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

**MS 142**

**John Phillip Sousa**

**February 13, 2013**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. JENNY SOBELMAN: Good evening, ladies  
3 and gentlemen. We're going to get started in  
4 just a couple minutes. I wanted to have a quick  
5 announcement before we get started.

6 INTERPRETER: [Introduction in Spanish]

7 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you very much. And as  
8 I said we're just going to give a couple more  
9 minutes and then we'll have the folks join us up  
10 on the panel, and we'll get the hearing started.  
11 Thank you.

12 [Pause]

13 MS. SOBELMAN: I'm going to take that  
14 silence as a sign that everyone is ready to get  
15 started. So, good evening. Thank you so much  
16 for joining us. My name is Jenny Sobelman, and  
17 I'll be serving as the facilitator for this  
18 evening's joint public hearing. I want to make  
19 sure that everyone's aware that this evening's  
20 proceedings will be recorded and transcribed.  
21 Excuse me. So, I'm going to run through the  
22 agenda. Then we'll have presentations. We'll  
23 have public comment. There's a Q&A portion. So  
24 anyone who is interested in signing up for  
25 public comment, there's a sign up table at the

1 back of the auditorium where you came in.  
2 We'll have a timekeeper up here in the front.  
3 Percy will hold up a sign to let you know when  
4 your 30 seconds and then two minutes. We've got  
5 a small crowd but I am just going to try to make  
6 sure everyone who wants to speak gets their full  
7 two minutes. I would just ask folks to try and  
8 be paying attention to that time.

9       If you also have questions that you'd like  
10 to address to the panel, you can write them on  
11 the note cards that are available also at the  
12 table where you can sign in. We will have an  
13 opportunity towards the end to respond to the  
14 questions. We may not respond to all the  
15 questions tonight. We may batch some together,  
16 but I assure you that all of the questions are  
17 responded to in a document that's published  
18 online and provided to the panel members prior  
19 to the vote. That's called the analysis of  
20 public comment, and it's widely available. So  
21 all of your questions, even if we don't address  
22 them tonight, will be responded to in advance.

23       So we do have all of our panel members who  
24 are joining us tonight. They confirmed they'd  
25 be here with us, and we're going to go ahead and

1 get started. If additional folks join us once  
2 we've started, we will try and give them an  
3 opportunity to speak if they would like that as  
4 well. We may have other elected officials who  
5 join us but I do want to recognize we're joined  
6 this evening by Erica Veras representing the  
7 Bronx Borough President, and Michael, I believe  
8 also representing the Bronx Borough President.  
9 We also have other folks in the audience that  
10 I'd like to recognize before we move on to the  
11 panel. We have Principal Shawn Mangar,  
12 Principal Patricia Winn. We also have, oh, I  
13 already gave Erica. We have the SLT President  
14 Talene [phonetic] Dickerson, and Superintendent  
15 Elizabeth White. Oh, she's joined us on the  
16 panel. And the network leader Ben Waxman is  
17 also with us this evening; oh, and he's over  
18 here.

19 Moving right along. I mentioned the two  
20 minute public comment, Q&A. I think we're good.  
21 So what I would like to do now is turn it over  
22 to our panel. We are joined by Petra Poleon,  
23 like Napoleon, who's the President of the CEC,  
24 and Superintendent Elizabeth White, and Deputy  
25 Chancellor Corinne Rello-Anselmi. So now I will

1 invite the Deputy Chancellor to do the  
2 presentation. Do you want to come up here or  
3 down there?

4 MS. CORINNE RELLO-ANSELM: No. Here is  
5 good. Thank you Jenny. Good evening Ladies and  
6 Gentlemen, and thank you for being here this  
7 evening. This joint public hearing was convened  
8 to discuss the proposed phase out and  
9 replacement of MS 142 John Philip Sousa. For  
10 the purposes of this hearing, I will refer to MS  
11 142 John Philip Sousa as MS 142 from this point  
12 forward. The decision to phase out 142 is a  
13 difficult one, and we do not take this decision  
14 lightly. We examine many factors and data  
15 before we propose a course of action. We engage  
16 families and the community members in a  
17 discussion about what is and is not working at  
18 the school before determining whether phase out  
19 is appropriate.

20 All of us count on our schools to provide  
21 high quality education to students, and we must  
22 hold all schools to the same standard of  
23 excellence because every child in this city  
24 deserves the best possible education. When a  
25 school isn't serving its students well, we have

1 to take action to ensure current students don't  
2 fall even further behind, and that the future  
3 students will have a school that prepares them  
4 for success in college and in the workplace. I  
5 want to acknowledge the students who are here  
6 and the families who feel that their children  
7 are being served well by the MS 142 school  
8 community. Tonight we will hear about the  
9 success stories happening here, and we want to  
10 honor those. But we also need to consider the  
11 other students in this school that are not being  
12 served well and who have not experienced the  
13 same success. These students deserve better.

