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

**Co-Location of Explore Exceed  
Grades 6-8 at K320**

**10/24/13**

**5:30pm**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. RANDY LAFARGUE: All right. Good  
3 evening ladies and gentlemen. My name is Randy  
4 J. Lafargue and we're about to start the joint  
5 public hearing for this evening. So those who  
6 are still haven't gotten a seat, if you please  
7 will. So this is a joint public hearing of the  
8 Department of Education, Community Education  
9 Council 17 and the school leadership teams of  
10 PS375 and MS352 to discuss the following  
11 proposal. The proposed co-location of grades  
12 six through eight of Explore Exceed Charter  
13 School with existing schools PS375, Jackie  
14 Robinson School and MS352, Abbot Field Middle  
15 School, in building K230, beginning in 2015 to  
16 2016. Tonight's proceedings are going to be  
17 recorded and transcribed. Before we begin this  
18 hearing, we ask that anybody that is wishing to  
19 speak, to please make your way to the rear.  
20 There is a sign up table. And the sign up will  
21 officially end in ten minutes. So if those who  
22 are wishing to speak, if you do not sign up, you  
23 will not be given an opportunity to speak this  
24 evening during the public comment portion,  
25 excuse me. All panel participants were asked to

1 be here no later than 5:30 p.m. Now that we  
2 have started for panel participant arrives late,  
3 he or she will be given an opportunity to speak  
4 at the first opportune moment. We want to be  
5 respectful of everybody's time. There may be  
6 elected officials who arrive at different times  
7 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak,  
8 we will do our best to accommodate them at the  
9 first opportune moment. Those who are here at  
10 the start of the public comment segment will be  
11 asked to speak first. Okay. We are going to  
12 officially start the joint public hearing for  
13 this evening. Tonight's format will include a  
14 presentation of the proposal and presentations  
15 by hearing participants, followed by public  
16 comment. Speakers should have already signed up  
17 to speak at the signup table in the lobby. As I  
18 said, there's approximately eight minutes left.  
19 Public comments can be no longer than two  
20 minutes each. The time will be strictly  
21 followed and speakers will be informed of their  
22 designated time once it concludes. There's  
23 going to be a timekeeper who will let the  
24 speaker know that there are 30 seconds  
25 remaining, and when the two minutes is finally

1 up. I would like to introduce, at this moment,  
2 the panel which has been assembled for this  
3 evening's joint public hearing. First, we have  
4 Ms. Catherine Kramer from SUNY. Second, we have  
5 Ms. Sara Koffman who is the chancellor's  
6 designee for this evening, and followed by Mr.  
7 Curtis Palmore, and Ms. Margie Baker. I will  
8 now turn the chancellor's--excuse me. I will  
9 now turn the program over to the chancellor's  
10 designee, Ms. Sara Koffman who will present the  
11 proposal.

12 MS. SARAH KOFFMAN: Thank you very much and  
13 good evening, everybody. Thank you so much for  
14 coming out tonight to hear about the proposal.  
15 Again, my name is Sara Koffman. I am the chief  
16 portfolio officer for the Office of Portfolio  
17 Management. I am the chancellor's designee  
18 tonight, for this hearing. So I'm going to now  
19 briefly describe the proposal that we're here  
20 for tonight. The New York City Department of  
21 Education is proposing to site Explore Exceed  
22 Charter School, sixth through eighth grades in  
23 building K320 here, located at 46 McKeever Place  
24 in Brooklyn in Community School District 17.  
25 Explore Exceed Charter School is an existing

1 public charter school that has been authorized  
2 by the state University of New York Trustees'  
3 Charter Schools Institute to serve grades  
4 kindergarten through eighth grades. Explore  
5 Exceed currently serves students in kindergarten  
6 through fourth grade, in building K022 located  
7 at 443 St. Marks Avenue, again here in District  
8 17. Explore Exceed is in the process of phasing  
9 in to serve grades kindergarten through five in  
10 that building, K022. If this proposal is  
11 approved, Explore Exceed's sixth through eighth  
12 grades will be sited in this building, K320  
13 beginning in the 2015/2016 school year. Explore  
14 Exceed will add one grade each year until it  
15 reaches full scale in 2017/2018 and would serve  
16 students in six through eight at that time.  
17 Explore Exceed would be co-located in K320 with  
18 PS375 Jackie Robinson school, an existing zoned  
19 elementary school that serves students in  
20 kindergarten through fifth grade and offers a  
21 pre-kindergarten program, as well as MS352, the  
22 Ebbets Field Middle School, an existing zoned  
23 middle school that serves students in sixth  
24 through eighth grades. A co-location means that  
25 two or more school organizations are located in

1 the same building and may share common spaces  
2 like auditorium, gymnasiums or cafeterias. If  
3 this proposal is approved, Explore Exceed would  
4 serve 55 through--to 70 students in sixth grade,  
5 beginning in the 2015 school year and would add  
6 one grade each year until it serves  
7 approximately 165 to 210 students in sixth  
8 through eighth grades in the 2017/2018 school  
9 year. The school would continue to admit  
10 kindergarten students via its charter lottery  
11 application process. Current and future  
12 students in elementary school and grades  
13 kindergarten through five at Explore Exceed  
14 would continue to attend school at K022.  
15 Explore Exceed's middle school grade seats would  
16 mostly be filled by existing Explore Exceed  
17 Elementary School students as they articulate up  
18 to middle school. A lottery process would not  
19 be conducted for Explore Exceed's middle school.  
20 However, students will be able to apply and  
21 would be admitted through a rolling wait list to  
22 backfill any additional seats that are available  
23 at the middle school level. K320, this  
24 building, has been identified as an  
25 underutilized building. It has the capacity to

1 serve 1,272 students. In 2013/2014, PS375 was  
2 projected to serve approximately 575 students in  
3 pre-k through fifth grade and the middle school  
4 352 was projected to serve approximately 307  
5 students in sixth through eighth grade. This  
6 yields a building utilization rate of  
7 approximately 69%, which demonstrates that the  
8 building is underutilized and has the space to  
9 accommodate additional students here. If this  
10 proposal is approved, in 2017/2018, once Explore  
11 Exceed is at full scale, there would be  
12 approximately 1,091 to 1,226 students from all  
13 three schools, from Explore Exceed, PS375 and  
14 MS352 collectively, which would yield a  
15 projected utilization rate of 86% to 96%.  
16 Therefore, there is sufficient space in Building  
17 K320 to accommodate the proposed location and  
18 all three schools. The DOE supports the  
19 expansion of Explore Exceed Charter School in  
20 District 17, in order to continue providing  
21 additional educational opportunities for  
22 students and families in this community. Thank  
23 you again for coming. I'm looking forward to  
24 hearing all of your feedback tonight.

25 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you very much, Sara.

1 Explore Exceed has been approved by its charter  
2 authorizer, the State University of New York  
3 Charter School Institute to serve kindergarten  
4 through eighth grade students in District 17.  
5 Although this proposal has not been approved by  
6 the panel for education policy, SUNY is required  
7 to hold a facilities hearing to receive feedback  
8 on the proposed co-location of Explore Exceed's  
9 middle school grades with PS375 and MS352. As  
10 such, this joint public hearing will also serve  
11 as the facilities hearing. There is a  
12 representative from the SUNY in attendance. If  
13 you have any questions or comments on the  
14 charter itself, Ms. Catherine Kramer, who I will  
15 provide the microphone to, will tell you how to  
16 submit those questions and comments. Ms.  
17 Kramer?

18 MS. CATHERINE KRAMER: Thank you. Good  
19 evening. My name is Catherine Kramer and I am  
20 the director of Charter School information at  
21 the SUNY Charter Schools Institute. I am here  
22 tonight to hold a public hearing on behalf of  
23 the Board of Trustees of the State University of  
24 New York or SUNY. SUNY is the authorizer of the  
25 charter school we are discussing today. That

1 means that SUNY trustees approve the  
2 application to create this school. My  
3 organization, the SUNY Charter Schools Institute  
4 will visit the school and report on its progress  
5 to parents. As the school gets older, we will  
6 also make recommendations to the SUNY trustees  
7 about whether or not the school has earned the  
8 right to stay open. Today our focus is on  
9 whether the school--where the school will be  
10 located. Education law requires SUNY to hold a  
11 public hearing any time one of the schools that  
12 authorizes might be opened--might open an  
13 existing public building. I am here today to  
14 listen to your comments about the proposal to  
15 co-locate grades six through eight of Explore  
16 Exceed Charter School in building K320,  
17 beginning in the fall of 2015. SUNY is holding  
18 its hearing now, at the same time as the DOE is  
19 holding its hearing, so that we don't have to  
20 ask parents and community members to attend two  
21 different hearings on the same subject. We want  
22 to make sure we have the opportunity to hear  
23 from as many parents, teachers, school leaders  
24 and members of the community as we can. I do  
25 note that SUNY has to make its own decision

1 regarding the school using the proposed space.  
2 I will take notes on comments made tonight. In  
3 addition, you can give me any written comments  
4 you have with you. You can email comments to  
5 Charters@SUNY, S-U-N-Y, .edu. You can mail  
6 comments to 41 State Street, Suite 700, Albany,  
7 New York 12207 or fax comments to (518)427-6510.  
8 I have extra copies of our notice with me and  
9 you can get the notice from me if you need any  
10 of that contact information. SUNY will accept  
11 comments through November 4, 2013. We set this  
12 deadline five days after the meeting of the  
13 panel for education policy where this co-  
14 location will be discussed. That way if there  
15 is any information that you get as part of the  
16 conversation at the pep meeting that you can  
17 share with us, you have time to do so. SUNY  
18 will make a decision on this co-location after  
19 the close of the comment period. In advance, I  
20 want to thank you for your comments tonight. We  
21 appreciate you taking the time to be here.

22 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you, Ms. Kramer.  
23 Ladies and gentlemen, I just want to note that  
24 the CEC has been invited to participate in this  
25 hearing and we continue to welcome their

1 participation. Should any CEC members choose  
2 to make a statement at a later time, they will  
3 be given an opportunity to speak. Okay. Would  
4 you like to make a comment? Okay. The CEC is  
5 here this evening.

6 MS. NICOLE JOBE: Good evening, everyone.  
7 My name is Nicole Jobe. I'm the president for  
8 CEC 17. That's the Community Education Council  
9 of District 17. Thank you.

10 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you very much. The  
11 next presenter will be Mr. Palmore of the PS375  
12 school leadership team. Excuse me. I meant to  
13 say the--of the MS352 school leaderships team,  
14 Ms. Baker. I'm sorry.

