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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
Citizens of the World Charter School
1 @ K126 - 12/5/12

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. MEG BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen.

3 It's now 6:00 p.m. Ladies and gentlemen, it's
4 now 6:00 p.m. We'd like to get started so if
5 you could make your way to your seats, thank you
6 very much.

7 [Pause]

8 MS. BARBOZA: Now, one more time. We'll
9 make one more announcement.

10 [Pause]

11 MS. BARBOZA: We've just got a couple of - -
12 .

13 [Pause]

14 MS. BARBOZA: Can you hold this for like two
15 seconds?

16 FEMALE VOICE 1: Sure.

17 [Pause]

18 MS. BARBOZA: What time are we at? What
19 time is it?

20 MALE VOICE 1: Michael Mena just left from
21 Senator Dilan's Office so you can cross him off.

22 MS. BARBOZA: Gotcha. Okay. Thank you Sir.
23 Thank you so much everybody. I wanted to make a
24 quick couple administrative announcements before
25 we get started just so you know what your

1 opportunities are for tonight. We're going to
2 get started in just a few minutes. As you may
3 know we'll be accepting public comment on this
4 proposal whether that is in favor of the
5 proposal or against the proposal. If you would
6 like to give a comment during the public comment
7 period, you will need to sign up on the public
8 comment sheet. It's one of these bright orange
9 sheets. You'll be given a number.

10 Just so you know we have some seating set
11 aside up here so we'll call you up and have you
12 sit down just to keep the aisles clear. I'm
13 going to have our interpreter make another
14 announcement so our colleagues who speak Spanish
15 will know, again, about their opportunity. I
16 want to remind you that public comment does
17 close 15 minutes after the start of the hearing.

18 SPANISH INTERPRETER: [Repeating
19 instructions in Spanish]

20 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you so much.

21 [Pause]

22 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen it is now
23 6:05 p.m. and we're going to start tonight's
24 hearing. As I'd mentioned earlier, public
25 comment is open for 15 minutes after the hearing

1 begins. It is now 6:05. Public comment will
2 close at 6:20 so if you would like to give a
3 comment during the public comment period, please
4 go outside and see my colleagues to sign up on
5 the orange sheet and get a number to speak
6 during public comment.

7 My name is Meg Barboza. I'm the Senior
8 Director for Engagement for the Office of
9 Portfolio and I'm here tonight to support
10 Superintendent Winnicki, Ms. Tesa Wilson, and
11 our principles from K126 and Northside. Do I--?

12 [Off mic comment]

13 MS. BARBOZA: Oh, fantastic. And we have
14 also Mario from the CEC as well. So I'm happy
15 to welcome them all here tonight. We'll also go
16 through introductions again. This is a joint
17 public hearing of the Department of Education,
18 Community Education Council 14, and the School
19 Leadership Teams of PS 126, John Ericsson Middle
20 School, my apologies, MS 126, John Ericsson
21 Middle School, and Believe School.

22 Tonight's hearings will be recorded and
23 transcribed. Again before we jump into our
24 formal presentations, I wanted to remind
25 everybody there is an opportunity to provide

1 public comment on this proposal whether that is
2 for or against. You do need to sign up. My
3 colleagues just outside this auditorium will
4 give you an orange number and again that sign-in
5 will close at 6:20.

6 All panel participants were asked to be here
7 no later than 5:30 p.m. and now that we have
8 started, if a panel participant arrives late, he
9 or she will be given the time to speak at the
10 first opportune moment. We want to be
11 respectful of everyone's time.

12 There may be elected officials, actually
13 there are elected officials here, and they may
14 arrive, others may arrive at different points
15 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak
16 we'll do our best to accommodate them at the
17 first opportune moment. Those who are here at
18 the start of public comment will be asked to
19 speak first.

20 Tonight's format will include a presentation
21 of the proposal and a presentation by our
22 hearing participants and that is followed by
23 public comment. Speakers should have already
24 signed up at the sign-in table and if you have
25 not signed up, again, you have 12 more minutes

1 before sign-up closes. Public comments,
2 everybody will be allowed 2 minutes for
3 comments. My colleague Debra is going to keep
4 time on a stopwatch and when your time is up,
5 she's going to signal to you that it's time to
6 move on to the next commenter.

7 So I ask everybody, ladies and gentlemen...
8 thank you I really appreciate that. Just wanted
9 to again remind you public comment closes at
10 6:20 and as you have your number you'll want to
11 listen closely for your name and your number
12 being called and come down here.

13 Again, everybody is allowed 2 minutes for
14 public comment. We want to hear from everybody
15 tonight so my colleague Debra, again, will let
16 you know when your time is up and we will ask
17 you to conclude so we can move onto the next
18 participant who would like to provide comment on
19 the proposal.

20 I would like to introduce the members of our
21 panel. Thank you. We have Mario Aguilar. We
22 have Mario Aguilar from the CEC 14. We have
23 Principal Reshma Baig from Northside Believe.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. BARBOZA: We have Principal Marcos

1 Bausch from John Ericsson.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. BARBOZA: We have Ms. Tesa Wilson of CEC
4 14.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. BARBOZA: We have Mr. Thomas Franta of
7 the State University of New York. And we have
8 District 14 Superintendent Alicia Winnicki.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. BARBOZA: I'm also pleased to be joined
11 by the following elected officials. We have
12 Assembly Member Joseph Lentol.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. BARBOZA: Council Member Diana Reyna.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. BARBOZA: And Council Member Stephen
17 Levin.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. BARBOZA: I'm going to turn the mic over
20 to Superintendent Winnicki. She's going to read
21 you a brief summary of the proposal. Assembly
22 Member Lentol will join us for some comments and
23 then we'll dive right into the presentations so
24 I thank you very much for your patience and your
25 attention.

1 MS. ALICIA WINNICKI: Good evening ladies
2 and gentlemen. The Department of Education is
3 proposing to open, collocate a new public
4 charter school, Citizens of the World Charter
5 School New York 1, in Building K126 beginning in
6 the 2013-2014 school year. A collocation means
7 that two or more school organizations are
8 located in the same building and may share
9 common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and
10 cafeterias.

11 Citizens will serve students in Kindergarten
12 through fifth grades. If this proposal is
13 approved Citizens will be collocated in K126
14 with existing schools, John Ericsson Middle
15 School, an existing middle school that serves
16 sixth through eighth grade students; and Believe
17 Northside Charter High School, an existing
18 charter school that serves 9th through 12th
19 grade students, beginning in the 2013-2014
20 school year.

21 Building K126 also houses Beacon, an after
22 school program run by the YMCA. If this
23 proposal is approved Citizens will enroll
24 Kindergarten and first grade classes in 2013-
25 2014 and will add one grade level each year

1 until it serves students in Kindergarten
2 through fifth grades in 2017-2018.

3 The school will admit schools via the
4 charter lottery application process with
5 preference given to District 14 residents.
6 According to the 2011-2012 enrollment capacity
7 utilization report, K126 has the capacity to
8 serve a total of 1,366 students. K126 is
9 projected to serve 668 students in 2012-2013,
10 yielding a projected utilization rate of
11 approximately 49%.

12 This means that the building is
13 underutilized and has space to accommodate
14 additional students. If this proposal is
15 approved in 2017-2018 once Citizens'
16 Kindergarten through fifth grades have fully
17 phased in and the school has reached full scale,
18 Citizens is projects to serve 342 to 432
19 students.

20 Ericsson Middle is projects to serve between
21 255 to 285 6th through 8th grade students.
22 Believe Northside is projected to serve between
23 360 to 420 9th through 12th grade students, for
24 a total of between 957 to 1,137 students
25 yielding a utilization rate of between 70% to

1 83%.

2 The proposed collocation of Citizens is not
3 expected to impact the admissions, enrollment or
4 educational options of students currently
5 attending John Ericsson or Believe Northside.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much
8 Superintendent Winnicki. Before we move onto
9 the presentations from our dais member I would
10 like to recognize Assembly Member Lentol and
11 Council Member Reyna and allow them the
12 opportunity to give us their comments on the
13 proposal.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. JOSEPH LENTOL: Thank you. First of all
16 is there anybody in the audience who's in favor
17 of this charter school?

18 AUDIENCE: No.

19 MR. LENTOL: I wanted to find out.

20 AUDIENCE: [Some applause]

21 MR. LENTOL: Do we have any public
22 elementary schools in the house?

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MR. LENTOL: All right. I come before you
25 tonight with a very heavy heart because I know

1 that there are a lot of communities that are
2 in desperate need of education change. And
3 there are many communities that need the help of
4 charter schools that are not getting it. And
5 the reason they're not getting it is because
6 some of the charter schools see fit to come to
7 areas where we have great students and try to
8 pilfer them from the public school system.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. LENTOL: I think that I stand before you
11 tonight to tell you that it would really be an
12 injustice to have a charter school collocated,
13 first of all in this school, I grew up in
14 Greenpoint. I've lived here all my life.
15 Junior high school, now Middle School 126, was a
16 large junior high school with many, many
17 students. Now it's the home to a great charter
18 high school. And the school, the middle school
19 was failing over the years. Let's face it. But
20 now we're turning it around.

21 [Applause, cheering]

22 MR. LENTOL: And a lot of the credit goes to
23 Marcos Bausch, the principal.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MR. LENTOL: So how does he get rewarded?

1 Okay. We're going to reward you for your hard
2 work. We know you want to expand your middle
3 school so we're going to put a charter school in
4 here so you can't expand. And the kids in
5 Greenpoint and Williamsburg will have no place
6 to go for middle school so they'll have to go
7 outside of our community in order to go to
8 middle school.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. LENTOL: I don't get it. Maybe somebody
11 can explain that to me. Also as the Assemblyman
12 from this District, I personally can attest to
13 the decades of hard work of the principal like
14 Alicia Winnicki.

15 [Applause, cheering]

16 MR. LENTOL: Now I can name all of the
17 elementary schools in District 14 but you and I
18 know how great they are and it breaks my heart
19 that all of that hard work, after all of that
20 hard work, that we should see our public schools
21 undermined by charter schools run by outsiders
22 who know nothing about our community.

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MR. LENTOL: Now wait. That's not entirely
25 true. That's not entirely true. The founders

1 of Citizens of the World Charter School know
2 that this community has great students and that
3 other charter schools have succeeded here all of
4 which means that there is an opportunity here.

5 But it is a business opportunity of the most
6 cynical kind. There's no concern here for the
7 best interests of our children. The only
8 concern for Citizens of the World is Citizens of
9 the World. Any educator, truly interested in
10 our community, would recognize that the existing
11 public schools excel at teaching our students
12 and that no change to that system is warranted.

13 [Applause, cheering]

14 MR. LENTOL: I don't think that the
15 organizers of Citizens of the World are a small
16 threat. Nothing could be further from the
17 truth. I fear that they will prey on the
18 newcomers, all of the new people that are coming
19 into the high rises that you see being built
20 around us.

21 And if allowed to open its doors, collocated
22 in this building, I can anticipate a very well-
23 funded campaign targeting middle class white
24 parents. With all of the new housing in our
25 community it will be easy to find well-

1 intentioned parents who want the best for
2 their children but really don't know how our
3 schools excel.

4 Public schools, public elementary schools
5 don't have an advertising budget. They can't go
6 out and try to get you to come to their school;
7 all they can depend upon is their reputation.
8 And that's because public schools aren't
9 operated like a business.

10 [Applause]

11 MR. LENTOL: And the principals of our
12 schools, I know them all well, I've worked with
13 them, they don't see our families as customers
14 and piggybanks and quotas.

15 Lastly our public elementary schools are run
16 and staffed by people from our community.
17 People who have educated generations of our
18 students and who themselves went to these
19 schools. We have worked hard for what we have
20 accomplished and the last thing this community
21 needs is a redundant charter school that will
22 only siphon off students.

23 That would have the effect of weakening our
24 public elementary schools which are, by the way,
25 already under-enrolled in case they didn't tell

1 you that.

2 This is the time when we should seek to
3 expand our commitment to our public schools, not
4 undermine them by allowing Citizens of the
5 World, a charter school, to open.

6 For all of these reasons, ladies and
7 gentlemen, I respectfully oppose the collocation
8 of Citizens of the World.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. LENTOL: At 126.

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much. I just
13 wanted to introduce Council Member Diana Reyna
14 and also wanted to note it is now 6:22 and
15 public comment is closed. Thank you Council
16 Member Reyna.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER DIANA REYNA: Thank you very
18 much. Good evening to everyone here. My name
19 is Diana Reyna. I'm a City Council Member in
20 District 14.

21 [Applause, cheering]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I want to thank my
23 colleague in government, Assemblyman Joe Lentol,
24 who has been a staunch advocate for our children
25 in our district, in our community. Bringing

1 together our families...

2 [Applause]

3 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It is without
4 question that we are here genuinely to listen to
5 you and we hear your plea as parents. We're not
6 speaking a different language today. We're all
7 united asking for quality public education.
8 There is no division when we refer to District
9 14 schools.

10 I want to welcome the Department of
11 Education and SUNY Charter School Institute to
12 our neighborhood. I am hopeful that you are
13 here genuinely to listen to us as a community.
14 On many issues this community has been perhaps
15 taking different sides of the equation. However
16 on this issue we are clearly united. I am here
17 in solidarity opposing what is Citizens of the
18 World and their message. Their message is to
19 divide our community.