14 As I mentioned earlier tonight, we will be  
15 discussing the proposed phase out and  
16 replacement of MS 142. In addition to the  
17 proposed phase out, we are proposing to replace  
18 MS 142 with one new district middle school. MS  
19 142 is located in a school building X142 at 3750  
20 Baychester Avenue in the Bronx, New York. It is  
21 a district middle school currently serving  
22 students in Grades 6-8 and admits students  
23 through the District 11 middle school choice  
24 process. MS 142 is located with One World  
25 Middle School at Edenwald and Baychester Middle

1 School, which are phasing into the building to  
2 serve Grades 6-8 at full scale in the 2013-2014  
3 school year.

4 On January 11, 2013, the New York City  
5 Department of Education published proposals to  
6 phase out and replace MS 142 based on its long  
7 standing performance struggles. On February 5,  
8 2013, the DOE published an amended proposal  
9 which provided updated information regarding the  
10 availability of school improvement grant  
11 funding. These proposals discuss the track  
12 record of MS 142 and why the DOE believes that  
13 phase out and replacement is the best option for  
14 the MS 142 school community.

15 As MS 142 performance indicates the school  
16 has struggled and confirmed the DOE's assessment  
17 that the school lacks the capacity to improve  
18 quickly enough to meet the needs of all its  
19 students; for example, an overwhelming majority  
20 of MS 142 students remain below grade level in  
21 English language, Arts and Math. In 2011-2012,  
22 only 17% of the students were performing on  
23 grade level in English language, Arts, putting  
24 the school at the bottom 13% of middle schools  
25 citywide. Only 28% of the students were

1 performing on grade level in Math putting the  
2 school in the bottom 15% of middle schools  
3 citywide.

4 In both subject areas MS 142 ranks last  
5 among all District 11 middle schools;  
6 furthermore, 142 has been identified by the  
7 State Ed as a priority school, one of the bottom  
8 5% of schools in the state. Given the school's  
9 continued poor performance, the DOE believes  
10 that only the most serious intervention, the  
11 gradual phase out and eventual closure and  
12 replacement of MS 142, will address the long  
13 standing struggles and allow for a new school  
14 option to develop in the building, and will  
15 better serve the future students and the  
16 community.

17 In a separate education impact statement the  
18 DOE has proposed to open and co-locate a new  
19 district middle school in this building. If  
20 approved, the new middle school will serve  
21 students in 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The new  
22 middle school will admit students through the  
23 District 11 middle school choice process, and  
24 offer priority to students residing in the X142  
25 zone through campus choice admissions method.

1 All students zoned to the X142 building would  
2 have priority to the schools in the building and  
3 would have an opportunity to rank the three  
4 schools including the proposed new school in  
5 order of preference.

6 Before we move to the public comment section  
7 of this meeting I would like to discuss the  
8 impact of the phase out proposal on the current  
9 MS 142 students. If the phase out proposal is  
10 approved, MS 142 would no longer admit new 6<sup>th</sup>  
11 grade students after the conclusion of this  
12 school year. MS 142 will continue to phase out  
13 one grade at a time until June 2015 when it  
14 would close. Current 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students  
15 will be supported at MS 142 as they progress  
16 towards completion of middle school and  
17 transition to high school. Students may also  
18 apply to finish school elsewhere. Students at  
19 MS 142 will have the opportunity to apply to  
20 transfer to another middle school for the 2013-  
21 2014 school year. Applications for this  
22 transfer opportunity will be available to  
23 students this Spring for enrollment starting in  
24 September. Current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students should all  
25 have already applied for high schools through

1 the citywide high school admission process.

2 Thank you in advance for sharing your  
3 feedback on the proposals tonight. We look  
4 forward to hearing your comments and your  
5 questions. Jenny.

6 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much. Excuse  
7 me. So we actually don't have any other  
8 presentations from the panel. So we're going to  
9 move directly into public comment. So as I  
10 said--so quickly before we go into the public  
11 comment, we've been joined by a representative  
12 from Councilman King's office, Myishia Taylor-  
13 Myke, so we'll give her an opportunity to bring  
14 greetings.

15 MS. MYISHIA TAYLOR-MYKE: No.

16 MS. SOBELMAN: You got it. Perfect. Good.  
17 Good.

18 MS. TAYLOR-MYKE: Nice to meet you.

19 MS. SOBELMAN: Yes, you too.

20 MS. TAYLOR-MYKE: Good Evening everyone. I  
21 just want to thank the DOE, CEC, Ms. Petra and  
22 everybody for coming out tonight to hear about  
23 the changes that are going on with John Philip  
24 Sousa. On behalf of Council member King, we  
25 just wanted to let you all know that we are here

1 to be of service, and any transition issues  
2 that are going on, if we can get the word out,  
3 we are available to do so. Any questions or  
4 concerns that parents have, if we can work  
5 collaboratively together to make this a smooth  
6 transition and let the community know that the  
7 school is not going anywhere. We always hear,  
8 when we hear closing, people think that that  
9 means the building's doors are going to be  
10 closed shut. There will be gates on it and you  
11 can't get back in. I just think that that's  
12 something that we need to make very clear to  
13 people, that it doesn't mean that the doors are  
14 closing. The school facility is still here, but  
15 that change is coming. So I welcome the change  
16 and anything that we can do to be helpful, by  
17 all means, let us know. Thank you.

