

Amended Public Comment Analysis

Date: June 23, 2014

Topic: The Proposed Revised Re-Siting of a Portion of Richmond Hill High School (27Q475) from Building Q636 to Building Q475 During the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 School Years, and the Temporary Co-location of a Portion of Richmond Hill High School (27Q475) with Epic High School – North (27Q334) in Building Q636 for the 2014-2015 School Year

Date of Panel Vote: June 24, 2014

Summary of Proposal

Richmond Hill High School (27Q475, “Richmond Hill”) currently serves a portion of its ninth grade in building Q636 (“Q636”), located at 94-25 117th Street, Queens, NY 11419 in Community School District 27 (“District 27”), and serves the remainder of its ninth grade, as well as its tenth through twelfth grades, in building Q475 (“main building Q475”) and temporary classroom units (“TCUs”) Q944, located at 89-30 114th Street, Queens, NY 11418, also in District 27. Q636 is located approximately 0.6 miles from Q475. Q475 also houses Partnership with Children, a community based organization (“CBO”). On October 11, 2013, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to re-site the ninth grade of Richmond Hill from Q636 to Q475 beginning in the 2014-2015 school year (the “Original Proposal”). A “re-siting” means students will attend classes in a different building than the one they attended the previous year. On November 26, 2013, the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) approved the Original Proposal.

In response to the Richmond Hill school community’s request to remove the TCUs, the DOE’s newly formed Campus Squad met with Richmond Hill’s principal in April 2014. The Campus Squad, which assists schools with programming issues and helps resolve co-location disputes, developed a plan for Richmond Hill to cease using the TCUs for core instruction beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, by gradually re-siting that school’s students from the Q636 building to main building Q475 over the course of two years. The DOE plans to remove the TCUs prior to the 2016-2017 school year.

The DOE has now substantially revised the Original Proposal. Under the revised proposal, a portion of Richmond Hill consisting of approximately 200 students will be served in Q636 during the 2014-2015 school year, and will be temporarily co-located with new high school Epic High School – North (27Q334, “Epic North”), which is opening in September 2014. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces like auditoriums, gymnasiums, and cafeterias.

Richmond Hill will continue to serve a portion of its students in Q636 during the 2014-2015 school year, re-siting its students from Q636 to Q475 over two school years (2014-2015 and 2015-2016). Actual enrollment and demand for Richmond Hill’s three admissions programs (the zoned program, Choices Academy program, and Criminology and Forensics Institute program) will determine which Richmond Hill students and classes will be served in Q636.

All Richmond Hill students will be re-sited from building Q636 to main building Q475 by the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year. The DOE will work with Richmond Hill’s leadership to ensure all of Richmond Hill’s students have access to the full array of programming offered by the school.

Epic North is open to students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process and uses a limited unscreened selection method with priority for students residing in Queens. Epic North will open in Q636 with ninth grade, adding one grade annually until it reaches full scale, serving grades nine through twelve, in the 2017-2018 school year. Beginning in the 2015-2016 school year, Epic North will be the only school organization in Q636.

The DOE plans to reduce the enrollment at Richmond Hill over a period of four years beginning in September 2014. By 2017-2018, enrollment at Richmond Hill will decrease by approximately 420-460 students so that it will serve approximately 1,570-1,610 students at scale in ninth through twelfth grades. The enrollment reduction is intended to provide an opportunity for Richmond Hill to concentrate on a smaller cohort of students, and allow for Epic North to open in building Q636. Moreover, the enrollment reduction is not expected to yield a net loss of high school seats in District 27. The approximately 420-460 seats that Richmond Hill will lose once its enrollment is fully reduced will be more than recovered through the phase-in of the new school in the Q636 building as well as the phase-in of another new high school, Epic High School – South (27Q314, “Epic South”) at building Q226, which together will offer between 600-680 seats once they reach full grade span in the 2017-2018 school year.

According to the 2012-2013 Enrollment Capacity Utilization Report (the “Blue Book”), main building Q475 and the TCUs (collectively, “Q475”) have the combined capacity to serve a total of 2,165 students. During the 2013-2014 school year, Richmond Hill is serving approximately 1,794 ninth through twelfth-grade students in Q475. This yields a projected utilization rate of approximately 83%. This means that the building is “under-utilized” and has space to accommodate additional students.

