

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**  
**Co-location of Uncommon High School**  
**3 @ K515, 10/7/13**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 [Background conversation]

3 MS. AIMEE HOROWITZ: Okay, can I ask the  
4 translators to please come to the front, please?

5 [French Interpreter speaking]

6 [Creole Interpreter speaking]

7 MS. HOROWITZ: Okay, good evening ladies and  
8 gentleman, my name is Aimee Horowitz, I am the  
9 high school superintendent for Brooklyn and  
10 Staten Island high schools, and I am here  
11 tonight representing the Department of  
12 Education. So I am going to read the proposal  
13 and then we will call speakers to the front.  
14 Speakers on the dais will have the opportunity  
15 to make their statements, and then we will call  
16 from the list of speakers.

17 "The proposed co-location of Uncommon  
18 Charter High School 3 with existing high  
19 schools; Brooklyn Generation School 18/K566,  
20 Brooklyn Theater Arts High School 18/K567,  
21 Victory Collegiate High School 18/K576, Brooklyn  
22 Bridge Academy 18/K578, and Academy for  
23 Conservation and the Environment 18/K637, and  
24 GED Plus Program 19/Q950 in Building K515,  
25 beginning in 2014-15."

1           So first I'd like to introduce the people  
2           on the dais. So we have principals Lydia Colon  
3           Bomani from Brooklyn Generation High School;  
4           David Ward from Brooklyn Theater Arts High  
5           School. I believe that Marcel is not sitting on  
6           the dais, but we have Marcel Deans in the  
7           audience from Victory Collegiate. Max Jean-Paul  
8           from Brooklyn Bridge Academy. Eugene Mazola  
9           from Academy for Conservation and the  
10          Environment, and Michelle Robinson from GED  
11          Plus.

12          I'm going to pass the mic down and let the  
13          people on the dais introduce themselves, other  
14          than the principals, and let you know the  
15          constituencies that they represent.

16          MS. MARIANNE RUSSO: Marianne Russo, I'm a  
17          parent of a high school child, so I am part of  
18          the Citywide Council for High Schools, similar  
19          to a CEC, and I'm the Brooklyn representative.

20          MS. LYDIA COLON-BOMANI: Lydia Colon-Bomani,  
21          Brooklyn Generation School.

22          MR. JONATHAN SPEAR: Jonathan Spear, co-  
23          founder of Generation Schools.

24          MS. DANIELLE DUFFY: Danielle Duffy,  
25          Brooklyn Theater Arts High School.

1 MS. ASHA GUPTA: Asha Gupta, I'm a teacher  
2 at Victory Collegiate High School.

3 DR. MAX JEAN-PAUL: Dr. Max Jean-Paul,  
4 principal of Brooklyn Bridge Academy YABC  
5 Program.

6 MS. SHIVIKA RAJKISORE: Shivika Rajkisore,  
7 UFT chair, Brooklyn Bridge Academy teacher.

8 MS. SCOTT CARLSON: Scott Carlson, chapter  
9 chair, Academy of Conservation and the  
10 Environment.

11 MS. HOROWITZ: Good evening. This is a  
12 joint public hearing of the Department of  
13 Education Community Education Council and School  
14 Leadership Teams for the proposed co-location of  
15 Uncommon Charter High School 3 with existing  
16 schools; Brooklyn Generation School 18/K566,  
17 Brooklyn Theater Arts High School 18/K567,  
18 Victory Collegiate High School 18/K576, Brooklyn  
19 Bridge Academy 18/K578, Academy for Conservation  
20 and the Environment 18/K637, and GED Plus  
21 Program 19/Q950 in Building K515, beginning in  
22 2014-15.

23 I am Superintendent Aimee Horowitz. We have  
24 asked the District 18 Community Educational  
25 Council and the School Leadership Teams in the

1 building to participate in this joint public  
2 hearing. I am joined tonight by representatives  
3 from the SLT at each school; Ms. B. Hydleburg  
4 and Mr. Jonathan Spear, from the SLT at Brooklyn  
5 Generation School; Ms. Danielle Duffy from the  
6 SLT at Brooklyn Theater Arts High School; Mr.  
7 Scott Carlson from the SLT at Academy for  
8 Conservation and the Environment; Ms. Shivika--  
9 sorry if I mess up your name--Ms. Shivika  
10 Rajkisore, from the SLT at Brooklyn Bridge  
11 Academy; Mr. Michael Friedman from the SLT at  
12 GED Plus, and also the SLT at Victory Collegiate  
13 High School.