18 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much. I will  
19 also just let you know we're going to keep the  
20 public--I apologize; we're going to keep the  
21 public comment sign up list open for about 15  
22 more minutes, so if you want to make a comment,  
23 please do. Make your way to the back. No.  
24 Yeah, 15 minutes from then. I'm now going to  
25 invite our first group of speakers. So we don't

1 have a mic stand, so Percy will be here to  
2 hand you the mic and you'll hand it back to him.  
3 Again--oh, I took away his timekeeping. So each  
4 person's going to get two minutes. He's going  
5 to let you know when you've got 30 seconds, and  
6 when you've gotten to the two minutes, I'll sort  
7 of remind you and we'll just sort of move  
8 through this. And I apologize in advance if I  
9 get your names wrong, so bear with me. I've got  
10 Nicole Singleton, Neville Evans, Steven Burnett,  
11 Jessie Collins, Daryl Greene, Pamela Johnson and  
12 Elena Hernandez. So if you could just line up  
13 here in this aisle and we'll start with Nicole  
14 Singleton followed by Neville Evans, then Steven  
15 Burnett, Jessie Collins, Daryl Greene, Pamela  
16 Johnson and Elena Hernandez. Right over there  
17 for us.

18 MS. JESSIE COLLINS: Good evening. I'm  
19 Jessie Collins and I'm representing the National  
20 Council of Negro Women, which is an organization  
21 that's known for its interests in education,  
22 especially of our young people. It's founded by  
23 Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune. I'm here to say that  
24 I'm really disturbed that the school is finally  
25 going to close, and I wonder what Dr. Hill

1 Brindle would say at this point. But moving  
2 on, I have some suggestions and some concerns  
3 about this closure.

4 First of all, I would like to say that it  
5 seems like a lack of resources was put into  
6 middle school 142 in the last two years, because  
7 I understand this year the library is not  
8 functioning; that there's a beautiful library in  
9 his building that no one has access to; that the  
10 three schools can't seem to make an agreement  
11 around that. I would like to also say, and I'm  
12 going to be talking to the NAACP, that we need a  
13 community advisory board. The school has moved  
14 from the hands of the community. We all live  
15 here in the Baychester Edenwald community. I  
16 would like to make the recommendation or to ask  
17 someone, can't we have a community advisory  
18 board.

19 If not, we ask the community. National  
20 Council of Negro Women will be holding monthly  
21 meetings asking the principals to come and tell  
22 us what is going on with the education of our  
23 children, because right now, we don't seem to  
24 know and we've left it too long to the "experts  
25 and the professionals." So we want to have and

1 will have input in the new school. Also we  
2 have a lot of African American heroes in this  
3 community. So if a school has to have a name,  
4 no one has come to us to ask if we could be  
5 named Arthur Thomas, who was the first African  
6 American to sit on Community Board of District  
7 11.

8 My 30 seconds are over? That there's a lot  
9 of concerns. I think if the advisory board is  
10 set up, we'd like to see teachers of color.  
11 We'd like to see teachers in the school that  
12 look at the children and reflect themselves.  
13 I'm hearing a lot of stories. I was just in the  
14 school today. I'm here frequently. I'm a  
15 retired teacher from this school, but I'm really  
16 a little emotional because I come out of the  
17 Civil Rights Movement, and I see the school  
18 system going backwards, going backwards. Brown  
19 vs. The Board of Ed did a lot. I'm from the  
20 State of Alabama, but right now I'm not really  
21 happy with what I'm seeing here and what I'm  
22 hearing.

23 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much Mrs.  
24 Collins. Nicole Singleton? Thank you.

25 MS. NICOLE SINGLETON: Good Evening. Thanks

1 for having me here. First of all, I want to  
2 say that I'm appalled, that we are at this issue  
3 again for the second time. We won the first  
4 time and evidently we're here again at the  
5 second time. Some of the issues are basically  
6 the accountability and the responsibility of the  
7 administrative staff. So you're bringing in a  
8 new school, and you and I both know and  
9 understand that all students that are already  
10 attending Sousa will not be able to attend. The  
11 limitations that you put on each grade for the  
12 seats kind of knock students out. That is  
13 leading--that is the exact example from  
14 education system to prison, the new Jim Crow.  
15 You and I both know this.

16 So my thing is why change the name of the  
17 car when the engine is still the same? So I  
18 think that the problem here is that you're  
19 sitting there and you're not even from this  
20 neighborhood. You're not even from this  
21 community. You're not from this district. You  
22 don't understand the dynamics and the diversity  
23 that our childrens are dealing with. And as far  
24 as the community, I am also appalled that I only  
25 see a few people here. The whole District 12

1 needs to be here. This is a community school.  
2 Dr. Brindle, by himself, was prosperous in  
3 building and developing our children to become  
4 great people and keeping on. So I encourage you  
5 to revisit your choice because you did not  
6 include the community. My name is Nicole  
7 Singleton, and I haven't heard from any of you.

