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

**Partial Re-siting of RHHS in
building Q475**

June 12, 2014

5:30 p.m.

**89-30 114th St.
Queens, NY 11418**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen,
3 thank you for your patience. It's just a little
4 quarter after 6:00 right now and I do want to be
5 respectful of people's time and get started. We
6 are awaiting Cheryl from CEC 27 and we will
7 accommodate her at the first opportune moment.
8 I'm just going to give everybody just another
9 minute to get to their seats and then I'm going
10 to take you through a brief summary of the
11 proposal. We'll hear from a few SLT members who
12 are present and then we'll move on to public
13 comments. So I appreciate your patience.

14 FEMALE VOICE: The CEC member is on her way?

15 FEMALE VOICE: Sherry.

16 MS. BARBOZA: Sherry. We will accommodate
17 her as soon as she gets here. That's not a
18 problem.

19 Okay, let's go ahead and get started. Good
20 evening. This is a joint public hearing of the
21 Department of Education, Community Education
22 Council 27 and the School Leadership Team of
23 Richmond Hill High School regarding the proposed
24 re-siting of a portion of Richmond Hill High
25 School, 27 Q475 from Building Q636 to Building

1 Q475 during the 2014-2015 school year and 2015-
2 2016 school year. And the temporary co-location
3 of a portion of Richmond Hill High School 27
4 Q475 with Epic High School North, 27 Q334 in
5 Building Q636 for the 2014-2015 school year.

6 I am Meg Barboza and I'm the Chancellor's
7 Designee for tonight's hearing. We have asked
8 the District 27 Community Education Council and
9 the School Leadership Team at Richmond Hill High
10 School to participate in this joint public
11 hearing. I am joined by several members of the
12 School Leadership Team tonight. To my left, he
13 just stepped out, was Mr. Vishnu and I will not
14 get his last name right so I'm just going to--
15 and I know you all know Vishnu so, we have
16 Vishnu, we also have, it appears, Charles,
17 Edith, Yolanda, Don, Patricia and Cheryl. And I
18 note that it appears Patricia, Cheryl and Edith
19 will all be giving some commentary tonight.

20 We are also awaiting Sherry from CEC 27.
21 She has not arrived yet but we will accommodate
22 her at the first opportune moment so if she does
23 arrive, I hope you'll indulge me and allow her
24 to speak her piece as well.

25 I want to let you know that tonight's

1 hearing is being video and audio recorded.
2 Transcripts will be available on the DOE's
3 website. The purpose of this hearing is for you
4 to provide comments about the proposal. Before
5 I describe the proposal, I want to make sure
6 that you are all aware of the opportunity to
7 sign up to give public comment and provide your
8 input. All those who wish to speak must sign up
9 with my colleague, Dean, just outside of the
10 auditorium here and we will have the speaker
11 sign in, we'll close at approximately 6:30.
12 Speakers will be given the floor in the order
13 that they are signed up. We will welcome
14 elected officials and their representatives to
15 speak first and all comments are limited to two
16 minutes. There may be other elected officials
17 who arrive at different times throughout the
18 evening. If they wish to speak, we will do our
19 best to accommodate them at the first opportune
20 moment. Those who are here at the start of the
21 public comment segment will be asked to speak
22 first, again in order in which they signed up.
23 All comments will be mentioned in the analysis
24 of public comment to be published and provided
25 to the Panel for Educational Policy before the

1 panel votes on this proposal. I hope you do
2 know of the change in the Panel of Educational
3 Policy vote date on this. That vote is now
4 scheduled for June 24th. It was previously
5 scheduled for June 17th.

6 In addition, we welcome any comments and
7 feedback you may have at any time before the
8 panel votes on this proposal. The email address
9 and phone number where comments may be made are
10 D27proposals@schools.nyc.gov. You may also call
11 212-374-7621.

12 I'm going to read a brief proposal summary
13 and then, again, we'll move on to SLT, CEC and
14 elected comments and then on to the public
15 comments. Richmond Hill High School currently
16 serves a portion of its ninth grade in Building
17 Q636 located at 94-25 117th Street, Queens, New
18 York 11419 in Community School District 17 and
19 it serves the remainder of its ninth grade as
20 well as its 10th through 12th grades in Building
21 Q475 in temporary classroom units also known as
22 TCUs Q944 located at 89-30 114th Street, Queens,
23 New York 11418, also in District 27. Building
24 Q636 is located approximately .6 miles from
25 Building Q475. Building Q475 also houses

1 Partnership With Children, a community based
2 organization.

3 On October 11th, 2013, the New York City
4 Department of Education issued an Educational
5 Impact Statement describing a proposal to re-
6 site the ninth grade of Richmond Hill from
7 Building Q636--that's going to dog me all night-
8 -to Building Q475 beginning in the 2014-2015
9 school year. A re-siting means students will
10 attend classes in a different building than the
11 one they had attended in the previous year. On
12 November 26, 2013, the Panel for Educational
13 Policy approved that proposal. In response to
14 the Richmond Hill High School community's
15 request to remove the TCUs or transportable
16 classroom units, the DOE's newly formed campus
17 squad met with the Richmond Hill principal, Mr.
18 Ganish [phonetic] in April of 2014. The campus
19 squad, which assists schools with programming
20 issues and helps to resolve co-location
21 disputes, developed a plan for Richmond Hill to
22 cease using the TCUs for core instruction
23 beginning in 2014-2015 school year by gradually
24 re-siting that school's students from the Q636
25 building to main Building Q475 over the course

1 of two years. The DOE plans to remove the TCUs
2 prior to the 2016-2017 school year.

