



Notice  
October 3, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott  
Chancellor

## **Proposed Temporary Re-siting of P.S. 51 (02M051) in Building M816 Beginning in the 2011-2012 School Year**

### **I. Description of the subject and purpose of the proposed item under consideration.**

On September 8, 2011, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Emergency Declaration temporarily re-siting P.S. 51 Elias Howe (02M051, “P.S. 51”), an existing zoned elementary school, from building M051, which is located at 525 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street in Manhattan’s District 2, to leased space at 323 East 91<sup>st</sup> Street also in Manhattan’s District 2, known as “Our Lady of Good Counsel,” or building M816. The emergency re-siting took effect on September 8, 2011 and will be effective for six months. The DOE is now proposing to extend the temporary re-siting of P.S. 51 until September 2013, at which point P.S. 51 would move to its new building, which is currently being constructed on property adjacent to the school’s former site.

As stated in the Emergency Declaration, the re-siting is necessary for the health, safety, and general welfare of students. Currently, three major construction projects are taking place at sites adjacent to M051 property. Among these is a multi-year project to create a platform over the Hudson Rail lines adjacent to the school, on which a high-rise building will subsequently be built. Another nearby major construction project is the construction of a new facility for P.S. 51, which is taking place adjacent to the current building M051. In combination, the projects are expected to increase the noise levels surrounding the school building, affect air quality, and make the operation of P.S. 51 impractical in building M051 during the current and the 2012-2013 school year.

After extensive discussions with the school community and local elected officials, and efforts to mitigate the concerns while remaining in the M051 building, the DOE began to explore various ways to accommodate P.S. 51 in an alternate location until the construction of its new facility is completed. Building M816 is located approximately four miles from building M051 and was scheduled to be unused during the 2011-12 school year. While M816 is not in the immediate neighborhood of P.S. 51, it is located in District 2, and is the only building in District 2 with sufficient space to accommodate all grades of P.S. 51 in one location. Other sites closer to the P.S. 51 building would have required split-siting the school in two locations, with both pieces co-located with other schools.

The DOE anticipates completion of P.S. 51’s new facility by September 2013, though construction on the other projects adjacent to the school is expected to continue beyond that time.

Nonetheless, P.S. 51 will move to its new building upon its completion in September 2013 because a large part of the increase to noise levels and impact on air quality will subside with the completion of the new P.S. 51 facility.

P.S. 51 is a zoned district elementary school that serves 334 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. While P.S. 51 had offered a pre-kindergarten program in its former location, it will not offer a pre-kindergarten program while it is located in building M816.

In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) published on October 3, 2011, the DOE proposes to open a new zoned district elementary school (02MTBD, “New School”) beginning in September 2012, in building M816. If that EIS is approved, New School would offer a kindergarten class at M816 in 2012-2013, and would eventually expand to serve kindergarten through fifth grade.

If these two proposals are approved, New School would be temporarily co-located in M816 with P.S. 51 during the 2012-2013 school year. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias. If these proposals are approved, the combined enrollment in 2012-2013 of New School and P.S. 51 at M816 would be approximately 340-445 students, yielding a building utilization rate of 89-117%. (The concept of “utilization rate” is explained below.)

As noted, currently, the DOE plans to move P.S. 51 from M816 to its new permanent site adjacent to its former site in building M051 after the 2012-13 school year. If P.S. 51’s new site is not ready at that time, the DOE would issue a separate EIS describing alternate siting plans for P.S. 51.

M816 is a leased facility with one year remaining on the lease. The lease on this facility expires August 31, 2012. The DOE is in active discussions with the Archdiocese of New York to obtain a long-term lease on this facility. If the DOE is not successful in obtaining a long-term lease on M816, future plans for New School and P.S. 51 would be proposed in a separate EIS.

## **II. Information regarding where the full text of the proposed item may be obtained.**

The Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) can be found on the Department of Education’s Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/Nov2011PEP.htm>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in P.S. 51 main office.

## **III. Submission of public comment.**

Written comments can be sent to [D02Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D02Proposals@schools.nyc.gov).

Oral comments can be left at (212) 374-3466.

**IV. The name, office, address, email and telephone number of the city district representative, knowledgeable on the item under consideration, from whom information may be obtained concerning the item.**

Name: Benjamin Taylor  
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning  
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007  
Email: [D02Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D02Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
Phone: (212) 374-3466

**V. Date, time and place of joint public hearings for this proposal.**

Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.  
P.S. 51 / Building M816  
323 East 91<sup>st</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10128

Questions about the proposal should be directed as indicated in section IV above.

Speaker sign-up will begin 30 minutes before the hearing and will close 15 minutes after the start.

**VI. Date, time and place of the Panel for Educational Policy meeting at which the Panel will vote on the proposed item.**

November 17, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.  
Frank Sinatra School of the Arts High School  
35-12 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Queens, NY 11106