
23 able to send their kids to and they're not going
24 to have to fear that they're going to send their
25 child to a school that's not going to give them

1 the education they want. And we need to
2 continue that. And I'm going to stand here
3 today and I'm going to continue to—I'm also
4 going to say to the DoE you have a partner in
5 this community and you have a partner in me.
6 I'm—it's this way, these guys? This is it?

7 [Laughter]

8 MR. REYNOSO: I'm sorry. They usually stand
9 on stage and like really—

10 FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] - -

11 MR. REYNOSO: —they usually stand on stage.
12 But you have a partner in me. I'm going to do
13 everything that I can a councilmember to make
14 sure any resources that this school needs to be
15 successful they're going to get, absolutely
16 going to get.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MR. REYNOSO: I am—Ms. Winnicki, who was my
19 assistant principal at junior high school 50 - -
20 and the parents, the parents, thank you so much.
21 I am very proud when I heard this, extremely
22 proud, and I'm excited. And I can't wait to
23 start the new school year. I can't wait to do
24 some ribbon-cuttings to make sure that you guys
25 are enjoying this. But stay involved. It's the

1 only way it's going to happen. Be united.

2 Thank you.

3 [Applause, cheering]

4 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Mr. Reynoso. We
5 have now concluded the formal presentations.
6 And, of course, we'll accommodate the elected
7 officials while they are arriving. We will now
8 open the floor for public comments. Speakers
9 will be given the floor in the order that they
10 signed up. All comments are limited to two
11 minutes. So there are about 34 speakers that
12 signed up to speak tonight. And we appreciate
13 it. To make this process a little bit more
14 fluid, I'm going to invite three speakers at a
15 time so they can line up right here by the
16 microphone. And we will begin. I would like
17 to—and please be patient with my police
18 pronunciation of your names. So I'm going to
19 invite Teresa Montagano, Ms. Michelle Colon, and
20 Jerry Urena to please come up to the microphone.

21 MS. TERESA MONTAGANO: Hi. My name is
22 Teresa. The opportunity to say with the same
23 friends for nine years is something important -
24 - to the students of PS 84. Every child is
25 different, as are the struggles that they face.

1 Some go through drastic changes in their
2 adolescent years, so sometimes it's better to
3 have one thing stable, one thing remain the
4 same. Through the experience, it is easier to
5 discuss and to ask questions in a room full of
6 people you've known rather than strangers.
7 Children learn most of their knowledge through
8 asking questions and for the most part feel
9 comfortable at the awkward age they will be in
10 middle school. To have adults and kids that
11 they've known around to task these questions and
12 they will not be judged is important. There is
13 plenty of time to make changes outside of the
14 school building. If things can remain familiar
15 for some kids, it is best. In closing, I would
16 like to say that I had to make a middle school
17 change and it was very tough. I am fully for
18 the grade expansion. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you.

21 MS. MICHELLE COLON: Good evening. My name
22 is Michelle Colon. And I am not for the
23 expansion. I need it because my son graduated
24 from here two years ago. And when I take him to
25 middle school every day, I worry about the

1 outside neighborhood. I don't have to worry
2 about that here because we're from here and
3 they're safe here. And this is what the kids
4 need. Why change something that's working - -
5 all for it.

6 [Applause, cheering]

7 MR. JERRY URENA: [0:38:04] [Spanish
8 spoken].

9 [Applause]

10 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
11 give the microphone to the CEC member, Mr. Ramon
12 Peguero.

13 MR. RAMON PEGUERO: Good evening. You know,
14 for many years, we had problems at 84. There
15 was a lot of tension and, you know, the quality
16 of education was, you know, in trouble. And
17 with the hard work and dedication of the parents
18 that were here, the parents that were coming in,
19 and a new leadership, we were able to turn it
20 around to become one of the best if not the best
21 elementary school that we have in District 14.
22 And for many years, I've always questioned DoE,
23 why is it that you're putting new schools,
24 charter schools, into our-schools into our
25 buildings when we could replicate good programs

1 that we already have in this community, in
2 this district? And finally, I don't know why,
3 but finally they have listened to us. And this
4 is the first time that this community is leading
5 the charge where this is not us fighting
6 somebody for something that we want. This is us
7 leading the charge. And the question is is it
8 going to work? Well, when I see names like
9 Winnicki, Mrs. Quail, Rodriguez, and all of
10 these wonderful parents and teachers, absolutely
11 it's going to work. We are going to make it
12 happen.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. PEGUERO: And this is going to be the
15 model of what it should look like around this
16 district. We want quality middle schools in our
17 district. And let's replicate what we are doing
18 in our elementary school and move it forward
19 before somebody else that does not know us, does
20 not understand us and does not appreciate us try
21 to invent a system for us. Let's create our own
22 system. So I commend Principal Rodriguez and
23 her entire staff and her entire team for putting
24 this together.