15 MS. MARGIE BAKER: Thank you boys and girls.  
16 And I just want to make a minor correction. I'm  
17 the principal of Ebbets Field Middle School.  
18 And that's no accident. Right guys? All right.  
19 Okay. Ebbets Field Middle School was founded on  
20 the principal that all children can learn and  
21 all children are welcome. Truncation and  
22 declining enrollment make it very difficult to  
23 offer diversified educational choices, but still  
24 we rise. Ebbets Field offers an array of  
25 curriculum choices in visual and media arts. We

1 incorporate music and theater as well. Our  
2 students have created videos and documentaries  
3 that have won the Middle School Film Festival  
4 award and have even been featured at Cannes Film  
5 Festival. All right. We have collaborated with  
6 - - Poly Tech and Stony Brook University, and  
7 have brought our students to live a residential  
8 experience on college campuses. We had our  
9 gymnasium transformed through a partnership with  
10 Corey Grable, who is sitting over there and of  
11 course, Nike and I'm leaving--I'm sorry, Labron  
12 James. I think you all may have heard of him.  
13 Yes. Okay. So and they've done that for us.  
14 Our school yards have been renovated through a  
15 partnership with the Brooklyn Nets and the  
16 National Grid. We have worked with CBRE, a  
17 major real estate investment trust company and  
18 the NYPD to create monitoring programs and  
19 expose our children to career paths in the  
20 private sector. Through the generosity of  
21 Councilwoman Letitia James, who will be here in  
22 support of our school we have a state of the art  
23 Mac lab where our children prepare to meet and  
24 exceed the challenges of the 21st century. We  
25 have brought the musical stylings of Miles

1 Davis, the Mingus Quartette and Helen Sung  
2 Sextet to our campus. We have hosted the  
3 history makers and exposed our children to the  
4 wisdom of such greats as Billy Allen, who was  
5 just here and--I'm sorry, - -. All of these  
6 activities took place on the 4th floor where we  
7 house our media labs, our multipurpose room, our  
8 dance and our music rooms. We have regent  
9 science labs on our third floors. We need  
10 programs like this to continue and grow. 20% of  
11 every graduate from Ebbets Field graduates with  
12 two college credits. I'm sorry, incorrect. I  
13 apologize. Two high school credits and two  
14 regents under their belt. Okay. We're looking  
15 to expand that, naturally, and I think that's  
16 great for a zoned middle school. All right. We  
17 are planning and would love to house a program  
18 for the gifted and talented to increase  
19 enrollment. We support co-location at this  
20 campus and a shining example of that is my ying  
21 to my yang, Dr. Wilson. I play Betty to her  
22 Wilma and together we work very, very well and  
23 get things done. And do you know who we get it  
24 done for? For the children of the Jackie  
25 Robinson campus. We like the idea of co-

1 location because we get along very well. And  
2 how often do two women get along well in the  
3 kitchen? However, we don't really believe that  
4 we can support three schools. We want room for  
5 our school to grow. Okay, we have--I love my  
6 peeps. I've got to tell you. Okay. With our  
7 two schools we can still host the programs  
8 through Police Explorers, Coastal Cadets, Bam,  
9 Girl Scouts, Champs, PAL and many other CBOs.  
10 With two schools occupying one campus, we can  
11 make room, not only for each other, but for the  
12 community. And the school belongs to the  
13 community. We will continue to reach beyond the  
14 confines of brick and mortar and embrace the  
15 community at large. We hope you will consider  
16 these factors and make a decision that is in the  
17 best interest of all of the students, the  
18 students of Ebbets Field Middle School, Jackie  
19 Robinson and Exceed. Thank you and let's say no  
20 to a third co-location.

21 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you very much. Ladies  
22 and gentleman, I want to just note that the  
23 public comment sign up period has officially  
24 ended. The public comment period--sign up  
25 period has officially ended. I would like to

1 turn the microphone over to the president of  
2 CEC 17. She has a few words that she would like  
3 to say.

4 MS. NICOLE JOBE: Thank you. Well said, Ms.  
5 Baker. CEC 17 opposes the proposed co-location  
6 of Explore Exceed Charter Middle School, grades  
7 six to eighth in building K320. Based on our  
8 conversation and assessments, Explore Exceed  
9 Charter Middle School would be better served if  
10 co-located in building K161 to replace the  
11 middle school that was truncated. Portfolio has  
12 been informed in previous conversations about  
13 thoughts and of course, of where proposed co-  
14 locations should actually be placed. Thank you.

15 MR. LAFARGUE: I would like to pass the  
16 microphone over to Mr. Palmore for--he has a few  
17 words for us.

18 MR. CURTIS PALMORE: So good evening  
19 everyone, my name is Curtis Palmore and I'm the  
20 principal of Exceed Charter School. First off,  
21 before I begin and speak anything about Exceed  
22 Charter School, I just want to acknowledge and  
23 thank Ms. Wilson--excuse me, Dr. Wilson and Ms.  
24 Baker for allowing me to be here today and to  
25 speak and also the CEC. And just hearing a

1 little bit about the work that you've done,  
2 honestly, is like very exciting, and I'm very  
3 excited to hear the good work that the schools  
4 are doing. Again, I think they do deserve  
5 another applause for that work they're doing,  
6 especially--and then also before I begin, just  
7 the students in the front row, for you to be out  
8 here this evening, you could be outside playing  
9 basketball, doing whatever, playing video games,  
10 but you're here tonight. Thank you for coming  
11 out tonight. So for the last 17 years, I've  
12 been--I've had a variety of roles in  
13 traditional, public and in charter schools, from  
14 teacher to assistant principal to principal.  
15 And two years ago I started this journey in  
16 starting Exceed Charter School. Exceed Charter  
17 School is started primarily with one specific  
18 goal, which is to provide a high quality  
19 education for students in District 17. And we  
20 wanted to have a choice for families and the  
21 choice was potentially Exceed Charter School or  
22 potentially other great schools within District  
23 17. We were very fortunate to be placed in  
24 PS22. And over the last two years or last year  
25 and a half, I've had the privilege of working

1 with some great leaders in the building--in  
2 building 22. PS705 is a co-located charter--a  
3 co-located school and PS22 is a co-located  
4 school in my building and our building. And the  
5 principals in that school have worked with me  
6 over the last year and a half to really assure  
7 that we're providing a high quality education.  
8 At Exceed we offer a number of programs, not as  
9 impressive as what I've just heard today, in  
10 terms of some of those enrichment programs. But  
11 we offer a number of programs for our students  
12 that we would continue to provide for our  
13 students if they were--if we were granted the  
14 ability to be in this program, and that includes  
15 a number of support services for students with  
16 IEPs. We offer special classes for students  
17 that have IEPs, like 12 to 1 classes. We offer  
18 enrichment programs. We have in-house services  
19 for students that have support services. And  
20 over the last year, we have worked tirelessly to  
21 ensure that we are partnering with the leaders  
22 in our building. Next week we are partnering  
23 with PS705 and doing a book character day, where  
24 both schools are coming together to ensure that  
25 kids are celebrating books in a special day on

1 Halloween. We also have had a number of  
2 opportunities where principals are partnered  
3 together and we are doing co-observations in  
4 each other's schools to ensure that instruction  
5 is assessed and then support is given to the  
6 teacher, so that teachers can effectively  
7 support instruction on a daily basis. I am  
8 hopeful that the CSE will accept this hope--  
9 excuse me. I am hopeful that the CSE and the  
10 DOE will hopefully accept this partnership to  
11 have our school here. I understand that there  
12 are definitely some concerns around having  
13 another building in this school. I believe that  
14 there is a possibility for schools to work  
15 together to potentially make this happen. And I  
16 also, I welcome to hear what some of the other  
17 people that are in this auditorium would have to  
18 say about potentially how to make that work.  
19 Thank you very much.

20 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you. We have now  
21 concluded the formal presentations and now we're  
22 going to get into the public comment period. So  
23 ladies and gentlemen, what I'm going to do is  
24 I'm going to read off the list of five  
25 individuals at a time and you can come down this

1 aisle right here and line up, and as I said,  
2 again, before, earlier, you're going to have two  
3 minutes to make your comment and you will be  
4 given a warning when you're at 30 seconds and  
5 then when your two minutes is finally up. Our  
6 timekeeper will alert you of that. Will the  
7 following individuals please line up? Ms.  
8 Natalie Wheeler, Marty Ballen, Bridget McAlman,  
9 Astra Henry and Ms. Bernadette, I believe that's  
10 Sandey. Just one more--just one last note,  
11 ladies and gentlemen. If anyone--if any of our  
12 speakers wants to submit their comments after--  
13 even after you speak, you can just hand the  
14 comments over to me. Thank you.

15 MS. NATALIE WHEELER: Good evening all. My  
16 name is Natalie Wheeler and I'm here as a UFT  
17 member and a teacher here at Ebbets Field Middle  
18 School. And I say good evening all because here  
19 at the Jackie Robinson campus, at PS375 and  
20 MS352 we are here for all of the children in  
21 District 17, and that's an overriding theme that  
22 I want to talk about. According to our New York  
23 State Constitution, Article 11, Section 1 in  
24 regards to education, the legislature shall  
25 provide for the maintenance and support of a

1 system of free common school wherein all the  
2 children of this state may be educated. What is  
3 a common school? A common school, as defined by  
4 the law, is a school maintained at public  
5 expense and administered by a state, district or  
6 municipal government for the gratuitous  
7 education of all citizens without any  
8 distinction. We, here at Jackie Robinson and  
9 Ebbets Field Middle School, we take all of the  
10 students. We open our doors and welcome in new  
11 immigrants, special needs students, homeless and  
12 transient students, overage students, students  
13 with behavioral problems or a history of such,  
14 and even previously incarcerated teens because  
15 they are all entitled to a quality education.  
16 Charter schools don't do this, folks. They do  
17 not. Clearly, public schools and charter  
18 schools do not play on a level field. I'm not  
19 here as an anti-charter representative, folks,  
20 but as a concerned citizen and teacher. Charter  
21 schools, when used as originally designed may  
22 actually serve a purpose, but they should not  
23 co-exist in public school buildings because that  
24 - - they will foster resentment and elitism that  
25 this district, this community, does not need to

1 perpetuate at all.