3 The DOE has now substantially revised the
4 original proposal. Under the revised proposal,
5 a portion of Richmond Hill, consisting of
6 approximately 200 students, will be served in
7 Building Q636 during the 2014-2015 school year
8 and will be temporarily co-located with new high
9 school, Epic High School North, which is opening
10 in September 2014. A co-location means that two
11 or more school organizations are located in the
12 same building and they may share one or more
13 common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums and
14 cafeterias.

15 Richmond Hill will continue to serve a
16 portion of its students in Building Q636 during
17 the 2014-2015 school year, re-siting its
18 students from Q636 to Q475 over the course of
19 two school years. Actual enrollment and demand
20 for Richmond Hill's three admissions programs
21 will determine which Richmond Hill students and
22 classes will be served in Building Q636. All
23 Richmond Hill students will be re-sited from
24 Building Q636 to main building--oh, I'm sorry, I
25 read that point already. My apologies.

1 The DOE will work with Richmond Hill's
2 leadership to ensure all of Richmond Hill
3 students have access to the full array of
4 programming offered by the school. The revised
5 EIS also includes an updated room count for main
6 Building Q475, which reflects plan construction
7 that will increase the capacity of that building
8 over the next two years, an updated allocation
9 of rooms for Richmond Hill in main Building Q475
10 and the TCUs, the allocation of rooms between
11 Richmond Hill and Epic North in Building Q636
12 for the 2014-2015 school year, additional
13 information about the implementation of the
14 enrollment reduction at Richmond Hill, updates
15 based on the most recent enrollment and
16 performance data for Richmond Hill, information
17 about the impact of recent amendments to
18 Commissioner's Regulation 100.3 on admissions
19 policies, updated information about the state
20 approval of status of Richmond Hill Career and
21 Technical or CTE education programs. Epic North
22 is open to students through the citywide high
23 School admissions process and uses a limited
24 unscreened selection method with priority for
25 students residing in Queens. Epic North will

1 open in Building Q636 with ninth grade, adding
2 one grade annually until it reaches full scale,
3 serving grades nine through 12 in the 2017-2018
4 school year. Beginning in the 20-15-2016 school
5 year, Epic North would be the only school
6 organization in Building Q636.

7 The DOE plans to reduce the enrollment at
8 Richmond Hill over a period of four years
9 beginning in September 2014. By 2017-2018,
10 enrollment at Richmond Hill will decrease by
11 approximately 420 to 460 students, so that it
12 will serve approximately 1570 to approximately
13 1610 students at scale in ninth through 12th
14 grades. The enrollment reduction is intended to
15 provide an opportunity for Richmond Hill to
16 concentrate on a smaller cohort of students and
17 allow for Epic North to open in Building Q636.
18 Moreover, the enrollment reduction is not
19 expected to yield a net loss of high school
20 seats in District 27. The approximate 420 to
21 460 seats that Richmond Hill would lose during
22 the enrollment reduction will be more than
23 recovered through the phase in of the new school
24 in the Q636 building as well as the phase in of
25 another high school, Epic High School South at

1 Building Q226 which together will offer
2 between 600 and 680 seats once they reach a full
3 grade span in the 2017-2018 school year.

4 According to the 2012-2013 enrollment
5 capacity and utilization report, main Building
6 Q475 and the transportable classroom units have
7 the combined capacity to serve a total of 2165
8 students. During the 2013-2014 school year,
9 Richmond Hill is serving approximately 1794
10 ninth through 12th grade students in Building
11 Q475. This yields a projected utilization rate
12 of approximately 83 per cent. This means that
13 the building is under-utilized and has space to
14 accommodate additional students. If this
15 proposal is approved, in 2014-2015 Richmond
16 Hill is projected to serve approximately 1763
17 ninth through 12th grade students in main
18 Building Q475 and the transportable classroom
19 units, yielding a projected building utilization
20 rate of approximately 81 per cent. In 2015-
21 2016, once all Richmond Hill students have been
22 re-sited from Building Q636, the school is
23 projected to serve approximately 1835 to
24 approximately 1875 ninth through 12th grade
25 students in main Building Q475 and the

1 transportable classroom units, yielding a
2 projected utilization rate of approximately 85
3 to 87 per cent. Because these utilization rates
4 are based on the combined capacity of the main
5 building, Q475 and the TCUs, they are subject to
6 change upon the completion of planned
7 construction in the main building. Modified use
8 of the TCUs in the 2014-2015 school years and
9 the eventual removal of the TCUs once the rooms
10 are no longer needed to support students.

11 According to the program requirements of the
12 School Construction Authority, Building Q636 has
13 the capacity to serve 402 students. During the
14 2013-2014 school year, Richmond Hill is serving
15 approximately 400 students--pardon me, 400 ninth
16 grade students in Building Q636. This yields an
17 approximate projected utilization rate of 100
18 per cent.