20 [Applause, cheering]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: How loud and how much
22 clearer do we need to be to the Department of
23 Education to understand that we do not need nor
24 want another elementary school?

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: The mere fact that
2 District 14, a vastly under-enrolled as
3 mentioned by Assemblyman Lentol, and now
4 reiterated by a Council Member, your Council
5 Member Diana Reyna, a school district that is
6 under-enrolled with 20 elementary public
7 schools. This is the list. This is the list
8 highlighted, two pages' worth of elementary
9 schools.

10 Oh, let me just explain to you how many
11 middle schools. Despite the fact that we have
12 20 elementary schools, let me just read through
13 so that you can listen to the argument. Our
14 district has been bombarded with 5 additional
15 elementary school applications within this last
16 year all of which have been approved by the
17 Department of Education. It speaks to poor
18 public policy and planning. It also speaks to
19 the Department of Education's lack of
20 commitment, a lack of commitment to and support
21 of our local public school.

22 Through this process...

23 [Applause]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Through this process
25 of collocations and school closures of which we

1 have seriously requested the expansion of our
2 current public school performing schools,
3 elementary schools, to become K through 8
4 models, to assist us in our middle school
5 crisis.

6 [Applause]

7 COUNCIL MEMBR REYNA: We have 1, 2, 3, 4, 5,
8 6, 7, 8; 8 middle schools. Through this process
9 of collocation and school closures we have
10 unveiled serious criminal and neglectful
11 behavior on the part of the Department of
12 Education towards our local schools like PS 19.
13 We had to live through a tremendous fight which
14 didn't have a science teacher. It didn't have a
15 math teacher. It had no literacy teacher. No
16 librarian. No academic intervention teacher.
17 Five no-teacher categories equals a failing
18 school and that is not a coincidence. That is
19 engineered for failure.

20 [Applause]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: For years our
22 community has been crying out to the Department
23 of Education for much-needed resources and
24 support for our local public schools. For years
25 we have asked for a district middle school and

1 we have been ignored. We have a total of
2 eight middle schools, as I had mentioned, and
3 seven high schools. You tell me where the gap
4 is.

5 A community that has endured your disregard
6 for the true educational needs of our children
7 and instead has insisted on making back-handed
8 deals with institutions that are not reflective
9 of nor culturally sensitive to the needs of
10 District 14, our families.

11 I want to ensure that we are sitting in a
12 collocated situation in this building right now
13 as we have two principals making do with what
14 they have but one is a collocated charter school
15 that was built from the ground up by the very
16 hands of this community. It was community-led.
17 There is a distinction between what is corporate
18 school education and community school education.

19 [Applause]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It seems to me the
21 only motivating factor is the real estate boom
22 in Williamsburg Greenpoint--

23 [[Applause, cheering]

24 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --Citizens of the
25 World came to our community, much in the same

1 way Success Charter did. Appealing to a
2 different socioeconomic class; I take offense:
3 offense to the testimony of Citizens of the
4 World at a public forum claiming to have a
5 progressive model of education which strives for
6 diversity in District 14.

7 On the contrary, diversity is achieved not
8 through a selective process but through an
9 inclusive process. Providing information to
10 everyone despite socioeconomic interests. I
11 oppose what is Citizens of the World, not
12 because I'm opposing another charter school but
13 because the principles under which we as
14 families have raised our children is not to
15 divide, it is not to look at each other with
16 socioeconomic interests.

17 It is not about corporate interests. It is
18 about raising, helping to raise all of our
19 children. Helping our 20 public elementary
20 schools be great so that they can create
21 greatness. It is incredible to see that another
22 lost opportunity. I am tired. I can't fight
23 this battle anymore. I can't continue to stand
24 here and tell you we must fight once again
25 another charter school because we're losing

1 ground.

2 Today the question is what are we providing
3 Middle School 126? Are they going to have every
4 teacher necessary so that the children here have
5 all the resources they need so they can become a
6 choice school for parents.

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: A choice school. It
9 is about the Believe Northside School that was
10 created by the community and dismantled by the
11 Department of Education. By the Department of
12 Education. Today that school has to stand on
13 its own ground.

14 For reasons I won't go into today because we
15 need to hear from parents here, but it is
16 important, people read, people are informed, and
17 that they understand facts. It is a fact that
18 today we are sitting at a collocated school
19 building but it is also a fact it was built from
20 the ground up by you, our community. Thank you
21 very much.

22 [Applause, cheering]

23 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much Council
24 Member Reyna. I do understand that Council
25 Member Levin was called away but we have been

1 joined by Evelyn Cruz from Representative
2 Nadia Velasquez' office.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. BARBOZA: So we'll have Ms. Cruz come on
5 up and provide her remarks as well and then
6 we'll be moving onto our dais presentations.

7 [Pause]

8 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Cruz.

9 MS. EVELYN CRUZ: I actually asked for a 5-
10 minute break. I didn't get it. Okay, good
11 evening everyone. Let's give Councilwoman a
12 round of applause. I think she said everything-
13 -

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. CRUZ: She said everything that we are
16 here and stand for. I want to commend the
17 parents and all the teachers, first that we're
18 out there, providing volunteer services and
19 collections for those victims of Hurricane
20 Sandy. You know many of the schools did a great
21 job and we thank you for all of that.

22 Secondly I commend the members of the CEC
23 for once again taking a stand for public
24 education in District 14.

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MS. CRUZ: As the Councilwoman and I'm
2 sure Assemblyman Lentol if he spoke stated, we
3 are tired. We are tired of charter schools
4 evading and usurping public school spaces that
5 rightfully pertain to the taxpayers of our
6 community. It is...

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 MS. CRUZ: It is not acceptable. And we
9 should not as conscious people, we should not
10 allow for the New York City Board of Education
11 to continue, to continue to fuel class
12 segregation, class distinction, that is not
13 acceptable. We should not allow that to
14 continue.

15 We welcome, we welcome and I'm a long-time
16 citizen of Williamsburg and a product of the
17 schools in our community, and our community, all
18 of us here, embrace anyone that wants to live in
19 Williamsburg and Greenpoint. What we ask of our
20 new neighbors is for you to join with us in the
21 fight for equity, for parity, for the most
22 underserved kids in our communities.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. CRUZ: Believe it or not, believe it or
25 not, but every time that a school is collocated,

1 a charter school is collocated into a great
2 school, it takes up space that rightfully
3 belongs to these kids that want to have art
4 space or would like to have a library or would
5 like to have a gym of their own or would like to
6 have an extra class for even music. This is not
7 right. And this is now what the DOE should be
8 in the business of.

9 We, our tax dollars, are allocated for
10 education. We need to hold all levels of
11 government responsible. Several years ago we
12 had a fight for fiscal equity in education.
13 That fiscal equity is yet to be delivered and we
14 have to unite for that funding, there's millions
15 of dollars that was allocated and we rightfully
16 are entitled to that. And we need to know...

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MS. CRUZ: And we need to tell charter
19 schools, if you want to come to Williamsburg,
20 you want to plant a seed in Greenpoint, then you
21 with your philanthropic, corporate shareholders
22 should then look for your own building.

23 Because--

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. CRUZ: At the end of the day, like

1 Success, and like many others, it's about
2 shareholders and corporate takeover and the
3 privatization of public schools. And public
4 schools provide those kids, those that may not
5 be high achievers, due to their quality of life
6 at home, due to learning challenges or language
7 challenges or a different way of learning, that
8 they may not succeed in a charter school the
9 first year.

10 And if they don't succeed in the charter
11 school, I'm pretty confident that they may not
12 be in that school for another year. And where
13 would that child be transferred to if they
14 continue to close down public schools? That is
15 really--that's an issue for the member.

16 We are here to say that every child has the
17 potential to learn regardless, regardless of
18 issues. I've seen children with autism, that
19 soar today, because there was someone that cared
20 enough in a public school to teach that child to
21 be sociable, to read, to write, and to hopefully
22 be a real sustainable citizen of New York City
23 because there was a teacher that cared about the
24 teaching and not about the data and not about
25 the money and not about the school grade. They

1 cared about that child.

2 [Applause, cheering]

3 MS. CRUZ: So together Congresswoman
4 Velasquez, Councilwoman Diana Reyna, Assemblyman
5 Joe Lentol and advocates for education and every
6 parent that has a child, to understand, we know,
7 we get it because public school, public
8 education is a right. Charter schools, they're
9 here. They're not going anywhere. But we just
10 don't want them usurping our space.

11 We are saturated between Success and now
12 their partner Citizens of the World. Listen,
13 Citizens of the World is a new school even in
14 California. We don't really know their record
15 of achievement. It is unjust and un-right for
16 the City of New York to even think of allocating
17 money when they don't have a long-term record of
18 success.

19 So why, why are we channeling tax dollars in
20 to a new school? That is a question that we all
21 have to ask. So to DOE we thank you again for
22 once--for once again pitting parent against
23 parent and kids against kids because this is
24 what DOE has done effectively for the past year.
25 And it is just shameful.

1 What we need is a DOE that's going to
2 focus on the process, on a process that is not
3 mismanaged, on a process that clearly governs,
4 that outlines, through transparency and
5 accuracy, what is the role and what is the
6 process of collocation 'cause we don't know.
7 And that's a sad thing.

8 We need more transparency and we need you,
9 your voice, even if you're a Citizens of the
10 World parent, to please stand with our community
11 and say you know what, I don't believe in class
12 segregation. I believe in equity. I'm
13 progressive.

14 I can send my child to an integrated school
15 and I can be a member of a school that's going
16 to teach--I want to be a part of that change.
17 So we're asking you be the change, be the
18 change, Citizens of the World of today. Be the
19 change that you want to see and join District 14
20 in the fight against collocations, thank you.

21 [Applause, cheering]

22 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you so much Ms. Cruz. I
23 appreciate that. Again, I wanted to let you
24 know that Citizens, as we move on with the
25 hearing, wanted to let you know that Citizens

1 has been approved by its charter authorizer,
2 the State University of New York School
3 Institute--sorry Charter School Institute to
4 open a public charter school in Community School
5 District 14.

6 Although this proposal has not yet been
7 approved by the Panel for Educational Policy,
8 SUNY is required to hold a facilities hearing,
9 to receive feedback on the proposed collocation
10 of Citizens with Ericsson Middle School and
11 Believe Northside. As such this joint public
12 hearing will also serve as a facilities hearing.
13 There is a representative from SUNY in
14 attendance. If you have questions or comments
15 on the charter itself, Mr. Thomas Franta of SUNY
16 will now tell you how to submit those questions
17 or comments.

18 MR. THOMAS FRANTA: Good evening. My name
19 is Tom Franta. I'm the Associate General
20 Counsel at SUNY Charter Schools Institute. I'm
21 here tonight to hold a public hearing on behalf
22 of the Board of Trustees of the State University
23 of New York.

24 As Liz mentioned, SUNY is the authorizer of
25 the charter school we are discussing today.

1 That means that the SUNY Trustees approved the
2 application to create this school. Excuse me.
3 And my organization, the SUNY Charter Schools
4 Institute will visit the school and report on
5 its progress to parents.

6 As the school gets older we will also make a
7 recommendation to the SUNY Trustees about
8 whether or not the school has earned the right
9 to stay open. Today our focus is on where the
10 school will be located.

11 The Education Law requires SUNY to hold a
12 public hearing at any time one of its schools it
13 authorizes might open in an existing public
14 school building. I'm here tonight to listen to
15 your comments about the proposal to locate
16 grades K through 5 of Citizens of the World
17 Charter School New York 1 in part of building
18 K126 beginning in the fall of 2013.

19 SUNY is holding its hearing now at the same
20 time as the DOE is holding its hearing so that
21 we don't have to ask parents and community
22 members to attend two different hearings on the
23 same subject. We want to be sure that we have
24 the opportunity to hear from as many parents,
25 teachers, school leaders, and members of the

1 community as we can.

2 I do want to note that SUNY has to make its
3 own decision regarding the school using the
4 proposed space. I'll be taking notes on all
5 comments that are made tonight including those
6 that have already been made.

7 In addition you may feel free to give me
8 written comments this evening that you may have
9 with you or you can email the comments to
10 CHARTERS@SUNY.EDU or you can mail them to 41
11 State Street, Suite 700, Albany, New York 12207
12 or fax comments to (518) 427-6510. All of that
13 contact information is also posted on the back
14 of--on the doors at the back of the auditorium.

15 SUNY will accept public comments through
16 December 28th of 2012. We set this deadline 5
17 days after the PEP where this collocation will
18 be discussed. That way if there is any
19 information that you get as part of the
20 conversation with the PEP, that you want to
21 share with us, you may do so. SUNY will make a
22 decision on this collocation after the close of
23 the comment period.

24 In advance I want to thank you for all your
25 comments this evening. Thank you.

1 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much Tom.
2 I'm also going to take this opportunity to give
3 you the information regarding the Panel for
4 Educational Policy vote and the telephone and
5 email contacts for public feedback. So if you
6 don't get it now I will also announce it at the
7 end and you can see myself or any one of my
8 colleagues from the DOE and we're happy to give
9 you that information.

10 Again, that vote is going to be happening on
11 December the 20th at 6:00 p.m. at the High
12 School for Fashion Industries which is located
13 at 225 West 24th Street in Manhattan. Again,
14 that's December 20th, at 6:00 p.m. It will be
15 at the High School for Fashion Industries, 225
16 West 24th Street, Manhattan 10011.

