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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
WHEELS Expansion - 1/22/13**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 SUPERINTENDENT ANTHONY LODICO: This is a  
3 joint hearing of the Department of Education,  
4 the Community Education Council, and the School  
5 Leadership Team for the proposed grade expansion  
6 of Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning  
7 School to a K--excuse me.

8 [Long Pause]

9 SUPERINTENDENT ANTHONY LODICO: Testing,  
10 testing. Sorry, take 2.

11 All right, let me begin again. This a joint  
12 public hearing of the Department of Education,  
13 the Community Education Council, and the School  
14 Leadership Team for the proposed grade expansion  
15 of Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning  
16 School to a K through 12 school beginning in the  
17 2014-2015 school year. I am the Manhattan High  
18 School Superintendent. My name is Anthony  
19 Lodico.

20 We have asked the District 6 Community  
21 Education Council and the School Leadership  
22 Teams in building M143 to participate in this  
23 joint public hearing. I am joined tonight by  
24 Principal Kimmel and Karina Demorizi from the  
25 WHEELS SLT.

1           A CEC six member confirmed participation  
2 has not yet arrived. We will accommodate them  
3 at the first opportune moment when they arrive.

4           The hearing is being recorded. The purpose  
5 of the hearing is for you to provide comments  
6 about the proposal. Before I describe the  
7 proposal, I want to make sure you are all aware  
8 of the opportunity to provide your input. All  
9 of those who wish to speak must sign up in the  
10 speaker sign-up area now in the lobby. It's  
11 located just out the doors of the auditorium.  
12 The sign-up list will close in 15 minutes at 7  
13 p.m. Speakers will be given the floor in the  
14 order that they are signed up. All comments are  
15 limited to two minutes.

16           There may be elected officials who arrive at  
17 different times throughout the evening. If they  
18 wish to speak, we will do our best to  
19 accommodate them at the first opportune moment  
20 as well. Those who are here at the start of the  
21 public comment segment will be asked to speak  
22 first.

23           All comments will be mentioned in the  
24 Analysis of Public Comments to be published and  
25 made available to the Panel for Educational

1 Policy before the Panel votes. That vote is  
2 scheduled for March 11th, 2013.

3 In addition, we welcome any comments and  
4 feedback you may have at any time before the  
5 Panel votes on both proposals. The email  
6 address and phone number where comments may be  
7 made are D06--that's D as in district  
8 06Proposals@schools.nyc.gov. Or you can call  
9 (212) 374-3466. So again, comments can be made  
10 tonight in person. They can be emailed to  
11 D06Proposals@schools.nyc.gov. And/or you can  
12 call (212) 374-3466.

13 Again, I want to remind you that a CEC 6  
14 member confirmed participation but has not yet  
15 arrived. We will accommodate them when they do  
16 arrive. Thank you. And again, you can sign up  
17 to speak until 7 p.m.

18 [Long Pause]

19 All right, at this time, I'm going to read  
20 the proposal summary. The New York City  
21 Department of Education is proposing to expand  
22 the grades served by Washington Heights  
23 Expeditionary Learning School, also known as  
24 WHEELS, from sixth through twelfth grades to  
25 kindergarten through twelfth grades. WHEELS is

1 an existing secondary school serving students  
2 in sixth through twelfth grades in building M143  
3 located at 511 West 182nd Street, New York, New  
4 York, 10033, in Community School District 6.  
5 WHEELS is currently co-located in building M143  
6 with I.S. 143 Eleanor Roosevelt Intermediate  
7 School, also known as I.S. 143, an existing  
8 unscreened middle school serving students in  
9 sixth through eighth grades. A co-location  
10 means that two or more school organizations are  
11 located in the same building and may share  
12 common spaces such as auditoriums, gymnasiums,  
13 and cafeterias.

