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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION – DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
**Opening and Co-Location of AF ES @
K166
10/28/13**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. GWEN HOPKINS: Good evening everyone.

3 GROUP: Good evening.

4 MS. HOPKINS: Oh, it's not going to fit.

5 Thank you so much for being here this evening.

6 My name is Gwen Hopkins. I am the Senior

7 Director of Parent Leadership with the Division

8 of Family and Community Engagement with the

9 Department of Education. So I was very, very-

10 I'm honored to be here with you this evening.

11 I'll be your moderator this evening. And we're

12 here today, for those of you that may not be

13 aware, we're here for the joint public hearing

14 of the Department of Education with the

15 Community Education Council for District 19.

16 The school leadership teams of Junior High

17 School 166, George Gershwin UFT Charter School,

18 and the Van Siclen Community Middle School to

19 discuss the following proposal; the proposed

20 co-location of Achievement First Brooklyn

21 Academy Charter School with existing Junior High

22 School 166, George Gershwin 19K166, UFT Charter

23 School District 84, School 359 and the Van

24 Siclen Community Middle School for 19K654, in

25 this building beginning in the 2014/2015 school

1 year. Tonight's proceedings will be recorded
2 and transcribed for the record. Before we
3 begin, we'd just like to remind any of you who
4 would like to sign up for the public comment
5 portion of the meeting, you have about seven
6 minutes left. The sign-up will end at 6:15. So
7 any of you that are sitting here that didn't
8 sign up before you entered the auditorium and
9 you would like to speak during the public
10 comment period this evening, you still have a
11 little bit of time to do that. Let's see. Oh,
12 and again, just a reminder, only those who have
13 signed up will be allowed to speak during the
14 public comment period. All panel participants
15 were asked to arrive here by no later than 5:30.
16 And now that we've started, if a panel
17 participant arrives late, he or she will be give
18 the time to speak at the first opportune moment
19 because we want to be respectful of everyone's
20 time. We do know that Erica Perez, your CC
21 President is on her way. And as soon as she
22 arrives, we will allow her to give her comments.
23 There may be some elected officials who arrive
24 at different times throughout the evening. And
25 if they wish to speak, we will do our best to

1 accommodate them at the first opportune moment.
2 Those who are here at the start of the public
3 comment period will be asked to speak first.
4 Tonight's format will include a presentation of
5 the proposal and presentations by hearing
6 participants, followed by the public comment
7 period. Speakers who have already signed up at
8 the sign-in table in the lobby, and if you have
9 not signed up, remember you have about five
10 minutes left. Public comments can be no longer
11 than two minutes each, and the time will be
12 strictly followed. Speakers will be informed
13 when they're designated time has ended. I'd
14 like now to introduce the panel which has been
15 assembled for this evening's joint public
16 hearing, starting from my—why don't I start from
17 my left? You can introduce yourselves.

18 MS. JOYCE STALLINGS-HARTE: Good evening.
19 Joyce Stallings-Harte, Community Superintendent
20 for District 19.

21 MR. GREGORY GRANT: Gregory Grant, SLT,
22 George Gershwin 166.

23 MR. CARLOS GERMAN: Carlos German, George
24 Gershwin SLT Member.

25 MS. KIESHA KEMP: Good evening. Kiesha

1 Kemp, Van Siclen Community Middle School SLT.

2 MR. SHEP BROWN: Thank you. Shep Brown,
3 School Leader, UFT Charter School.

4 MS. HOPKINS: Alright, we're going to have
5 each of the panel presenters speak with you for
6 just a couple of moments. I just want to ask
7 the panel members to just be cognizant of the
8 time and to keep that in mind when you're giving
9 your comments. Thank you. We'll start with
10 Superintendent Stallings-Harte.

11 MS. STALLINGS-HARTE: Thank you. [Off mic
12 speaking]

13 MS. HOPKINS: Okay. Alright, so she will
14 hold her comments for when she actually reads
15 the proposal to you. So let's hear from Mr.
16 Grant.

17 MR. GRANT: Good evening everyone. Thanks
18 for coming out tonight. Yet again, they're
19 trying to stick another school into our
20 building. This time, Achievement First, another
21 charter school from kindergarten to fourth
22 grade. This co-location thing is going too far
23 right now as far as I see. Now you want to
24 expose these young elementary school children to
25 the high school life and the way that these

