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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION – DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
**Long-Term Siting for Harlem Prep MS
(2014-2015)**

**January 8th, 2013
5:30 P.M.**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. LUZ CORTAZO: Good evening, everyone.
3 Welcome. [Brief welcome in Spanish.] This is a
4 joint public hearing of the Department of
5 Education Community Education Council on school
6 - - P.S. 88 for the proposed school location of
7 grades 6 through 8 of Harlem Prep Charter School
8 we're assisting P.S. 88 - - the Building M121,
9 meeting in the 2014-2015 school year. I am Luz
10 Cortazo - - . We have asked initially for the
11 Community Education Council and the school
12 leadership team or - - day to participate in
13 this Harlem hearing. Unfortunately, the
14 principal of 88 and the members of the - - are -
15 - . As many of - - , but the assistant
16 principal from P.S. 88 Ms. Yvonne Spears had - -
17 volunteered to be here today.

18 I am also - - members - - most of them are
19 out sick also, but at least they come - - come
20 today. I am also joined tonight by Tom Pranta
21 from - - University and by Ms. Lindsay Malanga
22 who is a principal of Harlem Prep at this point.

23 The purpose of this hearing is for you to
24 provide comments about the proposal. Before I
25 decide the proposal, I want to make sure you are

1 all aware of an opportunity to provide - - .
2 All of those who wish to speak must in fact - -
3 in a speaking - - area located outside of the
4 auditorium. The sign up place will close in 15
5 minutes. Speaking for the limit - - is all of
6 the - - . All sides will be given two minutes
7 and we have decided for the committee? Okay,
8 thank you.

9 There may be elected officials who arrive at
10 - - time through the evening. If they wish to
11 speak, we will do our best to accommodate them.
12 Those who are here are - - , then - - they are
13 to speak first. All comments will be mentioned
14 - - in the public - - to be published and
15 provided to the Department of Education of - -
16 and even before the panel votes. That vote is
17 scheduled for January 16, 2013.

18 In addition to the - - and feedback you may
19 have - - for the panel most of these proposals.
20 The email addresses and phone number for
21 comments being made are these four proposals as
22 soon as - - and - - 212-374-3466 and comments
23 will be made in a - - form or by e-mailing these
24 four proposals at school.nyc.gov.

25 The New York City Department of Education is

1 proposing to - - six - - of an assistant - - at
2 the school Harlem Prep Charter School in
3 building M121 located at 232 East 103rd Street,
4 Manhattan, New York, 10029 - - with assisting
5 school PS38 known as - - being - - in 2014-2015
6 school year.

7 In the calendar 2012-2013 school year, PS38
8 is co-located with a - - charter school and
9 assisting charter elementary school - - with
10 kindergarten to fifth grade. Next year in the
11 2013-2014 school year - - will serve students in
12 kindergarten to sixth grade. At the end of
13 2013-2014 school year, - - will relocate to a
14 private facility - - in M121.

15 The - - public school - - is a total of four
16 public--charter schools in Manhattan including
17 Harlem Prep. Beginning in the 2011-2012 school
18 year, the - - is a - - Harlem Prep, which was
19 previously called Harlem Day Charter School.
20 Before Harlem Prep came into - - Prep it
21 received a D score on the 2010-2011 progress
22 report in the first year operating at - - Prep
23 Charter - - . Harlem Prep received an A on its
24 2011-2012 progress report. Harlem Prep Charter
25 - - the state of emergency in New York had to

1 approve the school to expand to such - -
2 kindergarten through eighth grade.

3 M121 also houses a community-based - -
4 education Mt. Sinai. This proposal is not
5 expected to impact the continued - - of the
6 community-base of education.

7 In 2012-2013 Harlem Prep - - kindergarten to
8 sixth grade in two separate facilities, both
9 located in the - - . The new school - - that -
10 - are located in nearly every 99 as 410 - - 100th
11 Street. If this proposal is approved by the - -
12 the state - - of Harlem Prep will be co-located
13 in M121 in the 2014-2015 school year with PS38
14 and assisting - - elementary school that - - in
15 kindergarten through fifth grade and over two
16 section of - - .

17 Harlem Prep will - - students in
18 kindergarten through eighth grade depending on
19 the availability of - - to a lottery that will
20 give Prep its first - - student - - student - -
21 in Harlem Prep and then to students - - .

22 Additional information about Harlem Prep lottery
23 - - .

24 Building M121 has a - - capacity of 465. In
25 2012-2013 Building M121 is serving approximately

1 584 students in PS38 and in grades given - -
2 rate of 126%. In 2013-2014 Building M121 is
3 projected to serve 596 to 728 students from PS38
4 and - - . During a - - rate of 128-156%. In
5 2014-2015 the - - of this proposal, Building
6 M121 will serve 559-694 students from PS38 and a
7 - - rate of 112, yielding a potential
8 utilization rate of 120-149%, an increase from
9 the previous year.