2 MR. LAFARGUE: Mr. Marty Ballen?

3 MR. MARTY BALLEEN: Yes.

4 MR. LAFARGUE: Okay.

5 MR. BALLEEN: Good evening, everybody. My  
6 name is--

7 MR. LAFARGUE: Please, leave the mike on the  
8 stand.

9 MR. BALLEEN: I can also speak without the  
10 microphone. Good evening everybody. Can you  
11 hear, in back?

12 MR. LAFARGUE: We're going to switch mikes.  
13 Yes, look. There you go.

14 MR. BALLEEN: Thank you. Is this better?  
15 Can you hear in back? Okay. Good evening,  
16 everybody. My name is Marty Ballen. I'm the  
17 CEO and founder of Explore Schools. And I want  
18 to thank Principal Baker and Dr. Wilson both  
19 hearing how inspiring the work you're doing with  
20 your students here, truly inspiring, thank you.  
21 I started Explore Charter School 12 years ago.  
22 And before that, I was a teacher for six years.  
23 And the reason why I started Explore Charter  
24 School is because of a belief in a mission that  
25 our students have the academic critical thinking

1 skills they need to succeed in a college prep  
2 high school. So we started Explore Charter  
3 School with kindergarten through third grade and  
4 worked with parents and families right up to  
5 eighth grade and our first graduating class from  
6 Explore Charter School is now entering their  
7 sophomore year in college. We're very excited  
8 about the college prep and college attendance.  
9 And over the years, over these past 12 years, we  
10 made a commitment to work and feel quite blessed  
11 to work in District 17. I've had the good  
12 fortune to partner with Claudetta Guard of CEC  
13 17 and the other members of CEC 17 over the last  
14 ten year. And we are co-located in three other  
15 schools. All of our schools are co-located and  
16 those co-locations are characterized by  
17 camaraderie, partnership, a spirit that we're  
18 all in this for all our students. And if you  
19 visited any of our schools, you would see, is as  
20 Principal Palmore described, principals working  
21 together for all of our students in the school.  
22 We look forward to a productive partnership in  
23 this school with the families, with the students  
24 and with the leadership. Thank you very much.

25 MS. BRIDGET MCALMAN: Hello and good

1 evening, everyone. My name is Bridget McAlman  
2 and I am the PTA president of PS371. Wait.  
3 I've got to get my time because there's a  
4 professional timekeeper. So let me--let's be  
5 respectful to them because they have something  
6 to say, just like we have something to say. I  
7 have a couple of points that I want to touch on.  
8 But in general, when you talk about what they  
9 do, as far as evaluating the schools, not using  
10 the room. I think it's insufficient use. You  
11 have to see the inspection. Closets are  
12 inspected. Our children can't be in a closet.  
13 Remember, they're thinking numbers. Our  
14 children are actually individual children with  
15 names and faces, so that's another thing that  
16 they really don't think about. I wanted to say  
17 that with the charter schools, just be--from my  
18 experience and from what I've been reading from.  
19 Just because the charter school is in this  
20 building does not mean that your child would be  
21 a first preference to a charter school. You  
22 have to realize that. They would--anywhere  
23 where the children are accepted could be from  
24 Bed Stury, Redhook, wherever it may be. That's  
25 where they would be here. That doesn't

1 necessarily represent our mix in multi-  
2 cultural area that we live in now. You've got  
3 to remember. This is a prime piece of real  
4 estate at this point. Brooklyn has become a  
5 prime piece of real estate, and they want to put  
6 everything that they can in here that doesn't  
7 necessarily represent us in these communities.  
8 Also, not to mention, even though we have a lot  
9 of talented and very intelligent children,  
10 everyone cannot cut it in a charter school. We  
11 do have special needs kids. We do have children  
12 with English as a second language and they do  
13 need the extra help. If they would give us more  
14 money as what they would be giving the charter  
15 schools to help all of these enrichment  
16 programs, then we would be able to provide the  
17 same services that the charter schools are  
18 providing. But we do not have those perks in  
19 order to provide these things for our children.  
20 And lastly, because I have probably about ten  
21 seconds, please come out in numbers. This room  
22 should have been filled, okay. We have to stick  
23 together as parents. We have a voice. We need  
24 to use it. Thank you.

25 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you.

1 MS. ASTRA HENRY: Hi. Hello. Hi. My  
2 name is Astra Henry and I'm a concerned parent.  
3 I have a son in this school, in first grade.  
4 Can you hear me now? Okay. I'm a concerned  
5 parent. I have a child in the first grade in  
6 the Jackie Robinson School. And this hearing is  
7 about, you know, the space allocation in this  
8 building. The proposed charter school is a  
9 middle school. We already have a middle school  
10 here and like Principal Baker said, we have--we  
11 know about co-location. We are trying to  
12 embrace co-location with the school we have now.  
13 And we have issues already with that, in terms  
14 of, you know, our kids are really small. Middle  
15 school kids are really big. They're bigger than  
16 me. And if we add another middle school to this  
17 building, I don't know what would become of our  
18 little children. In terms of geographic space  
19 allocation, you know, these numbers about the  
20 cafeteria holds about 582 children, sure, if  
21 they're just standing still. If they're having  
22 lunch, it does not accommodate them safely. I'm  
23 very concerned about safety in increasing the  
24 numbers. If the charter school came in, the  
25 first set of numbers look like it were possible.

1 But by the time it's 2018 with 210 more  
2 students in the school and we're talking big  
3 kids in this school, I'm very concerned for  
4 Jackie Robinson small kids in this school  
5 safety. And I don't see enough information here  
6 about what's going to happen in terms of safety  
7 for these kids. And one little phrase here - -  
8 smooth daily operation of the school, that's the  
9 biggest concern I have. We love co-location,  
10 but we need to be safe for our kids.

11 [crosstalk]

12 MALE VOICE: Do you want it a little higher,  
13 Ms. Sandey?

14 MS. BERNADETTE SANDEY: I think I'm good.

15 MALE VOICE: Okay. Get in close, all right?  
16 Two minutes.

17 MS. SANDEY: Okay. Good afternoon everyone.  
18 My name is Bernadette Sandey, and I'm here today  
19 to speak on behalf of my son, Keith Sandey, a  
20 2013 graduate of MS352. He is currently a  
21 student at City Poly Tech High at--which is an  
22 early college intervention curriculum for  
23 students who show the aptitude to graduate high  
24 school in three years. My son is ranked at the  
25 top five students in the ninth grade, and this

1 is because of the hard work and diligence that  
2 was invested in him here at Ebbets Field. It  
3 was a challenge getting him there, but his  
4 teachers in the seventh and eighth grade equally  
5 saw that Keith was destined for greatness. And  
6 so they formulated a plan to ensure that my son  
7 did not become a statistic. They did an  
8 excellent job in ensuring that he was completely  
9 educated, and this was done on limited resources  
10 available to them. And I am completely proud to  
11 have my niece attending this school currently.  
12 Reducing the limited resources that are  
13 currently available will put additional stress  
14 on the staff and teachers. And this will  
15 ultimately lead to more students being left  
16 behind. Thank you.

17 MR. LAFARGUE: Ms. Tricia Wilson, Ms.  
18 Shafika McLean, Marina Smith and Daria Paul - -.  
19 Ms. Wilson?

20 MS. TRICIA WILSON: Yes.

21 MR. LAFARGUE: Two minutes.

22 MS. WILSON: I have a big mouth, but good  
23 afternoon to everyone. I have a comment. I do  
24 not support charter school. I do not support  
25 co-location. I am actually a parent that

1 experienced charter school for my son, which  
2 was not good. It is very militant. The kids  
3 succeed under pressure, which comes home to the  
4 parent. My son has come to Jackie Robinson.  
5 They're not constantly calling me. They're  
6 supporting my kids. We're doing great work.  
7 They enjoy all of the programs and charter  
8 school, it's a - -. It is run through the  
9 public educational system and we do not have the  
10 same funds granted to our children. So  
11 basically what it is, is injustice, okay? So we  
12 need to not only be here every day, but we need  
13 to be on the voting poll and have our elected  
14 officials held accountable. Why would you give  
15 a certain amount of people so much and cut from  
16 the rest? It's unfair. I do not support it.  
17 Thank you.

18 MR. LAFARGUE: All right, we'll get it from  
19 you.

20 MS. SHAFIKA MCLEAN: Yes, hello. I have  
21 three children in this--sorry. I have three  
22 children in this building, an eighth grader, a--  
23 I'm sorry, a first grader and a third grader.  
24 One of them are special needs and it's the first  
25 grader. Well are you willing to take a

1 kindergartener--sorry, a first grader that is  
2 special needs? Can he respond to that question  
3 or no?

4 MR. LAFARGUE: - -.

5 MS. MCLEAN: Okay, sorry. Well I do not  
6 support charter schools at all. I've been on a  
7 waiting list for over seven years and I have a  
8 eight year old and a five year old, what  
9 happened to them? They got forgotten, but the  
10 public school took them in, no problem.

11 MS. MARINA SMITH: Good evening to everyone.  
12 My name is Marina Smith. I am a parent of a  
13 daughter in eighth grade at PS375. I do not  
14 support charter school. My daughter was in a  
15 charter school. We got kicked out due to  
16 corporal punishment. When I came to this  
17 community school, they accepted her. This  
18 community school accepts all of the kids around.  
19 First of all, the corporal punishment, she was  
20 kicked out because I spoke and she was on a  
21 waiting list for Explore Charter for like six  
22 years, never got in. They're choosing children  
23 to get in there. With the community school,  
24 anyone is welcomed. When another school is  
25 being fitted in here, what is happening to the

1 fourth floor? What is she going to with it  
2 because she needs the fourth floor for computer,  
3 music, dancing. You are taking away resources  
4 from her and she will be left behind. I  
5 disagree. I don't support it. I have a  
6 dislike, I'm sorry to say that, for charter  
7 schools, because of how my daughter was treated.  
8 I was transparent when I went to the  
9 administrator and asked to speak with her. She  
10 would pass me like I was not existing. Charter  
11 school is no good.

12 MS. DARIA PAUL: Good evening, everyone. My  
13 name is Daria Paul. I am a 8th grade and 7th  
14 grade English teacher here. I'm also a member  
15 of the Ebbets Field Middle School SLT. I'm here  
16 tonight because I feel strongly about our  
17 students. When I was in college, one of my  
18 professors said one of the greatest things about  
19 this country is that everyone, every child, has  
20 a right to a free education. I became a teacher  
21 because I believed every child was entitled to a  
22 free, quality education. I'm not here tonight  
23 as an opponent of charter schools. This is  
24 nothing personal. It's nothing about charter  
25 schools. It's about the rights of our students.

1 I'm here as an advocate of our students. I'm  
2 here as someone who believes in the absolute  
3 right of our kids to be equipped with the best  
4 our society can offer them for their future.  
5 When our children--what our children deserve is  
6 to be members of a society where we teach them  
7 right from wrong. And co-locating another  
8 school here to split resources further among  
9 kids who are already disadvantaged and  
10 disenfranchised is wrong. The common core  
11 standards call for all of us to reach for higher  
12 goals for our kids, to push them higher, to be  
13 more academically successful. Our school, like  
14 all other schools, be they charter, or public,  
15 or community schools are reaching for this goal.  
16 We've all worked hard, and in our school, we've  
17 added regents classes. We aligned our  
18 curriculum to the common core standards. We are  
19 all hard at work. But we don't just teach  
20 children. We teach them as individuals, not  
21 just academics. We cannot share these  
22 resources. I implore you tonight not to make a  
23 decision based on numbers, but to make a  
24 decision based on what we believe our children  
25 deserve. Let us invest our resources, time and

1 money, not in more schools, but providing our  
2 children with a quality education for all  
3 students. As I said when I began, the greatest  
4 thing about the country is our free education,  
5 let's reflect on this and do the right thing.