1 older kids do things. I don't really think
2 that's safe. I think it's a real safety issue
3 because you do have cases where these older kids
4 will harass the younger ones. We see it every
5 day being in here with the high school and the
6 middle school children. So now, where are you
7 going to put these little tiny kids at in a
8 building that was actually made for junior high
9 school kids? These kids around here, they
10 smoke, they drink. We see things left around in
11 the building. Do you really want to expose
12 these younger children to this? They're just
13 starting out in life. A lot of them, this is
14 their first time going to school away from their
15 parents and you're putting them in here with
16 these older kids that are just running around
17 crazy. Achievement First, you have a building
18 somewhere else because you didn't bring your
19 high school kids in here. If you really want
20 your K through four to be placed somewhere,
21 place them into the school with your high school
22 children. I don't think they really belong in
23 here with us. It's not fair to them and it's
24 not fair to the rest of the people that's in
25 this building. And like I said, we only have-

1 what, three floors in here? So where are they
2 going to use the bathrooms at? Every school
3 should be allowed to have their own bathroom.
4 You shouldn't have a kindergarten kid or first
5 grade kid going into the bathroom with a 17 or
6 18 year old child. They shouldn't see all of
7 that. But, yet again, we'll take it past
8 tonight to the PEP and see what they decide, but
9 I really think they should just go into their
10 own building. Thank you.

11 MS. HOPKINS: Sorry. Ms. Perez, our CEC
12 President for District 19 and PA President at
13 IS302 has just joined us. So we're going to ask
14 her if she would like to give her comments.

15 MS. ERICA PEREZ: Okay. Good evening
16 everyone. On behalf of the CEC, our greatest
17 concern are the ages of the children that they
18 want to put in with this new school. Right now,
19 they have junior high school and high school
20 children, and even that element is a little
21 disruptive; you're dealing with hormonal
22 changes, children trying to find themselves, see
23 who they are, and they can't discover themselves
24 when you're restraining them more because now
25 you have smaller children coming into their

1 building. So in a sense, it is stifling toward
2 the children's development because they're not
3 able to be free just to develop who they are or
4 to develop themselves as students, because as I
5 say, they're taught a different type of decorum
6 because there are younger children in the school
7 environment. This is very disconcerting,
8 especially with the community area around the
9 school. This is not the safest neighborhood,
10 and I put it out there. It's a struggle for
11 these parents that have their children that go
12 here. And the big majority of the children that
13 go here are from shelters and are in foster
14 care. So with those two elements and children
15 trying to understand what they're going through
16 at home, the least that we should be able to do
17 is give them a stable school environment. Thank
18 you.

19 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you. Mr. German?

20 MR. GERMAN: Good afternoon everyone. I'd
21 just like to piggyback off of what Mr. Grant
22 stated as well as the CEC President regarding
23 our young children and our middle school
24 children attending the same school. A lot of us
25 see a lot of things in the news nowadays

1 regarding children being molested, killed, and
2 I can't speak for everyone here or everyone's
3 child; I can only speak for my own, we don't
4 know how other parents are raising their
5 children. As well as, like she stated, we don't
6 know what's going on at home. A child can be
7 being abused at home; that may be the only
8 thing that they know. And when they come to
9 school, they may feel they can't maybe fight
10 someone their age or their size and take it out
11 on someone else. And I'm pretty sure a lot of
12 you parents, people here who have children would
13 not want that to be your child. So if we want
14 to protect our children, I think we should just
15 leave George Gershwin and its building the way
16 it is now and not bring in these younger
17 children and possibly go through anything
18 negative for the school or the community itself.
19 Thank you.

20 MS. HOPKINS: Ms. Kemp?

21 MS. KEMP: We have no comment at this time.

22 MR. BROWN: Do you have a--? Mr. Brown,
23 right. Yeah, I have no comment at this time.

24 MS. HOPKINS: Okay. Thank you so much. I
25 would like to have Superintendent Stallings-

1 Harte read the proposal.

2 MS. STALLINGS-HARTE: Thank you. Proposal
3 Summary; the New York City Department of
4 Education is proposing to co-locate Achievement
5 First Brooklyn Academy Charter School, a new
6 public elementary charter school that will serve
7 students in kindergarten through fourth grade in
8 building K166, located at 800 Van Siclen Avenue,
9 Brooklyn, New York 11207, in Community School
10 District 19 beginning in 2014/2015. If this
11 proposal is approved, Achievement First Brooklyn
12 Academy Charter School will be co-located in
13 K166 with Junior High School 166, George
14 Gershwin, an existing District Middle School
15 that currently serves students in seventh and
16 eighth grades, Van Siclen Community Middle
17 School, an existing District Middle School that
18 currently serves students in sixth grade and
19 when full at scale will serve students in sixth
20 through eighth grades, and UFT Charter School,
21 an existing Public Charter School that currently
22 serves students in kindergarten through 12th
23 grades across two separate sites. On March 11th,
24 2013, the Panel for Educational Policy approved
25 a proposal to re-site UFT Charter's sixth