If this revised proposal is approved, in 2014-2015, Richmond Hill is projected to serve approximately 1,763 ninth through twelfth-grade students in main building Q475 and the TCUs, yielding a projected building utilization rate of approximately 81%. In 2015-2016, once all Richmond Hill students have been re-sited from Q636, the school is projected to serve approximately 1,835 – 1,875 ninth through twelfth-grade students in main building Q475 and the TCUs, yielding a projected building utilization rate of approximately 85% - 87%. Because these utilization rates are based on the combined capacity of main building Q475 and the TCUs, they are subject to change upon the completion of planned construction in the main building, modified use of TCUs in the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years, and eventual removal of TCUs once the rooms are no longer needed to support students.

According to the Program of Requirements (“POR”) from the School Construction Authority (“SCA”), building Q636 has the capacity to serve 402 students. During the 2013-2014 school year, Richmond Hill is serving approximately 400 ninth-grade students in building Q636. This yields a projected utilization rate of approximately 100%. If this revised proposal is approved, in 2014-2015, Richmond Hill is projected to serve approximately 200 students and Epic North is projected to serve approximately 81 ninth-grade students in Q636, yielding an estimated projected building utilization rate of 70%.

The details of this revised proposal have been released in a revised EIS which can be accessed here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/June2014PEPSchoolProposals>.

Copies of the revised EIS are also available in the main office of Richmond Hill.

This Public Comment Analysis has been amended to attribute correctly comments 23b through d to Richmond Hill School Leadership Team (“SLT”) representative Edith Rivera, and comment 2p to Richmond Hill SLT representative Cheryl Rose.

Summary of Comments Received

A joint public hearing regarding the Original Proposal was held at Richmond Hill on November 14, 2013. Approximately 60 members of the public attended the hearing, and 13 people signed up to speak. Present at the meeting were Tamika Matheson, High School Superintendent for Districts 15, 22, 23, 27, 30, and 32; DOE representative Elaine Gorman; District 27 Community Education Council (“CEC 27”) Member Michael Duvalle; Richmond Hill SLT representatives Principal Neil Ganesh, Vishnu Mahadeo, and Edith Rivera; Citywide Council on High Schools (“CCHS”) Queens Representative Alleyne Hughley; Community Board 9 Member Seth Welins; and Jillian Roland and Dean Guzman from the DOE’s Office of District Planning. The Public Comment Analysis concerning the Original Proposal can be accessed here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/B122F4F4-30A6-420E-9A0B-97FB288B216A/155150/PublicCommentAnalysisQ475vfinal.pdf>.

A joint public hearing regarding this revised proposal was held at the Q475 building on June 12, 2014. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the hearing and three people spoke. Present at the meeting were District 27 High School Superintendent Donald Conyers; Chancellor’s Designee Meg Barboza; CEC 27 representative Sherry Algreto; Principal Ganesh, Mr.

Mahadeo, and Cheryl Rose representing the Richmond Hill SLT; Mr. Duvalle representing the office of State Senator James Sanders; Mr. Welins of Community Board 9; and Melody Lopez and Dean Guzman from the DOE. A community meeting was facilitated by District 27 High School Superintendent Donald Conyers on June 19, 2014 with Principal Ganesh. Approximately 30 members of the public attended the meeting and five people spoke. At that meeting, interested parties had an additional opportunity to provide input on and ask questions about the proposal. Present at the meeting were: Principal Ganesh, Mr. Mahadeo, Ms. Rivera, and Ms. Rose representing the Richmond Hill SLT; Epic North Principal David Weinberg and Assistant Principal Paul Perry, and John Duval, Tom Fox, Rana Khan, Kevin Moran, and Donald Conyers of the DOE.