17 If you would like to provide comments after
18 the hearing, if you go home and you're struck by
19 some inspiration, you didn't get a chance to
20 sign up--[Off mic comment] I'm going to ask you
21 to be respectful of my time as I will be
22 respectful of yours.

23 [Off mic comment]

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. BARBOZA: So if you would like to

1 provide a comment via email you should email
2 D14PROPOSALS@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV. Again that's
3 D14PROPOSALS@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV. Telephone number:
4 (212) 374-0208.

5 I'm now going to move on to our dais
6 representatives. We'll begin with Ms. Tesa
7 Wilson's statement from CEC 14 followed by Mr.
8 Mario Aguilar.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Tesa.

11 MS. TESA WILSON: Thanks Meg. Good evening
12 District 14.

13 [Applause, cheering]

14 MS. WILSON: Or the people in my
15 neighborhood say 14 in the house, right? 14 in
16 the house?

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MS. WILSON: We have come to this place once
19 again where I get to sing the same song. It's
20 almost at the point where I feel that you can
21 join in the stanzas with me. We do not need
22 another elementary school in District 14.

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MS. WILSON: It is very interesting that
25 we're looking at a collocation in this

1 particular building which is surrounded by
2 some of the best elementary schools in District
3 14.

4 [Applause, cheering]

5 MS. WILSON: The Department of Education
6 likes to tout this idea that parents vote with
7 their feet because the choices are poor. Well
8 if I happen to have a magnet school, I happen to
9 have a couple of blue ribbon schools, guess
10 where my feet are going?

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 MS. WILSON: And for those of you who are
13 not in the know, you're in walking distance to
14 magnet schools, blue ribbon schools, and once
15 again some of the top District 14, some of the
16 top schools in this City, right within walking
17 distance from this building.

18 [Applause, cheering]

19 MS. WILSON: So let's talk about the fact
20 that this is a false choice. This is a choice
21 that serves no one within this community but
22 people from without, from outside of the
23 community. And I wanted to say that when you
24 look at District 14, when you look at us, we
25 come together as a community because we know

1 what we have. We know we have top students.
2 And as a result this school is looking to draw
3 those top students, grow their school, so they
4 can say what a success they have when really it
5 was something that was homegrown right here in
6 District 14.

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 MS. WILSON: Now, don't get me wrong when I
9 say that we do not want another charter school
10 in District 14 because it's very interesting.
11 CEC 14 supported the Believe High Schools. Why?
12 Because we need high school choice in District
13 14. We needed middle school choice in District
14 14. It's just the elementary school that we
15 keep saying, do not give us too much of a good
16 thing because after a while it's just not a good
17 thing.

18 You know I think back to back when I was a
19 young girl and I grew up, I'm about to dig
20 myself in the 70's, and we went through that
21 whole economic crisis and I'll never forget my
22 mother who was a teacher at the time was
23 struggling. We had to eat bologna sandwiches.
24 Now can you imagine a family of five eating
25 bologna sandwiches night after night after

1 night?

2 We began to protest and we got--we were in
3 an uproar as kids because too many bologna
4 sandwiches was just wiping out our dinner table.
5 So my sisters and myself, we decided we're not
6 going to eat dinner anymore. And that's what
7 District 14 needs to say. That's what we've
8 been saying. We're not going to do this
9 anymore. The CEC has stood against charter
10 elementary schools time and time again.

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 MS. WILSON: We actually walked out on
13 meetings. We showed up at PEP meetings. We
14 said we don't want this anymore. We do not want
15 this in our community. Now let's talk about
16 this and put this aside. I'm a parent in
17 District 14. My kid attended District 14
18 schools. As a parent I would not feel safe with
19 putting my Kindergartner in a building that
20 housed K through 12.

21 [Applause, cheering]

22 MS. WILSON: That is regularly done within
23 the City in only certain communities. And I'm
24 going to tell you the Department of Education
25 will tell you we will make sure that safety

1 issues will be recognized. We will make sure
2 that you have enough safety agents.

3 We will make sure that your children will
4 not commingle. Well I'm going to tell you
5 middle school kids can be off the hook. Can you
6 control the middle schools to make--the middle
7 school children to make sure that they will not
8 get the opportunity to put something that maybe
9 might be a little bit too suggestive in front of
10 elementary kids?

11 I can tell you as a person riding the bus, I
12 get to see what middle schoolers do on the bus.
13 Do you want to see--do you want your child, your
14 young child seeing that right within the school
15 building?

16 AUDIENCE: No.

17 MS. WILSON: No. So I say to you once
18 again, CEC 14, we are not for this. We do not
19 support it. Come with me to the PEP, the Public
20 Panel, come on, let's talk about that Public
21 Panel.

22 [Applause, cheering]

23 MS. WILSON: All those appointed people by
24 the Mayor who just rubberstamp his agenda, come
25 on, let's talk about it. They stand for the

1 clue-de-clats [phonetic] and the holle-gards
2 [phonetic]. Come on, let's talk about that,
3 too. Because a vote for the PEP would be a vote
4 against this school in this community.

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MS. WILSON: A vote for Citizens, another
7 elementary school in this community, is a vote
8 against 126.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MS. WILSON: A vote for Citizens in this
11 community is a vote for the--a vote against the
12 elementary schools in this area. These
13 elementary schools are not allowed to grow, just
14 to allow somebody else to come in. Nobody talks
15 about the capping of the size of our elementary
16 schools and how many of our local schools have
17 to turn away Kindergartners.

18 Hello parents. How many of you have been in
19 that position where you had to--you got turned
20 away? Because they told you we can't make rooms
21 for more Kindergartner classes but yet we can
22 get another elementary school. I ask you.

23 Stand with me, with CEC 14. Email District
24 14 proposals. Call. Show up with me. I'll be
25 there at the PEP. You know me. I'll have on my

1 red scarf and I'll have my red signs. Meet me
2 at the PEP. Stand with me against Citizens of
3 the World bringing another elementary school in
4 District 14.

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MS. BARBOZA: Mr. Aguilar? We'll hear from
7 Mr. Aguilar.

8 [Off mic comments]

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. MARIO AGUILAR: I hear you girl.
11 Listen, I just want to say one thing. Enough.
12 I mean Tesa couldn't said it as plainly as could
13 be said. The Assemblyman has stated it. But I
14 do want to go back to what we've been saying to
15 the DOE. We've been asking DOE, we already have
16 enough elementary schools in this district.
17 We've been asking DOE for more middle schools.

18 [Applause]

19 MR. AGUILAR: Eight years we've been asking
20 them for this. Now. We do have good middle
21 schools here. I'm not saying we don't.

22 [Applause, cheering]

23 MR. AGUILAR: What I don't understand is why
24 they want to bring an elementary school here.
25 First of all we've got two blue ribbon school,

1 they are close by each other.

2 [Applause]

3 MR. AGUILAR: And we have other schools that
4 even though they're not categorized as blue
5 ribbon schools, but they're very good schools.
6 You have 132--

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 MR. AGUILAR: PS 18 [phonetic]. 110.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. AGUILAR: What we're saying is our
11 middle schools right now, everybody's trying to
12 go into 318. It's sad but 20-plus years ago it
13 was 126 that everybody wanted to run into.
14 Because believe it or not 126 was the top middle
15 school that everybody wanted to attend. Now we
16 have a new principal that has taken over 216.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MR. AGUILAR: And not that he's new as a
19 principal, he does have a lot of experience, he
20 was a principal in Manhattan for a couple ten
21 years I believe. And he accepted this challenge
22 to come here. But can I say one thing? Since
23 he's taken over, and I realize he still has a
24 challenge ahead of him, but there's been some
25 changes in 126 already.

1 [Applause, cheering]

2 MR. AGUILAR: But going back to what I
3 wanted to relate because Diana Reyna, our
4 Councilwoman was the one who stated this, when
5 we look at 577, which is another great school...

6 [Applause, cheering]

7 MR. AGUILAR: But they are limited. They
8 can only take so much. So now if an elementary
9 comes into this building, we're trying to get
10 126 to be back what it used to be, in other
11 words you know the Department of Education
12 always say they believe in choices. Well now
13 I'm going to talk about choices. Let 126 become
14 what it used to be so they can compete with 318,
15 577 and everybody has--every parent has a choice
16 where they want to send their kids to.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MR. AGUILAR: Now I realize that the
19 Department of Education needed some changes
20 years ago. And everybody agreed with the Mayor
21 when those times came in. And we believed that
22 the Mayor was going to do some changes. The
23 problem with this administration that they have
24 is that they want to take and do whatever they
25 feel what--what they think is right.

1 [Applause, cheering]

2 MR. AGUILAR: And it got to the point that
3 one time even the Mayor said, I don't know if
4 you'll recall, that he said don't worry, the
5 kids will be an experiment for two years. I'll
6 blame myself with that. This is what he said.
7 And what I'm saying to the Department of
8 Education and I'm not here to say I don't want
9 to sound like I'm hating charter schools because
10 I know I'm sure everybody cares about kids.
11 This is what everybody says they care about, our
12 kids. But what I'm saying is that we've been
13 saying to the DOE give us more middle schools.
14 That's all we're saying. Don't try to open
15 another elementary school where you've got a
16 whole bunch of these schools that are
17 surrounding us that they still--they still have
18 space. And Diana said it real clear. I was
19 City Council.

20 You know if you open another elementary
21 school you're going to start withdrawing kids
22 from here and here and here and here and you
23 want me to tell you something, you might not
24 even meet your goals. Even if you did open an
25 elementary school here because you've got all

1 these good schools that surrounds here that is
2 going to compete with you.

3 AUDIENCE MEMBER: That's right.

4 MR. AGUILAR: You know how many kids, how
5 many parents would like to go to 31, 34? Did
6 you know that the principal couldn't accept
7 every parent? Or the Superintendent, she was a
8 principal from PS 34.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. AGUILAR: And that school today, it is,
11 today because when she was principal, she's our
12 superintendent today, because she took the
13 challenge, and she took that school to what it
14 is today.

15 [Applause, cheering]

16 MR. AGUILAR: But again I say... I'm asking
17 the Department of Education and please hear me,
18 we need middle schools. Stop this stuff with
19 bringing elementary schools to our district.
20 That's not what we need. We're asking for
21 middle schools. Thank you.

22 [Applause, cheering]

23 MS. BARBOZA: We'll have Principal Baig from
24 Northside Believe.

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MS. RASHMA BAIG: Good evening. You don't
2 know Northside so I'm going to introduce you to
3 Northside Charter High School. Can I have
4 Northside stand up please?

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MS. BAIG: Northside has been in the
7 building since 2009. 90% of our kids qualify
8 for a free lunch. We have roughly 42 students
9 right now that are receiving services for IEPs
10 and other related services. We also have a
11 large percentage of English language learners.
12 What does that mean? That means we represent
13 the community.

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. BAIG: We are a high school. According
16 to the New York State Education Department, our
17 school is outperforming the other high schools
18 in this district.

19 [Applause, cheering]

20 MS. BAIG: Why? Because our kids of diverse
21 backgrounds and languages and communities and
22 ethnicities will rise to the challenges and they
23 will speak the language of power.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. BAIG: I am a person of color. I

1 endorse all parents who have high school age
2 students to bring them to Northside because our
3 staff, our faculty, our Northside family,
4 refuses to let any student fall through the
5 cracks. And why is that? Because we know that
6 we are in the public service. We service our
7 community.

8 So let me get into the logistics right now.
9 With any collocation proposal, the penultimate
10 goal is implementation. The parties have to be
11 able to work together. All of us in the public
12 service, service the human needs. These are our
13 children. I don't have to say that they are our
14 future because that is a given. However in
15 order to accommodate another school on the
16 premises, we have to be fair to those kids as
17 well.

18 That's going to require a lot of collocation
19 cooperation and that's going to have three main
20 issues. The first is adequate space. We are a
21 high school. Just like any parent who is going
22 to bring their child into a high school setting,
23 we have concerns about that. It's the
24 developmental age. When you're dealing with
25 bringing an elementary school onto the premises,

1 I don't know how many of you are comfortable
2 with I call them our little young 'uns, being
3 with the bigger kids.

4 [Off mic comment]

5 MS. BAIG: I suppose you are not conversant
6 in respect.

7 [Off mic comment]

8 MS. BAIG: Thank you. Safety as it applies
9 to a multiple developmental age group, occupying
10 the same campus, there are issues, let's be
11 realistic. Educational opportunity as it
12 applies to high school students who we foster to
13 get high school regent's diplomas, it's going to
14 be impacted when classroom space is taken away
15 from us.

16 Right now we're looking at a 4-year plan
17 that will take away classroom space not just
18 from us but from 126. At the end of the day we
19 are servants in the public service. And it has
20 to be about our kids. It has to be about our
21 kids regardless who those kids are, we are in
22 service to them.

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Now we'll hear
25 from Principal Bausch from MS 126.

1 [Applause, cheering]

2 MR. MARCOS BAUSCH: Good evening everyone.
3 I don't want to belabor and echo a lot of the
4 things that other people said but a little bit
5 about me in terms of coming to 126. I came to
6 26 to be successful. For no other reason. I'm
7 from this community. I saw a lot of opportunity
8 and potential in 126. And I always see the
9 public schools from the perspective of the
10 parent.

