



Public Comment Analysis

Date: February 29, 2012

Topic: The Proposed Re-Siting and Grade Expansion of Teachers College Community School (05M517) to a Newly Leased Building

Date of Panel Vote: March 1, 2012

Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to re-site and expand the grades served by Teachers College Community School (05M517, “TCCS”), a choice district elementary school that opened in September 2011 and serves 50 students in kindergarten, and which is currently located in building M133 (“M133”) at 2121 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10037 in Manhattan’s Community School District 5, to a building leased from the St. Joseph of the Holy Family Church (“St. Joseph”), which is part of the Archdiocese of New York, located at 168 Morningside Avenue, New York, NY 10027, also in Manhattan’s Community School District 5.

The creation of TCCS was a component of the West Harlem Community Benefits Agreement¹ between the West Harlem Local Development Corporation and the Trustees of Columbia University in the City of New York. TCCS is currently co-located in M133 with P.S. 133 Fred R. Moore (05M133, “P.S. 133”), an existing zoned elementary school that serves kindergarten through fifth grades and offers a pre-kindergarten program. 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.

The opening and co-location of TCCS were proposed in an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) published on March 4, 2011 and approved by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) on April 28, 2011, which indicated that the co-location in M133 would last one year, at which point TCCS would be relocated to leased space. Although TCCS was conceived of as a kindergarten through eighth grade school, that EIS indicated that the school would serve just kindergarten through fifth grade at full scale due to constraints of the lease then being negotiated. However, since that time, the DOE has secured a lease with the Archdiocese to allow the school to serve kindergarten through eighth grades. Now, when TCCS moves to St. Joseph, it will be able to expand to its intended scale and thereby meet the commitment made in the Community Benefits Agreement.

The St. Joseph building was most recently occupied by the St. Joseph of the Holy Family parochial school, which ceased operations at the end of the 2010-2011 school year. The DOE entered into a lease

¹ The Community Benefits Agreement was entered into to ensure that the local communities benefit from the future Manhattanville expansion of Columbia University. In the agreement, Columbia University agrees to a diverse package of community benefits and mitigations it will contribute, including a commitment to a public school to be established in conjunction with Teachers College Graduate School of Education of Columbia University. The full agreement is available at <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/gca/pdf-files/CBAAgreement.pdf>.

for the St. Joseph building on August 15, 2011 that will expire on July 14, 2026. During the 2011-12 school year, the St. Joseph building has remained unoccupied while undergoing renovations to prepare for occupancy by TCCS. In the event that the St. Joseph building is not ready for occupancy by September 2012, the DOE would consider alternate options, including M133, to house TCCS for one additional year.

TCCS is expected to serve kindergarten and first grade in 2012-2013, and then add an additional grade each year until it reaches full scale in the 2019-2020 school year, when it would serve students in kindergarten through eighth grades. If this proposal is approved, TCCS's current kindergarten students will be re-sited to St. Joseph for the 2012-2013 school year, where the students would become TCCS's first grade class, and where TCCS would also expand to serve approximately 40-50 new kindergarten students. TCCS would continue to add one grade per year, enrolling approximately 30-40 kindergarten students each year through 2014-2015, and then enrolling 25-35 kindergarten students each year thereafter. In 2019-2020, when TCCS completes its expansion and achieves "full scale," it will serve approximately 265-355 students in kindergarten through eighth grades in mixed-grade classes. As a choice school, TCCS will enroll students through a school-based application process, with preference given to District 5 and District 6 residents in accordance with Chancellor's Regulation A-101. TCCS will continue to be operated and supported in partnership between the DOE and Teachers College Graduate School of Education ("Teachers College").

I. Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at building M133 on February 13, 2012. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 25 members of the public attended the hearing, and 4 people spoke. Present at the meeting were District 5 Community Education Council ("CEC 5") President Sonja Jones; CEC 5 Representative Ayisha Irvin; P.S. 133 Principal Susan Vairo; TCCS Principal Jeanene Worrell-Breden; TCCS School Leadership team ("SLT") Representative Rick Nacius; Teachers College Associate Vice President for School and Community Partnerships Nancy Streim; Community Board 9 Representative Joe Rogers, Jr.; Community Board 9 Representative Joe Rogers, Jr.; Community Board 9 Representative Brad Taylor; and District 5 Superintendent Gale Reeves.

The following comments and remarks were made at the joint public hearing on February 13, 2012:

1. Several commenters asserted their support for the re-location, and expressed that they are eager for the school to develop its own culture in its long-term site.
2. Several commenters asserted that they are happy TCCS will be able to grow to its intended scale of kindergarten through eighth grade in its new site, and that it will be able to serve more students from West Harlem.
3. Several commenters from the TCCS community thanked the P.S. 133 community for being gracious hosts this year while they were sited in M133.
4. Several commenters asserted their support for TCCS and the school's partnership with Teachers College, as well as its relationship with the CEC and Community Board 9.
5. Two commenters asserted their disappointment that the pre-kindergarten program that will be offered at TCCS next year will offer half-day, not full-day, sessions.

II. Summary of Issues Raised in Written and Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE regarding the proposal

The DOE did not receive any written or oral comments regarding the proposal.

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

Comments 1-4 support the proposal and do not require a response.

Comment 5 relates to the pre-kindergarten program that will be offered at TCCS in 2012-2013 and does not directly relate to this proposal to re-site and expand TCCS. However, the DOE notes that it hopes to be able to offer a full-day program at TCCS in the future, but at this time funding is only available for a half-day pre-kindergarten program. Funding for universal pre-kindergarten is provided by New York State, and the DOE's ability to offer pre-kindergarten programs is contingent upon funding availability.

IV. **Changes Made to the Proposal**

No changes have been made to the proposal in response to public feedback.