8 So I encourage you to go back to the drawing  
9 board, understand the issues of this community,  
10 economically, socially, and then tell me if  
11 you're just going to change the name because of  
12 funding. What is that, capitalism? We're  
13 tired. We're tired. Money doesn't change  
14 anything. It's the teachers. They should be  
15 influential. They should be experienced and  
16 mentored to understand our children. It's not  
17 color. It's the humanity of the individual that  
18 we need to visit. Thank you timekeeper.

19 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. SOBELMAN: Our next speaker is Neville  
22 Evans. Neville Evans. Are you Mr. Evans? Is  
23 Mr. Evans still here? So then we have Steven  
24 Burnett.

25 MR. STEVEN BENNETT: Bennett.

1 MS. SOBELMAN: Bennett, my apologies.

2 MR. BENNETT: Good Evening Ladies and  
3 Gentlemen. I am from the community. I spent 38  
4 years working in District 11, and I'm proud to  
5 tell you that--hello, how are you? Good. I'm  
6 going to read a statement. I represent the  
7 Council of School Supervisors and  
8 Administrators, which is the union that  
9 represents principals in the system.  
10 Principals; I'm glad to see some of our members  
11 are here tonight. The print is very small, so  
12 if you just bear with me, because it is a  
13 prepared statement from our union.

14 I will read to you that, once again, the DOE  
15 has scheduled more than two dozen schools for  
16 closure. The latest 26 schools destined for the  
17 scrap heap don't fit into any particular  
18 pattern. Several have new principals who were  
19 told they would have time to turn the school  
20 around. Several have effective ratings from the  
21 state. Several have proficient quality reviews.  
22 One actually has a principal who exceeds  
23 expectations, and a quality review rating of  
24 well developed. The DOE seems to take aim at  
25 schools as if it's playing a game of Russian

1 roulette.

2 This DOE's worst practice often devastates  
3 children of families. It usually takes aim at  
4 students who have already suffered setbacks and  
5 humiliations from previous school closings.  
6 Many of them have been turned away from the  
7 city's new schools for reasons of poor academic  
8 performance or for coming from families without  
9 clouts. Then the youngsters are warehoused into  
10 other low performing schools that are likely to  
11 be closed as well. This is a failing strategy  
12 for turning schools around and this is from the  
13 Council of School Supervisors and  
14 Administrators, the union that represents  
15 principals and assistant principals in New York  
16 City. Thank you.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much sir. Our  
19 next speaker is Daryl Greene. Mr. Greene, thank  
20 you so much.

21 MR. DARYL GREENE: Good Evening everyone.  
22 I'm a fellow graduate of the Class of 1983 John  
23 Philip Sousa. As you can see, I wear it with my  
24 heart. What I'm hearing here, the word phase  
25 out. We all know what phase out means, right?

1 It means; it's another form of elimination.  
2 Let's just call it what it is, elimination.  
3 We're talking about children here. If someone  
4 were to use their ideology when I was going to  
5 this school, phase out, I wouldn't be standing  
6 right here talking to you all. When we're  
7 looking at numbers, and that's all I heard while  
8 I was sitting here, numbers and statistics, I  
9 don't hear none of those numbers reflecting one  
10 time, coming out of none of these numbers the  
11 children. Not one time did I hear any one of  
12 these affairs that were quoting numbers say  
13 children. That's disturbing.

14 I'm hearing words like transition and  
15 relocation, and to me, that's like burying our  
16 future, because what you're saying is we're  
17 picking money on the human beings. You're just  
18 wording it differently. When you say phase out  
19 and transition, transition into what? It's  
20 camouflage. You're using trickery with the  
21 words. It's an illusion. It's like magic. Why  
22 bring in something else when you have something  
23 here that you could take a little bit more time  
24 on instead of just phasing them out. That's  
25 like double talk.

1           Why phase out something that's already  
2 here that if you worked a little bit harder and  
3 spent a little bit more time on, you could  
4 preserve what's already here. This is not  
5 making sense. We're playing games with our  
6 future. And you know what's sad? We're doing  
7 it with our weather. We're doing it with our  
8 economy. We're doing it with our lives, but  
9 we're not looking at the children and that's  
10 what's been overlooked here, and that's sad.

11           So this sweater that I made and I put  
12 together, I want you all to look at it because  
13 it says alumni, but on the back it has all the  
14 different years that this institution has  
15 created NBA ball players, people that have gone  
16 on to do great things. The Yankees aren't the  
17 only franchise in this Bronx district to have  
18 built legends. John Philip Sousa; Dr, Brindle  
19 is like George Steinbrenner. He has built an  
20 empire here that you're ready to tear down when  
21 you should be trying to build it and sustain  
22 what he built.

23           MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you sir. Before we go  
24 to our next speaker--

25           [Applause]

1 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you. Before we go to  
2 our next speaker, I just want to let you know  
3 that the speaker's sign up list has closed, and  
4 so now we're going to hear from Pamela Johnson.  
5 Pamela Johnson? The speaker sign up list is  
6 closed.

