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

SA 8 @ Brandeis - 1/25/11

1 [START 181_996_1.MP3]

2 MS. ELAINE GORMAN: ...Manhattan High School
3 superintendent. Thank you for joining us
4 tonight. Before reading the proposal I'd like
5 to make a very short statement. I reside in
6 District 3 just like most of you do, and as
7 such, I care deeply about education here in
8 District 3. As the superintendent and an
9 educator of 41 plus years, I care equally about
10 the messages we give to our young people.
11 Public hearings are opportunities to give voice
12 to passionate and sometime diverse perspectives.
13 Implicit in that important message is that we
14 can agree and disagree, but all points of view
15 must be met with civility. I ask that we
16 remember that all responses to the following
17 proposal are on behalf of the students who are
18 witness to the messages we give. Thank you.
19 And at this time I'd like to read the proposal.
20 First of all, present here are our principals of
21 the existing schools in the campus. Arlene
22 Lacori [phonetic] of Louis D. Brandeis High
23 School, Alexander Rapmannonan [phonetic] of
24 Urban Assembly School for Green Careers,
25 Jennifer Zen [phonetic], the Global Learning

1 collaborative, Casey Jones [phonetic],
2 Innovative Diploma - - , and Danielle Salsberg
3 [phonetic] from Frank McCourt High School. We
4 thank our principals for the great job they do.
5 Good evening and thank you again for coming
6 tonight to the joint public hearing for the
7 proposed co-location of a new public charter
8 school, Success Academy Charter School, with
9 existing schools in the Brandeis educational
10 campus. Again, I am Elaine Gorman, Manhattan
11 High School superintendent. I am joined tonight
12 by a very active group of SLTs and the CECs. I
13 would like to acknowledge these people. And I
14 will acknowledge them in the order in which they
15 are sitting to my right and your left. Noah
16 Gotbaume, President of CEC District 3. Let me
17 apologize in advance for mispronunciations.
18 Rachel Dahill-Fushell, Academic Dean, the Global
19 Learning Community, uh Collaborative, Rich
20 Sherwin, PA President, SLT member of Global
21 Learning Collaborative, Jeff Peca [phonetic],
22 UFT Chapter Chair, uh Chapter Leader, and the
23 Global Learning Collaborative, Lisa Steglich,
24 PTA President, SLT rep from Fran McCord, John
25 Englert, Co-chair, Citywide Council on Special

1 Education, Ellen McCue [phonetic], the Citywide
2 Council on Special Ed, public advocates
3 appointee, and Powla De'Coque, CCHS
4 representative from Public Advocates office,
5 Harvey, I think it's Lichman, SLT Brandeis High
6 School. Is there anybody at the table who I
7 have failed to mention? On my left I am joined
8 by members of the Office of Portfolio who will
9 assist in responding to questions. Elected
10 official that are here tonight, you have Gail
11 Brewer [phonetic] who I think people know. Do
12 you know how to pronounce it, Sophia Raheem, I'm
13 very sorry, representing Councilwoman Inez
14 Dickens [phonetic]. Maurice Cummings [phonetic]
15 representing Assembly Member Rights office, Rob
16 Godham from Congressman Nader's [phonetic]
17 office, Carmen Delarose [phonetic] representing
18 a council member, assembly member, I'm sorry,
19 O'Donnell [phonetic], Jared Chalsaw from Senator
20 Tom Duane's [phonetic] office, and Lauren
21 Schuster representing assembly member, Linda
22 Rosenthal [phonetic]. We thank you all for your
23 interest. I'm actually going to be seated to
24 read you the proposal. The purpose of this
25 hearing is for you to provide comments about the

1 proposal. And if you did not receive a copy
2 the proposals are outside on the table. Before
3 I describe the proposal I want to make sure that
4 you're aware of the opportunity to provide your
5 input. All those who wish to speak must sign up
6 at the speaker's sign up located outside the
7 auditorium. The sign up list will close in 15
8 minutes. Speakers will be given the floor in
9 the order in which they signed up after hearing
10 from elected officials and student
11 representatives who have signed up. All
12 comments are limited to two minutes. Speakers
13 may make a statement or ask a question. If a
14 speaker has time remaining after asking the
15 question, the speaker may ask a follow up. But
16 the total time for each speaker is two minutes,
17 no matter how you choose to use it. The DOE
18 welcomes for the commented any time before the
19 panel votes on this proposal. The email address
20 and phone number where comments can be made are
21 do3proposals@schools.nyc.gov, and the phone
22 number is 212-374-3466. Those contact
23 information, email and phone number, are also
24 available on the proposal. All comments
25 received up to 6:00 PM on January 31st will be

1 addressed in the analysis of public comment to
2 be published and provided to the panel for
3 educational policy before the panel votes on
4 these proposals. The vote is scheduled for
5 Tuesday, February 1st at 6:00 PM at Brooklyn
6 Tech. Let me give you a summary of the proposal
7 now. Success Charter Network, a charter
8 management organization that operates seven
9 public charters schools in New York City has
10 been approved by its charter authorizer, the
11 State University of New York, to open a new
12 public charter in community school District 3,
13 in Manhattan. On December 17, 2010 the DOE
14 issued a proposal to site the new public charter
15 school, Success Academy Charter School in the
16 Brandeis educational campus where it would co-
17 locate with Louis D. Brandeis High School, the
18 Urban Assembly School for Green Careers, the
19 Global Learning Collaborative, Innovation
20 Diploma - - Plus, and Frank McCourt High School.
21 A co-location means that two or more school
22 organizations are located in the same building,
23 often sharing large common spaces like the
24 auditorium, gymnasium, and cafeteria. The
25 Brandeis campus is located here at 145 West 84th

1 Street, New York, New York 10024 in community
2 school District 3, and currently houses five
3 high schools. One of the five, Brandeis High
4 School, is in the process of phasing out and is
5 scheduled to close in June 2012. The four other
6 high schools are phasing into the Brandeis
7 campus. Green Careers is a career and
8 technology demonstration school site that opened
9 up in September 2009 and currently serves grades
10 9 and 10, with between 100 to 125 students per
11 grade. Long term it will still serve schools,
12 grades 9 and 10 with between 100 to 125 students
13 per grade. And that adds up as you can tell to
14 up to 500. Diploma Plus is a transfer high
15 school that opened in September 2009 serving
16 grades 9 through 12 with 150 over age and 100
17 credited students. At scale it will serve
18 approximately 250 students. The Frank McCourt
19 School is a screening school that has a
20 particular focus on writing. It opened in
21 September 2010 with grad 9, and will eventually
22 serve grades 9 through 12 with between 100 to
23 125 students per grade. The Brandeis campus has
24 been identified as an underutilized building,
25 meaning it currently has at least 300 seats

1 available, and will have at least 300 seats
2 available within the next three years as
3 Brandeis High School phases out. When each of
4 the high schools at Brandeis is at scale, the
5 total high school enrollment in the building is
6 expected to be at 1525 to 1600 students, with
7 the largest capacity of the building being 2148
8 students. Thus there is sufficient space within
9 the Brandeis to house an additional school. In
10 2011/2012 the first year of the proposed co-
11 location, Success Academy Charter, would enroll
12 students in kindergarten and first grade.
13 Success Academy Charter would then add one grade
14 of approximately 85 students each year until
15 2015, 2016, when it would serve a total of
16 approximately 481 students. Combined with the
17 high schools total enrollment at the Brandeis
18 campus with all schools at full scale would be
19 approximately 2000 to 2100 students. In 2009,
20 2010, 86 percent of the students at Success
21 Charter Networks first school, Harlem Success
22 Academy One [phonetic], scored at or above grade
23 level on the state English language arts test,
24 and 94.2 percent of the students scored at or
25 above grade level on the state math test. These

1 results are among the highest of any school in
2 District 3. The Department of Education
3 supports opening an additional Success Academy
4 public charter, in District 3 as a way to
5 increase access to high quality schools for
6 District 3 families. Families residing in
7 District 3 will be given preference to
8 admissions to the new Success Academy charter.
9 At this time we have presentations from CEC and
10 SLT members. We've allotted one hour for the
11 collective group to make comments and pose
12 questions. I want to remind you that if you
13 hold up a sign you may not block anyone behind
14 you. So please be aware of that in order to
15 make accessibility to everyone in the building
16 and everyone who wants to participate in this
17 hearing. Again remember, we may have different
18 points of view, but hearings to allow everyone
19 to express their point of view without
20 interruption and with civility. Thank you very
21 much. And at this time I will turn it over to
22 Noah Gotbaume who can direct the members of the
23 diocese in their presentations. We will do this
24 for one hour. The time is now 6:20.

25 MR. NOAH GOTBAUME: Thank you Elaine. Just

1 so people know, we will have an hour. We will
2 also be able to ask questions of the DOE, ask
3 questions at the audience, a little more leeway
4 here, so to try to make this somewhat of a
5 hearing rather than simply a dog and pony show.
6 I'm going to talk briefly and then hand it down
7 to my colleagues and the various SLTs, and then
8 hopefully we'll be able to ask some questions
9 directly as I mentioned. Oh ladies and
10 gentlemen, we should not be here tonight.
11 There's no reason at all for this proposal to
12 have been put forth. We have good and moderate
13 and excellent elementary schools in District 3.
14 We are over crowded, but what we did not do was
15 ask for this school. Least of all, not in
16 Brandeis High School, a school that just went
17 underwent a \$22 million renovation, a school in
18 which we've been told for two years when we as a
19 community said to the DOE, we're overcrowded,
20 what are you going to do about it? They finally
21 recognized, finally, after increasing the zone
22 size as the most overcrowded zones in the city,
23 they finally recognized that we were
24 overcrowded, that we needed to do something
25 about it. Understandably Brandeis was never an

1 option, but unfortunately neither was building
2 new seats. That said, we as a community support
3 our schools. We didn't ask for a charter
4 school, and as I said, much less in this
5 building. They're taking a square peg and
6 putting it in a round hole. It makes no sense
7 whatsoever. It is not only a waste of money
8 because the \$5 million that they took to do
9 these science rooms, and you'll hear it down the
10 line, are now going to be turned right back into
11 classrooms, specialty rooms at every school that
12 Success Charter's co-located into, turned right
13 back in to classrooms. Hallways become
14 classrooms. Closets become classrooms. That's
15 how the DOE gets their capacity. It's a
16 complete waste. It's a bad lack of planning.
17 But more than that as I said, we don't want or
18 need a new elementary school. And if you look
19 at the polls, upper west, Success did a poll to
20 prove that there is demand. And you know what
21 that poll said? They went to District 3 parents
22 and they asked the parents what are the biggest
23 problems facing you and facing our public
24 school? Seventy-five percent of those polled
25 said, our biggest problems are we don't put

1 enough resources into our public schools, and
2 our public schools are overcrowded. Do you know
3 what percent said we need new options and we
4 need new public schools from - - own poll? Nine
5 percent, one out of eleven said that. But
6 that's why we're here today. This community
7 wants investment in our public school. And you
8 could talk about choices, and I understand that.
9 The problem is, is that we have a zero sum
10 situation here. There isn't enough space. And
11 what we've seen is that the DOE, when it co-
12 locates charters, it pushes out our district
13 kids. We've seen it at 149, we've seen it at
14 241. So the mantra of choice, choice, choice,
15 choice for few ends up destroying opportunity
16 for the many. That is what we're facing. This
17 doesn't need to be. We should not be fighting
18 each other. We should not see our tax dollars,
19 millions of our tax dollars going to flyers,
20 trying to pull our children out of our public
21 schools. I have personally received 22 flyers.
22 Ms. Moscovitz [phonetic], my children don't want
23 to go to your schools. Why are you spending our
24 money for that? It's criminal. I'll tell you
25 what else is criminal. It is not a lie, I

1 received 22 flyers, but I'll tell you
2 something else, district, that is our tax money,
3 exactly. They are spending our tax money to
4 tell us that our schools are no good. We
5 received an \$11 million federal mandate grant to
6 upgrade all the schools, to integrate, to
7 provide those options that we're told we don't
8 have. At the same time we have a system and
9 we're being supported, the DOE is supporting an
10 effort to go right against that mandate grant to
11 fend money and provide space to recruit kids out
12 of the schools that the federal government is
13 trying to bring kids in to. It's crazy. And
14 when we see the co-locations that have
15 experienced them, I'm sorry folks, again I
16 appreciate you want options but understand what
17 it does. You'll hear from our friends at 149,
18 you'll hear from our friends at 241, and if you
19 look in this building and when it happens, and
20 what it will do and what it has done to the
21 public schools, it is not a question of, well,
22 coexistence. We have never coexisted
23 unfortunately. It is invasion, it is eviction,
24 and what it does is it diminishes and undermines
25 our public school system. That is what we're

1 talking about here. Right now the DOE is
2 taking all of our time, spending a lot of our
3 tax dollars, and putting a system at war with
4 itself. We had two hearings before this, at 149
5 and at Wadleigh with - - Success Charter
6 Schools. And something very interesting
7 happened the other night at 149, the parents
8 from 149 and the teachers from 149, and we took
9 turns, got up and said, oh I've lost my
10 specialty rooms. Well, my kids aren't allowed
11 to use the gym because that goes to Harlem
12 Success. Oh, the therapy is done in the
13 hallway, the teachers say they can't even touch
14 their programs. The kids can't use the
15 stairways. They become second class citizens of
16 their own school. And you know what happened,
17 and we're not making this up, and you know what
18 happened? After awhile the parents from Harlem
19 Success One, unable to refute the fact that
20 their gain was the loss of all our public school
21 kids, turned on the DOE. And they looked up at
22 the diocese and said, don't blame us, we just
23 wan the same thing. Don't blame us. We're
24 talking to the DOE and we're talking to Success
25 Charters and we're saying, please DOE, stop

1 sowing dissent, stop pitting parents against
2 each other. This community overwhelmingly,
3 every elected official, every public school PA,
4 is saying invest in our schools, don't undermine
5 them. And that's the only option and choice
6 we're asking for to build up our schools. Thank
7 you.

8 MS. RACHEL DAHILL-FUSHELL: Wow. I have to
9 tell you I'm absolutely terrified standing up
10 here even though I've stood up here and spoken
11 to an auditorium filled with high school
12 students. And some people think they're pretty
13 terrifying too. But they're kind of where I
14 belong and you guys are, whoo, I'm just so glad
15 you don't have produces. So my name is Rachel
16 Dahill-Fushell and I tell bad jokes when I'm
17 nervous so be prepared. Because Noah Gotbaume,
18 other people up here are much better known than
19 I am, briefly, my pedigree so you know a little
20 bit about where I'm from. Although I presently
21 work at the Global Learning Collaborative as the
22 academic dean, as a teacher there, I'm a product
23 of the public schools of New York City all the
24 way through Puni Queens College [phonetic].
25 Thank you. I live in District 3. My children

1 attend District 3 schools. I'm a neighbor. I
2 feel like that hair club for men thing, I'm not
3 just a President, I'm also the consumer. So I
4 also looked around at the meetings I've been in
5 lately and sometimes I'm the only actual teacher
6 there. I spend sometimes ten hours a day in
7 this building. There have been days when I come
8 in and it's dark and I leave when it's dark.
9 Luckily for me it's a place I care about deeply
10 so I don't mind being here. So bare with me.
11 I'd like to start by sharing a little piece of
12 my world here for those of you who aren't in my
13 crazy business. Perhaps you can walk with me
14 for a few moments. Yesterday I had been invited
15 to the meeting with Chancellor Black. I of
16 course, was awed by this. And when I came back
17 in I had felt a little bit like a fish out of
18 water down at Tweed [phonetic], although it was
19 still odd because it's an amazing, amazing
20 place. I came back into the building and I
21 climbed the stairs to our fourth floor where our
22 school is, where the Global Learning
23 Collaborative is, and it presently shares space
24 with two other high schools. There have been
25 Assembly for Green Careers and Innovation

1 Diploma Plus. You probably have seen this in
2 other schools but we have those swinging doors
3 between the schools on one end. And true to
4 form as I arrived, five students from the Green
5 Careers school were being reprimanded for being
6 within the boundaries of the GLC, banging on
7 doors, simply not being where they were expected
8 to be and were supposed to be. Occasionally
9 this scenario would have taken place in mirror
10 form with some form of our GLC student
11 trespassing over into one of the other schools.
12 I returned to my office where three kids were
13 already waiting for me, not even having been
14 sure of when I'd return. But there they were,
15 one child with some of the strongest special
16 needs I have ever seen, needed to talk with me.
17 I will tell you that we are quite proud that
18 when she gets angry now she walks away from
19 trouble, sometimes to my office, sometimes
20 simply into the hall, rather than towards
21 another student posturing for a physical
22 altercation. The second student, having caused
23 some upheaval in his class, was awaiting me
24 also. This child, all 200 plus pounds of him
25 tends to find his way into the hallways almost

1 each period. His teachers know that if he
2 were contained in his classroom at the moment
3 when his ADHD tendencies persisted, he would
4 explode and might scare other students. He was
5 angry at something said and had found the small
6 quiet place to calm himself down. And still a
7 third, a fairly high performing kid came in,
8 just needing a place to put his foot up since
9 his ankle was swollen from a weekend skateboard
10 incident. As a teenager if he'd taken his shoe
11 off in his classroom to put an ice pack on,
12 inevitably somebody would've said something
13 about stinky feet or the like. I mean I'm sure
14 you all remember high school. Although we try
15 to make it very loving and warm, there are still
16 some pretty awful things that people can say to
17 other kids. So this was all truly, I swear
18 this, in a 15 minute period between 12:35
19 yesterday and 12:50 if anyone wants to check my
20 story, quite literally as soon as I had returned
21 from my meeting with Chancellor Black. So do we
22 have a name for this? Oh yes, we call it an
23 ordinary here in any 15 minutes on a Monday or
24 any other day of the week in the life of our
25 school. I wanted to share with you some of the

1 letter that we had sent as an SLT to
2 Chancellor Black. So forgive me reading here a
3 little bit more. In this Brandeis campus we
4 have brought into existence four distinct
5 institutions that address a wide array of
6 interests and future possibilities. And
7 together, although we nurture distinct groups of
8 students, we are forged a strong working
9 partnership that thrives on sharing resources
10 and spaces for the betterment of our students.
11 We have been told that should this elementary
12 school come to the building, because of the
13 nature of the elementary school age they would
14 need to keep themselves distinct and separate,
15 and room for collaboration would not exist. So
16 we built four high schools based on true
17 collaboration, and not just with ourselves but
18 with our neighborhood organizations, our - -
19 middle schools and our ability to share and work
20 together with our co-locate, with each other.
21 We share classrooms for the same purpose,
22 science laboratories, ceramic studios, dance
23 studio, music rooms, also gymnasia, notice my
24 proper Latin form of it, cafeteria, work out
25 rooms. If we need paper rolls for a bulletin

1 board, we could run over to Green Careers and
2 take from their supply. And if they require
3 something laminated, they come over and share
4 ours. This week our Model UN teacher right over
5 here will be taking students from our school and
6 from Frank McCourt High School up to Boston for
7 the Model UN conference. We really do conform
8 to the High School Musical way of doing things
9 that we really are all in this together. And
10 we've been hoping that the DOE would choose
11 another school or organization to join us and
12 compliment when we are more fully grown. Thank
13 you. I want to say very briefly that we have
14 been designated a Phase I special ed school. We
15 truly welcome our special ed populations. And,
16 thank you, and we also know that space is of
17 great importance here. In order for us to be
18 successful as a Phase I special ed school, we do
19 require more space than has been allotted to us,
20 and will continue to be allotted to us. So what
21 do we know? We know that space is not a luxury,
22 but a clear necessity of adolescence, and that
23 our school as well as the other new high schools
24 have been falsely assessed as to the classroom
25 and spacial needs in order for us to flourish as

1 a successful high school, one which serves our
2 Ponaplias [phonetic] students fairly and
3 successfully. We know that high school students
4 require a space for their emotional, social, and
5 intellectual growth. This is fostered in an
6 environment where they are not thrust into
7 overcrowded, chaotic, rooms and hallways,
8 exactly as Noah had said. Easy, comfortable
9 walking and safe interactions with peers are
10 essential for their growth, development, and a
11 sense of safety within their school. So a few
12 points just to close, yes every child can learn
13 but not in the same way, not on the same day,
14 and not necessarily within the same space. Not
15 all classrooms are created equal. Some kids
16 need smaller spaces, some larger, some more
17 filled with visuals, while for others too many
18 visuals are simply chaotic. Yes, our DOE has
19 had experts walk throughout our building and
20 determine how many seats are available, and that
21 based purely on the numbers, that this building
22 can accommodate a new school this year. But
23 that's just not how it works here. Based on the
24 idiosyncratic needs of our students, real
25 students, real people that I've been speaking

1 about, you can't just divide the number of
2 seats and say that's how many people it can
3 accommodate. Just yesterday at this meeting, I
4 will not name this gentleman for fear of
5 embarrassing him, but one of the leaders of the
6 portfolio planning group said to us all, and I
7 quote, after I shared with him our daily
8 dilemma, he said yes we asked you to do the
9 impossible. Well I thought about that. The
10 little voice inside my head said, so why make
11 more things more difficult for us? Help us be
12 successful. After all, our success here at GLC
13 and all the high schools is truly a success for
14 all of us within the DOE, and moreover, a real
15 success for the children. So our efforts here
16 at this town meeting are to convince our
17 Department of Ed, of which I am a part, to
18 rethink their proposed use of space in our
19 building. Our-it's-that-uh-okay, excuse me,
20 Chancellor Black, as you all know, lead Hearst
21 Publications when it obtained the rights to
22 publish the Oprah magazine, O. I'm a
23 subscriber. According to her book which I read
24 from cover to cover as a way of building a
25 bridge, I know that this was a project born out

1 of passion and a great sense of what a
2 particular demographic and society truly wished
3 for and needed. Well to paraphrase Oprah from
4 the magazine Chancellor Black was responsible
5 for publishing, this is what I know for sure. I
6 know that kids need special safe and
7 undisruptive, unchaotic places to breathe,
8 explore, learn about life, themselves, and yes,
9 academics. That adolescents need a place to
10 move and be adolescents safely and with adult
11 guidance. That when pushed into spaces not
12 appropriate for their numbers, nor age, nor
13 size, conflict arises. Thank you.

14 MR. RICK SHERWIN: Thanks. I think I'll
15 sit. I'm Rick Sherwin, I am the PTA president
16 here at Global in the building and also for - -
17 I'm the SLT. Thank you. You know I'm
18 relatively new to this whole fight for or
19 against the Success Academy coming in. And over
20 the past two months since I learned about it
21 I've gotten very involved. And you'll hear many
22 arguments, pro and con tonight, and I'll offer
23 my opinion in just a moment. But first I wanted
24 to speak to an issue that is directly related.
25 Better? - - I'm okay with this. Speak to an

1 issue that is directly related to the issue at
2 hand tonight that deeply troubles me. And it's
3 a question that I posed outside, does democracy
4 exist here? And here's what I'm getting at.
5 Let's hope it does, but we'll see. The local
6 community board, community board 7, which is
7 comprised of local residents from all walks of
8 life, and there's teachers and, there's
9 everybody. It was created to be an advisory
10 board to the city and the DOE, and therefore
11 with no predisposed position or vested interest
12 in any outcome other than what is best for our
13 students. So they held a hearing and they voted
14 40 to nothing, that's 40 to zero against this
15 proposed co-location. The Community Education
16 Council, the CEC, also created by the city, by
17 the DOE, to be an organized voice for students
18 and parents and schools, and elected by the
19 parents, adamantly and unanimously voted against
20 this co-location in the - - campus. Don't take
21 my thunder. There are a number of elected
22 officials, city council, assembly people,
23 congress people, they are all vehemently against
24 this co-location. So the voice of the people,
25 of agencies, of our district is loud and clear.