14 I am also joined by Ms. Rhonda Joseph from  
15 the CEC, as well as Ms. Marianne Russo from  
16 Citywide Council on High Schools.

17 This hearing is being recorded. The purpose  
18 of this hearing is for you to provide comments  
19 about the proposal. Before I describe the  
20 proposal I want to make sure that you are all  
21 aware of the opportunity to provide your input.  
22 All those who wish to speak must sign up in the  
23 speaker sign-up area located just outside of the  
24 auditorium. The sign-up list will close in 15  
25 minutes.

1           Speakers will be given the floor in the  
2 order that they signed up. All comments are  
3 limited to two minutes. There may be elected  
4 officials who arrive at different times  
5 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak,  
6 we will do our best to accommodate them at the  
7 first opportune moment. Those who are here at  
8 the start of public comment segment will be  
9 asked to speak first.

10           All comments will be mentioned in the  
11 analysis of public comment to be published and  
12 provided to the Panel for Educational Policy the  
13 evening before the panel votes. The vote is  
14 scheduled for October 15th, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.,  
15 at the Prospect Heights Campus, located at 883  
16 Classon Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11225.

17           In addition, we welcome any comments and  
18 feedback you may have at any time before the  
19 panel votes on the proposal. The email address  
20 and phone number where comments may be made are  
21 D, as in David, [18proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:18proposals@schools.nyc.gov).  
22 That's [d18proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:d18proposals@schools.nyc.gov). And the  
23 phone number is (212) 374-0208. (212) 374-0208.

24           The New York City Department of Education is  
25 proposing to co-locate Uncommon Charter High

1 School 3 on the South Shore Educational Campus,  
2 in School Building K515, beginning in 2014-2015.  
3 If this proposal is approved, Uncommon Charter  
4 High School 3 will be co-located in K515 with  
5 Brooklyn Generation School 18/K566, Brooklyn  
6 Theater Arts High School 18/K567, Victory  
7 Collegiate High School 18/K576, and Academy for  
8 Conservation and the Environment 18/K637,  
9 existing district high schools that each serve  
10 students in 9th through 12th grades. And  
11 Brooklyn Bridge Academy 18/K578, an existing  
12 district transfer school serving students in 9th  
13 through 12th grade.

14 K515 also contains a General Education  
15 Development Plus program 79/Q950, GED Plus, and  
16 a Young Adult Borough Center 18/K922, South  
17 Shore Campus YABC, which is aligned with the  
18 Brooklyn Bridge Academy 18/K578.

19 The GED Plus program and the South Shore  
20 Campus YABC program would continue to be offered  
21 in Building K515, should this proposal be  
22 approved. If this proposal is approved,  
23 beginning in September 2014, Uncommon Charter  
24 High School 3 will be co-located in the K515  
25 building, and will be open to students who have

1       been promoted from three existing charter  
2       middle schools operated by Uncommon.

3               The middle schools that will feed into  
4       Uncommon Charter High School 3 are Brooklyn East  
5       Collegiate Charter 84/K780, Ocean Hill  
6       Collegiate Charter 84/K777, and Leadership Prep  
7       Bedford-Stuyvesant Charter School 84/K517.

8               If this proposal is approved, Uncommon  
9       Charter High School 3 will open during the 2014-  
10       15 school year with a 9th grade of approximately  
11       100 to 130 students. Uncommon Charter High  
12       School 3 will gradually phase in by adding one  
13       grade level per academic year, until it reaches  
14       a full span of 9th through 12th grade in the  
15       2017-18 school year, when it will serve  
16       approximately 500 to 640 students.

17               Because of enrolment patterns at the three  
18       existing feeder middle schools, Uncommon Charter  
19       High School 3 will continue to grow in enrolment  
20       for two additional years, until it is at full  
21       scale in the 2019-2020 school year, when it will  
22       serve approximately 580 to 745 students.

