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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
**Re-Siting of International High
School at La Guardia to Q520 -
4/16/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MR. JUAN MENDEZ: If you would have a seat,
3 we'll begin in approximately one minute. For
4 those of you here in the audience, I would like
5 to make you aware that at the front to my right,
6 your left, you may find the educational impact
7 statement from the Department of Education. You
8 can also find the statement translated into two
9 additional languages. [Speaking foreign
10 language] in Spanish and the same education
11 impact statement in Chinese. So feel free to
12 get as many copies as necessary.

13 Good evening. Welcome to this joint public
14 hearing. Today is April 16, 2012. I want to
15 thank Principal John Starky and Principal Linda
16 Siegmund for organizing this event and for being
17 here with us this evening. We also have in the
18 audience the CEC representative, Bill Craigler
19 [phonetic]. We have SLT representatives from
20 two of the schools. We have Socrates Ortiz at
21 the back, and we have Jackie Belane [phonetic]
22 from Middle College High School. We have a
23 couple of people, we have Gonzalez Hidalgo, PTA
24 president and member of SLT. We have Ms. Asti
25 Timbe [phonetic], SLT parent, Kathy Clifford,

1 paraprofessional, school leadership team
2 member, Socrates Ortiz, AP, Facilitator, SLT
3 member, Romea Reed [phonetic], teacher, PTA
4 facilitator. And from International High School
5 at La Guardia community college, we have Carlos
6 Rodriguez, PTA president and we also have again
7 Jackie Belane, member of the SLT.

8 Welcome. An overview of the hearing
9 process. Good evening. This is a joint public
10 hearing of the Department of Education community
11 education council and school leadership team of
12 the proposed re-siting and colocation of
13 International High School at La Guardia
14 Community College, 24Q530 with existing school,
15 Middle College High School at La Guardia
16 Community College, 24Q520 in building Q520
17 beginning in 2012/2013. I am the Queens side
18 superintendent, Juan Mendez.

19 We have asked the District 24 Community
20 Education Council and the school leadership
21 teams of international High School and middle
22 college High School to participate in this joint
23 public hearing. I am joined tonight by Jackie
24 Belane, International High School La Guardia
25 SLT, and Socrates Ortiz from Middle College SLT,

1 also Nick Comiani [phonetic], president of
2 District 24C has been invited. I don't see him
3 present yet. As well as principals John Starky
4 to my right and Linda Siegmund as well. This
5 hearing is being recorded.

6 The purpose of this hearing is for you to
7 provide comments about the proposal. Before I
8 describe the proposal, I want to make sure that
9 you are all aware of the opportunity to provide
10 your input. All those who wish to speak must
11 sign up in the speaker sign up area located
12 outside the auditorium. The sign up list will
13 close in 15 minutes. Speakers will be given the
14 floor in the order that they sign up. All
15 comments are limited to two minutes.

16 There may be elected officials who arrive at
17 different times throughout this evening. If
18 they wish to speak, we will do our best to
19 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.
20 Those who are here at the start of the public
21 comment segment will be asked to speak first.
22 All comments will be mentioned in the analysis
23 of public comment to be published and provided
24 to the panel of educational policy the evening
25 before the panel votes. The vote is scheduled

1 for April 26, 2012.

2 In addition, we welcome any comments and
3 feedback you may have at any time before the
4 panel votes on both proposals. The e-mail
5 address and phone number where comments may be
6 made are d24proposals@schools.nyc.gov. Again,
7 d24proposals@schools.nyc.gov. And the telephone
8 number is (212) 374-7621. Again, (212) 374-
9 7621.

10 Proposal summary. The New York City
11 Department of Education, DOE, is proposing to
12 re-site International High School at La Guardia
13 Community College, 24Q530 International High
14 School, an existing High School that currently
15 serves 492 students in grades 9 through 12.
16 International High School is currently located
17 in building Q530, a leased site on the campus of
18 La Guardia Community College at 31-10 Thompson
19 Avenue, Long Island City, New York, 11101,
20 within the geographical confines of the
21 community school district 30 and the
22 administrative school District 24. If this
23 proposal is approved, International High School
24 will be re-sited to this school building, Q520,
25 located at 45-35 Van Damm [phonetic] Street,

1 Long Island City, New York, 11101 within the
2 geographical confines of District 24, beginning
3 in the 2012/2013 school year.