11 We're here to provide a service. And in
12 terms of having only eight middle schools in our
13 district, we're under-servicing the need that we
14 have. And my vision for 126 is to grow it as
15 big as possible. And...

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MR. BAUSCH: And jokingly, I talk to people
18 that come to visit and people say well I hear
19 good things about 126. I say come visit. Come
20 visit whenever you like because I could paint a
21 pretty picture but when you come, especially
22 when you come unannounced, you see that there is
23 a 360-degree change in this school. And that is
24 not because I'm a magician. It's because the
25 hard work of the administrators and the teachers

1 and the guidance counselor of 126 and I am so
2 proud of them.

3 [Applause, cheering]

4 MR. BAUSCH: And to that end I know that
5 moving forward that we're going to be able to
6 provide an amazing service to our Williamsburg
7 Greenpoint community. But my parents are
8 concerned. They're concerned about what they're
9 going to lose, namely space, and how that's
10 going to impact and the programs and the things
11 that they have. So tonight I'm here in 100%
12 support of those parents and I'd just like to
13 say that. Thank you.

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much Principal
16 Bausch. We're now going to move onto public
17 comment. I'm going to call the first five
18 members who signed up for public comment. We
19 have number one, Jeremy Ortiz.

20 [Applause, cheering]

21 MS. BARBOZA: And we're going to keep the
22 aisles clear so if you want to just have a seat,
23 Jeremy you can stay at the mic and then as you
24 come down, please have a seat. Leslye Leavess,
25 number two.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Number three, Tatiana Torres.

3 [Applause, cheering]

4 MS. BARBOZA: Number four, Tara Phillips.

5 And number five, Desiree Barmore.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. BARBOZA: Okay, thank you so much.

8 We'll hear from Jeremy Ortiz.

9 MR. JEREMY ORTIZ: Thank you. I'm here
10 represnting Northside Charter High School here.

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 MR. ORTIZ: I want to thank 126 for allowing
13 us to be here because without them, they won't
14 be here and I won't be who I am today. Right?

15 [Applause]

16 MR. ORTIZ: If they bring up the history
17 here about public schools here, 132, I was a
18 part of that school and MS 577 which are public
19 schools. I graduated from there.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. ORTIZ: And both were collocated schools
22 in which is--they didn't even have enough room
23 for our students. We had a hallway, a hallway
24 for over 300 students which did not even satisfy
25 our needs to grow as individuals.

1 Now that same thing is going to be
2 replicated again, having this elementary school
3 invade our space. All right? We don't need
4 that because by them doing that it's limiting
5 our growth, you know, not population-wise but
6 academically. And them taking up our space will
7 limit us on the amount of prosperity that we
8 will have as individuals of this school.

9 Now I thank Ms. Baig here because she has
10 supported us. We overcame issues that our
11 school was almost closed down last year and now
12 we don't need another concern on our back while
13 our kids are trying to learn. All right?

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MR. ORTIZ: This issues, bringing these
16 public students--I'm a student. You guys are
17 not here to witness what I witness, all right?
18 You guys are the suits and ties of everything
19 but you guys are not here to see what physically
20 happens.

21 And I want to say that by having them
22 students here will not only be a fire hazard but
23 will just cause a lot of tension between the
24 students and because of the age difference. Now
25 I've been part of MS 577 and not all of the

1 students but the majority of them influenced
2 the elementary schools that were nearby. And we
3 don't want that to happen. So thank you and I
4 hope you support our...

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Jeremy. Leslye
7 Leavess, please.

8 MS. BROOKE PARKER: Hi, I switched with
9 Lesley. I'm Brooke Parker. I'm a founding
10 member of Williamsburg and Greenpoint Parents of
11 our Public Schools.

12 [Applause, cheering]

13 MS. PARKER: There are two things. The
14 first is which I'd like to announce our lawsuit
15 against the SUNY Charter School authorizers--

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MS. PARKER: --and... and the New York City
18 Department of Education. We have over 300
19 parents signed onto this lawsuit. So far. I'd
20 like to point out a few other things that people
21 may not know about Citizens of the World because
22 I'm sure you brought some supporters here.
23 You'd have to. You're well in the minority.
24 You have less than 30 supporters. We have the
25 entire community against you.

1 Every single democratically elected body
2 has stood against another elementary school in
3 this district because it is bad city planning.
4 When we have absolutely no waiting list on any
5 of our elementary schools, including blue ribbon
6 schools, CON [phonetic] principals, and A
7 schools across the district, there is not only
8 no need for another elementary school, it's
9 hazardous and detrimental to the current schools
10 that we have. Our schools satisfy our parents.
11 What we want is smaller class sizes. What we
12 want is the DOE to listen to us.

13 [Applause, cheering]

14 MS. PARKER: What you guys have been doing,
15 you should be ashamed of yourselves. Having a
16 supporter, a real estate agent supporter
17 solicited for their petitions at school closing
18 is an abomination. Divide--pretending that the
19 community is diving and having SUNY flat out lie
20 and pretend to support--you simply do not have
21 in this district is an abomination. You're
22 coming from California. We in District 14 know
23 our schools. So to you supporters of Citizens
24 of the World, I am so angry.

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MS. PARKER: I'm going to lay it out. You
2 do not know our schools. You do not know our
3 schools. You do not know what we do in your
4 schools. And Citizens of the World is a poor
5 copy of the schools that we currently enjoy.
6 You are not offering us what we want.

7 [Applause, cheering]

8 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Tatiana Torres,
9 please.

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MS. TATIANA TORRES: Hello, my name is
12 Tatiana Torres. And I'm an 11th grader at
13 Northside Charter High School.

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. TORRES: When I first came to Northside
16 last year it was on one floor. But at that time
17 we had three grades. Now we have complete high
18 school and now we have another floor. The DOE
19 wants to take away that floor and give it to
20 another school, an elementary school. Like my
21 classmate has said, it is a fire hazard. And it
22 is--I think we can all agree that a child's
23 safety should come first.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. TORRES: With that said, putting us back

1 on one floor with a full high school is
2 endangering 400 students' lives.

3 [Applause, cheering]

4 MS. TORRES: Not only that but with one floor
5 we would have to cut some of the classes we have
6 just because we don't have enough room to take
7 care of everyone. And the first to go would be
8 our arts program and the arts program is
9 essential to our growth as people as children.

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MS. TORRES: Now when many of you came in
12 here, you were all asked to stand over there.
13 How many of you felt crowded? I bet a lot of
14 you were. But anyway my point is that's how I
15 felt last year and there was only three grades.

16 Now we have four and it still crowded but to
17 put us all on one floor is unfair and it's
18 going--that's not living space. It's--we don't
19 have enough to breathe. And I mean that's how
20 sicknesses gets around. Like if you sneeze and
21 you don't cover your mouth, with 400 students,
22 we could get sick. It's not fair. You can't
23 put 400 students on one floor.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 TIMEKEEPER: Your time's up.

1 MS. TORRES: Thank you.

2 [Applause, cheering]

3 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Tatiana. Tara
4 Phillips? Tara Phillips.

5 MS. TARA PHILLIPS: Nice and short here.
6 Okay. So how many of you in this room were born
7 in Brooklyn?

8 [Applause, cheering]

9 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. How many of you--how
10 many generations are from Brooklyn? My great-
11 grandmother came here in 1928 from Jamaica with
12 five children. Her husband died on their
13 journey actually and so she raised her five
14 children here. And I'm Tara Phillips and I'm
15 actually a native of Brooklyn, New York. I was
16 born in Clinton Hill.

17 And I stand here before you as an educator
18 and as a parent. My son is here in fact as
19 well. Having choices in education has been the
20 foundation of my upbringing. My father who was
21 raised by a single mother in Harlem, she wanted
22 to find the right fit for him and so he went to
23 a school outside of his neighborhood. My own
24 parents, when they were raising my brother and I
25 in the 70's--

1 [Off mic comment]

2 MS. PHILLIPS: I'm talking about me. Just
3 listen. If you want to hear my story, then
4 listen.

5 [Off mic comments]

6 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me. Excuse me. While
7 we have speakers, we want to give them their
8 respect so they will give it back to you. Let's
9 please just calm down, just everybody will have
10 an opportunity to speak.

11 MS. PHILLIPS: Respect. As I was saying, I,
12 when I was a kid in Brooklyn, my parents wanted
13 to find the best choice of school for me and my
14 brother so they sent us to a magnet school
15 because they wanted to find the best fit for us.

16 I also stand here as the Community Relations
17 Director for Citizens of the World. We are a
18 nonprofit organization. We are not a hedge
19 fund. We are not a corporation. We are a group
20 of parents and educators. Myself, a native of
21 Brooklyn, New York, looking to provide diverse
22 communities for children and families who want
23 to thrive.

24 [Off mic comment]

25 MS. BARBOZA: I need - - again.

1 MS. PHILLIPS: I'm here to let you know
2 that you've been misinformed. That there are
3 lies being told about us and that we are--

4 [Off mic comments continuing--

5 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Excuse me.

6 MS. PHILLIPS: --we are poised. We are
7 poised to collaborate and to partner, not just
8 with our collocation partners but with the rest
9 of the community as well. Parents...

10 [Off mic comments]

11 MS. PHILLIPS: Parents...

12 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse
13 me.

14 [Pause]

15 [Off mic comments]

16 MS. PHILLIPS: We were invited to D14 by a
17 group of parents who were looking for another
18 option.

19 [Off mic comments]

20 MS. PHILLIPS: You will hear from them
21 later. But do not--you know my son is here and
22 I'm proud to stand up here and at least to tell
23 the truth. And so I ask that all of you in here
24 think about the truth, not the lies that you're
25 hearing, but the truth. That's what matters.

1 [Off mic comments, boos]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me. Excuse me. Excuse
3 me. Our next speaker is Desiree Barmore and I
4 do hope you will give her your respect and
5 attention. Ms. Barmore?

6 MS. DESIREE BARMORE: Ladies and gentlemen,
7 my name is Desiree Barmore. I'm the Director of
8 the Greenpoint Beacon that's located here at
9 Middle School 126--

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MS. BARMORE: We teach our children respect
12 here. And I have to ask you to display that
13 same behavior now. We may not agree--

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. BARMORE: --with what this lady has to
16 say but she has a right to her opinion and she
17 has a right to be heard. Now that being said,
18 it's my turn. First of all this Beacon has been
19 in this building for more than 13 years.

20 [Applause, cheering]

21 MS. BARMORE: We service children from PS 32,
22 PS 34, PS 17, PS 132, MS 577, IS 318, and Middle
23 School 126. We service an average of 1,500
24 children a year. We have after school
25 programming and we have summer camp programming.

1 And it's possible because we are here. It is
2 possible because 126 is here, open and still
3 working. Now I have to say honestly with you,
4 Mr. Bausch has done his job.

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MS. BARMORE: He has--he came in at the--he
7 came in, in the middle of a horrible situation
8 and he tried his best and it is working. Is it
9 going to happen overnight? No. But it is going
10 to take time and it is going to take support.

11 My question is having an elementary school
12 in this building, how are you going to keep
13 these children safe? How are you going to keep
14 them from coming to harm? How are you going to
15 keep them from getting knocked down by accident
16 when somebody's running down the hall? And how
17 is it going to affect this Beacon which is vital
18 to this community? Thank you.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you very much Ms.
21 Barmore. The next six speakers are number 6,
22 Jairo Guzman; number 7, Irene Donahue; number 8,
23 Paula Notari; number 9, Christina Dodd; and
24 number 10, it looks like Jeff Hendrickson.
25 Again, Jairo Guzman number 6; Irene Donahue,

1 number 7; Paula Notari, number 8; Christina
2 Dodd, number 9; and Jeff Hendrickson, number 10.
3 Again, please remember comments will be allowed
4 2 minutes and we want to be respectful and allow
5 people to finish their message.

6 [Pause]

7 MR. JAIRO GUZMAN: Go ahead? All right--

8 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Mr. Guzman.

9 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you. Good evening
10 everybody. I'm here to tell you I am the
11 Chairperson for the Board of Northside High
12 School. And I want to let you know as the
13 Chairperson and speaking for the Board of
14 Northside High School, we are very much against
15 collocating another school in this building.

16 We just don't have the space that the
17 students need to make sure that they're kept
18 safe, to make sure that all three schools have
19 what they need and no one loses anything in the
20 mix. Okay. So as a board member and on behalf
21 of the board, I say that we are completely
22 against the proposal.

23 Now I'll take time to also share with you
24 that I am a parent. I have two sons in
25 Northside High School and I have a niece. I

1 have a niece here in this school because a
2 Queens' school failed her. Okay.

3 And I have to tell you that in this school,
4 and I'll tell you a little personal story, my
5 wife passed away about four years ago. Okay.
6 And my sons needed a school that was able to
7 cuddle them. Okay. Just like a parent would.
8 They needed a school that held to the highest
9 standards, just like a parent would. Okay.

10 And to have another school come in now, and
11 I--I'll tell you, I asked my sons, yesterday,
12 what were their thoughts about having to share
13 their space, their school, with yet another
14 school. And it was very simple to them. They
15 were very clear about the fact that they felt
16 very much like someone was coming in and
17 stealing part of their home.

