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

**BGLIG Expansion**

**February 25, 2013**

**5:30 P.M.**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. YOLANDA TORRES: Good evening everyone.  
3 [Foreign language] So good evening. This is a  
4 joint hearing of the Department of Education.  
5 Community Education Councils Leadership Teams  
6 for Performance School and Bronx Global Learning  
7 Institute of BGLIG. I am Yolanda Torres. I am  
8 the community superintendent for District 7, and  
9 we have asked the District 7 Community Education  
10 Council to solicit teams of performance, who is  
11 BGLIG to participate in this joint public  
12 hearings. I am joined tonight by Mrs. Neyda  
13 Franco CEC president of District 7. And also,  
14 we have Ms. Tracy Wooddall, who is the second  
15 vice president for the Community Education  
16 Council in District 7.

17 This meeting is being recorded. The purpose  
18 of this meeting, or this hearing is to provide  
19 you with comments of our proposal. And before I  
20 described the proposal, I want to make sure that  
21 you're all aware of the opportunity to provide  
22 input. All those who wish to speak must sign up  
23 in the speaker sign-up area located just outside  
24 the auditorium. The sign-up list will post in  
25 15 minutes, and the speakers will be given the

1 floor in the order that they signed up. All  
2 comments are limited to two minutes.

3 There may be elected officials who arrived  
4 at different times throughout the evening. If  
5 they wish to speak we will do our best to  
6 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.  
7 Those who are here at the start of the public  
8 comments segment will be asked to speak first.

9 All comments will be mentioned in the  
10 analysis of the public comments to be published  
11 and provided to the panel for educational policy  
12 the evening before the panel votes. The vote is  
13 scheduled for March 11, 2013.

14 In addition, we welcome any comments and  
15 feedback you may have at any time before the  
16 panel votes on both proposals. The email  
17 address and phone number where comments may be  
18 made are z07proposals@schools.nyc.gov, and the  
19 number is 212-374-5159.

20 I will now proceed with the proposal  
21 summary. The -- Department of Education or DOE  
22 is proposing to expand the grades served in  
23 building X156 by BGLIG for kindergarten through  
24 fifth grade to kindergarten through eighth  
25 grades.

1           BGLIG is an existing charter elementary  
2 school currently serving female students in  
3 kindergarten through the fifth grades in the 156  
4 building located at 750 Concourse Village West,  
5 Bronx, New York, including community school  
6 District 7. BGLIG is currently co-located with  
7 Performances School, 07X385, an elementary  
8 school serving students in kindergarten through  
9 fifth grade, and offering a pre-kindergarten  
10 program as well.

11           A co-location means that two or more school  
12 organizations are located in the same building  
13 and they may share common spaces like the  
14 auditorium, gymnasium, and cafeterias. If this  
15 proposal is approved BGLIG will expand to serve  
16 students in kindergarten through eighth grades  
17 in this building, the X156 building, by phasing  
18 in middle school grades beginning in the  
19 2013/2014 school year.

20           BGLIG is chartered by the Department of  
21 Education which has already approved BGLIG's  
22 request to expand its charter from serving  
23 kindergarten through fifth grades to  
24 kindergarten through eighth grades.

25           The New York State Board of Regents is

1 expected to give final approval of this charter  
2 expansion in spring 2013. Should the Board of  
3 Regents not finalize the charter expansion, the  
4 DOE will consider alternate options for the  
5 space in X156, and if necessary propose an  
6 alternative option in a new or revised  
7 educational impact statement or EIS and building  
8 utilization plans for DOE [phonetic].

9       If this proposal is approved in 2013-14,  
10 BGLIG will serve students in kindergarten  
11 through sixth grade, and will continue to add  
12 one grade level each year until they reach full  
13 scale serving kindergarten through eighth grades  
14 in 2015-2016 school year. BGLIG admits  
15 kindergarten and first grade students through a  
16 lottery, giving preference to students who  
17 reside in District 7.