7 MS. PAMELA JOHNSON: Hi everyone. My name  
8 is Pamela Johnson. I am on the CEC, which is  
9 known as the school board, and the NAACP and the  
10 community board, but I'm not going to stand here  
11 as a member of one of those as my position,  
12 because my family is still in Edenwald. I  
13 married into Edenwald with my husband; Punkin  
14 Johnson, Sabrina Johnson, Wayne Johnson, and  
15 Kenny Johnson all graduated from Sousa, so it  
16 has been a real staple in the community.

17 And partly what I don't understand is how we  
18 had two schools in this school that functioned  
19 properly and then Sousa didn't make it. That  
20 doesn't make sense. They're the same kids, same  
21 parents from the same community. And it was  
22 something wrong with the structure. There was  
23 something wrong with the structure that wasn't  
24 able to be fixed within the time period that was  
25 given. But I want to make a couple of

1 suggestions, and no offense, we need to change  
2 the network leader. We do not need to have the  
3 same network leader for the school that's coming  
4 in, and we don't need to have it for Sousa  
5 remaining for the next two years.

6 But a couple of things that I wanted to say  
7 is what is it that you plan to do better with  
8 this new school that you didn't do with Sousa,  
9 or how do you plan on keeping Sousa and our kids  
10 that are staying for the next two years? You  
11 said 17%, 28%; how will those scores--those  
12 scores can't remain for the kids that are going  
13 to stay here. So I want to know what is the  
14 plan for the kids who are remaining here. What  
15 are you going to do for these children?

16 Another thing is my concern is that I came  
17 here for a PA meeting on February 5<sup>th</sup>. It was  
18 announced. There was no PA meeting here. I  
19 took the time to come, took my gas to be here.  
20 No one said that there wasn't going to be a PA  
21 meeting. The PA needs to be functioning in this  
22 school. And then to say, because what I found  
23 out was they wanted to reschedule it two days  
24 before this meeting so the parents could rally  
25 out together, and we probably would have had

1 more parents here had they had that meeting.  
2 So we need to make sure that the principal, make  
3 sure that the PA is meeting, and I don't care  
4 who died. I don't care who was deceased. The  
5 PA meeting needs to go on.

6 Lastly, and I have 30 seconds. I want to  
7 know what's going to happen to the remaining  
8 teachers, teachers that are going to be phased  
9 out with the school. What I understood was that  
10 only 40% was going to be interviewed, not  
11 necessarily kept, or going to the new school.  
12 So the Deputy Chancellor is here. I want her to  
13 speak to the contract and the contract issues on  
14 that.

15 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. SOBELMAN: Our next speaker is going to  
18 be Elena Hernandez followed by Dr. Johnny Garth.  
19 Elena Hernandez? Dr. Johnny Garth?

20 DR. JOHNNY GARTH: I'm going to be  
21 piggybacking on everybody who spoke ahead of me.  
22 My name is Dr. Johnny Garth [phonetic]. I'm a  
23 retired Board of Ed teacher right here from this  
24 community. I spent 31 years teaching here, one  
25 year as an AP. Superintendent White, Petra to

1 cc President. We have a community here that  
2 we love. We're not here for DOE. We're here  
3 for the kids. Knowing that I have a  
4 granddaughter in a public school, it seems to me  
5 that we can't blame the kids. We can't blame  
6 the community. We have to blame what's inside  
7 the school. What's inside the school is  
8 standing in front of your kid and my kid.

9 Now, we need to look at a couple of things.  
10 One, like Ms. Johnson said, what's going to  
11 happen to the children that's going to remain  
12 here, and what's going to happen to those  
13 teachers that's going to remain here? Are they  
14 going to still be thinking like they're thinking  
15 now? Are they going to be teaching like they're  
16 teaching now? Are they going to be giving our  
17 kids the resource and infrastructure that they  
18 need? I don't think so. When you clean house,  
19 you need to clean everything out. When you  
20 clean house, you need to bring everything in  
21 you. It's just like when you're moving to a new  
22 apartment. You don't want the same old carpets.  
23 You want new carpet.

24 I'm here to tell you that I will be  
25 campaigning in a few weeks, and my campaigning

1 platform is going to be campaigning for  
2 parents, campaigning for kids. You're going to  
3 see me on every corner, every subway and  
4 everything else that could have a 6' black woman  
5 standing on. We need to work together. We need  
6 to hang our hats on our superintendent, our CEC,  
7 because when I attend the CEC meeting, I don't  
8 see all of you. When I attend a superintendent  
9 meeting, I don't see all of you. Then all of a  
10 sudden this school is going to be closing and I  
11 see all of you. You need to come out for PTA  
12 meeting, parent's conference. Anything that's a  
13 link with your child, you need to support it.  
14 If you don't support it, you have no leg to  
15 stand on when you come here. So right now, this  
16 community need an eye opener, and the eye opener  
17 is going to be campaigning for parents and  
18 campaigning for kids, and I thank you. God  
19 bless you, and Happy Valentine.