14 WHEELS currently serves 636 students in  
15 sixth through twelfth grades. The school is  
16 part of the Expeditionary Learning network of  
17 schools, a partnership of New York City Outward  
18 Bound and the Department of Education. The  
19 Expeditionary Learning schools aim to inspire  
20 and engage students and teachers by providing  
21 professional development, curriculum planning  
22 resources, and new school structures to boost  
23 student engagement, character, and achievements.  
24 New York City Outward Bound schools are college  
25 preparatory schools that are rooted in the

1 principles and practices of Outward Bound,  
2 which include active, real-world learning, a  
3 rigorous academic curriculum, membership in an  
4 advisory program, and team building adventures  
5 outside of the classroom.

6 If this proposal is approved, beginning in  
7 the 2014-2015 school year, WHEELS will serve  
8 kindergarten students in addition to its sixth  
9 through twelfth grade students, and will add one  
10 grade per year until it reaches full scale in  
11 2019-2020 and serves students in kindergarten  
12 through twelfth grades in building M143.

13 WHEELS currently admits sixth grade students  
14 through the District 6 Middle School Choice  
15 Process using an unscreened admissions method  
16 and gives priority to fifth grade students  
17 enrolled in P.S. 115, P.S. 132, P.S. 189, and to  
18 residents residing in the zone. Eighth grade  
19 students enrolled in WHEELS can stay at WHEELS  
20 for ninth grade and continue their education or  
21 choose to apply to other high schools through  
22 the Citywide High School Admissions Process.

23 Other eighth grade students throughout New  
24 York City may also apply to enroll in WHEELS for  
25 ninth grade through the Citywide High School

1 Admissions Process. Depending on seat  
2 availability, WHEELS admits high school students  
3 through a limited unscreened admissions process,  
4 which means that WHEELS gives priority to  
5 students who demonstrate interest by attending  
6 one or several of the following events:  
7 information sessions, school tour, open house or  
8 middle school fair, then to other students and  
9 residents of District 6.

10 If this proposal is approved, WHEELS will be  
11 a choice elementary school, which means it will  
12 be open for admission to all students in  
13 District 6, without giving priority to students  
14 who live in any particular zone. WHEELS will  
15 admit kindergarten through fifth grade students  
16 through a school-based application consistent  
17 with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. For  
18 additional information about admissions  
19 policies, please refer to Section III.A of the  
20 Educational Impact Statement describing this  
21 proposal.

22 I.S. 143 currently serves 498 students in  
23 sixth through eighth grades. I.S. 143 currently  
24 admits sixth grade students through the District  
25 6 Middle School Choice Process using an

1 unscreened admissions method and gives priority  
2 to fifth grade students enrolled in P.S. 115,  
3 P.S. 132, and P.S. 189, and to residents  
4 residing in the zone. This proposal is not  
5 expected to impact the admissions process at  
6 I.S. 143.

7         According to the 2011-2012 Enrollment  
8 Capacity Utilization Report, M143 has the  
9 capacity to serve 1,602 students. In 2012-2013,  
10 WHEELS serves 636 students and I.S. 143 serves  
11 498 students, for a total enrollment of 1,134  
12 students in building M143, yielding a building  
13 utilization rate of 71%. This means the  
14 building is underutilized and has space to  
15 accommodate additional students. In 2019-2020,  
16 WHEELS is projected to serve 880 to 1,005  
17 students and I.S. 143 is projected to serve 405  
18 to 435 students in building M143, yielding a  
19 building utilization rate of 80 to 90%. If this  
20 proposal is approved, there will be sufficient  
21 space in M143 to accommodate the proposed  
22 elementary school grades of WHEELS and the  
23 existing grades of I.S. 143 and WHEELS.

24         Building M143 also has a mini-building,  
25 M859, which currently is occupied by grades six

1 through eight of Community Health Academy of  
2 the Heights. Community Health Academy of the  
3 Heights shares common spaces, such as  
4 auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeteria with  
5 WHEELS and I.S. 143 in building M143. In June  
6 2009, the DOE announced that Community Health  
7 Academy of the Heights will vacate M859 by the  
8 2013-2014 school year. Building M143 also  
9 houses a community-based organization, Alianza  
10 Dominicana, and a school-based health clinic and  
11 dental room. The DOE does not anticipate that  
12 this proposal will impact these programs or  
13 partnerships.