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. And I would
2 like to inform everyone that we are joined by
3 Ms. Maria Quail, the Network Leader for this
4 school, CFN 109.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. WINNICKI: I would like to invite the
7 following speakers to please come up—Ms. Diana
8 Zelvin, Raymond - - Ortega, and Antonia Suriel,
9 please come up.

10 MS. DIANA ZELVIN: Hi everyone. Just have
11 to look out on the crowd and say how much I love
12 this gorgeous community. Between the children
13 and the parents and our esteemed politicians and
14 all under the incredible leadership of Sereida
15 Rodriguez, we are like the little engine that
16 could. In three, four years, like look at us
17 now and Courtney and you've said, you know, it's
18 the first time we're having a hearing about
19 something so exciting and promising that is
20 truly a no-brainer as, you know, we need the
21 middle schools. We have the space. And for the
22 kids to have the continuity as they have also
23 eloquently said how supportive and nurturing it
24 is to not have to change schools. I mean,
25 adolescence is so hard enough and kids don't

1 learn with anxiety and stress and bullying and
2 they learn when they feel safe and secure in
3 this - - environment that we have at PS 84.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. ZELVIN: And I also am very excited
6 hopefully, all fingers and toes crossed that,
7 you know, this goes through and they will get to
8 be the first kids in Brooklyn to be able to
9 utilize the greenhouse and, you know, it would
10 be great if we could use it to its fullest
11 capacity. So that will be along with the dual
12 language and all of the other wonderful programs
13 we have another distinction that sets PS 84
14 apart. So wholeheartedly support the expansion.
15 Thank you.

16 [Applause]

17 MR. RAYMOND ORTEGA: Good evening. I'm with
18 the parents of a fourth grader. He's been here
19 since pre-K. And one story I have to say is
20 that he was here in pre-K. We took him out to
21 get to a school closer to our home for
22 kindergarten and that was the worst decision
23 ever. As a small age, he was devastated. At
24 one age, he had made so many friends and we had
25 to take him out in like two weeks from that

1 school. Two weeks. The first week of
2 September, it's the 15th, September 30th he was
3 back in this school. He could not comprehend.
4 I was like why did I get out of that school at
5 such a young age? And ever since then, it has
6 just been a blessing that he has been here. I
7 mean, he knows more Spanish than I do, you know?
8 But like I said, it will be a blessing to have
9 him from here to pre-pre-K to eighth grade. And
10 like I saying, in my church, we have a saying,
11 no place like home. This is to him no place
12 like home.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. ANTONIA SURIEL: [0:44:04] [Spanish
15 spoken].

16 [Applause]

17 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
18 invite Ana Maria Serrano. I would-okay. A
19 person that is holding number 12, Erica, I am
20 not sure, and Salvador Mejia, please come up.

21 MS. ANA MARIA SERRANO: Hi. My name is Ana
22 Maria Serrano. I'm speaking as a parent, as a
23 volunteer in the school, and as somebody who now
24 works with the school. If your child is in
25 first grade, third grade, fourth, or fifth, they

1 have worked with me. And I fully support the
2 expansion. I know these kids. I adore these
3 kids just like everyone who meets the children
4 loves and adores them. And I think it's so
5 crucial that they continue to get the support
6 throughout like we have all said the difficult
7 preteen years, but I also think it's beautiful
8 that there's such a multicultural element in the
9 school. And they live in a multicultural city
10 and it's crucial that they get this experience
11 and be supported in learning to love people who
12 don't necessarily look like them, don't
13 necessarily have their background, socioeconomic
14 background or whatever. So I just, you know,
15 wholeheartedly support this. And I want to
16 thank Sereida Rodriguez because I was here
17 before she was. My daughter's been here since
18 kindergarten, is in fifth grade now. And what
19 she's done in this school just—thank you.

20 [Applause]

21 FEMALE VOICE: You can - -

22 FEMALE VOICE: Okay, thank you.

23 MS. WINNICKI: Come on up.

24 MALE VOICE: Hi.

25 [Background conversations]

1 MR. SALVADOR MEJIA: Okay, good evening.
2 Everybody in this room, especially the Board of
3 Education Department and all of the teachers,
4 Ms. Rodriguez, everyone, for me, it's a
5 pleasure. My name is Salvador Mejia. I have
6 two kids in the school. One is in the second
7 grade and the other one is in the fourth grade.
8 Definitely I support that we will have the
9 expansion to the eighth grade. I would like to
10 with everybody to see we do support. I would
11 like some heat over here because for real, I am
12 tired. But when—due to this, according to the
13 movements we have - - the school, no matter
14 what, we have to stay here. All parents, we
15 should be together. We should be involved what
16 is looking for the future of our kids. We do
17 support, yes or no?