6 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you.

7 MS. REBECCA DAVERIN: Good evening,  
8 everyone. My name is Rebecca Daverin. The  
9 first thing I want to do is echo what Mr.  
10 Palmore said earlier and really commend the  
11 students who are here tonight. You could be  
12 doing a lot of other things, but you're here  
13 advocating for yourselves and what you believe  
14 in. And the fact that you're doing that is a  
15 true testament to the amazing work that both Ms.  
16 Barker and Dr. Wilson are doing. So I also want  
17 to commend them for the amazing thing that's  
18 happening in this building. I am a life long  
19 Brooklyn resident. I'm a product of the New  
20 York City public school system. I went to PS110  
21 Junior High School 126, both of which are in  
22 Brooklyn, and Murray Bertram High School for  
23 business careers in the lower east side. I'm  
24 here because I do now work for charter schools  
25 and I believe in charter schools because they

1 are a part of the New York City public school  
2 system. They are public schools. And as a  
3 senior director of operations within our  
4 organization, I have witnessed the amazing work  
5 that Mr. Palmore and the leadership team of  
6 Exceed is doing with the other leaders in the  
7 buildings that they're co-located with. And I  
8 understand that co-location is really hard, and  
9 it takes a lot of strategic work and scheduling.  
10 And I can promise you that if we are co-located  
11 here, we are going to do everything we can to  
12 work with the leaders in this building, to make  
13 sure every student in this building is served  
14 and has an excellent, amazing education because  
15 we believe in serving all students and we're  
16 committed to serving all students. And again, I  
17 do realize that it's really, really difficult  
18 work, but we're committed to doing it. And I  
19 think that given the amazing leadership that  
20 already exists here, it would be an incredible  
21 partnership. So thank you for this opportunity  
22 to speak and have a good evening.

23 MR. REPNE VENORD: Good afternoon. My name  
24 is Repne Venord. I was in a charter school  
25 before I came to MS352 and I got kicked out due

1 to my disability of learning. And MS352  
2 helped me to learn and also words cannot even  
3 express my feelings for MS352 because they gave  
4 me one on one attention for learning. All of my  
5 teachers spent time with me, gave me all of  
6 their time. Even their lunch break, they give  
7 it to me to help me out because I was a Haitian  
8 speaking, how you call it, yes, language,  
9 basically. And you know, three--during the  
10 three years at MS352 was the greatest thing in  
11 my life. They gave me the opportunity to take  
12 the regents when I got to high school. I only  
13 did three years and a half in high school. And  
14 also, when I went to New York Harbor, I got  
15 accepted to New York Harbor and thanks to Ms.  
16 Shandlin and all of my--all of the teachers that  
17 helped me. And I got accepted to SUNY Maritime,  
18 and I got a full scholarship there, due to  
19 MS352. And there is no word that could express  
20 MS352. I'm just saying - - because you all just  
21 kicked me out.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MALE VOICE: John, you ready? Okay, what is  
24 your number?

25 MR. ANAJIAH JOHN: 13.

1 MALE VOICE: Do you have it?

2 MR. JOHN: It's in my jacket.

3 MALE VOICE: All right. Give it to me  
4 later.

5 MR. JOHN: All right.

6 MALE VOICE: Two minutes - -.

7 MR. JOHN: Ladies and gentlemen, I want to  
8 thank you for allowing me to address you this  
9 afternoon. My name is Anajiah John and I am  
10 currently in the eighth grade here at Ebbets  
11 Field Middle School. I'm looking forward to  
12 graduating in June and going into high school.  
13 I hope to attend a school where I can get  
14 involved in soccer and other activities that  
15 entrust me and help me grow as a student. I've  
16 been in this school since the sixth grade and if  
17 it was not for the support of the teachers and  
18 staff at Ebbets Field Middle School, I doubt I  
19 would be the person I am today, a student who is  
20 motivated and looking forward to a bright  
21 future. My history in this school was a  
22 challenging one. I was given support and  
23 guidance from the teachers and staff that helped  
24 me do better. If I were in a charter school, I  
25 doubt I would have been given a chance to redeem

1 myself. We do not need a charter school in  
2 this building. What would a charter school look  
3 like in this building? I'll tell you. It means  
4 a complete loss of the fourth floor. That means  
5 no computer labs, multipurpose rooms, dance  
6 studio, music room, nor art room. This is  
7 unacceptable. If you want to--if you want a  
8 student to succeed, what would a charter school  
9 look like in this building? Less physical  
10 education. And again, what would a charter  
11 school look like in this building? Students  
12 having lunch at 10:00 a.m. That's not lunch.  
13 That's brunch. Instead of taking resources from  
14 us, we should be given resources to help us  
15 strive and succeed. Ebbets Field Middle School,  
16 the teachers, staff and students allowed me to  
17 become a better student because they had to--  
18 they had the space to provide me with  
19 alternative choices that allowed me to grow. We  
20 need space to grow as scholars and so that we  
21 can become college and career ready students.

22 MS. LETITIA JAMES: Thank you. How are my  
23 children doing? How are my scholars doing? Not  
24 the parents, how are my scholars doing? Those  
25 are my scholars. So before I address them

1 tomorrow, President Barak Obama is coming down  
2 Eastern Parkway. Yes. So I hope all of us have  
3 signs out there on Eastern Parkway. He's going  
4 over to what is formerly--what was that school?  
5 It's the Paul Roberson--formerly Paul Roberson  
6 and I urge everyone to make sure that you got  
7 signs to let President Barak Obama know that co-  
8 locations and this idea about choice is just  
9 really unacceptable. This is--unfortunately,  
10 democracy has not been heard and they're shoving  
11 charter schools down our throat, but we're not  
12 going to have it. So, good evening. As many of  
13 you know, I've been a vocal supporter of our  
14 public school and this school in particular and  
15 I would like to see a moratorium on all co-  
16 locations in the City of New York. The  
17 autocratic approach of the Bloomberg  
18 administration's educational policy has allowed  
19 charter schools to flourish and public schools  
20 to close. This policy has undermined parents  
21 and teachers, and has failed my scholars, my  
22 children. That is why I'm here tonight, to  
23 advocate on behalf of the teachers and families  
24 that once again will bear the consequences of  
25 the misguided decisions made by SUNY and the

1 Department of Education to co-locate a charter  
2 school within a public school. The proposed co-  
3 location of Explore Exceed Charter School and  
4 middle school with existing schools PS375 and  
5 MS352 is a recipe for disaster. Why co-locate a  
6 charter middle school with an existing public  
7 middle school in the same building? Schools  
8 should not compete for the same students. One  
9 school--let's be clear. One school will  
10 ultimately fail and our children will ultimately  
11 fail. And we must repeal this administration's  
12 basically a business approach, a free market  
13 approach, an approach which, really it's all  
14 about franchise, took education and the  
15 proliferation of co-locations all throughout the  
16 city, and in particular in this district. This  
17 is my sixth co-location hearing in 17 and in 13.  
18 But I just want you to know, as the Bloomberg  
19 administration comes to a close, amen. There is  
20 an aggressive effort to co-locate as many  
21 charter schools as possible. This Explore  
22 Exceed Charter School will not open until 2015,  
23 but Department of Education is asking us to vote  
24 for it, and it's really not all of us. But it's  
25 really, you know, that the books are already

1 cooked. You know that they've already made a  
2 decision. This is nothing more than a hearing  
3 with no disrespect, a kangaroo court. But  
4 they're asking them to vote for this in 2013 for  
5 a charter school that will be permanently housed  
6 in the school. We cannot let this  
7 administration's educational policies to  
8 continue into Mayor Bill DiBlazio's term. We  
9 will not have it. And so I have joined UFT's  
10 lawsuit to stop the Department of Education from  
11 starting these co-locations, really an attempt  
12 to bind the mayoral--the next mayoral  
13 administration to the same failed educational  
14 agenda. The Mayor's agenda has systematically  
15 undermined the public education process system.  
16 And I don't know about you, but as I argued at  
17 the PEP last week and will argue at the next  
18 PEP, that this really is a separate and unequal  
19 system, and it's re-segregation all over again.  
20 And when parent's voices complain, they are  
21 stifled. And if we are sincere about providing  
22 high quality education for our children, we can  
23 no longer afford to ignore educators and  
24 parents. This policy has created an un-level  
25 playing field, where schools pay free rent. And

1 when our public schools are lacking resources  
2 and when all of the rules that apply to a public  
3 school do not apply to a charter school, it's  
4 just not fair. And although they say they have  
5 a lottery system, the reality is, is that  
6 children with special needs, children that have  
7 problems, children obviously that have perhaps  
8 some--need some services, those children you  
9 know are discharged. They are disciplined and  
10 suspended and then ultimately discharged. And  
11 what happens is that they'll go to a failing  
12 school and then that school will be closed.  
13 It's a perverse system and unfortunately, it  
14 leaves our children behind. And only parents  
15 that are really involved in the educational life  
16 of their child, those children will make it.  
17 But those children--not all of us have a Cosby  
18 kind of family. You know what I mean? Not all  
19 of us are involved because we're struggling to  
20 make ends meet, particularly women who have got  
21 a, you know, they've got to work two jobs and  
22 they've got a number of children. They've got  
23 struggles and we cannot leave children further  
24 and further behind. The criminal justice  
25 complex relies upon a failed educational system.

1 But I don't know about you. I'm not going to  
2 have any more of my children--you see, you gave  
3 birth to them, but they're really my babies.  
4 I'm not having any more of them go into the  
5 criminal justice system. I'm fighting for all  
6 of our children, each and every one of them  
7 because I believe in their potential to be  
8 great. And I know that if this school received  
9 the needed resources that they so desperately  
10 need, this school obviously would be at the top  
11 of its game. And really, she cannot do it  
12 alone. We've got to join with her and fight for  
13 this school. So parents, I'm going to need you  
14 to fight for me. I'm going to need you to fight  
15 with me. 71 more days and Bloomberg is gone.  
16 71 more days and King Bloomberg is out the door.  
17 71 more days and a clearer view for education,  
18 and 71 more days when Mayor Bill DiBlazio with a  
19 stroke of a pen, can repeal these decisions,  
20 reverse these decisions and save our schools.  
21 And ladies and gentlemen, because of all of you,  
22 Bill DiBlazio will be joined by the next public  
23 advocate and her name is Letitia James. God  
24 bless you and thank you.

25 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you very much. Next on

1 the list is Ms. Patience Boateng please.