18       In a separate educational impact statement,  
19 EIS, also posted on January 27, 2013, the DOE is  
20 proposing to gradually phase out and close  
21 Performance School because of its poor  
22 performance and inability to improve quickly to  
23 better support student needs. If the phase-out  
24 proposal is approved Performance School will no  
25 longer admit kindergarten, first, and second

1 grade students after the conclusion of  
2 2012/2013 school year, the present year. One  
3 grade will then be phased out each subsequent  
4 year and Performance School will close in June  
5 2016.

6 In another EIS posted on January 22, 2013,  
7 the Department of Education is also proposing to  
8 co-locate a new elementary school, 07X359, and  
9 add the site of an existing District 75 program  
10 which will be known as P017X at X156 that will  
11 provide some contained the classes in building  
12 X156.

13 If the EIS is approved in the 2013-14 school  
14 year, 07X359 will serve kindergarten, first, and  
15 second grade students who may otherwise attend  
16 the Performance School if it were not being  
17 phased out. 07X359 will then expand from by one  
18 grade each year until it reaches full scale in  
19 2016-17, and serves students in kindergarten  
20 through fifth grade.

21 07X359 will also offer a pre-kindergarten  
22 program beginning in 2013-14 subject to  
23 continued demand in funding. If approved the  
24 district 75 program will serve students in for  
25 the self-contained classes when it opens in

1 2013-14. It will continue with the number of  
2 students until 2016-17 when more space will  
3 become available in X156 and the public  
4 [phonetic] will begin serving by sections of  
5 students in the building.

6 The proposal to expand BGLIG is not  
7 contingent upon the proposals to phase out  
8 Performance School, or the proposal to open and  
9 co-locate 07X359 in the district 75 program  
10 because there is currently excess space in the  
11 building as indicated in the building  
12 utilization plan.

13 A plan [phonetic] to the 2011-12 enrollment  
14 capacity utilization report, building X156 has a  
15 capacity to serve 976 students. Currently the  
16 building serves 867 students yielding a building  
17 utilization rate of 89%. If this proposal is  
18 approved BGLIG will add sixth grade in 2013-14  
19 and will continue to add one grade each  
20 subsequent year until it reaches full scale in  
21 2015-16, when it will serve approximately 405 to  
22 495 students in kindergarten through eighth  
23 grade.

24 If this expansion proposal, the proposal to  
25 phase out Performance School and the proposal to

1 co-locate 07X359, and the new site of an  
2 existing District 75 program in building X156  
3 are approved, X156 is projected to serve  
4 approximately 911 to 1,066 students from BGLIG  
5 07X359 at the district 75 program in 2016-17,  
6 yielding an estimated building utilization rate  
7 between 93% and 109%.

8         Despite the possibility of a utilization  
9 rate over 100%, X156 has sufficient space to  
10 provide all schools in the building with at  
11 least a baseline room allocations. Although  
12 utilization rate in excess of 100% may suggest  
13 that a building will be over utilized or  
14 overcrowded in a given year, this rate does not  
15 account for the fact that rooms may be  
16 programmed for more efficient or different uses  
17 than standard assumptions in the utilization  
18 calculation.

19         In addition charter school enrollment plans  
20 are particularly based on larger classes than  
21 target capacity, contributing to building  
22 utilizations above 100% while not impacting the  
23 utilization of the space allocated to the  
24 traditional public school. Therefore the DOE  
25 believes that X156 building has the capacity to

1 accommodate all existing schools at full scale.

2 The DOE believes there is sufficient space  
3 in building X156 to accommodate all schools over  
4 the course of all proposals, and that this  
5 expansion proposal will benefit the District 7  
6 community by creating additional middle school  
7 seats, and by allowing currently enrolled  
8 kindergarten through fifth-grade students at  
9 BGLIG to continue their education at the school.

10 So before we continue with the presentations  
11 I would like to acknowledge Erica -- from the  
12 Bronx borough president's office -- . Thank you  
13 for being here. Welcome. Now we will have Mrs.  
14 Franco President of the CEC to present.