1 through eighth grades from K166 to K292.
2 Accordingly, UFT Charter's kindergarten through
3 eighth grades are located in building K292,
4 which is located at 300 Wyona Street, and 301
5 Vermont Street, Brooklyn, New York 11207 in
6 District 19, while the school's 9th through 12th
7 grades are located in building K166. On March
8 11th, 2013, the Panel for Educational Policy
9 approved a proposal to phase out Junior High
10 School 166 due to its low performance and
11 inability to improve quickly to better support
12 student needs. Junior High School 166 currently
13 serves students in seventh and eighth grade, and
14 in 2014/2015 will serve students in eighth
15 grade. Junior High School 166 will close after
16 June 2015. On March 11th, 2013, the Panel for
17 Education Policy also approved a proposal to co-
18 locate Van Siclen Community Middle School in
19 K166 to serve students in sixth through eighth
20 grade. Van Siclen Community Middle School
21 admits students through the District 19 Middle
22 School Choice process offering priority to
23 students residing in the K166 residential zone,
24 and then using a limited, unscreened admissions
25 method. Van Siclen Community Middle School

1 began enrolling sixth grade students in
2 2013/2014 and will add one grade per year until
3 it is at full scale and serves students in sixth
4 through eighth grades in 2015/2016. Achievement
5 First Brooklyn Academy Charter School has
6 submitted an application for Charter
7 Authorization to the State University of New
8 York Trustees to serve students in kindergarten
9 through fourth grades. Achievement First
10 Brooklyn Academy Charter School would be managed
11 by Achievement First Schools, a Charter
12 Management Organization. The proposal to open
13 and co-locate Achievement First Brooklyn Academy
14 Charter School in K166, which is described more
15 fully in the Educational Impact Statement, is
16 contingent upon State University of New York
17 Trustees' approving Achievement First Brooklyn
18 Academy Charter School's application for Charter
19 Authorization. Only the State University of New
20 York Trustees has the authority to approve or
21 deny Achievement First Brooklyn Academy Charter
22 School's application for Charter Authorization.
23 For the purpose of this proposal, it is assumed
24 that the State University of New York Trustees
25 will approve Achievement First Brooklyn Academy

1 Charter School's application. If this
2 proposal is approved, Achievement First Brooklyn
3 Academy Charter School will open with
4 kindergarten and first grade in 2014/2015 and
5 will add one grade each year until it serves
6 students in kindergarten through fourth grades
7 in 2017/2018. If this proposal is approved, the
8 co-location of Achievement First Brooklyn
9 Academy Charter School in K166 will provide
10 District 19 students with an additional
11 elementary school option. The school will admit
12 students via the Charter Lottery Application
13 process will preference given to District 19
14 residents. Beginning in spring 2014, all rising
15 kindergarten and first grade students residing
16 in District 19 will have the opportunity to
17 participate in the Charter Application Lottery
18 to enter kindergarten or first grade at
19 Achievement First Brooklyn Academy Charter
20 School in the 2014/2015 school year.
21 Applications will be available on Achievement
22 First Brooklyn Academy Charter School's website.
23 Neither the deadline to submit an application
24 for AF Brooklyn Academy's lottery nor the date
25 of the lottery has been set. For the 2015/2016

1 school year and beyond, Achievement First
2 Brooklyn Academy Charter School's lottery will
3 only be for seats at the kindergarten level.
4 Any remaining seats may be filled by students on
5 the school's wait list. The DOE has identified
6 K166 as an underutilized building. K166 has the
7 capacity to serve a total of 1,320 students. In
8 2013/2014, Junior High School 166 is serving
9 approximately 249 seventh and eighth grade
10 students, UFT Charter is serving approximately
11 305 9th through 12th grade students, and Van
12 Siclen Community Middle School is serving
13 approximately 120 sixth grade students, yielding
14 a building utilization rate of 51%. This means
15 that the building is underutilized and has space
16 to accommodate additional students. If this
17 proposal is approved, in 2017/2018, once
18 Achievement First Brooklyn Academy Charter
19 School's kindergarten through fourth grades have
20 fully phased in and the school has reached full
21 scale, Achievement First Brooklyn Academy
22 Charter School is projected to serve 385 to 505
23 kindergarten through fourth grade students, UFT
24 Charter is projected to serve approximately 320
25 to 420 9th through 12th grade students, Van

1 Siclen Community Middle School is projected to
2 serve approximately 345 to 375 sixth through
3 eighth grade students, and Junior High School
4 166 will no longer serve any students, for a
5 total of approximately 1,050 to 1,300 students,
6 yielding a projected building utilization rate
7 of approximately 80 to 98%. K166 also houses
8 two community based organizations; CAMBA and
9 the East New York Campus Satellite of Medgar
10 Evers College, ENY. CAMBA programs are run by
11 Beacon and provide education, recreation,
12 cultural activities, health information and
13 screenings, youth leadership, and social
14 services to the school's students, their
15 families and other neighborhood residents. ENY
16 hosts a GED Plus program in K166. GED Plus
17 programs help students earn their GED and
18 prepare them for college and career options.
19 GED programs are offered to students who are 18
20 to 21 years old, and are available as full time
21 or part time programs. The DOE does not
22 anticipate that the proposal will cause either
23 of the community based organizations to lose any
24 space or reduce the services offered at K166,
25 and anticipates they will continue to operate in

1 the building subject to interest and demand.

