

Public Comment Analysis

Date: June 18, 2013
Topic: The Proposed Co-Location of Explore Envision Charter School Grades K-5 (84KTBD) with Existing Schools P.S. 190 Sheffield (19K190) and Essence School (19K311) in Building K190 Beginning in 2014-2015
Date of Panel Vote: June 19, 2013

Summary of Proposal

The New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) is proposing to co-locate a new public charter school, Explore Envision Charter School (84KTBD, “Explore Envision”), which will serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade, in building K190 (“K190”), beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. K190 is located at 590 Sheffield Avenue, Brooklyn, New York, 11207, in Community School District 19 (“District 19”). K190 currently houses P.S. 190 Sheffield (19K190, “P.S. 190”), an existing zoned elementary school that serves kindergarten through fifth grade students and offers one section of full day pre-kindergarten, and Essence School (19K311, “Essence School”), an existing district middle school that serves sixth through eighth grade students. If this proposal is approved, Explore Envision will be co-located in K190 with P.S. 190 and Essence School. The DOE does not anticipate that this proposal will affect P.S. 190’s pre-kindergarten program, which will continue to be offered, subject to funding and demand.

Explore Envision’s charter was authorized in June 2012 by the State University of New York Trustees (“SUNY”) to serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Explore Envision will be managed by The Explore Schools Inc. (“Explore Schools”), a Charter Management Organization (“CMO”). Explore Schools is a growing CMO that seeks to provide students with academic skills and critical-thinking abilities necessary to graduate from high school and succeed in college. Explore Schools provides students in communities with access to another option for public education and provides support to schools in the network. Explore Schools currently manages four charter schools in Brooklyn. If this proposal is approved, Explore Envision will open with kindergarten, first grade, and second grade in 2014-2015, and will add one grade per year until it serves kindergarten through fifth grade students in 2017-2018. The school will admit students via the charter lottery application process, with preference given to District 19 residents.

As stated previously, P.S. 190 is an existing zoned district elementary school, serving kindergarten through fifth grade students and offering one section of a full-day pre-kindergarten program. Essence School is an existing district middle school and admits students through the District 19 Middle School Choice Process. Essence School first gives priority to students who reside in the K311 zone. For remaining seats, Essence School admits students using a screened admissions method.

According to the 2011-2012 Enrollment, Capacity, Utilization Report (the “Blue Book”), K190 has the capacity to serve 813 students. If this proposal is approved, K190 is projected to serve approximately 603-753 total combined students from Explore Envision, P.S. 190, and Essence School in 2017-2018, yielding an estimated building utilization rate of 74%-93%. Thus, K190 has sufficient space to accommodate the proposed co-location.

Copies of the Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) and Building Utilization Plan (“BUP”) describing the proposal are available in the main office of P.S. 190 and Essence School and the DOE’s Web site at: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2012-2013/June2013Proposals.htm>.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at the K190 building on June 3, 2013. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 5 members of the public attended the hearing, and 2 people spoke. Present at the meeting were P.S. 190 Principal Stephaun Hill; Essence School Principal Claudy Makelele; State University of New York Charter Institute Representative Thomas Franta and District 19 Community Superintendent Joyce Stallings-Harte. Sonia Park from the DOE served as the facilitator. Additionally, Stephen Demers from the DOE’s Division of Portfolio Planning was present. Community Education Council (“CEC”) 19 members confirmed their participation, but they were not present at the joint public hearing.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing on June 3, 2013 on the proposal:

1. Principal Hill and Principal Makelele declined comment on the proposal.
2. Two commenters from Explore Charter Schools stated their support for the proposal.

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

The DOE received 0 written comments and 0 messages via voicemail concerning this proposal.

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

Comment 2 is supportive of the proposal and does not require a response.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to the proposal.