

DECLARATION PURSUANT TO EDUCATION LAW SECTION 2590-g(9) and 2590-h(2-a)(f) CONCERNING THE TEMPORARY RE-SITING AND CO-LOCATION OF P.S. 056 NORWOOD HEIGHTS' (10X056) SECOND GRADE WITH ST. BRENDAN SCHOOL IN ST. BRENDAN'S CHURCH BEGINNING IN THE 2013-2014 SCHOOL YEAR

I, Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”), pursuant to sections 2590-g(9) and 2590-h(2-a)(f) of the New York State Education Law, do hereby determine that the immediate implementation of the proposal to temporarily re-site¹ and co-locate² P.S. 056 Norwood Heights’ (10X056, “P.S. 56”) second grade with St. Brendan School in St. Brendan’s Church, located at 268 East 207th Street, Bronx, New York, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year is necessary to preserve the general welfare of students. Additionally, compliance with the requirements of subdivisions (7) and (8) of section 2590-g of the Education Law, which require a public review process and approval by the Panel for Educational Policy (the “Panel”) before a proposed school closing or significant change in school utilization can take effect (except where the Panel or the Chancellor determines that immediate adoption of an item otherwise requiring Panel approval is necessary for the preservation of student health, safety or general welfare), would be contrary to the public interest. This emergency declaration shall remain in effect for six months or until the Panel votes to approve the proposal, whichever comes first.

P.S. 56 is an existing zoned elementary school serving students in kindergarten through fifth grade. P.S. 56 serves students in building X056 (“X056”), located at 341 East 207th Street, Bronx, New York, in Community School District 10 (“District 10”). Building X056 does not currently have the capacity to accommodate all of P.S. 56’s students. Thus, as of the 2012-2013 school year, P.S. 56 also served students in a building leased from the Montefiore Medical Center, Inc. (“Montefiore”), located at 361-63 East Gun Hill Road, Bronx, New York, also in District 10 (the “Annex”).

In April 2013, Montefiore declined to renew the DOE’s lease beyond the 2012-2013 school year, which means that P.S. 56 cannot continue to serve students in the Annex. Planned construction on X056 will increase capacity so that P.S. 56 can serve all of its students in that building, however, that construction is not anticipated to be completed until the start of the 2016-2017 school year. Therefore, it is necessary for a portion of P.S. 56’s students to be accommodated in a different building on a temporary basis.

After conducting a diligent search, the DOE has determined that St. Brendan’s Church, which is located approximately .1 mile from X056 also in District 10, is an appropriate facility in which to serve P.S. 56’s second grade students. St. Brendan’s Church houses St. Brendan School, a parochial school which serves students in kindergarten through grade five and offers a pre-kindergarten program.

¹ A “re-siting” means students will attend classes in a different building than in previous years.

² A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, libraries and cafeterias.

Under this proposal, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year, P.S. 56's second grade students will attend class at St. Brendan's Church rather than X056, and these students will be co-located with St. Brendan School. P.S. 56 second grade students will continue to be served at St. Brendan's Church through the 2015-2016 school year.³ P.S. 56 students in kindergarten, first, and third through fifth grades will continue to be served at the X056 building.

St. Brendan's Church has sufficient capacity to serve P.S. 56's second grade in the 2013-2014 school year. There are approximately 136 P.S. 56 second grade students, which will be served in 3 sections⁴ (consistent with section programming at X056 in the 2012-2013 school year) in three full size classrooms. P.S. 56 students will also have use of the gymnasium and cafeteria at St. Brendan's Church. An assistant principal from P.S. 56 will be assigned to St. Brendan's Church to provide administrative and instructional supervision as needed.

Several factors make the proposed temporary re-siting and co-location of P.S. 56's second grade at St. Brendan's Church the only practical way to serve these students:

1. The DOE has been unable to identify any other suitable buildings to accommodate P.S. 56 students.
2. St. Brendan's Church is only located .1 mile away from X056.
3. St. Brendan School and P.S. 56 serve students of similar ages.

For the reasons set forth above, I find that the temporary re-siting and co-location on an emergency basis of P.S. 56's second grade with St. Brendan School in St. Brendan's Church beginning in the 2013-2014 school year is necessary to preserve the general welfare of the students. This re-siting and co-location shall remain in effect for six months pursuant to this declaration. It shall continue thereafter if approved by the Panel.

Dated: New York, New York
September 4, 2013



Dennis M. Walcott

³ In order for the re-siting and co-location of P.S. 56 second graders to continue beyond Mach 2014, this proposal must be approved by the Panel consistent with Chancellor's Regulation A-190, and the DOE must enter into a longer-term lease with St. Brendan's Church, which it is already in the process of negotiating.

⁴ Enrollment figures are from the 2013-2014 Budget Register Projections.