2 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Superintendent
3 Stallings-Harte. Now we'll begin the public
4 comment portion of the meeting. I'd like to ask
5 these four speakers to come and line up right
6 behind that mic to my left; Ms. Lashanna
7 Jackson, Ms. Collette Graham, Mr. Michael
8 Stanley, and Ms. Tonya Barrett, and you'll speak
9 in that order. Just a reminder, you have two
10 minutes to give us your comments and we will
11 signal you when you have 30 seconds left and
12 when your time is up. Thank you.

13 MS. LASHANNA JACKSON: Okay. Okay.
14 Understanding the proposal that the building is
15 being underutilized, which, you know, there's no
16 problem that it's being underutilized, but why
17 are they putting kindergarten through four? Why
18 didn't they put Achievement First's sixth to
19 eighth grade or the Achievement First High
20 School in the building? Why put kids that's
21 starting out at four years old in the building
22 to be in the building with children that's 12,
23 13, 14 to some—the high school kids, some of
24 them don't graduate on time, so they're 19 even
25 20 in high school still with these babies. I

1 mean, the problem is—okay, the building is
2 being underutilized; that's the problem, but
3 what is the solution, putting younger kids in a
4 building with these older kids? Like it was
5 stated, these kids smoke, these kids drink,
6 these kids are having sex, they are being caught
7 in the staircase doing things. These children,
8 these babies should not be subject to that.
9 What's going to happen when something happens to
10 one of these babies and it's all over the news?
11 East New York is going to get another bad rep
12 because you put these babies in a building with
13 these kids that we asked not to put them in a
14 building with, and then they're going to say 'Oh
15 we're sorry'. How can you tell a parent 'I'm
16 sorry,' if something happened to their children?

17 MS. HOPKINS: No, no. Go.

18 MS. JACKSON: Oh. How can you tell us
19 parents sorry after something happens to their
20 children? The problem is nothing is being
21 thought out; everything is just being pushed
22 in. Is it a money thing? What is it? What's
23 going on here? Something is—it's sad when you
24 want to put babies with these high school and
25 these junior high school. I—

1 MS. HOPKINS: [Interposing] Ms. Jackson?

2 MS. JACKSON: Yes.

3 MS. HOPKINS: I'm sorry. I think your time
4 is up, ma'am. Oh, she's good? Okay. I'm
5 sorry. Forgive me.

6 MS. JACKSON: Oh. I went to school in this
7 area. I've lived in this area since I was 13
8 years old. I attended George Gershwin. My
9 daughter attends George Gershwin. She graduates
10 this year. I have two boys that's younger than
11 her. I don't want to send my boys in a school—I
12 have a five year old. I wouldn't never put my
13 five year old in a school with high school kids.
14 UFT has a junior high school here. They took
15 their junior high school out and sent them to
16 292. Why should Achievement First bring their
17 babies here if UFT wouldn't even keep their
18 teenagers here? There's a problem. Something
19 is definitely wrong when they want to put these
20 babies in this school. And then they tell us,
21 'Yes, we're giving District 19 first priority,'
22 so it makes parents say, 'Oh, we're going to put
23 our kid in a charter school'. I understand you
24 want to put your kid in a charter school. Why
25 charter school can't get their own building or

1 put them in a school with kids more their age?
2 Why put them in a school where kids are much
3 older, much more advanced and these kids, they
4 don't know these things. Then they say our kids
5 are too advanced for their age; look what
6 you're trying to subject them to. You're
7 putting them with older kids. How can they not
8 be more advanced for their age? And we're not
9 talking about advanced on a smart level, because
10 yes, our babies are smart, but they're advanced
11 on things that they should not know at four
12 years old. I don't know how many of you all
13 have children, but if you have babies, would you
14 want your babies in a school with 18, 19 year
15 olds? Something has to be done. This has to be
16 thought about. Even though you all already made
17 the decision that you're going to put them here,
18 this community itself needs to rally, needs to
19 get it out because something is seriously wrong
20 when you want to put babies with high school
21 kids. We don't do background checks on high
22 school kids. We don't know—we don't do
23 background checks on junior high school kids.
24 We don't know these—what the problem that these
25 kids have at home. We're bringing them around

1 our babies and something happens to the
2 babies, now that's splashed all over the news
3 and they're saying 'Oh, look what happened to
4 East New York again'. East New York is always
5 getting a bad rep, but East New York get the bad
6 rep for the decisions that's made for East New
7 York. That's all I have to say.