15 MRS. NEYDA FRANCO: Hello. Good evening.  
16 What we're saying is what's happening to us here  
17 is the fact that due to a lack of utilization of  
18 buildings we continue to have poor -- in our  
19 buildings. And no matter what we do it's either  
20 -- to have less space in buildings.  
21 Unfortunately that's not something that we're  
22 able to change; that comes down from downtown.  
23 It's happening in all of our schools. I come  
24 from a school that has four schools already.  
25 And I have kindergarten, pre-K all the way

1 through high school -- .

2           It's kind of hard for us to accept the fact  
3 that our children are losing space, they are  
4 also losing programs and activities that we  
5 would want our children to have. So we can't  
6 stop the educational processes, but you still  
7 have a lot of children coming to charter  
8 schools. Besides the fact that we have DOE  
9 expanding the remaining of the schools and we  
10 already had a charter school -- that's been in  
11 their target that they're going to expand from  
12 the beginning. That's something that we -- .

13           The phasing out process they're bringing in  
14 the new school, District 75 is something new to  
15 that we didn't even realize was coming in. It's  
16 self-contained. I don't know how this is going  
17 to happen because it's self-contained. They're  
18 giving them the whole floor? In fact that comes  
19 out four classes only.

20           FEMALE VOICE: So there'll be four self-  
21 contained classes and then finally they'll be  
22 charter. How the building layout is determined  
23 will be worked through the building Council.

24           MRS. FRANCO: Aside from having District 75,  
25 are you also going to make sure that they have

1 the rooms that they need to services, because  
2 they come from the services. [Crosstalk] Yes?

3 FEMALE VOICE: You know how I feel about  
4 services. Taking from services is not going to  
5 work for me. Because they're coming in, they  
6 have services, they have to have occupational  
7 therapy, they have to have additional  
8 counseling, they have a lot.

9 So you may tell me five rooms, but when it  
10 comes to meeting the end of the line when they  
11 have to get their service and the staff we have,  
12 it's going to come out to about 10 to 15 rooms.  
13 So there's concern right there because now were  
14 getting all the other schools to.

15 So I think that that's a plan that needs to  
16 be really clarified because it's bad enough  
17 they're closing it down and revamping the whole  
18 building to put in four schools, but also to  
19 have a self-contained knowing that there's  
20 special needs and that the have to have the  
21 additional rooms. How is that going to be  
22 handled for the four schools -- ?

23 MRS. FRANCO: Like you said it's the space  
24 planning that will have to be--there's also--

25 FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] The space

1 planning has two you know -- approving it and  
2 that's okay, here now do the space planning.  
3 Planning space first to see how it's working  
4 because it's not going to work afterwards.

5 Believe me, I'm going through the Bronx  
6 Academy of Letters; I'm going through that now.  
7 It's not working. They aim to take space away,  
8 -- from all the children that are there and then  
9 you lock them off, and then that's it. And we  
10 have to consider eating little -- in the little,  
11 what is it cafeterias? The teachers no longer  
12 have cafeterias. Some of our schools the  
13 teachers don't have cafeterias. They sit  
14 outside and have lunch on a bench in front of  
15 the school.

16 MRS. FRANCO: That's a shame.

17 FEMALE VOICE: It is a shame. So that these  
18 are things that--and you -- .

19 MRS. FRANCO: Absolutely.

20 FEMALE VOICE: And I have meetings in the  
21 hallway. 'Cause we can't have meetings--we don't  
22 have -- . These are things--if you're looking  
23 to have schools co-located, don't forget that  
24 co-location comes with a package which is the  
25 price [phonetic] in the families of the children

1 that are coming in to participate in the  
2 education as partners with this co-location.  
3 And so when you lock them out and there's  
4 nothing here to come to. You're going to have  
5 battles.

6 And with this -- co-location. And somebody  
7 coming in here and have so many buildings being  
8 built, there isn't going to be enough space to  
9 have any children in any of these buildings.  
10 Were going to go back to 35-40 children in a  
11 classroom that you can't -- . So I think that  
12 this is something that has to be -- .

13 I know this is about the charter school that  
14 expanding and that was here, but that's a --  
15 addressed too. That has to be looked at before  
16 we go follow through, look at the things in the  
17 front and give us those answers ahead so that we  
18 can know, okay. Because BP will listen to what  
19 you have to say, but BP is not going to have  
20 their children sitting in these classrooms.