10 Despite the - - rate of 100% the building
11 has sufficient space to provide all schools
12 within a - - modifications. Although our
13 utilization rate in excess of 100% is to get the
14 building - - overutilized or on-target in - -
15 year, this rate has not - - for the fact that
16 rooms may become more efficient or if they use -
17 - like the standard function in the utilization
18 calculation. In addition, charter schools - -
19 of - - days on larger class sizes than targeted
20 capacity, contributing to building utilization
21 of over 100% while not in fact in the
22 utilization of this space allocated to the
23 traditional public school. Therefore, the M121
24 building has the capacity to accommodate PS38
25 and the middle school rate of Harlem Prep.

1 With - - and those schools still - -
2 building, due to space limitation the building -
3 - for recent grade levels to be hold in - - .
4 There are many - - of - - . Harlem Prep had
5 been approved by the charters - - the state - -
6 of New York charter school in - - to operate
7 this - - of charter school and community school
8 - - . Although this proposal had not yet been
9 approved by the - - . To me it's - - to - - on
10 a proposal - - the location of Harlem Prep with
11 P.S. 88. As such, this - - would also serve as
12 a continuing - - . That - - from - - is - - on
13 the charter - - Mr. Tom Pranta will now tell you
14 how - - . Mr Pranta?

15 MR. TOM PRANTA: Thank you - - . My name is
16 Tom Pranta. I'm the associate general counsel
17 for the city charter schools institute. I'm
18 here tonight to conduct a public hearing on
19 behalf of the board of trustees of the state
20 university of New York.

21 The education law requires the school to
22 hold a public hearing at any time one of its
23 schools - - authorizes - - in an existing public
24 school building. I'm here tonight to listen to
25 your comments about the proposal to locate

1 grades sixth through eight at Harlem Prep
2 Charter School in part of this building
3 beginning in the fall of 2014. - - is holding
4 this hearing now at the same time as the DOE is
5 holding its hearing so that we don't have to ask
6 parents and community members to attend two
7 different hearings on the same subject.

8 I will be taking notes on all comments made
9 tonight. In addition, you may give me any
10 written comments that you may have or you can e-
11 mail them, mail them, or fax them to the
12 following addresses: via e-mail to
13 charters@suni.edu, via mail to 41 State Street,
14 Suite 700, Albany, New York 12207, or fax
15 comments to area code 518-427-6510. All of
16 these addresses are posted on the back wall to
17 the auditorium if you'd like to write them down.

18 SUNY [phonetic] will accept comments through
19 January 23 of 2013, just five days after the PEP
20 is scheduled to vote on this matter. Thank you
21 for all your comments today.

22 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Do we have any
23 others of the CEC that are - - ? No not yet.
24 At this time I would like to introduce Ms.
25 Yvonne Spears representing PS38.

1 MS. YVONNE SPEARS: Good evening everyone.
2 I would like to welcome all of you on behalf of
3 myself, and - - who is ill, and I'd like to say
4 I'd like to welcome Ms. Melinda and Marlin Bratt
5 [phonetic] and hopefully if they argue or work
6 together because children come first and we're
7 gonna make sure that we have an environment
8 that's conducive to learning. Thank you.

9 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you Ms. Spears. I would
10 also like to acknowledge the - - of - - Mr. - -
11 thank you for being here, and thank you all for
12 coming out tonight.

13 Do we have any - - officials in the
14 audience? Well I don't see anyone, but - - they
15 come. - - to the formal presentation we will
16 now open the floor for public comments.
17 Speaking for the - - floor - - . All comments
18 related to - - , but before you do that, excuse
19 my manners, I did not allow Ms. Malanga to say
20 anything, my colleague Ms. Malanga is here.

21 MS. LINDSAY MALANGA: Good evening. My name
22 is Lindsay Malanga. I'm the principal of Harlem
23 Prep. I'm very proud to be here and eager to
24 partner with all educators in Harlem to make
25 sure all students get the best education

1 possible, so thank you for your welcoming and
2 I look forward to working together with Ms.
3 Spears.

4 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Juanita, one of
5 these days. Would you please come up?

6 FEMALE VOICE: We like it and we - - .

7 MS. CORTAZO: Okay. I like it--yeah - -
8 thank you. I learned something new tonight,
9 thank you. Okay, now I - - the back row like
10 that I was wondering - - , but thank you. - -
11 you tonight. Okay. So like I said people who
12 will call you to the floor in the order that you
13 signed up. Those people will have two minutes.
14 The first person is Johanna--number one, how
15 about you have numbers right? Number one?
16 Johanna Irujo?