18 [Applause, cheering]

19 MR. MEJIA: After my kids left the nest in
20 our home, this school becomes the most
21 important, the second house where they have
22 developed to be the future. Staying to the
23 eighth grade, that would be very confident for
24 them to have progress with this exceptional
25 education and the education that they receive

1 with the supervision with all of the teachers.
2 And definitely moving after the fifth grade to
3 other places, it becomes hectic because we have
4 experience with my first boy, all mornings
5 waking up earlier, traveling, running from one
6 to the other place. But if they are here to the
7 eighth grade, when they will be ready to travel
8 some other places, they will be ready. That's
9 what I mean because it's more trustable and I
10 know they can make it. For their future, we
11 will support the school.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. MEJIA: Thank you.

14 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
15 introduce Ms. Evelyn Cruz representing
16 Congresswoman Velazquez.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. EVELYN CRUZ: Thank you. Good evening,
19 everyone. Good evening, students. How are you?

20 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

21 MS. CRUZ: Are you excited?

22 AUDIENCE: Yes.

23 MS. CRUZ: [0:49:30] [Spanish spoken]. Good
24 evening, Madam Chair, Ms. Winnicki, thank you,
25 Ms. Rodriguez, Mr. Peguero, Tessa, and everyone

1 else. I don't have—I have glasses on, but I
2 don't see too well.

3 [Laughter]

4 MS. CRUZ: I'm here in—I'm here on behalf of
5 Congresswoman Velazquez. She's actually in
6 Washington. Do we all know what's happening in
7 Washington, right?

8 AUDIENCE: Yeah.

9 MS. CRUZ: This shutdown, the shutdown, she
10 is there standing up for our community against
11 this shutdown that will be impacting education,
12 that is impacting housing, that is impacting
13 working families. So it's a hard time. We're
14 urging our constituents, our community families
15 to stand strong and we will continue to advocate
16 as best as we can to make sure that we get the
17 federal funding in our district that our
18 community deserves. So that's just number one
19 right now. Job number two is this event. And
20 this is important. Last evening I was in school
21 in Cypress Hills. There were 400 parents
22 opposing a co-location in a school in Cypress
23 Hills. Today I am pleased to announce on behalf
24 of the congresswoman that this is a positive
25 event. We haven't been to a positive event in

1 this school district pertaining to schools in
2 a long time.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. CRUZ: So Ms. Winnicki, this is a good
5 one for you and Ms. Rodriguez. We are here to
6 say we expand—we support the expansion. We have
7 to continue dialogue and we know it. But PS 84
8 has come a long way since when we were attending
9 the school prior to Ms. Rodriguez and her
10 quality team here at PS 84. I have to say that
11 with the support of the community and all our
12 partners—and I see many in the room. I see
13 Brooke, put a smile, this is going to be good
14 for our community, Diane, and all of you, we
15 have made a difference in this neighborhood.
16 And you, you have invested here. We started it
17 with the magnet funding that Nydia Velazquez
18 secured for the school. And Ms. Darader
19 [phonetic] and her staff and the CEC have
20 continued to—imagine, what school has a
21 laboratory, a science laboratory like PS 84?
22 This was done with the support of you, the
23 community partners, and Ms. Rodriguez. What
24 school can actually tell a student step into the
25 lab, plant a seed, monitor its growth, and then

1 have it for lunch? Who does that? And that
2 is what PS 84 is doing. Am I right or wrong?
3 This is where, you know, they talk about—

4 [Applause]

5 MS. CRUZ: —from the farm to the table.
6 Here it is from the farm or the garden to the
7 table. And it is wonderful to see our young
8 people now knowing that maybe their grandparents
9 did this, now they're doing it. But more
10 importantly, it's about the science and the
11 math. It's not just planting the seeds. It's
12 counting the month, counting the time of growth.
13 And that requires math and science. And that is
14 important.

