

Fact Sheet: Proposed Phase-out and Replacement of Law, Government and Community Service High School (29Q494)

Overview

We want every community to have high quality school options for families. Every fall, the Department of Education (DOE) reviews the performance of all schools Citywide. Over the past several years, despite the best efforts of the community and the DOE to support Law, Government and Community Service High School (“LGCS”), the school has struggled to meet basic requirements for student success.

On December 4 and December 5, 2012, Queens High School Superintendent Juan Mendez held meetings at the school with the School Leadership Team, staff, and parents to discuss what is working at LGCS, what needs to be improved, and how the community can work together to better serve students.

Based on an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative data and community feedback, the DOE has determined that LGCS does not have the capacity to quickly improve and is proposing that the school be phased out. The DOE is also proposing that the school be replaced by a new school.

Proposing to phase out a school is the most difficult decision we make. We are proposing to phase out LGCS because it is the right action for current and future students in this community. If the proposal to phase out LGCS is approved, the school would phase out gradually over the next several years. The school would close in June 2016 after its phase-out is complete.

We hope you share our view that we can—and must—do better for students. The DOE will continue to work closely with LGCS staff and families to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

Performance Summary

Graduation Rates		Progress Report Grades			Quality Review Rating
2011-2012 (4 year rate)	2011-2012 (6 year rate)	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2011-2012
54%	76%	D	D	D	Developing

- Graduation rates have declined over the last four years. LGCS’s four-year graduation rate (including August graduates) was 54% in 2012—well below the most recent Citywide average of 65.5% (Citywide average is based on the 2011 New York State reported graduation results for NYCDOE students.)
- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school, as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. LGCS earned a D grade on its 2011-2012 annual Progress Report, including an F grade for Student Progress, a D grade for Student Performance, a C grade for School Environment, and a C grade for College and Career Readiness. LGCS has a history of low performance, including D grades on both the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Progress Reports.
- On the 2012 New York City School Survey, only 63% of student respondents reported feeling safe in the hallways, bathrooms, and locker rooms at LGCS, putting the school in the bottom 2% of high schools Citywide.
- Demand for LGCS is low. LGCS has one educational option program to which students apply as part of the High School Admissions Process. For September 2012 ninth-grade enrollment, LGCS received only 3.1 applications per seat, well below the Citywide average of 8.9 applications per seat.

Despite Our Best Efforts, Performance Remains Low

We recognize that LGCS staff members have worked hard to improve the school, but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school's efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports to LGCS including:

Leadership Support:

- Coaching the principal in the use of classroom observations and feedback to enhance teacher effectiveness.
- Working with the principal to assess areas in need of improvement in the school and supporting the implementation of a strategic action plan to address these concerns.
- Assisting school leadership in the development of instructional plans and goals for the school year, in support of the school's Comprehensive Education Plan.

Instructional Support:

- Providing coaching and professional development for teachers on ways to strengthen instruction and improve academic outcomes for special education students.
- Participating in classroom walkthroughs to provide targeted feedback for teachers on ways to improve classroom instruction and increase student engagement.
- Coaching teachers in the development of lesson plans, curriculum maps and rubrics aligned to citywide instructional expectations.
- Facilitating the school's participation in a program that provides on online resources and technology to help teachers differentiate instruction and improve literacy outcomes for students.

Operational Support:

- Training school staff in student data tracking systems to ensure efficient and effective monitoring of student attendance, and providing guidance on strategies to increase student attendance.
- Assisting the school administration in the development of a school safety plan to reduce safety incidents and suspension rates, and promoting best practices for dealing with difficult behavior patterns to improve the school's culture and learning environment.
- Advising school staff on budgeting, staffing, teacher recruitment and building management.

Student Support:

- Coaching the school in the use of evidence-based guidance and counseling strategies to build the school's capacity to offer social and emotional support to students.
- Providing professional development for school staff on topics in youth development, including crisis-management, bullying, and violence prevention, in order to foster awareness and improve the school's culture and learning environment.

What would the proposal mean for current students?

If this proposal is approved by the Panel for Educational Policy (PEP), LGCS would gradually phase out over the next several years. Our top priority is ensuring that current LGCS students are supported through graduation. Below are enrollment plans for current LGCS students if the school were to be phased out.

- **Current, first-time ninth grade students** would have the option of completing high school at LGCS if they continue to earn credits on schedule and pass the required Regents exams. They may also apply to attend a different high school as a 10th grader in September 2013 by participating in the second round of the High School Admissions Process.
- **Current, repeating ninth grade students** would complete high school at LGCS as long as they earn credits on schedule and pass the required Regents exams. As the school becomes smaller, these students would receive more individualized attention to support them toward graduation and to help them prepare for post-secondary education and/or career plans. Students would also be encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to review progress toward graduation.

- **Current 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students who are on track to graduate** would complete high school at LGCS if they continue to earn credits on schedule and pass the required Regents exams. As the school becomes smaller, these students would receive more individualized attention to support them toward graduation and to help them prepare for post-secondary education and/or career plans. Students would also be encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to review progress toward graduation.
- **Current 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students who are not on track to graduate** should meet with their guidance counselors to review their progress toward graduation and to discuss their options. Students could complete high school at LGCS or consider applying to a transfer high school.

If the proposal to phase out LGCS is approved, the school would not admit new ninth-grade students after the end of this school year. LGCS would continue to serve students currently enrolled in the school. The school would close in June 2015 after its phase-out is complete.

Supporting Current Students

The DOE remains focused on helping LGCS students succeed. If this proposal is approved, LGCS would be provided targeted, customized and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas of budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance and enrollment including, but not limited to:

- Helping the school provide students with options that support their advancement and fully prepare students for their next transition point,
- Working with school staff to foster a positive culture, and
- Supporting school leadership in efficiently and strategically allocating resources to ensure a consistent and coherent school environment focused on student outcomes.

Plans for a New School for the LGCS Community

The DOE has proposed to open and co-locate a new district high school in the same building as LGCS. If that co-location proposal is approved, the new school will begin serving grade 9 and will add one more grade each year until it serves grades 9-12.

More information about this replacement school will be available shortly. We will work with the community to retain partnerships with community-based organizations that are offering valuable services to the school community.

Next Steps and What You Can Expect

In the next two months, the DOE will invite the LGCS community to participate in a joint public hearing co-hosted by the DOE, the District 29 Community Education Council, and LGCS's School Leadership Team. As soon as the hearing has been scheduled, we will notify you of the date and also share with you the formal phase-out proposal. During the joint public hearing, community members, including parents and students, will be able to share their thoughts on the phase-out proposal.

The proposals to phase out and replace LGCS will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy ("PEP"), which is composed of members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg and the five Borough Presidents, during a public meeting scheduled for **March 11, 2013**. During this meeting, the public will have another opportunity to comment on the proposals. If the PEP approves the proposals, LGCS would not accept new students next school year.

Sharing Your Concerns and Questions

The DOE is seeking your feedback on the proposals. We will record your comments and include them in our Analysis of Public Comments, which is presented to the PEP prior to the vote on the proposals. Please submit your comments to:

Phone: 212-374-7621

Email: D29Proposals@schools.nyc.gov

Online: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/queens/feedback?id=373>