21 MS. TORRES: Thank you Mrs. Franco. We also  
22 have Ms. Woodall the second vice president of  
23 the Community Education Council.

24 MS. TRACY WOODALL: I'm going to be brief.  
25 Once again I just want to thank all the parents

1 -- for coming out tonight. One thing I can  
2 see that's just over and over at these public  
3 hearings is parent -- . It's very important  
4 that the parents get to come out and support the  
5 meetings -- and were losing classrooms, losing  
6 programs for our children.

7 We have to -- . I'm definitely out there  
8 for the parents, but SOC [phonetic] is as  
9 important in the school. -- On the district  
10 level, we are meeting actually this Thursday,  
11 March 7 from 6:00 to 8:00, when we can inform  
12 the parents, each and every one of you on how to  
13 -- being a child. Whatever questions you have  
14 requesting [phonetic] a child I need these  
15 parents--you know anything that you must want  
16 and need, were here to give you the information  
17 that you need so that you can better serve your  
18 school and your child.

19 So I am really, really focused on we have to  
20 get more parents involved. We to have a voice  
21 and when we come out -- our voices will be heard  
22 and changes will be made on behalf of our  
23 children. Right now, like I said, this is a  
24 very important issue, and I'm so glad that each  
25 and every one volunteered [phonetic], but

1 there's more parents in this exact school that  
2 should be here to understand what's going on,  
3 and it's always at the last minute when things  
4 go down to the wire is when you see parents.  
5 But when you -- over and over again -- .

6       So it's important that you come out to the  
7 meetings. We have so much information and we  
8 could've stopped a lot of schools -- in the past  
9 -- . So like I said we are having a meeting  
10 this Thursday. We want you to come, we want to  
11 inform you on what's going on with the DOE.  
12 What's all this mean? -- A lot of you don't  
13 understand, that's no problem, that's what we're  
14 here for. We can explain this -- so you  
15 understand. Okay, how does this benefit my  
16 child? I hear all these words and hear all  
17 these things -- but what's this and what does it  
18 mean? We can explain it to you on a level that  
19 you need so that you can go into your school and  
20 speak on behalf of your child.

21       So once again please come to our meetings, -  
22 - , associate meetings, PTA meetings, show up  
23 it's a numbers is power. It does make a  
24 difference when you show up. That's all I have  
25 to say.

1 FEMALE VOICE: March 7<sup>th</sup> what time?

2 MS. WOODALL: March 7<sup>th</sup> -- .

3 FEMALE VOICE: March 28 is Friday, I mean  
4 Thursday. [Crosstalk] I'm sorry? What time?

5 MS. WOODALL: From 6:00 to 8:00. --

6 [Crosstalk] I was supposed to have it with the  
7 middle schools, but when it came to these storm  
8 days, the middle schools had to have Thursday's  
9 for opening -- .

10 MS. TORRES: Thank you ladies. Before we  
11 continue with our public comments I would like  
12 to acknowledge the Principal of the Performance  
13 School Mr. Hernandez. And also the principal of  
14 the BGLIG charter schools Celia Domenech.

15 So we have concluded with the formal  
16 presentations and now we are going to open the  
17 floor for further comments. The speakers will  
18 be given the opportunity to speak in the order  
19 in which they have signed up. And all comments  
20 will be limited to two minutes. So the first  
21 person Margarita Fernando [phonetic].

22 MS. MARGARITA FERNANDO: Good evening  
23 everyone. My name is Margarita Fernando. I  
24 have -- of two girls who attend BGLIG. One of  
25 them is in fifth grade and the other one is in

1 second grade. I first want to say I am very  
2 excited that BGLIG -- will be extended in  
3 reference to grades. It has demonstrated to be  
4 an awesome school and promoting education for  
5 our girls here.