23               K515 has the capacity to serve a total of  
24       2,769 students. In 2013-2014, the five schools  
25       and the GED Plus are projected to collectively

1 serve approximately 1,518 students in 9th  
2 through 12th grade, yielding a building  
3 utilization rate of only 55%.

4 If this proposal is approved, the six  
5 schools and the GED Plus will serve a total of  
6 1,515 to 1,755 students in 2014-15, yielding a  
7 projected building utilization rate of 55 to  
8 63%. In 2019-2020, once Uncommon Charter High  
9 School 3 is fully phased in at grade level and  
10 at scale and enrolment, the six schools and GED  
11 Plus will serve a combined total of  
12 approximately 1,995 to 2,370 students in 2019-  
13 2020, yielding a project utilization rate of 72  
14 to 86%.

15 The final shared space schedule will be  
16 collaboratively finalized by the Building  
17 Council if the proposed co-location is approved  
18 by the Panel for Educational Policy. The DOE  
19 acknowledges the ongoing hard work and  
20 collaboration among the existing schools at the  
21 South Shore Educational Campus since their  
22 openings in 2007 and 2008, and the important  
23 work being done here to cultivate a sense of  
24 community and shared purpose on the campus.

25 Thank you. Now that the proposal has been

1 presented--okay. I want to make clear that  
2 the CEC, the Community Education Council for  
3 District 18, was invited to participate, but the  
4 confirmed rep from the CEC has not arrived yet.  
5 We will accommodate that rep at the first moment  
6 we can, when and if they do arrive.

7 So if the CEC rep is in the audience and  
8 we're not aware that you're here, can you please  
9 let us know so that you can be given the  
10 opportunity to speak? Okay, so we're going to  
11 move on.

12 The next presenter will be Ms. Lydia Colon-  
13 Bomani, the principal at Brooklyn Generations  
14 High School.

15 MS. COLON-BOMANI: Thank you, and good  
16 evening students, families of South Shore  
17 Educational Complex Schools, members of the PEP,  
18 Superintendent Horowitz.

19 In August of 2011 I joined Brooklyn  
20 Generation School as principal. I decided to  
21 take on this particular leadership position  
22 because of all the caveats, the unique model  
23 that Generation School offered to the students  
24 at Brooklyn Generation School.

25 The school, using the model, allows for our

1 students to attend a longer school day and  
2 school year. It's important for you to know  
3 that a longer day and school year does not mean  
4 more time to do the same thing, but rather using  
5 the time differently, which also means using  
6 space differently, and scheduling staff  
7 differently.

8 All of this is done with attention to  
9 research and promising practices, as it relates  
10 to how students learn best and can continue to  
11 thrive in their lives far beyond high school  
12 graduation.

13 Generation Schools Network, the Brooklyn  
14 Generation School faculty, our CFN, our families  
15 and our students, as well as I, have worked  
16 cohesively to build and continue to grow a  
17 school that offers opportunities for students  
18 that would normally only be available to them  
19 and their families through additional costs, or  
20 not at all, because these resources are not  
21 available to them at traditional high schools.

22 The foundational pieces of Generation  
23 Schools Network model are college and career  
24 intensives, foundation courses in humanities and  
25 STEM, and the use of time differently to

1 facilitate this educational program. Brooklyn  
2 Generation School provides unique experiences  
3 for students in college and career study and  
4 preparation, as well as the educational forum  
5 for learning through integrated curriculum in  
6 humanities and STEM. Students can then take  
7 those learnings and make connections directly to  
8 the college and career during their intensive  
9 study.

10 All of this takes time, more time, space,  
11 space that is already here, and we have utilized  
12 to optimum levels. Our model and design has  
13 promoted student growth, led to better and  
14 higher student outcomes, and has made  
15 educational opportunities available to students  
16 and their families that would not be afforded  
17 them in a traditional high school.

18 Because we have been successful at closing  
19 the achievement gap, and made substantial gains  
20 in student performance, we are growing. This is  
21 the point of our concern. In the Educational  
22 Impact Statement of this proposal there is a  
23 projection that Brooklyn Generation School would  
24 not grow over the course of the six years. It  
25 actually states that none of the existing

1 schools would grow over the same time.