15 So PS 84 is a small school. It may be
16 expanding, but it is a small, quaint community
17 school. And that's why Nydia Velazquez endorses
18 this program, this project, this idea. Our
19 children are entering sixth grade soon. And you
20 know that a sixth grader—I was one, many of us
21 were here—is a transition. It's a shift. You
22 know, you leave a school building, you don't
23 know everyone. You go into a bigger school, a
24 new neighborhood. Many of the parents here that
25 have reached out to us say we want our child

1 here. They have been nurtured here. They
2 have been embraced by our teachers. We have a
3 great stakeholder community. And they foster
4 love, academic and emotional support. And I
5 don't see why my child can not continue on to
6 the eighth grade here at PS 84. And we agree
7 with that. We want it to be a seamless
8 transition. And that is key. And I think the
9 parents here agree with that. We know where
10 we're going to have new programs. We have to
11 continue to work with the school. We have to
12 work with DoE to make sure we get resources for
13 afterschool programs and clubs and more
14 competition in science and math and technology.
15 But that can happen with an expansion. That can
16 happen with your support. So I am hoping, I'm
17 hoping that the parents here are saying yes, we
18 can and yes, we will-

19 [Applause]

20 MS. CRUZ: -because that is key, okay? And
21 I don't know if any children have spoken, but I
22 see t-shirts and we see the art rocks and it
23 does rock and you come here for any community
24 event that has to do with art and culture. And
25 even a barbeque, you see hundreds of hundreds of

1 parents here, hundreds of teachers. And that
2 means community participation. And that is the
3 work that has been done at PS 84. Ms. Rodriguez
4 has really stepped up the bar. She has
5 professionalized her team here, her faculty,
6 which love your children. We have a program
7 here for children with special needs. And so it
8 is quite diverse. And I visit throughout the
9 entire district. We have more than 36 schools
10 in Nydia's district. And I can tell you that
11 this is one—a pick of the litter. And this is
12 where people want to come. And we want our kids
13 to progress and we need all of you, all of you
14 to work with us. So [0:55:00] [Spanish spoken].

15 [Applause]

16 MS. CRUZ: [0:55:06] [Spanish spoken]. You
17 see these young kids with, you know, with
18 diverse groups. I see them with a young Asian,
19 with a young African American, with a young
20 Irish kid, Italian kid. And that's what we
21 want. We want diversity and unity because the
22 rainbow looks prettier in colors and so do our
23 children, okay?

24 [Applause]

25 MS. CRUZ: So I'm going to let—I'm going to

1 end it there. Ms. Winnicki, this is a
2 wonderful school. I know you love all of your
3 schools, but I know you love this garden here.
4 The—I know the science lab. I know Diana. I
5 know these women and the school, Ms. Arayda
6 [phonetic], and the CEC, they work really hard
7 to get funders and donors for that beautiful
8 science program, the lab. And it's amazing.
9 And it's one of the best. And all of the
10 teachers here, you give a lot and you get a lot
11 of love back from your children and that's what
12 you want. Art, we want to support science,
13 technology, and math. And we can do it doing
14 it—we can do it through the arts program,
15 through the science program, and through the
16 programs that you have here. So we're here to
17 say we're with you. We'll support you. And
18 let's make it happen. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Ms. Cruz. I would
21 like to invite Ms. Viviana Nieves, Ms. Laura
22 Arriola [phonetic], and Ms. Angela Tejada to
23 please come up.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. VIVIANA NIEVES: Good evening, everyone.

1 My name is Viviana Nieves. And I just want to
2 say that I was born, raised, and I still live in
3 what we call Los Sueres [phonetic]. And I
4 graduated from PS 84, sixth grade, and now-

5 [Applause]

6 MS. NIEVES: -I am a mother to a third
7 grader. And I am all for the expansion because
8 she will have the option to continue to eighth
9 grade, something that I did not have. So I'm
10 all for it.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. LAURA ARRIOLA: I am very much for this
13 program. I'm not from the community. My family
14 is. But thank you, Ms. Rodriguez and Ms. La
15 Tropa [phonetic]. He has special challenges.
16 And this school has helped him so much.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. ARRIOLA: Ms. Nunez was his kindergarten
19 teacher. And she helped him out so much. He's
20 my only child and I don't want to transition
21 him. I don't. He's—they have to have a
22 childhood. And to put him out in the real world
23 at 11, 12-years old, I didn't even do it. I
24 went into junior high school at sixth grade.
25 Fifth grade is so young for them to be in the

1 real world, to make decisions on his own. He
2 can't do that now at seven. They can't do it at
3 11. They can't do it at 12. They're—they need
4 to be children. And I am definitely for this
5 program. This—it has to happen.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. ANDREA HOPPMAN: I'm all verklempt now.
8 I'm Andrea Hoppman [phonetic]. My family moved
9 to Williamsburg two years ago especially to go
10 to PS 84. My son is now in the third grade.
11 And as others have said, not only is this his
12 school, but it's his home, a place where he
13 feels safe and successful and a place that I
14 would love to keep sending my little baby. My
15 whole family would be delighted, excited,
16 relieved, and thankful for this expansion.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
19 invite Ms. Andrea Hoppman.