The following comments and remarks were made at the June 12, 2014 joint public hearing and/or June 19, 2014 community meeting regarding the revised proposal:

- 1) Richmond Hill SLT member Vishnu Mahadeo made the following comments:
 - a) He believes it is unacceptable for students to be housed in the TCUs.
 - b) He believes the TCUs should no longer be used for children.
 - c) He stated that the DOE is intentionally trying to confuse the Richmond Hill school community.
 - d) He believes the DOE cannot use the TCUs capacity for building utilization; therefore, the utilization calculation for Richmond Hill is incorrect.
 - e) He believes the security system needs to be repaired.
 - f) He expressed concern about the idea of split scheduling.
 - g) He questioned what type of populations Epic North will be serving in 2014-2015.
 - h) He believes Richmond Hill has seen an increase in demand for 2014-2015.
 - i) He believes the calculation of building utilization should use the main building only.
 - j) He believes the gym needs to be repaired.
 - k) He believes a lane in the swimming pool needs to be repaired.
 - l) He asked for the TCUs to be removed as soon as possible so the surface can be made into a tennis court.
 - m) He believes the Richmond Hill network needs additional support to meet the needs of the Richmond Hill leadership.
 - n) He asked when the FY 2015-2019 Capital Plan will be updated.
- 2) Richmond Hill SLT member Cheryl Rose made the following comments:
 - a) She believes the Richmond Hill school community input is being ignored.
 - b) She believes the DOE has already made a decision about this proposal.
 - c) She stated that the DOE has not shown proof that there is demand for a new high school in building Q636.
 - d) She stated that no community members she interviewed wanted Richmond Hill re-sited from building Q636 to Q475.
 - e) She asked who gets to pick which students will be served in building Q636.
 - f) She questioned whether all students will safely fit in the main building for 2014-2015.
 - g) She believes split sessions will cause Richmond Hill to decline in quality.
 - h) She believes the joint public hearing was not scheduled to be parent friendly.
 - i) She questioned why the PEP vote was in the Bronx.
 - j) She asked why Epic North and Epic South cannot share a building.
 - k) She requested that the DOE assist Richmond Hill leadership to avoid split scheduling.
 - l) She asked why parents were not invited to meetings at the central office to discuss this proposal.
 - m) She asked how the DOE is going to support the socio-economic needs of Richmond Hill students.
 - n) She questioned how Richmond Hill teachers can teach in TCUs with moldy conditions.
 - o) She believes DOE officials that believe in this proposal should send their children to Richmond Hill.
 - p) She believes the community meeting was not scheduled to be parent friendly due to the 4:45 P.M. start time and insufficient notice.
- 3) CEC 27 representative Sherry Algreto made the following comments:
 - a) CEC 27 sides with the parents.
 - b) She believes there is an issue of overcrowding in Richmond Hill.
 - c) She questioned how the DOE plans to solve overcrowding in Richmond Hill by opening a new school in building Q636.
- 4) State Senator James Sanders' representative Michael Duval made the following comments:
 - a) He is against the proposal.

- b) He believes it does not make sense to put a co-location in the annex.
- c) He suggested that building Q636 be used to alleviate overcrowding in Richmond Hill permanently.
- 5) Community Board 9 member Seth Welins made the following comments:
 - a) He does not believe there is an explanation for the removal of Richmond Hill from building Q636.
 - b) He does not understand why Richmond Hill students need to be re-sited to building Q475 for the 2014-2015 school year.
 - c) He questioned why charter schools can have up to 40 million dollars for rent in private space, but students at Richmond Hill have to stay in TCUs.
 - d) He asked what happens to Richmond Hill if enrollment increases.
- 6) Community Board 9 member John Carter made the following comments:
 - a) He believes building Q636 belongs to Richmond Hill.
 - b) He stated that building Q636 develops a cohort for the Ninth Grade Academy at Richmond Hill.
 - c) He believes building Q636 needs to be a part of the community.
- 7) One commenter believes the proposal will negatively impact the quality of Richmond Hill.
- 8) One commenter suggested that Richmond Hill serve more students in building Q636 since the building is underutilized.
- 9) One commenter stated that building Q636 is a good location for incoming Richmond Hill ninth graders and should continue to serve those students.
- 10) One commenter believes this proposal is ill conceived and an overall poor use of space.
- 11) One commenter suggested that the DOE wait until enrollment at Richmond Hill decreases to re-site Richmond Hill students from Q636 to Q475.
- 12) One commenter expressed concern that this proposal inhibits choice and options for future students.
- 13) One commenter stated that Richmond Hill has been “targeted” multiple times by the DOE.
- 14) One commenter expressed hope that the new administration will change this proposal.
- 15) One commenter stated that split schedules are not good for Richmond Hill.
- 16) One commenter expressed concern that the planned construction in building Q475 does not make sense.
- 17) One commenter expressed opposition to the prior administrations’ proposals.
- 18) One commenter expressed concern about the possibility of re-purposing three of the five computer lab rooms into three full-size classrooms due to the student need for desktop computers.
- 19) One commenter asked what the entire construction plan was for building Q475.
- 20) One commenter asked how the DOE will be able to re-purpose eight additional full-size rooms in building Q475 when the EIS states five additional rooms will be created.
- 21) One commenter asked why the locker rooms are being re-purposed into full-size instructional rooms.
- 22) One commenter asked where students are expected to change if the locker rooms are re-purposed.
- 23) Richmond Hill SLT member Edith Rivera made the following comments:
 - a) She asked if the DOE considered building an addition to the main building.
 - b) She stated that ninth grade students have always been served in building Q636.
 - c) She asked why students that reside in Brooklyn are enrolled at Richmond Hill.