14 The proposal for the grade expansion of  
15 WHEELS initially came from the school community.  
16 The grade expansion would allow WHEELS to serve  
17 elementary, middle, and high school grades at  
18 full scale, and create the first district school  
19 in District 6 to serve kindergarten through  
20 twelfth grades. This suggests a high level of  
21 satisfaction within the school and its parent  
22 body and an expectation that an expanded WHEELS  
23 will suit the needs of families in District 6.

24 [Pause]

25 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: At this time, we're

1 going to start the comments. I'm going to  
2 turn it over to Principal Kimmel.

3 FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] ...make that  
4 announcement about the CEC.

5 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Yes, one more time,  
6 just to remind you, a CEC member confirmed  
7 participation. Have they arrived yet?

8 FEMALE VOICE: No.

9 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: No. Okay, they have  
10 not arrived. We will accommodate them at the  
11 first opportune moment if they arrive. Thank  
12 you. And now, I present Principal Kimmel.

13 PRINCIPAL BRETT KIMMEL: Thank you,  
14 Superintendent Lodico. Good evening. My name  
15 is Brett Kimmel. I am the Principal of  
16 Washington Heights Expeditionary Learning  
17 School, commonly known as WHEELS, and also I'd  
18 just quickly like to introduce - - to the - -  
19 Vielka Nunez is also joining us as a WHEELS SLT  
20 member.

21 I'd like to thank everyone for coming this  
22 evening and participating in this process which  
23 represents a very important opportunity, not  
24 only for WHEELS as a school, but I think for the  
25 entire Washington Heights community.

1           Several years ago, as many of you know, I  
2 was a principal in this building, I.S. 143, when  
3 it was one large middle school. During that  
4 time, many students--many families came to me to  
5 inquire as to why there weren't more high  
6 quality high school options for students and  
7 families here in Washington Heights. Why, they  
8 asked me, would they have to leave their  
9 community for - - to have a high quality high  
10 school. Why did they have to go all the way  
11 downtown - - to a different borough for a high  
12 quality high school education.

13           At the same time, as a middle school  
14 educator, I would stay in touch with former  
15 students of mine. And this was before Facebook,  
16 so we'd actually have a face to face  
17 conversation as opposed to on the computer. And  
18 I would hear one of two stories in my former  
19 students' high school experience. Of course, I  
20 would hear the wonderful stories of students  
21 getting all their credits and passing all their  
22 Regents Exams and entering into a pre-college  
23 program. I'd hear great stories of former  
24 students of mine graduating high school and  
25 going on to college. And those are the stories

1 that made - - and families very happy, very  
2 satisfied, as you know.

3 But too often, I'd hear the other side of  
4 the story. Too often, I would hear stories of  
5 students who - - be successful in middle school  
6 who would come back and tell me that in terms of  
7 their age, they were supposed to be an eleventh  
8 grader, but in terms of the amount of credits  
9 they had, they were considered a ninth grader.  
10 Or that they were just a number in a huge  
11 school, and they were falling through the  
12 cracks. Or they didn't have the supports that  
13 they felt were needed for them to be successful  
14 in high school and eventually graduating and  
15 going to college.

16 And for those two reasons, the idea to  
17 create a new small school to serve this  
18 community was born. And specifically we wanted  
19 to work with students in grade six through grade  
20 twelve so that we didn't say goodbye to them in  
21 middle school. We kept them for four more years  
22 and we provided a high quality high school  
23 option that parents were asking for and this  
24 community deserves. And we've also been working  
25 so hard for middle school students - - to see

1       them off to a high school that we didn't know  
2       whether they were going to have success.

3               So we opened in September 2006 with 150  
4       students, and we grew by keeping those students  
5       and adding new students - - each year. The - -  
6       last year, we graduated our first high school  
7       class in June 2012. And we remain now sixth  
8       through twelfth grade school of about 625  
9       students as a superintendent.