20 MS. HOPPMAN: That was me, sorry.

21 MS. WINNICKI: Oh, I'm sorry, okay. That's
22 okay. That's quite all right. Ms. Betania
23 Rodriguez, Ms. Yolanda Aviles, and Ms. Maria
24 Bautista to please come up.

25 [Applause]

1 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening, everybody.

2 [0:59:43] [Spanish spoken] - - everybody.

3 [0:59:54] [Spanish spoken]. Everybody [1:00:29]

4 [Spanish spoken].

5 [Applause]

6 MS. BETANIA RODRIGUEZ: Good evening,
7 everyone. My name is Betania Rodriguez. And I
8 here today to support these beautiful changes
9 that's going to be in this school. So the first
10 thing, I think it's great because we have great,
11 great teachers. We have great parent that work
12 together to support. And we have the wonderful
13 principal. And I think my son is very happy
14 here, so that's going to be great for him. And
15 especially for me, I don't have to think when he
16 his finished fifth grade where I'm going to put
17 my son. So this is a really, really great
18 proposal. Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. YOLANDA AVILES: Okay, that's the way I
21 like to see you guys, united, because if you're
22 not united, we're not going to go anywhere.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. AVILES: I feel very comfortable in this
25 school. I feel blessed. I'm protected.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. AVILES: I'm very happy the school is a
3 team of very good teachers. My kid feels very
4 comfortable and safe in this school.

5 Okay. Thank you. The team - - is
6 incredible and Mrs. Rodriguez, too. If you need
7 something from her, you're always going to get
8 it.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. AVILES: Everything will be escalated -
11 - with this team we can not go wrong.

12 MS. MARIA BAUTISTA: [1:04:24] [Spanish
13 spoken].

14 [Applause]

15 MS. BAUTISTA: Good evening, everyone. My
16 name is Maria Bautista. And I worked with
17 Councilmember Diana Reyna for almost three
18 years. During those three years, I sat in
19 auditoriums where the Department of Education
20 turned its back countless times on the
21 community. And tonight, this is a victory for
22 us, for this community, for this school.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. BAUTISTA: I said I wasn't going to cry,
25 darn it.

1 [Laughter]

2 MS. BAUTISTA: I can do it, okay? I'm going
3 to pull it together. I want to thank this team,
4 this amazing team that's on stage, you the
5 parents for making it happening, for being here.
6 This is an amazing—you know why I tear up?
7 There was a student that said that she came from
8 another country and learned how to speak
9 English, but that's not the only thing that's
10 happening here, right? You're learning how to
11 speak Spanish, which is a lot of our native
12 tongue and something that we would lose
13 otherwise. So this school is a gem, the Nest
14 program that they have here, the rooftop garden,
15 and these are the things, these are the programs
16 that we have to expand throughout New York City.
17 And so this is an example for New York City
18 right here.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. BAUTISTA: I think I have said it, I
21 have expressed it many times when I was in
22 Councilmember Diana Reyna's office, I am for
23 this proposal to move forward for this
24 reconfiguration and I am doing it because I am
25 supporting the many voices in this community

1 that are supporting it, the many voices that
2 came to my office and said let's support this.
3 So today we are supporting this as a community.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. And I would like
6 to call on Ms. Milagros Lopez, Mr. Jordan
7 Margolis, and Ms. Idalia [phonetic], Idaling
8 [phonetic].

9 FEMALE VOICE: Idalia.

10 MS. WINNICKI: Idalia to please come up.

11 ISALINA: Good evening, everyone. My name
12 is Isalina - - and not only am I a parent. I'm
13 also a grandparent. My grandson had
14 difficulties. He's a very shy boy. I get
15 emotional, so, but I came to this school. And
16 not only—I know maybe two parents here from
17 where I live at. But the other parents just—I
18 would talk to them and they told me everything
19 is going to be fine. Ms. James is a wonderful
20 teacher. You are a wonderful principal, okay?
21 I mean, like the kids said it all the best.
22 They have fifth grade. To go into a middle
23 school, to know new people, probably even get
24 bullied, not that all schools, middle school
25 kids get bullied, I don't want to scare nobody,

1 but it happens. The new kids always get
2 picked on by the older kids, you know, not all
3 the time, but some of the time. I just want, I
4 mean, I'm all for this school expansion because
5 it will be the best thing. My grandson loves
6 this school.