18 That's where I have to step in as a parent
19 and say that I am here to protect that space,
20 that space that my sons needed, that space that
21 my sons will continue to need, that my niece
22 needs, and make sure that they have a place that
23 is conducive to their learning, to their
24 development, to their safety, and make sure that
25 the students that follow them have the same

1 opportunity to grow, to make sure that the
2 leaders, the teachers that they have, the
3 students that they--that they share the space
4 with are proud of their school and not be taken
5 for granted.

6 And as a parent be insulted by having an
7 institution make decisions without complete--
8 without checking with us. So I'm against the
9 proposed collocation. Thank you.

10 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Guzman.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. BARBOZA: Irene Donahue.

13 [Off mic comment]

14 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Donahue.

15 MS. IRENE DONAHUE: Hello everyone. Thank
16 you. [Laughing] I'm sorry. I'm here to go on
17 record to say that I strongly support Citizens
18 of the World Charter School.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. DONAHUE: Thank you. I just want to say
21 that you may be the majority in here but you're
22 definitely not the majority in the neighborhood.

23 [Off mic comments, boos]

24 MS. DONAHUE: No. No, no. You do not--

25 [Crosstalk]

1 MS. BARBOZA: Please be respectful for two
2 minutes--

3 MS. DONAHUE: --speak for me and you do not
4 speak for all the parents in the neighborhood.

5 [Off mic comments continue]

6 MS. DONAUE: So I know I'm not going to get
7 word--be able to get a word in because there's a
8 lot of boos and there's a lot of immaturity so
9 that's okay. So I'm going to speak from my
10 heart, from my experience, quickly.

11 I grew up in Cincinnati, Ohio. I'm not from
12 Brooklyn. I'm not--

13 [Off mic comments]

14 MS. DONAUE: --whoa, I know [Laughing] but
15 I--

16 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Excuse me.

17 MS. DONAHUE: --one thing that people do not
18 know about Cincinnati is that we had
19 tremendously excellent schools. I was--went to
20 a Top 50 high school in the country and my grade
21 school, elementary school, was actually a public
22 Montessori school which is unlike anything I've
23 ever seen in New York. It was a public school
24 and I am definitely a proponent of public
25 schools. Charter schools are public schools.

1 [Off mic comments]

2 MS. DONAHUE: Okay so--

3 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
4 gentlemen.

5 MS. DONAHUE: --I applaud the alternative
6 method of teaching. I am all for progressive
7 and alternative methods. And I'm all for PS 84.
8 I'm all for PS 110. I am not against your
9 schools. There's no reason for me to be
10 against--

11 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
12 gentlemen--

13 MS. DONAHUE: --I'm--I applaud all kids and
14 I want the best for all children. But what I
15 also want and hope for is a chance for my kids
16 to go to a school that I think is best for them.
17 And that's my choice--

18 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Excuse me.
19 Excuse me--

20 MS. DONAHUE: [Interposing] I have--I
21 actually have the choice to put them into a
22 school that I feel is best, going to give them
23 the best education that I would like for them to
24 have. Okay great, that's all I have to say.
25 Thank you.

1 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me. Ladies and
2 gentlemen.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. BARBOZA: All of our speakers are
5 allowed 2 minutes to speak. I continue to ask
6 you to be respectful of their time so that their
7 message can also go on record. We will now hear
8 from Paula Notari.

9 MS. PAULA NOTARI: Hi, my name is Paula
10 Notari. I--I am a parent in Williamsburg. I
11 have two small children. And I was born and
12 raised in Brooklyn. I attended Midwood High
13 School which is a fabulous public high school.
14 I am also a fervent believer in public
15 education.

16 And that's why I moved my family back to
17 Williamsburg because I wanted my children to
18 grow up in an urban environment where they went
19 to public school. I must say that I've kept an
20 open mind throughout this whole process. I was
21 participant in the other collocation hearings
22 involving Success Academy.

23 I've been listening to a lot of the
24 arguments, many of your arguments. And I just
25 want to point out that there's a lot of

1 inconsistency. And you guys are asking--you
2 know I have young children and many of the
3 people on the left side of the room over there
4 have very young children.

5 And you're asking us to put our children in
6 these schools, dictated by the Department of
7 Education and yet at the same time you're
8 telling us that that the Department of Education
9 is incompetent and that these schools have
10 closed because there aren't music teachers and
11 science teachers and the truth is, the truth is
12 that these schools are under-enrolled because
13 parents with choice are not putting their kids
14 in these schools. And the kids--

15 [Off mic comments, booing]

16 MS. NOTARI: Okay. There are--

17 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
18 gentlemen.

19 MS. NOTARI: There are--

20 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
21 gentlemen.

22 MS. NOTARI: you made--

23 [Off mic comments]

24 MS. NOTARI: You have made the argument here
25 tonight that the schools are under-enrolled and

1 that we don't need a new elementary school.

2 Well they're under-enrolled because parents who
3 have choices do not want to put their kids in
4 those schools. And--

5 [Off mic comments]

6 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen.

7 MS. NOTARI: If you--Brooke Parker, you
8 said...

9 [Off mic comments]

10 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen. Ladies
11 and gentlemen--

12 MS. NOTARI: [Interposing] It's your fear--

13 MS. BARBOZA: --Ms. Notari has the floor.

14 [Off mic comments]

15 MS. NOTARI: And your fear is that no one
16 wants these schools. Then what are you worried
17 about? If no one wants these schools, no one is
18 going to put--no one is going to put their kids
19 in these schools. Why did it take...

20 [Off mic comments]

21 MS. NOTARI: I am a taxpaying citizen. And
22 I am--I have--

23 [Off mic comments]

24 MS. BARBOZA: Ms. Notari, please conclude.

25 MS. NOTARI: The citizens of the school is a

1 joyful, wonderful--

2 [Off mic comments]

3 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me, Sir.

4 MS. NOTARI: I just want to say one--

5 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Excuse me.

6 Excuse me. Ms. Notari, please conclude.

7 [Off mic comments]

8 MS. BARBOZA: Ma'am, Ma'am. Absolutely not.

9 [Off mic comments]

10 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Notari.

11 MS. NOTARI: I just want to say one more
12 thing. What is an abomination? Is that you are
13 trying--

14 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ms. Notari.

15 MS. NOTARI: --to silence parents--

16 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ms. Notari,
17 please conclude.

18 [Off mic comments, applause, cheering]

19 MS. BARBOZA: Christina Dodd. Number 9.

20 Again, ladies and gentlemen, everybody gets 2

21 minutes. We want to respect their 2 minutes.

22 Okay. Thank you, I really appreciate it. Ms.

23 Dodd, you have the floor.

24 MS. CHRISTINA DODD: I--

25 [Off mic comment, applause]

1 MS. DODD: Thank you. I would actually
2 like to speak directly to some points that Paula
3 Notari made. She comes to these events and she
4 speaks out. And let the truth be known that her
5 kids are in private school and unless she's
6 willing to find--

7 [Off mic comments, screaming]

8 MS. DODD: --a contract... unless she's
9 willing to sign a contract tonight that says
10 she's sending her kids to Success Academy, or
11 Citizens of the World Charter School, everything
12 she says is for nothing. Is for nothing. And
13 my point is that everybody who's for Citizens of
14 the World has no stake in this neighborhood.

15 SUNY is sitting up in an office in the City.
16 Citizens of the World was created in L.A. Paul
17 Notari has her kids in private school. Nobody
18 put--has anything to say about--good about the
19 school that even has a stake in this community.
20 They don't know about this community. And their
21 big--their big--

22 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
23 gentlemen.

24 MS. DODD: --their big argument, their
25 biggest argument is about having choice. Well

1 guess what? Do we have a choice? They asked
2 us if we wanted to have Success Academy here.
3 What did we say?

4 AUDIENCE: No.

5 MS. DODD: What did we get?

6 [Off mic comments]

7 MS. DODD: Exactly. Having another school
8 like this is like having another McDonald's in
9 the neighborhood, you know what I'm saying?

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MS. DODD: We could have 5-star restaurants,
12 which are our current public schools, PS 84,
13 Rooftop greenhouse project, you know what's up?

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. DODD: And all the rest of our public
16 schools. Or can we have another McCharter
17 Charter School, McDonald's to choose from--is
18 that really a choice? Is that a good choice?
19 No offense against charters, you guys are doing
20 your thing. Don't take it personally.

21 [Applause, cheering]

22 MS. DODD: But it's not a choice. It's not
23 a choice. I think not. That's all I want to
24 say.

25 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Dodd.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Jeff Hendrickson? Mr.
3 Hendrickson? Mr. Hendrickson? Thank you.

4 [Applause, cheering]

5 MR. JEFF HENDRICKSON: Got it. All right.
6 Thanks. There we go. All right. So, hi, I'm
7 Jeff Hendrickson. I teach 9th grade at
8 Northside. A lot of our families--

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MR. HENDRICKSON: And we're all here because
11 we're proud of our school. We all work hard,
12 from the principal to the board, the students,
13 everyone here, works real hard. And I
14 especially want to thank the two students that
15 got up and spoke. High school students getting
16 up and speaking on the - - -

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MR. HENDRICKSON: All right. So we're
19 talking about adding another school to this
20 building. I don't know a whole lot about this
21 school. I'm learning something about it
22 tonight. But I know that adding more students
23 to this building is not a good idea.

24 I looked in this packet. It said that this
25 building is 49% full of students right now.

1 Anyone who has been here during the school day
2 knows that that is just not true. You just
3 cannot double the amount of students in this
4 school--

5 [Applause, cheering]

6 MR. HENDRICKSON: We know that this will
7 have a negative effect. It will have a negative
8 effect on safety. It'll have a negative effect
9 in our classrooms, both academically and
10 socially, with our students. Yes, we all want
11 the best thing for our students. Everyone here
12 wants the best thing for the young people in
13 this community. But cramming more people into
14 this school is not the way to do that. Thank
15 you.

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Hendrickson.
18 Numbers 11 through 15: number 11, Ms. Stephanie
19 Anderson; number 12, Mr. Pete Bertine; number
20 13, Michael Mena; number 14, I apologize it
21 looks like Ms. Espinal, Ms. or Mr. Espinal, oh
22 Laura, number 14; and then number 15, Diana
23 Fernandez. So again number 11, Stephanie
24 Anderson; number 12, Pete Bertine; number 13,
25 Michael Mena; number 14 it looks like Gloria

1 Espinal; and number 15, Diana Fernandez.

2 MS. STEPHANIE ANDERSON: Hi, hello--

3 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Thank you Ms.
4 Anderson.

5 MS. ANDERSON: Is that good? Hi, as my
6 friend Jay here said, it's good to see me again
7 'cause I find myself having to stand up for
8 public schools when I shouldn't have to. But
9 it's important that you all showed up tonight
10 and we will keep fighting even if SUNY doesn't
11 let us win. Maybe Advocates of Justice will.

12 [Applause, cheering]

13 MS. ANDERSON: I do want to make one note.
14 In the last ten years this neighborhood has lost
15 2,700 children. The flight of families that
16 have perhaps larger families, Latino, Polish,
17 Italian, have been priced out possibly by white
18 folks like me but in many great numbers and we
19 need to remember this. We have a very large
20 Hassidic population in Williamsburg, none of
21 whom send their children to public school. So
22 it is complete, complete fabrication that our
23 schools aren't chosen. I chose it for my child.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. ANDERSON: That's a lie. We need to

1 recognize the demographics of this community
2 and talk about the facts and then we can
3 proceed. Thanks.

4 I'm going to go back to what I wanted to
5 say. I do find that in general I find this
6 community full of good people. I'm on a list
7 serve for Brooklyn parents called Brooklyn Baby
8 Huey. And if anyone has a problem, parents will
9 come and--to their rescue. We have an amazing
10 school, PS 84, with parent volunteers that
11 donate time and money--

12 [Applause, cheering]

13 MS. ANDERSIN: -- a hardworking
14 administration and this community is proud to
15 have El Puente here to service many, many
16 children with their high school, their after
17 school programs, their dance programs, and all
18 the other programs that they host for free,
19 including their fight for the environment.

20 So when you're surrounded by so many good
21 people, it's easy to believe that there aren't
22 bad people. But they're here and they're called
23 Citizens of the World.

24 [Applause, cheering]

25 MS. ANDERSON: Christine Dragon [phonetic]

1 is a corrupt, evil, greedy, individual who has
2 been busted by a major news organization for
3 stealing for Los Angeles and Mark Thornton, the
4 other head, is a well-known racist who has been
5 called out also by the press. Stop these
6 racists. Stop Citizens of the World. Stop the
7 grief.

8 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Anderson.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MS. BARBOZA: Number 12, Pete Bertine?
11 Number 12? Oh, number 14. Number 12, Pete
12 Bertine?

13 MR. PETE BERTINE: Can I hold the mic? - -
14 . Hi. Hi. I love our public schools.

15 [Applause, cheering]

16 MR. BERTINE: I'm--I'm Pete Bertine. I live
17 on Metropolitan Avenue and Berry, in
18 Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Anyone here a neighbor?

19 [Applause, cheering]

20 MR. BERTINE: Okay. Okay. My son Alex is
21 four and a half years old, he goes to pre-K at
22 PS 84.

23 [Applause, cheering]

24 MR. BERTINE: Anyone out there from PS84?

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MR. BERTINE: Okay. Well to all of you,
2 I'm here to apologize. I'm here to apologize to
3 all of you. At one time I was in support of
4 bringing charters into this community. At one
5 time I thought Citizens of the Word was okay.
6 Well how wrong I was. See I was invited by a
7 gentleman, by a guy named Eric Grannis
8 [phonetic], does anyone know who he is?