19 If this revised proposal is approved in
20 2014-2015, Richmond Hill is projected to serve
21 approximately 200 students and Epic North is
22 projected to serve approximately 81 ninth grade
23 students in Building Q636, yielding an
24 approximate building utilization rate of 70 per
25 cent.

1 As I mentioned, I am joined by members of
2 the School Leadership Team and I will certainly
3 pass the mic off. We'll start with Vishnu. We
4 also have Cheryl, Edith and Patricia and I did
5 want to see if Sherry from CEC 27 has arrived
6 yet. I'll now hand the mic over to Vishnu who
7 will give us some commentary. Thank you.

8 MR. VISHNU MAHADEO: I thank you very much
9 for the participation of the DOE in this once
10 again very important meeting to do with the
11 welfare of the students and the community here
12 in Richmond Hill.

13 We are getting a lot of mis--different
14 information. Earlier we were told by various
15 members of the DOE that the TCUs will not
16 anymore house students. But now I'm hearing
17 that we will have some students in the TCUs.
18 This is unacceptable. We know and we have said
19 very clearly as SLT that the proposal that they
20 have given to us was a non-starter. And we
21 would like to make sure that that position you
22 have not really done much to address our
23 concern. We are very clear that the TCUs are no
24 longer supposed to be used for our children.
25 And having this again in the statement is really

1 giving us information that it seems as though
2 the DOE is trying to get us all confused. Do we
3 have children going in the TCUs? We need a yes
4 or no on that because it was said publicly, no
5 more children in TCUs.

6 Now in addition to that, I would like to say
7 at this forum that again I challenge the numbers
8 of the calculation for the utilization
9 [applause]--

10 MS. BARBOZA: That's right. Go ahead and
11 clap.

12 MR. MAHADEO: Now why I'm challenging this,
13 you cannot use a capacity of the TCU to
14 calculate the capacity of the utilization here
15 in Richmond Hill. TCUs, as per the standards of
16 DOE, should not be using that capacity--the
17 capacity of the TCUs should not be used to
18 calculate the utilization. So those are two
19 areas of concern. We have had private meetings
20 and we are getting commitment for increase in
21 security and cameras. I would like to comment
22 on this public forum and say very clearly,
23 Richmond Hill security system is inadequate.
24 Richmond Hill High School system needs a
25 thorough overhaul of its camera and its

1 technology and we need that to be done
2 immediately.

3 We'd also like to bring to the attention of
4 the DOE that we have experimented here before
5 with multiple schedules and we know the
6 detriment of multiple schedules. We had a
7 marked drop in attendance and our graduation
8 rate was at 49.3 per cent. We can't go back to
9 a multiple schedule because we know that's a
10 failed experiment and it doesn't work in
11 Richmond Hill. It may be a solution for other
12 communities but this minority community has its
13 own characteristics and you need to pay
14 attention to the details of our numbers over the
15 last three to five years where it became very
16 apparent that our concern about TCUs and our
17 concern about this multiple schedule. These are
18 some of our major concern.

19 In addition to that, we want to make sure
20 that--we're getting multiples of information
21 with regards to Epic. On one hand, on Epic
22 website, they were talking about the need to
23 serve male black and Hispanic students only. If
24 there is a change, they need to communicate it
25 to us clearly that the population that they're

1 going to be taking is going to be an open
2 population. But at the same time, we have an
3 increase of students who want to come to
4 Richmond Hill this year. While we're having an
5 increase in the student intake, you want to take
6 400 of our students and bring them into this
7 environment. Where are we going to put these
8 kids and how are we going to accommodate them?
9 This is a logical statement.

10 When Sarah Kaufman made the error of using
11 the capacity of the TCU and she was challenged
12 publicly at the PEP meeting, why are we going
13 through the same false calculation at this point
14 in time? Who is she and why is she putting this
15 agenda on Richmond Hill High School? Richmond
16 Hill High School capacity needs to be looked
17 upon and calculated properly. Use the capacity
18 of the school, use the blue book standards, we
19 need to make sure that you treat us equal or
20 fair. Don't treat us with some different
21 yardstick. We're very concerned. And what it
22 is is that we are asking for your participation,
23 we need the DOE to listen to what we are saying.
24 We have been saying very clearly, our message is
25 very consistent, but you kept changing your

1 position and you're not coming to us clearly.

2 With that, I would also like to recognize,
3 we have Senator Jim Sanders' representative
4 here, Mr. Mike Duvalle, so I would like to ask
5 Mr. Mike Duvalle if he can join us up front.

6 MS. CHERYL ROSE: Thank you. Well, as my
7 name tag shows, my name is Cheryl Rose. I am
8 the PTA co-president, I'm a member of the SLT
9 and I'm a pastor in this community of Richmond
10 Hill. So I'm speaking wearing all of those hats
11 so if I get a little preachy, you understand
12 it's because I'm a pastor.