2 MALE VOICE: Okay. Two minutes. The  
3 gentleman has the time there. You ready?

4 MS. PATIENCE BOATENG: Hello. My name is  
5 Patience Boateng. This essay is about the  
6 voices of the unheard students. Please don't  
7 take away our second home. EFMS has always been  
8 a second home to us students. It's a place  
9 where students are able to connect. Ebbets  
10 Field Middle School is a place to make new  
11 friends. It's a place to get an education in a  
12 safe learning environment. It's a place to be  
13 able to become a stronger student. Adding a  
14 charter school in this building that currently  
15 already has two schools in it is a bad idea.  
16 There's barely any space in the entire school.  
17 The space, we need this space. We have to share  
18 a lunchroom and the gym. This is a bad idea.  
19 The community has come together to stand up for  
20 what's right. And what's right is to make sure  
21 the charter school does not come and overtake  
22 our school. Thank you for your time, and have a  
23 good day.

24 MR. LAFARGUE: The next one on the list is  
25 Kayana Rhoden, followed by Keyona Johnson. Is

1 that good enough, or you want it higher?

2 MS. KEYANA JOHNSON: That's good.

3 MALE VOICE: Okay. There you go.

4 MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

5 MALE VOICE: You're welcome.

6 MS. JOHNSON: Good evening parents,  
7 teachers, and peers. My name is Keyana Johnson.  
8 I'm a student at EFMS, and am in the seventh  
9 grade. I'm here to explain why Ebbets Field  
10 Middle School 352 shouldn't have a charter  
11 school come to our school building. We would  
12 have to share our school space which we already  
13 share with PS375. The charter school may need a  
14 home, but please let them find one somewhere  
15 else. We would have to reduce gym classes, and  
16 only have access to the gym for two hours a day.  
17 Some students would be eating lunch at 10:00 in  
18 the morning. There would be loss of the fourth  
19 floor, which means we would not have access to  
20 our computer labs. Councilwoman Letitia James  
21 created one of these labs for students of Ebbets  
22 Field, and we have done incredible things there.  
23 If we lose the fourth floor, we would lose our  
24 dance studio, music room, and our multipurpose  
25 room. There is no reason to put three schools

1 here. There are only four floors, two floors  
2 for PS375, and the other two floors belong to  
3 EFMS 352. If the charter school comes to our  
4 school, we will have less extracurricular  
5 activities. We would have one floor. We would  
6 have to share a cafeteria and auditorium. We  
7 don't need another school, because we wouldn't  
8 have enough space. We need our art, Spanish,  
9 computer, multi purpose, dance studio, and music  
10 rooms. We need to have all of our learning  
11 space. At Ebbets Field Middle School, we are  
12 all family. And if a charter school comes and  
13 takes more of our space, we will not be able to  
14 grow. Our family will be torn and limited. We  
15 are all scholars, and we need space to become  
16 college and career ready.

17 MALE VOICE: Good job. We'll call them all  
18 out. Come here. Yes. I want you to stand  
19 right here. Stand right here for now. And when  
20 the people walk by. I'm going to have them sit  
21 down. Okay.

22 MR. LAFARGUE: Kayana Rhoden followed by  
23 Dacia Morton, Ms. McFarlene, Ms. Janice Lopez,  
24 and Eileen Soto. Please come right. Those  
25 names I just read off, sit down over here

1 please. Thank you.

2 MALE VOICE: Follow me, girls.

3 MS. KAYONA RHODEN: Good afternoon. My name  
4 is Kayana Rhoden. I am testifying tonight  
5 because we do not want--

6 MALE VOICE: Here you go. We got her.  
7 Okay. Go ahead.

8 MS. RHODEN: Good afternoon. My name is  
9 Kayana Rhoden. I am testifying tonight because  
10 we do not want a charter school at Ebbets Field  
11 and Jackie Robinson School campus. We wouldn't  
12 have enough access to the gym at appropriate  
13 times. Our lunchroom would be over utilized  
14 with three schools, PS375, MS352, and a charter  
15 school. We would not have enough access to the  
16 auditorium. Our class schedule would change,  
17 and this would impact our learning. We could  
18 even lose our music and dance room, computer  
19 labs, and multipurpose room. This should not  
20 happen. Teachers, students, and parents, I  
21 believe that Ebbets Field is a safe learning  
22 environment where teachers, principal, and  
23 assistant principals really, really care about  
24 us. We need space to grow, labs, theater, and  
25 exposures to help us become scholars who are

1 college and career ready.

2 MS. DACIA MORTON: Good evening, parents,  
3 students, and teachers. My name is Dacia  
4 Morton, and I am a student at Ebbets Field  
5 Middle School. I have been here for two years.  
6 I love this school. I love my teachers, my  
7 assistant principals, and my principal. I love  
8 the people in the office, and the  
9 paraprofessionals, too. They treat me like  
10 family. I have learned a lot. I have learned a  
11 lot of things here. I love having the computer  
12 room, the art room, and the music room, and the  
13 dance room. I love learning about many  
14 different things. I love learning taking  
15 foreign language, and wish we could have even  
16 more languages to choose from. Right now we  
17 have Spanish. Most of the classes I just  
18 described are on the fourth floor. If a third  
19 school comes in, we might lose these special  
20 places. We also might only be allowed to use  
21 the gym for two hours each day. It sounds  
22 crazy, but some students would be having lunch  
23 at 10:00 in the morning. That is not good.  
24 That is not a good thing. These kids will be  
25 starving by 3:00. They won't be able to think

1 about school because they will be thinking  
2 about eating. We don't need the third school.  
3 We need space to grow our school and become  
4 college and career ready. I am a scholar at  
5 Ebbets Field Middle School, and want the  
6 Department of Education to treat us like  
7 scholars. Respect our space and leave our  
8 campus school alone. Thank you for letting me  
9 speak.

10 MALE VOICE: You ready? Come in close.  
11 There you go.

12 MS. LADJAYA MCFARLENE: All right. Good  
13 evening, and thank you for coming. My name is  
14 Ladjaya McFarlene. I am speaking tonight  
15 because I want to talk about my school, Ebbets  
16 Field Middle School 352. We absolutely do not  
17 want another school here. A third school will  
18 take away important resources from our school.  
19 We will have to share the lunchroom, gymnasium,  
20 and auditorium. We will lose space on the  
21 fourth floor, and lose our computer labs, dance,  
22 and music room, and multipurpose room. We might  
23 only be allowed to use the gym two hours a day.  
24 The gymnasium will not be available to us during  
25 lunch, and we need a recreation area. The

1 lunchroom schedule will be ruined. Some  
2 students will eat at 10:00 in the morning. We  
3 might only be allowed to use the gym two hours a  
4 day. The gymnasium will not be available to us  
5 during lunch, and we need it. Right now we have  
6 lots of room at our school. We have space to  
7 continue to improve our math and reading scores.  
8 We are now working with our teachers to become  
9 scholars and build our skills so that we are  
10 college and career ready. - - fixed our gym for  
11 us. The Brooklyn Nets fixed our schoolyard for  
12 us. We want to be able to use them like we  
13 should. Placing another school will put us at a  
14 disadvantage. Help us move forward. Thank you  
15 for your time.

16 MALE VOICE: Thank you. Great job. You  
17 ready? There you go.

18 MS. EILEEN SOTO: Good evening, parents,  
19 teachers, and scholars. My name is Eileen Soto  
20 from class 716. I will be representing Ebbets  
21 Field Middle School. I am here to talk about my  
22 school. We are given many opportunities. We  
23 should not have to change because they want to  
24 put another school here. We already have two  
25 schools here. We already share our resources.

1 We need space to grow as scholars and  
2 students. Right now, each teacher has a room to  
3 form small groups and help each student with  
4 their core academics, like ELA, math, science,  
5 social studies. We have access to technology  
6 and media to help us research and become  
7 independent learners. If we put another school  
8 here, we will not have enough time for physical  
9 education. There is a youth obesity problem.  
10 Two hours of PE a week is not enough time to  
11 burn calories. Some children will be eating  
12 lunch at 10:00 in the morning. This would be an  
13 eating disorder waiting to happen. If the  
14 charter school--what's that word right there?

15 FEMALE VOICE: Occupies.

16 MS. SOTO: If the charter school occupies  
17 the third floor, we would lose our computer lab,  
18 the multi purpose room, music room, and dance  
19 studio. We need to keep our space and grow our  
20 enrollment. We need additional support for  
21 reading and math to become scholars and college  
22 and career ready.

23 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you. Janice Lopez.  
24 Okay. We have Ms. Aleya Martin, followed by  
25 Grace Peter, Agania, and Mamadou Diallo.

1 MALE VOICE: Come on, Aleya. You're up  
2 first. Two minutes. He's going to let you  
3 know. All right?

4 MS. ALEYA MARTIN: All right. Begin?

5 MALE VOICE: Yes. You got it, yes.

6 MS. MARTIN: My name is Aleya Martin from  
7 class 814. In my opinion, I don't feel we  
8 should have to share our campus with a charter  
9 school. First, we will not be able to use the  
10 gym or the time for physical education. With  
11 childhood obesity on the rise, children need to  
12 exercise more, not less. Yet as a school, our  
13 physical education time would be limited, two  
14 hours a day. Then there is the issue of lunch,  
15 or should I say breakfast? By sharing the  
16 cafeteria, some students will be eating lunch at  
17 10:00 in the morning. That means they would not  
18 eat again until after 3:00 pm. Imagine your son  
19 or daughter trying to learn, but they can't  
20 focus because they haven't eaten since morning.  
21 Would you vote yes to that for your child? Well  
22 are we not just as precious as your children?  
23 Then we have the issue of classroom  
24 overcrowding. Classrooms filled beyond the max  
25 are unsafe and are difficult to learn in. Would

1 you be okay with your child learning in a room  
2 of 35 with one teacher? No, you would not. Yet  
3 this is what voting yes would do to the student  
4 at Ebbets Field Middle School. At Ebbets Field  
5 Middle School, everyone hits a home run because  
6 we have the space to grow and strive. Bringing  
7 in a charter school takes away that space and  
8 limits our options. We have access to  
9 specialized high school prep, after school  
10 programs, and community based organizations that  
11 provide us with choices other than hanging in  
12 the streets. Lastly, Ebbets Field Middle School  
13 is like our second home. No, it is our second  
14 home. Our principal, assistant principals,  
15 teachers, and staff know and care about us and  
16 our education. Ebbets Field Middle School is  
17 safe, is a safe environment for students to grow  
18 and learn. We don't want to lose any of this  
19 space, and will continue to work very hard to  
20 save our school and campus. Thank you.