8 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

9 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you very much, Ms.
10 Jackson.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. HOPKINS: Ms. Graham?

13 MALE VOICE 1: She also—okay. Come on dear.

14 MS. COLLETTE GRAHAM: Good afternoon
15 everyone. My name is Collette Graham. I am an
16 SLT Member for 166. I am no stranger to the
17 mic. I usually take the time to come up to have
18 my concerns heard. And at this time, it's very
19 troubling. The entire co-location process is
20 troubling. Education, I'm sure all of us here
21 have gone to school. I remember when I went to
22 elementary school. My school was an elementary
23 school. The children in the school go through
24 phases, they go through stages. I have all
25 phases in my house right now; I have a five

1 year old, I have nine year old, I have an 11,
2 12, 13 year old, I have a 19 year old, I have a
3 24 year old and I have a 25 year old all living
4 at home at some point in time. And so,
5 therefore, I understand the phases that they go
6 through. I don't think the Department of
7 Education is taking the time to look at the
8 phases our babies go through. Just to subject
9 them to—I mean, we can talk about the—you know,
10 subjecting them to unsafe conditions on a number
11 of levels. My son that's five years old, when
12 he was in pre-k there was a fire drill. I was
13 there doing the birthday party and all of the
14 junior high school kids from upstairs ran
15 downstairs and pushed them all to the side. Had
16 there been a fire, some of them wouldn't have
17 made it out. It was really, really sad. I
18 mean, I'm trying to scramble to grab those that
19 I can hold onto. It's just not fair. I think
20 people are making decisions who are not in the
21 place where we are, not saying that they don't
22 have children, but just saying that they're not
23 taking in consideration the children, our
24 babies. Where I work, every day, every year, it
25 comes across my desk, as it did this year and

1 years in the past, where there are young
2 adults who molest small children. So it's not a
3 story that, you know, that's being made up;
4 it's reality. And in my position, I have to
5 deal with it. I have to get statements. We
6 have to have pictures of children taken. We
7 have to call the police. We have to get parents
8 involved. And trust me, trust me, in one
9 situation I had a day camp supervisor whose
10 child was in the camp and her child was
11 molested. So never at any point in time did she
12 think that this was going to happen. A 17 year
13 old molested her child in her own camp, under
14 her own nose. So I mean, we can talk a number
15 of times, what type of bathrooms are they going
16 to use? Just the shared space, in terms of gym,
17 the auditorium, the lunch room; these are all
18 things that need to be considered when you speak
19 about co-location. Junior high school children
20 are so full of themselves. Trust me, I know, I
21 have three of them at home, and they are full of
22 themselves. They have their bright ideas. They
23 have their times when they want to be babies,
24 and they have their times when they want to get
25 in your face. But to mix them with babies-

1 kindergarten is babies, you know, they're four
2 years old. And then you add to the pot 17, 18,
3 19, 20, 21 year olds, there's a problem.
4 There's a problem in this community, in all
5 communities who are being forced to co-locate
6 their children. I mean, right now, this is not
7 going to make the decision to stop co-location,
8 but I just think someone really needs to take
9 the time to think about this again because
10 babies' lives are at stake. You can turn the
11 news on at any time and see malicious things
12 being done to babies, and I cry every time. I
13 mean, my kids can attest to it, my mother, my
14 husband. I cry because they are our children,
15 they're our future and they are not being
16 considered as such. People are making decisions
17 that affect their lives, just because it's
18 comfortable to sit at a desk to make that
19 decision. But our children are our future.
20 They have to be able to come up, grow up, go to
21 school, and eventually make the decisions that
22 will shape our elder lives. Is this something
23 that we really, really want to subject our
24 babies to? I don't know. To me, I don't think
25 it's the best decision, but that's just my take

1 on things. Thank you.

2 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Ms. Graham.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. HOPKINS: Mr. Stanley? You're not going
5 to speak? Okay. Thank you, sir. Ms. Barrett?
6 And then we'll have Courtney Gonzalez.

7 MS. TONYA BARRETT: Hello. My name is Tonya
8 Barrett and this will be a perfect zone—hello?
9 Okay.

10 MALE VOICE 1: Better?

11 MS. BARRETT: Yes, it is.

12 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

13 MS. BARRETT: I think this school will be
14 better for PTech. And the way you want to bring
15 all of these kids in District 19—I've been to
16 several buildings on fire drills. All of them
17 kids in those buildings, even down to charter,
18 all of them kids would have been burnt. I went
19 to two fire drills and the last kids coming out,
20 them kids would have been burnt, even all the
21 charter kids in one building. And I went to
22 another school on a fire drill, them kids would
23 have been burnt. They just coming back down the
24 stairs in two minutes, 'Oh it's time to go back
25 upstairs'. And every time I turn around, you

1 all always want to put a charter school in
2 District 19. What's wrong with you all finding
3 your own building? Every time I turn around,
4 it's charter here, charter there. You all can't
5 find your own building. You all get money from
6 everybody—from everywhere else, all them
7 billionaires. So why you all can't find your
8 own building? It's going to be a change coming
9 soon.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Ms. Barrett. Ms.
12 Gonzalez?