2 However, the school to be co-located is  
3 projected to grow at an average of 150 students  
4 per year. These numbers would mean that the co-  
5 located school would potentially grow to be more  
6 than twice the size of any of the existing  
7 schools.

8 Our question is, why is that? The impact on  
9 Brooklyn Generation School would mean  
10 significant loss of vital instructional space,  
11 making it extremely challenging to effectively  
12 implement our educational program, as well as  
13 how we service families and engage this  
14 community.

15 It also goes back to the question of growth.  
16 If our school doesn't grow--excuse me--and we  
17 continue to lose instructional space, not only  
18 does Brooklyn Generation School's instructional  
19 program get compromised, but it also would not  
20 allow for the school to offer more opportunities  
21 to students.

22 Limiting growth to our school would mean  
23 limiting the possibilities to increase our  
24 instructional programs to include courses that  
25 our students are ready for, and just as

1 important, are entitled to.

2 As my community and I try to make sense of  
3 this proposal and how it would impact our  
4 community, we want to be clear by stating that  
5 we are not against co-locating a charter school  
6 here at South Shore. We are, however, concerned  
7 about how this co-location would impact our  
8 school, and how we can continue to effectively  
9 deliver our instructional program and the  
10 opportunities for growth, as we ask to get a  
11 point of sustaining the model fiscally and  
12 physically.

13 I ask that this panel take these concerns  
14 and questions into consideration as you move  
15 forward in making this decision. Thank you for  
16 your time and the opportunity to address this  
17 panel.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. The next  
20 presenter will be Ms. B. Hydleburg of the  
21 Brooklyn Generation School Leadership Team.

22 FEMALE VOICE: So, Ms. Hydleburg is not  
23 here, but she asked the School Leadership Team--  
24 oh, I'm sorry--she's asked the parent  
25 coordinator to read her statement.

1 MS. HOROWITZ: Okay, so Ms. Hydleburg  
2 couldn't be here, so she has a statement that  
3 will be read that she sent. Thank you.

4 MS. ROBIN SIMMONS: My name is Robin  
5 Simmons, I'm the parent coordinator for Brooklyn  
6 Generation School. I have a wonderful working  
7 relationship with several parents, so I ask that  
8 I'm allowed to read the prepared statement that  
9 Ms. Brenda Hydleburg, who is a senior parent of  
10 one of our students, who also sits on the SLT,  
11 has prepared and faxed to us this morning.

12 "Good evening. My apologies for not  
13 attending this meeting in person, but due to  
14 conflict with an important client meeting at  
15 work, I am not able to attend.

16 "As a participating parent at Brooklyn  
17 Generation School for the past three years, I  
18 have had firsthand witnessed the togetherness of  
19 the facility and student body. I have had the  
20 pleasure of participating on the School  
21 Leadership Team and as a member of the Parent-  
22 Teacher Association.

23 "The schools which currently share the South  
24 Shore Campus are all public schools and pretty  
25 much operate under similar guidelines provided

1 by the Department of Education for the City of  
2 New York. The idea of bringing a charter school  
3 into the building, which will operate under  
4 different and separate guidelines, and have  
5 significantly more funding than the public  
6 schools may cause the current student body to  
7 feel that their existing schools cannot compete  
8 with the services they may be able to offer.  
9 How can public schools compete if they do not  
10 have similar funding as charter schools?

11 "By starting with the 9th grade class in the  
12 fall of 2014, will any of our current 2013 9th  
13 graders be able to apply to the charter school  
14 for the 2015 year? Or will only those enrolled  
15 in the charter school be able to attend?

16 "It is my understanding that Uncommon  
17 Charter High Schools do not accept applications,  
18 only their middle school students are accepted.  
19 Let's think about how this will impact our  
20 current student body. They will observe the  
21 difference between what is available to them and  
22 what is available to a charter school, and may  
23 want to enroll in this school. How will it be  
24 explained that they cannot attend that  
25 particular school?

1            "These students have to go through  
2 scanning in order to be admitted into the  
3 building. Will the new high school students  
4 have to do the same? Or will they be given  
5 privileges to have a separate entrance?