13 Anyway, I'm happy to be here tonight. I'm
14 saddened that we don't have a greater turnout
15 and I would have to say that it's not
16 necessarily because people don't care because I
17 know that's one of the first things we're
18 accused of. Oh, if they cared, they would come
19 out. Unfortunately, what has happened, the
20 morale has decreased severely over the years and
21 people are afraid to care. Now it's not that
22 they don't care. Their hearts are broken. They
23 feel like they have no hope any longer, hope
24 defers, makes the heart grow sick, right? And
25 so people are feeling like what happen--if we

1 come, does it really matter? Especially when
2 we have DOE representatives going around making
3 comments like oh, well, we've already made the
4 decision. This is just a formality, yeah. Mm-
5 hmm. So we're a little disheartened by that but
6 I can guarantee you that every teacher, every
7 parent, every community member that is involved
8 with Richmond Hill High School loves these
9 students. But they can no longer trust what the
10 DOE says and does. [Applause].

11 Thank you. I know you are all used to me
12 getting all hyper. I'm trying to stay calm.
13 I'm trying to keep in the seat but you know, my
14 passion is still here.

15 As a member of SLT and a PTA co-president,
16 since the beginning of the school year, DOE
17 representatives have told us that the reason
18 they decided to give the annex to another high
19 school was because that was what the community
20 wanted and it was in the best interest of the
21 community. Now as parent leaders, we repeatedly
22 asked for proof to substantiate this claim. Up
23 until now, we have not been furnished with any
24 proof. So my husband and I decided to venture
25 out into the community, starting with

1 individuals that live directly across the
2 street from the annex. Mm-hmm. And we asked
3 them if they had ever been approached by the DOE
4 and were they in support of removing Richmond
5 Hill High School from the annex and giving it to
6 Epic High School North. Out of the hundreds,
7 and I say hundreds, of people we approached, not
8 one single person acknowledged that they had
9 been approached by anyone from the DOE. In
10 fact, most, if not all of the community members,
11 were outraged that the DOE's proposal to
12 displace Richmond Hill High School students in
13 order to house Epic students. They were so
14 outraged that many times before finishing
15 sharing the information, they began signing our
16 petition which asked for the annex to be used
17 solely for providing services to students of
18 RHHS. So who did the DOE approach in this
19 community?

20 As far as we can tell, they haven't
21 approached anyone. The DOE claims a new high
22 school is in the best interest of the community
23 and yet the faculty and staff of Epic High
24 School are not from this community. And they
25 have never lived or taught in this community.

1 In fact, the prospective principal is from
2 Massachusetts. Now while they may be wonderful
3 individuals, how do they know what this
4 community needs? Reading about something on
5 paper and actually living it out are two
6 completely different things. Has anyone from
7 Epic gone to members of this community and
8 introduced themselves or their plans? Well,
9 members of the Richmond Hill High School
10 community have walked through the neighborhood
11 introducing themselves and building good rapport
12 with our neighbors or showing them that we are
13 here to enhance the neighborhood and community
14 and we have been well received since then.

15 Is it good for the community to bring in 94-
16 -this young lady mentioned there was a capacity
17 at 81 but at my last CEC meeting, the
18 prospective principal publicly stated that they
19 were at, had 94 students which made them at full
20 capacity. But is it good for the community to
21 bring the 94 students from Epic High School so
22 that they can be under served since Epic will
23 not have the proper funding or human resources
24 to offer all of the many wonderful programs that
25 Richmond Hill High School currently offers,

1 including various Pathways, advanced placement
2 classes, tutoring, clubs, opportunities to
3 travel to other countries, just to name a few?
4 It would take years before Epic is able to offer
5 what we already have and those students who are
6 starting out will miss opportunities that no
7 doubt Epic will be able to offer in the future
8 but they could have taken advantage of it at
9 Richmond Hill High School right now.

10 Again, at the last CEC meeting, the
11 prospective principal of Epic stated that the
12 importance of supporting the socio-emotional
13 development of his students--he stressed that.
14 But how would that supported as they realize
15 they will not be able to benefit from the many
16 programs and opportunities that would have been
17 afforded to them had they simply enrolled in
18 Richmond Hill High School or if they were in
19 another building where they would not be able to
20 see the inequities so clearly? How is it in the
21 best interest of the community to have students
22 experience such inequity which will only lead to
23 resentment? How is it in the best interest of
24 the community to offer Richmond Hill High School
25 200 seats, forcing us to pick and choose who

1 will receive one of those seats? We can't
2 make the choice by Pathways since currently our
3 smallest Pathway is approximately 350 students.
4 So who gets the seats? Is it in the best
5 interest of the community to limit our seats in
6 the annex while removing the trailers
7 simultaneously?

8 And Like Mr. Mahadeo said, what is the
9 story? Why can't DOE keep it straight? First
10 we're told there are not going to be anymore
11 students in the trailers and now we're told that
12 there are. What is the truth? How can we trust
13 you? I'm keeping it real here.

14 Now of course we're grateful to get rid of
15 the trailers. But how will all of the estimated
16 2500 students, including the 486 freshmen that
17 are slated to come in the fall, not to mention
18 the over the counter students that we can't
19 possibly project, how would they fit safely and
20 comfortably in our main building? The answer is
21 they will not. We will be over-crowded and most
22 like forced to return to multiple sessions,
23 which is not in our students' or community's
24 best interest. As Mr. Mahadeo stated already,
25 we've experienced this and it was a failure.

1 How can we go back to that? There's safety
2 issues. How are we going to know who's coming
3 or going? How are we going to know who's a
4 Richmond Hill and who's not? How are we going
5 to know this? And then what's going to happen?
6 It's going to continue to perpetuate, the
7 negative reputation that Richmond Hill has
8 gotten over the years, which is not true.

