

The Proposed Opening and Co-location of New High School 24Q236 with Newtown High School (24Q455) in Building Q455, Beginning in 2013-2014

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

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to open and co-locate 24Q236, a new International High School, at the Newtown High School Campus in school building Q455 (“Q455”) located at 48-01 90th Street, Queens, NY 11373, within the geographical confines of Community School District 24 (“District 24”). International schools are designed to provide quality education for recently arrived immigrant students through a unique educational model, which will offer rigorous academic programming to prepare English Language Learner (“ELL”) students for post-secondary college and careers. If this proposal is approved, 24Q236 will be co-located in building Q455 with Newtown High School (24Q455, “Newtown”), an existing high school that serves grades nine through twelve. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

In consultation with the school’s leader, cluster, network support, and community, the DOE is planning to reduce the enrollment at Newtown over a period of four years beginning in September 2013. By 2016-2017, enrollment at Newtown will decrease by approximately 304-344 students so that it will serve 1,910–1,950 students at scale in ninth through twelfth grades.

The proposed co-location of 24Q236 in building Q455 is part of the DOE’s central goal to create new school options that will better serve future students and the community at large and to provide another option in the Q455 building. 24Q236 will be a screened International High School serving approximately 300-340 students at scale in ninth through twelfth grades and giving priority to Queens residents who have lived in the United States for four years or fewer at the time of admission to high school and whose home language is not English.

According to the 2011-2012 Enrollment Capacity Utilization Report (“Blue Book”), building Q455 has a target capacity of 2,396 students. In 2012-2013, the building serves approximately 2,254 students, yielding a building utilization rate of 94%.

If this co-location proposal is approved, 24Q236 will gradually phase into Q455 while Newtown simultaneously scales back its enrollment. The new school will serve students

in ninth grade in the 2013-2014 school year and will add one grade level every year until the school reaches its full grade span of ninth through twelfth grades in the 2016-2017 school year, serving approximately 300-340 students. In 2016-2017, once Newtown has completed its enrollment reduction and 24Q236 has reached full scale, it is projected that there will be approximately 2,210–2,290 students served in Q455, yielding an estimated building utilization rate of approximately 92%-96%.

Background on the DOE's Decision-Making Process

The DOE strives to ensure that all students in New York City have access to a high-quality school at every stage of their education. The co-location of 24Q236 in building Q455 is intended to provide an additional option to students and families in District 24 and in Queens.

As mentioned above, the DOE is working closely with the Newtown community to gradually decrease the school's enrollment by approximately 304-344 students over a period of four years. This will allow the school to concentrate on a smaller cohort of students as well as enable the co-location of a new high school which would focus on the needs of ELL students, which make up a large percentage of Newtown's current student body.

During the 2010-2011 school year, Newtown was designated as a Persistently Low Achieving ("PLA") school by the New York State Education Department ("SED"). In May 2011, the DOE assigned several PLA schools to one of four federally approved intervention models. Newtown became a Restart school. This model's interventions aimed to change the school by partnering the school with an outside organization which supports and helps manage the school.

During the 2011-2012 school year, as a result of the school's earlier performance struggles, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of Newtown, with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit its students and the school community. During that review, the DOE looked at recent historical performance and demand data from the school, consulted with superintendents and other experienced educators who have worked closely with the school, and gathered community feedback. Newtown struggled to meet performance targets for several years. The school received a C grade on its overall Progress Report grades in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 with a D grade in performance for both school years.

Due to the evidence that the school was not equipped to significantly improve student performance, the DOE proposed to close Newtown at the end of the 2011-2012 school year and replace it with a new school which would have opened this past September. A lawsuit prevented the DOE from implementing this proposal.. In August 2012, Newtown

was identified by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) as a priority school, defined by NYSED as one of the bottom 5% of schools in the state.

At this time, the DOE believes that reducing the enrollment of Newtown beginning in September 2013 and providing a new option for high school students in the Q455 building will benefit current and future students at both Newtown and in Queens. The enrollment reduction is intended to provide an opportunity for students currently attending Newtown to improve by narrowing the focus to a smaller number of students, while offering a high-quality option to serve the ELL population.

The DOE believes that the District 24 community and Queens as a whole will benefit from having an additional option in the Q455 building. The DOE will continue incorporating community feedback while this proposal is under consideration by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) and as plans are developed to co-locate the new school that meet student and community needs.

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

The Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) can be found on the Department of Education’s Web site: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>.

Copies of the EIS are also available in Newtown’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D24proposals@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: Emily Ades
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007
Email: D24Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-7621

V. Date, time and place of joint public hearing for this proposal.

February 27, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.
Newtown High School
Q455 Building
48-01 90th Street
Queens, NY 10473

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

Speaker sign-up will begin 30 minutes before the hearing and will close 15 minutes after the start.

VI. Date, time and place of the Panel for Educational Policy meeting at which the Panel will vote on the proposed item.

March 11, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.

Brooklyn Technical High School
29 Fort Greene Pl
Brooklyn, NY 11217