21 MS. GRACE PETER: Okay. Say no to the  
22 charter schools. Good evening, students,  
23 parents, and staff. My name is Grace Peter, and  
24 I am from class 711. And I believe that in  
25 Ebbets Field Middle School, there should not be

1 a charter school. I believe there should not  
2 be a charter school because how much Ebbets  
3 Field Middle School would change. There would  
4 only be two hours of gym a day, and we might  
5 lose the fourth floor. The fourth floor is the  
6 place where we have the most of the things that  
7 interest us. There's the multipurpose room, the  
8 dance studio, the two computer labs, the art  
9 room, and the music room. Taking away these  
10 things will have some of the kids unhappy. I  
11 have been at Ebbets Field Middle School since  
12 sixth grade, and now I'm in seventh grade. But  
13 I have been in this building for nine years. In  
14 the nine years I have been here, they have never  
15 added a charter school, so why now? Since a lot  
16 of the things in the school are going to change  
17 if we have the charter school, parents are going  
18 to start taking their kids out the school. Even  
19 lunch might be changed to 10:00 a.m., when  
20 usually it's 12:17 pm. Having it at 10:00 a.m.  
21 would be like eating brunch. It's not fair at  
22 all. We are scholars, and we need space to be  
23 college and career ready.

24 MALE VOICE: Okay.

25 MS. AGANIA CHICANEAU: Two minutes. Okay.

1 Good evening parents, teachers, and fellow  
2 students. My name is Agania Chicaneau, and I am  
3 a student in Ebbets Field Middle School, and I  
4 am in seventh grade. I have been in this school  
5 since sixth grade. I am here to explain why  
6 Ebbets Field Middle School 352 should not have a  
7 charter school come to our campus. Now think  
8 about it. If you're bringing a charter school  
9 in Ebbets Field Middle School, we only get two  
10 hours of gym a day, and that's not good for our  
11 health. It will also affect our lunch program.  
12 Some children will be eating at 10:00 a.m. And  
13 eating this early without another break will  
14 have a major impact on our academic success.  
15 This is not lunch. It is brunch. And it's not  
16 good for middle school children. Also, some  
17 children enjoy playing basketball at lunch. If  
18 we put a third school here, we will not be able  
19 to use the gym for lunch. It will also impact  
20 team sports and after school activities.  
21 Teachers may have to share rooms. This will  
22 affect how our work is displayed. We might lose  
23 the computer labs, music room, and dance studio.  
24 We will lose a lot more than we will gain. We  
25 need sports to become scholars who are college

1 and career ready. Thank you for your time,  
2 and thank you for listening.

3 MALE VOICE: You want it close.

4 MR. MAMADOU DIALLO: Good evening parents,  
5 guardians, and staff. My name is Mamadou Diallo  
6 from class 813. I am here to fight for our  
7 school space. I disagree with a charter school  
8 coming here. This school is like a second home  
9 to me. I have learned a lot, and I have fun  
10 doing it. For example, we use space in the gym  
11 to learn skills and how to master the art of  
12 playing basketball. We have a computer lab that  
13 teaches us how to use technology to help us  
14 succeed in this technical world. Our art room  
15 allows us to be creative and design a  
16 masterpiece that show our uniqueness. The  
17 teachers and administration is supportive and  
18 care about us, not as test scores, but as  
19 students. We feel safe. We make friends and we  
20 receive a great education. I have been in this  
21 school since I was in third grade. If a charter  
22 school comes here, it will impact our schedule,  
23 our time in the cafeteria, schoolyard, gym, and  
24 auditorium. And this impact would affect us  
25 from succeeding in this school. Everyone hits a

1 home run because we know that excellence is  
2 our only option. Taking away our space will  
3 limit our option, and not provide us with enough  
4 room to hit our home run. Thank you for  
5 listening. And this was my face when I thought  
6 we was going to have a charter school.

7 RP: Can the next five speakers please stand  
8 up? Thank you. Casietya Alexander. If I'm  
9 mispronouncing that, I'm sorry. James Seraphin,  
10 Sharlene Giles, Nigel Henry, and Mr. Jacques  
11 Mock.

12 MALE VOICE: Okay. Ms. Alexander, there you  
13 go.

14 MS. CASIETYA ALEXANDER: Good evening,  
15 school. My name is Casietya Alexander. I came  
16 in this school last year, in sixth grade. I  
17 feel that we should not have a charter school in  
18 here. From what I know about this school, we  
19 have to share a gym, lunchroom, auditorium, and  
20 schoolyard with PS375. Now they are trying to  
21 put a third school in here. Can you all believe  
22 that? If you think about it, putting a third  
23 school in here is not the best idea. We have to  
24 share a gym, auditorium, and lunch with three  
25 schools if that happen. If this happens, we

1 would have two hours of gym for every day of  
2 our entire middle school. That's not cool.  
3 This is taking a lot of gym time from us.  
4 Moving on, if we allow this charter school to  
5 come, things will be different. For example,  
6 one of the schools will have to eat lunch at  
7 10:00 a.m. That's not even lunch. It's brunch.  
8 Also, we might have to be--we might not be able  
9 to use the gym at lunchtime. So for all the  
10 students that like to play basketball during  
11 lunch cannot. They will not be too happy about  
12 that. When you're thinking about this, the  
13 charter school will have to go somewhere, most  
14 likely the fourth floor. And they are going to  
15 take just the--they're not just taking the  
16 fourth floor from us. They are taking our  
17 creativity. We have our computer rooms, music  
18 room, dance room, and multipurpose room on the  
19 fourth floor. We need all of this to get  
20 experience with the arts. Also the multipurpose  
21 room is like our home. We learn new things  
22 there. Everything--even if they do not take the  
23 fourth floor, they're going to have to take some  
24 floor, meaning that the school will be crowded  
25 and wouldn't have the same level of access to

1 arts and studies. I think bringing a third  
2 school would not help us to be college and  
3 career ready, and I repeat, not creative, and  
4 all this other stuff.

5 MR. JAMES SERAPHIN: Good evening, teachers,  
6 staffs, and scholars. My name is James  
7 Seraphin, and I'm from class 11. I am here  
8 today to defend my school space from being taken  
9 away by a charter school. Ebbets Field Middle  
10 School has been a loving and caring learning  
11 environment for me. And I, and I know anybody  
12 else in here will be most disappointed if a  
13 charter school comes in and trying to take over  
14 our school. Since coming from Haiti, I have  
15 been able to improve in my reading, speaking,  
16 math, and arts. I have been taking the  
17 specialized high school--I will be taking a  
18 specialized high school exam this weekend, and  
19 hope to get in Brooklyn Technical High School.  
20 And know without a doubt, I will be accepted  
21 thanks to the hard work of my teachers of Jackie  
22 Robinson and Ebbets Field Middle School. I also  
23 know that I will go into college because of  
24 being in the--because of the education and  
25 support I receive as a student here. Since I

1 have attended the school, I received - - top  
2 honors, as well as many other academic awards.  
3 Putting a charter school in our school, in our  
4 campus will disrupt our learning process. The  
5 utilization of space in our school and the  
6 safety of the schools--of the students will no  
7 longer exist. Please support us with all your  
8 help to save the space in our school that is not  
9 just well maintained, but provides the student  
10 in this community with a high education.  
11 Thanks. Thank you for your time.

12 MS. SHARLENE GILES: Good evening, everyone,  
13 parents, the panel, Ebbets Field, Jackie  
14 Robinson, and all the other designees here. I  
15 am a parent of a pre-K student at Jackie  
16 Robinson. I was a science teacher for Jackie  
17 Robinson for six years, and a science teacher  
18 for Ebbets Field Middle School for seven years.  
19 Now I'm talking as a concerned parent, and as an  
20 educator in this building. We need resources.  
21 This is an insult to our intelligence, a  
22 complete insult to my intelligence. I'm doing  
23 so much on so little. And rather than giving me  
24 the proper resources that I need, such as a real  
25 scientific laboratory as a science teacher, a

1 real library, you know, that I don't have to  
2 share with another school. I want a real  
3 library that's not going to be eight books of  
4 let me see, 12 copies of 8 different textbooks  
5 of a common core library. I want a real  
6 library. Give me a real library. Don't bring  
7 another school here. If you have money to waste  
8 or money to spend, spend it in the right places.  
9 Okay. I need a laboratory. I need school  
10 aides. I need help. You know, school aides,  
11 more school aides for both schools. Okay. What  
12 else do I need? I'll tell you, textbooks, all  
13 right, a curriculum, money to buy things for our  
14 students. What else? After school programs.  
15 We don't have any after school programs that are  
16 started yet. You know, what else do we need?  
17 Replenish the manipulatives, because we purchase  
18 manipulatives. They're used. Now we need new  
19 ones. So as a parent, I am concerned about  
20 safety. I have a pre-k daughter in Jackie  
21 Robinson. I don't need any more extra bodies  
22 that do not know our students. Okay. And as an  
23 educator, I teach everybody, not a selected few-  
24 -everybody. The best of the best, the worst of  
25 the worst, and we bring them all up, no matter

1 where they are on their walks of life. And no  
2 child left behind. Okay. And we bring urban  
3 advantage. We bring New York Hall of Science,  
4 all these other cultural institutions here for  
5 our kids.

6 MALE VOICE: Time is up.

7 MS. GILES: Time is up?

8 MALE VOICE: Yes. Time's up.

9 MS. GILES: Okay. So it is unfair, it's  
10 insensitive, and it's a total disrespect. Okay.

11 MALE VOICE: Okay. Have a good evening.

12 MR. NIGEL HENRY: Good evening, ladies and  
13 gentlemen. My name is Nigel Henry. I am a  
14 special educator here at MS352. Currently the  
15 fourth floor is occupied by the self contained  
16 classes. And it boggles my mind that you would  
17 bring a charter school into the fourth floor  
18 where in this past time, our special ed students  
19 have qualified for--have come in second place in  
20 the science, the region district wide science  
21 fair to become--they were in second place in the  
22 region. And this charter school talks about  
23 having a special ed program. Now what do you do  
24 when you have a charter school that has an  
25 abundant amount of resources, and you have a

1 public school that has a paucity of resources,  
2 and these special ed students see the wealth  
3 that a charter school has? You have a clash of  
4 cultures. You're teaching our kids--you're  
5 beginning to teach our kids about class warfare.  
6 You're telling our kids that they don't have an  
7 equal say in America. That's what you're  
8 telling our kids. This building, the culture  
9 that is in this building, the cooperation  
10 between the two schools is a beautiful thing. I  
11 doubt very much that the charter culture--now  
12 don't get me wrong. I'm not a basher of the  
13 charter schools. But I'm just talking the  
14 reality of what the charter school culture, the  
15 charter school--the funding, just the whole  
16 system of the charter school is in conflict with  
17 what justice is, or what equality means. All  
18 right. And we can't have that in this building.  
19 And I ask you to completely reject this  
20 proposal. Thank you.