7 [Applause]

8 ISALINA: And I love this school, too.
9 Thank you.

10 MR. MARGOLIS: Okay. I first start in
11 Spanish and it's a privilege for me to be able
12 to speak in English, too, so.

13 [Laughter]

14 MR. MARGOLIS: - - all right, but I would
15 like to give my two minutes to the voices of
16 other youngsters. We know that a number of you
17 all came prepared, so if anybody didn't get a
18 chance to speak earlier, now is a great time.
19 Okay, thank you, thank you.

20 [Applause]

21 ANGELICA: Hi. My name is Angelica. I'm in
22 Mr. Gorm's [phonetic] class. We should expand
23 to the eighth grade because in every grade, they
24 made me learn many things. And the second one
25 is that I think PS 84 is a very good school to

1 be all the way to eighth grade. The third
2 thing is that many kids work good as a team and
3 share with others and for the teachers to see us
4 grow more and to learn—and to see us learn.

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MR. MARGOLIS: Thank you so much. Any other
7 students who would like to—all right.

8 [Applause]

9 MALE VOICE: I would like PS 84 to expand to
10 junior high school because—

11 [Laughter]

12 MALE VOICE: —because I like the teachers
13 here and I also think that this school is smart.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. MARGOLIS: - - yeah, all right. Thank
16 you.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. ANGELIE GOMEZ: Good evening, everybody.
19 My name is Angelie Gomez and I'm from Class 3-
20 306. And I decided to say what I feel because
21 I'm new to the school and I think that this is a
22 great school and I would like PS 84 to expand
23 because the teachers are great and I like how
24 people treat me and people are just really good
25 in this school. And I think that I've learned a

1 lot in this school and I like how they treat
2 me. And the Spanish class, I love it and I love
3 how science and social studies, everything that
4 we learn, I like it.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. MARGOLIS: Thank you. Okay, we've got
7 time for one more. Okay.

8 REKWAN: Hi. My name is Rekwan. The reason
9 why PS 84 should expand the school is that you
10 can have the same teachers and then the teachers
11 would know the way students work. The teachers
12 that I remember most is Mr. Combs and Ms.
13 Goliani [phonetic] because they were the ones
14 that helped me most in math, reading, and ELE.
15 PS 84 is a great school.

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MR. MARGOLIS: Excellent. If there's
18 anybody else who had signed up, please consider
19 using some of your time to give to the kids
20 because they all really prepared a lot tonight.
21 Give them another round.

22 [Applause]

23 RAY: My name is Ray. And I like this
24 school because, I mean, we should expand PS 84
25 to eighth grade because this school is really

1 good. And a lot of my teachers believed in me
2 because I had a lot of difficulties with math
3 and reading. But now I—I'm in a high level or
4 in reading and my math is really good.

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MR. MARGOLIS: Okay.

7 JOHANNA: My name is Johanna. And I think
8 PS 84 should stand up to eighth grade because PS
9 84 is the best school and our teachers work hard
10 to teach us English and Spanish. And now that
11 we know English and Spanish, we could teach our
12 parents and our siblings. Now that we're in a
13 higher level because of our teachers, we could
14 read any type of book we want. And if
15 something—and if we don't understand something,
16 our teachers help us and we tried our best
17 because we never give up. I think PS 84 should
18 go up to sixth and seventh grade because PS 84
19 encourage kids to learn different type of
20 languages and things like science and
21 technology.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. MARGOLIS: Good. Are there other people
24 on the list who had signed up to—I'm sorry? A
25 lot of people. Okay, so let's hear from some

1 more-

2 MS. WINNICKI: [Interposing] There is one
3 more student that wants to speak, right?

4 MR. MARGOLIS: Oh, yeah. Okay.

5 FEMALE VOICE: Carly.

6 MR. MARGOLIS: How many more students want
7 to speak? Raise your hand if you—students who
8 haven't had a chance to speak yet, if you
9 haven't spoken yet. Okay. Okay.

10 FEMALE VOICE: I think PS 84 should go to
11 the expansion because this is a great school and
12 I love all of my teachers.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. MARGOLIS: All right. Thank you.

15 Sorry?

16 FEMALE VOICE: - -

17 MR. MARGOLIS: Oh, okay, okay. So this is—
18 you're going to be the last one for right now.
19 We're going to hear from some more parents,
20 okay? So thank you.

