



### **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: January 18, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of P.S. 226 (10X226) to a K-5 School

Date of Panel Vote: January 19, 2011

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### **Summary of Proposal**

P.S. 226 (10X226 or “P.S. 226”) is an existing zoned elementary school located at 1950 Sedgwick Avenue, Bronx, NY 10453, in Community School District 10. P.S. 226 currently serves students in kindergarten through fourth grade and offers a pre-kindergarten program. P.S. 226 is located in school buildings X826 and X827.

On December 3, 2010, the Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to implement a “grade expansion” so that P.S. 226 will serve kindergarten through fifth grade. This means that P.S. 226 would continue to serve existing students as they are promoted to fifth grade in the 2011-2012 school year. P.S. 226 would complete its grade expansion in September 2011, at which point it would enroll students in kindergarten through fifth grade and continue to offer a pre-kindergarten program. If a grade expansion is approved, total enrollment of P.S. 226 would be increased by approximately 65-75 students.

The DOE strives to ensure that all students in New York City have access to high-quality schools at every stage of their education. Having elementary schools that terminate in different grades (i.e., K-4 versus K-5) creates challenges for students who must leave elementary schools after fourth grade.

Elementary schools typically enroll students from kindergarten through fifth grade (K-5). The proposed grade expansion of P.S. 226 will help standardize elementary school grade spans in District 10, giving P.S. 226 students the typical six years in elementary school. Once P.S. 226 serves students in grades K-5 in 2011-2012, fifth-grade students will be able to apply to middle schools through the Middle School Choice process and will have greater access to the middle school options that begin in grade six.

The buildings in which P.S. 226 is located will have space to accommodate the fifth grade students. School building X826 has a target capacity of 228 and a target utilization of 125%. School building X827 has a target capacity of 201 and a target utilization rate of 59%. While the

school technically has two building codes, the buildings operate as one building. No further construction or facilities changes are necessary to implement the grade expansion, but the school will be one full size administrative space under the baseline allocation set forth by the Citywide Instructional Footprint (“Footprint”). The administration of P.S. 226 is aware of this and is nevertheless in support of the proposed grade expansion. This minor shortage of administrative space will not impact the provision of instruction.

The DOE does not anticipate that the proposed grade expansion would impact students with disabilities or English Language Learners (ELLs). P.S. 226 currently offers a bilingual Spanish kindergarten class, a bilingual Spanish bridge class in the first and second grades, an ESL class in second grade and an ESL class in grades three and four. P.S. 226 would continue to meet the needs of its students with disabilities and ELL students in all grades.

P.S. 226 currently operates one section of a full-day pre-kindergarten program. Barring unforeseen circumstances, we expect pre-kindergarten to continue being offered at P.S. 226.

P.S. 226 is one of the few remaining elementary schools in District 10 serving students in grades K-4. This proposed expansion is one of the current efforts to standardize elementary school grade spans in District 10.

In particular, the DOE has proposed the grade expansion of P.S. 396, another K-4 school, in a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”), which would change the grade span of the school from K-4 to K-5.

Students zoned to both P.S. 396 and P.S. 226 for elementary school are zoned to M.S. 390, which serves grades 5-8, for middle school. In a third EIS, the DOE has proposed the truncation of M.S. 390 from a 5-8 school to a 6-8 school. This will allow two elementary schools—P.S. 226 and P.S. 396—to have a grade span of K-5 and M.S. 390 to serve articulating students in grades 6-8. The grade spans of P.S. 226 and M.S. 390 currently align, and if both proposals are approved, they will continue to do so.

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

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at P.S. 226 (10X226) on January 11, 2011. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the hearing, and 3 people spoke. Present at the meeting were District 10 Superintendent Sonia Menendez; Community Education Council 10 President Marvin Shelton; P.S. 226 Principal Gloria Darden; P.S. 226 School Leadership Team representatives Kathleen Danieli, Linda Buchwalter, Danielle Jawski, Tilleris Emanuel, Robert Romano, Ivelise Tamayo and Jimmy Gonzalez.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing:

1. All three commenters voiced support for the proposal.

2. A commenter asked about the process for voting on the proposal and the chances of the proposal being passed.

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

There were no written or oral comments submitted to the DOE.

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

Comment 1 expresses support for the proposal, and as such does not require a response.

In response to Comment 2 concerning the voting process, consistent with the Education Law and Chancellor's Regulation A-190, the DOE published an EIS describing the proposal to implement a grade expansion of P.S. 226 on December 3, 2010, thereby commencing the public review process at least 45 days in advance of January 19, 2011, the date on which the Panel for Educational Policy ("PEP") will vote on this proposal. The DOE accepted public comments from the community via e-mail, phone and mail up to 24 hours in advance of the PEP's vote. All comments received are addressed in this document, which is made public and provided to the PEP prior to its vote. The PEP, which consists of 13 appointed members and the Chancellor, will vote on the proposal at a meeting to be held on January 19, 2011. That meeting will take place at Brooklyn Technical High School at 6 p.m., at which time community members will be given another opportunity to share their thoughts about the proposal with the PEP. If the proposal passes, P.S. 226 will have a fifth grade in September 2011.

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

No changes in the proposal were made in response to public feedback.