1 The Success - - Academy does not belong in the
2 Brandeis campus. It's a bad idea; it's a
3 dangerous idea. And with that we'll all get to
4 things, but what I'm talking about there is
5 size, and space, and stairways, and fire exits,
6 and gymnasias, and all kinds of things. It is
7 not a good idea. So if this co-location gets
8 approved, then look, I've been on the losing
9 side of many an issue. I've been on the winning
10 sides of issues, and sometimes it feels as if
11 your voice is heard and there's really a due
12 process. And when that happens, win or lose,
13 you know, you fought the good fight. The Jets
14 lost the other night, it happens. But if this
15 gets approved, if it gets rubber stamped by the
16 DOE and is already a fate of complete, and this
17 hearing means nothing. In the face of virtual
18 unanimous opposition, and this ruling is imposed
19 upon us, then I'm afraid and I'm ashamed to say
20 to the DOE and to the city, shame on you,
21 because this is not a democracy if that happens,
22 this is what is called in other countries, a
23 dictatorship. Alright, so we don't want that.
24 So now let's get, I have two more points, to
25 some issues at hand. Why is virtually everyone

1 opposed to this co-virtually everyone? Yeah.
2 Okay, so the new Brandeis, you will have your
3 chance. The new Brandeis campus was recently
4 created to house 4 new diverse schools in the
5 building. There have been accounts and it's
6 been brought up tonight that \$22 million dollars
7 was spent to renovate this building to
8 accommodate four schools, for high schools,
9 thank you. So now if an elementary school comes
10 in, how many millions do we have to spend to
11 retrofit, to undo, and to waste millions of
12 dollars that was just spent? So besides the
13 fact that the forethought is clearly lacking,
14 what a waste of our money. The main point is
15 that someone, be it the prior Chancellor, 'cause
16 Chancellor Black is too new, or the mayor, or
17 the DOE, someone had a vision, let's put four
18 smaller schools in this building and help them
19 flourish. That was the idea. It's pretty new.
20 The oldest school here now that just came in is
21 not even two years old. So what happened to
22 that idea? Why was all that money spent to
23 create that idea? So the bottom line is let
24 these new schools grow and flourish as was the
25 plan. And we talk about a numbers of students

1 and that there's plenty of space. I'll tell
2 you I'm hear all the time, Rachel's here every
3 day, Jeff [phonetic] is here every day. It
4 already feels pretty confined, it already feels
5 tight. I don't know where all this space is
6 coming from. I don't think we're building on
7 the roof. So it's not as if this is some huge,
8 massive building with endless space, that's
9 really not true. And in the next three years
10 we'll be adding amongst the four schools, nine
11 more grades, juniors and seniors, nine grades.
12 That's going to be over 1000 more students.
13 Where are they going to go? The DOE did a walk
14 through to identify available space. And you
15 know, the space availability that they came up
16 with, even the numbers of students that will
17 exist by the end supposedly to make room for
18 these new students, I think the numbers are a
19 little off. But at any rate, they labels
20 science labs, music rooms, art rooms, or a black
21 box theatre, all these were said these are
22 classrooms that can be used. These are not
23 classrooms that can be used for a new school.
24 These are classrooms that we use for art and
25 music and science. We need those rooms. That's

1 how a good school grows. If as has happened
2 at 241 and couple of the other schools, and
3 you'll hear about that later, if we lose these
4 rooms we're diminished and our kid's education
5 is diminished, and that's really not the idea.
6 So a little bit, you've heard it before, a
7 little bit, and I'm only going to speak another
8 minute or so, a lot of people so I'm going to
9 get to it, about our existing schools, one of
10 them, bless them, is a transfer school with
11 students up to 20 years old, 18, 19, 20 years
12 old. Bless them, we welcome them, we love them.
13 But these are kids other schools didn't want,
14 wouldn't take. We take them here; we have a
15 school designed for them. It was created for
16 them. These are big kids. So when you think
17 about it, big kids, little kids, I don't think
18 it's such a great idea. There another school,
19 two of the schools as Rachel mentioned, are
20 Phase I schools, specifically designated for
21 special needs students, and with the DOE, to
22 work under the model of inclusion with
23 mainstream students. And we have an abundance,
24 and over abundance of special needs students,
25 way more than most schools. The DOE created our

1 schools for them. Again, we welcome them.
2 It's part of our mission. And according to DOE
3 regulations these students need more space, not
4 less, so where will they go? And how will their
5 classrooms be structured? The last school, the
6 newest school, is a screen school with a focus
7 on writing and journalism that was - - by all
8 involved, parents, the press, politicians, and
9 the DOE. And like all these other schools, they
10 need room to grow and they need space to
11 flourish. And the DOE as recently as October
12 supported the growth of all these high schools
13 and did not recommend placing any elementary
14 school in this building. So let our schools
15 grow and flourish. If need be let's revisit
16 this issue, not the charter school, but let's
17 revisit if we going to have another school in
18 here, if that's going to come down the pike, but
19 let us grow into our building. Let the next
20 three years take place 'til there's full
21 capacity here. And look, it'll be tight 'cause
22 it's tight now, but we all work together, we'll
23 figure it out. And I have one final point and
24 it's about this particular charter school. And
25 again I went into this with open eyes, I knew

1 nothing about the charter school. And again,
2 over the last couple of months I found out some
3 things, predominately from hearing from teachers
4 in the co-located schools. And I've spoken with
5 them, you'll hear I hope, from a couple of them
6 tonight. And their words, the co-location has
7 been, and this is their words, a disaster, a
8 virus, a class of haves and have nots. We're
9 forced into basement space, there is zero
10 cooperation. We've lost our science labs while
11 the Success Academy has gotten two new science
12 labs. And others tonight I hope will talk about
13 the school, the Success Academy's target
14 audience or target population and the reality.
15 And so in closing, look, we need the high school
16 space. We need the high school space for our
17 kids here in District 3. Let these schools do
18 their jobs and provide quality education for our
19 students. Thank you.

20 TEACHER: I am going to pass my time over to
21 Frank McCourt High School to give them a chance
22 to speak 'cause my colleagues did such a
23 wonderful job in framing all the arguments I had
24 to make. However, I will just say that it is
25 just simply more than dividing the number of

1 students by number of classrooms and coming
2 with nice, neat numbers of 25. You need to let
3 these schools grow. Thank you.

4 MS. LISA STEGLICH: Thank you. Thank you
5 very much. My name is Lisa Steglich and I'm
6 speaking on behalf of the school leadership team
7 of Frank McCourt High School. Thank you. I'd
8 like to begin by saying that we do not view the
9 issues to be discussed tonight as an argument
10 over whether charter schools are good or bad.
11 The issue tonight is whether this particular
12 charter school, SACS Elementary School, belongs
13 in this particular building. The DOE has put
14 forth a proposal which contains numerous errors.
15 Most glaringly, a kitchen and a dance studio are
16 counted as regular classrooms. And the number
17 of students at Louis Brandeis High School is
18 listed as 600 instead of the 800 who actually
19 attend. Several specialty rooms of which we are
20 so proud and which put our building on a par
21 with expensive private schools are listed as
22 regular classrooms. But not only is the room
23 count upon which the entire proposal based
24 incorrect, the EIS does not in any way take into
25 account the issue of flow of students and the

1 management and control of several different
2 student populations. Now I must mention that
3 yesterday we were told by the DOE that the EIS
4 is not based on the facility survey which I
5 quoted earlier, but is instead is based on a
6 subjective walk through done on November 9th. We
7 have the document that came with this walk
8 through. It's here, it's a two page document
9 that does not in any way give detail onto which
10 rooms are being used and for what. If the DOE
11 did indeed use this document it means that the
12 EIS is based on one or more of its employees
13 merely walking around with paper and pencil and
14 recording and categorizing each of the 201 rooms
15 in the Brandeis complex. The question has to be
16 asked, why not use a facilities survey which
17 lists each room, the school to which it is
18 allocated, it's size and it's use, and is an
19 enormous and more objective spreadsheet, some 17
20 pages long, than to use a subjective walk
21 through? It just doesn't seem to make any
22 sense. If SACS were to co-locate in this
23 building the EIS state that students will not
24 have to through the scanners as every other
25 group who comes to this school, be they 18 year

1 old students or toddlers coming to daycare.
2 We are concerned about the blatant inequality in
3 the way the two groups will be treated. There
4 will be a strong message of you are privileged
5 and trustworthy to the SACS group, and to the
6 other group, to everyone else, they will be
7 getting a very different message. Believe me,
8 high school students know when they are being
9 dissed, and if one school population is not
10 being scanned and all the others are, the
11 message will come out loud and clear. We have
12 heard arguments there is a great need for this
13 elementary school in this space, and that SACS
14 has roughly 600 applications for its 188 seats,
15 a ratio of about 3 to 1, demonstrates that
16 parents want to send their children to this
17 school. But Frank McCourt has almost 1000
18 applications for its 108 seats. That's a ratio
19 of almost 9 to 1. Thank you. And Global
20 Learning has almost 900 applications for its 108
21 seats, a ratio of 8 to 1. These figures
22 demonstrate that there is a much greater demand
23 for seats in high schools already at Brandeis
24 than there is for seats at SACS. And we have
25 also heard that SACS co-locating at Brandeis

1 will not take room away from any of the
2 schools currently there. This is simply not
3 true. The EIS states that in year 2013 and 2014
4 after each school has been allocated the number
5 of rooms it's supposed to get according to its
6 number of students, there will be five extra
7 classrooms. It then says that this space will
8 be given to SACS. In previous years extra
9 classroom space has always been allocated to
10 high schools currently there. So make no
11 mistake about it, space is being taken away from
12 schools currently in this building and being
13 given to SACS. This is another example of how
14 SACS will be given privilege treatment, first as
15 far as scanning is concerned and then as far as
16 extra space is concerned. This is also an
17 argument about dollars and cents. Why is it in
18 a time of very tight budgets and revenue
19 shortfalls should public school funds be used to
20 convert part of a high school building into an
21 elementary school building? The building of a
22 separate cafeteria for SACS students by the way,
23 is an admission by the DOE that elementary kids
24 should not be mixing with high school kids. Now
25 supposedly the purpose of SACS co-locating in

1 this building according to their literature is
2 to give local parents, "public school solution
3 to private school tuition." However, in citing
4 this charter school at the Brandeis complex they
5 will be taking away from Brandeis high school
6 students many of the amenities that placed this
7 campus on a par with private high schools. Like
8 our ceramic studio and kiln, our black box
9 theatre, and it's a joining lighting and sound
10 control room, and our science labs, our music
11 rehearsal rooms. These are spaces of which we
12 are rightly proud, and they are now threatened.
13 So the DOE is telling principals that they will
14 definitely receive \$500,000 in matching funds if
15 SACS co-locates here. They have also been told
16 they will not receive this money if a public
17 high school comes here. However the EIS states
18 that once the project is finalized the DOE will
19 determine whether it qualified for matching
20 provisions. So on the one hand facilities
21 people are telling our principals you will
22 definitely get the money if SACS comes here, yet
23 on the other hand, the EIS implies that they
24 will get no money at all. In summary the
25 classification and allocation of rooms is wrong,

1 these different education groups, these
2 different age groups should not be mixed, and
3 there was a great demand for high school seats
4 in the D3 area. Thank you.

5 MR. JOHN ENGLERT: Good evening everyone, my
6 name is John Englert and I'm the co-chair of the
7 Citywide Council on Special Education. On
8 behalf of the CCSC I'd like to thank my co-host
9 in the Department of Education for having this
10 hearing tonight and for allowing the parents of
11 the District 3 community to be heard. In
12 predictable DOE fashion we have the charter
13 school on one side and the public school's
14 parents on the other side. We should not be
15 pointing fingers at one another but holding the
16 DOE accountable for their lack of planning and
17 nearsightedness when it comes to the education
18 of our children. First and foremost what we are
19 reviewing this evening is not an educational
20 impact statement but an environmental impact
21 statement that talks about building usage, not
22 education. The educational impact statement
23 does not talk about scheduling elementary school
24 classes such as kindergarten and first grade in
25 a high school environment, proper equipment such

1 as books and desks, reading programs, prep
2 periods, student activities, testing
3 accommodations, and also social interaction
4 between peers and students with disabilities.
5 However we're assured by the DOE that if this
6 EIS is approved room specific allocations will
7 be made by the Office of Space Planning in
8 conjunction with the building council. We're
9 provided a rough draft of a building utilization
10 plan in which an attempt is made to allocate
11 classrooms and administrative space. We're even
12 provided a proposed shared space plan for the
13 schools to consider. Although this may
14 represent a valiant effort towards a
15 restructuring plan, by the untrained eye there
16 are many issues which may jeopardize the safety
17 and health of our children such as poor air
18 quality control and ventilation measures due to
19 reconfiguration of classroom space without the
20 necessary redesign of the mechanical systems.
21 No attention to the time it takes students to
22 travel to and from their classrooms in
23 overcrowded halls as they make their way to the
24 next period, whether it be a library, lunchroom,
25 gymnasium, etcetera. Where are the designated

1 rooms that are set aside for the delivery of
2 specialized services? Surely parents, you don't
3 expect this space to be one of the resources
4 that the school will offer you after such an
5 aggressive restricting plan has been put in
6 place. Lastly, we are once again schooled by
7 the DOE, or the new math. We're 140 percent of
8 target or 28 students, not 20 students for K
9 through 3 is an acceptable utilization rate.
10 Illogical as it may sound some parents will
11 attribute such short term posturing as
12 supernatural. My higher learning confirms such
13 behavior as inhuman. Why settle for
14 overcrowded, unsafe, retrofitted, and
15 potentially improperly ventilated space when
16 there are nearby Catholic schools, such as St.
17 Joseph, or The Holy Family, and All Saints,
18 which are closing. Parents I ask you, has the
19 DOE reviewed these alternatives? Why not, as
20 it's been done before? Once again we have a
21 plan that has been developed by the DOE without
22 much thought for our children's education,
23 safety, and the culturing class eyes in which
24 they learn. It's time that we hold the DOE
25 accountable and behave in a manner which is

1 reflective of the community, and not be strong
2 armed by self-centered organizations and special
3 interest groups. Anything less represents a
4 disservice to the community, which will have
5 grave consequences for all of the children
6 involved. Thank you.

7 PARENT: That's quite and act to follow.
8 The only issue for me as the parent of an
9 individual who is deaf is the issue of access.
10 This is a statement from the Council on
11 Exceptional Children, this is their issue brief.
12 It's dated June 2010. Studies have shown that
13 students with disabilities have been and
14 continue to be underrepresented in charter
15 schools. Furthermore, students with low
16 intinence disabilities, that's my child, are
17 further underrepresented within the population
18 of charter schools students with disabilities.
19 While there is little data available to explain
20 the trend, one alarming explanation is that
21 students with disabilities are being cancelled
22 out of enrolling in charter school. In fact, a
23 U.S. Department of Education study indicated
24 administrators at one fourth of charter schools
25 reported having advised parents of children with

1 disabilities that this school was not a good
2 fit for their child. Such action is illegal and
3 must be enforced by federal and state law.
4 Charter schools must be ready, willing, and able
5 to provide students with disabilities with the
6 full range of supports and services necessary to
7 succeed. The most recent statement about New
8 York City from the National Center for Learning
9 Disabilities is that the U.S. Department of
10 Education has rated this city in need of
11 assistance, where it talks about children with
12 disabilities. Having said all that and having
13 sat through any number of these meetings, there
14 will be a statement made that students with
15 disabilities are served in charter schools, and
16 they are at times. But the larger and more
17 frightening piece is the creation of segregated
18 charter schools for children with disabilities.
19 I am a white woman from Brooklyn. My parents
20 came from Ireland to this country so that they
21 could get educated. They had never had anyone
22 in their family go past the equivalent of our
23 eighth grade. To say that segregation exists,
24 when people look at me would say I am being a
25 bleeding heart or facetious, but I'm telling you

1 that as a white woman I may never have
2 experience racial discrimination, but my child
3 has been discriminated against because of his
4 disability. To continue in this manner without
5 addressing the issue of race and disability will
6 keep us apart. We are not necessarily at
7 different of the spectrum, but we are certainly
8 people that want to see integrated and
9 cooperative educational facilities, not
10 segregated and separate. Those days are long
11 gone.

12 MS. POWLA DE'COQUE: Good evening, I'm Powla
13 De'Coque and I'm actually a resident of
14 Brooklyn, but I sit on the Citywide Council for
15 High Schools. And my concern is what is
16 happening to a great high school space and
17 potentially what will happen to the small high
18 schools that have just been created. We were
19 supposed to ask question, so I will ask, I will
20 say what I have to say most in the form of
21 questions. First of all as many have pointed
22 out before, why in a time of fiscal crisis is
23 any part of the \$22 million that was spent on
24 this school to create a great space for high
25 schoolers going to go to waste? This is

1 independently of any additional money that
2 would have to be spent. Secondly, we know that
3 high school students are different from other
4 students. They have different needs. They
5 truly need, in order to be successful in high
6 school and to go onto college, they need things
7 like extracurricular activities. Those require
8 space. They need physical activity for both
9 their well being and the well being of everybody
10 else around them as we have found out. They
11 need special classrooms with labs, with
12 demonstration rooms. And one of the schools
13 here is actually CTE School, so those kinds of
14 schools need workshop space. Those are all the
15 things that are necessary for a high school to
16 be successful. So here's my question, why take
17 any of it away? And we know that it will be
18 taken away. I read the EIS and I didn't see how
19 they were-no it doesn't say that it will be
20 taken away, but we know they will. And you've
21 heard a lot about that. Now the other question
22 is why take away high school seats at all? My
23 son went to Stuyvesant and Stuyvesant has become
24 incredibly overcrowded, and the PAO has asked
25 the principal why do we have now 3200 kids where

1 there used to be 20-where the capacity's 2800,
2 where half of the library's been taken away to
3 make a classroom? And what the principal said,
4 well basically, no the students have, New York
5 City children haven't gotten that much smarter,
6 there's so many more passed the test. It's just
7 that the Chancellor is desperate for seats in
8 good high schools. And instead of stuffing
9 additional children in specialized high schools
10 or in the schools they are already successful,
11 why not create more successful schools? We know
12 that the demand exists. We've seen what
13 happened with Beacon [phonetic], we've seen what
14 happened with Millennium. There may be others;
15 those are the ones that I happen to know.
16 People are desperate for good schools. These
17 small schools should be nurtured, they should be
18 expanded, not hemmed in from growing. I was at
19 the City Council hearing today, 7 out of 25 new
20 schools created under this--

21 [END 181_996_1.MP3]

22 [START 181_996_2.MP3]

23 MS. PAULA DECOQUE: --administration have
24 failed. Why--that's, by the way, 28% failure
25 rate. It's not a great record. Why? Because

1 they were not supported, and the new schools
2 here need support.

3 Uh, the last question I have is actually
4 for, for the charter school parents. I have
5 been on the other side when we were trying to--
6 uh, when--and--when we were trying to um, um--in
7 John J. They were putting a middle school into
8 a high school with other aged children and, um,
9 there was a high school that was being phased
10 out.

11 I know that parents really did not want to
12 have those high school children. They wanted to
13 take them out of the way, make them go through a
14 side door. So I wonder why do people really
15 want this school? Why--tell me why you want to
16 come here. I'm curious.

17 MS. ELAINE GORMAN: We'll let that question
18 be answered during, um, the comment.

19 [Background voices]

20 MS. DECOQUE: I just have to say that the
21 parents--most parents who have high school--if,
22 if the reverse--if the reverse were the case and
23 you had an elementary school where they were
24 trying to put high schoolers in it, parents
25 would squeal like stuck pigs.

1 MS. GORMAN: So we now have ten minutes
2 left for, uh, questions, we'll answer--

3 MR. NOAH GOTBAUME: [interposing] Sorry,
4 sorry, sorry, sorry. Uh, we have a
5 representative of Brandeis High School, the High
6 School that is being phased out here.

7 MS. GORMAN: Oh, I'm very sorry. I didn't
8 see the last person. I apologize.

9 [Applause]

10 MR. HARVEY LICHMAN: Is this going to
11 stretch? That's all right. I'm going to stand.
12 My name is Harvey Lichtman [phonetic]. I'm the
13 teacher delegate for Brandeis High School. I've
14 been teaching for 22 years, 18 of them in this
15 building.

16 [Applause]

17 Um, my, uh, two children came up through the
18 public schools on the Upper West Side. Um, and,
19 uh, we had a family business that got started in
20 1947 on the Upper West Side. Um, but the issue
21 is much larger than this. The Brandeis High
22 School school leadership team stated right away
23 its opposition of the co-location of the Upper
24 West Success Charter School. Others are
25 pointing out all the difficulties well.

1 We are in a--Brandeis High School is in a
2 position of not speaking from defending our turf
3 because we're phasing out, but from defending
4 public education. From this point, in what I
5 say, I must add from my own experience. The
6 recent DOE hearings, which I went to some of,
7 Cathie Black, the Chancellor, like Klein, was
8 being booed constantly.

9 There are 25 schools being closed and many
10 more co-locations. Many of them, like Brandeis,
11 had students overcrowded. That's what they want
12 to do here. We had 3,000 students in Brandeis
13 here. The resources that were needed were not
14 brought in. That's what they would do to the
15 schools here. If we stop the Success Charter,
16 will that stop the budget cuts and the layoffs
17 that are coming down the line?

18 The issue is larger, in defense of public
19 education. The fight for massive funding, not
20 the defense of any one school here or any one
21 school in New York City. It is the basic right
22 for the right to public education.

23 Noah Gotbaume asked, well, then why are we
24 here? That requires an answer. The opposition
25 to the DOE, Mayor Bloomberg and the Success

1 Charter Schools, and I might add the policies
2 of President Obama, is because their agenda is
3 not that of the educators and parents here.
4 Have no doubt about it that their agenda is that
5 of the corporations and the banks.

6 [Cheering]

7 Some here--some here counsel that we should
8 not be opposed to charter schools in general. I
9 disagree. Why do charters have so much big
10 business backing when the public schools do not?
11 They see the possibility of turning some of the
12 \$600 billion in K to 12 education toward their
13 profits by establishing the market system in
14 education.

15 But public education for the mass of people,
16 people whose life situation is becoming more
17 insecure, more hard, the issue has a different
18 meaning. Education is a basic social work
19 necessary for modern society. We must recognize
20 that a society that is creating more social
21 inequality is what needs to be restructured, not
22 the underfunded education system alone.

23 As a teacher, I find it outrageous that the
24 teachers' union and the other unions have not
25 united the parents, teachers and students

1 throughout the city for anything but protest
2 to the same political establishment and
3 politicians and big business, that their
4 alliance with the Democratic Party maintains in
5 power. Where is the unity in the city, in the
6 country for the mass demonstrations, strikes and
7 occupations that a real defense of education
8 requires.

9 This is a Hurricane Katrina for what they
10 are doing to the public education system. One
11 more thing. There are no real victories for
12 education here unless we change path. It's not
13 a question of fighting one school for another
14 and hanging onto the turf while the tidal wave
15 of the economic crisis washes over it. There
16 has to be a massive fight for the resources that
17 are needed, the teachers that are needed, the
18 smaller classes that are needed, not just
19 smaller schools. The resources are there.

20 The bailed out bankers have them. What is
21 needed is a new political party in this country
22 that unites all the working people with
23 socialist policies. You may not have come
24 expecting to hear this, but that is what is
25 needed. Those of you, you should've all gotten

1 a leaflet from the World Socialist web site,
2 and I urge you to read it.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. GORMAN: So at this time, we have five
5 minutes left for the CEC and SLT to ask
6 questions. We've agreed on one short question
7 per school, and we'll begin by quickly answering
8 the question raised by the public applicant's
9 rep. All, all other questions of the CEC and
10 SLTs that are not answered within this five
11 minutes, we will answer at the end.