17 MS. JOHANNA IRUJO: Hi. Good evening. My
18 name is Johanna Irujo. I'm a proud parent of a
19 - - scholar. Harlem has - - I'm a part of the
20 village. We're all facing the same challenges
21 [crosstalk]. My name is Johanna Irujo. I'm a
22 proud parent of - - scholar, achieved in
23 kindergarten. Harlem is my home. I'm a part of
24 this village. We're all facing the same
25 challenges of - - crisis, - - , and gang

1 violence. Harlem Prep is a safe haven for my
2 little girl. When she's at school I know that
3 she's safe. Not only is she safe, but she also
4 has the best--the - - educators that I can - - .
5 I have a 14-year-old that's in high school and I
6 have to say that this is one of the best schools
7 that I have seen and been a part of. The - - is
8 not - - for me, it is actually a community.
9 It's a community - - professionalism and the
10 dedication that the teachers have shown - - my
11 daughter.

12 Recently I made a video of Clara and she was
13 enacting her teacher, and I thought it was so
14 cool because in her I see that encouragement
15 that the teachers are giving her and the
16 challenges that are coming from her being in
17 school from 7:00-4:00, it's a testament it's
18 working - - did that. But they also have a - -
19 system that works really well. I have also used
20 the - - home because I find that - - behavior
21 modification, giving her rewards, and teaching
22 her that when she's good she gets rewarded and
23 when she misbehaves then she needs to be
24 disciplined in the appropriate way. So the
25 school has helped me become more - - . I think

1 that the - - Prep it's made such a difference
2 in not just Clara's life, but our lives as well
3 because we also now know that I can have a
4 teacher that will answer a text message when I'm
5 concerned and I'm - - . I actually get a
6 response. I haven't gotten that in 14 years, my
7 son is in high school. I grew up Catholic
8 school, I couldn't do that. So being a part of
9 the community at the - - Prep I think that it
10 teaches me - - . Time's up.

11 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

12 [applause]

13 MS. CORTAZO: Okay I'm going to call on - -
14 to stand so that we're going to - - because we
15 have a lot of speakers. So numbers two through
16 five, so at this point I would like to call
17 numbers two through number four.

18 MR. ANTHONY BIZZELL: Good evening everyone.
19 My name is Anthony Bizell. My child is a
20 scholar at Democracy Prep or Harlem Prep middle
21 school. Public charter schools may not be for
22 everyone, but it is for my son. I need
23 somewhere safe to send my son because we don't
24 live in one of the safest neighborhoods and
25 Democracy Prep has provided a safe place for my

1 son to learn and to get an education. I
2 appreciate the zero tolerance policy that they
3 have and it is certainly a zero tolerance
4 policy. I get a call about the symbolism they
5 use. I actually just got a call yesterday that
6 my son didn't turn in his homework. He actually
7 did it, but I appreciate the fact that they did
8 call me because if he hadn't you know, we could
9 have corrected it you know, and, and I
10 appreciate that. And I love the fact that the
11 sweat the small stuff, you know. Sweating the
12 small stuff it, it promotes prevention, you
13 know, it prevents things from happening in the
14 future, you know, and, and, and gives the kids a
15 great sense of accountability, you know. I
16 appreciate the, the, the fact that Democracy
17 Prep promotes the same level of accountability
18 for the teachers as it does the students. It's
19 not only the student's responsibility to learn,
20 but it's the teacher's responsibility to make
21 sure they're accountable. I appreciate that.
22 That's a great thing. I haven't seen that. I
23 didn't see it when I was a kid going to school,
24 you know.

25 But there's so many wonderful things; so

1 many, so many wonderful things about Democracy
2 Prep that I love and I can go on and on for all
3 night. But I just wanted to say that please
4 help us get - - . Our scholars need a place to
5 call their own. And, and please help us do
6 that.

7 [applause]

8 MS. CORTAZO: Number three.

9 MS. JUANA LEONOR: [Spanish language].

10 INTERPRETOR: Good evening. Normally I
11 would speak in Spanish as I am an English
12 learner and I don't feel very prepared to speak
13 in English.

14 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

15 INTERPRETOR: My name is Juana Leonor and I
16 want to talk today about what Harlem Prep is for
17 me and for our community.

18 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

19 INTERPRETOR: I who have had experience in
20 regular schools and in this school that is a
21 charter school I can say that the differences
22 are, are extremely radical.

23 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

24 INTERPRETOR: With regards to discipline,
25 the academic material and the preparation and

1 the - - of the teachers.

2 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

3 INTERPRETOR: And with regard to the system
4 that's been - - in general.

5 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

6 INTERPRETOR: As a mother of two daughters,
7 I've always wanted to have them in the best
8 schools since I am unable to afford private
9 schools.