6 I do have a concern -- speak in reference to  
7 I'm hoping that we could keep the extension for  
8 6, seventh, and eighth graders here at this  
9 site. As a parent with two places, two kids to  
10 go to different locations would be a hardship  
11 for me. I have to drop off one child then drop  
12 off the other child and I also have an autistic  
13 child that I have to ensure, before I drop them  
14 off, that he gets on his bus and then drop off  
15 the first one, and then go to work from there.  
16 So it would be a very big hardship for me and  
17 for parents in my similar situation would be bad  
18 for the girls who need this site. And that's  
19 pretty much what I have to say.

20 MS. TORRES: Thank you Ms. Fernando. Now we  
21 will have Kae Taliber [phonetic].

22 MS. KAE TALIBER: Good evening everyone.

23 AUDIENCE: Good evening.

24 MS. TALIBER: I really don't need a speaker.  
25 I'm a former New York City public school,

1 middle school teacher. I currently have -- .  
2 I was very thrilled when she was able to get  
3 into the charter school here, because I'm  
4 getting older, and as I get older I certainly  
5 don't want to have to go miles and miles away to  
6 take her to school.

7 Taught mathematics in community school  
8 district number four where innovation was a part  
9 of what went on. I'm so happy that BGLIG will  
10 go to the eighth grade. I think it's important  
11 because middle school is so key to what happens  
12 to our children. We worry about getting that  
13 good foundation because -- schools have to  
14 provide a good foundation, I see that the BGLIG  
15 is all about, but then we forget that 6, 7, and  
16 8 is still important. Because you see what  
17 happens in 6, 7, and 8 can really determine the  
18 future of our students.

19 So therefore I don't want to see BGLIG go  
20 because I plan to be around here a long time. I  
21 have a lot of experience with this building  
22 because my niece was a teacher, actually is a  
23 graduate of public school 156 when it first  
24 opened. My mother was a part of the PTA at 156,  
25 and she walked down these isles many moons ago

1 when she got her -- in building that school.  
2 But right now I'm a BGLIG, part of this BGLIG  
3 family, and BGLIG must stay here 'cause my niece  
4 -- .

5 Most important to what education can do.  
6 Education is the key toward a better life; and  
7 all our children deserve to have a good, high  
8 quality education with high expectations for all  
9 of our children -- so that they can be our  
10 future.

11 MS. TORRES: I apologize. Jane Maisel.

12 MS. JANE MAISEL: Apologize for what?

13 MS. TORRES: Did I say it right?

14 MS. MAISEL: Yes.

15 MS. TORRES: Oh, okay.

16 MS. MAISEL: Good evening. My name is Jane  
17 Maisel. I'm here for a second night. I was  
18 here the other day when we had a hearing about  
19 the closing of PS 385. We've just been assured  
20 that there is sufficient space in this building  
21 for all these schools to coexist. If that's the  
22 case I absolutely protest and do not understand  
23 how you can excuse closing PS 385.

24 I am told were not filling tonight because I  
25 see it's over. People are thinking this is

1 over. It's done. "Done deal" as they like to  
2 say in this neighborhood. I don't accept that  
3 it's a done deal, I don't think it's right. I'm  
4 a former employee when this school was 156, and  
5 I continue to know the staff here. There are an  
6 extraordinary group of people. And to have the  
7 DOE, for its own purposes, whether it's that  
8 Mayor Bloomberg wants to say he's closed down  
9 175 schools so he can run for president, or for  
10 whatever reason, it is wrong to destroy a  
11 community.

12       You do not appreciate the value and I do see  
13 and know the value of this group of people.  
14 They are dedicated. They are as innovative as  
15 you allow them to be. They're as innovative as a  
16 charter school if they're allowed to be. So  
17 that shouldn't be a reason that we have charter  
18 schools as opposed to regular public schools.  
19 You let them be innovative, they will be.

20       When you say that you're basing the closing  
21 of 385 as a separate, and I'm addressing you,  
22 but I know that this is a policy that has come  
23 from -- and come from the mayor. I understand  
24 that you're an employee and that you have to  
25 follow what you're told to do. I'm almost done.