6            "My belief is that if these schools do not  
7 operate equally to public schools, then they  
8 should be housed in a separate building. Maybe  
9 the Department of Education can house these  
10 schools together and they can compete against  
11 each other."

12            [Applause]

13            MS. SIMMONS: "This building was recently  
14 converted into a campus of multiple schools in  
15 order to have smaller class size and a better  
16 and more manageable student to faculty ratio.  
17 How will this continue if the current schools  
18 will have to give up space in order to  
19 accommodate the new school? Our current class  
20 sizes will be larger and we will be right back  
21 to where we were in the past.

22            "We're looking at this campus in the near  
23 future as home to a complete charter school.  
24 Where will the youth of our community attend  
25 school if they can't apply to a school in their

1 own community? Our community has just gone  
2 through the effects of Hurricane Sandy, where  
3 people within the community had lost the use of  
4 their homes and are still in the rebuilding  
5 stages. Now we have to worry about the children  
6 not being able to attend school in their own  
7 community. Has anyone fully thought this  
8 through?

9 "I ask that we continue to engage our  
10 community for input before deciding what is best  
11 for our children. Ms. Brenda Hydleburg, SLT,  
12 Brooklyn Generation School."

13 [Applause]

14 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
15 presenter will be Mr. Jonathan Spear, also from  
16 Brooklyn Generation School.

17 MR. SPEAR: Hi, my name is Jonathan Spear,  
18 I'm co-founder of Generation Schools Network,  
19 which is a very proud founder of Brooklyn  
20 Generation. And I don't know how many other  
21 people were here seven years ago when the four  
22 schools, Brooklyn Generation, Victory  
23 Collegiate, Brooklyn Theater Arts and Brooklyn  
24 Bridge Academy were approved and sited on this  
25 campus.

1           Since then we've really been committed to  
2 campus success, ensuring that everyone on the  
3 campus has access to resources, sports teams,  
4 like the football team. We've been committed to  
5 closing the opportunity gap for students in the  
6 community, and we've been committed to creating  
7 opportunities for the students that grow up near  
8 this building.

9           I'm not interested in speaking against the  
10 notion of co-locations generally, or against  
11 charter schools, or to speak to the impact of a  
12 new school on the culture and climate of the  
13 building here, other people will do a better job  
14 than I will.

15           But I do want to make clear, Generation  
16 Schools delves deeply into the way school works.  
17 We look very carefully at time and space and  
18 budget. We really commit ourselves to  
19 understanding the way the DOE accounts for  
20 things, and we want to highlight that the  
21 assumptions in the Impact Statement and in the  
22 Building Utilization Plan don't really reflect  
23 the fact that Generation Schools is now a larger  
24 school than it's projected to be in the EIS and  
25 the BUP. And that it doesn't take into account,

1 because the District uses consistent formulas  
2 for all the schools in the city, it doesn't take  
3 into account the ways that Generation Schools is  
4 different.

5 I have a longer letter that I'll deliver to  
6 the Division of Portfolio Planning, but I just  
7 want to read a couple of quick excerpts. So  
8 first of all, the Division of Portfolio Planning  
9 understandably uses common assumptions and  
10 standards calculations to project school  
11 enrollments and space needs. These formulas do  
12 not reflect the way resources are used at  
13 Brooklyn Generation School, even as these use of  
14 resources were approved by the New York City  
15 DOE.

16 Generation Schools Network want to ensure  
17 that Brooklyn Generation School can grow, as  
18 demand grows, to a level at which it is  
19 financially sustainable over time. If allowed  
20 to meet increasing demand, BGS can continue to  
21 grow. If the Office of Portfolio Planning does  
22 not afford BGS sufficient space, the BUP should  
23 reflect that BGS will end up hobbled and  
24 significantly adversely affected by the proposed  
25 co-location, as the planned enrollment number

1 will not allow for financial sustainability of  
2 this school.

3           Lastly, we ask that the Office of Space  
4 Planning revise the BUP and Impact Statement to  
5 reflect BGS' actual needs at a sustainable  
6 enrollment level, reducing the calculations of  
7 excess capacity. I've gone through the  
8 calculations of enrollment and space, staffing  
9 and space needs, and will forward that off to  
10 the division.