9 So, please, help us to understand how the
10 DOE determined that the multiple detrimental
11 effects of limiting our seats in the annex will
12 benefit our community. The DOE has told us that
13 we have a voice and we must stand up for our
14 children. However, although we have a voice, it
15 doesn't seem that the DOE has hearing since what
16 we have shared with our voice has fallen on deaf
17 and at best, ears with selective hearing. So we
18 are imploring you to consider what is really in
19 the best interest of the community based on what
20 the community knows and believes and not based
21 on what the DOE has perceived.

22 If the DOE was listening to us, how could
23 they even have a meeting at this time when they
24 know that parents are unavailable so close to
25 their work hours? If they really wanted to hear

1 what we have to say, why aren't there more DOE
2 representatives standing here? If they really
3 cared about what was happening, why don't they
4 look at all the awesomeness that's taken place
5 and stop telling us of what used to be. Why
6 don't they help us move forward in excellence to
7 become the school that we know we're destined to
8 become? Is the DOE really listening? Does our
9 voice really matter? If our voice really
10 matters, why is the PEP taking a vote in the
11 Bronx at six o'clock on this issue when our
12 parents and our students are from this
13 community? Do we really have a voice? What is
14 it for, their entertainment? I've lost respect
15 for the DOE. I've lost faith in the DOE. I'm
16 challenged when a parent or someone else comes
17 to me and questions me and they want to have
18 hope. How can I offer them hope when I myself
19 do not trust the DOE and its agenda?

20 We respect their proposal--we don't respect
21 their proposal. Let me correct that. We get
22 it. You need to put Epic somewhere. But why
23 can't they share the same space, Epic North and
24 Epic South. Why should their students come here
25 and experience inequity and injustice as well?

1 If you want to get them out, if you want to
2 get us out of the building completely by 2017,
3 why not make a plan that's healthy for everyone
4 in the meantime? Because while these proposals
5 are being thrown at us and forced down our
6 throats, what about in the meantime? What do
7 they do with the actual number of students that
8 we have that is not showing up in the DOE
9 reports? What do we do with those students? Do
10 we push them all together in a sardine can and
11 say here, just deal with it. This wouldn't
12 happen in another community, whether or not the
13 parents showed up, this would not happen. So
14 what is the deal with telling us about how they
15 feel about us, our students, our community? As
16 far as I'm concerned, they're telling us that we
17 don't care. But I'll let them know this, we're
18 not going to stop fighting for our children,
19 community, faculty and staff or treat them with
20 dignity, honor and respect. So what do I say
21 whenever I end what I have to say? Let's go
22 Lions. [Applause]

23 MS. SHERRY ALGREDO: Hi, I'm Sherry. I'm
24 with the CEC, Council Representative. I'm not
25 going to say--I think everything was said

1 already but I want to say on behalf of the
2 CEC, we are on the side of the parents. We 100
3 per cent agree with them. Their concerns about
4 over-crowding, and we already have an issue with
5 over-crowding that needs to be addressed and
6 taken care of but instead of taking care of
7 that, now they're dealing with an issue of
8 having Epic, another high school come in and
9 just take space. So in a nutshell, it doesn't
10 make sense to me. Like why wouldn't you work
11 with the issue that's at hand rather than add
12 another issue upon an issue. So I am 100 per
13 cent, we are supporting the CEC, the parents,
14 you know, the CEC is part of, you know, DOE
15 representative, and we hope that you hear our
16 voice. You know, you work on the over-crowding
17 issue and you forget about the co-location for
18 now until the issue is at hand in the school
19 that needs to be addressed, needs to be taken
20 care of first. To me that makes much more
21 common sense. So I hope it's something you guys
22 would hear us, know this is where we stand on
23 this issue and you would talk about it before
24 making decisions that you probably will regret
25 later on. Thank you. [Applause]

1 MALE VOICE: Thank you. And I apologize
2 for my tardiness in being late. I was speaking
3 to the senator and he is in Ramapo the last time
4 I spoke to him. He left Albany on his way here.
5 So if he get here before, he will stop by on his
6 way home. In the meanwhile, I'm also the
7 borough president appointed to the CEC and I'm
8 also, well, not officially representing the
9 senator as one speaker alluded to.

10 The senator though is concerned that the
11 annex existed in the first place to alleviate
12 the over-crowding of Richmond Hill High School
13 and now in actuality they'll be over-crowding
14 the annex by adding another school to it which
15 is ludicrous. So I don't have much to say
16 because I'm just--but the senator is against
17 having a co-location, he's 100 per cent behind
18 having the annex open for Richmond Hill High
19 School and he said that the fight is not over.
20 And we got half a loaf. At least it's open.
21 It's not closed. But we have to fight and the
22 fight continues. So he was texting me, he's
23 getting close to the GW Bridge area. Hopefully
24 he gets here before. Thank you. [Applause]

25 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you so much. And again,

1 we just heard from the SLT members represented
2 from Senator Sanders' office. The formal
3 presentations have now concluded so I'd like to
4 open the floor up to the speakers. We're going
5 to welcome elected officials and their
6 representatives first and then students and then
7 people who have signed in on the general sign in
8 sheet.