12 We have four hours of speakers, and we want
13 to respect the people who have signed up.

14 MS. ELIZABETH ROSE: I'd like to quickly
15 answer some of the questions that were raised
16 by--

17 MR. GOTBAUME: No, if you're going to take
18 up all the time, I'm not--

19 MS. ROSE: Then don't ask several questions.

20 MR. GOTBAUME: Microphone is not on.

21 MS. GORMAN: Yes, it is. Here it is. It's
22 on.

23 MR. GOTBAUME: Fine. I have a question to
24 ask of the DOE, and that is, what level of
25 community outrage or community response against

1 this proposal, what do you need? What does
2 the Chancellor need to see, the DOE, to
3 recognize that this is not what the community
4 wants? What do you have to see?

5 MS. ROSE: There is no specific. If we see
6 this, then we will change a proposal. What I
7 can say is we have, in the past, amended or
8 significantly changed proposals as a result of
9 public comment and feedback that we have
10 received at public hearings.

11 MR. GOTBAUME: I'm sorry. So the answer is?

12 MS. GORMAN: There is no specific amount of
13 outrage. What Ms. Rose [phonetic] said is there
14 have been, at times, after reviewing public
15 comment, changes made.

16 [Background voices]

17 MR. GOTBAUME: Sorry, excuse us. There's
18 public session time. We'd be happy to have it.
19 The answer is, there is no metric, no number,
20 nothing?

21 MS. ROSE: There is no specific threshold.

22 MR. GOTBAUME: Okay.

23 MALE VOICE: - - .

24 MR. GOTBAUME: Okay. The other question I
25 had is before this all happened, the DOE said,

1 okay, the community wants this. Um, you were
2 involved in our battles last year, okay? Very
3 much involved in terms of the overcrowding. The
4 charter came down to say that it was
5 prioritizing English language learners, children
6 at at-risk schools. So my question to you is
7 how does that respond to the desires of the
8 community as established, and how will they meet
9 that mandate while at the same time, you're
10 saying that they're going to be a neighborhood
11 school? And if you could, as part of that,
12 explain what the DOE criterion is for a failing
13 school?

14 MS. ROSE: So in this case, it is the
15 charter lottery's definition of a failing
16 school, not the DOE definition of a failing
17 school.

18 [Booing]

19 They have defined it as schools that receive
20 a D or an F on the student performance section
21 of the DOE progress report. So having said
22 that, we understand and agree with the concerns
23 that District 3 families have expressed about
24 overcrowding in the lower part of the District,
25 and we agree with the concern that this school

1 be able to serve District 3 students. And we
2 are talking with Success Charter Network and
3 would like to see the lottery preference adapted
4 to give preference, absolute preference, to
5 District 3 families.

6 MS. GORMAN: We have time for one more
7 question.

8 MR. GOTBAUME: Once again, it is the DOE
9 determining what we want. All right. I think
10 we have a question, and that is, in every other
11 school that we've seen, the charters are allowed
12 to grow, and what happens is that the District
13 schools, not only do they stay stable, they end
14 up contracting, generally. The question is, how
15 does the DOE justify displacing the children
16 here, children of color, children with special
17 needs, for a school that is, quote-unquote, a
18 replacement for a private school alternative?
19 How do they justify that based on the--excuse
20 me--based on the experiences of all the other
21 collocated schools?

22 MS. ROSE: So earlier this evening, one of
23 the gentleman described the vision of four small
24 high schools in this building. The vision for
25 this building was always five schools in the

1 building. It was not a vision of four
2 schools.

3 [Background noise from audience]

4 So yes, we are substituting an elementary
5 school for a high school, but in terms of the
6 space in the building and the schools that are
7 here in the building, it is not taking away
8 space from these particular schools. There was
9 always a plan for a fifth school in the
10 building.

11 [Audience yelling]

12 Further, and I think this is important,
13 because charter schools enroll students by
14 lottery, not by score on a gifted and talented
15 test, not by geographic zone that is dependent
16 upon a certain income stream to afford an
17 apartment in a specific school zone, we
18 anticipate that this is a public school that
19 will be open to all students of District 3
20 equally.

21 [Audience yelling]

22 And therefore, since District 3 is an
23 extraordinarily diverse district, we expect and
24 anticipate that this will be a diverse school
25 that meets and serves the needs for District 3.

1 [Cheering]

2 MS. GORMAN: So we'll be glad to stay
3 afterwards to answer any more of these
4 questions. At this time, as was pointed out, we
5 have a large number of speakers, and we need to
6 allow speakers to do that. I want to remind
7 you, we have a presentation by Eva Maskawitz
8 [phonetic], elected officials and our students.
9 And then we have 112 other speakers.

10 We want to make sure that everybody has a
11 chance. We will stay here until everyone has a
12 chance. We have a timekeeper. The timekeeper
13 will tell you when you have 30 seconds left.
14 Please make every effort to finish on time or to
15 send the rest of your comments. Either we'll
16 accept them tonight, or you can reach out to the
17 D03proposals@schools.nyc.gov to post them.

18 I want to remind you that any time taken
19 with cheering or booing or whatever, takes time
20 away from the speakers.

21 [Audience yelling]

22 Excuse me. Excuse me, please. Excuse me,
23 Mr. Gotbaume would like to make a comment
24 regarding decorum.

25 MR. GOTBAUME: Please, it's true. It's not

1 an example for our kids. If you signed up to
2 speak, you'll get your turn. The students will
3 be speaking first, so they'll get their
4 opportunity, but really, one of the things that
5 above all we're asking for in everything we're
6 doing is to respect the other side. So please,
7 let's do that. Let's show our kids that.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. GORMAN: I promise you I will stay and
10 listen to anybody's comments afterwards, even if
11 it's--everybody's gone. At this time, I'd like
12 to call Eva Maskawitz.

13 [Cheering]

14 Put your sign down. Signs should be down.
15 Signs down. I forgot to mention that we also
16 have, from Robert Jackson's office, Sarah
17 Mortgage [phonetic], and I'm sorry I eliminated
18 you at the beginning.

19 [Audience cheering]

20 MS. EVA MASKAWITZ: Good evening. My name
21 is Eva Maskawitz. I want to thank the members
22 of the CEC and Department of Education for
23 holding this hearing, and for the patience of
24 the audience. It's a long night, and I know
25 lots of people have lots of things to say, and I

1 really look forward to hearing them. This is
2 New York. There are various viewpoints, and
3 everyone feels very strongly about those
4 viewpoints, and I welcome them.

5 I wanted to open up schools. As you know, I
6 was chairwoman of the education committee trying
7 to make sure that New York City children got
8 what they are entitled to and deserve. We
9 opened five schools in Harlem and two in the
10 South Bronx and really believe that parents need
11 options and that we need more great public
12 schools

13 As a mother of three myself with one in a
14 traditional public school and two in a charter
15 school, it is a very, very harrowing experience
16 to find educational excellence in New York City.
17 There are some great schools, but there are also
18 some not so great schools, and those not so
19 great schools can be a really, really terrible
20 experience for children and for the their
21 parents, and we need to make sure in this city
22 that all kids get a first-class education.

23 And unfortunately, that's not happening,
24 even though on the Upper West Side, you have
25 some of the best of the best. I represented the

1 Upper East Side of Manhattan, and we had some
2 great schools there. So this is not about
3 charter. It's not about traditional public
4 schools. It's about how do we as a city make
5 sure that we have excellence in all of our
6 buildings.

7 Our particular version--our particular
8 version of excellence has a few design elements
9 that I just wanted to share with you. We
10 deeply, deeply believe in science education,
11 science five days a week for our children. We
12 think that process of discovery and really
13 discovering children's scientific intuition and
14 ability to understand the natural and manmade
15 universe is something that is--

16 [Audience yelling]

17 MALE VOICE: Eva Maskawitz, democracy is
18 respect, but if you don't have democracy, you
19 have a dictatorship that is not respectful of -
20 -

21 FEMALE VOICE: We really need everyone to
22 let--

23 [Audience yelling]

24 MR. LICHMAN: I would appreciate if you
25 didn't interrupt. I would appreciate if you

1 didn't--I'm going to ask you one more time.
2 I'm a teacher, former principal, so I'm going to
3 ask everyone to be respectful, which is to let
4 me finish. Everyone's going to get a turn.
5 Everyone's going to get a turn here.

6 MR. GOTBAUME: I'm going to ask the same
7 thing, okay? Please let her speak. If we want
8 to talk about respect, respect means allowing
9 people to say their word.

10 MS. EVA MASKAWITZ: So our goal, very
11 briefly, is to make sure that our kids are
12 critical thinkers, that we are teaching reading
13 and writing at a very, very high level, but also
14 we believe in making sure the children
15 experience the larger world. So we're deep,
16 deep believers in field studies.

17 All of our children, several times a month,
18 go on field studies. I believe this will be a
19 great, new option. It's not going to take away
20 from others. It's adding one new option so that
21 families have another choice. Thank you very,
22 very much.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. GORMAN: Robert Godham from congressman-
25 -Robert Godham from Congressman Nadler's office.

1 [Audience yelling]

2 MR. ROBERT GODHAM: Thank you very much. My
3 name is Robert Godham. I am district director
4 for Congressman Nadler.

5 [Applause]

6 Thank you very much. The congressman
7 couldn't be here today. He's in Washington, but
8 he asked me to read a statement about this.
9 Community School District 3 is fortunate enough
10 to contain some of the most excellent schools
11 and committed parents, educators, administrators
12 in New York City. The District 3 school
13 community has worked in collaboration with the
14 New York City Department of Education with local
15 elected officials to build on the strength and
16 success of their schools and address areas for
17 improvement.

18 As the US Congressman representing a large
19 portion of District 3, I have been fortunate
20 enough to work with many of these parents and
21 staff members on several issues, including
22 relieving the dire overcrowding currently
23 burdening the District, remediating the toxic
24 PCB chemicals in our schools and bringing
25 federal financial resources to District 3 to

1 improve the diversity and quality of life of
2 certain schools within the District.

3 Unfortunately, the Department of Education's
4 proposal to locate the Upper West Side Success
5 Academy on the Brandeis High School campus will
6 do nothing to address the pervasive overcrowding
7 in our public schools. Nor will it shuttle new
8 resources and support to improve any schools
9 that may be struggling. Instead, the proposed
10 co-location will raise a new set of issues.

11 These potential problems include the
12 diversion of resources. Excuse me a second.
13 From the recently and established and impressive
14 high schools located on the Brandeis campus and
15 the incursion of substantial expense needed to
16 retrofit the recently renovated and improved
17 high school building to serve kindergarten
18 students, among others.

19 Collocating five year olds and 15 and older
20 just doesn't work. We can't do that. Our goal
21 is for all parents to have the option to send
22 their children to an excellent public school,
23 and we must all work together to achieve this,
24 by supporting the growth and improvement of our
25 existing District schools and develop new

1 schools that will meet the needs of all
2 District 3 parents. Thank you, and if you have
3 further questions, please contact my office.
4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. GORMAN: Jarred Chalsaw from Senator Tom
6 Duane's office followed by Gail Brewer
7 [phonetic], council member.

8 [Applause]

9 MR. JARRED CHALSAW: Thank you. My name is
10 Jarred Chalsaw. I work for state senator Tom
11 Duane who unfortunately is in Albany this
12 evening, so I'll be delivering a statement on
13 his behalf. My name is Thomas K. Duane, and I
14 represent New York State's 29th Senate District,
15 which includes the Brandeis Educational Campus,
16 where New York City Department of Education
17 proposes to collocate the Success Academy
18 Charter School with five existing schools.

19 I thank the DOE, CEC 3, the SLTs, the
20 schools currently sharing the building for
21 providing this opportunity to present testimony.
22 I join the District 3 community, including the
23 CEC, the President's Council, Manhattan
24 Community Board 7 and the PTA of the schools in
25 and around Brandeis in strongly opposing this

1 proposal. As you know, four of the five high
2 schools currently collocated in the Brandeis
3 educational complex, the Urban Assembly School
4 for Green Careers, the Global Learning
5 Collaborative, Innovation to Come up Plus and
6 the -- High School are expected to remain there
7 over the long-term. I believe the scarce
8 available space at this site would best be used
9 to either support the growth and expansion of
10 these promising new schools, or to add a fifth
11 high school to serve local students as well as
12 those from neighborhoods that previously fed
13 into Brandeis High School.

14 In letters to DOE and elected officials, D3
15 parents have rightly expressed concern that this
16 proposal for an elementary school would take
17 away urgently needed high school space. I am
18 also concerned that the proposed co-location of
19 SICS would prove extremely disruptive to the
20 building's existing schools. Clustered co-
21 locations can result in strife as multiple
22 schools with different administrations and
23 missions must share scarce facility space,
24 including science labs, gym space, art and music
25 rooms.

1 However, by all accounts, the five schools
2 sharing this campus currently have an amicable
3 and even complimentary relationship. The same
4 cannot be said about existing Success Charter
5 Network schools and the schools with which they
6 are collocated.

7 For example, parents and teachers at P.S.
8 241 and 149, which were compelled to share their
9 facilities with HSA schools, report that HSA has
10 aggressively annexed essential classroom and
11 cluster room space and shown a consistent
12 disregard for the needs of their host schools.

13 I share the fears of existing Brandeis
14 campus school communities and SACS would not be
15 a good neighbor. Furthermore, I believe that
16 collocating elementary school students with
17 those in their late teens is problematic,
18 creating unnecessary risks for young children,
19 and requiring costly retrofitting of the
20 building to accommodate these younger students'
21 physical and educational needs.

22 These modifications would reduce individual
23 schools' flexibility in moving, exchanging and
24 sharing classrooms and cluster rooms.
25 Additionally, many of the building's prior

1 shared spaces are designed specifically for
2 high school students, and it would be a waste of
3 education dollars to reconfigure them.

4 I also share parents' concern that SACS's
5 stated desire to grow could further threaten
6 recent capital investments that have made the
7 Brandeis Educational Campus one of the city's
8 best high school facilities. The ostensible
9 benefit to the community provided by this
10 proposal, as articulated in the DOE's
11 Educational Impact Statement, is that it would
12 provide an additional choice option for D3
13 families crowded out of their zone school.

14 This assertion is misleading. Indeed, while
15 I and other D3 stakeholders have long been
16 calling for a new public elementary school to
17 mitigate the severe overcrowding that has
18 plagued the area for years, the proposed SACS
19 would likely do little or nothing to achieve
20 this goal. SACS representatives have indicated
21 that the school's enrollment policy to
22 prioritize at-risk students from outside the
23 District over students zoned for District 3
24 schools that received higher than a D on student
25 performance evaluations, such as the highly

1 regarded nearby schools that are at the heart
2 of the overcrowding crisis.

3 Given the demand for existing Success
4 Academy Schools, it seems unlikely that many
5 area families would have a chance to attend
6 SACS, and thus, this school would not help to
7 resolve the neighborhood's long-standing
8 elementary school overcrowding problems. The
9 DOE could more effectively combat this
10 overcrowding by promoting the District's many
11 choice schools, as well as the underutilized
12 District 3 schools that recently won magnet
13 grants from the US Department of Education as
14 attractive options for elementary school
15 students unable to attend their zoned schools.

16 For all of the above reasons, I strongly
17 urge the New York City Panel for Education
18 Policy and by extension, the DOE, to reject the
19 proposal to collocate SACS in the Brandeis
20 Educational Campus. Again, thank you for
21 allowing me to testify today, and for your
22 consideration of my comments.

23 MS. GORMAN: Gail Brewer, followed by Sophia
24 Rahim [phonetic] and Lauren Schuster [phonetic].

25 MALE VOICE: Thank you very much, and I

1 bring you greetings from Robert Jackson
2 because he's still at the Education Committee.
3 They started at 1:00 this afternoon, and he's
4 working hard.

5 I want to say thank you to Superintendent
6 Goreman, to the amazing panel, and as no
7 surprise to anybody in this room, I am
8 unequivocally opposed to any co-location at
9 Brandeis High School. Let me try to be specific
10 as to why.

11 I've been in and out of this building since
12 the 1970s when I was actually on the Advisory
13 Board to the Brandeis High School itself. I
14 know this building well. This is a high school
15 building. Let me be specific.

16 There is a kiln. There are three high
17 school gyms. It is a high school cafeteria.
18 There are art rooms. There is a real sense that
19 this is for big students who are in high school.
20 Two entrances. It would make no sense to have
21 one group of students--you know which one--
22 coming through the scanners and another one
23 coming through 85th Street. That is two classes
24 of students. That is not what we want in this
25 high school.

1 These high schools that you've heard about
2 today, these amazing parents, whom you've heard
3 describe so articulately about the growth and
4 the excitement of these high schools, they need
5 to grow. They need growth for special
6 education, but they also need the two music
7 rooms. They need the three gyms. They need the
8 large cafeteria, and actually, they need the
9 Life program for students who are pregnant.
10 This is a high school.

11 The amazing PTA president, Frank McCort
12 [phonetic] talked about the huge number of
13 applications. I stood right here in this space
14 when the members of the McCort family came to
15 cut the ribbon, and 12 incredible students told
16 the life, from their perspective, of Frank
17 McCort. There wasn't a dry eye in the room
18 because of the amazing articulateness of these
19 students. Same for the other schools. That
20 cannot happen if we have an elementary school
21 that is pushing the envelope. And I'm trying to
22 be nice. Pushing the envelope.

23 I want to make it clear that there is room.
24 Eva Maskawitz said correctly on Brian Laird this
25 morning that there is more room for students in

1 this school. It is. There are files.

2 I don't want files in a room. I want
3 students, but I want high school students who
4 are going to be here for the long haul. I want
5 to talk about the overcrowding situation.

6 We have overcrowded schools. We have great
7 schools, but they are overcrowding. Last year,
8 Elizabeth Rose and everyone at this table solved
9 the problem with 452. But if this school
10 proposed is for ELL and for students who are so-
11 called zoned in schools that need improvement,
12 then this is not going to solve our overcrowding
13 problem.

14 I don't want, I'll be blunt, a bait and
15 switch situation where the state says, all of a
16 sudden, it's open to only District 3 because
17 that's not what it says in the charter. So
18 please do not bait and switch us.

19 We also need more seats for high school
20 students, for District 3. We do not get into
21 Beacon High School. It is overcrowded. So we
22 need more seats. Five high schools in this
23 building could handle it. I was here when
24 Brandeis had 2,300. We don't want it
25 overcrowded, but we sure want it to be a high

1 school.

2 So I'm saying this proposal does not address
3 overcrowding. It does not address the need for
4 more high school seats, and two schools, type of
5 schools, an elementary charter and high schools
6 in one building do not fit. Just the other day,
7 we were touring the school, as I'm here all the
8 time, and the basketball team was coming through
9 the halls. They're big, and they're good at
10 basketball, but it's not going to work for
11 elementary school students.

12 Elementary school would be located right
13 next to the cafeteria when the high school
14 students are having lunch. It doesn't make
15 sense. No co-location. Thank you very much for
16 all the hard work that everybody has put in.

17 MS. GORMAN: Sophia Raheem, Lauren Schuster,
18 followed by our students.

19 MS. SOPHIA RAHEEM: Hello, good evening. I
20 am here today--my name is Sophia Raheem, and I'm
21 here today representing Council Member Anisi
22 Dickens [phonetic] who has been very vigilant in
23 the fight to support existing public schools in
24 Harlem and wants to come out to support Council
25 Member Brewer and the residents of the Upper

1 West Side to maintain the academic
2 institutions that they've built here as well.
3 Thank you.

4 I'll try to be as brief as possible.
5 Council member Dickens is opposed to this co-
6 location as well as other school locations for
7 two primary reasons. One is that public schools
8 need to be given the opportunity to develop
9 their programs and to grow. There is a growing
10 tide in public schools reintroducing the arts
11 into their schools, and they need to be able to
12 have the space to invite organizations and
13 programs into their school that will provide
14 enrichment for their students.

15 The other reason why she's opposed to these
16 co-locations is because there is an equality in
17 the types of schools that will be inhabiting the
18 same space. So on the other hand, you have a
19 charter school that has the luxury of soliciting
20 private funds to help get things like SMART
21 Boards and laptops for their students. But at
22 the same time, DOE existing public schools,
23 they're subjected to a city budget that's in a
24 fiscal crisis. So the services that they're
25 able to provide for their students don't match

1 the type of services that a private endowment
2 can create.

3 Then going back to the first point, and if
4 they do find programs that are willing to work
5 with them, they don't have the space to bring
6 them in. So in closing, I want to make this
7 last point. We feel--Council member Dickens
8 feels that the Harlem Success Academy as well as
9 the Success Charter Network is really failing to
10 recognize their privilege. You have access to
11 resources that our regular existing public
12 schools do not have access to, and we are asking
13 for the space to bring them in once they're
14 available.

15 Council member Dickens has also proposed
16 numerous times that the Success Charter Network
17 use their private endowment to secure their own
18 space. And as--on numerous occasions, we've
19 come to these occasions. We've said the
20 Archdiocese of New York State has released a
21 list of schools that are closing. If you're
22 interested in acquiring a school building,
23 acquire one that's no longer going to be in
24 existence.

25 Also, I'm sorry, yeah, so we've proposed

1 that, uh, you find, uh, space. Also, I just--
2 I know I said there was a last point, but this
3 is the last point. Sorry. And then I lost it
4 again. [Laughter] Bear with me. I have a
5 cold, and I'm very tired.

6 Yes, lastly, um, when you--you know what,
7 I'm just going to end here because I keep losing
8 my point. But Council member Dickens is against
9 this co-location. Please use your endowment to
10 find your own space. Yes, I remember what it is
11 now.

12 Parents from the Harlem Success Academy are
13 also expressing a frustration that they are
14 tired of coming to these meetings as well to
15 fight for space. They recognize that
16 opportunities are not being afforded to other
17 children so that their children can succeed, and
18 they're tired of it, too. They want their own
19 space, too.

20 MS. GORMAN: Lauren Schuster followed by
21 students Shane, David, Ashak [phonetic] and
22 Laurie.

23 MS. LAUREN SCHUSTER: Good evening,
24 everybody. Thank you so much for this
25 opportunity to speak. My name is Lauren

1 Schuster. I am here to speak on behalf of
2 Assembly member Linda Rosenthal. She is
3 unfortunately--thank you--unable to make it.
4 She is traveling down from Albany, but I will
5 read a statement that she prepared, and I
6 promise I will go quickly, but slowly enough
7 that you can understand me.

8 So at a time when school District 3 is
9 grappling with overcrowding at all grade levels,
10 it is irresponsible for the DOE to propose
11 reallocating seating capacity to an elementary
12 charter school. In recent years, I joined
13 parents, faculty and local officials in a war
14 room convened to fight for adequate school space
15 for our children.

16 We succeeded in securing space for a new
17 elementary school, P.S. 452, but that is not
18 enough to meet the acute shortage of seats that
19 we will face in the future. I have continually
20 implored the DOE to find space for elementary
21 schools to grow and middle schools to expand in
22 response to the burgeoning number of school aged
23 children in District 3.

24 The DOE has shamefully denied the need for
25 more seats, has concluded that no room for

1 expansion exists and has warned that rezoning
2 is the only acceptable means of addressing
3 issues of capacity. The announcement by DOE
4 that Upper West Success Charter school would be
5 collocated at the Lewis D. Brandeis High School
6 building at West 84th Street where five high
7 schools currently coexist, has ignited a
8 firestorm of opposition, clearly, from school
9 District 3 parents.

10 Their reasons are many and wide in scope,
11 but they are unified under one Rubric, the
12 proposed site for the elementary charter school
13 is inappropriate and untenable.

14 As the assembly member representing the
15 Upper West Side of Manhattan, I can say no less.
16 It is my obligation to view this plan in the
17 context of our community's challenges and needs.
18 As we continue to work towards alleviating
19 District 3 overcrowding, the insulation of an
20 Upper West Success School at this location would
21 be counterproductive to this goal.

22 I must opposed this ill-advised placement of
23 an elementary charter school in the midst of an
24 environment created and meant for high school
25 teenagers at a time when we are facing a dearth

1 of seats for all grades of public school
2 children.