10 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

11 INTERPRETOR: And I feel that I cannot be
12 quiet about this opportunity. I wish that other
13 kids would have the same opportunity that my
14 kids have.

15 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

16 INTERPRETOR: Since it is an excellent
17 institution.

18 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

19 INTERPRETOR: I hope we'll be able to get
20 this space so that more kids will be, will be
21 receiving the benefits of having this excellent
22 preparation.

23 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

24 INTERPRETOR: As all parents we want our
25 children to be an important and positive part of

1 society, so let us struggle with our hands
2 together and we will achieve it.

3 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

4 INTERPRETOR: I also want to say my child is
5 in the eighth grade right now and I myself am
6 studying English.

7 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

8 INTERPRETOR: And it's incredible how she
9 imitates her teacher giving me English classes
10 and she doesn't even allow me to laugh, she
11 says, "Mom, this is serious, I'm the teacher
12 today".

13 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

14 INTERPRETOR: She says, "I'm - - and you
15 will change - -".

16 MS. LEONOR: [Spanish language].

17 INTERPRETOR: And so I think this
18 institution is extremely excellent and so - -
19 struggles - - . Thank you.

20 MS. LEONOR: Thank you.

21 [applause]

22 MS. CORTAZO: Number four.

23 MS. MOIMOUNA KONE: Good evening everybody.
24 I'm Moimouna Kone and my daughter is - - . I am
25 here really hoping to get - - particularly - - .

1 I actually have a son and a daughter. My son
2 is in a - - school and - - . She is in love
3 with - - more than my son and she's more focused
4 and especially she's more respectful with
5 everybody - - . This school - - in those areas,
6 so--and I want them to get the best education as
7 early as possible because myself it took me time
8 to get an education I need and I just got into
9 college, so it's - - for me - - to make sure
10 they get the best education as early as they
11 get. Thank you.

12 [applause]

13 MS. CORTAZO: Number five. Will numbers six
14 through 10 please line up now? Thank you.
15 Number five.

16 MALE VOICE: As they come through - - bring
17 your tickets with you. Thank you very much.

18 MS. ANTO NESHA: Hello. My name is Anto
19 Nesha. I am the mother of a kindergartener and
20 a fourth grader at Democracy Prep charter
21 school. My - - Harlem and since starting at
22 Democracy Prep my children have done so well.
23 They do well because Harlem Prep - - teachers
24 care. They really care about their students.
25 They make frequent calls from both their

1 teachers telling me how good their day was. I
2 never - - for my children teacher. All of their
3 teachers and the school have - - have the - - to
4 - - . I - - Democracy Prep is already helping
5 my kids think about college. In fact, my son -
6 - in my house and he was talking to his cousin
7 and his cousin asked him, "What grade are you
8 in"? And he said, "I'm in the University of - -
9 " [laughter]. So we - - that he ain't too young
10 to go to university - - , but it may - - . I'm
11 so proud to - - . She said that in - - and I
12 finally - - he was like, - - enough, you know,
13 it - - encouragement and he was excited about
14 it.

15 I also am proud of the fact that my
16 daughter's - - with - - involved with her school
17 on the - - and channel "Good Morning America"
18 show to seeing the - - . Thank you.

19 [applause]

20 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Number six.

21 MS. ANGELA NEWMAN: Hi everyone. Hello my
22 name is Angela Newman. I am a PhD candidate for
23 health psychology and my most concern is health
24 education for our students. As you know,
25 statistics say that one out of three children

1 are obese and by the year 2014 they're
2 expecting high diabetes outcomes as a result.
3 And at this point, Harlem Prep does not have
4 access to a gymnasium. We need our own space so
5 that we can pay attention to our health
6 education. It's hard to educate sick children.
7 You know, it's hard to educate children who are
8 worried and bogged down with disease. You know,
9 we want to be concerned about their well-being.
10 We need our children to feel good about their
11 academic experience. We need them to have their
12 own space. We need them to be able to go to a
13 recess and to health education. We need them--
14 we can't expect them to be still when they are
15 eating foods that are making them not be still.

16 You know, after lunch that's when most of
17 these kids are most disruptive, so to speak, but
18 they have no outlet to let some of that go. And
19 so, my concern here is about the health of our
20 children. We cannot educate sick children
21 effectively. Our kids need a space, they need
22 to feel good, their well-being needs to be
23 addressed, it needs to be comforted. Having
24 their own space will provide that's what - -
25 attention. Thank you.