4 International High School opened in the
5 1999/2000 school year in a building on the
6 campus of La Guardia Community College, and
7 entered in an informal agreement that was later
8 formalized via a memorandum of understanding,
9 MOU, with CUNY, City University of New York.
10 Due to the construction of additional seats in
11 building Q520 as a result of a new DOE building
12 extension built by the school construction
13 authority, SCA, the DOE has identified a long-
14 term site for International High School.
15 Building Q520 is approximately 0.3 miles from
16 the campus of La Guardia Community College.

17 If this proposal is approved, International
18 High School will be collocated with the school
19 organization currently housed in building Q520,
20 Middle College High School at La Guardia
21 Community College, 24Q520, otherwise known as
22 Middle College High School. An existing high
23 school that serves students through grades 9
24 through 12. A collocation means that two or more
25 school organizations are located in the same

1 building, and many share common spaces like
2 auditoriums, gymnasiums and cafeterias.

3 During the 2012/2013 school year, the first
4 year of the proposed colocation, International
5 High School will serve students in grades 9
6 through 12 with a total enrollment of
7 approximately 460 to 500 students. According to
8 the 2010/2011 enrollment capacity utilization
9 report, the blue book, prior to the new
10 construction, building Q520 had a target
11 capacity of 516 students, and enrolled 497
12 students, yielding a building utilization rate
13 of approximately 96%.

14 According to the program or requirements
15 POR, for the newly constructed extension,
16 building Q520 will have a target capacity of 820
17 students, beginning in the 2012/2013. If this
18 proposal to re-site and collocate International
19 High School is approved, building Q520 will have
20 a projected utilization rate of approximately
21 111 to 121% in the 2012/2013 school year.

22 Both International High School and Middle
23 College High School have educational models that
24 provide students with the opportunity to enroll
25 in college classes, as part of their high school

1 instructional program. International High
2 School and Middle College High School are five
3 year early college program schools, meaning that
4 students in the 12th grade will have finished
5 their high school graduation requirements, have
6 the option of staying a fifth year in which they
7 can take a full college schedule and work toward
8 associates degrees at La Guardia Community
9 College. These students remain on each school's
10 register, thus increasing the size of the 12th
11 grade cohort each year.

12 However, as students who participate in the
13 fifth year program do not typically follow a
14 standard high school schedule and often attend
15 classes at La Guardia Community College for a
16 large portion of the day. This year, there are
17 45 students at International High School and 62
18 students at Middle College High School who are
19 participating in the fifth year program
20 respectively.

21 This represents approximately 11% of the
22 total combined enrollment of both schools this
23 year. Taking this educational model into
24 consideration, the projected utilization rate of
25 building Q520 in 2012/2013 would decrease to

1 approximately 98 to 107%.

2 Now we will have the presentation of hearing
3 participants. Thank you. Do we know who the
4 presenters are?

5 MS. EMILY ADES: I don't believe anyone from
6 either SLT wishes to make a statement, so we can
7 move on to speaker list. That's correct?

8 MR. MENDEZ: Correct. We have now concluded
9 the formal presentations. We will now open the
10 floor for public comments. Speakers will be
11 given the floor in the order that they have
12 signed up. All comments are limited to two
13 minutes. We are such a small audience, if you
14 need more than two minutes, we certainly are
15 more than willing to accommodate you.

16 Our next speaker is Gonzalo Hidalgo.

17 MR. GONZALO HIDALGO: Yes, I just want to
18 make a quick comment about my own experience as
19 a father here in the school. Coming from
20 transferring - - from a different school, we
21 were kind of worried what the transition was
22 going to be, but we found it to be so easy from
23 day one. My son fit into the school - - staff,
24 and basically the curriculum for the school. So
25 to all the new parents, I just want to say that

1 you made the right decision coming to this
2 school.

3 For the other part of the integration of
4 Middle College and International, I think it's
5 going to be a great experience. It's going to
6 benefit all the kids, the new ones, the ones
7 that are already here, and I can only hope for
8 the best, and I'm sure it's going to be the best
9 for everybody. So I welcome that integration,
10 and I'm all for it. That's what I wanted to
11 comment on. Thank you very much.

12 MR. MENDEZ: Thank you very much, Mr.
13 Gonzalo Hidalgo. Anyone else in the audience
14 who wishes to speak, you're welcome to do so
15 now.

16 MS. VALERIE CABRERA: We have a question.

17 MR. MENDEZ: Because you're a translator, he
18 can speak in Spanish, and you can translate in
19 English, if you wish.