3 I am deeply unnerved by the prospect of
4 placing children as young as four years old
5 alongside high school students as old as 18 or
6 even 20. This concept displays poor judgment
7 involved in choosing the site and poses obvious
8 safety concerns in a school where all who must
9 enter must pass through metal detectors.

10 Will our four-year-olds be required to pass
11 through these detectors, and what about their
12 parents, for that matter? In addition to the
13 obvious safety concerns, the school lacks a
14 concrete enrollment plan.

15 Upper West Success' massive PR blitz is
16 disingenuous and confusing for parents just
17 entering the school system. Although it has
18 billed itself as an alternative choice and
19 solution to the overcrowding for all D3
20 families, careful examination of its SUNY
21 charter application clearly demonstrates that
22 enrollment preference will be given to out-of-
23 district ELL over non-at-risk students from
24 within the District. The school states there is
25 tremendous need for excellent education for

1 students with special needs, and Success is
2 taking specific actions to attract and retain a
3 comparable or greater enrollment of limited
4 English proficient students.

5 While it is certainly laudable to provide
6 educational opportunities to students with
7 special needs, D3 is facing a critical shortage
8 of seats. Giving preference to students from
9 out of district will only intensify this
10 problem. The admissions preference would likely
11 result in a higher proportion of out of District
12 ELL students, all of whom would then become
13 eligible for D3 middle schools.

14 DOE has admitted in November 2010 that D3
15 will face an acute shortage of middle school
16 seats starting in current third grade. The DOE
17 has not begun to address this need, but its
18 efforts in connection with the charter school
19 seem counterproductive to the goal of creating
20 more middle school seats for in-district
21 children. It is troubling that Success'
22 original intentions as laid out in its charter
23 application do not mesh with its current talking
24 points.

25 Success will not address the biggest problem

1 in this District, overcrowding, and its
2 charter documents, the basis upon which it was
3 granted approval, reveal that addressing this
4 essential problem was not even part of the
5 school's plan.

6 It is also troubling that co-location may
7 reduce utilization of some of the building's
8 specialty amenities such as a the Black Box
9 Theater and the ceramics room because they're
10 designed for use by high school students. It
11 also prevents the possibility of other high
12 schools expanding within the complex and taking
13 advantage of these areas. Other shared spaces
14 such as the stairwells and bathrooms would have
15 to be retrofitted to accommodate young children,
16 and these retrofits may be potentially
17 disruptive to student learning.

18 There is disagreement between the DOE and
19 high school officials about the actual amount of
20 underutilized space. In fact, in a recent walk-
21 through of the space by my staff, community
22 members and school officials, we revealed that
23 several rooms were actually miscategorized.

24 If Upper West Success has the funds to
25 retrofit so many facilities, why must they be

1 sited in this particular facility? Why must
2 they impose themselves on a building unsuited to
3 their needs in a District with the most enviable
4 public schools in the city?

5 Upper West Siders have been outspoken in
6 their opposition to this proposed co-location
7 and community board 7 voted unanimously to
8 oppose it. Teachers and administrators from
9 several public schools who have had occasion to
10 experience a Success Charter Academy co-location
11 have shared their horror stories.

12 On the issue of co-location, I've received
13 hundreds upon hundreds of e-mails and phone
14 calls and have spoken with parents and
15 principals, teachers and community members. I
16 have rarely seen such fervent and united
17 opposition to a facility in my district. That
18 is certainly a message the DOE should heed
19 before it forces this school into a community
20 where it is not wanted.

21 In certain areas of the city where public
22 schools are failing or do not meet standards
23 that parents expect for their children's
24 education, charter schools may have an eager
25 clientele. In fact, most charter schools

1 position themselves in neighborhoods as
2 alternatives to substandard public schools. On
3 the Upper West Side, no such dynamic exists.

4 Parents are satisfied with the excellent
5 quality of public schools and are, in fact,
6 clamoring for the expansion of those schools,
7 not the creation of alternative charter schools.
8 This is not a new request.

9 The DOE has been told this ad nauseam over
10 the years, but evidently it needs to learn how
11 to listen and respond appropriately. Charter
12 schools are often the solution in neighborhoods
13 with failing schools, but D3 is one of the
14 jewels of the public school system. The real
15 problem here in District 3 is overcrowding, and
16 the real solution lies in expanding our current
17 public schools.

18 We simply cannot afford to give up precious
19 space to this charter school, no matter how
20 sterling its reputation, and slight our public
21 schools even further. Thank you so much, and
22 I'm sorry I spoke forever.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. GORMAN: We are now beginning with our
25 students, Shane, Daveed [phonetic], Ashak Lowry

1 [phonetic]. We remind you that there will be
2 somebody here so that you know when you have 30
3 seconds left of your two minutes.

4 STUDENT: Hello, my name is Shane Lopez, and
5 I attend Frank McCort High School. I'm in the
6 ninth grade, and--

7 [Applause]

8 I just want to say that I oppose co-location
9 because I don't want to wake up one day, go to
10 school and be limited. I want to be able to go
11 to school and have space and be able to have
12 resources and be able to spin my rings and, you
13 know, not be limited to everything that's
14 available to kids in the neighborhood who go to
15 high school.

16 STUDENT: Hi, my name's -- Jordan
17 [phonetic]. I also go to Frank McCort, and I,
18 too, oppose co-location. So what I wanted to
19 say was that--well, sorry, my bad. I wanted to
20 say that there is a limited space, and this is
21 also the first year for Frank McCort, and so we--
22 -like, we're not even--we haven't even been here
23 for a while. Like, we've only been here for,
24 like, a few months, and we haven't even been
25 able to get our, like--like have our print on

1 this school, have them know that actually
2 Frank McCort's here.

3 And not only that, but--not only that, but
4 also I think, like, I have three little sisters,
5 and I just don't think this is the right
6 environment for them because I think it's
7 dangerous. I think that bigger kids being in an
8 area with such smaller kids, like, it just
9 doesn't go together. It's like having a bear
10 and a mouse in the same cage. It's not worth
11 it.

12 [Applause]

13 STUDENT: Hi. I go to Frank McCort High
14 School, and I'm a ninth grader. My name is
15 Daveed, and I oppose co-location because it's
16 already cramped. We only have, like, five
17 classrooms, and there's 100 of us. So it's
18 probably going to get a little more cramped when
19 next year's class comes in, but also another
20 school comes in. Yeah.

21 MS. GORMAN: Next is Lowry followed by a
22 group of three, Cav [phonetic], Alpha [phonetic]
23 and George.

24 STUDENT: All right. I'm Ashoke [phonetic].
25 I'm a ninth grade from Frank McCort, and I

1 oppose co-location because it's just a
2 distraction, and it's really not helping us
3 right now.

4 STUDENT: All right. Hi, I'm Alpha Barry,
5 and this is my friend, George, and we're here
6 representing the Global Learning Collaborative.
7 And I came just to say that we're in a tight
8 space as it is, and what's the whole point of
9 bringing a new school in here? There's, like,
10 little kids, like, coming in, and we're a bunch
11 of teenagers. Like, teenagers do what they do,
12 and like, what does it look like, where, like,
13 little kids--like, parents exposing their little
14 kids to what teenagers do? Like, they're little
15 kids. They're supposed to be learning. They're
16 supposed to be learning, not looking at us and
17 what we do.

18 We're supposed to be role models.

19 STUDENT: We also want to say that if this
20 co-location happens, a lot of our teachers, our
21 favorite teachers and our favorite classes like
22 ceramics and theater, if we lose that, that's
23 our greatest motivation for class. The greatest
24 motivation for learning is our teachers, and if
25 we lose those teachers, we're not motivated, and

1 we don't succeed. And no one wants to have a
2 city full of bums and people who don't succeed.
3 And no one wants that. So thank you. So thank
4 you also because we waited to speak today, and
5 we also want to thank you because tomorrow we
6 have Regent's, and we waited to speak today and
7 to prove our point. So thank you.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. GORMAN: Doris and Caroline.

10 STUDENT: Hi. Oh, yeah, I know. Hi, I'm
11 Caroline.

12 STUDENT: I'm Doris. We both attend Frank
13 McCort High School. And we oppose co-location
14 because--

15 STUDENT: Because we like the schools and
16 the Brandeis campus to expand as a community and
17 not be limited to a certain amount of space.

18 MS. GORMAN: Before turning the podium, the
19 microphone over to Noah Gotbaume, who will read
20 our speakers, I'd like to commend our students
21 for coming and staying. And for exercising your
22 right to public speech. Thank you very much,
23 and good luck on Regent's.

24 [Applause]

25 MR. GOTBAUME: Thanks. All right. We have

1 three more students from Frank McCort, and
2 then we're going to have the public session.
3 Come on up, guys.

4 STUDENT: Hi, my name is Leah Clooney
5 [phonetic]. Hi, my name is Leah Clooney. I am
6 a student in the ninth grade at Frank McCort. I
7 disagree with the decision to put the charter
8 school in because it will limit the space of
9 Frank McCort. Right now we have a tiny section
10 of the third floor, and as the years go by, we
11 hope to expand.

12 If the charter school is added, we will be
13 limited on our space even more because we share
14 this building with four other schools. I also
15 don't like the idea of sharing a high school
16 with younger children.

17 A high school to me is a place where
18 teenagers come and learn with other kids their
19 own age and older. Adding the charter school
20 doesn't fit that definition.

21 [Applause]

22 STUDENT: Hi. I unfortunately typed my
23 speech on a computer, so I unfortunately have to
24 hold this. My name is Maggie. I'm a ninth
25 grader at Frank McCort High School, and I'm here

1 to speak out against the co-location. Let me
2 just say that I like the idea of charter
3 schools, but putting a charter school on the
4 Brandeis campus is impractical.

5 Why? Well, first off, the charter school
6 will have small grade school students, which
7 means most of the school structures will be
8 modified to fit their students' needs and not
9 ours. In addition, as they expand, they will
10 need more room for their students, which will
11 leave our school with little room to expand. As
12 it is, we have to share the building's locker
13 rooms and gyms, and adding another school will
14 cut out the time allotted for us to have access
15 to those facilities.

16 A new elementary school will need to send
17 hundreds of small children to play in these
18 gyms, so how will we even be able to share the
19 facilities?

20 Also, this new school may need to use
21 hallways and staircases while high school in the
22 buildings are changing classes, which will cause
23 confusion and traffic, and could potentially
24 harmful to those young kids, particularly due to
25 the questionable behavior of some of the

1 students here.

2 My main argument is it's not practical for a
3 large elementary school to be housed in a shared
4 building that already shares a space with high
5 school students. In fact, it's a bad idea.
6 It's potentially harmful to the charter school
7 and to our school as well. Basically, the
8 charter school wouldn't be benefiting itself by
9 moving here, and certainly won't be benefiting
10 anyone in our building.

11 The charter school would be better off and
12 safer in a more appropriate space. Thank you
13 for your time, and please consider locating the
14 charter school elsewhere.

15 STUDENT: Hi, my name is Anesia Steinager
16 [phonetic], and I'm addressing you today because
17 I'm concerned about what would happen to my
18 school and the other schools in this building if
19 a charter school moved in.

20 The Brandeis campus already has, as is, five
21 high schools, and there's just enough space for
22 us as we are. And in later years, as we expand.

23 There's no way that the campus would be able
24 to accommodate a charter school. It's not
25 physically possible for the building. Another

1 thing is that I wouldn't be comfortable with
2 small children going to school with me. I mean,
3 would you want to send your young and
4 impressionable child to a school where other
5 students may be acting in a vulgar and
6 inappropriate manner every day? I mean--

7 [Applause]

8 There's a reason why high school and
9 elementary school are usually separate, and
10 because of our age differences, we have
11 different needs that aren't able to be met in a
12 shared space. So I personally am asking that
13 for the sake of all that is logical, for you not
14 to put a charter school here.

15 [Applause]

16 MR. GOTBAUME: Thank you. Thank you,
17 students. Okay. Now we're going to go to--
18 we're going to go to the public session here.
19 The way we're going to do this is we're going to
20 alternate those in favor and those who are
21 opposed, and I'm going to call up a few at each
22 time, but we'll be working off the same mic.

23 We would ask you to respect the time limit
24 if we can, all right? Two minutes per speaker.
25 So starting off, our -- because we have more

1 people who are opposed, Danielle Geneau, and
2 then in favor, Cory McClure [phonetic], Maggie
3 Thomas and Sara Unger [phonetic]. Those four,
4 can they come up in that order, please, and then
5 I will call people -- get them to line up.

6 Danielle Geneau, Cory McClure, Maggie Thomas
7 and Sara Unger, please. Is Danielle here?

8 MS. DANIELLE GENEAU: Good evening. My name
9 is Danielle Geneau. I'm an Upper West Side
10 resident. I'm a parent. I have a child at
11 Frank McCort High School. I also have a two-
12 year-old, so I'm looking at this from many
13 perspectives.

14 Last year, I was involved in a harrowing
15 experience. I know a lot of parents have been
16 through it. The high school search in New York
17 City. You know, there were overwhelmingly
18 wonderful, quality, screened programs for my
19 very articulate daughter who you just heard from
20 in district, but none for District 3. There was
21 Beacon High School, which is already
22 overcrowded, and what? And then Frank McCort
23 came into our district, and we had some kind of
24 high school choice in District 3.

25 You know, District 3 needs seats at the

1 elementary, the middle school, the high school
2 level. My youngest starts kindergarten in two
3 years. I'm concerned, but you know, not a
4 school where he--this charter school, I'm not
5 opposed to charter schools. I'm opposed to this
6 charter school in this location. My son
7 wouldn't have first or second priority. He
8 would be third priority at this school, and I
9 don't if I'd want him going to school with over
10 1,000 high school students in the building.

11 There'd be a four-to-one ratio outnumbering
12 the young children in this school. It doesn't
13 make sense for this school in this location.
14 That's--you know, but that's what that--you
15 know, what the four glossy brochures that I
16 received at my house--how did they get my
17 address?--said, and why not spend all that money
18 on--that, you know, has canvassed my
19 neighborhood, that has sent me beautiful,
20 expensive brochures, that is on every, single
21 bus stop in my neighborhood. Why not spend that
22 for an appropriate location?

23 If you have money, don't spend it courting
24 the parents here who won't be able to send their
25 children to this school. You know, and Success

1 has not been a great neighbor in previous
2 locations, so I fail to see how this co-location
3 makes sense.

4 It intensifies the overcrowding in my
5 district, and it's very upsetting. Thank you
6 very much for your time.

7 MR. GOTBAUME: Thank you, Danielle. Cory
8 McClure, then Anasia Steinager and Sara Unger.

9 MS. SARAH UNGER: Good evening. My name is
10 Sara Unger, and I am the science teacher at
11 Harlem Success Academy Four. I stand before you
12 as a professional and a future parent because I
13 believe in the need for limitless educational
14 choices.

15 30 years ago, my parents made the choice to
16 leave Manhattan for the suburbs because they
17 were denied the choice to send me to a quality
18 public education school. Yes, District 3 does
19 have amazing schools and educators, but there
20 are not enough spaces to serve every child that
21 deserves it.

22 I plead with you to recognize that charters
23 are not the enemy, but rather another outlet for
24 quality, successful learning. As children--as
25 teachers, parents and administrators, I call on

1 you to put the needs of children in front of
2 the political injustice that is standing in our
3 way.

4 I acknowledge your concern and relative fear
5 of the unknown charter co-location system. This
6 is why I invite you to come into my classroom
7 and see firsthand that it works. That we are
8 not a deficit, but rather an asset to your
9 educational community. Be bold enough to stand
10 up to those who incite fear and protect the
11 right for all students to get the knowledge to
12 get to college.

13 And since I have--

14 I would like to propose a question. If
15 Success Charter Networks serviced students who
16 were in high school, would you be favor of us
17 taking the place of the fifth school leaving and
18 taking that space?

19 [Audience yelling]

20 [Applause]

21 MR. GOTBAUME: Tara--is Tara Renauldo
22 [phonetic]? Okay. Because we -- students.
23 Alia Clunis--she's a student as well. Okay.
24 Carmen Valcusseral [phonetic]? Sorry, these
25 were students who spoke earlier. Sorry, Carmen,

1 thank you. And then Sara Unger. I'm happy to
2 answer your question.

3 [Audience yelling]

4 MR. GOTBAUME: I'll take 30 seconds. The
5 answer is that no, it's not okay because I will
6 tell you, high school or not, our experience
7 with Success Charters in co-locations is that
8 they squeeze out the kids. You'll hear it all
9 over. If you--other charters, we don't have the
10 problem, okay? Success Charter eats up our
11 kids, and that's why.

12 So high school, no high school. That's what
13 happens. You want the experience. You asked.
14 I answered it. I'm happy to talk about it
15 afterward. Yeah, Carly Glover [phonetic] after
16 this, please.

17 MS. CARMEN VALCASEROW: Good evening. I am
18 Carmen Valcaserow, a parent and an SLT member
19 from Frank McCort High School. Thanks. A year
20 ago, I also was--me and my child were both, you
21 know, unsettled in uncertainty situation because
22 we didn't have a high school. So we were
23 extremely excited when we were accepted in Frank
24 McCort high school.

25 It's been a short time being at this school,

1 and we have a lot of work to do. It took a
2 lot of work during the summer time with the
3 staff and the parents. When we could always--
4 also be on vacation, we were working to be on PA
5 and also to be on SLT. And when we were ready
6 to--

7 [END 181_996_2.MP3]

8 [START 181_996_3.MP3]

9 FEMALE VOICE 1: --work and he start working
10 in issues such as how can we start creating and
11 building community? How can we start using the
12 resources that we have? How can we work across
13 the other school and all the other differences
14 that we have? Now we found out that we have
15 then to start thinking how we're going to
16 preserve our space in this school. This is a
17 matter of rights. Our children have the right
18 to be here and to use the resources and we need
19 to take that in account. I believe that charter
20 schools are not the solution to the education
21 gap. The solution is equality and equal rights,
22 and I oppose to a charter school being in this
23 school. Thank you.

24 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you. Carly Glazer
25 [phonetic] and Joy Paris [phonetic] then Jeffrey

1 Goldis.

2 MS. CARLY GLAZER: Good evening. My name is
3 Carly Glazer and I'm a first-grade teacher at
4 Harlem Success Academy 4. And I believe that
5 this is about parent choice. Before coming to
6 Harlem Success Academy I taught at two different
7 failing Department of Education schools. In my
8 two years in those schools I faced a lot of
9 challenges. I worked with some incredible
10 teacher, both veteran teachers and new teachers
11 like myself. And as teachers our work was
12 always for our students as we pushed our kids
13 who are many times years behind grade level to
14 meet their full potential. For us it was always
15 about the kids and for the kids. Many times we
16 faced a culture of fear and harsh opposition,
17 and it felt as though we weren't always fighting
18 for the same thing within our school, student
19 achievement across all grade levels, K-12. Last
20 year I chose to move to Harlem Success Academy,
21 a school where everyone from teachers, to
22 parents, to leadership, to students is always on
23 the same page with the same goal, to push our
24 amazing kids to reach their full potential in
25 New York City. As a teacher, as a native New

1 Yorker, and as the daughter of two parents who
2 twenty years ago were fortunate enough to send
3 me to an excellent New York City Public School,
4 I know how important it is to have those
5 options. There are some great schools on the
6 Upper West Side but space is limited and our
7 parents and our students deserve another choice.
8 Let's work together to create more high-quality
9 public schools across the city.

10 MALE VOICE 1: Joy Paris [phonetic] , Tina
11 Crockett, Tara Rinaldo. I understand that but
12 if--the next speaker--I'll pick the next speaker
13 on this list, right, or are we going to wait
14 for--

15 FEMALE VOICE 2: I have Tina's statement.

16 MALE VOICE 1: You have Tina's statement?
17 Thank you. Is Joy Paris here?

18 FEMALE VOICE 2: Hi. Tina Crockett had to
19 leave. She asked me to read this on her behalf.
20 Good evening, my name is Tina Crockett,
21 President of P.S. 145's Parent Association, and
22 a member of the President's Council Executive
23 Board. I am here on behalf of our parent
24 association, staff, and concerned community
25 members to oppose this proposal of co-location.

1 The Success Charter Network tried to locate
2 their school at P.S. 145 late last year but was
3 met with strong opposition from parents and
4 community members. Now we find ourselves right
5 back on the battle lines and our fight must
6 continue. We all know that District 3 has a long
7 history of segregation and inequity, and that
8 the DOE has been planning to co-locate,
9 reorganize, and shuffle around particular
10 schools. This has been well documented over the
11 years. All we ask and all we have been asking
12 for for some time is a fair community process
13 that takes into account the needs and views of
14 the schools being targeted or the community as a
15 whole. All we ask is for the DOE to stop
16 imposing decisions on our schools and our
17 community. All we want is to become full
18 partners in decisions impacting our children's
19 right to a decent and equitable education.

20 MALE VOICE 1: Jeffrey Goldis, Tara Rinaldo,
21 Kate Kincaid [phonetic] , and Deborah Lopez.

22 MR. JEFFREY GOLDIS: Hi my name is Jeffrey
23 Goldis. I'm a science teacher at HSA 4. I want
24 to thank the panel for the chance to speak. I
25 would also very much like to say it's very

1 heartwarming as a teacher to see the kind of
2 passion there is for child's education here.
3 Believe me, I've been in situations where that's
4 the major problem, and it's great that we all
5 have come together and we have that passion, we
6 have made our children's education a priority.
7 I'm a product of a public school. My mother is
8 a public schoolteacher. I've worked in public
9 schools, charter schools, private schools. I
10 don't really make the distinction. I'm happy to
11 have the choice as a teacher. I'm not-- I
12 think a lot of focus has been on the distinction
13 between public and private and charter. Really,
14 it's about our child's education, it's about
15 pushing to achieve the highest level of
16 education we have. And the reality of the
17 situation is I now am teaching second graders
18 lessons that I have taught tenth graders in
19 other situations. We at Harlem Success raise
20 the bar and our children are able to meet it.
21 It's about success, it's about achievement. And
22 we are proving that. There have been many
23 misconceptions so I don't have the time or don't
24 think it's appropriate to single out and address
25 each of them, but I do welcome you please don't

1 listen to what you may have heard. Come
2 visit. Come see us. Come speak to our
3 students, speak to our parents. See what kind
4 of achievements that we are making in our
5 communities. Thank you.

6 MALE VOICE 1: Tara Rinaldo then Kate, Katie
7 Kincaid, Deborah Lopez.

8 MS. TARA RINALDO: Hi, my name's Tara
9 Rinaldo. I teach second grade at P.S. 149 and
10 Harlem Success is in our building. I believe,
11 and I'm sure everyone else here believes, that
12 all children deserve an equal education and that
13 we're all here for the children. Harlem Success
14 does not have self-contained special Ed
15 classrooms nor do they accept students that need
16 those services. Just because students in Harlem
17 Success have IEPs that does not mean the same
18 thing. Self-contained students require more.
19 P.S. 149 has four self-contained classrooms and
20 they need the space to reach those students'
21 needs. We accept all students no matter what
22 the needs of the students are. They will get
23 the services they need from P.S. 149 and will
24 not be turned away. Along with turning away
25 self-contained special Ed students, they have

1 sent back students with behavior issues. At
2 149 a student was asked to leave due to academic
3 and behavior issues. He is now back at P.S. 149
4 in our school. We are not able to handpick our
5 students or have a lottery, and P.S. 149 does
6 not support that. We take them as they come.
7 We are all different but all deserve the same in
8 quality education.

9 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Tara. Katie
10 Kincaid, Deborah Lopez, Eva Bonovich, and
11 Marianza Stinager [phonetic] .

