



Public Comment Analysis

Date: November 25, 2013

Topic: The Proposed Temporary Re-Siting and Co-Location of One Grade Level of P.S. 056 Norwood Heights (10X056) with St. Brendan Elementary School ("St. Brendan") in St. Brendan Building, located at 268 East 207th Street, Bronx, New York 10467, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. As described below in greater detail, this re-siting and co-location was already effectuated via emergency declaration on September 4, 2013 and this proposal would allow P.S. 56's students to remain in St. Brendan Building through the 2015-2016 school year.

Date of Panel Vote: November 26, 2013

Summary of Proposal

On October 11, 2013 the New York City Department of Education ("DOE") issued an Educational Impact Statement ("EIS") describing a proposal to temporarily re-site and co-locate one grade level of P.S. 056 Norwood Heights (10X056, "P.S. 56") with St. Brendan Elementary School ("St. Brendan") in St. Brendan Building, located at 268 East 207th Street, Bronx, New York 10467, beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. As described below in greater detail, this re-siting and co-location was already effectuated via emergency declaration on September 4, 2013 and this proposal would allow P.S. 56's students to remain in St. Brendan Building through the 2015-2016 school year. A "re-siting" means that students will attend classes in a different building than in previous years and 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. P.S. 56 is an existing zoned elementary school that serves students in kindergarten through fifth grades; St. Brendan is a private parochial school serving students in kindergarten through eighth grades and offering pre-kindergarten.

P.S. 56 primarily serves students in building X056 ("X056"), located at 341 East 207th Street, Bronx, New York 10467, in Community School District 10 ("District 10"). Until the end of the 2012-2013 school year, P.S. 56 also served students in an annex building leased from the Montefiore Medical Center, Inc. ("Montefiore"), located at 361-63 East Gun Hill Road, Bronx, New York 10467, in District 10 ("the Annex"). In April 2013, Montefiore declined to renew the DOE's lease beyond the 2012-2013 school year, which meant that P.S. 56 could not continue to serve students in the Annex in the 2013-2014 school year. In addition to the Annex, P.S. 56 had been serving a small number of students in a "mini-building" located next door to the X056 building, which was demolished in the summer of 2013 to create space for construction on the X056 building. The planned loss of the mini-building coupled with the unexpected loss of the Montefiore Annex made it necessary during summer 2013 to secure additional space for P.S. 56, as building X056 alone could not accommodate all of P.S. 56's students for the 2013-2014 school year. Once arrangements were made with St. Brendan Building—which is located in District 10, just 0.1 mile from the X056 building and which had classrooms for P.S. 56 students—the Chancellor signed an emergency declaration providing for the placement of P.S. 56 students there, beginning on September 4, 2013 and continuing for six months thereafter. Since the start of the 2013-2014 school year, P.S. 56's second grade students have been co-located at St. Brendan Building with St. Brendan.

This proposal, if approved, will extend P.S. 56's placement in St. Brendan Building beyond March 2014 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Building X056 is currently undergoing construction, that will substantially increase the capacity of the building as a whole by creating an addition to expand it; the construction of the addition is anticipated to be completed prior to the start of the 2016-2017 school year, at which time the grade level served at St. Brendan Building will return to X056 and all P.S. 56 grade levels will be served in building X056. Should the

DOE learn that construction will not be complete in the anticipated time, the DOE plans to reassess any space related plans.

Under this proposal, it is anticipated that P.S. 56 will serve one grade level of students in St. Brendan Building through the duration of the 2013-2014 school year, as well as in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016. Although the DOE expects that in each year P.S. 56's second grade will be located in St. Brendan Building, the P.S. 56 administration may ultimately decide to change the configuration of its grade levels across the two sites. Any plans to re-site additional grade levels of P.S. 56 to other locations would be proposed in a separate EIS.

The DOE believes that the placement of one grade level of P.S. 56 will significantly assist the school in meeting the instructional needs of all its students and that St. Brendan Building offers sufficient capacity to serve one grade level of P.S. 56 students over the course of this proposal. In the 2013-2014 school year, 136 second-grade students from P.S. 56 are being served in St. Brendan Building.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at the X056 building on November 12, 2013. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the original proposal. Approximately 8 members of the public attended the hearing, and 2 people spoke. Present at the meeting were District 10 Community Superintendent Melodie Mashel; Community Education Council 10 ("CEC 10") President Marvin Shelton; Priscilla Sheeran, Principal of P.S. 056 Norwood Heights; Maureen O'Neill and Mary Ramirez representing the School Leadership Team ("SLT") of P.S. 56; and Yael Kalban and Keely Faulkner from the DOE.

The following comments, and remarks were made at the joint public hearing on October 23, 2013 on the proposal:

1. Priscilla Sheeran, Principal of P.S. 56 asserted that:
 - a. She supports this proposal, as the leased space in the St. Brendan Building is critical to address the over-crowding at P.S. 56.
 - b. The X056 building has been historically over-crowded and over the last twenty years, various spaces have been used to accommodate P.S. 56 students.
 - c. She hopes to continue to accommodate second grade students at the St. Brendan Building, but the grade level is subject to change.
2. Marvin Shelton, President of CEC 10 voiced his support for this proposal.

Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE

No written and/or oral comments were submitted.

Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal

Comments 1(a), 1(b), and 2 are in support of this proposal and thus do not require a response.

Comment 1(c) asserts that the configuration of the school's grade levels across the X056 building and the St. Brendan Building is subject to change by the P.S. 56 administration.

As noted in the EIS, the DOE expects that in each year, P.S. 56's second grade will be located in St. Brendan Building; however, the P.S. 56 administration may ultimately decide to change the configuration of its grade levels across the two sites.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes were made to the proposal.