13 MALE VOICE 1: Yeah, I did. I'm sorry.
14 How's that?

15 [Background noise]

16 MALE VOICE 1: There you go.

17 MS. COURTNEY GONZALEZ: Good evening
18 everyone. I am Courtney Gonzalez. I am a CEC
19 Member. I am a PTA Vice President. I am also
20 involved in my daughter's high school. In the
21 school that I work in as the Vice President, we
22 have Achievement First in there. It is
23 horrendous, horrible, disgusting. When we do
24 fire drills, they hold us up about 15 minutes to
25 get them kids from the fifth floor down to the

1 first; that is ridiculous. They stop our
2 kids from using their lunchroom. They prevent
3 them from using their own bathroom. They hold
4 our children up in a fire drill. So I'm going
5 to tell you right now, to put them in here would
6 be very ridiculous, especially with junior high
7 school kids. We have junior high school kids in
8 our building and they continually are fighting
9 and arguing. And them children on that floor
10 have to see it every single day. To bring in
11 another Achievement First to co-locate in
12 District 19, that's not what we want. We need
13 PTech, a District 79 school and IS166 will be
14 the perfect site for it. We need to change
15 what's going on in District 19. We need to
16 shift it. We need to do something new. But
17 bringing in a lower grade into a junior high
18 school where they're transitioning from junior
19 high to high school is not the move for them.
20 You want them to be educated, they need their
21 own environment. They walk around the building
22 like toy soldiers; that is not what children
23 are supposed to be doing. They should be able
24 to be socializing with other children. Their
25 children are not even allowed outside. So what

1 kind of socialization are you giving the kids?
2 What kind of aspect are they getting if they
3 can't even socialize with their own atmosphere?
4 These are kids that were going to my school,
5 half of them that are now in Achievement First
6 and they look at us like they don't even know
7 us. They can't even speak to us in the hallway.
8 They are told, 'No, don't say nothing to them'.
9 You know how that hurts, to be a parent that's
10 been affective in most them children's lives and
11 can't even speak to them anymore? Because we
12 try to change lives; that's what CEC is here to
13 do. To shift the atmosphere in District 19.
14 We're here to change it, to rearrange it, to do
15 something new, but that co-location is not
16 what's new; that's old; that's past tense. We
17 are going into 2014 and something different has
18 to happen and it's not going to happen in her,
19 not as long as I'm standing here. I'm going to
20 keep fighting until all of this nonsense stops.

21 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

22 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Ms. Gonzalez.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. HOPKINS: I'd like to ask the next group
25 of speakers to come to the mic; Shamona

1 Kirkland, Mildred Boyce—I know I'm going to
2 mess this name up. I'm apologizing in advance—
3 Bushawn Mac [phonetic]. Am I close? Yes sir.
4 Thank you. Mayfield Goddard [phonetic]. You
5 guys are putting me to work tonight. Hold on.

6 MALE VOICE 1: Did they give you a number,
7 ma'am? Number two, okay. Have a seat right
8 there.

9 MS. HOPKINS: Okay. Mayfield Goddard. Oh
10 thank you. And Leda Duran, and you'll speak in
11 that order. Remember you have two minutes and
12 we will signal you when you have 30 seconds left
13 and when your two minutes are up. Thank you.

14 MALE VOICE 1: Is that good? Oh, sorry.
15 Okay.

16 MS. SHAMONA KIRKLAND: That's fine. Thank
17 you. Good evening everyone. My name is Shamona
18 Kirkland and I'm a parent of a scholar in
19 Achievement First Apollo, as well as a scholar
20 in Brooklyn Theater Arts High School. I'm here
21 tonight in support of the proposal for the
22 Achievement First Elementary School because I
23 have faith in children and I also have faith in
24 Achievement First values. Achievement First
25 core values speaks about respect, enthusiasm,

1 achievement, citizenship and hard work. And
2 for me, the biggest things that stand out for me
3 is citizenship and hard work because we want to
4 teach our children to be community oriented, to
5 be able to work together and commune together
6 because we are a family. And it is up to the
7 adults to show leadership and show commitment to
8 change by modeling good behavior. And I believe
9 Achievement First is offering an excellent
10 option for the community of East New York. I
11 grew up here in Brownsville in East New York.
12 I've been living here most of my life and have
13 gone to most of the community school here. And
14 I just feel like education and our children
15 being on the path to college is the most
16 important thing, and that's the goal for us, and
17 we should do everything in our power to ensure
18 that that's happening. That our children are
19 getting the resources that they need and that
20 we're showing them that the biggest goal for us
21 is for them to have what's best and that we
22 would do anything necessary to ensure that. I
23 believe Achievement First will do anything to be
24 a good partnership with the schools that's in
25 this building and parents working together can

1 achieve anything. I think we should look at
2 ourselves as partners, and community members and
3 families to ensure that excellence is also and
4 always will be a part of this community. Thank
5 you.