11           [Applause]

12           MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
13 presenter will be Ms. Danielle Duffy of the  
14 Brooklyn Theater Arts School Leadership Team.

15           MS. DUFFY: Ladies and gentleman of the  
16 panel, distinguished guests, families, students,  
17 community members and members of the press,  
18 tonight we stand at the crossroads. Tonight  
19 this panel is charged with determining whether  
20 or not it is practical to place a seventh school  
21 onto this campus.

22           The community of Brooklyn Theater Arts High  
23 School urges the panel to vote against this  
24 proposal. Tonight I stand before you as a voice  
25 for those being marginalized by this proposal,

1 not with opinions freely given, but in  
2 counsel, to discuss the needs of our young  
3 people and to advocate for them in this process.

4 This proposal seriously jeopardizes the  
5 educational quality of six city schools in the  
6 interests of one.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. DUFFY: This evening I plan to  
9 demonstrate how it will endanger the quality of  
10 education for a Brooklyn Theater Arts High  
11 School student. The first step is recognizing  
12 that public education works when every school is  
13 given the kind of resources we know are needed  
14 to make great schools. Taking space and  
15 resources away from our children is never in  
16 their best interest.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. DUFFY: Yet that is what is being  
19 proposed this evening. Debate about funding  
20 equity, educational equity and quality school  
21 options must move beyond obsolete face-off  
22 between charter supporters or charter opponents.  
23 It is not about charter schools or traditional  
24 schools. It is about building and sustaining  
25 excellent schools.

1 [Applause]

2 MS. DUFFY: And Brooklyn Theater Arts High  
3 School and the work our students create is  
4 excellent. We urge you to support us by  
5 equitably giving our students the space they  
6 need to sustain and grow their school.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. DUFFY: All city students deserve the  
9 right to a public education that puts their best  
10 interests above policy and personal agendas.  
11 Charter school students deserve the right to a  
12 quality education also, but not at the expense  
13 of our students' education.

14 [Applause]

15 MS. DUFFY: The proposal to move Uncommon  
16 High School 3 onto the South Shore Educational  
17 Complex at the start of the 2014-2015 school  
18 year would cause undue hardships on programming  
19 and shared common spaces that this proposal does  
20 not consider. The same way a live performance  
21 is never the same as a documented video of one,  
22 the real needs of a school sharing space with  
23 other schools are not the same as the numbers  
24 that appear to fit neatly into the boxes.

25 In the reality of a building shared by six

1 separate schools, there are quality of space  
2 issues that cannot be articulated in a chart or  
3 graph. We ask the panel to consider the  
4 practical ramifications of this proposal, and  
5 what it will do to student experiences,  
6 opportunities and learning environments.

7 For example, gym allocations for BTAHS  
8 provide all of our students to be in one gym at  
9 the same time. And only provide for one hour of  
10 usage in that gym space. Ladies and gentleman  
11 of the panel, we ask you, how does placing  
12 nearly 400 students into one gymnasium  
13 simultaneously serve their best interest?

14 [Applause]

15 MS. DUFFY: When engineers design a bridge,  
16 they are careful to plan that the weight of the  
17 bridge does not exceed the tensile strength of  
18 the building materials. Even the strongest  
19 alloy has a breaking point. If the design will  
20 not be structurally sound it is thrown out for  
21 its structural flaws. Asking for shared  
22 building resources already stretched thin across  
23 the needs of six separate programs to bend to  
24 yet another entity puts all of our children at  
25 risk and at a disadvantage.

1           Primum non nocere is a Latin phrase that  
2 means first, do no harm. Nonmaleficence, which  
3 is derived from the maxim, is one of the  
4 principle precepts of medical ethics. Another  
5 way to state it is that given an existing  
6 problem, it may be better not to do something,  
7 or even to do nothing, than to risk causing more  
8 harm than good. It reminds physicians and other  
9 healthcare providers that they must consider the  
10 possible harm that any intervention might do.  
11 Ladies and gentleman, it is evident that this  
12 proposal is harmful to our kids.