1           When you say that it's because the DOE has  
2 an elaborate trace it uses for why the school  
3 should be closed. It's based on data for when  
4 there was a different principle here. And they  
5 just don't seem to get the fact that there is a  
6 new principal who is doing an extraordinary job,  
7 and I'm going to evaluate -- their choosing to  
8 not give him the time to show what everyone here  
9 sees what their own eyes. That he is changing  
10 the school, he is helping the school, and  
11 apparently that's just not important enough.

12           You don't close schools in rich  
13 neighborhoods; you don't close schools except  
14 when its population that is basically just  
15 people with color, then you can close a school.  
16 It's not right.

17           I was also going to say that when you say  
18 there's enough room, and that everyone can  
19 coexist, and I believe in peaceful coexistence,  
20 I have two ask a couple of questions and I'll be  
21 brief. One: why do you have children eating  
22 lunch at 10:15 in the morning, so that they  
23 don't pollute the children in the other school  
24 by sharing the space?

25           FEMALE VOICE: These are things that we

1 should address.

2 MS. MAISEL: Absolutely.

3 FEMALE VOICE: Not here. Okay, but not  
4 here.

5 MS. MAISEL: Very good. Very good.

6 FEMALE VOICE: I think that these things  
7 should be addressed. As long as people are  
8 sharing space it should be addressed, but as a  
9 view of how good this plan is, I have to say  
10 that the children in 385 aren't being treated  
11 properly in some cases. And then you say that  
12 if you split up the school and you phase out the  
13 school that there will be no negative  
14 educational impact. There is one gym teacher,  
15 there's one music teacher. So how are they  
16 going to be able to afford 385 when it's half  
17 the size, how are they going to be able to  
18 afford a gym teacher? How are they going to be  
19 able to afford a music teacher and all the  
20 services that they have now?

21 There is no guarantee in the plan that  
22 you're going to be providing all those services.  
23 So it'll be like this limping school. And who's  
24 going to want to stay there?

25 And what you're doing is you're tearing

1       apart a community where there are families  
2       that have children across the grades. If you're  
3       saying that doesn't exist, that's not correct.  
4       And you're splitting them up and then you say  
5       "we should have more parent participation." You  
6       know what? I just want to say, I'm sure your  
7       heart is in the right place, I've seen you at  
8       many meetings and I appreciate that, but there  
9       are schools where they are shutting them down  
10       when 1,000 of parents show up. I'm not  
11       exaggerating. A 1,000 parents, they shut it  
12       anyway. Instead of saying it's the parents  
13       fault for not showing up.

14               MS. MAISEL: I didn't say that.

15               FEMALE VOICE: No. I know you didn't.

16               FEMALE VOICE: You have 30 seconds.

17               FEMALE VOICE: Okay. Instead of saying  
18       that, which people have said, I'm not saying you  
19       did, if the parents cared we wouldn't shut the  
20       schools down, but the parents don't care. Well  
21       the parents care, but they get discouraged when  
22       they see all these "done deals" happening. And  
23       when they say nobody's going to listen. The  
24       mayor's not going to listen to anybody he's  
25       going to do what he wants. Thank you very much.

1 MS. TORRES: Now Lillian Marrero?

2 MS. LILLIAN MARRERO: Yes. Hi. My name's  
3 Lillian Marrero and I have four children in PS  
4 185. One who has cerebral palsy and the other  
5 one has -- . Like -- concern I also have a  
6 autistic nephew which I'm hoping to come to PS  
7 185, but maybe to be moved from PS 17 -- .

8 My concern here is this is a barrier free  
9 school and it's to serve, I have nothing against  
10 the charter school I think they're wonderful.  
11 Charter schools are not for everyone we know  
12 'cause I grew up here, but at the same time this  
13 is a barrier free school. The only one in the  
14 district. Elementary in this district that  
15 serves children with needs.

16 I don't see how the Department of Education  
17 is going to serve the needs of these children  
18 educational wise, their needs for orthopedics.  
19 Right now we have children that attend school in  
20 wheelchairs, we've got them in walkers, I have a  
21 few with orthopedic impairments. What are you  
22 going to do with them? Right now their self-  
23 esteem is so low because they are like my  
24 schools closing.