9 So I ask Dr. Seth Welins from Community
10 Board 9 to please approach the mic. And Dean,
11 just here on your left, as we noted, we'll have
12 two minutes. He'll give you a time.

13 DR. SETH WELINS: Thank you very much.
14 Richmond Hill High School is an integral part of
15 our community board and we've been watching - -
16 the last couple of years. There have been a lot
17 of promises made to the school by the Department
18 of Education, particularly with regard to the
19 annex and movable - - units. And - -
20 explanation. - - . But it's not possible to -
21 - that kind of environment for the teachers as
22 well. I wouldn't want to teach there and I
23 wouldn't want my child in there. It's not
24 healthy, a healthy environment. I don't
25 understand why for the next two years - - still

1 staying in that environment. It's not right.
2 It's particularly strange that now under the new
3 Education Law, charter schools - - by the city
4 of very nice things whereas - - high school - -.
5 There's money available. There's plenty of
6 money available - - promises that DOE has made
7 over the last couple of years with regard to the
8 annex. And I believe very carefully the
9 statement. And one of the things that comes to
10 mind that I've noticed is they say the eventual
11 removal of TCUs once the rooms are - - to
12 support students. Well, I think I'm skeptical.
13 I wonder what happens if the enrollment
14 increases unexpectedly. Would that mean then
15 they still - - needing the TCUs to support the
16 students because they won't be able to - - the
17 main building? Normally I wouldn't think this
18 way but there have been so many promises - -
19 over the last couple of years that you start to
20 wonder exactly what the DOE plans to do if in
21 fact that occurs, that there is an - - students
22 and they can't absorb them. [Applause]

23 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you so much. So Mike,
24 we had you give your statement and Vishnu, would
25 you like to wear this hat?

1 MR. MAHADEO: I'd prefer if Mike does that
2 as he's here.

3 MS. BARBOZA: That's fantastic. And we'll
4 move on to the students. I have John Rainone.
5 Thank you, John.

6 MS. JOHN RAINONE: - - , teachers, students
7 and administrators. The last freshmen of the
8 school - - attend the annex - - middle school to
9 high school - - . The more freshmen for the - -
10 which are pitiful excuses - - . As a student
11 that attended ninth grade in - - , I can tell
12 you this. - - to accommodate the change to high
13 school. - - for the students. That's - - more
14 of them have to go. The Board of Education make
15 the annex - - . I'd also like to add that the
16 main building, you have - - downgraded from the
17 over-crowding that is going to be generated from
18 moving adolescents from the annex. If the Board
19 of Education - - the annex is under-utilized in
20 the past year, in 2013, - - because we should be
21 moving - - from the - - to the annex - - once
22 and for all instead of the opposite. That's why
23 our school needs not just a portion of the annex
24 but it's entire - - in order to meet the needs
25 and expenses of the Department of Education.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much, John. I
3 have Shellian Williams and then the name was
4 crossed out. Shellian, did you still want to
5 give a statement? Thank you, Shellian.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. SHELLIANN WILLIAMS: It's crossed out
8 because I signed on the student page.

9 MS. BARBOZA: Oh.

10 MS. WILLIAMS: - - have another student?

11 MS. BARBOZA: Okay. We actually don't have
12 another student. The next person is actually
13 you on the right page. so we're in good shape.
14 Okay. Thank you, Shellian.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: You're welcome. And although
16 - - the panel has already expressed the majority
17 of my sentiments, I still - - . My name is
18 Shellian Williams and I am a guidance counselor
19 with the Magnet Academy over at the annex and
20 the Magnet Academy is a place where incoming
21 freshmen are given the opportunity to transition
22 to high school in a safe, healthy and highly
23 structured environment. They learn the
24 importance of teamwork. They're celebrated when
25 they achieve well and they are supported when

1 they're struggling. We know our students
2 personally and we give them the care and
3 guidance that they need to begin to make the
4 choices that will have an impact on their
5 future. We're committed to creating a cohort of
6 invested, well rounded students while teaching
7 them how to form healthy relationships with
8 their peers and the staff and to positively
9 influence them as they go through high school.
10 In addition to academically rigorous curriculum
11 designed to prepare them for Regents exams in
12 June as they begin on their path to public
13 readiness, they're also exposed to many
14 opportunities to serve the community. They give
15 back to the school by participating in monthly
16 assemblies which are designed to raise
17 awareness, promote tolerance and enlightenment
18 as well as give the students an opportunity to
19 showpiece their talents and practice effective
20 communication. We want what's best for our
21 students.

22 Currently we have almost - - students
23 enrolled in academics. We're slated to receive
24 approximately 486 incoming freshmen in the fall.
25 I thought that the poorly thought out

1 counterproductive business first tactics of
2 the Blumberg - - was going to be over with the
3 new administration with - - children first.