1 [applause]

2 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

3 MALE VOICE: - - when you please come up
4 please have your numbers, thank you.

5 MS. JAILA NICHOLAS: Good evening everybody.
6 My name is Jaila Nicholas. I am a proud mom of
7 Democracy Prep. I have five children, four of
8 them are going to Democracy Prep public schools.
9 It has been a change of life for me for my first
10 - - , but let me get to Harlem Prep kids. My--
11 I'm glad I'm able to come here hoping everything
12 works out well because the commute would be
13 better. Starting that same school year I'll
14 have one child coming here and still three over
15 at the other school, so the commute will
16 actually be much more easier for me.

17 I love Harlem Prep because it provided an
18 education for my kids that I know anywhere else
19 would be hard to get. I don't have to pay for
20 this. It's coming to me for free, so I am very
21 grateful. And everything they put in, my son -
22 - he is classified as an NIEP, but because of
23 how much effort they put into teaching him how
24 to read, he went and got evaluated, couldn't
25 even get an IEP. But--[applause]--but because

1 of that, they now have him coming in early in
2 the morning, they have him come in on Saturdays,
3 and it's showing how much he's improving. He
4 even, you know, all of them had their turn at
5 correcting me during homeroom time. I wrote out
6 something to the home, for them to recite from
7 the Bible and PJ he's in kindergarten, he says,
8 "Mom you didn't finger space" and he was like,
9 "You have to do it over". I said, okay next
10 time I'll do it over, but it's just that they
11 pay attention to that. They understand the
12 language that they're being taught. They
13 understand that what--the different parts of
14 language arts and how to teach me. So for that
15 I am--I know what's coming here to join forces
16 with you it's something that's good. They can
17 kind of, you know how you say, it sheds all
18 around you, you know, so hopefully that will,
19 our union will be. Thank you.

20 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

21 [applause]

22 MS. CORTAZO: Number eight. Please bring
23 your numbers up. Number eight. Number nine.

24 MR. JASON REYES: Hi. My name is Jason
25 Reyes and I am a sixth grade reading teacher at

1 Harlem Prep middle school. I want to say that
2 I'm incredibly proud to be a part of Harlem Prep
3 middle's first year of existence and I am so
4 proud of the fact that I am here at my very
5 first public hearing speaking unexpectedly
6 before you all tonight. But I feel confident
7 doing that because I, I have the blessing and
8 the incredible privilege to work with the most
9 dedicated and enthusiastic professionals that
10 I've ever worked with in my teaching career and
11 it's an honor to go to work with these people
12 every day, and it is an honor for me to serve
13 the students that come through the doors of the-
14 -of those four flights of stairs every day of
15 Harlem Prep middle.

16 And we talk a lot about setting ourselves up
17 for success, that we want the very best for them
18 so that they can go on in life and achieve
19 whatever they want to achieve their dreams. And
20 I think I support this proposed co-location
21 because I think this will really setup scholars
22 up for success and will help provide them with
23 the best that they can have for their futures.

24 [applause]

25 MS. CORTAZO: Number 10.

1 MS. MICHELLE HERRERA: Hi. Good evening.
2 My name is Michelle Herrera and I am the - - at
3 Harlem Prep middle. And I am here today, also
4 in my first public hearing, but I am very proud
5 to be here because I want to advocate for our
6 scholars and our parents. I love our parents.
7 I love seeing them being proud to come to Harlem
8 Prep and they love the education that their
9 scholars are receiving, a free education. I
10 want my children to come to Harlem Prep. I want
11 everyone to have an opportunity. I see myself
12 in every scholar that walks in that door. I did
13 not have the opportunity that they're having
14 today and I'm proud to be part of it.

15 I want your support in us having this space.
16 I want to see our scholars succeed and I want to
17 see them through sixth, seventh, and eighth, and
18 graduating. Thank you.

19 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

20 [applause]

21 MS. CORTAZO: Number 11. Number 12.

22 MS. DLAYNA MORRIS: Okay - - . Good evening
23 how are you? First I'm here to say that this is
24 a child of a charter school who first started
25 out in charter school. Unfortunately I'm a

1 parent now of PS38 okay. I feel that you
2 don't have the space, it's very overcrowded
3 here, they do not have access to a gym and
4 proper play time, okay, and I'm very involved in
5 the community with all of the schools. I have
6 also worked at Harlem RBI. I work with all the
7 schools in the community. I see a few parents
8 that my son has attended school with here as
9 well, you understand, but I feel that we don't
10 have the space here okay. And that is it.

11 [applause]

12 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Number 13.

13 MS. DMITRIA BRICE: I'm Dmitria Brice and I
14 feel like we don't have enough room in PS38 and
15 we need more space for more classes and we lost
16 the music program and I really wish that I could
17 play an instrument in the music program.