9 [Booing]

10 MR. BERTINE: Well he lives in Manhattan.
11 And he invited me off to this thing called the
12 Brooklyn Baby Huey, it's an internet
13 communication thing on Yahoo. Well this man
14 from Manhattan, he asked me to come to Brooklyn
15 to visit Shaffer Landing, a big condo on the
16 water in Williamsburg. And he wanted me to
17 learn about Citizens on the World--ha. Ha, I
18 say. Eric, a parent in Manhattan, husband of
19 some woman named Moskowitz.

20 [Booing]

21 MR. BERTINE: Respect, people. Eric, he
22 pretended that he was a parent with children in
23 my community. He lied. And he was kicked off
24 the Brooklyn Baby Huey. Just like his school,
25 Citizens of the World should be kicked the heck

1 out of Brooklyn.

2 [Applause, cheering]

3 MR. BERTINE: Sorry. I'm sorry. Respect.
4 But I am so pissed. Nobody lies to me and gets
5 away with it. So I'm here to kick some charter
6 school butt out of Brooklyn. Citizens of the
7 World, stay the heck, just get out of my public
8 school. This, this public school. Stay out.

9 [Applause, cheering]

10 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Michael Mena?

11 MR. DE VALE: I'd like to lie and say I'm
12 Michael Mena. But I know the powers that be at
13 Tweed know very well this face is not Michael
14 Mena.

15 [Applause, cheering]

16 MR. DE VALE: So it's D-E space V-A-L-E
17 'cause I know this is being taped and watched
18 and recorded and--as we came together as a
19 community, when they sent us another, yet
20 another uncertified chancellor, Kathy Black, and
21 all that will come to light, we came together as
22 a community to say no.

23 Every single elected official, don't ever
24 forget, this started way back. We talk about
25 respect. What respect do they have for this

1 community, when nobody here wants this
2 organization to come into the community? So I'm
3 beyond respect.

4 [Applause, cheering]

5 MR. DE VALE: You reap what you sow in this
6 world. And what they've sown is a Panel for
7 Education Policy, usurped from SUNY. I ask you,
8 has your entity ever said no to anything these
9 people have proposed?

10 I work for this community. I do not live
11 here. But I work for the people I serve.
12 Before I moved out of the community my children
13 did go here. But regardless of where one lives
14 and color and race, that's all nonsense.

15 That gentlemen Peter I just met, Mr.
16 Bertine, I didn't know who he was. I went up to
17 him in the back. Are you Eric Grannis? He said
18 why would you ask me? I--I saw a very well-
19 dressed, very sophisticated gentleman. I don't
20 care, no one in this district cares if you're
21 black, white, or in between. This is about our
22 public schools. Mr. Bausch, someone that I
23 admire greatly grew up here. My school is full
24 of--

25 [Applause]

1 MR. DE VALE: --teachers. My assistant
2 principal brings his kids to my school. I don't
3 think there's a higher piece of praise I could
4 get than when my staff wants their children in
5 our school. The community where they live.
6 This is not just about your school.

7 It's gotten to the point where the
8 saturation clause which Mayor Bloomberg made go
9 through. He threw a hissy fit when the
10 legislature was doing the charter school cap.
11 And when he said no, there cannot be a
12 saturation clause 'case this is not about your
13 children, it's about real estate. Harlem and
14 District 14 are primo real estate. They want
15 these buildings for Eric Grannis and Eva
16 Moskowitz.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MR. DE VALE: God bless you. Say no to this
19 organization. Thank you.

20 [Applause, cheering]

21 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Mena. Number
22 14, Gloria Espinal?

23 MS. GLORIA ESPINAL: Thank you. Yeah, it's
24 [Speaking in Spanish] SPEAKING THROUGH AN
25 INTERPRETER: Good evening my name is Gloria

1 Espinal. I'm trying to repeat what you say in
2 Spanish. My son has been attending a charter
3 school since fifth grade and now in ninth grade.
4 She's saying my son has been attending the ninth
5 grade in this school, has had a tremendous
6 amount of growth in learning. And I feel
7 extremely sure and safe in this school. I love
8 charter school and I want for the school to
9 continue to be just as it is. They need the
10 space to continue to grow. Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Espinal. Diana
13 Fernandez? Number 15? Is it possible that it's
14 a Damian Fernandez for number 15? Last call for
15 number 15. Moving on. Number 16, Laura
16 Kleinschmidt.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MS. BARBOZA: I've been informed that number
19 17, Magnolia Anario [phonetic] is no longer here
20 so we will move on. Instead of Brooke Parker I
21 will call Lesley Leavess.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. BARBOZA: Number 19, Esteban Duran. And
24 number 20, I believe this is Anthony Govino or
25 Govine--thank you Sir. Okay. So again we have

1 number 16 Laura Kleinschmidt; number 17 is not
2 with us; number 18, Leslye Leavess; number 19
3 Esteban Duran; and number 20 Anthony Govine.
4 Thank you.

5 MS. LAUREN KLEINSCHMIDT: Good evening panel
6 and audience. My name is Lauren Kleinschmidt.
7 I'm the Special Education Coordinator here at MS
8 126. I just wanted to take a moment to speak to
9 you guys about really the truly amazing change
10 that has happened within this building. I don't
11 think many people know or have had an
12 opportunity to see it so I'd like to be able to
13 share it with you.

14 Mr. Bausch our principal has tirelessly,
15 tirelessly, worked to recruit some of the most
16 amazing staff members that I have ever had the
17 opportunity to work with. It really truly has
18 changed the academic and social culture at our
19 school. We have, our teachres, art and music
20 teachers are incredibly talented in their
21 fields.

22 We have a math department that stays after
23 school to coach a math team. We have a special
24 education department that can speak to every
25 single IEP students' academic and social needs,

1 not just the ones they teach. Every student
2 in the school. The staff here is truly engaged
3 and truly dedicated to improving the academic
4 and social quality of life for the students in
5 the neighborhood.

6 Beyond that we have current common core
7 fellows on our staff. We have master teachers.
8 We have teachers with 20-plus years of
9 experience. We have many, many members of our
10 staff who come directly from this community.
11 And I just want to point out that this is the
12 only public middle school in Greenpoint. It's
13 the only public middle school. If we want to
14 give our parents choice, taking away space from
15 the only public middle school isn't giving them
16 a choice.

17 [Applause, cheering]

18 MS. KLEINSCHMIDT: So I would just ask that
19 you give us the opportunity to see the fruits of
20 our labor. We are here dedicated each and every
21 day. I am here until 7:00 o'clock at night very
22 single night, not because I have to, but because
23 I want to, because I believe in this school--

24 [Off mic comment]

25 MS. KLEINSCHMIDT: --because I love our

1 students and... I want to see--I want to see it
2 grow. Thank you.

3 [Applause, cheering]

4 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Lauren. Ms.
5 Leavess?

6 MS. LESLYE LEAVESS: All right. Hi. My
7 name is Leslye. I've been in this neighborhood
8 for 18 years and I made a commitment to go to
9 have my children go to public school and to be
10 part of this neighborhood. When we started, I
11 am--we are zoned for PS 132. When we started
12 there, there was 2 pre-K's, it grew to be 4 pre-
13 K's. The school was under-enrolled. The school
14 is busting at the seams.

15 There is a ton of elementary school students
16 in this neighborhood. And we have a lot of
17 choices of good, solid, elementary schools.
18 This is a middle school and I beg SUNY to see
19 that we do not have--I believe in choice, I
20 don't want to talk about charter or whether it's
21 corrupt or politics or anything.

22 This is a middle school, one that we
23 desperately need. I have a seventh grader who
24 is not in this district and I have a fourth
25 grader. I'd like my fourth grader to go to this

1 school. You are taking this school from our
2 neighborhood. We don't want an elementary
3 school. We need middle schools--

4 [Applause]

5 MS. LEAVESS: --the principal here is really
6 working on it. So.

7 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Ms. Leavess.
8 Esteban Duran?

9 MR. ESTEBAN DURAN: Good evening. I want to
10 read out a resolution that Community Board 1
11 passed last night. I'm a member of the head of
12 the Educational Youth Community in Community
13 Board 1. And we passed this resolution last
14 night. And it was opposing the collocation of
15 Citizens of the World Charter School into John
16 Ericsson MS 126, Community Board 1, Brooklyn
17 District 14.

18 Whereas, Williamsburg Greenpoint elementary
19 schools are under-enrolled and our district does
20 not need another elementary school,

21 Whereas new elementary charter school will
22 impact the funding for nearby elementary schools
23 like PS 110, PS 84, PS 414, PS 34, PS 31 and PS
24 132, and

25 Whereas, MS 126 will lose vital art rooms,

1 science rooms, computer rooms, music rooms and
2 rooms for special education

3 And I'm going to fast-forward a little bit
4 more here to

5 Whereas MS 126 is the only middle school in
6 Greenpoint, and the new principal has focused on
7 increasing enrollment, and

8 Whereas the Citizens of the World has
9 enrollment targets of 55% white, middle class
10 families which will reinforce segregation in our
11 neighborhood public schools,

12 Be it resolved Community Board 1, Brooklyn,
13 opposed the collocation of Citizens of the World
14 Charter School in Community Board 1, Brooklyn
15 District MS 126.

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MR. DURAN: I want to say that I am tired of
18 the Department of Education keep coming to us in
19 our community with these false paradigm choices.
20 Last year we were involved in this fight over
21 126--I'm sorry MS 50 where they collocated
22 Success Academy, okay.

23 Success Academy, according to your impact
24 statement, it's stated here, to only go K to 5.
25 Why on their website today it says that they're

1 planning K to 8, in MS 50? Stop coming into
2 our community with outright lies about what
3 you're planning for our community.

4 [Applause, cheering]

5 MR. DURAN: This EIS states that there will
6 be no impact on this Beacon program here in
7 after school. That is a flat-out lie. And it
8 is--and it s very--it malfeasance that you are
9 coming here and you're saying that. And also to
10 the SUNY charter operator who authorized this,
11 you should be ashamed of yourselves, we will
12 fight you. Join the lawsuit if you haven't
13 done it. Thank you very much.

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Duran. Mr.
16 Govine?

17 MR. ANTHONY GOVINE: What's up everybody?
18 We want to protect our schools, right? Yes? We
19 know why we're here, right? Yeah. We've got to
20 thank Mr. Mayor, okay, for not maintaining and
21 upkeeping, okay, our school systems. Okay. And
22 allowing a board such as the DOE to steamroll
23 over people. Okay. Because even though we say
24 no, y'all turn around and y'all take it for
25 granted like y'all want to do what y'all want to

1 do anyway. Well the truth needs to be known.
2 Okay. If it wasn't for the fact that you didn't
3 fail the upkeep. If you upkept the school
4 system like you were supposed to, we wouldn't
5 even be here.

6 [Applause]

7 MR. GOVINE: Okay? If you ask them to go
8 and get their own public spaces like they would,
9 we wouldn't have this problem. We don't have
10 anything against what they want to do. We've
11 got something against what they're trying to do
12 to our system, the one that the Mayor and the
13 Board of the Department of Education is supposed
14 to upkeep and maintain. And because they
15 failed, they want to blame the schools. It's
16 not the schools' fault. It's theirs.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Govine. Number
19 21, Kate Yourke; number 22, David Debosz; number
20 23, Yennie Almonte; number 24, Henry Harvey; and
21 number 25, Deanna Morea. Again we have number
22 21, Kate Yourke; number 22, David Debosz; number
23 23, Yennie Almonte; number 24, Henry Harvey; and
24 number 25, Deanna Moren.

25 MS. KATE YOURKE: Hi everybody. It's hard

1 to know how to approach this kind of
2 situation. We've all been here before It's a
3 piece of theater that leaves us empty and
4 starving and dehydrated. I was on the Community
5 Education Council. I served with Tesa. It's a
6 complicated body, performs mostly advisory
7 capacity.

8 But during that time I got to know our
9 schools. And I got to know how hard people work
10 here and how awesome the students are. During
11 that time I was also aware of what was happening
12 in this building and what was happening with the
13 leadership of this school.

14 I called that attention to the issue of the
15 leadership in this school, to the tar--education
16 and that is how I befriended Esteban Duran who
17 is here somewhere, a wonderful person whose
18 anger spills over because he knows only too well
19 how abused our district has been.

20 I called attention to the problems in this
21 building many times and they were ignored. What
22 happened to this school which was started as a
23 top school years ago and deteriorated under the
24 leadership of the Department of Education.

25 This school was allowed to deteriorate to

1 the point that parents would not send their
2 students here. And the students that ended up
3 here did not get into the schools of their
4 choice.

5 So if you're going to abdicate leadership of
6 the schools, I do not think you then have a
7 right to choose what goes on in this building.
8 You may not choose a school from somewhere far
9 away who sees a grand opportunity where Mayoral
10 control can give us no chance of opposing them.

11 They can be escorted in by the politically
12 connected tapestry project and be shoved into
13 our very important middle school. I don't know
14 how we stop this because we have no power. The
15 laws have been established to give us absolutely
16 no say which is pitiful and disgusting. But we
17 are watching and we will continue to be
18 watching.

