



Public Comment Analysis

Date: January 31, 2011

Topic: The Proposed Co-location of New High School 12X521 with Monroe Academy for Business/Law High School (12X690), Pan American International High School (12X388), High School of World Cultures (12X550), and Monroe Academy for Visual Arts and Design (12X692) in School Building X420

Date of Panel Vote: February 1, 2011

Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to co-locate 12X521, a new high school, in school building X420 (“X420”) located at 1300 Boynton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472, located within the geographical confines of Community School District 12 (“District 12”). The proposed new high school, 12X521, would offer a rigorous academic program and prepare students for post-secondary work.

If this proposal is approved, 12X521 would be co-located with Monroe Academy for Business/Law High School (12X690, “MABL”), Pan American International High School (12X388, “Pan American”), an existing 9-11 school which will reach its full scale of 9-12 in 2011-2012, High School of World Cultures (12X550, “World Cultures”), an existing 9-12 school, and Monroe Academy for Visual Arts and Design (12X692, “MAVAD”), an existing 9-12 school, in the James Monroe Educational Campus, school building X420. In addition, X420 houses a Living for the Young Family Through Education (“LYFE”) program, a GED Plus Learning to Work part-time evening program, and an Alternative Learning Center (88X995, “ALC”). A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) posted on December 16, 2010, the DOE also proposed to phase-out and eventually close MABL based on its poor performance and the DOE’s assessment that the school lacks the capacity to turn around quickly to better support student needs. In the event that the phase-out of MABL is not approved, the DOE would re-examine the availability of space in the building, and may, as appropriate, revise its proposal to co-locate 12X521 in X420. Such a revised proposal would be described in a revised EIS.

The proposed co-location of 12X521 in building X420 is part of the DOE’s central goal to create new school options that will better serve future students and the community at large. The DOE has

already opened one new school—Pan American—in building X420 in an effort to create schools with high academic standards in traditionally underserved communities in New York City. 12X521 would offer a rigorous, college-preparatory program open to students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process. The new school would open during the 2011-2012 school year, when it would serve approximately 100-125 students in the ninth grade. 12X521 would gradually phase-in by adding one grade per academic year. The school is expected to reach full scale in 2014-2015 and would serve approximately 400-450 students in grades nine through twelve.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at James Monroe Educational Campus on January 21, 2011. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 71 members of the public attended the hearing, and 10 people spoke. Present at the meeting were MABL SLT member and UFT chapter leader Robert Roache, High School of World Cultures SLT members Principal Ramon Namnun and Dr. Diane Marquez; Pan American Principal Bridgit Clair Bye; Bronx Coalition Principal Mary Ann Tucker; Monroe Visual Arts Principal Richard Massel; Citywide Council on High Schools (“CCHS”) representatives Constance Asiedu and Denise Sullivan; and Dustin Engelken from Council Member Annabel Palma’s office. District 12 Community Education Council members confirmed that they would attend the hearing but did not.

The proposal to phase-out MABL was also addressed at this joint public hearing. The analysis of comments received which relate to the phase-out proposal can be found at <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2010-2011/Feb12011Proposals>.

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

1. Constance Asiedu, representative of the CCHS:
 - a. Expressed concern about the students who remain on the campus after the school is phasing out.
 - b. Noted that the Bronx has many schools on New York State’s list of Persistently Low Achieving schools. She expressed concerns about educational options for students in the Bronx. She stated that Bronx parents are very concerned about their children’s education, and want to ensure that there are high quality high school options in the Bronx.
2. A commenter described the history of the Monroe campus. He stated that in 1994, the DOE closed James Monroe High School and replaced it with small schools. Seventeen years later, three of those schools are closed and a fourth is proposed for closure. Instead of replacing schools, the DOE should support them and educate the young people of the South Bronx.

3. A commenter asked: What is the name of the school that will replace MABL if MABL is phased out?
4. Multiple commenters expressed concern about options for students in the community if the school is closed. Multiple commenters asked: What are the options are for current students if the school is phased out?

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

No oral or written comments were received on this proposal.

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

With regard to comments 1(a) and 4, as detailed in pages 7-12 of the EIS concerning the proposed phase-out of MABL, students currently enrolled at MABL would have the opportunity to graduate from MABL assuming that they continue to earn credits on schedule. As the school becomes smaller, students will be able to receive more individualized attention so that they can achieve their graduation goals and prepare for post-secondary education and/or career plans. All students are encouraged to meet with their guidance counselor to discuss their progress towards graduation.

With regard to comments 1(b) and 4, the DOE is proposing to open seven new high schools in the Bronx in September 2011 that will provide additional seats to students in the borough, including one new school as a replacement option for MABL. If approved by the PEP, these seven new schools are expected to serve approximately 830 new 9th grade students in 2011-2012.

Information regarding the new schools that will be proposed to open in 2011 will be provided in the winter for students who may be interested in applying to the schools as part of the High Schools Admissions Process. Detailed information about all City high schools is published annually in the City's High School Directory, available in print at DOE middle schools and Borough Enrollment Offices or on the DOE website here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/ChoicesEnrollment/High/Directory/default.htm>

With regard to comment 2, 8 out of the 25 schools proposed for phase-out this year were opened since 2003, representing less than 2% of the total schools we've created since 2003 (365). In any case where a school is failing to serve its students well, we must take appropriate action.

With regard to comment 3, the DOE has not finalized the name of the new school that will replace MABL. That information will become available within the next few weeks, pending PEP approval.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes to this proposal have been made as a result of public comment.