10              We've had a great deal of success. We're an  
11       A-rated school - - progress reports. We're in  
12       the 96th percentile, meaning we're scoring at a  
13       rate better than 96% of all schools citywide,  
14       not just in Washington Heights, but citywide.  
15       We've been asked by the Department of Education  
16       to share our best practice with other schools as  
17       the Department of Education helps them improve  
18       on their school.

19              And with all of this, we're very proud of  
20       our success. But at the same time, we're not  
21       satisfied. We graduated our first students, and  
22       90% of those students are now in college--

23              [Applause]

24              PRINCIPAL KIMMEL: But I'll tell you what I  
25       told them, which is that I will be happy and - -

1 to cheer - - until they graduate from college.  
2 So the jury's still out on that. And in fact,  
3 nationally, the statistics are against us, and  
4 they're against our kids. 8% of students from  
5 low-income families graduate college. So if 25%  
6 of our students are graduating college, we're  
7 tripling the national average, but we're still  
8 75 percentage points below what we know we want  
9 and where we can be. So there's work to do  
10 there, and we're going to do it.

11 At the same time, there's a huge challenge  
12 on the other end of our school, which is our  
13 sixth graders - - . And each year when our kids  
14 come to us, and as the superintendent indicated,  
15 they come from the District. They come from  
16 various schools. We don't choose them; we don't  
17 interview them; we don't audition them. We  
18 don't do anything to them. We just get a list  
19 of who they are. But we test - - to find out  
20 what they know and - - . And we find  
21 consistently that - - year that our kids are  
22 entering sixth grade on about the third or  
23 fourth grade level on average in both reading  
24 and math. And so what that means is that we're  
25 playing a big game of catch up, right? Over

1 three years in middle school, we're trying to  
2 do five years of work so by the time they get to  
3 ninth grade, they can go into a rigorous high  
4 school curriculum, and they can be successful.

5 And we're doing well, but it's very, very  
6 hard work. And so - - has now come to say if we  
7 have an opportunity to enter students and  
8 families into our school community earlier, in  
9 elementary school, and not just spend 7 years  
10 together, but spend 12 years together, and we're  
11 having great results in 7 years, how amazing and  
12 tremendous - - our results would be after 12  
13 years together.

14 And so for that reason, we've entered into  
15 this - - with the Department of Education to  
16 create an elementary school to provide more  
17 options for students and families at an earlier  
18 age here in Washington Heights.

19 I'd like to add and just highlight the one  
20 piece of the program proposal that the  
21 superintendent referred to, because I know it's  
22 an ongoing question. It's a question the WHEELS  
23 community help created. It was a question as  
24 our schools grew. And it would be a question  
25 for many people here and many people not here if

1 WHEELS continues to expand elementary grades,  
2 and that's how is the building going to be  
3 utilized.

4       And I'd like to point out to you that  
5 according to the Department of Education and  
6 according to the summary that the superintendent  
7 read, the building's being utilized right now -  
8 - 71% utilization rate. What that means  
9 essentially is that there are classrooms in our  
10 building that could be allocated to another  
11 school. And my feeling is that if WHEELS does  
12 not grow or if 143 were not to grow, that the  
13 DOE would put another school into this building.  
14 They'd look at the building, and they'd see an  
15 opportunity. They'd see a building that's being  
16 underutilized, and they might say--I have no  
17 idea if they would. But they might say, here's  
18 an opportunity to build another school. And so  
19 I think who better then to use that space than  
20 the school that's already in this building. And  
21 when there's a need in the community, and when  
22 there's a need on our end to do better at  
23 elementary school, I think, why not us.

24       And so thank you for coming. I'm very eager  
25 to hear your comments. I hope you'll be in

1 support of this. And I know that - - would  
2 like to share with you their thoughts as well.  
3 Thank you.

4 [Pause]

5 MS. KARINA DEMORIZI: [Foreign language  
6 spoken].

7 [Long Pause]

8 MS. DEMORIZI: [Speaking through  
9 interpreter]. ...as the President of the Parents'  
10 Association and WHEELS. As all of you know, we  
11 are very happy - - proposed. We had the meeting  
12 two weeks ago. We were talking about the school  
13 - - , and I told the parents that that was very  
14 important. - - opportunity for our children to  
15 have the success that our children from 6 to 12  
16 already have, the children of our community.  
17 I'm happy that I've see the success and we've  
18 got - - that we will have this opportunity.  
19 Thank you.