12 MS. KATIE KINCAID: Hello, my name is Katie
13 Kincaid and I am a science teacher at Harlem
14 Success Academy 4. I thank you for welcoming me
15 here to speak in front of you. I am honored to
16 work for my school because every day I see
17 educators and parents alike putting our children
18 first. This is not about adults, this is about
19 children, high school, middle school, elementary
20 school children alike. It is about the kids. I
21 urge you to ask yourself, What is so wrong about
22 putting elementary school kids with high
23 schoolers? Have you never heard of brothers and
24 sisters co-locating in the same household? It
25 is a political injustice that all children in

1 this nation do not have the opportunity to
2 receive an excellent education that will afford
3 them the opportunity of the futures of which
4 they are all capable. Now I know there are
5 other great schools in this district but in
6 reality there is still more need than seats
7 available. I am certain that in allowing Upper
8 West Success the space here we'll be putting
9 children first and allowing them to experience
10 the empowerment, transformation, and achievement
11 that comes with a great education. Thank you.

12 MALE VOICE 1: Deborah?

13 MS. DEBORAH LOPEZ: Hi. Thank you and it's
14 been really interesting to sit here and--

15 [background talking]

16 MALE VOICE 1: Please let her talk. Let
17 everyone speak. You'll get your opportunity.
18 Please.

19 MS. LOPEZ: I'm Deborah Lopez. I am an
20 officer of the District 3 President's Council.
21 I'm a co-president at the Anderson School, and a
22 very proud class parent of a kindergartner at
23 P.S. 163. I have statements from both of those
24 schools that I'm going to read. The Anderson
25 statement is first. Both of these statements

1 oppose the co-location of this charter in
2 this building. Once again, we are at a hearing
3 that demonstrates the DOE's lack of long-term
4 planning for District 3. This is a story that
5 we have seen again and again. This time the
6 suggestion is to co-locate kindergartners and
7 first-graders with five high schools including
8 one that serves overage students and to spend
9 hundreds of thousands of dollars to modify the
10 building to make that possible. We've seen this
11 story before. First as a practical matter, the
12 plan is flawed. Speaking from experience at a
13 school that is currently located with four
14 others, what looks good on paper rarely reflects
15 the reality of student experience inside the
16 building. Trying to share all of these shared
17 resources, the auditorium, the gym, the outdoor
18 space, among children of vastly different ages
19 and needs is a constant and rarely successful
20 juggling act that shortchanges all of the
21 students in the building. Second, it is a
22 mistake for the DOE to add a charter school to
23 the Brandeis complex before formulating a plan
24 to accommodate the needs of existing schools.
25 With a recent rezoning in the southern part of

1 this district which has yet to take effect
2 and upcoming rezoning of the northern part and a
3 federal magnet grant to consider, there remains
4 a lot of uncertainty about school enrollment in
5 this district. This is not the time to
6 sacrifice flexibility and foreclose options.
7 Thank you. Can I quickly read the P.S. 163
8 statement?

9 MALE VOICE 1: Yeah, little flexibility.
10 Going to read now for--

11 MS. LOPEZ: From P.S. 163.

12 MALE VOICE 1: 163, thank you.

13 MS. LOPEZ: Parent leaders at P.S. 163
14 believe co-location of a new charter school
15 within any District 3 facility and especially in
16 the Brandeis complex would eliminate space
17 needed to address elementary, middle school, and
18 even high school needs that continue to grow in
19 our district. We need to support our existing
20 public schools and do everything we can to
21 ensure their success. Thank you.

22 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you. Eve Bonovich
23 [phonetic] then Damaris [phonetic] , then Sivan
24 Moss [phonetic] .

25 MS. EVE BONOVIK: Hi, my name is Eve

1 Bonovich and I am a teacher at Harlem Success
2 Academy 4. We are located in the same building
3 as a high school and there are zero problems. I
4 am here because I believe in excellent education
5 for our children. This is not about the adults.
6 It's about a quality education for our scholars.
7 We hold our scholars accountable and we use a
8 joyful and rigorous curriculum. This is an
9 outstanding education we want to provide and we
10 need more space for high quality public schools
11 in the Upper West Side.

12 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you. Damaris then Sivan
13 Moss, Marianza Stinager.

14 MS. DAMARIS MERCADO: My name is Damaris
15 Mercado and I'm a parent at Frank McCourt High
16 School, and I think it's time to do a little
17 exercise here. So I'd like to know who here is
18 opposed to co-location by a show of hands, but
19 not only by a show of hands because you've been
20 sitting for a while, so can you please stand up?
21 Look at that. Look at that. Wait, I got to
22 take a picture. Okay, so thank you very much.
23 I'd like to thank the students who spoke today.
24 That took a lot of courage so a round of
25 applause for them as well. And I must let you

1 know that when I came to sign up today to
2 speak there was no space for the students to
3 speak. They wanted them to get on the back of
4 the line like everyone else, which I thought was
5 unfair because we're here for them, aren't we?
6 Yeah. So I had to fight for them to have their
7 own signup sheet which was put on another table
8 and rally the students to speak and have their
9 voices heard, and we heard them tonight, didn't
10 we? Okay. So as Obama is giving his address to
11 the nation and talking about policy we're here
12 to address our policies and the policies that we
13 need to set forth as a precedent for our
14 children because they're the youth right, that's
15 what we're here for. And we need to take care
16 of them because they're going to be taking care
17 of us in a few years. So they need the space.
18 And it's nothing personal Eva. This is business
19 and we're here to handle business for our kids
20 as well. And so I just want to thank you for
21 your time and I'm going to hand it over to Ms.
22 Moderator over here. Thank you very much.

23 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Damaris. Sivan
24 Moss then Marianza Stinager.

25 MS. SIVAN MOSS: Hi, my name is Sivan Moss.

1 MALE VOICE 1: Excuse me.

2 MS. MOSS: No problem. I work for Harlem
3 Success Academy. I've been there for three
4 years. I was a founding teacher of one of Eva's
5 very first new schools that opened. And I left
6 a public school in the Bronx that quite frankly
7 did not serve my students' needs. I came to
8 this school because

9 FEMALE VOICE 3: - - .

10 MALE VOICE 1: Excuse us please. Please.

11 MS. MOSS: I came to this school because I
12 am surrounded--I knew I was going to be
13 surrounded by extremely passionate, dedicated,
14 incredible people and I--all of my colleagues
15 have already said everything that I was planning
16 to say, so I just wanted to point out that we
17 are all here for the exact same purpose. We
18 want space for our incredible scholars just like
19 you do and unfortunately there isn't enough
20 space in the city for everybody, and we need to
21 co-locate sometimes. It can work out for both
22 of us and I'd appreciate--thank you. It can
23 work out for all of us and we're here for the
24 exact same reasons which is the future of our
25 children. Thank you.

1 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Sivan. Marianza
2 Stinager, then Jose Santiago [phonetic] , then
3 Beth Servetar and Mona Lisa Lopez-Morales
4 [phonetic] .

5 MS. MARIANZA STINAGER: Good evening. I'm
6 Marianza Stinager. You heard from my daughter
7 earlier, Anesia [phonetic] , very well-spoken
8 young lady. I think we all here, because we are
9 passionate about our children's education, just
10 as you guys have spoken very passionately about
11 your work at the charter school. However, here
12 at Brandeis High School I don't think it's the
13 proper location for middle school and young
14 children, therefore I oppose the co-location.
15 Thank you.

16 MR. JOSE SANTIAGO: Hi. I'm going to keep
17 this short because babysitters are expensive.
18 So my name is Jose Santiago. My parents came to
19 this country from Puerto Rico about 50 years
20 ago. At that time my parents knew little about
21 the value of a good education. They were
22 instead excited about the possibility of just
23 getting me into a school in the States. Now
24 it's my turn to enroll my 4-year-old into a
25 school. But unlike my parents, my wife and I we

1 do know the value of an excellent education,
2 and we will not, not accept that our zoned
3 school is our only choice, especially since our
4 zoned school is underperforming. We believe
5 opening the Upper West Success Academy gives all
6 the members of this community, all, especially
7 those that are in the lower-than-middle-class
8 bracket something it desperately needs and
9 deserves. The opening of the school gives us
10 another option, an option that has proven itself
11 through a half decade of past academic
12 successes--successes, it's not a question.
13 They're succeeding. To the panel and community
14 please welcome with open arms the Upper West
15 Success Academy into its proposed location here
16 in Brandeis and the Upper West Side community.
17 Thank you.

18 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Mr. Santiago.
19 Rachel Laiserin for Beth Servetar, Mona Lisa
20 Lopez-Morales, Stefan Coster [phonetic] , and
21 then Karen Petry [phonetic] .

22 MS. RACHEL LAISERIN: Hi, my name is Rachel
23 Laiserin. I'm a District 3 parent of two boys,
24 one in kindergarten and one in third grade, and
25 I'm co-president of the P.S. 87 Parents

1 Association. P.S. 87 has 1,000 kids in the
2 school so I think we're actually the largest PA
3 in the district. So that means I represent
4 about 1,600 parents and I can state that we are
5 united against this proposal. As an individual,
6 I'm a policy person and I think it's really
7 clear there's no doubt this is bad policy. I've
8 looked at the numbers very closely for the last
9 three years on the data relating to overcrowding
10 in District 3, and one thing I can say for
11 certain is that District 3 does not have space
12 for this school. The school's charter
13 prioritizes out-of-district, at-risk kids over
14 others in the district, and we simply don't have
15 room for these children. Last fall, and in fact
16 even tonight, Elizabeth Rose stated that she
17 understood this and that the DOE would ask the
18 charter to change its priority admission to give
19 full priority to District 3 students, yet we had
20 that conversation in the fall, it hasn't
21 happened yet, and I think Gail [phonetic] was
22 right that it would be unfair if this
23 modification came at the last minute as some
24 kind of appeasement to the parents here. The
25 EIS and the Building Utilization Plan for the

1 Brandeis building actually demonstrates that
2 there isn't room for this school. While neither
3 of these documents actually does the
4 calculation, I did the calculation. I always do
5 the calculations and I added up the numbers, and
6 they show that the building with each school at
7 the scale that the DOE estimates, the building
8 will be over 100% capacity. This is clearly the
9 new DOE trend. This is the same that was true
10 in the proposal for P.S. 149, for P.S. 145, as
11 well as the 44 building from last year. Sadly,
12 it seems that the DOE has completely given up on
13 its own targets and expects all of our children
14 to sit in overcrowded classrooms and even more
15 overcrowded buildings. Furthermore, this EIS
16 only addresses the planned population for the K
17 through 5 version of Upper West Success, yet the
18 school has clear plans to expand to the eighth
19 grade. So if our buildings look crowded now
20 there's only more to come. And because students
21 who go to an elementary school in District 3
22 have priority for District 3 middle school, it
23 doesn't even matter if the school never expands
24 because the reality is District 3 will have to
25 serve these children to eighth grade. District

1 3 needs more elementary school seats for our
2 own kids. We need more middle school seats, and
3 more high school seats. We all know this to be
4 true. Now we're asking you to find the will to
5 do what is right and disapprove this plan.

6 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Rachel. Mona Lisa
7 Lopez Morales then Karen Petry [phonetic] . You
8 don't look like Karen Petry. Are you Karen
9 Petry? Stefan Coster on deck.

10 MR. JOHN PETRY: Hello, my name is John
11 Petry. I'm a board member of HAS 1 and also the
12 Success Charter Network, however, tonight I'm
13 here as a father because I have a 4-year-old
14 daughter who is looking at schools next year as
15 well as twins who are 24-months-old. I live on
16 the Upper West Side and I'm looking for the best
17 options for my daughter for school. Now we were
18 originally zoned into 199. The CEC changed our
19 zoning this year; we would be zoned into 452;
20 452's a new school and it may be a great school.
21 We'll find out as time goes on. But I'd like to
22 be able to choose which grade school my daughter
23 goes to. And every step of the way the CEC has
24 opposed the school. And so I think it's the
25 CEC's job to try and work with all community

1 members including the hundreds of members who
2 have already applied for this lottery and would
3 like to go to the school. So every step of the
4 way the CEC's been working to try and take
5 options away from our parents, from the hundreds
6 of parents who would like to apply to the
7 school, and I think there are a lot of Upper
8 West Side parents like myself who would like to
9 have this option for our children, and many of
10 them have already applied for this lottery.

11 Thanks.

12 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Mr. Petry. Stefan
13 Foster, Hannah Seminara [phonetic] , then Gina
14 Demetrius [phonetic] .

15 MR. STEFAN COSTER: Hi, my name is Stefan
16 Coster. I have a fourth grader at P.S. 199. I
17 am primarily concerned at this stage about space
18 for middle schools which is lacking tremendously
19 which we are looking for. I further would just
20 like to--indulge me for a moment here. I was at
21 the Wadley [phonetic] meeting last night and I'm
22 hearing a lot about how bad these schools are,
23 these public schools all in our district. And I
24 can only tell you that the students at Wadley
25 last night were so pumped up and intense and

1 fighting for their school, and I was very
2 surprised to hear what excellent students they
3 were because they were receiving stipends to--
4 scholarships to outstanding universities and
5 schools. So it is so easy for all of us to sit
6 here and to declare that one school is bad and
7 the other one is good, and I'd like to keep--I'd
8 like to ask everybody to keep in mind that we're
9 talking about people. We're talking about
10 teachers being people, we're talking about
11 students as people. Everybody's trying to get
12 the best possible education for their children.
13 I just do not believe that all these schools
14 that we so easily talk about as being bad
15 schools are actually bad schools. Thank you.

16 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Stefan. Hannah
17 Seminara, Gina Demetrius, Monette Rodriguez
18 [phonetic] then Elizabeth Kelner [phonetic] .

19 MS. GINA DEMETRIUS: Hi. My name's Gina
20 Demetrius. I'm the mother of a student, a ninth
21 grader at Frank McCourt, and I'm also a teacher
22 of 19 years, public school teacher, and I'm
23 opposed to this co-location. As a ninth grader
24 said wonderfully, It's not logical, doesn't make
25 sense in this building, good luck to you. We're

1 united in our opposition to this co-location.
2 It's not just for our kids, our beautiful 14-
3 year-olds who are just starting out, but it's
4 for all those beautiful 4-year-olds who are just
5 beginning the journey in public education. Isn't
6 it--wouldn't it be nice to know that when
7 they're ready for high school they have some
8 excellent choices and that Brandeis will be in a
9 location for some of them. So, not in this
10 building but good luck to you. Thank you very
11 much.

12 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Monette Rodriguez,
13 Elizabeth Kelner, Tom Malish [phonetic] , is
14 that right? Tom Mc-something [phonetic] , and
15 then Ellen Reed [phonetic] .

16 MS. DORI ROSENSTEIN: Thank you. Hi, my
17 name's Dori Rosenstein [phonetic] and I'm in
18 favor of the co-location. I'm not a teacher at
19 Harlem Success Academy, I'm just a plain old
20 mom. As it stands now, my family is zoned for a
21 school that received grades of "C" and "F" in
22 various categories. I want a public school
23 alternative for my kids, and I also want a
24 private school alternative for my kids
25 considering, do the math, with three kids in

1 private schools I'd like an alternative to
2 that. After visiting Harlem Success and going
3 through the tour frankly that is a fantastic--
4 that's the kind of alternative I want for my
5 kids. And the other thing--the question has
6 been asked, Why would I as a parent want to
7 subject my 4-year-old and my kids to a school
8 full of high school kids. Private schools do it
9 all the time, Collegiate, Trinity, they do it
10 all the time successfully.

11 [audience members speaking]

12 MS. ROSENSTEIN: I named two but there are
13 probably more. And frankly, I've been very
14 quiet and listening to your side, please be
15 respectful and listen to ours. If these high
16 schools are so dangerous then something's wrong
17 and that needs to be addressed too. Thank you.

18 MS. ELIZABETH KELNER: My name's Elizabeth
19 Kelner. I've lived in the Manhattan Valley
20 neighborhood of the Upper West Side for 34
21 years. My 25-year-old daughter went to District
22 3 public schools, P.S. 163 Delta and then Bronx
23 Science. She is now a New York City public
24 schoolteacher in an East Harlem middle school
25 which is co-locate with a charter high school,

1 and there are many problems I can tell you
2 that. But really I want to ask the parents who
3 believe that their local public schools are not
4 an option and ask you why if you're willing to
5 live in those neighborhoods and walk those
6 sidewalks and go to those stores you aren't
7 willing to become involved with those schools
8 and work with your neighbors? That's what I did
9 when I moved to Manhattan Valley 34 years ago.
10 My husband and I bought an abandoned brownstone.
11 We drove the drug dealers out of the
12 neighborhoods, we sent our kids to the public
13 school. And I could afford--thank God I'm a
14 very lucky person. I could have afforded to
15 send my kids to five private schools. My
16 husband and I are both lawyers. I'm a retired
17 corporate litigator. I'm a veteran of many
18 battles in this neighborhood. And I don't
19 question your love for your children, teachers I
20 don't question your commitment because I know
21 how hard my daughter works, sixty, seventy hours
22 a week, and ask as a Christmas present that her
23 family give her reams of paper because there are
24 not enough supplies in her public schools. And
25 when her kids need extra tutoring to pass their

1 tests they can't do it because they don't
2 have the computers that they need to run the
3 programs they have. So I think we have to look
4 deep within ourselves as to what we are willing
5 to give to our communities, to build these
6 communities and not opt out of the system and
7 not let our public officials force us to opt out
8 of the system.

9 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Elizabeth. Sorry.
10 Is there a Tom McCracker [phonetic] ? Abigail
11 Johnson [phonetic] ? Gary Rissman [phonetic] ?
12 George Snyderman? [phonetic] Burning through
13 this list here.

14 MALE VOICE 2: - - .

15 MALE VOICE 1: Yes, Gary Rissman.

16 MS. ROBIN GOLDSTEIN FONTAINE: Hi. The P.S.
17 9 PTA and parents strongly oppose the co-
18 location of an elementary school at the Brandeis
19 Building because it does nothing to alleviate
20 overcrowding. It is logistically and
21 financially unsound. It will exacerbate future
22 middle school overcrowding by guaranteeing a
23 middle school seat to each enrolled student
24 residing outside of District 3. It limits high
25 school expansion and increases congestion on

1 West 84th Street and wastes already spent
2 taxpayer money. Hello. My name is Robin
3 Goldstein Fontaine and I'm a parent of two
4 students at P.S. 9 and the chair of the External
5 Affairs Committee at P.S. 9 which is located
6 right across the street. There has been little
7 if any mention of this wonderful school. I
8 believe this omission is purposeful. P.S. 9 is
9 a top performing school which received an "A" in
10 student performance on its report card, making
11 those zoned to P.S. 9 so low on the priority
12 list as to have no chance to get a lottery seat
13 for this proposed charter. P.S. 9 is more than
14 a viable choice for all neighborhood children as
15 well as all students in District 3. That cannot
16 be said of this proposed charter school. In
17 this neighborhood only English language learning
18 students have a true chance at a seat, meaning
19 that 93% of our children are so low on the
20 priority list that they have no real chance at a
21 seat but will have to bear the brunt of the
22 problems of this proposed co-location. Although
23 Ms. Moskowitz insists that her school will be a
24 neighborhood one, I do not see how that is
25 possible if she sticks to her charter's

1 enrollment criteria. English language
2 learners and children zoned for schools that
3 received a "D" or an "F" in student performance
4 throughout the city will have a higher priority
5 than the vast majority of our neighborhood
6 children. P.S. 9, 87, and 199 all received A's
7 on student performance. Just as the majority of
8 our population is ineligible for a seat,
9 statistical analysis says the same will be true
10 of those zones directly to the south of us.
11 Placing this elementary school at Brandeis where
12 it only serves to increase overcrowding
13 problems, not alleviate them, is a mistake that
14 does not need to be made. There are very real
15 people and traffic crowding issues on 84th
16 Street. Currently we have over 1,000 people
17 twice a day during a 20-minute timeframe on this
18 one block. Nine buses twice a day are idling
19 and waiting their turn to drop or pick up
20 students. Should an elementary school be
21 located at Brandeis there will be a need for
22 more buses, buses to deliver children residing
23 out of District 3 as well as within. Where will
24 these buses wait? Where will those students
25 disembark? How much extra time will be added to

1 the 30-minute bus process P.S. 9 currently
2 has? What is already a complex safety operation
3 will only be made more difficult. It is for all
4 these reasons that we implore the DOE to rescind
5 its offer to house Upper West Success Academy in
6 the Brandeis complex or in any other DOE
7 building.

8 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Robin. Gary
9 Rissman then Brad Abrams [phonetic] , George
10 Snyderman, and then Christine Annechino.

11 MR. GARY RISSMAN: The first thing I learned
12 while studying to be a certified market
13 technician is that human life is cyclical. As
14 you all know, we are in a deficit period. We
15 had a surplus-- We will come back to the
16 surplus someday soon and if we--I'm optimistic
17 if we go to the green technologies we will come
18 out of this deficit spending more quickly and
19 have the extra money to build the extra schools,
20 but for now I think as you all know the city,
21 the state, the government, doesn't have the
22 money. We might have to share for a little bit
23 until we get that surplus again. Today I stand
24 here before you as a taxpayer, as a resident of
25 Midtown West, and as a fellow American. Many

1 years ago JFK advised fellow Americans to ask
2 what you can do for your country. I can do a
3 lot for my country, my state, and my city by
4 asking you to focus on the obvious and well-
5 known virtues of the Success Charter Network
6 schools. I can do for my country by pointing
7 out that any politician sincere about education
8 should be doing the right thing by giving full
9 support to the Upper West Success Academy. As a
10 taxpayer I want the biggest bang for my buck.
11 My hard-earned tax dollars are being wasted by
12 the traditional schools. Please, give your full
13 support to the charter school system. As a
14 resident, I am worried that in the future I
15 could be mugged by future failed students of the
16 school system who out of desperation went to
17 crime because they couldn't find a job. Please
18 eradicate illiteracy, dropouts, and other school
19 failures. Give the Success Charter Schools your
20 full support. I thank you for hearing me.

21 MALE VOICE 1: Brad Abrams, George
22 Snyderman, Christine Annechino.

23 MR. BRAD ABRAMS: Hi, thank you for hearing
24 me. There have been a lot of big issues already
25 discussed here, but I want to drill down a

1 little bit on one that has not been given as
2 much attention as it might, and that is middle
3 schools. To me it comes down to seats. In the
4 past two years to relieve elementary school
5 overcrowding, the Center School was moved into
6 P.S. 9 and Anderson was moved out, and P.S. 452
7 was created. I'd like to make two points about
8 this. First, the K to 5 portion of Anderson and
9 452 add up to 750 kids. Both of these
10 elementary schools are housed in M.S. 44, a
11 middle school building. Those are 750 middle
12 school seats that the southern part of District
13 3 isn't getting back in the foreseeable future.
14 I'm not saying that we shouldn't have taken
15 those steps, just that those seats are gone.
16 Second, all our elementary school kids will be
17 going to middle school, and there will be a
18 crisis starting in three years and it will only
19 get worse. Right now there are roughly 400
20 kindergarten kids in just P.S.'s 199, 452, 87,
21 and 9., kids who will be looking for middle
22 school seats in five years. Where are they
23 going to go? How far away from their homes will
24 11-year-olds from the southern portion of
25 District 3 have to go without buses to go to

1 school in just a few years? Thirty blocks,
2 40 blocks? I'm not saying that we should put a
3 middle school in the Brandeis complex, not at
4 all. But placing an elementary school that
5 gives priority to out-of-district kids over
6 neighborhood kids, 452, 87, P.S. 9--my son goes
7 to P.S. 9. He's in fourth grade so he's going
8 to avoid this, but across the street above kids
9 like that and thereby guaranteeing them middle
10 school seats in District 3 seems to be very,
11 very shortsighted. Our elementary school kids
12 will be middle schoolers and then they'll be
13 high schoolers. And by all means, put more high
14 school seats in here, but let's think about the
15 future. Thank you.