21 [Laughter]

22 CAITLIN: Hi. My name is Caitlin
23 [phonetic]. The reason why I think PS 84 should
24 expand the school because some of the students
25 already know all of the teachers, so they would

1 know like how they would react to the
2 different subjects.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
5 invite at this time Ms. Dinaomi [phonetic]
6 Fernandez, Elodia [phonetic] Cruz, and Anthony
7 Schultz.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. DINAOMI RODRIGUEZ: Good evening,
10 everyone. My name is Dinaomi Fernandez. And I
11 am wholeheartedly—I wholeheartedly want this
12 expansion to happen. I moved my son here last
13 year for the third grade. He is now in the
14 fourth grade. And we are both in love with this
15 school, especially Ms. Perkarowa [phonetic], who
16 was his first teacher here. This is a wonderful
17 opportunity to make sure that our students, our
18 families, all get educated together all the way
19 to the eighth grade and to avoid the unnecessary
20 hassles of oh my goodness, what is going to
21 happen to my child, how is he going to react
22 this new environment? I don't want that for my
23 son. That is why I put him here. And I don't
24 want that to occur anymore. Thank you.

25 [Applause]

1 MS. ELODIA CRUZ: Hi. My name is Elodia
2 Cruz. I have a fifth grader. I want to thank
3 everybody. Good evening. Thumbs up, not just
4 for my daughter, for all my fifth graders and
5 the fellows that follow. It was a headache just
6 thinking about it from the summer on what am I
7 going to do? Junior high school is a big step.
8 You have a lot of bullying at that stage. And I
9 think 84 is a home. I've been here for many
10 years. Very good memories and many more to
11 come. I'm going to get on that bus. And I hope
12 all my parents stick together and we're going to
13 ride that bus to the biggest horizons for our
14 children.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. CRUZ: Thank you.

17 MR. ANTHONY SANTIAGO: Hi guys. My name is
18 Anthony Santiago. And I have a child here in
19 fifth grade. I'm a product of the public school
20 system and grew up here in Williamsburg and know
21 how hard it is to make the transition from
22 elementary school to middle school. Anyone who
23 grew up here in the neighborhood knows that the
24 local middle schools were not up to par
25 academically or socially. So at 11-years old, I

1 had to take the train to 96th Street in
2 Manhattan, waking up extra early to take a one-
3 hour-and-15-minute ride to go to a school, a
4 trip that I did not want to take. So
5 performance for me at this school suffered.
6 With the lack of community and teacher support
7 that I did have in elementary school, I no
8 longer wanted to go to the school. And that's
9 why I support the expansion to eighth grade here
10 at PS 84 so that every child that feels at home
11 here can continue on to have a home here through
12 their transition years. Thank you.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
15 invite Ms. Jessica Anderson Winston, Ms. Adriana
16 Galoni, and Salvador Rios, please come up. All
17 right, we are going to move--yes? So another
18 student of mine. Adriana.

19 MS. ADRIANA GALONI: Good evening, everyone.
20 My name is Adriana - - I'm going to speak in
21 Spanish.

22 I used to have three kids in this school.
23 And now I have a girl, Andrea, in third grade.
24 My son graduated from here two years ago. I
25 used to tell Ms. Rodriguez I'm going to die, my

1 kid is going to have to go to another school,
2 I don't know what to do. I've been without
3 working for five years because I want to assist
4 in my school and have my own education. Two
5 years ago he graduated from here and they
6 recommend me the 318. They told me that it was
7 a good school. One afternoon of May, my son
8 arrived home red and someone kick him in the
9 back. One man, approximately 35-years old, jump
10 him, assault him. I don't want that to happen
11 to my daughters. So please, you know me for
12 many years. You were like my teacher, my
13 mother. You helped me. You teach me English
14 very good and I'm very thankful to you. But now
15 I need you to help my sons. I want them to be
16 prepared in the eighth grade to go to high
17 school. Thank you.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. WINNICKI: [1:21:11] [Spanish spoken].
20 We are going to move on and invite Brooke, Ms.
21 Brooke Parker, Ms. Alisa, can't read the-number
22 32, and Mr. Miguel Salazar.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. BROOKE PARKER: Hi. So if I am-I
25 address you guys as the DoE, you two are the

1 DoE? That's—okay. So I just, I want to say
2 I've got a kid in PS 84 in the Nest program.
3 It's a phenomenal program. I can't believe the
4 DoE let that happen. I've had a lot of
5 experience with the DoE over the past two years.
6 So I looked really carefully at this impact
7 statement. And I just want to say like many of
8 the people in the room I've lived here for over
9 20 years. And I watched the neighborhood change
10 and I watched it change under Bloomberg's
11 rezoning, which has increased housing
12 segregation more than explicit racism has. It's
13 beyond disturbing. And in the midst of that, we
14 saw our congresswoman give this school along
15 with either other schools in our district at
16 various times a magnet grant, which made an
17 enormous difference. It was designed to end
18 Latino isolation in this school and it worked.
19 It worked because of where the school was, but
20 also because of the trust that parents had in
21 the first principal, Gellan [phonetic], who is
22 here, and then several principals afterwards, to
23 this fantastic principal. It was a fantastic
24 gift to this community and very successful.