20 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much. I do want  
21 to let folks know we have made notes on the  
22 questions that have been asked during this, and  
23 so we'll include those in the Q&A at the end.  
24 We have two more speakers. We have Toba Lacrown  
25 followed by Donna Drayton, who's actually here

1 representing Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson.

2 So Toba Lacrown.

3 MS. TOBA LACROWN: Good evening everyone.

4 One, I'm just glad that I made the meeting, and

5 I was running late, but I'm thankful I'm here.

6 I don't know what has been said before, but I

7 came here with opinions, and that is what I'm

8 going to attack. So I'm listening to the

9 President yesterday talking about education.

10 One of the key issues he mentioned was study.

11 Studies have shown that if you study kids on the

12 right part as they are listed, they grow up to

13 be mature adults, a healthy society and as

14 politicians we're trying to money.

15 Now, it saves you \$1.00 that you spend today

16 will save you \$7.00, preventing pregnancy and

17 all those things. The one thing that SPG

18 mentioned, which I believe resonate with those

19 here in New York, especially in Northeast Bronx,

20 those kids, they actually put through Pre-K and

21 kindergarten because you spend money. When they

22 get to high school, they fizzle out. There's

23 also study that shows that one out of four

24 actually make it through high school. Why?

25 Because of our public system structure. I've

1       come to a couple of meetings, and I went home  
2       with the fact that our parents are not doing  
3       what they're supposed to do.

4               I agreed, but the definition of parents here  
5       is what I want the administrator to tell us.  
6       Are they parents on their own, or you just mean  
7       individuals that have tutoring here, they are  
8       the parents that we're talking about? So if I  
9       put my child in school as well as I have  
10      responsibility at home, but I want to believe  
11      I'm also putting them in care of individuals  
12      that can take care of them. So when we come to  
13      school, I don't need to be thinking twice, but  
14      what I found out with this system is that the  
15      union is fighting with Bloomberg. That is the  
16      problem, and the children will suffer and it  
17      shouldn't be so.

18              So it's now time that we take it upon  
19      ourselves and note this place will not be phased  
20      out because I couldn't find the rationale of  
21      closing one school and bringing another school.  
22      You told us one was doing better; Baychester is  
23      doing better, but what happened to those  
24      schools? Why is it not happening in MS 142?  
25      And I'll give you this story before I leave.

1           I grew up with my parents not knowing how  
2 to read and write. So if you want to blame it  
3 on our parents--so what do you serve those kids  
4 that come here from a place like me, have only  
5 one problem? But when they come here, they  
6 learn English, but when they get home, their  
7 parents cannot even speak English. So how do  
8 you tackle it? The problem is if we consider  
9 this place as a priority school, then we should  
10 know that--we don't have several many of  
11 priority school in New York City, so those few  
12 ones that we have, maybe we should have  
13 compulsory after school program for them, and we  
14 spend money on them. It's not too much. But  
15 don't keep bullying us that our school is not  
16 doing well. What happens to the teachers? What  
17 happens to the system that we're going through?  
18 That is my challenge here.

19           MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much Mr.  
20 Lacrown. And now we'll have remarks by Donna  
21 Drayton.

22           MS. DONNA DRAYTON: Good evening. On behalf  
23 of State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson I'm here  
24 just to bring some brief remarks on her behalf  
25 as well as myself personally as a product of

1 public schools in New York City, especially  
2 Bronx County, District 8. I'm sort of kind of  
3 baffled because the Senator has represented this  
4 district. This is her 13<sup>th</sup> year. For 12 years  
5 or at least we'll say 11, 11-1/2 underneath the  
6 jurisdiction of the administrative guidance of  
7 the former Principal Cibelli, there was a unique  
8 structure that interestingly enough married my  
9 high school before it got changed up, which was  
10 Stevenson High School. You had two different or  
11 four different type of structure. Schools here  
12 ran by assistant principal with the principal  
13 being Mr. Cibelli as the head. Now that  
14 structure mirrors almost like a mayor and his  
15 four deputy mayors running their administration  
16 of this whole institution.

17 We used to see Mr. Cibelli outside walking  
18 the kids across the street. We have met with  
19 him in here with regards to expanding the  
20 Science component here in the school, or working  
21 with the Parks Department to expand this - - .  
22 I want to know what happened between his leaving  
23 and why, and the transition to whoever came in  
24 afterwards, and why we are now on a rapid  
25 decline.

1           Personally I have gone to numerous  
2 meetings in regards to phase out. I'm tired of  
3 going to meetings regarding phase out because  
4 they are not producing anything constructive.  
5 I'm still hearing problems of phased out schools  
6 and with new schools coming in, and then the new  
7 schools coming in being phased out, dah, dah,  
8 dah; it's the constant--we have the Department  
9 of Education underneath the mayoral control has  
10 dismantled a very unique thing our children are  
11 lacking, continuity. I went from PS 93, doing  
12 high school 123, Stevenson High School being the  
13 first class to graduate, and from those  
14 transitions I have friends from elementary  
15 school all the way up to high school.