16 FEMALE VOICE 4: Joe Fiordaliso?

17 MR. GEORGE SNYDERMAN: George Snyderman.

18 FEMALE VOICE 4: Oh okay. Thank you.

19 MR. SNYDERMAN: Hi. I'm a District 3 parent
20 with three young children in the New York City
21 Public schools. It's a disgrace and a communal
22 embarrassment that if you are a kindergartner in
23 District 3 your street address determines
24 whether you are entitled to attend a school
25 where 87% of third graders are meeting state

1 standards in English or a school where 13% of
2 third graders are meeting those standards. That
3 is not okay. District 3 families were not
4 fortunate enough to be zoned for a good school
5 desperately need more choices. In particular,
6 we need schools that are dedicated to academic
7 excellence, that have established a track record
8 of achieving superior outcomes with all
9 students. The Success Charter Schools have such
10 a record. Unlike many of the other good schools
11 in the district, they do not require you to live
12 in the most expensive part of the district nor
13 do 4-year-olds have to take tests to gain
14 admission. As a parent, I don't care whether my
15 children attend a traditional public school or a
16 public charter school. I do however care deeply
17 and passionately my children and all New York
18 City public children--including by the way those
19 who don't live in District 3--have great public
20 schools to attend. Success Charter Schools are
21 a part of the solution and District 3 needs to
22 find a suitable home for the Upper West Success
23 Academy. In some District 3 schools
24 overcrowding is a serious problem, but it is
25 better to be on a crowded but seaworthy like

1 float than on a sinking boat with elbow room.
2 And few things in life are more distasteful than
3 watching those who have seats heckle those who
4 are trying to build seaworthy boats for those
5 who do not. Thank you.

6 FEMALE VOICE 4: Joe Fiordaliso, Elizabeth
7 Brandon England [phonetic] ?

8 MS. CHRISTINE ANNECHINO: Hello. My name is
9 Christine Annechino. I'm vice president of the
10 Community Education Council. Make no mistake
11 about it. This is segregation. Let's keep that
12 in mind. It's under the veil of an education
13 corporation that has created a competitive
14 system where they've made our children winners
15 and losers, and that isn't right. They have a
16 track record--we can now speak of a track
17 record--in the schools, 149 and 241 just--those
18 are just two, not to mention 123. They have
19 taken over the gym space, they have taken over
20 the classroom space, they have taken over. I'm
21 not sitting here just pretending; they have done
22 it. So come to our schools HSA, who haven't
23 been in these schools, and see how your schools
24 have taken over the space. I have two
25 questions: One is, How come the Department of

1 Education never sits on a panel and says, The
2 benefits of the schools that are being co-
3 located? How come we never hear what the
4 benefits are? I don't know if this is a
5 question-and-answer or--

6 [laughter]

7 FEMALE VOICE 5: Our focus is on ensuring
8 that all children have access to high-quality
9 schools. We know that we don't have the
10 financial resources to build all of the seats
11 that we would like to have in individual
12 buildings throughout the city. Co-location is
13 necessary in order to meet the needs of
14 students, and to build the small schools that
15 families are choosing to attend.

16 MS. ANNECHINO: So the benefits for, let's
17 just say, Frank McCourt is--

18 FEMALE VOICE 5: There is a long history in
19 District 3 of housing more than one school in
20 the same building, and we do it extremely
21 successfully. We do it here in Brandeis campus,
22 we do it in the former Joan of Arc campus, we do
23 it at M.O. 44, we do it in the P.S. 9 building,
24 we do it at P.S. 84, we do it at P.S. 75. We
25 have multiple examples of more than one school

1 sharing the same building and doing so
2 successfully.

3 MS. ANNECHINO: Okay. I think I was talking
4 about charter schools but with my--

5 [audience members speaking]

6 MS. ANNECHINO: Thank you.

7 FEMALE VOICE 4: Joe Fiordaliso, Elizabeth
8 Brandon England.

9 MR. JOE FIORDALISO: My name's Joe
10 Fiordaliso. I'm the parent of a kindergartner
11 at P.S. 199. I'm also a member of the P.S. 199
12 PTA Executive Committee. I'm going to summarize
13 a letter that was recently sent by our PTA
14 Executive Committee to Chancellor Black. The
15 P.S. 199 PTA strongly opposes the proposed co-
16 location. District 3 community and in
17 particular P.S. 199 has been working to address
18 overcrowding in the district for the last few
19 years; 199 has been at the center of
20 overcrowding in District 3. Over the past five
21 years our total school population has increased
22 by 37% and our kindergarten classes have
23 increased an average of 15% a year. In fact,
24 last year P.S. 199 had to institute a cap on the
25 kindergarten enrollment leading to a waitlist of

1 over 50 families. In fact, our waitlist grew
2 to 68 before it was all said and done, and we
3 expect that to be repeated again this year. My
4 own personal addition to that is I was number 50
5 on that waitlist. My daughter got an offer to
6 199 literally the Thursday before school
7 started. So I'm committed to making sure that
8 this doesn't happen again to other families.
9 And so you might think that I would be a poster
10 child for supporting the proposed co-location.
11 You might think that 199, given our historical
12 situation, would be supportive of the proposed
13 co-location, based on a lot of the literature
14 from the proponents and glossy brochures and all
15 the rest. However, we're not. The reason for
16 that is as constituted and as you've heard from
17 Councilwoman Brewer and others, as constituted,
18 co-locating this charter in Brandeis would do
19 absolutely nothing to alleviate overcrowding
20 despite the hundreds of applications from
21 perspective parents, hundreds of them--I've seen
22 them, and all the hundreds of glossy fliers I've
23 gotten in the mail. And that capacity crunch is
24 only going to extend to middle schools as has
25 been discussed previously. We're very concerned

1 that the decision to site in Brandeis does
2 not take into account District 3's needs.
3 Furthermore, the appropriateness of co-locating
4 an elementary school in a school facility with
5 multiple high schools has been spoken--I don't
6 need to elaborate on that point, I think it's
7 pretty clear. We don't have the seats to give
8 up to charter schools. Support District 3
9 public schools by opposing this co-location.
10 Thank you.

11 FEMALE VOICE 4: Elizabeth and Brandon
12 England. Beth and I'm sorry I can't--it looks
13 like S-E-N is the beginning. Servetar, I'm
14 sorry. Andrea Esper [phonetic] and Katherine
15 Gooden. Is Elizabeth Brandon England here?
16 That's 35. Beth? Is she here? Andrea Esper?
17 Katherine Gooden? Is Andrea here?

18 MS. KARYN GOODEN: What number are you on?

19 FEMALE VOICE 4: Andrea is 37.

20 MS. GOODEN: I'm 38.

21 FEMALE VOICE 4: Thirty-eight is Katherine
22 Gooden.

23 MS. GOODEN: Karyn Gooden.

24 FEMALE VOICE 4: I'm sorry.

25 MS. GOODEN: That's okay.

1 FEMALE VOICE 4: That's why I wanted Noah
2 to do it.

3 MS. GOODEN: - - with numbers. Hi, my name
4 is Karyn Gooden and I'm a parent at P.S. 166,
5 and I'm representing the P.S. 166 PTA. I am an
6 educator. First of all I have a fourth grader
7 and a first grader at 166. I'm a certified
8 teacher in three different states and have
9 taught public and private education. My brother
10 is a charter school teacher. We at P.S. 166 are
11 against the co-location of the Upper West
12 Success at Brandeis or any other District 3
13 location. Simply put, there is no room.
14 Parents in the playground used to discuss
15 timelines for when they would leave public
16 schools. They said, Oh are you going to wait
17 until second or third? That conversation is
18 never heard now. Everyone is staying. There
19 will be a critical mass of students heading into
20 the middle school in the next year or two and
21 then onto high schools. The space here is
22 needed for District 3 middle and high school
23 students. We need more middle school space and
24 high school space to call our own. I can't
25 believe that the Board of Education is still

1 considering co-location when the
2 neighborhood, the CB7, the CEC Council, and all
3 of the elected officials have opposed the Upper
4 West Success. The Success academies have not co-
5 located peacefully and cannot accommodate all
6 students. They should not take our precious
7 space.

8 FEMALE VOICE 4: Alisa Axelban [phonetic] ,
9 Harvey Littman [phonetic] .

10 MS. ELLEN DARENSBOURG: I have number 36. I
11 didn't come down fast enough.

12 FEMALE VOICE 4: Please go ahead.

13 MS. DARENSBOURG: I am Ellen Darensbourg I
14 speak for P.S. 241 and the communities that are
15 co-locating as well as P.S. 149, P.S. 123, P.S.
16 30. I could go on and on. The co-location
17 stories are horrendous. You've heard some of
18 them, they've been on the news, we've written
19 about it. Whatever HSA wants to say about how
20 great they are, that's fine, but they don't
21 share and it's not equitable. I'm not going to
22 repeat them all here. I'd rather use my time to
23 ask some questions. In a district that is
24 desperate for school seats why are we giving
25 them up to a school that will maybe serve

1 District 3, maybe? Why was P.S. 241's middle
2 school in a district desperate for middle school
3 seats? DOE, why did we phase out a middle
4 school that clearly we need in order to provide
5 space for HSA that is bringing in children from
6 all five boroughs? I don't think we can afford
7 this. If they come into Brandeis and they want
8 to increase their numbers--and by the way at 241
9 they were allowed 50 extra kindergarten seats
10 that were not in their charter. So this will
11 happen again. It will happen here, District 3
12 will lose more space than what was originally
13 supposed to be given to them. So again my
14 question: Why are middle school seats being
15 given up to charter schools who service outside?
16 And pre-K seats as well, excuse me, that have
17 been taken away in order to provide seats for
18 out-of-district, out-of-zone students?

19 FEMALE VOICE 5: The middle school grades of
20 P.S. 241 were phased out, began a phase-out
21 several years ago based on then performance of
22 the school. Obviously every school sometimes
23 has issues and at the time felt that the best
24 thing to do to serve students was to phase out
25 those middle school grades.

1 MS. DARENSBOURG: I'm sorry, are you
2 saying that this happened before HSA came to the
3 building?

4 FEMALE VOICE 5: I can't respond
5 specifically what year the phase-out decision
6 was made. I don't--

7 MS. DARENSBOURG: I can. It only occurred
8 when HSA was given the room in our building. It
9 was not because of a pre-supported plan. It
10 happened only after that. Next question for
11 HSA--my time is up? But she asked a question.
12 I mean, I asked a question, she answered. I
13 should still have my two minutes to speak.

14 [crosstalk]

15 MS. DARENSBOURG: I'd like to know how many
16 special ed NL [phonetic] students are actually
17 served by HSA currently? We've been waiting 2-
18 1/2 years for that answer. They claim they serve
19 them, they claim they will. What is the actual
20 percentages the actual public would like to
21 know? Where is that documented?

22 FEMALE VOICE 4: So the time is up. Excuse
23 me. Ladies. Ladies. If you want to stay after
24 the other speakers please continue the
25 conversation. Alisa Axelban? Harry Littman?

1 Ladies, why don't you step outside so you can
2 answer each other's questions?

3 [audience speaking]

4 FEMALE VOICE 6: All right. I taught in
5 Brownsville Brooklyn in the public schools for
6 quite a few years. I was observed four times in
7 three years. There's no accountability. I work
8 at Harlem Success now. I teach first grade
9 which is the most important thing to teach a
10 child how to read. Every day my children in my
11 class on or above grade level. So every day I
12 feel like it's the most important job in the
13 world and I know that at Harlem Success I'm able
14 to give it to them. So at this point earlier
15 Mr. Gotbaum [phonetic] said that a choice for
16 few destroys an opportunity for many. Well, I'm
17 afraid that these few, if we want to count them
18 as few, well they could be the future of our
19 country which they are. And these few, if
20 they're denied an excellent education when
21 there's actually space to accommodate us, well
22 then these lives are at stake. And lives. This
23 is the livelihood of our nation, of the future
24 of our country. So it's important to remember
25 that if 6-year-olds can know that sharing is

1 caring then we need to remember that sharing
2 is caring too, and we need to work together to
3 make sure that we're giving a high-quality
4 education, and just do the right thing and make
5 sure that we're giving the kids the best that we
6 can.

7 FEMALE VOICE 4: Harvey Littman, is he here?
8 Harvey? Brian Smith?

9 MS. BETH SERVETAR: My name is Beth Servetar
10 and I'm a District 3 parent of two children, and
11 I won't take up a lot of time because some
12 really reasonable and compelling arguments have
13 already been made by adults and children
14 pertaining to the ludicrousness of putting the
15 charter school here in Brandeis so I'm very much
16 opposed to that proposal. But I just have a few
17 questions. One is sort of rhetorical. During
18 the overcrowding fight we were trying really
19 hard to find a place to incubate a new public
20 school for the kids who would be otherwise
21 sitting on waitlist in Lower District 3, and
22 more than one time we were told that this
23 building was either too full or not suitable for
24 elementary school use. And so those students
25 were left to wait, wait, wait, until finally the

1 DOE opened P.S. 452 in a previously middle
2 school building with the Anderson School. Fine,
3 they have a location but we were on more than
4 one occasion, as was CB7, told that this was not
5 available to our D3 kids for that use. So that
6 said, I'm wondering why the charters don't have
7 to adhere to the descriptions they set up for
8 themselves? The Success school was able to
9 determine its own definition of at-risk students
10 and decide that they were going to receive
11 priority here, but now it sounds like the
12 priority can shift around if they decide they
13 want to do that. And I agree with Gail that it's
14 a bit of a bait-and-switch and it's depressing
15 and frustrating for all of us. So at the CB7
16 hearing about the co-location the Youth
17 Education and Libraries Hearing [phonetic] Jenny
18 Sedlis, the external affairs person from
19 Success, said that the priority list, the
20 ranking of students, only applies to the first
21 pull of the lottery--and this is where my
22 question comes in--and not to the filling of
23 seats for people who reject their acceptance. So
24 I'm wondering how those seats get filled if
25 people don't--in the first pull don't take their

1 seats, and is it a transparent process?

2 FEMALE VOICE 5: That would have to be an
3 answer that Success Academy can provide.

4 [audience members speaking]

5 FEMALE VOICE 4: Is there a response that
6 Success Academy wants to provide quickly?

7 FEMALE VOICE 7: The lottery is a public
8 process. - - .

9 [audience member speaking]

10 FEMALE VOICE 4: The question was asked and
11 the answer was given. We'll move onto the next
12 speaker. Brian Smith? Please submit the
13 question to me afterwards.

14 [audience members speaking]

15 FEMALE VOICE 4: We're going to move on. We
16 said that all questions have to be asked within
17 the two-minute period. Our next speaker is
18 Brian Smith.

19 MR. BRIAN SMITH: Good evening ladies and
20 gentlemen. I am a science teacher at Harlem
21 Success Academy 1. And the first thing I want
22 to say is just a plea to everybody else who is
23 here in the audience for respect for the things
24 that everybody else has to say for the procedure
25 that has been set up here this evening for

1 everybody to have two minutes to speak and
2 for questions to be answered in the way as set
3 down by law. The second thing I want to say is
4 that we really are here all for the same reason.
5 It's not for teachers, it's not for unions, it's
6 not for our adults; it's really for the
7 children. And so--

8 [audience members speaking]

9 MR. SMITH: For our children. And when we
10 have this amount of--when we have this amount of
11 vitriol and rhetoric coming out of the audience--
12 - I've been teaching these scholars that we
13 have in our school

14 [audience members speaking]

15 FEMALE VOICE 4: We will add time to the
16 speaker if the comments continue because he's
17 entitled to his two minutes.

18 MR. SMITH: At this point I can clearly see
19 that anything else I have to say is not going to
20 be listened to by the majority of the audience.

21 FEMALE VOICE 4: Karen Kaul, K-A-U-L. Is
22 she here? Ebony Mays [phonetic]? Eunice Levis
23 [phonetic], and Abby B-I-L-A-N-I-N [phonetic] ?

24 FEMALE VOICE 8: I'm here tonight because my
25 children first went to P.S. 87 and now I'm a

1 parent at Frank McCourt High School. I'm not
2 here as a teacher to speak about the scholars.
3 I'm here as a parent to speak about my child.
4 It's naive to say that there's no difference
5 between the mingling of teenagers in high school
6 and elementary school children in a school
7 building and a family of different age children
8 in a home. The kindest thing I can say to the
9 person who said that is perhaps you don't have
10 children so you don't realize the difference.
11 To most of us it's obvious. It doesn't make
12 sense. It's also very obvious that Upper West
13 has treated its neighbor schools badly always.
14 It's clear that it plans to do the same with us
15 in the Brandeis building because the EIS clearly
16 states that their scholars do not have to go
17 through the scanners but our children do. This
18 is not a co-location, this is an invasion and I
19 oppose it.

20 MS. EBONY MAYS: Good evening everyone. My
21 name is Ebony Mays and I'm a parent to a 4-year-
22 old. And currently I'm in the process of trying
23 to find a great kindergarten for my son. And as
24 I do my research I know you said there's lots of
25 options in District 3 but actually we don't--I

1 don't have a lot of choices. I am zoned to a
2 failing school, and my child has a right just as
3 any other child who is privileged enough to live
4 in a great area to go to a great school. And in
5 speaking with someone from the community board
6 about my options of a public school they gave me
7 different names of schools. And I said, Well how
8 about P.S. 9. How about my son getting into
9 P.S. 9? They said, Oh no, don't try that
10 because those seats fill up quickly. So that
11 tells me I don't have options. And Upper West
12 Success Academy coming into District 3 gives me
13 choices. I have spoken to plenty of parents
14 whose child goes to this school and they do live
15 in District 3 so this school does serve District
16 3's parents. And they say excellent things.
17 One parent says her kindergartner is reading on
18 a first-grade level. And we say we have great
19 schools in District 3 but I want to know who are
20 we comparing ourselves to? Are we comparing
21 ourselves to Long Island or Westchester County?
22 Because actually we don't compare. And maybe a
23 little competition will--because a rise in tide
24 raises all ships, and maybe a little competition
25 will help our other schools step it up.

1 FEMALE VOICE 4: Eunice Levis? Abby
2 Bilanin?

3 FEMALE VOICE 9: Hi. I'm here to speak to
4 you as a parent of a 5-year-old and a 2-year-
5 old. I live in District 3. I love my
6 neighborhood. I moved there in 2003 with my
7 husband. My child will be attending
8 kindergarten next year somewhere. I visited my
9 zoned school and the tour was very
10 disappointing. The children weren't sitting,
11 they weren't listening. The teacher was
12 disengaged. So I investigated schools and I
13 found out that in District 3 P.S. 87, P.S. 9, I
14 guess P.S. 166, and 199 are great schools.
15 Great schools. And guess what? I called all of
16 them and they told me I can't tour because of my
17 address. So when I heard about a new charter
18 school that was opening that was going to create
19 new seats, seats that didn't exist last year for
20 kindergartners and first graders all the way
21 through middle school--there will be more middle
22 school seats in District 3 my husband and I
23 couldn't believe it; this is great. This is
24 great. You can all apply. Everyone in District
25 3 can apply. And when I sit here and I listen--

1 and this is my first meeting--it seems you
2 have to be quite loud to be heard. But what I'm
3 hearing is that the only parents opposed to this
4 school already have children in the best
5 schools. P.S. 87, P.S. 9, P.S. 166, and P.S.
6 163. So my final question is for Noah Gotbaum--
7 Where do your children go to school?

8 MR. NOAH GOTBAUM: - - answer your question-
9 -

10 FEMALE VOICE 8: Where do your children go
11 to school?

12 MR. NOAH GOTBAUM: My children go to P.S.
13 87.

14 FEMALE VOICE 8: That--

15 [END 181_996_3.MP3]

16 [START 181_996_4.MP3]

17 FEMALE VOICE 1: It is so wonderful for you.
18 So that's the question. So this is a case
19 really of the haves and the have nots.

20 [applause]

21 MALE VOICE 1: Can you please explain to us
22 then why, why is - - 242, 241, 76, 75, 163, 84,
23 every school in this district is against this
24 collocation. Because every school in this
25 district understands that collocation means

1 eviction. They understand it. [applause]
2 Plus my children have to go to middle school
3 too.

4 And Helen Rosenthal, I think you had to, Zoe
5 Stein, um, and then, um, Mr. Negross [phonetic].

6 MR. ANDREW GLAZE: I am going for Zoe Stein.
7 My name is Andrew Glaze and I am a Board member
8 of the, of West Success Academy. A little bit
9 about myself. Uh, I came here as a very, very
10 poor immigrant, um, to Crown Heights many, many
11 years ago. I had the chance to go to Philip
12 with Skyler, Mark Twain, Stiverson, all very
13 good schools and I was able to really see a
14 significant improvement in my quality of life
15 from my childhood as a result of education.

16 So while I do not live in the Upper West
17 Side, I am a very strong supporter of the school
18 because I know how important education is. I'll
19 go back to where I grew up and I look at other
20 kids who didn't have the chance to have parents
21 push them. And who didn't have access to a good
22 education. And I see that they weren't able to
23 put as many things together.

24 So I think a common claim for many that, um,
25 that are against the collocation is that well my

1 school is too crowded. And, you know what,
2 this is going to take away from me.

3 To be honest I probably look at it from a
4 different perspective after going to Stiverson
5 and I went to West Point and served in the Army.
6 And so I look at things and say, you know what,
7 what's going to be best for America as a whole
8 or my community as a whole?

9 You know what, I am not going to lie to you.
10 Would life be easier for the students that are
11 currently at Brandeis if the charter school was
12 not collocated? Yes, it would.

13 But when you look at the lives of the
14 children who are directly impacted and who are
15 taken from, in all likelihood, a life of poverty
16 to the chance to really succeed and live the
17 American dream. I think, you know what, I think
18 it is worth it. And so those are the comments I
19 have to say. Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 MS. HELEN ROSENTHAL: My name is Helen
22 Rosenthal. I am a member of Community Board 7.
23 It is short-sighted for the Department of
24 Education to consider an elementary charter
25 school in the Brandeis, uh, high school complex.

1 The first question I have is if my child,
2 well the first thing I want to say is, come to
3 PS 84. I spend so many days of the week in
4 there working and I got to tell you those kids
5 are sitting quietly. They are learning their
6 lessons. And they are doing exactly what
7 everyone here is describing about Harlem
8 success.

9 Come to our public schools. They are just
10 as good. And I find it so offensive to hear a
11 leader of, uh, charter school, which is
12 supposedly a public school stand up and extol
13 the virtues of that charter. They're the exact
14 same virtues of the public schools. Come to
15 anyone of them tomorrow. I'll stand with you in
16 front of that classroom and I bet you that it is
17 going to be just as quiet, just as orderly and
18 the academic excellence is going to be just as
19 high as what you're talking about.

20 And if it is not, it is incumbent on the DOE
21 to spend more resources to make sure that they
22 are just as good. Public schools should be just
23 the same.

24 I want to talk about, uh, well, my children
25 are zoned for PS 9. And if I, uh, they're in

1 high school. But if they were to apply to
2 Harlem Success, it is my understanding, and, and
3 Eva correct me if I'm wrong, there's no way in
4 your algorithm, there's no way in your algorithm
5 they could get in. Is that correct?

6 [background conversation]

7 I couldn't hear you. I'm sorry, I just
8 couldn't hear you. Is there a way someone who
9 is zoned for PS 9, if they joined the lottery,
10 to ever get into Harlem Success? Am I asking it
11 wrong?

12 MALE VOICE 1: If the priorities, the
13 priorities are all run through. Or they don't
14 get the priority applicants.

15 MS. ROSENTHAL: So you're saying when my
16 kids come in before an outside - - .

17 MALE VOICE 1: Helen they need to get the
18 applications from those priority kids and
19 they're not, they're not marketing to them. So
20 they're not going to get those applications.
21 Please.