18 MS. CORTAZO: Go ahead Dmitria. Are you
19 finished?

20 MS. BRICE: I'm done.

21 MS. CORTAZO: You're done? Okay - - thank
22 you.

23 [applause]

24 MS. CORTAZO: Okay number 14.

25 MS. NAVEA WHITE: Hi. My name is Navea

1 White and I go to PS38. I think that we don't
2 have enough room for the - - charter school to
3 be in PS38 and I want to know why they--they
4 want to take over our school.

5 MS. CORTAZO: That's it? Okay. Thank you.
6 [applause]

7 MS. CORTAZO: Number 15. Okay.

8 MR. LOSSAU DOSJU: Good evening - - .

9 MS. CORTAZO: Hello sir.

10 MR. DOSJU: My name is Mr. Dosju - - . I am
11 a proud parent of 14 - - and - - who do - -
12 Democracy Prep - - . I'm also - - of my own
13 children. - - with - - and - - teacher and I'm
14 also a teacher at Democracy Prep - - . I see
15 the transformation six years ago. People who
16 came from Africa who do not speak English, the
17 parents don't go here, the parents send them to
18 Africa, they come back when they were - - 10,
19 11-years-old and went into public school, and
20 nobody - - . Six years ago at Democracy Prep
21 change - - the children, today they are - -
22 tenth grade, eleventh grade. They just came
23 from - - , Europe, South Korea, so people who do
24 not speak English - - the community - - and they
25 speak the Korean, - - Democracy Prep. Not only

1 Democracy Prep, but the principal, the
2 assistant principal, the - - . Some students
3 they can neither do their homework at home, the
4 - - the teacher - - , if you do not do your
5 homework at home you're gonna sit from 5:15-6:15
6 and so that - - . I - - , I'll be retiring - -
7 two years ago, - - . It's - - my own children I
8 say listen, you - - Democracy Prep, why? You
9 should see the homework they give you there and
10 compare them with other schools. You will be
11 surprised. Here I have a - - , all of them Mr.
12 Lopez, Mr. - - , she got a - - , she got a gang,
13 she take three buses to come to Harlem Prep - -
14 , three buses and a train to come to Harlem
15 Prep. Why? Because - - some teacher - - .
16 Look today how many children are - - Harlem Prep
17 because they have to meet - - right? And - -
18 the internet now is - - .

19 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you very much.

20 [applause]

21 MS. CORTAZO: Number 16. Number 16.

22 MS. KIYALE JOSEY: Hello everyone. My name
23 is Kiyale and I was transferred from Marvin Day
24 charter school and--to PS38 and I like this
25 school because it has like basketball and shows.

1 That's it.

2 [applause]

3 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Number 17.

4 MS. KATE SHUSTER: Hi. My name is Kate
5 Shuster and I'm the proud ESL teacher here at
6 PS38. I teach K-5 push and pull ESL. So
7 although I'm here - - you know, really positive
8 stories about Democracy Prep, when my main
9 concerns are about the cohabitation. And I
10 think, you know, that that is a really major
11 issue that are not really affecting - - and
12 starting with the parents - - up. So it also
13 seemed that there's like a little bit of
14 misconception when I heard the parents. This
15 wouldn't be your own space, this would be a
16 shared space. So right now we currently share a
17 school with another free charter school and so
18 we as a community see some of those shared space
19 issues coming up. But as it's sort of amplified
20 that that would be older students, so it would
21 be grades six through eight. So, you know, that
22 involves students transitioning, so older
23 students transitioning from classroom to
24 classroom, you know, using hallways, and the
25 stairwell as provision. There's, you know,

1 sometimes we have to share bathrooms, which we
2 currently have some issues with our current
3 charter school. And sharing a gym and recess,
4 you know, these are things that right now
5 because we have all students of the same age
6 don't have sort of other - - issues, and I'm
7 concerned that students who are older might find
8 some of those issues arising.

9 So yes, even though there are some models of
10 good K-8 - - this will be two disjointed
11 different schools. My last thing is, you know,
12 how will a successful - - successful foundation
13 - - play between two very different schools of
14 very different ages to support other. Other
15 models of cohabitation - - generally see that
16 that quality of collaboration is happening in
17 practice. It might be on paper, but not in
18 practice. So what are things that will be
19 implemented in order to make sure that these two
20 very different schools will work successfully.

21 [applause]

22 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Okay number 18.