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

No other oral or written comments were received related to this revised proposal.

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

Comment 2o and 17 are unrelated to the proposal and thus do not require a response.

Comments 1c, 2a, 2d, and 2l concern the DOE’s engagement with the Richmond Hill community regarding this revised proposal. Comments 2h and 2p express concern about the scheduling of the joint public hearing and community meeting.

The DOE is committed to engaging with the community for all proposals to implement a significant change in school utilization. Chancellor’s Regulation A-190 sets out the public review and comment process that the DOE undertakes with respect to all such proposals by the Chancellor (e.g., grade reconfigurations, re-sitings, co-location of schools, or phase-outs).

The DOE revised the Original Proposal concerning the re-siting of Richmond Hill students from Q636 to Q475 in response to the Richmond Hill school community's request to remove the TCUs. The DOE's newly formed Campus Squad met with Richmond Hill's principal in April 2014. The Campus Squad, which assists schools with programming issues and helps resolve co-location disputes, developed a plan for Richmond Hill to cease using the TCUs for core instruction beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, by gradually re-siting that school's students from the Q636 building to main building Q475 over the course of two years. The DOE plans to remove the TCUs prior to the 2016-2017 school year.

Consistent with applicable laws and regulations, the revised EIS was published on the DOE's website on May 23, 2014, and hard copies were made available in the Richmond Hill main office. When an EIS is issued, it is made available to the staff, faculty and parents at all the impacted schools, on the DOE's Web site, and in each school's respective main office. Parents were notified of the revised proposal and the joint public hearing via parent letters and joint public hearing notices that were backpacked home with students by May 30, 2014. The DOE dedicated a proposal-specific website, voicemail, and email address to collect feedback on this revised proposal.

Furthermore, the DOE held a community meeting on June 19 to discuss with Richmond Hill stakeholders how the revised proposal might be implemented if the PEP approves it.

The DOE encourages all families and community members to participate in these processes.

With regard to comment 2h, the DOE reached out to CEC 27 and the impacted SLTs in advance of issuing the revised EIS to schedule the joint public hearing. The District 27 High School Superintendent, CEC 27, and Richmond Hill SLT were all given five possible dates to select for the joint public hearing, and all mandated parties agreed to the June 12th date for the joint public hearing. With regard to comment 2p, the community meeting was determined by the availability of the principals for Richmond Hill and Epic North before the end of the school year. If this revised proposal is approved by the PEP, the DOE and principals at Richmond Hill and Epic North welcome any additional feedback regarding implementation moving forward.

Comment 1e concerns the safety and security system at Richmond Hill.

As stated at the community meeting on June 19, 2014, funding to install new security cameras will be allocated in the next proposed FY 2015-2019 Capital Plan.

Comments 1j and 1k concern facilities upgrades for the gym and swimming pool at main building Q475.

As stated at the community meeting on June 19, 2014, work orders to the Division of School Facilities will be processed for repairs to the gym and swimming pool.

Comment 1n inquires when the FY 2015-2019 capital plan will be updated.

As stated at the community meeting on June 19, 2014, the FY 2015-2019 capital plan will be updated in September 2014.

Comments 1m and 2m request additional network support to meet the needs of the Richmond Hill leadership and students.