16           Our children do not have that continuity no  
17 more. When our office was on Gun Hill Road, I  
18 guaranty you out of the six or seven schools at  
19 Evander, I bet you 75% of those students did not  
20 live in our communities. And when they don't  
21 live in our communities, they do not respect our  
22 communities, nor do parents who are  
23 participating, because they have to travel to  
24 that school in order for them to participate in  
25 the parent's association. So the continuity we

1 are losing. Our children are not having the  
2 sense of unity. We lost a sense of a school and  
3 their sports concept or their band concepts or  
4 their after school; there's all of that has been  
5 lost. Continuity of our children has no sense  
6 of who we are and the continuity of friendship.  
7 I mean, I've got a girlfriend; for some of us,  
8 this is our 40<sup>th</sup> year as graduates of Stevenson  
9 High School. And five of us have went all the  
10 way to elementary school. So how many of our  
11 kids today can say that? How many of our kids  
12 five years ago can say that? None of them.

13 So I think not only should DOE and  
14 underneath mayoral control needs to revisit this  
15 continuity, is also disregarding the phase out  
16 concept, because in actuality to teachers is it  
17 regards of you seeking a job some place else,  
18 whether or not you were good or you were a bad  
19 teacher or whether or not here we are again;  
20 four principals, four assistant principals,  
21 whole other administrative staff and that's the  
22 waste of dollars; could have been re-poured back  
23 into this school in regards to addressing the  
24 needs and the concerns of the school. Thank  
25 you.

1 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you so much. So now  
2 we're going to transition into the Q&A and just  
3 a couple sort of framing points for you. We did  
4 get a few questions submitted, so we're going to  
5 run through them. If something that you've  
6 heard tonight has sparked another question, I  
7 want to give you a phone number and an email  
8 that you can use that will be available from  
9 tonight until the day before the panel meeting.  
10 That panel meeting takes place on March 11<sup>th</sup> at  
11 Brooklyn Technical High School. And these  
12 numbers are also on the fax sheet which is  
13 available back there, but I just want to read  
14 them for you.

15 It's D-11, so D-11 proposals at  
16 schools@nyc.gov, and the telephone number is  
17 (212) 374-5159. And as I said earlier, all of  
18 the comments this evening, the questions,  
19 anything that's submitted will be included in  
20 the analysis that's published online and made  
21 available to the panel members prior to their  
22 vote. So now I'm going to invite the Deputy  
23 Chancellor, I believe, to respond to one of the  
24 questions that came in, which was; after all of  
25 the successful stories that have come out of

1 Sousa, why are you considering shutting it  
2 down?

3 MS. RELLO-ANSELM: So first I'd like to  
4 begin and I think it was Ms. Singleton. Are you  
5 here Ms. Singleton? I'd like to just share with  
6 you that I too am a former District 11 principal  
7 and I have worked in District 11 for 29 years.  
8 I hear very clearly, and I have watched the  
9 journey of 142 over the years, and it is not an  
10 easy decision when decisions like this are made.  
11 I have followed the journey the last few years  
12 as we struggled in terms of leadership, in terms  
13 of reducing the enrollment, of looking at  
14 putting additional resources into the school to  
15 help our teachers and our students.

16 But one of the things that we really cannot  
17 deny is that over the last three years, the  
18 students who fare well have done really well,  
19 and that the students who struggle continue to  
20 struggle. We are obliged to offer opportunities  
21 for all of our students to succeed. The  
22 journey, as we call it, Sousa, over the years  
23 has been somewhat troublesome, because I think  
24 we would all agree that the outcomes of the  
25 school do not ensure that our students are

1 prepared for career, college, a future that  
2 affords them many opportunities.

3 With the installation of the two small  
4 middle schools, we see the same population of  
5 students really succeeding and on a path to  
6 success, and we want to continue to offer  
7 options and paths to success for our students.  
8 As I mentioned earlier, most of the students at  
9 142 are below grade level and we are obliged to  
10 do better. That is why the decision to phase  
11 out Sousa and afford another opportunity for our  
12 teachers, our students, our administrators, to  
13 develop a viable alternative for the students in  
14 this community.

15 Johnny, it's good to see you still active in  
16 the community all these years.

17 MS. GARTH: - - .

18 MS. RELLO-ANSELM: Yes. It's a pleasure to  
19 know that you're out there and still rallying  
20 the parents around what is most important is the  
21 options for our students.