21 MALE VOICE: Yes. Hold on. I'll bring it  
22 down for you.

23 MS. JACQUELINE MOCIK: Okay. Sorry. Good  
24 evening, everyone. My name is Jacquelyn Mock,  
25 and I'm part of the PTA. And our president is

1 sitting right over there. Raise your hand.  
2 Okay. I've heard everything that everyone have  
3 said, and I'm in concord with you about no  
4 charter school coming into this school. We  
5 don't need that because we need our children to  
6 be safe in here where they always--they are safe  
7 right now. We want them to stay like that. We  
8 also want them to learn more. They're learning  
9 right now, but if a charter school come in here,  
10 they won't be learning as much. You know that.  
11 We all know that because it's going to hinder  
12 them from learning. Their lunchroom, 10:00 in  
13 the morning, a lot of the kids saying that's  
14 breakfast to me. I don't know about you, but  
15 that's breakfast. They shouldn't be eating that  
16 early in the morning, because they have  
17 breakfast when they come here at 8:00. Couple  
18 of hours they're going to eat again. Then they  
19 won't eat until that evening when they get home.  
20 They're going to be hungry. How can you learn  
21 when you're hungry? You can't. You can't learn  
22 when you're hungry. We do not need a charter  
23 school in this school. If you bring more kids  
24 in here, more trouble, less kids, less trouble.  
25 We know our kids are learning now, but if you

1 bring the charter school in here, they're not  
2 going to be learning as much. We all know that.  
3 That's why they want to confuse us and bring a  
4 charter school in here so our kids won't learn.  
5 We want our children to excel higher and higher.  
6 And that's like it is now. They are learning.  
7 But if you bring a charter school in here,  
8 they're going to fall right back. They're going  
9 to fall down. They're going to fall down. And  
10 we don't want that. We're not going to stand  
11 for that. Parents, are we going to stand for  
12 that? No. Thank you so much.

13 MALE VOICE: Need a little help? Thank you,  
14 sir.

15 MR. LAFARGUE: Corey Grable, Melanie Lewis,  
16 Edith Joseph, Marlon Barrington, and Leilani  
17 Mabrey.

18 MR. COREY GRABLE: That's fine. How's  
19 everybody doing tonight? Ms. Baker, I don't  
20 think they heard me. How is everybody doing  
21 tonight? Well my name is Corey Grable. I'm the  
22 financial secretary for the Patrolman's  
23 Benevolent Association. And about six years ago  
24 or so, I've been a police officer. I used to  
25 work up the street. And before I left it, a kid

1 was being beat up. And that was my formal  
2 introduction to Ms. Baker. And I am one of the  
3 people that have these after school programs.  
4 Through the New York City police department, and  
5 with the Explorer program, I help protect the  
6 kids for after 3:00 when there's the dismissal.  
7 We serve, and we have kids that went to this  
8 school, currently go to this school, and who  
9 will be coming to this school. And what I do is  
10 help protect them. I'm also the one that help  
11 have Nike develop the gym there. So because of  
12 the collaborative effort, Ms. Baker, and Dr.  
13 Wilson, these kind of programs, the concern that  
14 I have is whether or not they're going to  
15 continue to exist. As a labor official, and  
16 with the state and with the city, you know, to  
17 me it's a farce to have public funds, which in  
18 reality is your tax dollars. I could go on to  
19 days about the union issues, and about some of  
20 the privatization and the danger of  
21 privatization in public schools, because  
22 eventually, there's not going to be any public  
23 schools. It's going to be private schools in  
24 public buildings. And it's all about money. I  
25 could go on and on for days, but I want to take

1 this time to thank Ms. Baker and Dr. Wilson  
2 for giving me opportunity to speak to you all.  
3 But help me help your kids by saying no to  
4 charter schools. Thank you very much.

5 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

6 MR. LAFARGUE: Melanie Lewis.

7 MALE VOICE: Ms. Lewis - - please. Want it  
8 a little higher? How's that?

9 MS. MELANIE LEWIS: Good evening, everyone.  
10 Good evening. Yes, my name is Melanie Lewis.  
11 I'm on the PTA for Exceed Charter School. Yes,  
12 I am. And I went to school right here at Jackie  
13 Robinson when it was Jackie Robinson IS320. And  
14 I'm a member of this community. I attend  
15 community board meetings. I'm very active with  
16 the PTA. As far as resources and the board of  
17 education, yes. As parents, we have to be  
18 involved for the changes that we want. Now  
19 charter schools is a public school, and that's  
20 where I chose to put my children. Now both of  
21 my children, they both have IEPs. And I was  
22 very reluctant in putting them in this  
23 particular charter school, in which we seek to  
24 have in this particular building. But let me  
25 tell you, they have been working with me. And I

1 have been a very--I have been in the school  
2 building watching as the other two building--  
3 other two schools in the building--I have been  
4 watching very closely the relation with the  
5 other schools in our building. And I will tell  
6 you, it has been succinct. It has been cordial.  
7 We have been working together as a team because  
8 together, everyone achieves more. And if we are  
9 allowed to be in this building, we would have to  
10 work together because together we achieve more.  
11 We would need to renew our minds so that we can  
12 work together to get things done for all of our  
13 children. I am in agreement with you. Who  
14 wants for there to be three schools in one  
15 particular building? I don't believe anybody  
16 would want that. But if that is what is given  
17 to us, we will need to work together to get  
18 things done. Okay. So I appreciate this time,  
19 and you all have a great day.

20 MALE VOICE: Okay. Equal time for everyone.  
21 Please, everyone has a thought. Equal time.  
22 Please be respectful and mindful. Thank you,  
23 Ms. Joseph. Is this good? There you go.

24 MS. EDITH JOSEPH: Good evening, everyone.  
25 I say no. Why? I don't want no charter school

1 coming here. Why? Because I don't want no  
2 kids coming to sit down in my kid's lap. Why?  
3 I don't want nobody touch my principal and the  
4 teamwork. They work so good. One day, I went  
5 to the charter school. The way the lady  
6 watching me, they eyes and toes, I feel very  
7 ashamed. When I'm coming here, I see something  
8 else. Charter school not allowed here. I feel  
9 good with my principal. Don't touch my  
10 principal, please. I don't want nobody touch my  
11 principal, please. They're working so hard with  
12 my kids. My kid is very happy when she here.  
13 She always tell mommy, "Mommy, I don't want to  
14 leave that school, because I think nobody going  
15 to tell me I'm so pretty." "Who tell you that?"  
16 "My kids, my principal always tell me that every  
17 morning." Please. I want to talk, please. I  
18 don't want charter school here. Hello. I - -.  
19 I got voice for that. Okay. I'm ready.

20 MALE VOICE: There we go.

21 MS. JOSEPH: This is the best school. I  
22 think they don't watch news. If you watch news,  
23 you're not going to allow charter school come in  
24 here. It is the best school. It's enough.  
25 There are so many people here. They don't want

1 nobody come in here in this place. That's  
2 enough. I want my principal sleep a good sleep,  
3 not upset. This is a good school. I want my  
4 kids stay in that school, please.

5 MALE VOICE: Get you up. No problem.

6 MR. MARLON BARRINGTON: Thank you much. All  
7 right.

8 MALE VOICE: There you go. Two minutes, and  
9 the time is right here.

10 MR. MARLON BARRINGTON: No problem. Good  
11 evening, everyone. My name is Marlon  
12 Barrington. I'm the stepfather of Dacia Morton.  
13 Now I just want to say that as a parent, and  
14 when I saw my daughter speak here and advocate  
15 for the school, it was very, you know, I felt  
16 proud to see that she has excelled so much  
17 because I don't know really how far along she  
18 is. But to see her stand here and advocate for  
19 herself so eloquently, it shows me that she's  
20 actually learning something. It shows me that  
21 she's actually excelling and moving forward.  
22 You understand what I'm saying? And to  
23 understand that you're coming in here and  
24 advocating for the charter school, I understand  
25 where you're coming from. But I want my kids to

1 actually learn. I want them to exceed. I  
2 want them to move forward in life. And having a  
3 crowded space, I don't see that's going to be  
4 able for them to really focus and to learn  
5 what's going on because there's so much this and  
6 so much that. Now I heard someone else say  
7 that, oh, well it's going to be a difficult  
8 task. Why would we want to make things more  
9 difficult for them? Why? Why would we want to  
10 make it harder for them, for them, for the  
11 teachers, and for the parents? All of that is  
12 just not necessary. So I understand that this  
13 is a hearing, but I hope you're actually  
14 listening to what we're saying. No is no. I  
15 mean, we really got to understand. I watch  
16 these kids out there left behind left and right,  
17 and they're losing. Our society is losing  
18 because our kids are not getting the proper  
19 education. Please, people, no.

20 MR. LAFARGUE: Leilani Mabrey.

21 MALE VOICE: Want to move this? What it  
22 down?

23 MS. LEILANI MABREY: Yes. Please.

24 MALE VOICE: Right there?

25 MS. MABREY: Thank you. This is perfect.

1       Okay. My name is Leilani Mabrey. I am a  
2       seventh and eighth grade teacher here at Ebbets  
3       Field Middle School. And right now, I'm going  
4       to begin by reading a speech from my sister,  
5       colleague, and friend, another seventh and  
6       eighth grade teacher here, ELA, Ms. Chapman  
7       Santiago. And I read this because her  
8       sentiments are my sentiments. "Education is a  
9       right. It's not a business. Ebbets Field  
10      Middle School is one of those schools that this  
11      community needs. It's a jewel of the  
12      neighborhood, and should be given a chance to  
13      shine. Bringing in a charter school is not the  
14      answer. Disenfranchisement of children,  
15      parents, and communities, de-intellectualizing  
16      the schools is not the answer. If a charter  
17      school is brought into this building, it will be  
18      the unfortunate destruction of what education  
19      means in this country. Privatization of  
20      education goes against our right of a free and  
21      equitable education for our children. Though  
22      this school does not have the funds that a lot  
23      of other schools have, it has produced some of  
24      the finest students, by providing them  
25      opportunities and experiences that they would

1 not have otherwise been exposed to. Money  
2 would be pumped into our public schools, not--  
3 money should be pumped into our public schools,  
4 and not pumped into the pockets of businessmen  
5 who do not understand our children's needs, and  
6 who do not care, and do not care to understand  
7 who they are. Privately controlled centers are  
8 better for workers, not for children. Please  
9 keep out of Ebbets Field Middle School. Save  
10 our school. Save our kids. Save our community.  
11 Our kids are hungry enough as it is. Their  
12 resources are scattered enough as it is. We are  
13 stressed enough as it is. We have to preserve  
14 what we do have, and try to get more. We cannot  
15 scatter them any further. These are my babies.  
16 I don't have children. All of these are my  
17 babies, and I need more for my babies. Thank  
18 you.