13           [Applause]

14           MS. DUFFY: The City's own recommendation  
15 for arts programming states that there should be  
16 dedicated art space for programs in theater,  
17 dance, music and art. By asking a theater arts  
18 school to share the only formal performance  
19 space with five other schools in the building,  
20 our students have already been limited. This  
21 space was created for performance. The shop  
22 backstage was created for building scenery, and  
23 yet, in this building it is seen as a common  
24 space. There is nothing common about this  
25 space. It has a designated purpose, the same

1 way a track or an office has a designated  
2 purpose.

3 To meet the City's recommendation for arts  
4 programming, we have had to transform classroom  
5 space into dedicated art spaces for our  
6 students, because we are limited in the use of  
7 the dedicated art space in our building.

8 The proposal for BTA to move from 22  
9 classrooms to 18 will mean that BTA will no  
10 longer have art spaces to serve our students.  
11 In addition, as we complete career and technical  
12 certification from the State, under this  
13 proposal our students will not have access to  
14 the equipment they need in order to be  
15 proficient and earn technical certificates.

16 Our students deserve better. They have  
17 demonstrated time and time again over the last  
18 seven years that they deserve better. They are  
19 serious about their work and honing their craft.  
20 Their successes speak volumes. Some of their  
21 most recent testimonies include, but are not  
22 limited to: A national August Wilson Monologue  
23 Competition winner; City-wide August Wilson  
24 Monologue Competitors annually; an invitation to  
25 perform on Broadway through a partnership with

1 Circle in the Square Theater; 46 Chancellor's  
2 endorsed diplomas.

3 Our students our widely sought after by  
4 prestigious arts programming, such as Stella  
5 Adler Youth Theater, CAT Youth Theater, NYU's  
6 Shakespeare Youth Ensemble, Kevin Spacey's  
7 Foundation's Richard's Rampage, and  
8 participation in programming at BAM.

9 Our students have been featured in Show  
10 Business Magazine, accepted into highly  
11 competitive MFA programs in acting and musical  
12 theater, and some of our alumni have  
13 participated in fashion week, are currently  
14 performing--are currently employed in off-  
15 Broadway theaters, have been featured in Law &  
16 Order and the Horne Brothers' documentary film  
17 "The Start of Dreams."

18 None of these opportunities would have been  
19 possible without space to create their art. The  
20 evidence clearly shows that they have proven  
21 themselves to make good use of the space we  
22 have.

23 We ask you to consider what kind of space  
24 you would want your children to work and play  
25 in. We ask you to consider how these students,

1 many of whom are here tonight, will feel when  
2 you take away their opportunity to perform on  
3 this very stage, to make room for someone else's  
4 programming.

5 Will they feel valued? Will they feel  
6 supported? I wonder if they will feel included  
7 in the community that they have fought so hard  
8 to create, as the resources they need to be  
9 successful in the theatrical community are  
10 handed freely to someone else.

11 Do not be fooled into thinking that another  
12 school entering this space is the underdog. We  
13 are being asked to defend why we need the  
14 classrooms we currently occupy.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. DUFFY: If it was a matter of four  
17 classrooms not being used, we wouldn't be here  
18 tonight. If there was ample space for our  
19 students to perform, we wouldn't be here  
20 tonight. If this proposal did not seek to  
21 undermine the work of our students, we would not  
22 be here tonight.

23 We recognize that power concedes nothing  
24 without a demand, it never has and it never  
25 will. To release is defined as to free from

1 confinement, to allow to be known. Tonight,  
2 ladies and gentleman of the panel, I call for  
3 you to release BTA's creative and classroom  
4 spaces, and thereby our creative potential.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. DUFFY: I call for you to release this  
7 campus from the restraints of this proposal.  
8 How do you build a culture? You have to be the  
9 culture. Leadership is the best example.  
10 Ladies and gentleman of the panel, tonight I  
11 call upon you to search within yourselves, to  
12 listen and to consider the counsel offered, and  
13 to truly exemplify what it means to be a leader  
14 by demonstrating that these students matter,  
15 that the work they do matters, that they are  
16 more than just a number on the page.

17 Destiny, ladies and gentleman, is a process,  
18 and BTA has a long future ahead of us. The work  
19 our students produce has already touched  
20 thousands of people who have walked through  
21 these doors, and over the course of time I  
22 believe will touch millions more.