22 MS. SOBELMAN: So then I just wanted to--  
23 sorry.

24 MS. GARTH: [off mic] - - . I just want to  
25 say I respect your position and having a tough

1 time - - , but what I don't respect from  
2 anyone's position is to sit here and tell me  
3 that you have failing schools that have nothing  
4 to do with inside the Board of Education. Your  
5 teachers, your--

6 [Applause]

7 MS. GARTH: I'm - - . Let me also explain  
8 something to you that I'm quite sure you know.  
9 Why do you have 16 and 17 year olds in the  
10 building - - ? Why do you have young girls  
11 having babies and coming to the school when they  
12 have no right to - - . I am not playing the  
13 blame game. I'm playing the - - game. I'm - -  
14 game, the accountability game. That's the game  
15 that you need to play, and when you're on the  
16 inside, it's time to talk to the - - . I  
17 understand that, because you have a - - of being  
18 too hard; answer to like the mayor, the state  
19 and the federal. But what I do want to say to  
20 you is that just because you change the name of  
21 the car, you have to change the engine that - -  
22 . I'm not coming up with - - . You only work  
23 with the unions. That's what you need to do.  
24 You need to understand there are people are  
25 coming - - . You know the economic and social

1 realities within our school, social group.  
2 This - - encompasses the - - . You know this.  
3 So I want to thank you but I also - - .

4 MS. SOBELMAN: So I'm going to go ahead and  
5 invite our Bronx planner to come up and address  
6 the two other questions that came up during the  
7 public comment. I am going to say that she's  
8 going to respond to the questions, but we're not  
9 going to have a continuing back and forth. If  
10 we can, just let her respond to these questions.

11 If we were able to get your comments  
12 recorded, they will be included in the analysis  
13 of public comment, but they weren't on the  
14 microphone, so I'm not 100% sure about that  
15 part. So the two questions that came up were  
16 loosely; what are you going to do to support the  
17 kids who are still going to be here and being  
18 served by 142? And then also what's going to  
19 happen with the teachers who are here employed  
20 at 142? So I'll have Yael come up and respond  
21 to those.

22 MS. YAEL KALSAN: Thank you. Great. So  
23 first I will just address a little bit about how  
24 students will continue to be supported at 142 if  
25 the school is phased out. So I just want to

1 note that every student who is currently  
2 enrolled at MS 142 Sousa, assuming they continue  
3 to progress on grade level, will have the  
4 opportunity to graduate from Sousa. They will  
5 continue to be supported. The schools that are  
6 undergoing phase out get targeted supports to  
7 meet the unique needs of schools undergoing  
8 phase out.

9 We know that the needs of the school change  
10 as their circumstances change, so schools that  
11 undergo phase out will receive targeted support  
12 in areas like instruction, as well as budget and  
13 enrollment, as the circumstances for this school  
14 in those areas continue to change throughout the  
15 phase out.

16 The schools that are currently undergoing  
17 phase out in this city are supported by a  
18 network called the Transition Support Network  
19 that is uniquely trained to provide those kinds  
20 of supports to those schools. We have seen that  
21 schools that undergo phase out actually show an  
22 improvement in student outcomes throughout the  
23 course of their phase out. So as they get  
24 unique supports and as the enrollment shrinks,  
25 students are able to get support that is more

1 targeted towards their individual needs, and  
2 we do see an improvement in student outcomes  
3 over the course of the phase out.

4 As for the second question about what will  
5 happen to the faculty of Sousa, if the school is  
6 phased out and a new proposed school is opened  
7 in the building, that new school will have the  
8 opportunity to hire a new staff. The school  
9 will do that according to the guidelines laid  
10 out in the UFT's contract, and I did hear  
11 someone mention something about 40%. I'm not an  
12 expert in the contract, but I will give some  
13 overview. Essentially new schools that are  
14 opening in a building where there is a school  
15 phasing out or closing, are obligated to hire up  
16 to 50% of the--

17 AUDIENCE: A minimum.

18 MS. KALSAN: A minimum. Thank you. I see  
19 we really have some teachers.

20 AUDIENCE: The teacher's union--

21 MS. KALSAN: They have an obligation to hire  
22 at a minimum 50% of the qualified staff from the  
23 phase out school if so many apply. So the  
24 numbers shake out a little bit differently at  
25 each school depending on how many teachers apply

1 and what the new school is looking for as it  
2 phases in, but there are UFT guidelines that  
3 drive the way hiring processes are done at the  
4 new schools.

5 MS. SOBELMAN: Thank you Yael. Thank you to  
6 everyone who joined us this evening. That's the  
7 end of our Q&A portion, and as I said, all of  
8 the questions that were submitted, all of your  
9 comments will be included in the analysis of  
10 public comment. If more questions come to you,  
11 I'll give you the email and the phone number  
12 again. It's D11, D11 proposals@schools.nyc.gov,  
13 and the phone number is (212) 374-5159.

14 And as I said, that phone and email will be  
15 available until March 10<sup>th</sup> at about midnight and  
16 then we need to wrap up the analysis and that  
17 will be published online and presented to the  
18 panel members prior to the vote, which will take  
19 place on March 11<sup>th</sup> at Brooklyn Technical High  
20 School. The address is 29 Fort Green Place.  
21 It's in Brooklyn, New York, and I want to thank  
22 you again for coming and this evening's joint  
23 public hearing is officially adjourned.

24 So as I said, some of the questions won't be  
25 responded to this evening, but that will be

1 included in the analysis of public comment.

2 Thank you.

3 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

5  
6           Signature Deborah Sweet

7           Date February 18, 2013  
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