22 MR. SAMORA LEGROSS: Good evening ladies and
23 gentleman. [background conversation]

24 FEMALE VOICE 1: We have a speaker who is
25 trying to speak.

1 MR. LEGROSS: Hello, good evening ladies
2 and gentleman. My name is Samora [phonetic]
3 Legross [phonetic]. I work as a paralegal but I
4 am also a youth adviser with the NAACP, the
5 National Association for the Advancement of
6 Colored People. And we strongly oppose the
7 collocation.

8 Why? Because it is an infiltration on our
9 schools. If we were to make the analogy that
10 this were a hospital, and it was with cancer
11 patients, would you want to add more people who
12 couldn't get the resources and the attention
13 that they deserve?

14 So we need to think about our students and
15 understand that they need the individual
16 attention to grow. By overpopulating these
17 schools, we are going to be wiping out our fine
18 arts programs.

19 I was just at a meeting yesterday at the
20 Wadley [phonetic] School. They want to take out
21 the fine art studios, some of the labs and these
22 are the programs that enable our kids to
23 flourish but also have some other avenue aside
24 from the life on the streets. And we have to be
25 sure that education comes first.

1 But equal opportunities to education are
2 created. By bringing in these charter schools
3 we are going to have a lottery, which is not a
4 definite answer for a lot of people. There is
5 no definite answer for a lot of people.

6 But you're putting them on a lottery. And I
7 don't know what this algorithm is but a lot of
8 these kids are going to get left out of the
9 equation. And that means that they're going to
10 get bumped down in terms of their priority to an
11 access to good education.

12 So we have to be sure. I was able to go to
13 PS 84. My parents transferred later to the
14 Browning School. I was able to attend
15 Vanderbilt University. And come back to tell
16 these kids how important their education is.

17 So I need the DOE to think about the
18 individual needs of these kids. They are not
19 herds or cattle. They need individual
20 attention. Thank you.

21 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you. Paul Applebaum,
22 uh, Reverend Rosemary Bray-McKnat [phonetic].
23 Sabrina Shane Warney [phonetic] and then Cynthia
24 Deltie [phonetic].

25 REVEREND ROSEMARY BRAY-MCKNAT: Good

1 evening. I am the Reverend Rosemary Bray-
2 McKnat. I am senior minister at the Fourth
3 Universal Society on 76th in Central Park West.
4 I am the mother of two public school educated
5 children. One of whom attends Frank McCort
6 [phonetic]. And along with my husband I was
7 part of the planning team that helped put
8 together, um, the creation of Frank McCort
9 School.

10 Um, I didn't work as hard as some of the
11 other people but I did work. Um, I really want
12 to talk about something that has really been
13 breaking my heart in here.

14 And I didn't used to have a whole lot of
15 feelings about charter schools. You know, I
16 just sort of thought, nah, you know, they want
17 to so do something else.

18 But as I sit and I listen, I am so
19 heartbroken and appalled at the way in which
20 parents are pitted against one another. We,
21 everyone of us, wants our children to do well,
22 to succeed.

23 And charter schools drive a wedge between
24 the resources of public education that has been
25 constantly de-funded and the needs and the

1 desires of children. I have a child with
2 special needs. I don't know how well my child
3 would do in this charter school.

4 I have a child who is at Frank McCort and is
5 having a wonderful time. But it also seems to
6 me that the Board, the Department of Education
7 has a lot to answer for here.

8 Because in doing what you all are doing, you
9 are pitting people who should be on the same
10 side against one another. It is not fair and it
11 is not right.

12 Every person in here who thinks that their
13 child would do better in a charter school should
14 be thinking about how much energy they are
15 spending creating and improving the schools that
16 they are in. As I have to work and have had to
17 work in every school my child has attended.

18 All of us have to do that. And public
19 schools will not improve when we opt out of
20 them. They just won't. And everything that
21 anybody does to encourage us to opt out of them
22 creates the circumstances around which this
23 fight occurs.

24 We should be fighting together to make the
25 Department of Education accountable so that

1 every child we have gets everything they
2 need.

3 [applause]

4 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you Reverend. Paul
5 Applebaum. Cynthia Deltie. Uh, Sabrina.

6 MS. SABRINA SHINGWANI: Hi, my name is
7 Sabrina Shingwani [phonetic] and I am a teacher
8 at Harlem Success Academy 5. I am a public
9 school teacher at Harlem Success Academy 5.

10 I have taught at two other New York City
11 public schools, one of which was a charter
12 school. I am also a product of New York City
13 public schools.

14 Let me tell you right now if my family lived
15 across the street from where I grew up I would
16 have had an opportunity to get a good elementary
17 education. That is the situation that I grew up
18 in.

19 We did not have options. My family did not
20 have options. And let me tell you we sure as
21 hell would have gone. My brothers and I sure as
22 hell would have gone to an elementary school
23 that was collocated with four high schools if it
24 meant that I was getting the same education that
25 my students at the Success Academy's are getting

1 today.

2 The education that our teachers have the
3 privilege to provide our students today, if that
4 was what I could have gotten, collocated with
5 four high schools, we would have taken that
6 option. HSA 4 is another HSA 4 as another HSA
7 teacher mentioned is collocated with a high
8 school and there have not been any issues.

9 The next thing, are there any good Upper
10 West Side elementary schools? Yes, no one is
11 denying that but there are not enough. There is
12 not enough space. Parents have come up here and
13 told you there is not enough space. That their
14 kids can't get into those schools.

15 HSA is a solution to that problem. Space is
16 an issue at these high schools. I understand
17 that and I know that. And I know it is hard. I
18 teach reading groups in a hallway on the floor
19 every single day. It is tough.

20 But we need to serve all of our children in
21 District 3. Give them all a successful
22 education. First grade students in my school
23 today have the same reading level as fourth
24 grade students at a school that I used to teach
25 at. My first graders can name over 15 bones in

1 the human body. Adults that I know cannot do
2 that. Most adults that I know cannot do that.

3 Let me finish up. One more comment. Give
4 parents the option of going to a good school for
5 their kids. Jose Santiago was up here asking
6 you for that. Adriana Eggbert [phonetic] was
7 asking you for that for her three year old.

8 Another parent came up here asking you for
9 options for her four year old. Give parents the
10 option to this solution.

11 [applause]

12 MALE VOICE 1: Cynthia Deltie. - - . Lee
13 are you here? Gaye Gazakaros [phonetic]. Why
14 don't you go.

15 MS. ZOE STEIN: Hi, my name is Zoe Stein. I
16 have a five and seven year old. I live in
17 District 3. I am zoned for a, a school that
18 gets a D. I have my special needs student. I
19 have toured schools that get F's.

20 I have toured Harlem Success. I have done
21 the research on special needs students. My
22 special needs kid could get the special needs
23 attention that it, that he deserves at Harlem
24 Success. Above and beyond any public school
25 that I have toured.

1 Or that I am zoned for. It is an abysmal
2 failure that the school in my district is so
3 pathetic. Which one? Try 163 is the one that
4 I'm zoned for. Why aren't they here?

5 I would like, I would love for, I would love
6 to get my kids in-

7 MALE VOICE 1: [Interposing] They have a PA
8 meeting this evening.

9 MS. STEIN: I've, I've gone to the school
10 Have you, like, the reading scores are
11 uncomparable. And the fact that my kids would
12 get such a better education, I would like that
13 opportunity for every student. Every student in
14 our district.

15 If they're lucky. If they're lucky. If
16 they're zoned for a better school than the one I
17 am zoned for. Please, please give Harlem
18 Success a chance. Do you have something to say?

19 MALE VOICE 2: I do have something to say.
20 I, I'd say that you should probably go walk in
21 and meet Dr. Virginia Parrot.

22 MS. STEIN: I have.

23 MALE VOICE 2: You've met Dr. - - and you've
24 done a tour of 163.

25 MS. STEIN: I have, twice. Twice. And I

1 have gone and visited my, the CTT classrooms
2 as well as the other classrooms.

3 MALE VOICE 2: And the ELL classes?

4 MS. STEIN: Yes.

5 MALE VOICE 2: Yeah. And the special needs
6 classes?

7 MS. STEIN: Yes, and I, and I've even been
8 to the trailers in the back for the overcrowding
9 for that school, that is not doing well.

10 MALE VOICE 2: Right.

11 MS. STEIN: It is overcrowded there. It is
12 overcrowded for the schools that are in our
13 district. It is true. But we need better
14 schools.

15 MALE VOICE 2: Zoe we do need better
16 schools. No one is disagreeing, you, you don't,
17 you don't hear anyone disagreeing with you that
18 we need better schools. Not a soul. No one in
19 this, in this place is disagreeing. The
20 question is how do we get them?

21 MS. GAYE ZACHARAS: Yes, good evening. My
22 name is Gaye Zacharas [phonetic] the speech and
23 language therapist at PS MS 149 in District 3.

24 Some proponents of charter schools say that
25 education reform is the civil rights issue of

1 our time. I say for me that the issue of our
2 time may very well be the civil rights issue,
3 the collocation of charter schools in community
4 schools, like in my school, the Sojourner School
5 in Harlem.

6 Imagine your child or student receiving his
7 or her physical therapy in a stairwell. Imagine
8 your child with a speech language hearing
9 impairment in a small room like a closet, a
10 noisy space or a conference room similar on any
11 given day to an emergency room in a triage unit
12 with people constantly coming in and out
13 interrupting instruction.

14 Imagine your child looking down the hallway
15 as if pushing the noise up to the glass at an
16 expensive store, not able to afford the things
17 that are in there or access them, such as the
18 newly renovated Harlem Success classrooms with
19 newly renovated bathrooms that our students
20 can't even use in their own building. They have
21 to go to another floor to use, by what
22 contrasts, by what, in contrast is an inferior
23 facility.

24 Imagine your child receiving counseling or
25 occupational therapy in a room shared with a

1 PTA. Imagine your child who receives special
2 education services being removed from a full
3 sized classroom to a half-size classroom without
4 the same educational opportunities as his or her
5 general education peers.

6 Our students say that this is segregation.
7 They say we will all be cramped together and not
8 be able to concentrate. The charter school is
9 better because they have more money and look
10 better.

11 This brings about the concept of separate
12 and unequal. In the Brown versus Board of
13 Education case the psychological impact on
14 children was demonstrated by a black doll versus
15 a white doll. In this case it is a charter
16 school versus a community school.

17 The psychological message, what is that to
18 our children? I'm not as good as or I'm not
19 worthy of. Collocations of schools in the same
20 building with one having inferior facilities
21 separate and unequal. Placing special learners
22 in smaller rooms, separate and unequal.

23 Taking away rooms from specialists and
24 teachers and reducing quality of services,
25 separate and unequal. To paraphrase Dr. Martin

1 Luther King Jr., the true goal of education
2 is intelligence plus character.

3 It is our moral obligation to use our
4 intelligence and to be an example of character
5 to seek education reform that is equitable not
6 separate and unequal.

7 [applause]

8 MS. LEAH MONSUER: Hi, my name is Leah
9 Monsuer [phonetic]. I am co-president of PS 75
10 PTA. I am here today to add our voice in
11 support of keeping the Brandeis campus for the
12 use of high school students.

13 We need to commit ourselves to providing the
14 best possible education and equal opportunity to
15 all New York City school children. We need to
16 guard against dividing populations and
17 supporting some children at the detriment of
18 others.

19 Of distributing resources that are
20 especially in short supply those days.
21 Unfairly, some at the expense of others. Space
22 is one, is one such vital resource. We need to
23 ensure that all of our children, not just a few,
24 have bright, clean, well equipped classrooms.

25 Art rooms, gyms, science labs. We must

1 ensure that none of our children are
2 consigned to the basement. With an eye for, to
3 the future we must plan for growing needs in our
4 district for high school and middle school
5 spaces.

6 The Brandeis building already prepared for
7 high school students should be preserved for
8 high school students. Thank you.

9 [applause]

10 FEMALE VOICE 1: Andrew Glaze. Um, Harry
11 Jordan. Are they here? Kathy Riva. Angel
12 Gonzales. I'm sorry, I skipped a name.
13 Stephanie Goldblatt.

14 [applause]

15 MS. STEPHANIE GOLDBLATT: Begin two points
16 to all you preschool parents who aren't happy
17 with D3 schools and want, and loved Harlem
18 Success. Harlem Success, one in four has room.
19 Go. Second point to all you teachers, with all
20 due respect, you're probably doing a great job.
21 But you don't have children who are worrying
22 about where they're going to middle school and
23 high school.

24 My name is Stephanie Goldblatt [phonetic]
25 and I'm here talking on behalf of the District 3

1 President's Counsel of which I'm a member of
2 the Executive Board. And it is made up of over
3 30 PTA's of elementary schools and middle
4 schools in District 3, which all oppose this
5 collocation.

6 At the recent Chancellor's Parent Advisory
7 Committee meeting on December 21st, which
8 Chancellor Black graciously attended we asked
9 her specifically about charter schools and
10 specifically about this, uh, proposed
11 collocation of HCA into the Brandeis.

12 In response she stated, stated that such
13 decisions were made in consultation with the
14 community and with "community input". We
15 sincerely hope Chancellor Black meant that when
16 she said that and that this community input will
17 be considered.

18 As demonstrated the community has not been
19 consulted and the community input speaks volumes
20 against this school. It is deafening. We don't
21 want it in District 3.

22 District 3 needs space for kids. As the
23 Chancellor stated at this CPAC meeting, there is
24 only 40,000 kids in, in, uh, charter schools.
25 And over a million in DOE schools. DOE should

1 put its resources into these million kids and
2 their public schools.

3 We need more public school space to
4 accommodate this growing population in our
5 crowded district. We need additional middle and
6 high school seats. To lose this space to a
7 small number of children who will also likely be
8 from outside District 3 is misguided, short-
9 sighted and an insult to all District 3 public
10 school children who wonder where they were going
11 to middle school and high school.

12 As soon demand will surely exceed capacity.
13 Here is an opportunity to use the Brandeis
14 building, 480 seats, to expand the existing high
15 schools, create more high schools. I really
16 hope that if you act proactively and with
17 foresight and before this bulge becomes worse,
18 it is good planning and sound management. Two
19 of the virtues the Mayor just extolled of you
20 when he named you to this post.

21 Use this foresight. Act proactively.
22 Create more middle schools and use more
23 resources to public schools.

24 FEMALE VOICE 1: Kathy Riva and we have
25 somebody for Angel Gonzales. Is Kathy Riva

1 here? Sir.

2 MALE VOICE 3: Thank you. I don't even know
3 where to start to be honest with you. I'm
4 looking at this beautiful auditorium and it has
5 been my under, um, experience that all the
6 beautiful schools that we have seem to be
7 targeted by HSA or whatever new name you all
8 call yourself now.

9 I mean it's not no accident. Yesterday we
10 were at Whatley. I was there. That's a
11 landmark building. They have a print shop
12 there. They have, uh, uh, - - um, for baking.
13 Culinary, thank you, for baking. It's not an
14 accident.

15 And, and, and they're, like, um, a mold.
16 When you get a mold in your house you can't just
17 wipe it off. It will grow back. You have to
18 cut it out and eliminate it. In other words
19 they stay. Once they get or, like, termites.

20 Certain things that you just don't want in
21 your house because it's going to be, or like
22 now, bedbugs. They're like bedbugs. Once they
23 come in, they're hard as hell to get out.
24 That's what you're like. You're like bedbugs.

25 I remember when I was a kid and I watched

1 little impressionable, um, um, stories like
2 the Wizard of Oz. I thought that was nice and
3 quaint. And I said, you know, who, who cannot
4 have a heart? I mean, it was, I mean I didn't
5 understand that, you know. Going to get courage
6 and going to see the wizard for the heart.

7 And I found out why they made that movie.
8 Somewhere in somebody's life they ran into a
9 heartless person. That's you. You hear people,
10 passionate people. They come here and they say
11 we are here for the same thing. No we're not
12 because if we were here for the same thing we
13 wouldn't be here.

14 At what point in time do you acquiescence?
15 I mean even in school. Even in the penal system
16 they separate the young guys from the older
17 guys. They even recognize that in the penal
18 system.

19 Don't you, don't you get it for the life of
20 you? At, at once, even when you go fishing they
21 throw fish back.

22 At what point in time, even Markowitz
23 [phonetic], do you get it? I'm going to respect
24 that sign. Thank you.

25 [applause]

1 MALE VOICE 1: Um, Michael Lupinati
2 [phonetic]. Laurie Braun [phonetic].

3 FEMALE VOICE 1: He's here.

4 MALE VOICE 1: Michael. Uh, and then
5 Catherine Sprall [phonetic]. Kara Jordivitz
6 [phonetic] and Ernestine Augustus. And I'm
7 going to have to apologize. But I've got to get
8 home to my, my three. Um, but thank you all
9 for, uh, participating, for staying here and for
10 being interested and involved.

11 Um, that's for everybody here. Folks from
12 Success, uh, from D3, thank you. Thank you to
13 the DOE. Um, appreciate it.

14 FEMALE VOICE 1: So, um, we are on 62. We
15 have 57, 62, um, 59 and the last number is 112.

16 MALE VOICE 1: There are six more pro and
17 29.

18 MR. MICHAEL LUPINATI: Hi everybody. Um,
19 let's see. I was the principal of Central Park
20 East Elementary School. And we had, uh, I was a
21 K through 12 school. And we had pre-K, pre-K
22 through 12. And the older kids would come down
23 and read stories to, with the younger kids. And
24 some of the older kids that were struggling
25 readers were the master readers who would help

1 the younger kids.

2 And it really was, really was upsetting to
3 me tonight to hear students say we don't want to
4 be in the same buildings with little kids
5 because we're, we act out too much. And we
6 don't act appropriately. And that's not good
7 for them to be around.

8 To be honest I don't think those ninth
9 graders really believe that. I think those
10 ninth graders know deep down that they can
11 behave in a way where they would benefit from
12 little kids being there. And the little kids
13 would benefit from them.

14 So it is really upsetting to me as an
15 educator who has worked in a building where
16 older and younger kids are together that, that
17 seems so impossible. It's actually not. There
18 are places who do it and they get along fine.

19 What it really seems to me is that you guys
20 are frustrated. And I understand the
21 frustration. If you just, you know, the
22 Brandeis school is just getting phased out. And
23 you guys worked for a long time to get this
24 school phased out because I assume people didn't
25 think it was a successful school or wasn't

1 serving the community or whatever.

2 And now someone is saying well we want to
3 also come in. So of course you're frustrated
4 but I don't think that it should necessarily be
5 taken out on little kids and older kids can't
6 work together. That's terrible to me.

7 Um, I think, um, with all due respect to
8 Gail Brewer and, and the other politicians, I
9 really think that they need to find more space.
10 That if everybody just had more space, we've had
11 these giant real estate projects go up. And I
12 don't, and you know, we have not proportionately
13 built new schools over the years.

14 So if the whole community, charter
15 proponents and regular public school people got
16 together and put more pressure on the elected to
17 build more schools, we wouldn't be fighting with
18 each other.

19 Um, and finally, uh, just really quickly,
20 um, I worked at Beacon High School for six
21 years. And I saw the admissions process at
22 middle schools. And District 3 middle schools
23 admission process is much worse than anything
24 charter schools do. And I don't mean to say
25 that as an insult. Those are just the facts.

1 Getting into good middle schools in District
2 3 is like applying to a private school.

3 And kids literally get handpicked. And it
4 is much worse than any lottery system any
5 charter school does. So I just encourage
6 District 3 to actually take a look at that.
7 Because it is hard for me to hear you say how
8 this lottery thing is not so, um, equal. But
9 District 3 middle schools, it's, like, it's so
10 elitist the way that process is done.

11 And I've seen it from the inside. It is not
12 hearsay. So please take that into
13 consideration.

14 FEMALE VOICE 1: Catherine Spraul. Laurie
15 Braun, Ernestine Augustus. I'm sorry. And Cara
16 Judithitz [phonetic].

17 MS. CATHERINE SPRAUL: Hi, my name is
18 Catherine Spraul and I am, um, my son currently
19 goes to Emily Dickerson, uh, PS 175. Um, but,
20 um, when he was two years old I heard about
21 Harlem Success Academy. I got the brochures. I
22 was living up in Washington Heights. I was very
23 excited about it.

24 Um, I did some research and, uh, was very
25 excited about it because I felt like all the

1 schools in our area were all failing schools.
2 There were not options. So this was very
3 exciting to me.

4 Um when my son was ready for pre-K,
5 kindergarten we went through the whole lottery
6 process. And my son got into Harlem Success
7 Academy. Um, what should have been a monumental
8 time where, um, should have been exciting and a
9 good thing, turned into a nightmare.

10 Um, my son, um, at the time I didn't know
11 was a child that, uh, had special needs. And,
12 uh, within 12 days of attending Harlem Success
13 Academy my son was, we were told that, uh, uh,
14 was not a good fit for the school. We weren't
15 counseled out.

16 I felt like we were bullied out. Um, it was
17 horrible. The experience was absolutely
18 horrible. Nobody was a bigger fan of even
19 Maskowitz [phonetic] and Harlem Success Academy
20 than I was. And I still commend, because I saw
21 the work that went there. I saw kids that were
22 reading on a higher level and all of that. And
23 I wanted that for my child.

24 But he was a child that did not fit in
25 because he needed, he had special needs. And

1 the process that was used to get us out of
2 the school, my child left there within a matter
3 of three weeks, a broken child. He had a broken
4 spirit. He was a broken child. We were a
5 broken family.

6 And I challenged, I fought to try to keep
7 him in there and what made me finally stop
8 fighting was the day that I took him to school
9 and he looked up at me and he said, mommy, is
10 the day the day that Harlem Success Academy is
11 going fire me because I can't go beyond Z?

12 And he had tears in his eyes. And, uh,
13 eventually we, we left the school. I got tired
14 of fighting because I realized that it was about
15 him. It wasn't about him going beyond Z or
16 reading on the fourth grade level. It was about
17 how he felt about himself. And I realized at
18 that moment it wasn't about what I wanted for
19 him. It was about him.

20 And he was broken. His spirit was broken.
21 He was deemed defective and we were put out of
22 the school, literally. My son went to 75. He
23 is now thriving. He is loved. He is welcome.
24 He is ready to go into a gifted program. Thank
25 you.

1 [applause]

2 MS. ERNESTINE AUGUSTUS: Hi, good night. My
3 name is Ernestine Augustus. I am a New York
4 City teacher, a member of People Power Movement
5 and I'm also an alumni of Brandeis High School,
6 graduated from here in 1974. When I graduated
7 from this school I came in 90th in my class with
8 an average of 93.3.

9 I would like to know what the DOE did to
10 change all these schools and have failing
11 schools. And another thing, my parents made
12 sure that I came to school and did what I had to
13 do. It's a parent's job to make sure that their
14 children are in classes where they are being
15 serviced.

16 I was an immigrant when I came here. As a
17 matter of fact, when I arrived in New York City
18 I was 14 years old going into the 12th grade.
19 However, because I was 14 years old and my last
20 name was Dominguez, they placed me in an ESL
21 classroom in the ninth grade. But I fought
22 myself. I fought DOE by myself because my
23 parents didn't know how to do it.

24 So I know that there is a continuous fight
25 with DOE. I have four children, one with

1 special needs and three who successfully
2 completed public schools and are all college
3 graduates, with the last one graduated from
4 college this year.

5 Now I'm not going to hold up or fight here
6 because I have fight on Thursday. Because I'm
7 in PS 123 where HSA is asking for more rooms and
8 we have also been granted an expansion by DOE to
9 continue onto the eighth grade.

10 But I want to bring one, a few things to
11 your attention that have been placed in the
12 media. When Eva came up to our school she said
13 she was going to have an Iraqi war in Harlem.

14 Bloomberg wrote he's, he's presenting
15 charter schools to parents for, so that poor
16 people can feel like their children are in
17 private schools. And Eva said that. Her
18 relationship with parents is like a marriage.

19 If you don't, if you don't apply the
20 contract, you'll get divorced like the parent
21 that just left here. And that's not fair
22 because public schools can't do that. We just
23 cannot get rid of kids because they cannot make
24 it. They're not functioning. There is a lot of
25 social ills in this city.