20 MS. CABRERA: - - . What she wants to ask
21 is that she believes that she actually believes
22 something that he said was correct, and she
23 wants to add on when in regard to the - - . She
24 just wants to know more or less in regard to the
25 security. Will there be more security? Will

1 the students be more secure in the school?

2 MR. MENDEZ: We can address that right
3 after, but the short answer is every Department
4 of Education building has a school safety
5 administrator assigned to their location, and
6 there's a protocol for safety and security.
7 When outsiders come into the building, they have
8 to identify themselves. They have to state the
9 purpose of their visit, who they're going to
10 see. They get escorted to the location. They
11 don't just wander the building, especially
12 buildings that have multiple floors. Many times
13 they are given stickers that are color
14 coordinated and each color represents the school
15 or floor so they can be easily identified. So
16 there are a lot of systems in place.

17 Currently in both schools they are both
18 Department of Education institutions where that
19 is taking place. Any other questions, we'd be
20 more than happy to address it right after the
21 meeting. Anyone else? Okay. So the speaker
22 list is now exhausted. Oh, somebody?

23 MR. CARLOS RODRIGUEZ: [Speaking foreign
24 language].

25 MS. VALERIE CABRERA: He's referring as to

1 the amount of students there's going to be,
2 900 students in the school. So he understood
3 what we were saying, and in regard to what you
4 were saying how there was going to be much more
5 protection, and in regard to coming into the
6 school, you would have a sticker to come in.

7 [Speaking foreign language]

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: [Speaking foreign language]

9 MS. CABRERA: Unfortunately the parents from
10 the school--what he's trying to say is that
11 unfortunately not all the parents are not giving
12 the undivided attention that he would want them
13 to, but he's trying, as you can see, himself,
14 and a couple of the other parents.

15 MR. MENDEZ: No, I commend this parent
16 because every time I come to either this
17 building or the building across the street, he's
18 always present. He's a highly committed
19 individual and professional. So that means that
20 he cares. So he's representing parents quite
21 well right now, and him being a voice for them.
22 So I thank you for that.

23 And then there are many, many things that
24 can be done in buildings that are shared, where
25 there are multiple schools. So that is a

1 relationship of support versus a relationship
2 of rivalry. I mean, we all live in a city where
3 millions of people live in this city, and we all
4 get along, work with each other, support each
5 other, do community service. So these same kind
6 of activities can be done at the school level.
7 So you could have joint teams to compete against
8 other schools, and now as members of that team,
9 then they are unified within one campus setting.

10 You can have a band that is shared where you
11 have people who play music, whether it's a band
12 or an orchestra that is done in collaboration
13 between the two schools. Then they go and
14 represent the campus at other locations in
15 competitions. There are multiple things that
16 can be done to bring them together. They can do
17 community service projects together to choose
18 one service project and then work in
19 collaboration to make sure the project is
20 successful.

21 That does away with the misperception that
22 because you don't know somebody else, they are
23 necessarily different from you. They are all
24 students and future citizens of this great city.

25 MS. LINDA SIEGMUND: I just want to add that

1 students from International High School and
2 Middle College got together already. They have
3 - - and have members of their student government
4 have met and - - activities to make sure that
5 the student populations know each other and can
6 create some bonding before the actual re-siting
7 takes place.

8 MR. MENDEZ: Yes, and you can do welcoming
9 activities where the students from Middle
10 College High School are welcoming in big ways
11 the students who are coming right across the
12 street. You only have to wait for the traffic
13 light, and you can cross the path. You could
14 almost have a tunnel underground.

15 MS. SIEGMUND: Right now, the students eat
16 in the cafeteria together.

17 MR. MENDEZ: Wonderful.

18 MR. SOCRATES ORTIZ: Sorry, we also, the
19 cafeteria is one relationship that we have, and
20 we've had no incidents for years, and we also
21 share sports teams together already. So I mean,
22 these are things that parents may not know, but
23 we share all sports teams. Because our schools
24 are so small, we share both schools actually
25 with a third school, which is Wagner. We all

1 share one sports team. So we already do a lot
2 of things together, and in addition to that,
3 we're also working on bringing staffs together
4 so the staff can also get to know each other as
5 well.

