

## Fact Sheet: Proposed Phase-out and Replacement of P.S. 64 Pura Belpre (09X064)

### Overview

We want every community to have high quality school options for families. Every fall, the Department of Education (DOE) reviews the performance of all schools Citywide. Over the past several years, despite the best efforts of the community and the DOE to support P.S. 64 Pura Belpre (“P.S. 64”), the school has struggled to meet basic requirements for student success.

On October 15, 2012, District 9 Community Superintendent Dolores Esposito held meetings at the school with the School Leadership Team, staff, and parents to discuss what is working at P.S. 64, what needs to be improved, and how the community can work together to better serve students.

Based on an extensive review of qualitative and quantitative data and community feedback, the DOE has determined that P.S. 64 does not have the capacity to quickly improve and is proposing that the school be phased out. The DOE is also proposing that the school be replaced by two new schools.

**Proposing to phase out a school is the most difficult decision we make. We are proposing to phase out P.S. 64 because it is the right action for current and future students in this community. If the proposal to phase out P.S. 64 is approved,** the school would phase out gradually over the next several years. The school would close in June 2016 after its phase-out is complete.

We hope you share our view that we can—and must—do better for students. The DOE will continue to work closely with P.S. 64 staff and families to ensure that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

### Performance Summary

Proficiency: % of Students on Grade Level		Progress Report Grade			Most Recent Quality Review Rating
English	Mathematics	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2011-2012
18%	27%	C	D	D	“Developing”

- The overwhelming majority of P.S. 64 students remain below grade level in English Language Arts and Math. Only 18% of students were performing on grade level in English—putting the school in the bottom 1% of elementary schools Citywide. Only 27% of students were performing on grade level in math—putting the school in the bottom 1% of elementary schools Citywide.
- The Progress Report measures the progress and performance of students in a school, as well as the school environment, compared to other schools serving similar student populations. P.S. 64 earned a D grade on its 2011-2012 annual Progress Report, including a C grade for Student Progress, an F grade for Student Performance and a D grade for School Environment. P.S. 64 has a history of low performance, including a D grade on the 2010-2011 Progress Report and a C grade on the 2009-2010 Progress Report.
- P.S. 64 was identified by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) as a Priority school, defined by NYSED as one of the bottom 5% of schools in the state.
- P.S. 64 was rated “Developing” on its most recent Quality Review in 2011-2012, indicating deficiencies in the way that the school is organized to support student learning.
- Demand for P.S. 64 is low. P.S. 64 is a zoned school, but as of last school year, only 51% of students residing in the P.S. 64 zone chose to attend the school, suggesting that families are seeking better options.

## Despite Our Best Efforts, Performance Remains Low

We recognize that P.S. 64 staff members have worked hard to improve the school, but even with support the school has not produced adequate outcomes for students. To help the school's efforts to improve performance, the DOE offered numerous supports to P.S. 64 including:

### Leadership Support:

- Providing extensive coaching and professional development for the principal and assistant principals in the use of classroom observations and feedback to improve teacher effectiveness.
- Supporting school leadership in aligning curriculum to citywide instructional expectations to raise standards for teacher practice and student learning.
- Assisting the principal and assistant principals in the development of instructional plans and goals for the school year, in support of the school's Comprehensive Education Plan.

### Instructional Support:

- Coaching teachers in improving instructional strategies and monitoring the academic progress of English Language Learners.
- Facilitating professional development opportunities for school staff to enhance instructional practice in literacy and math.
- Providing targeted training and mentoring to new teachers in methods for differentiating instruction to increase student engagement and academic achievement.
- Coaching teachers on the development of rigorous curriculum and challenging student work in English Language Arts, with a focus on increasing student understanding of complex non-fiction and informational texts.

### Operational Support:

- Training school staff in student data tracking systems to ensure efficient and effective monitoring of student attendance and academic programming.
- Advising the school on budgeting, human resources, staff recruitment, compliance issues and building management.
- Advising the school on grant opportunities and working with the principal to align the budget with the school wide instructional goals.

### Student Support:

- Assisting the school in the development of a school safety plan and discipline code, and coaching school staff in best practices for reducing the number of safety incidents and suspensions.
- Facilitating a town hall meeting on safety issues, including bullying, for students, parents and school staff, aimed at fostering support for a positive learning environment among the entire school community.

## What would the proposal mean for current students?

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 64 will be phased out gradually over the next several years and will no longer admit new kindergarten students after the end of this school year. However, most current students will stay at P.S. 64 as it phases out.

Below are the enrollment plans for current P.S. 64 students, if the school were to phase out.

### **Kindergarten – Grade 1**

- The new schools will only serve kindergarten, first, and second grades next year and will add one grade per year over the next three years.
- Current kindergarten and first-grade students will attend one of the new schools for first and second grades next year. Families will have the opportunity to indicate their preference between the two schools.

### **Grades 2 – 4**

- P.S. 64 will serve third, fourth, and fifth grades next year and will serve one grade fewer each year over the following two years.
- Current second-, third-, and fourth-grade students will continue on to the next grade level at P.S. 64 in September 2013; these students can remain at P.S. 64 through their fifth-grade graduation.

### **Grade 5**

- Current fifth-grade students will have the opportunity to graduate from P.S. 64 at the end of this school year. These students may have applied to middle school through the Districts 9 and 10 Middle School Choice Process. Whether or not they have submitted an application, these students will receive priority for a seat in their zoned middle school. Most students at P.S. 64 are zoned to I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade for sixth grade.

P.S. 64 students who are held over in a grade still offered by P.S. 64 will continue to be served by that school. P.S. 64 students who are held over in a grade which is no longer offered by P.S. 64 will be served by one of the two new, replacement elementary schools.

Next school year, P.S. 64 will serve students in grades three, four and five. Then, during the following school year, P.S. 64 will serve students in grades four and five. Finally, during the 2015-2016 school year, P.S. 64 will only serve students in grade five. P.S. 64 would close in June 2016 after its phase-out is complete.

## **Supporting Current Students**

The DOE remains focused on helping P.S. 64 students to succeed. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 64 would be provided targeted, customized, and intensive supports aimed at the unique needs of the school and its students. This support would be in the areas budget, staffing, programming, community engagement, guidance and enrollment including, but not limited to:

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

## **Plans for New Schools for the P.S. 64 Community**

The DOE has proposed to open and co-locate two new district elementary schools in the same building as P.S. 64, which will both serve the same zone as P.S. 64. If that co-location proposal is approved, the new schools will begin serving grades K-2 in the 2013-2014 school year and add one more grade each year until they serve grades K-5 in the 2016-2017 school year.

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

## Next Steps and What You Can Expect

In the next two months, the DOE will invite the P.S. 64 community to participate in a joint public hearing co-hosted by the DOE, the District 9 Community Education Council, and P.S. 64's School Leadership Team. As soon as the hearing has been scheduled, we will notify you of the date and also share with you the formal proposal to phase out P.S. 64. During the joint public hearing, community members, including parents and students, will be able to share their thoughts on the phase-out proposal.

The proposals to phase out and replace P.S. 64 will be voted on by the Panel for Educational Policy ("PEP"), which is composed of members appointed by Mayor Bloomberg and the five Borough Presidents, during a public meeting scheduled for **March 11, 2013**. During this meeting, the public will have another opportunity to comment on the proposals. If the PEP approves the proposals, P.S. 64 will not accept new students next school year.

## Sharing Your Concerns and Questions

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

Phone: 212-374-5159

Email: [D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D09Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)

Online: <http://schools.nyc.gov/community/planning/changes/bronx/feedback?id=350>