



Notice
January 22, 2013

Dennis M. Walcott
Chancellor

The Proposed Grade Truncation of P.S. 156 Laurelton (29Q156) from a K-8 School to a K-5 School 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 implement a “grade truncation” of the middle school grades of P.S. 156 Laurelton (29Q156, “P.S. 156”). P.S. 156 currently serves students in kindergarten through eighth grade, and is located in building Q156 and its adjacent transportable classroom unit (“TCU”) Q957 at 229-02 137 Avenue, Queens, NY 11413, in Community School District 29. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 would no longer serve students in grades six through eight and would only serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade. P.S. 156 is currently the only school organization housed in Q156. The DOE is proposing to truncate P.S. 156 based on its poor performance and the DOE’s assessment that the school lacks the capacity to improve quickly to better support student needs. In a separate Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) also posted on January 22, 2013, the DOE is proposing to open and co-locate a new middle school, 29Q289, in building Q156. That proposal can be found here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>.

If this proposal is approved, P.S. 156 will no longer enroll sixth-grade students after the conclusion of the 2012-2013 school year, will no longer serve seventh-grade students following the 2013-2014 school year, and will no longer serve eighth-grade students following the 2014-2015 school year. In 2015-2016 and beyond, it will continue serving students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Current students in grades six through eight will be served and supported by the DOE as they progress towards the completion of middle school while remaining enrolled at P.S. 156. Current and future P.S. 156 eighth-grade students will be supported through the Citywide High School Admissions Process as they apply to a high school. In cases where students do not meet promotional requirements by June 2015 and must repeat a grade no longer offered by P.S. 156, they will be served in 29Q289.

P.S. 156 is a zoned elementary school that currently admits kindergarten through fifth-grade students in its zone. It also serves sixth- through eighth-grade students, and gives priority for admission to continuing fifth-grade students. A student’s zoned school is determined by his or her home address. If this proposal is approved and P.S. 156 no longer serves middle

school grades, P.S. 156 will continue to admit kindergarten through fifth-grade students in its zone. All P.S. 156 fifth-grade students will enroll in their zoned middle school in 2013-2014 as sixth-grade students or apply to one of the district, borough-wide, or Citywide middle school options. As an additional option, current fifth grade students at P.S. 156 will have priority to enroll at new school 29Q289 in building Q156 for the 2013-2014 school year only, should the proposal to open that school be approved.

In a separate proposal described in another EIS, the DOE is proposing to open and “co-locate” a new middle school, 29Q289, in building Q156 in September 2013. The proposal can be found at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/Mar112013Proposals.htm>. If the proposal to co-locate 29Q289 in Q156 is approved, it would provide a new middle school option for District 29 families and would replace seats lost by the proposed grade truncation of P.S. 156’s middle school grades. The new school would open with sixth grade for the 2013-2014 school year, adding one grade annually until it reaches full scale in the 2015-2016 school year, with a grade span of six through eight.

Background on the DOE Decision-Making Process

Schools are identified for possible intervention for any of the following three reasons: (1) they received poor grades on their annual Progress Report; (2) they received a poor score on their most recent Quality Review; or (3) they have been identified by the New York State Education Department (“SED”) as a Priority School, defined by SED as one of the bottom 5% of schools in the state. In August 2012, SED identified Priority schools across the State, including 122 in New York City. Elementary and Middle schools are identified as Priority based on the school’s state test performance. Specifically, under the DOE’s accountability framework, all schools that receive a grade of D, F, or a third consecutive C grade or lower on their annual Progress Report and all schools that receive a rating of Underdeveloped on the Quality Review are evaluated for intensive support or intervention, including the possibility of phase-out or grade truncation. Progress Reports are released by the DOE each fall and evaluate schools on a scale of A through F based on Student Progress, Student Performance, School Environment, and, new to the High School Progress Report in 2011-2012, College and Career Readiness. During Quality Reviews, experienced educators visit a school over several days, observing classrooms and talking with students, staff, and families. Schools are rated on the following four-point scale: “Underdeveloped” (the lowest possible rating), “Developing,” “Proficient,” and “Well Developed” (the highest possible rating).

P.S. 156 received an overall D grade on its Progress Report in 2011-2012. On both the 2010-2011 and 2009-2010 Progress Reports, P.S. 156 received overall C grades.

As a result, the DOE initiated a comprehensive review of P.S. 156, with the goal of determining what intensive supports and interventions would best benefit its students and the P.S. 156 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.

After completing that review, the DOE believes that a grade truncation will best serve students and the community. Truncating P.S. 156’s middle school grades will allow for the school to more fully focus on serving its kindergarten through fifth-grade students.

Truncation will also allow for a new school option to open in building Q156, which the DOE believes will better serve future middle school students and the District 29 community.

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 P.S. 156 Laurelton’s main office.

III. Submission of public comment.

Written comments can be sent to D29Proposals@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: Jillian Roland
Office: Division of Portfolio Planning
Address: 52 Chambers Street, New York, NY 10007
Email: D29Proposals@schools.nyc.gov
Phone: 212-374-7621

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

February 28, 2013 at 6:00 p.m.
229-02 137 Avenue
Queens, NY 11413

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