6 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

7 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Ms. Kirkland. Ms.
8 Boyce?

9 MALE VOICE 1: Put your mouth a little
10 closer so the mic can pick you up. Okay?

11 MS. MILDRED BOYCE: My name is—oh, geez.

12 [Background noise]

13 MS. BOYCE: My name is Mildred Boyce. I'm
14 from the Counsel of School Supervisors and
15 Administrators. I did not come with a prepared
16 text. I was here back in March when they were
17 talking about phasing out schools. And this
18 seems to me, no more than musical chairs.
19 First, I'd like to touch on the fact that I
20 heard our Chancellor say, "Oh, co-location is
21 good and it's working out very well". Well, I
22 visit schools in District 13, 14, 15, 16, 19,
23 23, and 32, so I get around. And I'm telling
24 you that for the most part, it is not the high
25 in the sky, the rose colored glasses that it's

1 painted out to be. I remember in District 13,
2 where it was an elementary school and they put a
3 high school in. The high school was a brand new
4 Principal, did not plan properly, did not use up
5 his money—not correctly anyway, and didn't have
6 money for school aides. So the answer was, 'Oh,
7 just send them downstairs with the other ones.
8 The elementary school has school aides. Send
9 them downstairs at that time'. Well, oh they
10 came downstairs at their time. What did they
11 share with these little children? How to make
12 blunts—I think I'm pronouncing it right. Is
13 that where you take cigars and you put marijuana
14 in them, okay. This is how I learn these
15 things, alright. They talked about their sexual
16 activities and they thought it was good story
17 time telling for the kids. Okay. What I'm
18 saying is that the idea that there's space that
19 you should fill every crevice is the wrong idea.
20 In most schools where they pack it to capacity,
21 they do away with science labs, they cut down
22 the libraries, they cut out many of the extra
23 things that these children need to survive and
24 to be educated properly. She's telling me my
25 time is up. But I'm telling you, this is not

1 right.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, Ms. Boyce.

4 [Applause]

5 MALE VOICE 1: When you get down to 30
6 seconds, I'll let you know, alright?

7 MR. BUSHAWN MACMILLONELLE: Alright.
8 Greetings. My name is Bushawn MacMillonelle.

9 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, sir.

10 MR. MACMILLONELLE: I have seen that from
11 the summary in March, 2011, PEP made a decision
12 to approve a change for the children. I am most
13 concerned about this change. I'm concerned
14 because the information that I'm hearing here,
15 it seems that parents are concerned with the
16 health of their children, the safety of their
17 children, and the children being mingled with
18 older children, children who have different
19 biological and hormonal needs. I am more
20 concerned with the education that is given to
21 the children, the attempts to educate these
22 children and the children's behavior. These
23 children are going through evolutionary stages,
24 mostly the adults are going through evolutionary
25 stages, both males and females. What causes me

1 a great deal of concern is my son attends this
2 school. I'm aware of gang land activity that
3 goes on here. And what seems to be neglected in
4 the decision that PEP made in 2011 to approve
5 this change is it seems to neglect, it seems to
6 neglect the gang land activity and how it can
7 correct and address the attention of the
8 children. Therefore, I'm speaking to perhaps a
9 failure by the Board, who is not present, about
10 children who are here, endangering a complete
11 future, endangering a complete future. Believe
12 me, I would hate to hear that my child was in
13 any way assaulted by another child. I would
14 hate to hear that and I would hate for the media
15 to say 'I'm sorry, Mr. Elle,' because that's not
16 going to be good enough when I know that my
17 child's education is not being met. Thank you.

18 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you, sir.