1 A lot of them have been caused by
2 Bloomberg right now building all these buildings
3 and overpopulating areas. And now he needs to
4 service these rich people he placed in Harlem.
5 So now he is preparing these schools for the
6 rich folks who are planning to move in.

7 FEMALE VOICE 1: Laurie Braun. Joe Kay. Is
8 Laurie Braun still here? Joe Kay. Is he here?
9 Joe Kay is 66. Uh, Cara Judovits, J-U-D-O-V-I-
10 T-Z-S. John Sabbet [phonetic]. T. Carter. How
11 many people who have signed up are, are, still
12 want to speak? Okay, we'll go through the list
13 in order.

14 FEMALE VOICE 2: How about have them all
15 come up and stand in line?

16 FEMALE VOICE 1: Well because there's 50
17 more people on the list. In number, by your
18 number please, um, get in line and we'll take
19 you in order. We are up to 67.

20 FEMALE VOICE 2: Is that you? All right.

21 MR. TOM PERNAUGH: Good evening, my name is
22 Tom Pernaugh. I am not an HSA 1 teacher, I'm a
23 proud parent of an HSA 1 student. I'm here
24 tonight to speak in support of the Success
25 Academy and Success Academy program.

1 It is an intensive academic program and
2 my son is excelling at it. He has attended
3 kindergarten and first grade there. Um, we are
4 backing 100 percent with the homework packets
5 and the reading. We are tracking as a school
6 between first, between kindergarten, first and
7 second grade to get through 100,000 books this
8 year.

9 We're doing it at a clip of about 24 a
10 month. We have reading logs. We're reading,
11 uh, age appropriate, um, is read to us by our
12 son and we help him along with the stuff that is
13 slightly ahead of him.

14 Um, I'm here to afford the opportunity to
15 District 3 students to have a Success Academy in
16 the neighborhood. I'm hoping that one will go
17 through here. And it's getting late and I just
18 want to thank everyone for coming out this
19 evening.

20 Uh, the other folks that are going to speak,
21 I'm going to relinquish my time to. And I'm
22 hoping that we can see our way through opening a
23 Success Academy here. Thank you very much and
24 good night.

25 [applause]

1 MS. JUDITH: Good evening, my name is
2 Judith Smith. I'm a, I'm a mother that had
3 children in public school. And now I'm a
4 grandmother looking, helping my daughter look
5 for a school for my grandson. I support the
6 charter schools.

7 Um, in 1999 I took my daughter out of public
8 school. Because they failed her. She was in
9 75. We live in District 3. My, my daughter
10 couldn't go to PS 9 and these other schools.

11 Then by the time, um, she graduated from 75
12 her percentile in math was 25 and her reading
13 was somewhere in the 30s. She went to Joan Ark
14 and they finished dumbing her down.

15 After, um, they, the Board of Ed, DOE has
16 over now a \$20,000,000,000 budget but they
17 couldn't educate, they can't educate children.
18 Okay. I, um, took her out. Put her in a
19 private school. The private school she went to
20 they, they go from pre-K all the way to 12th
21 grade.

22 It is no problem. And I think if you,
23 you're saying Brandeis is not a successful
24 school. Because if you have to have metal
25 detectors and the students in your school

1 cannot, um, accept younger children, there's
2 a problem.

3 And that's the problem that you should be
4 addressing. Um, my daughter, um, what else do I
5 want to say?

6 Well I think it's not, it's not space
7 because you can take the little you have, if you
8 are creative, and make a, and do a lot with it.
9 And it's not money. It's quality. And that's
10 the problem we have here. Finding quality
11 education.

12 [applause]

13 FEMALE VOICE 1: Please give your name when
14 you speak so I can mark you on the list.

15 MS. ROBIN KLEUBER: I'm reading for Christy
16 Young, um, uh, co-president of PS 84. And I
17 represent our 300 elementary schools failings on
18 92nd Street.

19 Forty-five percent of the children attend
20 the dual language programs. They are here to
21 support the need for middle schools and high
22 schools in District 3. Our third graders are
23 just the tip of the iceberg of the baby boom
24 expansion. And we beg the DOE to be prepared
25 with space.

1 Do not rename these high schools seats to
2 elementary size charter school seats. We
3 support the SCAS to have a space in D3 but to
4 create new seats, not rename them. Renaming is
5 a game where the total stays the same.

6 I also want to talk on behalf of myself. My
7 name is Robin Kleuber [phonetic] and PTA
8 president MS 54. MS 54 is the middle school
9 that houses both core and the Delta program.

10 Delta is one of the most sought after middle
11 school programs in District 3 because like the
12 charter school we are talking about most of
13 those children have at or above grade level test
14 scores on the standardized tests. So my
15 question would be to you guys, have you really
16 given it a lot of thought what you're going to
17 do in four to five years?

18 I have been on the Community Education
19 Council for four years and I know that you don't
20 get really far in that time. You know, so think
21 you are going to get new middle schools put in,
22 it is just not going to happen.

23 Our middle school at MS 54 is at or close to
24 capacity. My daughter sits in a classroom with
25 36 other kids. Um, I don't know if you realize

1 how severe this is but if that is really
2 where your next step is, it could be pretty
3 hard.

4 Uh, last and not least, I'm the co-chair of
5 the Multilingual Committee and I have a problem
6 as does my committee with the, um, fact that
7 you're talking ELLs first. You're taking them
8 from our dual language programs where they are
9 instrumental in the model that we use to teach
10 these children.

11 And, uh, if you really thought about the
12 fact that them learning in both their native
13 tongue and English language is probably the best
14 thing for them. Um, and you don't afford that
15 to them. So I hope they really understand that.
16 Thank you.

17 [applause]

18 FEMALE VOICE 4: Hi, I'm a mother of a four
19 year old who is applying to kindergarten. I
20 also have two teenage step children and a baby.
21 This is my first meeting tonight. Um, so I just
22 want, came to say a few things.

23 First, uh, when I got here I was told that
24 this decision was unanimous. And I can tell you
25 that it is not unanimous and I didn't have the

1 opportunity to vote. Nor did any of the
2 people I know who have four year olds applying
3 to kindergarten.

4 And I can tell you that pretty much there is
5 a sentiment out there that is the same as mine.
6 That people are happy to have the choice. Um, I
7 also want to say that I like my zoned school. I
8 may send my child my zoned school. It is a
9 District 3C, whether it is the zoned school or
10 this particular charter school.

11 And that whether or not I choose to go to
12 this school or I'm accepted in the lottery, I
13 still support this school. I think they're
14 doing a lot of things that are very good with
15 their money. And that it really helps our
16 public schools do a better job and puts pressure
17 on them to improve our level of education.

18 And thirdly, um, as far as the collocation
19 goes it is certainly not ideal. And I hear a
20 whole bunch of other issues that are raised here
21 but if there's extra space and this is the only
22 solution that is workable, I would be in support
23 of it. And I would hope that a lot of the
24 parents who are here and the teachers too at
25 this school would, would work on changing the

1 attitudes of some of the kids I heard
2 tonight.

3 Because I think this could be a pretty
4 negative environment, uh, for kids to come into,
5 who are four years old. And that everybody
6 should come together and put the interests of
7 the children first.

8 [applause]

9 MR. MARK DILLER: Good evening, I am Mark
10 Diller [phonetic]. I am the Chair of the Youth
11 Education Libraries Committee at Community Board
12 7 where we voted unanimously to oppose
13 collocation. Not because it is a charter versus
14 non-charter issue. But because of the merits of
15 this particular proposal. And I would like to
16 take my time to address just this proposal.

17 My mother always taught me that you should
18 not make your life more difficult by picking
19 battles you don't need to fight. So we've
20 heard, now that's said, we also have a phrase
21 at, uh, Community Board 7, which is add, don't
22 repeat.

23 And pretty much everything that is in our,
24 our, uh, resolution has been said tonight about
25 its impact on the ability to take children off

1 wait lists and the nature of the interactions
2 that we are likely to have here in this
3 building. So I want to sort of clean up a
4 couple of, of issues.

5 Um, I don't think anybody would straight up
6 say that choice is bad. The question is when is
7 choice meaningful? And the question should be
8 answered that choice is meaningful when the,
9 when choice for one person does not preclude
10 choice for another. This does that.

11 We want, if Harlem, if, um, Upper West
12 Success, um, is sited in District 3, we want it
13 to be a success. Excuse me. To be a success,
14 because there are, our children will be in that
15 building. We want the schools in this building
16 to be able to offer successful collocation,
17 successful education as well.

18 Um, the point was raised that there are
19 examples of successful K to 12 programs. The
20 ones that were mentioned, however, are schools
21 that have a unified curriculum all the way
22 through. And my goodness, two minutes goes by
23 quickly. The, um, so with that situation, that
24 would not be the situation here. You would have
25 a gap in grades of almost eight years.

1 And you don't, and, and one of the joys
2 and blessings of this building is that we don't
3 have one unified curriculum, we have many to
4 meet many needs. That's what District 3 is
5 about. That's what we should continue to be
6 about.

7 And what we should limit ourselves to the
8 question of does this make sense and unanimously
9 our Board, including people who serve on the
10 Boards of charter schools, who raise funds for
11 charter schools, and who teach in charter
12 schools, all said this doesn't make sense.
13 Thanks.

14 [applause]

15 FEMALE VOICE 4: Hi, on behalf of the
16 District's newly created PS 452 we stand here
17 united with all other district existing public
18 schools parents and families to voice our
19 opposition in the collocation of Success Academy
20 in the Brandeis complex.

21 Our school was founded last year as a direct
22 result of the overcrowding issues that have been
23 negatively impacting District 3 elementary
24 schools and creating seat shortages and
25 continued program losses. These issues will

1 inevitably carry over to our middle schools
2 within the next few years.

3 And further to high school soon after. We
4 believe, we believe in the existing public
5 schools in our district and the education that
6 they have to offer. And it is obvious from the
7 existence of PS 452 the wait lists and the
8 applications to the existing high schools in
9 this building, that any available seats in a
10 public school building must be used for and
11 reserved to accommodate the excessive demand for
12 enrollment in our prospering existing District 3
13 public schools. A demand that will only
14 increase as result of new construction and
15 growing population.

16 SAC, SACS will not relieve overcrowding in
17 our district. In fact, the placement of that
18 school into the Brandeis complex further reduces
19 space for public schools who reside in the
20 district. According to its charter, admission
21 priority is given to at risk students from
22 outside District 3 over students from within the
23 district who are not at risk.

24 Given this priority it is extremely unlikely
25 that any student from the most overcrowded

1 portions of the district will be offered
2 admission to Harlem Success through its lottery.
3 Giving valuable and flexible public school space
4 in a crowded area of District 3 to a charter
5 school will not serve the community in which it
6 is placed seems to us a wrong path to follow.

7 It is further exaborated by the fact that
8 any out of school district child enrolled in
9 Harlem Success would be guaranteed placement in
10 District 3 middle schools upon completing that
11 elementary education. Only adding to the
12 already foreseen crisis of space. It allocates
13 precious high school seats to the elementary
14 level in a district noticeably lacking in public
15 school options.

16 [applause]

17 FEMALE VOICE 1: What was your name please?
18 What was your name please? Your name? Thank
19 you. Thank you.

20 MS. CAMILLE GOODRICH: Good evening, my name
21 is Camille Goodrich. I am, I serve on the
22 President's Council here at District 3. Ms.
23 Elizabeth, yes, collocations do exist but two
24 key points. One they're all public schools.
25 And two they share.

1 They are not better than a public school
2 and there is not a takeover. The Department of
3 Education is good with making a mess and not
4 fixing a problem.

5 Collocation is a nice way to say eviction.
6 That is what collocation is doing across
7 District 3. There are too many overcrowded
8 schools across District 3.

9 DOE needs to take the time to invest in our
10 public schools and give them a chance to grow.
11 There are public schools in District 3 that need
12 a home or it is overcrowded. How are charter
13 schools given preference? How is the DOE
14 allowing all these new elementary schools to
15 open where, excuse me, where are the middle
16 schools for all these students?

17 This is just not, this is just another way
18 that the DOE is getting rid of public schools.
19 I know quite a few parents and families that was
20 pushed out of charter schools due to IEPs. They
21 were pushed out nicely.

22 All students deserve an equal and quality
23 education. Find a private location for these
24 charter schools and leave the Board of Education
25 buildings alone. I am not against charter

1 schools. I am against the DOE putting
2 schools against schools and parents against
3 parents.

4 [applause]

5 FEMALE VOICE 5: You have to go at the end.
6 We have to take the people who signed up first.
7 Your name? Your name?

8 MR. JOHN REITER: John Reiter [phonetic].
9 Um, I am a parent of a child at, uh, in the 9
10 Zone. But she attends, uh, Anderson. I oppose
11 the charter moving into the Brandeis complex.

12 It is outrageous to propose a charter moving
13 into a lower D3, um, area at a time when D3 has
14 been paralyzed for four years, grappling with
15 overcrowding in lower D3. That resulted in a
16 cram down for five schools in O'Shea.

17 I have attended countless community meetings
18 aimed at solving overcrowding. Specifically in
19 lower D3. I thought I was having a nightmare
20 when I heard Harlem Success not only was moving
21 into the most crowded section of D3 but also
22 into the nicest, newest and most expensive
23 facility on the Upper West Side.

24 And they're claiming a spot that was off
25 limits to other schools, squeezed and shuffled

1 over the last three years during the
2 overcrowding discussions. And, uh, they are
3 threatening to permanently eliminate 600 high
4 school seats from the only high school building
5 on the Upper West Side.

6 Only a few districts have designated high
7 schools. Upper West Side has none. Uh, I've
8 carefully watched amazing community efforts over
9 the last four years to make Upper West Side
10 schools even better. The threat of Success
11 charter has caused an enormous disruption to
12 that progress.

13 An unprecedented advertising blitz that had
14 the affect of targeting affluent residents,
15 particularly in lower D3, in those ads Success
16 trumpeted its performance. Comparing itself to
17 Anderson and Special Music School. That's a bad
18 analogy. Its apples to oranges.

19 [applause]

20 MS. ALICIA SIMPSON: My name is Alicia
21 Simpson and I would just wanted to start out by
22 saying that I moved here six and a half years
23 ago from Utah. Where my child was in private
24 school and I was really unhappy with the
25 schools. I, we moved into the Columbia

1 neighborhood and I looked at inside schools
2 and, um, observed the school from the outside.
3 And I, I didn't like what I saw.

4 Um, so I put her in for the first half of
5 the year and then I yanked her out because I
6 was, I was just, you know, unhappy. Um, you
7 know, gave myself some time. I put her back in
8 the following year and you know what, she did
9 fine.

10 Um, my husband and I supported her and she
11 is now at Delta. One of the very coveted
12 schools. And I believe that the criteria that
13 are necessary for academic success are having
14 good administration, good teachers that are
15 dedicated and children have parents who are
16 invested and who care about their child's
17 education.

18 So with that, um, I am also here on behalf
19 of PS 165. A school that is considered
20 undesirable by many parents in the Columbia
21 neighborhood. And I am sorry, yes, we have a
22 lot of English language learners. We have got a
23 lot of kids with special ed but the kids who are
24 receiving help from home, who are receiving that
25 support and I know the parents who are still

1 here and who were here would give that
2 support.

3 Your child will do well no matter what. No
4 matter what, okay. And my daughter is evidence
5 of that. She is at Delta. She has been on the
6 honor roll every single semester.

7 And my two boys are now in there and I even
8 still had hesitations that they had phased out
9 the gifted and talented. But you know what,
10 it's just one more layer that is not really
11 necessary.

12 My kid in G&T was no more smarter or
13 intelligent than my kid that is not in G&T. So
14 with that I represent PS 165, the SLT, and the
15 PTA as I am co-president. And we are, uh, in
16 opposition of this collocation. Thank you.

17 [applause]

18 [background conversation]

19 MALE VOICE 4: Here is my number. We only
20 talked about two minutes. We're wrapping it up.
21 Let's not do this. Let's not do this.

22 [background conversation]

23 [crosstalk]

24 MS. ALISE SEGAL: Hi, my name is Alise

25 [phonetic] Segal. I'm a special education, um,

1 teacher. I teach English language arts to
2 special education students at Wadley Secondary
3 School where the Harlem Success Academy is also
4 looking to collocate on a campus where there are
5 already two buildings.

6 Um, I would like to say that based on what I
7 see of the Harlem Success Academy teachers here
8 I now know that the Harlem Success Academy not
9 only discriminates, um, not only has
10 discriminatory enrollment practices but would
11 appear to have discriminatory hiring practices
12 as well.

13 Um, you know, uh, that's what I saw up here.
14 Um, I also have a comment, and I'm sure the
15 teachers there do a fine job but for teachers
16 who profess to be so passionate about what they
17 do, I find it very telling that not one of you
18 could speak without reading from your notes
19 directly.

20 Okay, now I do have a direct question.
21 Okay, I do have a direct question. Everybody
22 from Harlem Success Academy talks about how the
23 wonderful scholars there, and I am sure they are
24 wonderful, beautiful children. Um, as are the
25 children that I teach. Are all reading on tenth

1 grade level when they are five years old and
2 can name every part of the body.

3 I would like to know what percentage of
4 students at Harlem Success Academy have entered
5 your building earning one's and two's on the
6 state exams? Um, your teachers speak as if you
7 have created the success of your students.

8 I would like to say that your students come
9 in already at three's and four's. Because you
10 are able to, um, decide who you enroll. You do
11 not have any self contained classes.

12 When I asked, when I met Ms. Rose in October
13 I asked her what the percentage of special
14 education students was at Harlem Success
15 Academy. She was unable to answer my question
16 at that time. Last night she told me it was
17 zero percent.

18 Now I'm hearing that you do in fact have
19 some CTT classes. Well you do not have self
20 contained classes. The definition of a student
21 who needs a self contained class is a student
22 who is functioning below grade level.

23 Your students are coming in already at or
24 very near grade level. Well I will give you a
25 challenge. You invited me to your school. I

1 invite you to step into my classroom and try
2 to educate my students. Okay.

3 Because I believe that I am doing a fine job
4 of bringing students who are in high school
5 reading at a third grade level and who have just
6 been, um, released from incar, being
7 incarcerated and all kinds of psychiatric
8 facilities, and we welcome them. And we work
9 with them.

10 And I'm here on their behalf. And I
11 challenge you to come into my classroom and try
12 to educate them without your script. Thank you.

13 [applause]

14 FEMALE VOICE 1: Um, is the gentleman with
15 the blue tie, did you have a number? And what
16 number is that? [background conversation]
17 Thank you.

18 MR. DAVE PERITSKI: Hi, I am Dave Peritski
19 [phonetic]. I am a parent of PS 87. I guess
20 we're technically the have's, although tell that
21 to the kids who don't have gym, right.

22 Um, I, uh, this is, this is getting a little
23 silly. I tend to play the role of the court
24 jester so I guess I have to do it in person if
25 I, if I done it over email.

1 Um, we, the way that this, the way that
2 the school is structured in District 3 has been
3 changed over the last few years, um, I have seen
4 it happen twice. Um, one was on the East side
5 and one was on the West side.

6 Um, on the East side there was an effort led
7 by a very passionate parent who, uh, pointed out
8 to the space shortages in the school. Did reams
9 of, of research and was so good that the
10 Department of Education hired her. And I think
11 that's basic, that's, that's why they brought
12 you onboard, right. So congratulations.

13 Um, I got to be a little bit of a witness to
14 a second effort, which was essentially done in
15 your mold. In fact I was reading some of the
16 news about what you had done, uh, on the East
17 side. And during what, what Rachel and Beth and
18 some of, another cadre of women in PS 87 who
19 have come to admire greatly, um, have been able
20 to achieve. And it wasn't about a political
21 argument.

22 I don't think there is anybody in here who
23 doesn't believe in the qualities. I mean Harlem
24 Success is a wonderful model. I, I, my hat is
25 off. You, you, the, it is a successful model.

1 It is, there is some bumps along the road.

2 But you know what, there are going to be ten
3 answers to the question.

4 And if Harlem Success is one of them, let's,
5 let's have more. I mean there's no, there are
6 no issues there. The, the issue that seems to
7 come up is the issue of space.

8 And you know it well. We know it well. Um,
9 when, when the PS 87 parents went, went to the
10 effort of pointing out space deficiencies in the
11 school, um, it was not a political issue.
12 Nobody, nobody hates kids. Nobody hates private
13 school. Nobody hates charter school. It was,
14 there is not enough space in the school.

15 And lo and behold, what the, what the DOE
16 wasn't able to do, not because it was stupid.
17 Not because it was incompetent. Not because it
18 was political. They just, they didn't plan for
19 people to stay in the city. They didn't plan
20 for all the sex people were having after 9/11.

21 They didn't plan for all these things that
22 have become politicized. But what, what, give
23 me a couple of seconds because I'm going to end
24 with it. But what ended up happening was they,
25 they, they opened some eyes. And it wasn't

1 pitting good against bad. It is just saying
2 we have space issues, let's help resolve them.

3 And that's how 452 was born. It was born
4 out of logic. It was born out of wonky
5 statistical analysis. It was born out of, out
6 of, out of people who just took what DOE could
7 not do themselves. Not because they were
8 terrible but just because they needed their
9 reach extended just a little bit. Part of that
10 reach involved hiring you.

11 Um, and, and really bringing that into, into
12 light. And what's happening now is we have
13 another space issue. And our, I have a second
14 grader. So maybe I'm going to feel it acutely
15 in three years. The third and fourth graders
16 starting to feel it now.

17 So for us it is just about middle school and
18 high school space. We would love, love what
19 you're doing. Respect what you're doing. We
20 just, we just need the space and let's work
21 together to find a building.

22 [applause]

23 FEMALE VOICE 1: And our last speaker is
24 William Herrington. Hargraves [phonetic], I
25 apologize.

1 MR. WILLIAM HARGRAVES: Close enough.

2 Um, see, public schools is under siege. All
3 right. It has been, it has been documented over
4 and over from all the hearings that we have had.

5 It is under siege. And it is also been
6 highlighted in the hearings that we have. If
7 you allow a school to use creativity,
8 imagination and time, that schools do improve.

9 Now if your goal is to defunct these schools
10 and create an environment where these schools
11 will fail, well, you have all the resources.
12 You have all the rules, because we have a mayor
13 that is king of the waiver.

14 So he'll waive and make anything fit
15 whatever ideology that he has. We know this.
16 And it seems to me the same, I mean, like, I
17 look at HSA. They're a great example of what
18 I'm talking about.

19 Um, I learned tonight that they have metal
20 detectors. But if they allow them in school,
21 there goes another waiver. The kids don't have
22 to go through the metal detector.

23 That's not fair. One for all, all for one.
24 I doubt if a little kid be packing but every now
25 and then you find out that is a, a first grader,

1 what have you, that came to school with a
2 gun. It happens. It happens in this city. It
3 is recorded in the paper. So why should they be
4 exempt?

5 Then charter schools were able to start from
6 K on up. But again, HSA got a waiver. It's
7 like what time is it? I say 9:30, you say half
8 past nine. It is the same time.

9 So instead of calling it pre-K, they call it
10 development learning. So it is different class.
11 Anybody here that is arguing on behalf of HSA an
12 don't get it, that is two different classes, is
13 not really listening or they don't really want
14 to know the truth.

15 And that's why we're here. We are talking
16 about equality. This is 2011. Martin Luther
17 King month, Black History month, Brown versus
18 Board of Education. Separate but unequal.

19 Come on people. Let's wake up. It is
20 slavery all over again. All we got is each
21 other. Let's pull it together. Thank you for
22 your time.

23 FEMALE VOICE 1: The speakers list is now
24 exhausted. On behalf of myself and the
25 Department of Education, thank you very much for

1 your participation.

2 [END 181_996_4.MP3]

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