20 MS. VIELKA NUNEZ: [Speaking through  
21 interpreter] I am Vielka Nunez. I'm the Vice  
22 President of PTA - - . As Karina already told  
23 our - - members and the - - of the school. As a  
24 parent and as a member of the PTA, I would like  
25 the school to - - . As a part of the community,

1 I took pride in their success with my  
2 daughter, and I would like the other children of  
3 the community to come to school. And I - - the  
4 idea of having a child be in the school since  
5 the beginning to the end. Since the school is  
6 very good, the option is very good that the kids  
7 start early. So I feel very happy that having a  
8 school like that starting since the beginning to  
9 the end in this community. So I know that  
10 starting at the beginning, we are going to do  
11 better - - . Thank you.

12 [Pause]

13 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: I see a CEC 6 member  
14 has confirmed attendance and participation.  
15 Have they arrived?

16 [Pause]

17 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Since they have not  
18 yet arrived, we will accommodate them at the  
19 first opportune moment when they do arrive.  
20 We've now concluded the formal presentations.  
21 We have 11 speakers who have signed up to speak,  
22 so I'm going to call them up. The first  
23 speaker, number 1, I'm just going to call you by  
24 the first name. The first speaker is Rosa.  
25 Rosa De Jesus [phonetic]. Okay, we're going to

1 go to the second speaker, Deana [phonetic].

2 Deana? Deana - - ?

3 [Pause]

4 FEMALE VOICE: [Foreign Language Spoken].

5 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Wendy Nemteanu?

6 [Pause]

7 MS. WENDY NEMTEANU: Good evening. Thank  
8 you. Thank you for the opportunity of coming  
9 and giving us all the information that we  
10 needed. I think it's very important as a  
11 community and as a parent to have this type of  
12 information for us and for the future of our  
13 kids.

14 Just very quickly, I am a parent of a kid  
15 who comes to the school here, and I am extremely  
16 honored how well my son is adopting, learning in  
17 the program - - . I also have a kindergartener  
18 in another school who would be extremely,  
19 extremely proud to come to the WHEELS academy as  
20 a first grader. So I'd just like to say thank  
21 you and also apologize for the number of parents  
22 who are not here. I think we've got to work on  
23 that, the parent association - - .

24 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you for being  
25 here.

1 MS. NEMTEANU: Thank you.

2 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: The next speaker,  
3 Ms. Vasquez. I think it's Maria. I can't read  
4 the first name.

5 [Pause]

6 MS. MARIA VASQUEZ: [Speaking through  
7 interpreter] Good evening. I have to say that  
8 I'm proud of being here tonight and having the  
9 opportunity to express. I feel sad - - in this  
10 auditorium because my dad - - me and my  
11 daughter. I feel sad of being here right now at  
12 this moment 'cause he told me - - school here.  
13 I really appreciate - - to the staff members of  
14 143. I'm really thankful for my dad, my - -  
15 because of him my daughter - - . I'm so sorry -  
16 - . She took care of - - her own mother. I'm  
17 really thankful to her, even though she's not  
18 with us any more. I also - - . I'm thankful  
19 for all the staff members at 143. And I'm  
20 thankful to WHEELS - - my other daughter here so  
21 she can continue the same path and the same  
22 education that she received here so she can  
23 continue in the future. And I'm favorable with  
24 whatever's being done with the kids in  
25 kindergarten, that - - to be - - kindergarten

1 through fifth grade. - - the community will  
2 now be able to receive one education and - -  
3 from one place to the other. I'm really happy  
4 because from here, they can just - - to college.  
5 Thank you.

6 [Pause]

7 INTERPRETER: [Foreign Language Spoken].

8 Wanda Cruceta?

9 [Pause]

10 MS. WANDA CRUCETA: First off, I would like  
11 to say that I agree with what the other parents  
12 spoke about - -. My child also graduated from  
13 this school, and it is a very good school, and I  
14 really appreciate what they did.