19 [Applause]

20 MALE VOICE 1: You have two minutes, make
21 sure of the time. I think I need to raise this
22 a little.

23 MS. MAYFIELD GODDARD: Yes please.

24 MALE VOICE 1: Okay.

25 [Background noise]

1 MS. GODDARD: Thanks very much.

2 MALE VOICE 1: Okay.

3 MS. GODDARD: Okay. Good evening. My name
4 is Mayfield Goddard-Adetamerin [phonetic], and
5 I've lived in this community for 22 years. I'm
6 the mother of three boys; my eldest son 24,
7 just graduated this year from college; I have
8 another child in SUNY Cortland; and my baby is
9 currently—I call him baby, but he's 16, he's
10 currently attending Achievement First Brooklyn
11 High School. And he's about to go to college at
12 16 years old. What I need people to understand
13 is that the children that's going to be served
14 by this school are children coming from our
15 community. They're not aliens that are going to
16 be bused in from other communities; this is
17 going to be our children. When my child was
18 ready for fifth grade, I had to take my child to
19 Crown Heights to find a school that could
20 educate him the way I wanted to educate him.
21 School started at 7:00; 7:01 he was late. I
22 had to get all the way to Crown Heights to give
23 my child an education that has words like
24 Harvard, Duke, Yale, Princeton coming out of my
25 child's mouth that he's ready for school. So I

1 think Achievement First is needed in our
2 community to service our kids. Remember these
3 are the younger siblings to the kids that are
4 already here. They're not strangers to our
5 community. They live in the same buildings.
6 They walk on the same street. They're not
7 aliens that these children do not know. So when
8 you talk about people coming into this
9 community, this school will be here to service
10 us and it's a necessity because I'm greedy and I
11 want to have three college students, three
12 college graduates coming out of East New York
13 because it can be done. We can change a
14 statistic with the help of Achievement First.
15 Thank you all very much.

16 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you.

17 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

18 MS. HOPKINS: And our last speaker for this
19 evening is Leda Duran.

20 MALE VOICE 1: Hello Ms. Duran. I'll take
21 it down.

22 MS. LEDA DURAN: Thank you.

23 MALE VOICE 1: I appreciate it. That's
24 good?

25 MS. DURAN: That's perfect. Yes.

1 MALE VOICE 1: Two minutes and I'll let
2 you know.

3 MS. DURAN: Perfect. Thank you. Good
4 evening parents. Good evening community
5 members. Good evening panel. I thank you so
6 much for the time to speak here tonight. I've
7 been a community member here in East New York
8 for over 30 years. I went to district schools
9 here in East New York. And when it came time
10 for me to put my children in a school, I wanted
11 to make sure that they attended a public school
12 here in East New York. I fortunately have that
13 opportunity for them at Achievement First Apollo
14 over—it is a co-located school with IS302. Our
15 co-location has been one that has worked well.
16 And so, therefore, I can speak to say that the
17 Achievement First prides itself on being a good
18 partner, being a good neighbor with the schools
19 that it is in with. My kids are small kids, and
20 they're co-located with the middle school. And
21 it's something that, at first, I was a little—
22 okay, well how's this going to work? And
23 fortunately, I feel very fortunate that our
24 school, along with the other school, has found
25 ways to make that happen. I believe that this

1 can happen as long as we, as a community, put
2 that priority first of our children. As long
3 as, as a community, we believe in our children
4 and we put our children first and decide that
5 our children need to have that space to get that
6 proper education, then it can happen. Our
7 children can make that happen. Our children
8 here in East New York need that opportunity to
9 be able to get out and flourish here, here in
10 the community, not in other district schools,
11 but right here. This opportunity is here. This
12 hearing tonight I think will allow for more of
13 those opportunities for our children to continue
14 to grow right here in East New York and have a
15 great school right here, great public school
16 right here for them. I believe that working
17 together, we can do a lot for all of the
18 children of the community, not just the children
19 that are coming in new, but the children that
20 are already here. So thank you. I believe—so I
21 just want to say that I want to again thank
22 everybody here for coming out tonight, for the
23 opportunity to speak. And I want everybody to
24 remember, this is about the children. I believe
25 in my children. I want everybody else to

1 believe in my children. And my children are
2 not just my two, it's every child in District
3 19. Thank you.

4 MALE VOICE 1: Thank you.

5 MS. HOPKINS: Thank you. And thanks to all
6 of you this evening. We've heard a lot of
7 significant comments here tonight. And I want
8 to thank you all again for taking the time to
9 come out. We appreciate your feedback and your
10 contributions to this process. This information
11 will be shared with the Panel on Educational
12 Policy. They have their hearing on Wednesday,
13 October the 30th. The meeting will be at the
14 Prospect Heights campus, which is located in
15 District 17 in Crown Heights, at 883 Clausen
16 Avenue in Brooklyn. The meeting begins at 6:00
17 p.m. If you have any additional comments that
18 you would like to make or share with the
19 Department, please send them to this e-mail
20 address; d19proposals-that's d19P-R-O-P-O-S-A-
21 L-S at schools.nyc.gov or contact us at (212)
22 374-0208. Thank you all again for coming.
23 Please get home safely. This joint public
24 hearing is officially adjourned.

25 MR. GRANT: Good night everybody.

1 MS. HOPKINS: Good night. I'm sorry.

2 [END RECORDING]

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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 

7 Date: October 30, 2013
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