19 MALE VOICE: I see. Hold on. I'm going to  
20 lift it up for you. Okay.

21 MS. SAMANTHA BERNARDINE: Thank you so much.

22 MALE VOICE: You're welcome. I'm sorry.

23 MS. BERNARDINE: I'll make it happen. Good  
24 evening. Okay. My name is Samantha Bernadine.  
25 I am the PTA president for PS316, but also the

1 president for President's Council for District  
2 17. And let me just say, and start off this  
3 way, it's disrespectful that we're having this  
4 hearing when parents who have children in high  
5 school are in theirs right now for open school  
6 night. So I just want to put that out there.  
7 So with that being said, I am an alum of this  
8 school when it was only 320. And let me just  
9 say, from here I went on to high school, and  
10 went on to college, and went to graduate school.  
11 So public schools do educate their children.  
12 All right. But I want everyone to really think  
13 about this whole process. It's not about  
14 charter schools. The real culprit is DOE. They  
15 have systematically broke down the public school  
16 system because charter schools are doing what  
17 they have to do. And with that being said, we  
18 were just at a hearing with City Council, and I  
19 believe you were there as well with the  
20 chancellor. And there are 1,100 schools that  
21 are co-located in 537 buildings throughout the  
22 city. So if you really do the math, you can see  
23 that our kids are failing. And where those co-  
24 locations are, they're in areas that are of  
25 people of color, that are in low income areas.

1 So they kind of systematically, and I believe  
2 the brother had said about classism being  
3 brought into the building because in these  
4 areas, we already see classism outside. So you  
5 bring in what is outside in here. I will ask  
6 all of you, do not let this night be the be all  
7 and end all. Let this be the night that you  
8 fight. And it is outrageous that we don't have  
9 all these seats filled up. So I beg of you  
10 guys, you make sure that you bring another  
11 parent here, you bring another child here. If  
12 we have to make sure that we have babysitting,  
13 we'll have that because DOE needs to understand  
14 that we are about our children. We're not about  
15 what they see on TV. So rise up. It is time to  
16 rise up. Thank you.

17 MR. LAFARGUE: - -.

18 MS. CLAUDETTE AGARD: So my name is--one  
19 minute.

20 MALE VOICE: You got it?

21 MS. AGARD: No. Thank you. My name is  
22 Claudette Agard, so I want to say good evening  
23 to Principal Wilson, and Principal Baker, and  
24 Mr. Padmore. So let me just make some clarity.  
25 I'm the former president of the CEC 17. And so

1 I need to say this, right, because you heard  
2 Mr. Balland refer to me. And for some reason I  
3 always get called out in meetings that there's  
4 this partnership with the CEC. So let me  
5 explain. I am very much into the process of  
6 what goes on. Explore does happen to be one of  
7 the charter schools that has always tried to put  
8 a face to the charter school, and come to the  
9 CEC, and talk with us. All right. But let me  
10 be perfectly clear. I am not for this co-  
11 location. I am very much opposed to it, because  
12 I am opposed to the DOE and the process, what  
13 they do. And as a charter school, you get told  
14 that this is the building. So let's be clear.  
15 But it doesn't make it right. Do you  
16 understand? Just because you're told that,  
17 doesn't mean that it's a right fit. And it's  
18 not a right fit here. There's a lot of history  
19 here, and it needs to be said. I have two  
20 children. Don't ask me to sacrifice one for the  
21 other. I'm not doing it. Okay. So that's my  
22 position in this. The reason why it was  
23 suggested that you go to another building, not  
24 because we just want you to be wherever, because  
25 that is a K though eight. And the DOE truncated

1 the middle school. So common sense would say  
2 to me, if you're going to put a middle school,  
3 put it where it was. It's not there. Don't  
4 come here and now take away from a middle school  
5 that's already existing here. It makes no  
6 sense. All right. So my point in saying all  
7 this is, let's be clear. That's SUNY. SUNY is  
8 the authorizer of this charter school. SUNY can  
9 tell DOE this is not a right fit. So everybody  
10 needs to look at SUNY and tell SUNY to tell--  
11 that they need to tell DOE, not a good fit.  
12 Then you need to look at DOE and say, withdraw  
13 the proposal. You need to know who you're  
14 talking to, and where you're directing your  
15 energy to. Understand? Okay. So that's for  
16 clarity purposes. But for the record, no, I am  
17 not for it. It is not a right fit. You're  
18 going to grow, and so you're going to take space  
19 away. And that's just the reality of it. You  
20 are. And so it's not good for this house, and  
21 there's a lot of history here. So you need to  
22 go somewhere else, and that's okay. Ask the  
23 CEC, and they'll tell you. Okay. Thank you.

24 MALE VOICE: It's time.

25 MS. AGARD: Thank you.

1           MALE VOICE: Come on, you all. Better  
2 make it.

3           MS. HAYDE ESTEVEZ: Don't worry about it.  
4 Good evening, everyone. My name is Hayde  
5 Estevez. And this is my second generation in  
6 this school. When it was IS320, my daughter,  
7 Cynthia, finished her middle school in here. In  
8 that time, they give the opportunity to the best  
9 students to get place in - -. Thanks God my  
10 daughter got the good level, and she get a  
11 graduation in there. What this mean? This  
12 school is something else. This school always be  
13 something else. Now I have my grandchild - -.  
14 I very thankful with God and with the principal,  
15 and all the teacher for Jackie Robinson 375.  
16 Now he's in the middle school, 352. I'm very  
17 thankful because I receive many letters for that  
18 kind of school, and I refuse. They promise me  
19 this, and this, and that, and I refuse because I  
20 want what I got. I want what I see. Go with  
21 the teacher. The door is open. All child need  
22 be free. They don't need be stress. They need  
23 space. They need time. They need to be  
24 healthy. And how this going to be? We don't  
25 need other school in this building. We don't

1 need no more school in this building. We have  
2 enough. Okay. And then now - -. Say no to the  
3 other school in here. Thank you so much and God  
4 bless you. Bless you.

5 MR. LAFARGUE: Thank you very much. And  
6 that exhausts our speakers list and that we've--  
7 excuse me? I called out the names, sir.

8 MR. FRED BAPTISTE: No you did not. If you  
9 look on the paper you will see the name of Fred  
10 Baptiste from the PEP.

11 MR. LAFARGUE: We will check it out. Hold  
12 on.

13 MR. BAPTISTE: You can check it then.

14 MR. LAFARGUE: All right, hold on. We got  
15 you. Well I don't see a Fred Baptiste.

16 MALE VOICE: I don't see a Fred Baptiste,  
17 either.

18 MR. LAFARGUE: I don't see a Fred Baptiste  
19 on the list here, sir.

20 MR. BAPTISTE: Check the paper.

21 MALE VOICE: We checked it.

22 MR. LAFARGUE: We checked it.

23 [crosstalk]

24 MALE VOICE: You have to have a number, sir.

25 MR. BAPTISTE: There is an invited list.

1 MALE VOICE: You have to have a number,  
2 sir.

3 MR. BAPTISTE: Sir, there was an invited  
4 list.

5 MALE VOICE: You have to have a number, sir.

6 MR. BAPTISTE: All right. Not a problem.  
7 [crosstalk].

8 MR. LAFARGUE: Hold on. Fred, hold on.  
9 Sir, you can have your two minutes to speak.

10 MR. BAPTISTE: I will be brief because this  
11 community has already come out loud and clear  
12 with what their feelings are regarding the  
13 process to how we got here and what the effects  
14 are going to be on their children, our children,  
15 as I am a resident of this neighborhood as well.  
16 I think that we have to look back to the--  
17 there's a sentence I'm going to read here very  
18 quickly. The DOE's projected utilization rates,  
19 blah, blah, blah, are based on the 2011/2012  
20 target capacity, which assumes that the  
21 components underlying the target capacity remain  
22 constant. Let's be clear. Those assumptions  
23 are based on rules established by the mayor of  
24 New York City. In 2015, we are going to have a  
25 totally different mayor of New York City. So it

1 is wrong for us to even assume that these  
2 targeted utilizations are going to be part of  
3 the policy of the city at that point, for one.  
4 For two, I think we need to look at this whole  
5 idea of a 96% utilization rate means that this  
6 building is being utilized well. The assumption  
7 is that we need to pack all of our students  
8 until they're falling out of the windows in a  
9 building. What makes a good school is how it's  
10 utilized, not how many kids are in there. So if  
11 we're talking about we have class sizes that are  
12 manageable for teachers. If we're talking about  
13 we have access to computer labs, to speech labs,  
14 to mathematics labs. If they have time to play  
15 and of course, whoever said, you know, that's  
16 not lunch, it's brunch. We've heard that  
17 several times as well, but it's all of those  
18 things that go into making sure a quality  
19 education is happening in this building. This  
20 proposal totally ignores so many of those facets  
21 that I really think that we should--we need to  
22 ignore this and this needs to be brought back to  
23 the communities. And as a point of order, I  
24 also want to make sure that we note that the  
25 CEC, when this proposal first came out, said

1 that it needs to go back to the drawing board  
2 and it needs to be brought to the communities to  
3 be reviewed because there were some serious  
4 objections to some of the assumptions that were  
5 in here. Community boards eight and nine passed  
6 resolutions, saying that this was half-baked and  
7 it needed to be brought back to the community,  
8 to the parents, to the stakeholders, to the  
9 community boards, to make sure that our voices  
10 were being heard, in terms of how we want to  
11 service--how we want this building to be used in  
12 our community. There is no disrespect to Exceed  
13 Charter School. I've heard of you and I've  
14 heard of the work you've done. But I believe  
15 that, and Mr. Paul - - you said that--when you  
16 referred to Ms. Baker's comparison of what they  
17 do here, you say we don't do as much, but we  
18 definitely want to do more. Cramming three  
19 schools inhibits all--the ability of all three  
20 schools to do more. When there's 96% of you,  
21 there is no room for growth. You are who you  
22 are. You are stuck at who you are. There is no  
23 room for that to change. In an educational  
24 system, I think we need to be able to allow for  
25 that change for our students and for our schools

1 and our community.

2 MR. LAFARGUE: And thank you very much, sir.  
3 And now I believe that we have exhausted the  
4 speakers list. And so ladies and gentlemen, we  
5 heard many significant comments this evening and  
6 we certainly appreciate your feedback and your  
7 contributions to this hearing. The information  
8 will be shared with the Panel of Education  
9 Policy which will have its meeting on October  
10 the 30th, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at the Prospect  
11 Heights campus, located at 883 Classon Avenue,  
12 Brooklyn, New York, to vote on this particular  
13 proposal. There is an email address and phone  
14 number where comments on this particular  
15 proposal may be made, and that email address is  
16 D, as in David, 17Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov.  
17 I'm going to repeat that. That email address,  
18 once again, is D, as in David,  
19 17Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov and the telephone  
20 number is (212)374-0208. And that number again  
21 is (212)374-0208. Thank you all for coming and  
22 this officially adjourns the public hearing.

23 [END RECORDING]

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

6  
7           Signature

*Michelle R Killen*

8           Date   October 28, 2013  
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