15 But we're here about WHEELS, and I think--  
16 and I wrote it down 'cause I don't want to  
17 forget anything--I think that WHEELS has a high  
18 quality education. I've seen it in both of my  
19 children. And I'm very appreciative of that.  
20 And they also had something that - -. They  
21 also have the long-term site. So it's not all  
22 about the high quality education, but the - -  
23 that I value is there. I can see it in  
24 teachers. I can see it in all the staff at  
25 WHEELS.

1           So I think that this proposal is a  
2 challenge. Yet I think that WHEELS can take  
3 this challenge. We need the high quality  
4 education to be expanded into other fields. And  
5 in this case, if it's for elementary school, I  
6 think, that WHEELS can most definitely take this  
7 challenge. I think that they will - - great.

8           So what I'm trying to say is that I am in  
9 favor of it. I do believe in WHEELS. Yet there  
10 is only one concern that I have. And I think  
11 it's not just Rosa's. And my only concern is  
12 about the facilities. You know, sharing a  
13 facility with older children and small children  
14 is my only one concern. You know, when I say  
15 this, I'm talking about the physical part.  
16 Older children going into the same bathroom as  
17 small children are going to be in the same  
18 hallways, walking the same hallways. It's about  
19 safety. It's the only concern that I have. Yet  
20 I do wish and hope that this program at the  
21 facility will get - - something or that WHEELS  
22 will be provided in a certain facility, because  
23 I do believe WHEELS. I do believe that it is a  
24 great school.

25           SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you. Thank

1 you for sharing that.

2 INTERPRETER: Joyse Ribera.

3 [Pause]

4 MS. JOYSE RIBERA: Good evening, everyone.  
5 My daughter--thank you for coming. My daughter  
6 is in sixth grade in WHEELS. She just started  
7 this year. And I'm very proud and happy because  
8 I was able to see the difference between her  
9 primary school and what she's doing right now.  
10 She - - .

11 And now I have a three-year old who's going  
12 to pre-K in September and then next year, she's  
13 going to go to kindergarten. And when I heard  
14 the proposal, for me, it was the best because,  
15 you know, I was also worried about my daughter  
16 going to high school somewhere else and then  
17 having my other one going somewhere else. I  
18 mean, it was very scary. So why not? I see the  
19 difference. I can see how much my daughter  
20 improved. And I know my son, who's going to go  
21 into the same class.

22 So, you know, as many the parents within  
23 WHEELS, we are happy. We are grateful. And I  
24 hope for the best and - - .

25 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you.

1 INTERPRETER: Jose Gonzalez.

2 [Pause]

3 MR. JOSE GONZALEZ: [Speaking through  
4 interpreter] Good evening. I am Jose Gonzalez,  
5 organizer of - - , - - sisters, - - . - - ,  
6 they - - spoken to the parents. And they're  
7 being proposed - - as a gift. And - - of your  
8 space. And since traveling from the Department  
9 of Education, the DOE, to - - my public  
10 education - - the parents and teachers to  
11 teachers, principals to principals, and the  
12 whole community.

13 In this school wants to be - - the school  
14 with the - - school - - would be functioning  
15 three schools inside one building. - - at the  
16 same time - - cafeterias, libraries, - - , space,  
17 and there's going to be pressure - -. - - a lot  
18 of pressure and - - a lot of constant pressure  
19 because the school has to use the space, and  
20 they don't - - and they don't know - - the other  
21 one.

22 So my proposal is for WHEELS to continue - -  
23 as a high school school and to be able to  
24 publish programs, exchange programs with college  
25 students, and to allow the growth and

1 development at 143 and for the elementary  
2 classes we have. We have 189, 115, and 132 - -  
3 . We do have enough elementary schools in the  
4 community. And WHEELS should just focus on the  
5 continuing to do a job - - high school. Thank  
6 you.

7 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you.