Richmond Hill, like all DOE schools, will continue to receive support and assistance from its superintendent and Children First Network, a team that delivers operational and instructional support directly to schools. The DOE does not anticipate that this proposal will preclude the current leader from improving the learning environment at Richmond Hill.

Comments 1h, 2c, 3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 8, 12, and 14 express general opposition to the revised proposal and concern the DOE's rationale behind opening a new high school in Q636 and reducing enrollment.

As stated in the EIS, the DOE strives to ensure that all students in New York City have access to schools that meet their needs at every stage of their education. The opening of Epic North in building Q636 is intended to provide an additional option to students and families in District 27 and in Queens at-large. For the 2014-2015 school year, Epic North had sufficient demand to meet their seat target. At this time, Richmond Hill has not had sufficient demand to meet their seat target.

As mentioned above, the DOE is planning to gradually decrease Richmond Hill's enrollment by approximately 420-460 students over a period of four years. The enrollment reduction of Richmond Hill is driven by Richmond Hill's performance and demand. Richmond Hill received an overall D grade on its Progress Report in 2012-2013, an overall C grade in 2011-2012, an overall D grade in 2010-2011 and an overall C grade in 2009-2010. Additionally, in 2012-2013, the school received a C in College Readiness and a D grade in Student Progress, Student Performance, and Environment. Moreover, enrollment at Richmond Hill overall has decreased by 35% since 2008-2009, with a 38% decrease in ninth-grade enrollment from 1,173 ninth-grade students in 2008-2009 to 727 ninth-grade students in 2013-2014, indicating declining demand for the school. Applicant demand for Richmond Hill is low, particularly demand for the Choices Academy Program to which students apply as part of the High School Admissions Process. For the 2013-2014 school year, there were 1.4 applicants per seat available in this program, as compared to the Citywide average of 8.1 applicants per seat in high schools, with only 22% of all applicants to the program ranking it as their first choice.

At this time, the DOE believes that reducing the enrollment of Richmond Hill beginning in September 2014 and providing a new option for high school students in the Q636 building will benefit current and future students at Richmond Hill and in Queens. The enrollment reduction and re-siting is intended to provide an opportunity for Richmond Hill to concentrate on a smaller cohort of students in a consolidated location, and allow for a new school option to develop in building Q636.

This revised proposal also responds to community requests to remove or reduce usage of the Richmond Hill TCUs. Funding has been allocated in the proposed FY 2015-2019 Capital Plan for the removal of all TCUs citywide. The TCUs will be removed once the DOE has confirmed the space is no longer needed to support students. Additionally, under this revised proposal the TCUs will no longer be used for core instruction beginning in 2014-2015.

Comment 23a suggests that DOE construct an addition to main building Q475.

As stated above, the DOE is planning to gradually decrease Richmond Hill's enrollment by approximately 420-460 students over a period of four years. The enrollment reduction and re-siting is intended to provide an opportunity for Richmond Hill to concentrate on a smaller cohort of students in a consolidated location, and eventually allow all students enrolled at Richmond Hill to be served in the main building only. Therefore, the DOE does not anticipate a need to construct an addition to main building Q475.

Comment 2j proposes that Epic North and Epic South share a building.

The proposal to open and co-locate a new high school, Epic South, in the Q226 building beginning in the 2014-2015 school year was approved by the PEP on October 30, 2013. That proposal can be found here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/Oct30SchoolProposals>. Building Q226 does not have sufficient space for both Epic North and Epic South to co-locate in that building, and building Q636 does not have sufficient space for both Epic North and Epic South to co-locate in that building when the schools are at full scale.

Comment 2e concerns how Richmond Hill will determine which students will be served in building Q636.

As stated in the EIS, actual enrollment and demand for Richmond Hill's three admissions programs (the zoned program, Choices Academy program, and Criminology and Forensics Institute program) will determine which Richmond Hill students and/or classes will be served in Q636. The DOE will work with Richmond Hill's leadership to ensure all of Richmond Hill's students have access to the full array of programming offered by the school, and to schedule classes in a way that minimizes the need for students to travel between main building Q475 and Q636 during the school day.

Comments 4c, 6a, 6b, 6c and 9 suggest that Q636 should continue to serve incoming ninth grade Richmond Hill students permanently. Comment 23b contends that the ninth grade cohort has always been served in building Q636.