23 MR. GREG DANIEL: Hi. Good evening. My
24 name is Greg Daniel and I am a sixth grade
25 global literacy teacher at Harlem Prep middle

1 school. One thing I want to say is that
2 currently we share a building with three other
3 schools and we are as a staff who teaches in a
4 half hallway, are really exciting about the - -
5 to even share a full hallway with another
6 school. Right now as a teacher I care about
7 holistic education of my students. We have one
8 elective class, which is set, and that is
9 because of the space issues we face. We would
10 love and care equally enough of being a
11 community with the schools that we would partner
12 with. So with PS38 and Democracy Prep had a
13 chance to work together I think would be a very
14 fruitful relationship because as many parents
15 have said, we sweat the small stuff. We care
16 about transitions, incredibly, we care about
17 transitions, up and down the stairs. We
18 currently have--we work really hard at having
19 silent, four or five stair transitions from the
20 cafeteria all the way up and back to school, so
21 we understand the concern about sharing space,
22 especially with right now we share the space
23 with two other high schools and an additional
24 middle school. So we do have the concern about
25 our students working with students of an older

1 age, but our ultimate goal was to educate all
2 students and give every student in Harlem the
3 opportunity to be successful. So we care about
4 having the opportunity to share community space.
5 And I know that as a staff member I would love
6 and help support the staff of PS38 if we had the
7 opportunity to work together to create a school
8 where we have every child getting to and through
9 college to be successful and then having the
10 partnership and collaboration and the mindset
11 that we want every child in school to be
12 successful. So I would love to see our schools
13 have the - - to share a space with my kids - -
14 and have even the opportunity to see a gym more
15 than once every two weeks, and the opportunity
16 to be in the choir or have this spirit space
17 because we currently have no options and
18 holistic education is much better than small
19 private one.

20 [applause]

21 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Number 19.

22 MS. ZARA WHITE: Hi. My name is Zara White.
23 I am a former student of PS38 and I'd like to
24 say that my younger sisters still go to this
25 school and I don't feel like it would be very

1 good for my younger sister that goes here is
2 only four and I don't think that it'll be very -
3 - safe place for her to go to the bathroom and
4 have to share a bathroom with a 13-year-old or a
5 12-year-old because I'm in middle school and I
6 know like the things that like happen or could
7 happen 'cause what if one of - - has an accident
8 while kindergarteners going up the stairs and
9 they're having a fight, like kindergarteners
10 could get hurt. So I feel like there should be
11 probably a better space between the smaller
12 babies and the bigger kids because the younger
13 kids could get hurt and also my other sisters
14 they're on their way out, but you don't want
15 them to probably pick up anything that your
16 other students might do badly or stuff. Like
17 there could be like kind of friction between the
18 students and you don't want the, the kind of the
19 mix up and not feel right with each other. So I
20 feel like there should be not really that much
21 closeness of older students with smaller ones.
22 Thank you.

23 [applause]

24 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you. Number 20.

25 MS. RENEE BUMPHER: Hello my name is Renee

1 Bumper and I'm a proud single parent of a
2 sixth grade scholar having - - . And when I was
3 first introduced to Harlem Prep it was actually
4 through online and I had then my daughter
5 register my son and the response was my daughter
6 was accepted to the school not knowing that she
7 was already in college. So she said, "Well
8 mommy Harlem Prep called me", I said, no there's
9 a misunderstanding that's where Kevin not
10 yourself. So she's like, "Well why couldn't
11 have that opportunity to go to charter school"?
12 I said, well Kevin is the special one and that's
13 how I feel like. Kevin is special. Kevin is
14 very intelligent and when I look up on Harlem
15 Prep is that they have order, they are in
16 uniform because most of the children, you know,
17 they talk about their attire and if you have on
18 the same thing you cannot address someone's
19 attire because you basically having the same
20 thing that this scholar have on.

21 But my advice about Harlem Prep is how they
22 are organized whether it's my son as far as his
23 academics is concerned and when he's out of line
24 they will give me a call. And sometimes it's
25 one call to me, and I said to myself, oh my god,

1 what did I get myself into, these people are
2 calling me off the hook. Every time I turn
3 around I'm like, Harlem Prep, Harlem Prep,
4 Harlem Prep, or it's you know, and it's good
5 though because each child needs that discipline
6 - - and I believe in teamwork. You know a child
7 can do their best with a parent as well as with
8 a teacher because you all are one community.
9 And just to piggyback onto the last person, the
10 person came up before me came up to say, not to
11 dismantle what she said, but if we all are from
12 the same community why could we not share the
13 same school okay? [Applause]. We have to share
14 libraries, we have to share the cafeteria, so
15 age has nothing to do with it, it's - - and the
16 teachers within the school okay. So I wouldn't
17 really be concerned about a sixth grader coming
18 into the school with a four-year-old because
19 when I was in school we used to have a - - , but
20 they kept--they already - - .

21 But my main concern is the space in the
22 school. We do need more space because when I -
23 - this is the last thing and I'm sorry, time's
24 up thank you.