19 [Applause, cheering]

20 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. David? Number 22,
21 David? Number 2, David?

22 MR. DAVID DEBOSZ: Good evening. I'm David
23 Debosz from St. John's Lutheran Church Social
24 Action Committee. At the end of the day the
25 argument is about not allowing 126 to shrink at

1 the expense of a charter school.

2 But quickly I want to say to the folks from
3 Citizens of the World, please see what happened
4 to your authentic community engagement because
5 you associated with Eva Moskowitz' husband, Eric
6 Grannis. He destroyed you on arrival. It is a
7 shame that you have to be shouted down the way
8 you did but look, Northside is accepted by the
9 community because of authentic, real, honest to
10 goodness engagement.

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 MR. DEBOSZ: Your playing the game the way
13 Eva Moskowitz did over at MS 50. Nobody from
14 our community is going there. She had to pull
15 folks from afar, the same thing is going to
16 happen to you. I know you're confused. I know
17 you're wondering what's going on.

18 You know how I know? Because you came to my
19 church last summer and the trustee said Citizens
20 of the World was looking at our closed parochial
21 elementary school, thinking about how they could
22 fix it up. And you know what? You don't come
23 to St. John's church with a charter school
24 disengaged from the community.

25 We fought for community control. You are

1 not about community and therefore what in the
2 world did you think was going to happen if you
3 approached us? It's because you didn't talk to
4 anybody in the community.

5 If you had talked to El Puente, if you had
6 talked to Williamsburg Charter or Northside, if
7 you had talked to the Southside Schools
8 Coalition, if you had talked to Churches United
9 for Fair Housing, if you talked at St. Nick's or
10 anybody else, they would have told you, don't go
11 looking at St. John's for property.

12 For God's sake, folks, hang it up and do it
13 right. I don't know about District 17 where you
14 have your other school but this one is a total
15 loser. I'm sorry you did it wrong. Don't [mic
16 cuts out] the wrong people. They'll kill you
17 [phonetic].

18 [Applause, cheering]

19 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Yennie Almonte,
20 number 23, Yennie Almonte.

21 MS. YENNIE ALMONTE: [Speaking in Spanish]

22 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen, as you
23 know that was in Spanish. I would like, if you
24 will indulge us, after we hear from Councilman
25 Levin, to have Yennie return and we will have a

1 translator to translate that for the benefit
2 of our English-speaking speakers. Would you
3 like to? Thank you Council Member Levine.
4 Yennie, would you like to come back up?

5 MS. ALMONTE: Yes.

6 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you I appreciate this.
7 Sorry.

8 MS. ALMONTE SPEAKING THROUGH AN INTERPRETER:
9 Good evening everybody. I'm the mother of three
10 children. Two are at PS 84 and the oldest one
11 is at 577. I have a moral engagement with my
12 children and my community to fight for their
13 rights. In the past years in our community we
14 had visits from charter schools that came to
15 visit and promised a progressive mission,
16 progressive education.

17 In our community we don't need any more
18 elementary schools. Because they're doing a
19 good job. We need middle schools. I'm asking
20 all the parents here especially with the charter
21 school, that they come and visit our school
22 especially PS 84. I want them to see how we're
23 working with those children, with our children.
24 And how we are forming the future leaders of our
25 community.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. ALMONTE SPEAKING THROUGH AN INTERPRETER:

3 So we don't need more change. What we are doing
4 is working fine. We just need junior schools,
5 sorry. Thank you.

6 [Applause, cheering]

7 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. I'd like to
8 recognize Council Member Steven Levin who has
9 some comments and then we will get back to our
10 speakers.

11 [Applause, cheering]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER STEPHEN T. LEVIN: Well thank
13 you very much. I'll keep my remarks brief. I
14 want to thank you for the opportunity to speak
15 this evening. My name is Steve Levin. I'm a
16 Council Member here in the 33rd District which
17 includes MS 126. I'm also a neighborhood
18 resident.

19 The District that I represent is
20 economically, racially and ethnically diverse
21 and I am proud of the fact that despite vast
22 differences, the Greenpoint and Williamsburg
23 neighborhoods have remained tight-knit and
24 community-focused. This sense of community is
25 reflected in our community's public schools and

1 that is why I cannot support the proposed
2 collocation of Citizens of the World Charter
3 School in the MS 126 building.

4 [Applause]

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: MS 126 under the
6 leadership of Principal Marcos Bausch is in the
7 midst of a real transformation. Principal
8 Bausch has innovative ideas to improve the
9 school and I believe that with the support from
10 the neighborhood, and from the Department of
11 Education, and from everybody in this room, MS
12 126 will quickly become every District 14 middle
13 schooler's first choice. In order for this to
14 happen though MS 126 needs resources and it
15 needs space. That simply cannot happen if
16 another charter school is allowed to move into
17 this building at this time.

18 Many of our schools in District 14 are at a
19 critical turning point right now. This is a
20 District that has seen a tremendous population
21 shift over the last few years and that has
22 affected many of our community schools. But
23 parents have banded together to make sure that
24 our schools work for our children.

25 And schools like PS 84, at PS 110, PS 34, PS

1 31, PS 132, you name it, many schools
2 throughout District 14, student morale and
3 student achievement are very high and parent
4 morale and parent achievement is very high.

5 Families from the south side and the north
6 side and Greenpoint are all coming together to
7 ensure that we continue to succeed. And at the
8 same time, District 14 has had to face the
9 approval of numerous charter schools in a very
10 few short years. Not all the charter schools
11 have succeeded but they have changed the
12 dynamics in our community.

13 And on a note about my role in the City
14 Council, I serve on the Council's Education
15 Committee. And I just want to share that last
16 year in our budget hearings and the preliminary
17 budget hearing, in February when looking at the
18 Department of Education budget, the budget for
19 charter schools grew from the previous fiscal
20 year and the documentation given to us by the
21 Department of Education, in the preliminary
22 budget they thought it was going to grow by \$70
23 million from FY '12 to FY '13.

24 When the Department of Education came back
25 to us for the final budget hearing in May, that

1 number was revised to \$120 million increase.
2 That's an increase of \$120 million from the
3 previous year. I think it's prudent at this
4 point that we put the brakes on siting new
5 charter schools because that money has to come
6 from somewhere, whether it's coming from arts
7 [phonetic]--

8 [Applause, cheering]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: --education or it's
10 coming... extracurriculars, whether it's coming
11 out of enrichment programs for our public
12 schools, that money doesn't just come from thin
13 air. And so I think that it's appropriate at
14 this time because that number is going to
15 continue to go up,

16 I want everybody in this room to know that,
17 that if it's going up because every year that a
18 charter school is sites, it's sited for the
19 first year or the first two years, it continues
20 to grow. And so we're not looking at an
21 increase next year of \$120 million, we're
22 looking at a much bigger increase than that.

23 And so I think that it's prudent at this
24 time that the Department of Education be more
25 selective with proposing charter schools. And I

1 think really what is--what we should do is put
2 a moratorium on siting new charter schools in
3 our public schools and let's start today with
4 this proposal. I think we should withdraw the
5 proposal. It is not--

6 [Applause, cheering]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: --and it is not
8 something that the community is asking for. I
9 think that that's also really important to note
10 is that in this community, the elementary
11 schools thrive in this community. And they
12 thrive because they have dedicated parents and
13 they have a dedicated community that is excited
14 about sending their children to these schools.

15 They are neighborhood schools. PS 110, PS
16 31, PS 34, 132, all within several blocks, it's
17 because--and the reason why--and they keep on
18 getting better. And the reason they keep on
19 getting better is because there is a--they've
20 reached a good balance that all--they're all
21 grade schools. They all provide different
22 things to different families.

23 And if a family is not particularly
24 satisfied with their zone school, there's a
25 place for their child to go. And every child's

1 need is met in this District and I think
2 that's--Superintendent Winnicki has done a great
3 job with and her predecessors have done a great
4 job with and it's something that this community
5 can be proud of but it's something that was
6 built from the community on up. And so I think
7 that in respect to the community's wishes, the
8 best thing to do at this time would be withdraw
9 this application. Thank you very much.

10 [Applause, cheering]

11 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Council Member
12 Levin. Number 24, Mr. Henry Harvey. Thank you
13 Mr. Harvey for allowing us to go ahead of you.

14 MR. HENRY HARVEY: Hi. My name's Henry
15 Harvey. I have a child over here at PS 34 which
16 is a couple of blocks down the street, which is,
17 by the way, a blue ribbon school. It's one of
18 the many good elementary schools here. And I
19 just want to say that I understand why people
20 would want school choice.

21 I've been involved with charter schools. My
22 wife actually taught for many years at a charter
23 school. But let me tell you the difference
24 between that charter school and the one that's
25 proposed to go into here.

1 That one, the charter school law was
2 originally intended to help the under-served
3 populations. The students that really were
4 struggling, under-served communities. This is
5 not one. This is one that--we have good
6 elementary schools. We don't need--we don't
7 need a charter elementary school coming in here.
8 And I think you have to question the motives of
9 these people.

10 [Applause]

11 MR. HARVEY: And another thing I would say
12 is that, to the people who--from Citizens of the
13 World, that is saying that you need choice and
14 people are not choosing these public schools.
15 Well we did choose these schools. We chose--we
16 looked at the schools and we chose PS 34. We
17 said this is a great school. And by the way--

18 [Applause, cheering]

19 MR. HARVEY: We need resources. I have to
20 question the intent of these people. If you
21 have all these resources and this money and you
22 want to help the children, I've got a crazy
23 idea. Why not help the schools that are already
24 here?

25 [Applause, cheering]

1 MR. HARVEY: Right? If you claim that the
2 charter schools are public schools, the
3 definition of public is the people. So don't
4 you want to help all the people? Because if all
5 the students don't succeed, then we as a nation
6 don't succeed.

7 And by the way, here's another point. If
8 this is all a foregone conclusion and things
9 have already been decided, do we live in a
10 democracy? I have to question that. Right?
11 Are we living in a plutocracy which means
12 government by the rich?

13 Do we live in a plutocracy that's covered in
14 republic and only has a thin veneer [phonetic]
15 of democracy. We need to--we need to control
16 our own community because we're, in a sense,
17 we're citizens of the world but you know what,
18 we're really citizens of Greenpoint, Brooklyn,
19 in New York, in the United States of America.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. HARVEY: And by the way the people--the
22 people behind this school, they're people that
23 are selling curriculum. They're people that
24 have a couple of years of experience in teaching
25 and then go on to become--

1 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Mr. Harvey,
2 will you please conclude?

3 MR. HARVEY: --consultants in how to start
4 charter schools. They're all about market
5 share, real estate, money, they don't care about
6 the kids. Thank you.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you Mr. Harvey. Number
9 25.

10 MS. IRENE SANDRA DONAHUE: Hi. My name is
11 Irene Sandra Donahue and I'm a Williamsburg mom.
12 I have a 4-year old son named Jake. And I do
13 support the Citizens of the World Charter
14 School.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. DONAHUE: And I'm going to be really
17 honest. It's incredibly difficult to stand here
18 in front of all the parents who oppose this
19 school because I know that all of us here
20 together really, really love our children and we
21 want all of the children in the community to do
22 well and to thrive. So I--my support of this
23 school is not meant as any ill-will toward any
24 of my neighbors, any of your children and
25 anyway...

1 [Off mic comments

2 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen, let her
3 speak. Excuse me. Let her speak. Let her
4 speak. This is enough.

5 MS. DONAHUE: My family supports Citizens of
6 the World Charter School because of its strong
7 focus on diversity, academic rigor, critical
8 thinking, creativity, emotional development, and
9 how children relate to one another. As a mother
10 of a young child, I'm frightened by the level of
11 polarization that is the norm today.

12 I appreciate a school with a strong
13 curriculum that focuses on peacemaking and how
14 one relates to their peers, their community, and
15 the world around them. I believe that Citizens
16 of the World Charter School is sincere in these
17 intentions.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. BARBOZA: Stop. Please let her speak.

20 MS. DONAHUE: In New York City, finding a
21 school for your child is an excruciating
22 process. You want to make the best decisions
23 for your child, one that meets their needs, but
24 it also forces you to look at the stark
25 realities of other children's--

1 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Guys, let her
2 speak. Enough is enough.

3 MS. DONAHUE: And I've toured--I've had the
4 opportunity to tour a lot of schools. And I can
5 see what people--when people talk about the
6 disparities in the schools, I see that with my
7 own eyes as a parent. I see that. And I also
8 see the newcomers, which I am one of, everybody
9 channeling into certain schools and those
10 schools, no one can deny that the parents in
11 those schools are doing an amazing job making
12 those schools better.

13 MS. BARBOZA: Okay. Okay.

14 MS. DONAHUE: Oh--

15 [Off mic comment]

16 MS. DONAHUE: --please.

17 MS. BARBOZA: Guys.

18 MS. DONAHUE: But I feel a certain sense of
19 shame that the expectation of the system, not
20 necessarily the people here but of the system,
21 is that we have to show--we, the newcomers, have
22 to show up to make it--to make it that way.