6 And both schools, I just want to say, I'm
7 the AP, and I'm in charge of security at Middle
8 College High School, and both schools are low
9 incidence schools. We have very little problems
10 throughout the year, and the person that deals
11 with security over there, we're always in
12 communication, work as a team. So that's not
13 going to change. It is going to change. It's
14 going to change, and it's going to improve.
15 It's going to improve them coming over here
16 because we can just walk to someone's office
17 instead of trying to track them down. So it's
18 only going to be a plus, and again, both schools
19 are low incidence schools, and we're both very
20 confident that we're going to be successful here
21 in this one building.

22 MR. MENDEZ: Thank you. Yes?

23 MS. CABRERA: Also, I would like to comment
24 in regard to the future, in the future whether
25 they wanted to know whether you guys will make

1 more organizations or even more things for
2 parents in order to understand or to see how
3 their students are doing. That's one comment,
4 and the second parent is if for future
5 references, whether there is any problems with
6 any student. Like, let's say you have one
7 student that is bullying another student. What
8 would you do to take action in that type of
9 situation? They want to know, more or less.

10 MR. MENDEZ: Okay. So there are two items.
11 The first item is parental involvement. There
12 are existing parental associations at each of
13 the schools. They are run independently, but I
14 know that for example, principals are very
15 supportive of those parents associations and
16 parents' executive boards to ensure that they
17 have access to the building, that they can
18 request workshops. Teachers regularly volunteer
19 to participate, guidance counselors to go over
20 graduation requirements, and procedures, how to
21 take college courses free of charge at La
22 Guardia Community College, for example. So
23 that's one component. The second question was
24 on?

25 MS. CABRERA: In regard to a future

1 situation where a student, let's say that one
2 student that's good in particular, and then we
3 have a student that's a bully. What would you
4 do a teacher or a - - ?

5 MR. MENDEZ: Yes, it's a very good question.
6 I always tell students go to person that you
7 trust, an adult in the building who you have a
8 relationship with. It could be a teacher, it
9 could be an assistant principal, it could be the
10 principal, it could be a para professional and
11 voice your concern. That person, everyone is
12 trained to be a mandated reporter and to know
13 what's the channel of command is and to go
14 report it so there will be appropriate
15 interventions made. Maybe the other student
16 doesn't know that they are acting
17 inappropriately. It could be as simple as that.
18 Or maybe some student who had a prior history
19 that needs more guidance and intervention so
20 they can understand there are certain
21 expectations at this school and how to behave
22 appropriately in a civilized society. So those
23 are some of the things that we do.

24 But that communication is critical, to reach
25 out to somebody. If the child gets home and

1 needs assistance, pick up the phone, call the
2 school. There's always a guidance counselor, an
3 assistant principal, the assistant principal of
4 security for one of the schools. I'm sure
5 there's a counterpart at International High
6 School La Guardia as well.

7 MS. CABRERA: I believe parents would
8 actually like easier access to the facility or
9 also to the teachers and maybe to the actual
10 staff. If there's any way you guys can have a
11 way to contact them, if anything goes wrong with
12 a student.

13 MR. MENDEZ: Yes, they do have. They have
14 telephone numbers and many ways. We have it in
15 the computer system called ATS, automated
16 schools. We also have information on the blue
17 card, [Speaking foreign language], that has
18 alternate numbers. The primary numbers, cell
19 numbers, secondary numbers, and when those don't
20 work, we can actually go into the system and
21 historically go back to kindergarten and try
22 every, single number that is there. Most people
23 don't know that, and they have alternate numbers
24 of all the people who in the past were
25 authorized to also receive phone calls or

1 authorized to pick up their sons and daughters
2 when they were in elementary, middle school.

3 We have a member of Jimmy Van Bremer's
4 office. If he cares to speak on behalf of the
5 councilman, he's welcome to do so. He's sitting
6 there, very unassuming, but he's a great person
7 who's always working very closely with the
8 community, just like the council members, so we
9 thank you for being here this evening.

10 MR. JOE KENTON: No, I don't.

11 MR. MENDEZ: So again, we welcome any
12 comments and feedback you may have at any time
13 before the Panel for Educational Policy votes on
14 this proposal at its April 26, 2012 meeting.
15 The e-mail address and phone number where
16 comments may be made are again,
17 D24proposals@schools.nyc.gov and (212) 374-7621.
18 Thank you for your participation. This joint
19 public hearing is now closed.

20 [END RECORDING]

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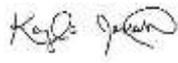
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature 

Date April 19, 2012_____