4 But whose children?

5 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

6 MS. WILLIAMS: The DOE's plan to displace
7 half of our incoming freshmen to make room for
8 94 students is ill conceived, disregarding of
9 the needs of our students from this community
10 and - - of space. Richmond Hill High School's
11 problem of over-crowding has led to us having
12 multiple sessions for years. This year, with
13 the help of the annex, we were able to have a
14 single session allowing the students to
15 participate in sports, clubs and other
16 extracurricular activities as well as attend
17 after school - - . I want to urge you to place
18 Epic High School in another building - - . It
19 makes no sense at all to do what you have
20 proposed to do when the problem of over-crowding
21 has not yet been resolved. We are not asking
22 for the annex in perpetuity but at least until
23 enrollment is down. We generally enroll
24 approximately 500 freshmen in our school and
25 this year, according to - - is no different. Do

1 not force the unsafe situation of over-
2 crowding back into our lives. Do not force our
3 students to have to forego the extracurricular
4 activities and academic intervention
5 opportunities that will help to enrich their
6 high school experience and in many instances
7 provide a scholarship opportunity for them as
8 they enroll in college. This is not a favor we
9 are asking. This is the right thing to do.

10 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

11 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you, Miss Williams. I
14 have John Carter from Community Board 9. Thank
15 you, Mr. Carter.

16 MR. JOHN CARTER: Yes, I'm a member of
17 Community Board 9, I'm on the Education
18 Committee. I'm an actual resident, spend many
19 hours in this building, in the pool and the gyms
20 and the yard. I - - my own children in this
21 very room for various activities. I even had an
22 aunt who graduated here probably in the mid to
23 late 20s--I'm sure she would be interested to
24 see what was going on. And I spent my entire
25 working life - - .

1 I assume you know that the building on
2 114th Street and 86th Avenue was the annex at
3 one time. In fact the parlance in the community
4 when I was growing up, and in fact I still refer
5 to that building as the annex. People know it
6 as an annex. The model I think is good. It's
7 been used in various places and the New Town
8 High school using it for many years. It made
9 sense, I think it's a good place for a strong
10 leadership team of a school to get to meet
11 relevant cohorts, to develop - - , to - - the
12 school culture, to develop just the way that - -
13 then bring them into the main building. It
14 makes sense as a model. I am less persuaded by
15 the metrics and more by the historical venue for
16 the culture of the annex as the model for the
17 school. And it seems to me it's a reasonable
18 way to have this school rejuvenate itself.
19 Because it needs to be a solid, ongoing,
20 significant part of the community not only for
21 its students but for all the kids in the
22 community.

23 FEMALE VOICE: That's right, that's right.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much, Mr.

1 Carter. And then it looks like Ari
2 Steinfeld? Ari? Knicks fan.

3 MR. ARI STEINFELD: I'm sorry.

4 MS. BARBOZA: That's all right. My husband
5 too. I've been suffering with you. You can
6 hold onto it, that's fine.

7 MR. STEINFELD: Okay. My name is Ari
8 Steinfeld. I've been a teacher in - - last 23
9 years. I came here in September of - -
10 seniority transfer through John Adams. Long
11 story short. This school has been beat upon
12 from the day that I walked in here and under
13 previous chancellors--and I going to try to - -
14 my words nicely but I would, let's just say I
15 would not be upset if they - - , okay? Let's
16 just put it that way. I am not going to miss
17 them under the new mayor and under the new
18 chancellor. I am hopeful that there will be
19 some changes in policy and some - - , teachers
20 and supervisors. I am sending this message
21 directly to the school chancellor whom I hope
22 will listen and really accept the advice of the
23 community and the teachers here. This policy
24 stinks. It's not just that it stinks for
25 political reasons, it stinks because you're

1 bringing us back to the situation that was - -
2 . I personally, when we were - - was one - -
3 teaching three different - - in four different
4 rooms on three different floors. That is
5 impossible for a human being and the fact is,
6 the teachers will not have their own rooms.
7 They will have to walk from one room to another
8 to another. There will be no place for us to
9 eat lunch. There is this concept that we are
10 going to have new classrooms, that was what I
11 heard in this report. Where is the classrooms
12 coming from except the basement? And many of
13 these classrooms, I am sure that they presume
14 that they can use--cannot be used because of
15 fire issues. So I would urge the chancellor to
16 really look at this, look at this, proposal with
17 some degree of skepticism, with a lot of
18 skepticism.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

20 MS. BARBOZAL Thank you very much, Ari. So
21 at this time the speaker list is exhausted and
22 we'd like to adjourn the meeting. I do want to
23 share some information as I had earlier on. I
24 know that you had noted that some parents
25 couldn't be here. I do want to reinforce that

1 English, Spanish, whatever their language is,
2 the telephone number, they're absolutely free to
3 leave a message. If it's not in the English
4 language, we'll work with our translations unit
5 to interpret it. And the same thing with any
6 email that comes through to us. So as I read
7 that information to you and you think of parents
8 who may not have been able to be here tonight or
9 even students who may not be able to be here
10 tonight, they can submit comments and those are
11 comments that are anonymous. So no one is going
12 to know that John Q. Student said this proposal
13 stinks. That won't be called out at all but it
14 will be included in that analysis of public
15 comment. And I did thank you for mentioning the
16 - - location so I will reiterate that again. So
17 again, we welcome comments and feedback you may
18 have before the panel votes on the proposal at
19 the June 24th meeting. The comment is open
20 until 6:00 p.m. on the 23rd. The email address
21 and phone number for comments is d27proposals,
22 and that's proposals multiple. So d27p-r-o-p-o-
23 s-a-l-s@schools.nyc.gov. Again, the telephone
24 number, 212-374-7621. And again, that meeting
25 will take place 6:00 p.m., it begins at 6:00

1 p.m. at the Taft Educational Campus which is
2 located at 240 East 172nd Street in the Bronx,
3 10457.