Richmond Hill offers the Ninth Grade Academy to all incoming ninth graders to provide a transition into a high school setting with the exploration of six career pathways to be chosen by the student at the end of the ninth grade year. In the 2013-2014 school year, students enrolled in the Ninth Grade Academy are served in building Q636. As stated in the revised EIS and above, actual enrollment and demand for Richmond Hill's three admissions programs (the zoned program, Choices Academy program, and Criminology and Forensics Institute program) will determine which Richmond Hill students and classes will be served in Q636 in the 2014-2015 school year. The DOE anticipates that the Richmond Hill leadership will continue to successfully serve students enrolled in the Ninth Grade Academy without the dedicated, permanent use of building Q636.

During this re-siting, Richmond Hill, like all DOE schools, will continue to receive support and assistance from its superintendent and Children First Network, a team that delivers operational and instructional support directly to schools. The DOE does not anticipate that this proposal will preclude the current leader from improving the learning environment at Richmond Hill.

With regard to comment 23b, Richmond Hill began serving incoming ninth grade students in building Q636 in the 2013-2014 school year. All students were served in the main campus and TCUs prior to the 2013-2014 school year.

Comment 7 expresses concerns about the impact of this proposal on Richmond Hill's quality.

As mentioned in the EIS, the DOE will work with Richmond Hill's leadership to ensure all of Richmond Hill's students have access to the full array of programming offered by the school, and to schedule classes in a way that minimizes the need for students to travel between main building Q475 and Q636 during the school day.

The planned enrollment reduction may have an impact on some of the educational options available to students currently attending Richmond Hill.

With respect to academics, the school will continue offering all necessary classes to support current students as they work to meet graduation requirements and earn their high school diplomas. As total enrollment at the school declines throughout the course of the enrollment reduction, the school may need to scale back its elective course offerings. It is difficult to predict how those changes might be implemented, as decisions will rest with school administrators and will be based on student demand and available resources. However, the school will still have approximately 1,570 – 1,610 students by the end of the enrollment reduction, and this is a sufficient size to continue offering a wide array of academic offerings.

Comment 13 concerns the history and impact of prior interventions at Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill has struggled to meet performance targets for several years. In 2011, the DOE applied to the State Education Department to implement the Transformation model, one of four federally approved intervention models. Based on later evidence that the school was not equipped to significantly improve student performance, in April 2012, the Panel for Educational Policy voted to implement the closure and replacement of Richmond Hill. A lawsuit prevented the DOE from following through with those plans. Please refer to the response to comments 1h, 2c, 3a, 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 8, 12, and 14 for more information concerning the rationale for the proposed enrollment reduction and opening of a new high school in Q636.

Comments 1d, 1i, 2f, 3b, 3c, and 10 express concerns about overcrowding in main building Q475 and the calculation of the building utilization rate.

The revised EIS indicates that if this proposal is approved, the estimated building utilization rates for main building Q475 and the TCUs between the 2014-2015 and 2017-2018 school years will remain under 100%. However, the estimated building utilization rates for Q475 may vary from actual utilization rates because the Blue Book's target capacity calculation for Q475 includes the capacity of main building Q475 and the TCUs. Several elements of this revised proposal may affect the target capacity. First, programming the TCUs for non-core instruction beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, and removing the TCUs will likely reduce the target capacity of Q475. Second, the DOE's plans to construct a minimum of three additional classrooms in main building Q475 for the 2014-2015

school year, and a minimum of four additional classrooms in main building Q475 for the 2015-2016 school year will increase that building's target capacity. Therefore, the projected utilization rates reported may be different from actual utilization rates. However, as discussed in the revised EIS, both Richmond Hill and Epic North will receive their respective baseline allocations pursuant to the Citywide Instructional Footprint. Please visit the DOE's Web site to access the Footprint, which guides space allocation and use in City schools:

http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/ronlyres/78D715EA-EC50-4AD1-82D1-1CAC544F5D30/0/DOEFOOTPRINTSConsolidatedVersion2011_FINAL.pdf

Comment 5d concerns the impact of this proposal if demand increases at Richmond Hill.

As stated above, the DOE is planning to gradually decrease Richmond Hill's enrollment by approximately 420-460 students over a period of four years. Should demand for Richmond Hill increase, the DOE will work with the Richmond Hill leadership to assess space and the school's ability to accommodate additional students. For more information about school zoning and admissions processes for zoned schools, please visit the DOE Web site's School Search function at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch>.