25 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

1 [applause]

2 MS. CORTAZO: Number 21.

3 CELESTE: Good evening. My name is Celeste
4 and I'm a proud parent of a student that attends
5 this school - - . However, Rich asked me--when
6 I was asked to speak I was very proud because
7 Harlem Prep, you know, my daughter came in from--
8 -I like to say my son is 25, we've been - -
9 education, which really sucks. I can say
10 because I have experience in it - - wild and
11 destructive. So just to come to Harlem Prep
12 with some order and you know, some type of
13 structure, you know, it was here that I found
14 out our daughter, she reads on a first grade
15 level, a fifth--you know, she's getting special
16 education services like right away. Like as
17 soon as she got here they found out, so I was
18 even, you know, take steps. And just to see
19 that the dedication that they have, you know, my
20 daughter has some issues, but they're addressing
21 those issues you know what I'm saying. It's
22 like, I want to say that she says she wants to
23 be an attorney, you know, she want to be a
24 judge. What African American that - - , not--
25 I'm 42, never - - judge, she said, "Mommy I have

1 to be appointed, so I have to be a lawyer
2 first to be appointed". And not only that, she
3 has a certificate saying she's gonna graduate in
4 2024. We're not talking about high school,
5 we're talking about college. You understand?
6 This is gonna be me. I'm going back to college
7 right now because I need more - - . You see
8 sometimes you don't see the money right now, but
9 you see it later. But I want to live good and I
10 want her to live better, but she, she knows
11 she's going to college.

12 But on that note you know I just want to say
13 that I'm so happy to be a parent of Democracy
14 Prep because they are really hopping. I'll tell
15 you that. They got the - - and we - - you know,
16 - - . And the last thing I wanted to say--my
17 time is not up, that I didn't want our daughter
18 to be thrown back to the wolves in Harlem's
19 public schools because sixth grade - - you teach
20 her how to be good, and now in sixth grade they
21 don't teach you - - . So she needs to continue
22 to go up, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. I
23 don't want her in public school ever. Thank
24 you. My time is up.

25 [applause]

1 MS. CORTAZO: Number 22.

2 MS. ROSEMARY ACONA: Good evening. My name
3 is Rosemary Acona. I'm a parent from Harlem
4 Prep and daughter's a sixth grader. I know that
5 - - from work, but to tell you the truth I'm
6 really proud of Harlem Prep. Harlem Prep, it's
7 the best. When my son got into fifth grade from
8 PS128 he was kind of not so good on his
9 education. But Harlem Prep picked up, they--my
10 son got a 180 on - - Prep Academy that they
11 showed him how to do, how to come in. My son
12 the other day was John F. Kennedy riding - -
13 which I was so--I don't know what to say. And I
14 thank all the staff at Harlem Prep because they
15 was the one that showed him. Any time - - come
16 up with words that I don't even know. I want to
17 go to Harlem Prep also. I have three kids, five
18 months--a six-month-year-old, a seven-year-old,
19 and 11 and I - - pray and you know, and I'll get
20 on my knees to the altar to ask him please give
21 them space because I do want my son to keep
22 going. I want my other - - meeting, I went you
23 know, - - I could see where my son doing - - and
24 talk about sharing. We all share. We share the
25 - - , we share the table, we share bathroom

1 everywhere, so what's the problem. Work
2 together you know, because I get a lot of phone
3 calls from the school and I'll tell you that
4 it's - - it's a fight. At 7:45 that's their - -
5 they take care of them, make them show
6 responsibility. She show them how to respect
7 elderly. They give them everything. 5:15
8 they're our kids, so we - - you know there. So
9 please you know, give us - - . These are - -
10 space, you know.

11 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you.

12 [applause]

13 MS. CORTAZO: I want to thank all the
14 speakers that signed up - - tonight. We have
15 one more? Oh - - we have 22 names - - . Oh 23,
16 oh you? I'm sorry I don't have a name - - .

17 MR. ELMER MEYER: My name is Elmer Meyer.
18 I'm the network leader for PS38. I just wanted
19 to put onto the record my concern that
20 contingent to this plan is if the building for -
21 - Charter will be ready and available, which is
22 currently under construction behind us and that
23 we have a contingency plan in place if that
24 building is not available. Currently, there's a
25 hole in the ground. Thank you.

1 MS. CORTAZO: Thank you Mr. Meyer and - -
2 . All right, so we have heard from all the
3 speakers tonight. I don't think we have any - -
4 in the room. No, we don't. - - , I want to
5 thank all of you for coming tonight. - - and -
6 - the proposal at January 16, 2013. Again, the
7 - - chance to speak tonight - - e-mail these
8 four proposals at nyc@school.gov and the number
9 is 212-374-3466. Again, thank you very much for
10 your participation - - is now closed. Have a
11 good night everyone.

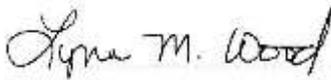
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature 

Date January 9, 2013