4 I thank you all for your participation
5 tonight. This hearing has been adjourned.

6 Ladies and gentlemen, my sincere apologies.
7 It appears that I missed one of our SLT members.
8 So if you will give me just a moment, I did want
9 to give him the opportunity to speak. So my
10 apologies. Petrucio, my sincere apology to you.

11 MR. PETRUCIO LOPEZ: Hi. Good evening. My
12 name is Petrucio Lopez. Miss Barboza, I have a,
13 the first question, are you entitled to answer
14 questions?

15 MS. BARBOZA: Beg your pardon?

16 MR. LOPEZ: Are you entitled to answer a
17 question?

18 MS. BARBOZA: We don't have a Q and A, but
19 if you have a question, I'm happy to give you
20 any information I have.

21 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. I'm going to talk in
22 regard to annex. So you used to be a teacher
23 before?

24 MS. BARBOZA: I personally am not - - .

25 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. Well, let me ask you

1 something very simple. Miss Farina
2 [phonetic], she speaks Spanish so, but if you do
3 ask - - to Miss Farina, if you think about a
4 teacher and that position that she have, if you
5 feel comfortable or if she like it to go back to
6 be a teacher.

7 MS. BARBOZA: - - .

8 MR. LOPEZ: To work, you know, to leave that
9 position what you have and go back to. Because
10 that's going to represent like a class work,
11 work. You know how the class work? They, like
12 that, you know? So if they take the students
13 from the - - to put them on the annex, what's
14 the deal to bring them back? Do you think
15 that's progress?

16 MS. BARBOZA: - - to take the students back
17 - - .

18 MR. LOPEZ: No, they take the student to the
19 annex, so, and they want to bring them back to
20 the - - .

21 MS. BARBOZA: They're taking the students,
22 they're putting them back - - . - - trailers
23 and I think that's something that - - talk to
24 the community, talk to the principal - - was a
25 priority - - . I know that there's some planning

1 - - .

2 FEMALE VOICE: But I think that - - . - -
3 your children, your grandchildren, great
4 grandchildren, why would they bring them here
5 under these situations? - - . I'm sorry - - .

6 MR. LOPEZ: So when you're driving your
7 first time, you want to, now you have a brand
8 new car, you want to go back to the first car
9 you - - before?

10 MS. BARBOZA: I understand that now.

11 MR. LOPEZ: You understand now? It's, you
12 know, my question is really like stupid but I
13 think that makes sense.

14 MS. BARBOZA: - - I think it does. I think
15 that transfer question - - . And this is
16 certainly something that, you know, will be
17 addressed. I personally am not in a position to
18 say - - . - - position tonight - - Your
19 question - - . - - but in this particular
20 position, I'm not that - - .

21 MR. LOPEZ: I know you're not here to be the
22 face to face, you know, with the people but
23 you're here to listen to what other people say.
24 But sometimes the people, when they're talking,
25 the people sit behind the table, you know, they

1 have to answer some questions. And another
2 thing, and from 2013 to 2014, this is the first
3 time that the panel - - of a new - - . Listen
4 somebody because this is the last public meeting
5 that they're having. They're not having any
6 more. They say oh, let me send somebody and,
7 you know, and take it away. We're going to
8 leave you alone. Why they don't say that from
9 the beginning, to listen to what everybody say?

10 MS. BARBOZA: - - ?

11 MR. LOPEZ: Huh?

12 MS. BARBOZA: - - . So I just want to note
13 that - - . I know that the - - panel - - at
14 this time - - . He's very available to - - . I
15 can't speak to her personal schedule - - , I
16 know that she's very involved. Other panel
17 members might be able to reach out to - -
18 questions or concerns you may have about - - .
19 - - another school, I'm sorry, - - so I can't -
20 - speak to the individual members. But I can
21 certainly put you in touch with - - .

22 MR. LOPEZ: Okay. Your position, do you
23 think the annex continue for the next year?

24 MS. BARBOZA: I beg your pardon? The annex?

25 MS. LOPEZ: If the annex continue keeping

1 the students for the next year?

2 MS. BARBOZA: So again, I'm not - - . I
3 know that we're looking for - - DOE's - -
4 response. But again, I'm here to - - . - - .

5 MR. LOPEZ: I don't think - - voice with
6 everybody here, they're going to listen.
7 Believe me. They never--they say to you to, so
8 quick for something, you know? Because this is
9 the last meeting. If they don't listen, why let
10 the voice where everybody say hey, we're - - .
11 But I don't think so. Sorry.

12 MS. BARBOZA: I understand. I'm sorry
13 you're disappointed. But I appreciate you, and
14 thank you. I'm so sorry that we missed you
15 earlier. Thank you. All right. Thank you and
16 we are now going to officially adjourn.

17 FEMALE VOICE: - - ask a question.

18 MS. BARBOZA: I'm going to be available--
19 Dean and I will be available to ask questions.

20 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah, like I said, tell--

21 [END RECORDING]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability

Signature:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Denise Argumayo", is enclosed within a faint, rectangular border.

Date: June 17th, 2014