25 Lunch, they are being rushed because they

1 have to rush out for the next group to come  
2 in. So it's not working on-site. I think that  
3 adding more and even adding the other school is  
4 going to be chaos. I don't think that the  
5 Department of Education is thinking about all  
6 our children when it comes to this community,  
7 because in this L-shape there's nine schools.  
8 At dismissal you have to see what goes on at the  
9 high school. The schools can't even handle  
10 them. One day -- throwing bottles.

11 They're not looking at the safety of our  
12 children at all. Nine schools and one L-shape,  
13 that's a disaster. All I know is they are not,  
14 they are not, you guys are not taking to  
15 consideration the handicapped and the disabled  
16 in this situation. Thank you.

17 FEMALE VOICE 1: We do want parents to leave  
18 here with the impression that that's not going  
19 to be taken into consideration. As we said  
20 before if this is approved the elementary  
21 incoming school will then provide services to  
22 the students in need and those grades, pre-K  
23 through second grade. And then--

24 MS. MARRERO: [Interposing] But then you  
25 said, you guys are saying that if by, I'm sorry,

1 is by allocation, it's -- the children, it's--  
2 you're saying first option, but that's not what  
3 the counselor is saying. The counselor is  
4 saying--

5 FEMALE VOICE 1: [Interposing] But that's to  
6 do with elementary choice.

7 MS. MARRERO: You said choice?

8 FEMALE VOICE 1: Yes. [Crosstalk]

9 FEMALE VOICE 2: That's two different  
10 things. That's two different things.

11 MS. MARRERO: I have articles to show you.  
12 [Crosstalk] We voted for choice. And we voted  
13 for choice because parents asked us to vote for  
14 choice. The parents that came spoke. We had  
15 four parents and the parents that came, came to  
16 speak. There was a lot of topic. And they  
17 wanted choice. They don't want to be like you  
18 said, that this L-shape and have a high school.  
19 Parents have concern about some of the  
20 elementary schools too.

21 So they preferred to have choice and that's  
22 what we voted. The choice is by choice of what  
23 school you want to go to. It's just like the  
24 middle school children. It has nothing to do  
25 with this phasing out or -- that -- aren't

1 decisions for our kids in this district that  
2 says choice. You could still apply for any  
3 school that you could be a -- . The problem is  
4 that there are parents too that couldn't get  
5 into a school and then they're -- to go to the  
6 other school because they didn't -- . So they  
7 re-chose here to -- then you couldn't over there  
8 because that, you wouldn't have to go to for  
9 classes -- . So that was a different choice.

10 FEMALE VOICE: More children, three  
11 principals -- ?

12 MS. MARRERO: No, we are--listen your  
13 preaching to the choir. Like I said I have my  
14 child in this school that's four. And like I  
15 said teachers started high school and it's  
16 atrocious. And just to let you know we're also  
17 charter school parents. Not only are we public  
18 school, but were also charter school.

19 FEMALE VOICE: She has one at one--

20 MS. MARRERO: [Interposing] No, I have five  
21 charter school -- .

22 FEMALE VOICE: So the thing is that the  
23 choices are given for -- . And it's not that we  
24 are not going to provide the services that our  
25 students need 'cause we are, we have that

1 commitment.

2 MS. TORRES: Jack. Jack O'Casey.

3 MS. JACK O'CASEY: Good evening. My name is  
4 Jack O'Casey. I am a special education teacher  
5 at PS 385 and I'm here to speak against the  
6 extension of the girl's charter school. In  
7 terms of sharing common space--well I'm  
8 wondering, you know we teach the food chain and  
9 we talk about ecology, I think that two share a  
10 common space it has to be an equal contribution  
11 of resources. I know that the charter school  
12 shares our library; which limits the books that  
13 our students can take out to do their ELA common  
14 core aligned units, and they don't contribute to  
15 the library. So that seems more like a host  
16 parasite relationship rather than a sharing  
17 common space.

18 I'd also like to say because we're a barrier  
19 free school the charter school discriminates  
20 against children based on gender, kids with  
21 special needs, emotionally disturbed kids, and  
22 kids with physical handicap or challenges. So I  
23 think that this is not the place for them. This  
24 is not the appropriate facility for a school  
25 that doesn't need a barrier free school. Thank

1 you.