8 [Pause]

9 INTERPRETER: Carmen Rojas?

10 [Pause]

11 MS. CARMEN ROJAS: [Speaking through  
12 interpreter] Good evening. I am Carmen Rojas  
13 from the organization Parents Advocating for  
14 Children, an advocate for all schools, - -  
15 through sixth. - - P.S. 132. I - - and I have  
16 information on how good the school is going and  
17 with the high school program.

18 The Department of Education is planning  
19 District 6 and the society - - parents when they  
20 have new opinions, but they - - on their own.  
21 And I'm - - focus - - doing right now that the  
22 school can continue in a specialized school from  
23 Washington Heights. We are in communication  
24 with other District schools - - position - -  
25 space to create another elementary school

1 because - - one here within that space - - may  
2 come in based on the - - because there is no  
3 cafeteria - - worried to make a decision without  
4 parents being present - - the majority of  
5 parents because - - here they're - - because  
6 they're the ones who get involved in their kids'  
7 education and we get involved in our kids'  
8 education, we acquire knowledge, and our kids  
9 receive a quality education.

10 With all due respect of all the parents who  
11 are here present, there are not - - because  
12 there are not enough parents to continue in  
13 this. - - of the school 143 since it's - -  
14 school is something that we have not - - . So -  
15 - chancellor - - to - - offices - - without any  
16 quality education being provided. Thank you.

17 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you.

18 [Pause]

19 MS. ROJAS: [Speaking through interpreter]  
20 We want answers. We want to hear answers. This  
21 is not a - - .

22 INTERPRETER: Cecelia?

23 [Pause]

24 CECELIA: Would there be a problem if I  
25 translate for myself?

1 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: That's fine.

2 CECELIA: Good evening. I'm Cecelia - -  
3 143. I'm here today with the students from the  
4 school - - specifically - - because I'm in the  
5 school, I see that, you know, right now, we're  
6 already overcrowded as it is. We don't see that  
7 because we're not in the halls with the kids - -  
8 . - - I see it as something dangerous. And I  
9 believe that before education comes safety for  
10 all parents.

11 - - really has the goodness in his heart,  
12 but I was a little bit sad when he mentioned the  
13 quality of the high schools and also the  
14 instruction they receive in elementary school,  
15 because I believe that in high schools and  
16 elementary schools, teachers are working hard  
17 the best they can for the students. A lot of  
18 the teachers that work in WHEELS are partnered  
19 with teachers from - - 143 - - .

20 I believe it's something that really we have  
21 to think about because the sad thing is that the  
22 parents that would be living there are not here,  
23 which are the parents of those kids that  
24 supposedly are coming in kindergarten. So the  
25 parents for the elementary - -. - - in high

1 school, - - in high school, - - elementary - -  
2 . So we have to think - - more security right  
3 now, and we know we have tried to get more. - -  
4 working WHEELS and others - - more. So imagine  
5 - - security - - for the high school students,  
6 intermediate, and elementary. Imagine multiple  
7 facilities. Right now, - - school--a lot of the  
8 children in the school, whether it's WHEELS - -  
9 , don't have arts program. They don't have  
10 technology laboratories. They don't have - - .  
11 Why aren't we working on that? If we really  
12 want a school without quality, arts is part of a  
13 child's education - - .

14 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you.

15 [Pause]

16 INTERPRETER: - - .

17 [Pause]

18 MALE VOICE: I don't need the mike. I just  
19 want to--you know, I'm not here to be against or  
20 pro the school. I think Mr. Kimmel has had a  
21 great vision. I think for me, it's about  
22 partnership. I'm a little slighted because I  
23 found out about this meeting yesterday - - or  
24 last week. But I didn't get to see what the  
25 writing was about. It would have been good as

1 being a partner. It just came out December  
2 18th. I should have gotten it on the 19th,  
3 'cause we're partners.

4 And the answer's been here since 1991,  
5 before Mr. Kimmel had his tenure here as  
6 assistant principal. We operated a beacon  
7 school. This is a beacon school that operates--  
8 is supposed to operate for 45 hours. - - it's  
9 supposed to--for 45 hours in the week and  
10 provide after school services. Maybe it's true  
11 during the school day we have space. But during  
12 the after school, we're losing space. And  
13 because of the competitiveness--and I understand  
14 that. I would not want to be in the way of a  
15 high school flourish. I don't want to put in  
16 the way of a--towards the students of our  
17 community to not have the services that they  
18 need after school.