25 What concerns me deeply is that there's

1 absolutely no commitment to diversity in this
2 document. We have 150, something like 150
3 kindergarteners, maybe more. Next year we'll
4 only be allowed to have between 70 and 80 in
5 this. And the promise goes—okay. The promise
6 goes to zoned kids. And what that means is the
7 complexion of this school is going to change
8 dramatically. And unless there is a promise
9 from the DoE in a document that says you have
10 the commitment to diversity that we have when we
11 came to this school, I'm deeply concerned that
12 you'll be segregating this school and that
13 parents who should have access to come to this
14 school and should enjoy and benefit from the
15 dual language program as experts in Spanish
16 language won't have access to it. And that
17 matters. So without that, I can not—this is a
18 really awful educational impact statement,
19 talking only about numbers of people in the
20 building and not who is in the building.

21 [Applause]

22 MR. MIGUEL SALAZAR: Okay. My name is
23 Miguel Salazar. And I've been here in the
24 community about 20 years. And I want to shift
25 the paradigm a little bit and get away from the

1 emotional impact to the pragmatic impact.
2 Junior high school transition is truly one of
3 the most difficult transitions for our kids.
4 I've been an educational advocate for 35 years.
5 I was a hearing officer for the Board of
6 Education. And we lose our children in middle
7 school. We don't lose them in high school. So
8 what kids need is consistency, predictability,
9 structure, and they need discipline. And
10 discipline doesn't mean abuse. It means
11 discipline. So I certainly am in support of the
12 extension to the junior high school. I think
13 the points that you made are well-taken.
14 Unfortunately the Board of Education doesn't
15 necessarily operate that way. I tell people if
16 you expect logic and rationality from an
17 illogical, irrational system, you're going to be
18 very disappointed. So while we do really need
19 the extension—I think it's a great thing—I think
20 there are a lot of issues that need to be
21 explored, the issue of integrated children with
22 differences, with "disabilities," the issue of
23 access for everyone, access to the upper floors,
24 all of those issues need to be considered.
25 Having said all of that, I, again, do really

1 think that it's a great idea. Thank you.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. And I would like
4 to invite Ms. Jennifer Gutierrez to say a few
5 words on behalf of our Councilwoman Diana Reyna,
6 who just notified Jennifer that she's still
7 struggling to come.

8 MS. JENNIFER GUTIERREZ: Thank you. Hi
9 everyone. [1:25:54] [Spanish spoken]. First I
10 just want to thank your leadership and our
11 parents and all our students. The fact that
12 you're here speaking and advocating for the
13 expansion, children, is a true example of the
14 kind of education that the school offers. On
15 behalf of the councilmember, we are in full
16 support of this expansion. On behalf of myself,
17 who is a product of public education, I wish
18 that I attended a school that offered the unique
19 programs that PS 84 does. Like-to echo what
20 everyone else has said, the transition between
21 elementary school and junior high is extremely
22 difficult. The kind of environment that the
23 administration and that the parents and the
24 teachers harbor here is a nurturing one and one
25 that we can't really guarantee that your

1 children will continue to have in junior high.
2 We know that the high quality middle schools
3 that we do have in the district are overcrowded.
4 This expansion will help alleviate that.

5 Again, just to reiterate, we are in full
6 support of the expansion. Thank you to the
7 parents for being so active and so involved.
8 And thank you to the—to Ms. Rodriguez and to the
9 Department of Education. Oddly enough, this is
10 one of the first times that we can say we're
11 partners. And the fact that they're supporting
12 this expansion is a testament that they are
13 behind our public schools.

14 Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. The speaker list
17 is now exhausted. Again, we welcome any
18 comments and feedback you may have at any time
19 before the Panel for Educational Policy votes on
20 this proposal at its October 15th meeting. The
21 email address and phone number where comments
22 may be made are, again,
23 dl4proposals@schools.nyc.gov or at (212) 374-
24 0208. Thank you for your participation. This
25 joint public hearing is now closed.

1 [Applause]

2 [END 368254]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the
4 best of my ability.

5
6 Signature 

7 Date: October 14, 2014
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