23 MS. BARBOZA: Ms. Morea, please conclude.

24 MS. DONAHUE: And I--and I feel when--and I-

25 -

1 [Off mic comments]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen, Ms.
3 Morea is concluding--

4 MS. DONAHUE: [Interposing] I'm just
5 speaking from my heart.

6 MS. BARBOZA: --please give her your
7 respect.

8 MS. DONAHUE: I'm speaking from my heart.
9 Because I don't feel that at all, I feel ashamed
10 about that. I feel ashamed.

11 MS. BARBOZA: Excuse me. Ladies and
12 gentlemen. Ladies and gentlemen. Ladies and
13 gentlemen. Okay? Thank you.

14 [Applause, cheering]

15 MS. BARBOZA: These are our last six
16 speakers of the evening. Sarah Porter; Sergio
17 Zamora; number 28, Katie Sobel; number 28,
18 Courtney Smith; number 30, Norm Scott; and
19 number 31, George Hernandez. Thank you. Okay,
20 number 26, Sarah Porter.

21 MS. SARAH PORTER: Hi. Hi. I'm number 26.
22 My name is Sarah Porter. I'm a public school
23 parent. I'm a proud public school parent. And
24 I'm getting a little emotional just like Ms.
25 Donahue was getting a little emotional.

1 I've got two kids in PS 132 and I'm very
2 happy there. We're not saying there aren't
3 problems. Of course there are problems at every
4 public school, at every school. It's not
5 perfect but we are trying. We're working hard.

6 We're working hard with the administration.
7 We're working hard with parents, with all our
8 parents. And we would like the DOE to listen to
9 us. To listen to all the parents in this school
10 that go to public school, in this room that go
11 to public school. Parents want more services.
12 Parents want more activities. Parents want more
13 funding for their school for smaller class
14 sizes, for after school programs. We don't want
15 collocation in an existing school.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. PORTER: All of the things that Ms.
18 Donahue was talking about, having, that she
19 wanted, guess what? We have.

20 [Applause]

21 MS. PORTER: Okay? We have a great
22 performing art program called Tada. It's great.
23 Okay? We have a fantastic art program in our
24 school. Okay? We have--we have one of the few
25 elementary school band programs in our school.

1 Unfortunately my son felt he had too much
2 homework to do that so he didn't do it. But it
3 is great. It's a great thing.

4 This is--this is not something to laugh at
5 or joke at or to sneer at. This is a Title I
6 school. It has multiethnic, multi--obviously,
7 socioeconomically and it--it's very varied and
8 we are trying our best. And we want the DOE to
9 support us, not turn their backs on us like they
10 are doing with every public school in this
11 District.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. PORTER: I have one more thing to say.
14 I know my time is up but 'm very happy--how many
15 people from DOE are here tonight? Who's here
16 from DOE? Okay. Well where's the Office of
17 portfolio Planning? Where's the Office of
18 Portfolio Planning?

19 [Off mic comment]

20 MS. PORTER: Oh, great, I'm so glad to see
21 you're here. Well, okay, I've got something for
22 you and SUNY, I'm so glad you're here because,
23 guess what, you didn't show up at our last
24 hearing in April--

25 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ms. Porter,

1 please conclude.

2 MS. PORTER: --all right, 80 people showed
3 up from the community and said we don't want--

4 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ms. Porter?

5 MS. PORTER:--it's not--you don't have to not
6 say no to charter schools. We don't want it
7 collocated in this school--

8 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ms. Porter,
9 please conclude.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. PORTER: [Off mic] - - listen and hear,
12 to listen to the community - - .

13 [Applause, cheering]

14 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Sergio Zamora?

15 [Applause]

16 MR. MICHAEL MENA: Good evening members of
17 the community. Good evening to the
18 distinguished members of the panel. My name is
19 Michael Mena. I'd like to thank my colleague
20 Sergio Zamora for allowing me to speak. In my
21 earlier slot I had allowed Principal De Vale to
22 speak.

23 And I wanted to speak to you this evening
24 on--from a number of different perspectives.
25 First of all I am a veteran educator in this

1 building. I am also the coordinator of our
2 magnet grant and I am the Chairperson of the
3 School Leadership Team here at MS 126.

4 In my capacity as the Chairperson of the
5 School Leadership Team I would like to tell you
6 that there is unanimous sentiment that the
7 collocation is a bad idea.

8 [Applause, cheering]

9 MR. MENA: Not one member of the constituent
10 stakeholders on this school leadership team here
11 at MS 126 support this collocation. In my role
12 as the magnet grant coordinator, let me tell you
13 something about MS 126. MS 26 is 1 of only 136
14 schools across the country that is currently the
15 recipient of a federally funded magnet grant.

16 What have we done with this magnet grant
17 support? We have brought the level of
18 instruction and rigor up to levels that I've
19 never seen before in this school and I've been
20 here for close to 17 years. We have a dedicated
21 staff of new staff members, of veteran
22 educators, who are committed to one thing: the
23 academic and overall success of the students in
24 this building.

25 And the Educational Impact Statement, if you

1 read it, says very clearly that they do not
2 expect there to be a detrimental impact on
3 either the Believe Charter School, the high
4 school here, or MS 126. Do not believe that.
5 It is a falsehood. I can guarantee you that if
6 the charter school, the charter elementary
7 school, is located, it will have a detrimental
8 impact on everyone here.

9 Now I also want to speak to you as a parent
10 of a fifth grader, of a 5-year old, special
11 needs student. My daughter is in an ASD Nest
12 Program in District 15. The ugly truth that has
13 not been spoken about in this forum tonight is
14 that charter schools, with the exception
15 certainly of the Believe school here, charter
16 schools have a very poor record of serving
17 special education students and English language
18 learners.

19 What guarantees would this charter school
20 bring to serving those populations?

21 [Applause]

22 MR. MENA: Thank you.

23 MS. BARBOZA: Thank you. Number 28, Kate
24 Sobel.

25 MALE VOICE MS. BARBOZA: Sir, can you sit

1 down? Thank you.

2 MS. KATE SOBEL: Good evening ladies and
3 gentlemen. My name is Kate Sobel and I'm a
4 former teacher, former principal, and now a
5 member of the Board of Citizens of the World
6 Charter. And I want to speak to the staff. A
7 lot of our colleagues have left this evening
8 already but speak to the staff who are here from
9 MS 126 and from Believe. Thank you for hosting
10 us this evening Principal Baig.

11 I just want to share with you on a very
12 practical level that this school, recognizing
13 that it has been identified for collocation, is
14 one that a school will come in to collocate in.
15 And we as a board are committed fully to sitting
16 down with you and figuring out how to make sure
17 that as the staff here tonight have said it's
18 not detrimental to the current programs that
19 exist in this school.

20 We have a record of doing this successfully
21 in two of our buildings in Los Angeles and we
22 believe that--

23 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
24 gentlemen.

25 MS. SOBEL: We believe that we--

1 [Off mic comments]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Ladies and gentlemen, let her
3 speak.

4 [Off mic comments]

5 MS. SOBEL: We believe that if we can come
6 together at the same table and talk about things
7 like bell schedules, school calendars, the
8 vision that we have for how to use the space in
9 our school, we can do things to actually improve
10 the building and work together rather than
11 working against each other. We're not looking--

12 [Off mic comments]

13 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Excuse me.

14 MS. SOBEL: We're not looking--

15 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Let her finish.

16 MS. SOBEL: We're not looking for the
17 District to tell us what the regulations are
18 about what the space is and how it should be
19 divided up. We plan to come together and sit
20 with you and have those conversations to make
21 sure that it really works for all of us.

22 When I was a principal, I had a school come
23 in and take over. They didn't give me that
24 privilege to sit down and make those decisions.
25 So as a member of the board represnting the

1 educational--

2 [Off mic comments]

3 MS. BARBOZA: [Interposing] Ladies and
4 gentlemen. Please let her finish.

5 MS. SOBEL: --the educational vision and
6 hopes for the school, I just want to make a
7 commitment to you that if this does--if this
8 partnership does get established, we absolutely
9 will come together and make decisions that work
10 best for all of the children of this building
11 and of this community. So thank you very much
12 for considering us for collocation.

13 [Applause, cheering, off mic comments]

14 MS. BARBOZA: Number 29, Courtney Smith.
15 Number 29, Courtney Smith.

16 [Applause, cheering]

17 MS. COURTNEY SMITH: Good evening everyone.
18 I am a resident of the neighborhood for a long
19 time. My youngest child is in Kindergarten at
20 PS 84. I have older kids--

21 [[Applause, cheering]

22 MS. SMITH: --I have older kids, high school
23 age and beyond. And I've really been around the
24 block as a parent. I know what I'm doing and
25 I'm so sure that the right thing is to invest

1 entirely in our local public schools. And
2 any charter school coming in is only undermining
3 what we as a community are working so hard to
4 build.

5 And what I want to point out also, Citizens
6 of the World is not a school. It's a business
7 first and foremost.

8 [Applause, cheering]

9 MS. SMITH: It is not a school. It could be
10 anything. It happens to sell education. But
11 it's a business. And you know what? And I can
12 prove that. Because they prey on those
13 ignorant, new parents, walking around Kent
14 Avenue with a baby Bjorn [phonetic] who don't
15 know the first thing about education.

16 They don't know the first thing. And it's
17 so easy to go there and try to pitch this
18 business concept about a progressive school,
19 blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. We read the
20 proposal. There's nothing in there that you
21 don't have in every one of our schools. We know
22 that--

23 [Applause]

24 MS. SMITH: --but you get these poor
25 parents, just like, unfortunately that poor

1 woman who spoke earlier who was quivering and
2 almost in tears.

3 And she's a perfect example of somebody who
4 doesn't have knowledge, doesn't have experience,
5 is vulnerable, is insecure. She's prey to this
6 concept that you can go in there and tell these
7 people that this is the exact school for their
8 kid and new parents are so scared, they're so
9 worried, but this is just--it's just gross.
10 It's gross. It's predatory--

11 [Applause]

12 MS. SMITH: --it's invasive. And you know
13 what? Why? It's--it's--you know you must feel
14 bad. It's immoral frankly because you're
15 taking--

16 [Off mic comments]

17 MS. SMITH: --you're taking funds away from
18 kids. You are ruining something that exists.
19 Something that people have worked hard. You
20 know? And the same with the DOE, that passes
21 this. One last thing. One last thing. If this
22 school passes, we will know that there are a
23 bunch of jaded, cynical, passive bureaucrats
24 just letting it happen because it's wrong on
25 every level.

1 [Applause, cheering]

2 MS. BARBOZA: Mr. Norm Scott.

3 MR. NORM SCOTT: Hi, I'm Norm Scott. I
4 taught in this community for 35 years, PS 16, PS
5 84 and PS 147 where I was 27 years. I'm one of
6 the people that stayed in this community, not
7 like in very many cases in charter schools, we
8 have a revolving door of teachers with
9 tremendous turnover. And I say that to my
10 friends over here. I know about your school.
11 I've written about it. And I know some of the
12 turnover that you've gone through.

13 The fact of the matter is that this is a
14 scam. I mean it's a scam. Let me explain what
15 the scam is. People who have their kids in
16 private school see a way to create their own
17 little private school using our money, our
18 public school--

19 [Applause, cheering]

20 MR. SCOTT: --that's the scam. That's part
21 one. Now to the lady who just spoke who claims
22 they have a record of cooperating. Let me tell
23 you about the Moskowitz Grannis family record.
24 They undermine every single school they go into.
25 They steal space.

1 They get services that the rest of the
2 school doesn't get. And they basically are out
3 to take over a building. There is no question
4 that the goal that they're not telling you is
5 not to cooperate but to occupy this building
6 like a foreign occupation. That's what they do.
7 And that's why--

8 [Applause, cheering]

9 MR. SCOTT: --that is why I'm opposed to
10 charters because charters lead to no choice.
11 Eventually the goal of the Grannis Moskowitz
12 family is to own all the elite schools in
13 District 14 and leave the rest of the kids that
14 they don't want. And don't--and to the ladies
15 who spoke before, if your child does one thing
16 wrong, your child will be out. You will be
17 counseled out of that school and you'll be right
18 back here with us the next time.

19 Let me just say one quick thing to the State
20 Ed Department. The State Ed Department would
21 allow any kind of charter. The Hitler Youth
22 Charter, fine. The KKK, Ku Klux Klan Charter,
23 that's okay with us. Now that we've allowed
24 them to come in, you will either clean the
25 sheets for them.

1 You're a dishonest bunch of people. You
2 should be driven out of office by every single
3 person, one day I hop ewe get to elect you
4 people and we will push you out like they've
5 done in other places like Indiana.

6 [Applause, cheering]

7 MS. BARBOZA: Our final speaker tonight is
8 number 31, George Hernandez. Mr. Hernandez?
9 Last call for number 31. Well then I suppose it
10 was fitting that Mr. Scott had the last word
11 tonight. So I wanted to thank everybody for
12 coming.

13 [Applause]

14 MS. BARBOZA: We have concluded the joint
15 public hearing. I want to remind everybody that
16 the vote on this proposal will be voted on at
17 the Panel for Educational Policy's December 20th
18 meeting. Again that's at the High School for
19 Fashion Industries, 225 West 24th Street,
20 Manhattan. If you would like to provide
21 feedback via email,
22 D14PROPOSALS@SCHOOLS.NYC.GOV. The telephone
23 number is (212) 374-0208.

24 [END RECORDING]

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the
4 best of my ability.

5
6 Signature *Laura L. Springate*

7 Date December 8, 2012
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