Comment 11 suggests that the DOE delay re-siting Richmond Hill students from Q636 to Q475 until Richmond Hill's enrollment decreases.

Under this revised proposal, in order for Richmond Hill to cease using the TCUs for core instruction beginning in the 2014-2015 school year, the DOE proposes to gradually re-site Richmond Hill's students from the Q636 building to the main building Q475 over the course of two years. The DOE proposes that Richmond Hill continue to use Q636 during the first year of the school's enrollment reduction. In the 2015-2016 school year, when Richmond Hill's enrollment has decreased by approximately 210-230 students, all of Richmond Hill's students will be re-sited to the main building Q475 and TCUs. At this point, there will be sufficient space to program core instruction in Richmond Hill's main building.

Comments 16, 18, 19, and 20 concern the planned construction in main building Q475 to increase capacity.

To accommodate the Richmond Hill school community's request to remove the TCUs, the DOE plans to increase the capacity in main building Q475 by constructing at least three additional classrooms prior to the 2014-2015 school year, and at least four additional classrooms prior to the 2015-2016 school year. The DOE also plans to remove the TCUs once the rooms are no longer needed to support students. With regard to comments 18 and 20, three of the five designed computer labs in the main building may be repurposed into three additional full-size instructional rooms. In addition to the two remaining designed computer labs, Richmond Hill will receive three laptop carts to replace the three re-purposed designed computer labs. The DOE does not anticipate these changes will impact Richmond Hill's ability to use computers for instructional purposes.

Comments 1a, 1b, and 5c relate to the usage of TCUs. Comment 2n relates to the condition of the TCUs.

Funding has been allocated in the proposed FY 2015-2019 Capital Plan for the removal of all TCUs citywide. This revised proposal facilitates the removal of Richmond Hill's TCUs, which will be removed once the DOE has confirmed the space is no longer needed to support students. Additionally, this proposal assumes that the TCUs will no longer be used for core instruction beginning in 2014-2015.

With regard to comment 2n, as stated in the EIS posted on October 11, 2013, mold remediation and cleaning for TCU Q944 was conducted from September 20, 2013 to October 2, 2013. All units in TCU Q944 were suitable for occupancy at the time of the completion of the mold remediation and cleaning by October 2, 2013.

The Original Proposal to re-site one grade level of Richmond Hill High School (27Q475) to building Q475 beginning in the 2014-2015 school year can be found here:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2013-2014/Nov26SchoolProposals>

Comment 11 requests that the TCUs be removed as soon as possible so the surface can be made into a tennis court.

As stated at the community meeting on June 19, 2014, the DOE will identify unused TCUs and begin discussions with the SCA and school community regarding expediting the removal of some TCUs, and planning for resurfacing to install tennis courts.

Comment 1g concerns Epic North's anticipated student population.

Epic North is open to students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process and uses a limited unscreened selection method with priority for students residing in Queens. Epic North will open in Q636 with ninth grade, adding one grade annually until it reaches full scale, serving grades nine through twelve, in the 2017-2018 school year.

Comments 1f, 2g, 2k, and 15 concerns the possibility of split scheduling at Richmond Hill.

Queens high schools, and many high schools throughout the city, have successfully served students in buildings by efficiently scheduling classes through additional periods and split-schedules. Under a split-schedule, students attend school at different times of the day, so not all students are in the building at the same time. Some examples include Forest Hills High School and Francis Lewis High School in Queens, which each operate on more than one session and have received "A" and "B" progress report grades every year, with each receiving an "A" grade for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years.

Under this proposal, there will be sufficient space in the main building Q475 to accommodate its projected student enrollment. This revised proposal does not necessitate split scheduling, however, the decision to split schedule is at the discretion of the Richmond Hill leadership.

Comment 2b contends that a decision has already been made regarding this revised proposal.

While the DOE supports this revised proposal, the DOE notes that PEP has not yet voted on it. Public feedback on this proposal will continue to be collected and provided to the PEP prior to its vote.

Comment 2i questions why the June PEP vote will take place in the Bronx.

