



## Notice

November 3, 2016

### Department of Education

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

## **The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 45 Clarence Witherspoon (27Q045) from a K-6 School to a K-5 School in the 2017-2018 School Year**

### **I. Description of the subject and purpose of the proposed item under consideration.**

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to truncate the grades served by P.S. 45 Clarence Witherspoon (27Q045, “P.S. 45”) beginning in the 2017-2018 school year so that it will no longer serve sixth grade. P.S. 45 is an existing zoned district elementary school currently serving students in kindergarten through sixth grade and also offering a pre-kindergarten (“pre-k”) program in building Q045 (“Q045”). P.S. 45 is located at 126-28 150<sup>th</sup> Street, Queens, NY 11436 in Community School District 27 (“District 27”). If this proposal is approved by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”), P.S. 45 will no longer serve sixth grade students after the 2016-2017 school year. Beginning In the 2017-2018 school year, P.S. 45 will only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade, and continue offering a pre-k program.

This Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) was developed in collaboration with the District 27 Community Superintendent and P.S. 45 leadership, who believe that the truncation of the sixth grade will benefit P.S. 45 and District 27 families.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 45 will have the opportunity to focus exclusively on its elementary school grades. The proposed truncation of the sixth grade will bring P.S. 45 into alignment with the standard kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school model and also result in its students entering middle school at the standard sixth grade entry level.

Given the low demand for sixth grade at P.S. 45, the school community has requested the truncation of its middle school grade by the DOE. In the 2014-2015 school year, approximately 60% of P.S. 45’s fifth grade students did not remain at P.S. 45 for sixth grade. As a result, P.S. 45 only served one section of sixth grade (31 students) in the 2015-2016 school year. Currently, P.S. 45 is also projected to serve one section of sixth grade, but with fewer students (25). In the 2016-2017 school year, according to 2016-2017 Budget Register Projections, P.S. 45 also serves one section of sixth grade, but with fewer students (25). This decline in enrollment was due in large part to students opting to attend stand-alone middle schools in and outside of the district. P.S. 45’s zoned middle schools are J.H.S. 226 Virgil I. Grissom (27Q226, “J.H.S. 226”) and Hawtree Creek Middle School (27Q297, “Hawtree”) located at 121-10 Rockaway Boulevard in District 27. Although between J.H.S. 226 and Hawtree there is sufficient excess capacity to accommodate future students who may have otherwise attended the sixth grade at P.S. 45, most families exercise choice and elect to attend other middle schools in and outside of the district.

The students who remain at P.S. 45 for sixth grade and then apply to middle school are limited to only those middle schools that have available seventh grade seats. P.S. 45 students who enter middle school in the seventh grade may also face transitional challenges as they adjust to a middle school curriculum designed as preparation for rigorous high school instruction. From a pedagogical perspective, continuity

of instruction is adversely impacted when students begin middle school at multiple entry grade levels (sixth and seventh). If this proposal is approved, the truncation will allow the school community to focus exclusively on the elementary school grades as it will no longer offer seats to its sixth grade.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 45 will no longer enroll sixth grade students beginning in the 2017-2018 school year. Current sixth grade students who meet promotional criteria may continue on to the middle school to which they are matched in the middle school admissions process. If current sixth grade students do not meet promotional criteria and must repeat the sixth grade in the 2017-2018 school year when sixth grade will no longer be offered at P.S. 45, they will receive individualized enrollment support from the Superintendent's staff and Family Welcome Center counselors, with a focus on each student's interests to find an alternative seat in a school that is aligned to his or her needs. Similarly, current fifth grade students who meet promotional criteria and receive offers to attend P.S. 45 for sixth grade through the middle school admissions process, will receive individualized enrollment support and be provided a seat at their zoned middle school or to the middle school with an available sixth grade seat to which they receive an offer.

This proposal is also expected to help reduce the excess of middle school seats in District 27. Future students who may have otherwise attended middle school at P.S. 45 will instead support the enrollment at other middle schools throughout Queens.

More information about the upcoming Joint Public Hearing and PEP meeting can be found on the DOE website at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2016-2017/December212016PanelMeeting.htm>

## **II. Information regarding where the full text of the proposed item may be obtained.**

The EIS can be found on the Department of Education's website:  
<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2016-2017/December212016PanelMeeting.htm>

Copies of the EIS are also available in the main office of P.S. 45.

## **III. Submission of public comment.**

Members of the public who wish to provide comments are encouraged to attend the joint public hearing for this proposal and share their feedback in person. Members of the public that do not provide comments at the hearing may also provide oral or written comments as described below. All comments must be submitted at least 24 hours in advance of the PEP meeting at which this proposal is subject to a vote in order to be mentioned in the Public Comment Analysis to be published and provided to the Panel the evening before the Panel votes.

Written comments can be sent to [D27Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D27Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
Oral comments can be left at 212-374-7621

**IV. The name, office, address, email and telephone number of the city district representative, knowledgeable on the item under consideration, from whom information may be obtained concerning the item.**

Name: Rasheida Alston  
Office: Division of Operations  
Address: 100 Gold Street, Suite 3200, New York, NY 10007  
Email: [D27Proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:D27Proposals@schools.nyc.gov)  
Phone: 212-374-7621

**V. Date, time, and place of Joint Public Hearing for this proposal.**

December 15, 2016 at 6:00 PM.  
Q045 Building  
126-28 150<sup>th</sup> Street  
Queens, NY 11436

Questions about the proposal should be directed as indicated in section IV above.

Speaker sign-up will begin 30 minutes before the hearing, at 5:30 PM, and will close 15 minutes after the start of the hearing.

**VI. Date, time and place of the PEP meeting at which the Panel will vote on the proposed item.**

December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 at 6:00 PM  
High School for Fashion Industries  
225 W 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10011