19 But I want the DOE to really think about  
20 when you're thinking about expanding these  
21 schools and--because with this comes after  
22 school opportunities as well for the lower  
23 grades--how do you envision the community  
24 school? How do you envision the beacon school?  
25 And if we start off by not inviting--by not

1 giving us a clue--because I'll be honest with  
2 you, one thing I do agree is I really feel there  
3 should be more parents here. And if they're all  
4 pro-Kimmel and pro-WHEELS, I'm 100% with it. I  
5 think that's key.

6 But I think that we should open it up to the  
7 community, because I think one of the things  
8 that's happening with our education and our  
9 community--30 seconds--in our community is that  
10 our parents are not really given the opportunity  
11 to hear. After that happens, the decisions are  
12 made; they say okay, this is what you have. And  
13 I think, you know, that's not what we want. But  
14 that's what Mr. Kimmel said. I don't want--he  
15 doesn't want that. He wants students to get an  
16 opportunity to get a second choice. So for me,  
17 I just want to open up a broader communication,  
18 a real partnership.

19 I want my, you know, my beacon director to  
20 be part of the school leadership team because in  
21 every other school I'm in, my beacon director's  
22 on the school leadership team. I don't know why  
23 we're not on the school leadership team.

24 And I just want also for it to be clear that  
25 we are a new nonprofit in the sense that we work

1 formally - - charity community services, so  
2 our situation has changed. So that also has to  
3 be--this is the second time that the DOE has  
4 done that, that they have not put that change.  
5 And that has been very public for the last six  
6 months.

7 I'll do it in Spanish, or they'll translate  
8 for me? You'll translate?

9 [Crosstalk]

10 MALE VOICE: All right, so I thank you. I  
11 want the parents to make the right decision for  
12 their children. I want to make sure that--but I  
13 do agree that there has to be--CEC members  
14 should be involved. We've done this in other  
15 schools. I think the CEC's members--

16 [Crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE: - - speak over your voice.

18 MALE VOICE: No, okay. [Translating into  
19 Spanish]

20 INTERPRETER: [Foreign language spoken]

21 [Crosstalk]

22 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

23 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Thank you.

24 INTERPRETER: Myla Cruz.

25 [Pause]

1 MS. MYLA CRUZ: Good evening, everyone. -  
2 - . Congratulate you for the great job - -  
3 school. It's one of the best in the District  
4 right now. But I do have some concerns, though-  
5 -food for thought when you, you know, go back.

6 First of all, the school is supposed to be a  
7 school of choice. So being a school of choice,  
8 then what kind of team is there that the  
9 sequence of the students that are already in  
10 your school are going to be accepted or are  
11 going to be a part of the school, number one.

12 Number two, we don't have space--is it on?  
13 WHEELS and I.S. 143 have the largest class size  
14 in the District this year, the largest. - -  
15 schools - - operation. So moving forward,  
16 adding additional students to the complex, I  
17 don't know how that's to - - in the future - - .  
18 So those are the two main concerns. Thank you.

19 [Pause]

20 SUPERINTENDENT LODICO: Okay, thank you,  
21 everyone. The speaker list is now exhausted.  
22 So that concludes today's comment portion of  
23 tonight's meeting.

24 Again, we welcome any additional comments  
25 and feedback you may have at any time before the

1 Panel for Educational Policy votes on this  
2 proposal at its March 11, 2013 meeting. Again  
3 you can email your comments to D06--that's D as  
4 in District 06Proposals@schools.nyc.gov. Okay,  
5 so comments may be sent to that email address,  
6 D06Proposals@schools.nyc.gov, and also to the  
7 telephone number (212) 374-3466.

8 I thank you for taking the time and being  
9 here this evening, and thank you for your  
10 participation. This joint public hearing is now  
11 closed. Thank you.

12 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

5  
6           Signature *Melanie Holladay*

7           January 24, 2013  
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