According to the PEP bylaws, at least one PEP meeting shall take place in each borough each year. PEP voting locations are determined months in advance. The proposals that are presented to the PEP for voting are determined independently of the PEP voting location.

Comments 21 and 22 concern the proposed re-purposing of the locker rooms into full-size instructional rooms.

As stated at the community meeting on June 19, 2014, Q475's current locker rooms are not efficiently designed. The DOE plans to re-design the locker rooms to maximize space so that students will continue to have facilities to change for the pool and store their belongings, while also creating additional instructional space.

Comment 23c asks why students that reside in Brooklyn are enrolled at Richmond Hill.

As stated in the EIS, in New York City, high school admissions is a Citywide choice process, with students ranking up to 12 high school programs in order of preference. Students across the city, including students that reside in Brooklyn, may choose to enroll at Richmond Hill.

Richmond Hill and Epic North admit students through the Citywide High School Admissions Process, described in further detail below. Though this revised proposal will not impact the admissions methods or policies of any of the programs Richmond Hill currently offers, including the zoned program, the enrollment reduction will reduce the number of ninth-grade seats available at Richmond Hill in the 2014-2015 school year and beyond. In particular, the enrollment reduction will reduce the number of seats offered in the Choice Academy program.

Richmond Hill admits students to the Criminology and Forensics Institute through a screened admissions method. Currently, in screened programs, students are ranked based on their final report card grades from the prior school year, as well as reading and math standardized test scores. Attendance and punctuality are also considered.

Richmond Hill admits students to its Choice Academy program through an educational option admissions method. Currently, Educational Option (“Ed. Opt.”) programs are meant to serve a wide range of academic performers. Based on English Language Arts (ELA) standardized test scores from the prior school year, students are matched to Ed. Opt. programs based on the following distribution: 16% from the high reading level; 68% from the middle reading level; and 16% from the low reading level. Half of the students matched to Ed. Opt. programs will be selected based on their rankings from the school; the other half will be selected randomly. If a student scores in the top 2% of all students in the City on his or her previous year’s ELA reading exam, and lists an Ed. Opt. program as his or her first choice on the application, he or she is guaranteed a match to that program. Additionally, for Round 1 of the high school admissions process for 2014-2015 admissions, if a student scored in the top 2% of all students in the City on his or her previous year’s ELA reading exam, and listed an Ed. Opt. program as his or her first choice on the application, he or she was guaranteed a match to that program. Beginning for Round 2 of the high school admissions process for 2014-2015 admissions, consistent with changes to State law as described below, students scoring in the top 2% of all students in the City on his or her previous year’s ELA reading exam were not guaranteed a match.

These admissions methods may be modified in future years to comply with the recent amendments to section 100.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, which provide that test scores on the State ELA and Math tests may not be used as the sole or primary factor in placement decisions. Such modifications will not be impacted by this revised proposal.

Richmond Hill also admits students through a zoned admissions method. A zoned admissions method provides a priority to students living within a specified zone. A student’s zoned school is determined by his or her home address. For more information about school zoning and admissions processes for zoned schools, please visit the DOE Web site’s School Search function at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolsearch>.

Changes Made to the Revised Proposal

As discussed above, the Original Proposal described in the EIS posted on October 11, 2013 has been substantially revised. Under the revised proposal, a portion of Richmond Hill consisting of approximately 200 students will be served in Q636 during the 2014-2015 school year, and will be temporarily co-located with new high school Epic North. Richmond Hill will continue to serve a portion of its students in Q636 during the 2014-2015 school year, re-siting its students from Q636 to Q475 over two school years (2014-2015 and 2015-2016). All Richmond Hill students will be re-sited from building Q636 to main building Q475 by the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

The revised EIS includes:

- An updated room count for main building Q475, which reflects planned construction that will increase the capacity of that building over the next two years
- An updated allocation of rooms for Richmond Hill in main building Q475 and the TCUs
- The allocation of rooms between Richmond Hill and Epic North in Q636 for the 2014-2015 school year
- Additional information about the implementation of the enrollment reduction at Richmond Hill
- Updates based on the most recent enrollment and performance data for Richmond Hill
- Information about the impact of recent amendments to Commissioner’s Regulation 100.3 on admissions policies
- Updated information about the state approval status of Richmond Hill career and technical education (“CTE”) Programs

No changes have been made to the revised proposal.