2 MS. TORRES: Tasha Smalls Ramon [phonetic].

3 MS. TASHA SMALLS RAMON: I want to respond  
4 to the woman who just spoke. I don't know what  
5 the problem is exactly, but I think that as far  
6 as us all getting along together we do need to  
7 share. The only one that sounds like they're  
8 discriminated is you. I don't know why you have  
9 a problem with our girls coming to use the  
10 library. We always returned the books back the  
11 same way we got them. [Crosstalk].

12 The point is, the point is we have a right  
13 to be here just like everyone else. Okay? My  
14 son was in PS 385. I had to take him out of  
15 there in second grade because it was so chaotic,  
16 disruptive, the teacher had no control. My  
17 daughter had to be taken out and then she was  
18 put into BGLIG. It was disgusting at 385. She  
19 was learning nothing. And I tell you I had to  
20 do everything she'd do. When she got to BGLIG  
21 was because I had to teach it to her myself.  
22 Okay? My daughter is on the honor roll. My son  
23 is now on the honor roll. Have been on the  
24 honor roll since they left, since 385, since  
25 leaving there.

1           My son is on a scholarship program on his  
2 way to earn a full scholarship just coming from  
3 a weekend of spending at Princeton University.  
4 Okay?

5           I think BGLIG deserves to be here. I think  
6 our principal is amazing. She has a vision for  
7 these girls that I don't think I've ever seen  
8 anywhere else. Our girls work hard. And if you  
9 come and see once in a while, you'd see what  
10 these girls are doing, they're amazing. They're  
11 going to be, they're going to be something to--

12           FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] -- 385.  
13 [Crosstalk]

14           MS. SMALLS: I'm glad. I'm glad that some  
15 of them, some good students there. But you know  
16 what? There's a lot of great students at our  
17 school. So to say that we don't deserve to be  
18 here makes no sense.

19           FEMALE VOICE: I did not say that. I did  
20 not say -- .

21           MS. SMALLS: Thank you.

22           MS. TORRES: One of the things that I need  
23 to remind parents is that with co-location we  
24 also have building councils, were our principals  
25 meet on a regular basis to discuss -- to the

1 need, utilization of space also, and also in  
2 terms of scheduling so that all the students  
3 benefit to the utmost. So--

4 FEMALE VOICE: [Interposing] And eat lunch  
5 at 10:15 in the morning. That would be  
6 something that maybe you could help with.

7 MS. TORRES: Okay. So with that said we are  
8 now closing the floor for our additional  
9 comments. We have exhausted the list of  
10 speakers. We welcome any other comments and  
11 feedback that you may have at any time before  
12 the panel for Educational Council.

13 Educational policy votes on this proposal at  
14 its March 11 meeting. The email address and  
15 phone number where comments made be made is  
16 [proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:proposals@schools.nyc.gov), and the phone number  
17 is 212-374-5159. We thank you for your  
18 participation in this joint public hearing is  
19 now closed. And you have a question ma'am?

20 FEMALE VOICE: Yes. I just want to say that  
21 I understand all the parents and the teachers in  
22 here about the phase-out and the sharing of the  
23 space, but we have to be clear that we're not  
24 here because we like it. We're here because it  
25 works. It works for our girls. It works for

1 us.

2 We have special needs kids with big needs.  
3 We may not have the amount for special needs  
4 that other schools have, but we do have special  
5 needs kids. We are not discriminated against  
6 anybody. We want our -- to see. We do not want  
7 our girls pregnant at 12 years old because they  
8 don't know what to do. We want them to go to  
9 school. We want them to go to college.

10 [Crosstalk] We don't need to share everything.  
11 What you have to be clear that it's not just for  
12 one or two. It's for every kid.

13 MS. TORRES: The bottom line is that we're  
14 here to serve all of District 7 children.

15 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

16 MS. TORRES: Okay, so the meeting is closed.  
17 Thank you so much for being here and have a good  
18 night, and get home safe.

19 [END RECORDING]  
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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\_2/28/13\_\_\_\_\_