23 Do not stifle this vital and necessary work  
24 by confining our potential and limiting our  
25 possibility. Do not jeopardize their arts

1 programming by stripping away the little art  
2 space we have and limiting the time they have to  
3 learn and create on this stage and in this  
4 space.

5 At the end of the day, what is right for our  
6 kids is the right thing. And cramming kids into  
7 space that doesn't suit their needs and  
8 overcrowding common spaces because we can, is  
9 not right. Our kids deserve space to grow, to  
10 create, to flourish.

11 And once again, I call for this panel to do  
12 the right thing for the students of the six  
13 schools who live, breathe and create in this  
14 building by finding space for the charter  
15 elsewhere. Thank you.

16 [Applause]

17 [Audience chanting "BTA"]

18 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
19 presenter will be Ashraya Gupta of the Victory  
20 Collegiate Leadership Team.

21 MS. GUPTA: Good evening. That's a tough  
22 act to follow. I just wanted to talk really  
23 frankly about the reasons I started in public  
24 education, and my notions about community. And  
25 I started working at Victory Collegiate about

1 five years ago, and I was really, really  
2 excited to start there. It was an exciting  
3 place, with a bunch of teachers who I really  
4 responded to. We all seemed to have the same  
5 vision for our students.

6 And three years ago we got there, we got to  
7 see our first graduating class walk the stage,  
8 receive diplomas, and much like all of the other  
9 schools here in this building, we've had that  
10 joy for the four years that many of us have had  
11 graduating classes, and we've had results.

12 So when I think about a Building's  
13 Utilization Plan, and whether a building is  
14 underutilized, which is what the claim is,  
15 right, that this space is underutilized, I think  
16 about outcomes. Because utility is defined by  
17 outcomes. We've had outcomes, we are utilizing  
18 this space and this building, and we have had  
19 fantastic outcomes for our students.

20 So when I think about how this space is  
21 used, I consider that small schools, by their  
22 nature, have to reconfigure time and space to  
23 get results. We work with a limited pool of  
24 teachers, we work with all hands on deck. So  
25 everything that--I'm sorry, your name?

1 MS. DUFFY: Ms. Duffy.

2 MS. GUPTA: Everything that Ms. Duffy just  
3 said about Brooklyn Theater Arts and the way  
4 that they utilize the auditorium, and the  
5 limitations that are already placed on their use  
6 of it, because you have six schools with  
7 different schedules, we don't have one master  
8 plan for this is when we use the auditorium,  
9 because the truth is, we have different needs,  
10 we have different populations, and yet we serve  
11 the same community.

12 If another school entered this building, and  
13 that school has a size of 700 students in  
14 comparison to six schools that are at about 300,  
15 400, it doesn't concern me so much where that  
16 school is coming from, what concerns me more is  
17 simply the clout that comes in the form of  
18 numbers.

19 Because at this point we're all part of the  
20 same community, we're invested in the same  
21 students, who know each other. We share  
22 tragedies, we share successes. And we've  
23 managed to share the space effectively. But  
24 with 700 students in one school, I imagine that  
25 that school would, simply by notions of

1 efficiency and how we plan for allocation of  
2 resources, would probably earn a bit more than  
3 the other schools here, because they need a bit  
4 more, they serve more students.

5 But sharing a space requires that people  
6 collaborate, and it requires that people have  
7 equity. And I'm not even discussing all the  
8 aspects of funding and privatization, but simply  
9 the notion of equity in numbers.

10 Every school here serves students from the  
11 same communities, same background, we're often  
12 in the same peer index, those of you who are in  
13 the Department of Ed and know what that means,  
14 and I think we've managed to build a community  
15 here. And I wonder what will happen to that  
16 community if it is, in fact, threatened by the  
17 existence of something that's quite different  
18 from it.

19 And it's a community that would not give its  
20 access to students here, students would be  
21 coming from only the middle schools. And I  
22 wanted to point out something about those middle  
23 schools. Last year, in 2011, 2011 a proposal  
24 was passed to open an uncommon high school,  
25 Uncommon Charter High School 2, and it was

1 intended to serve two of the middle schools  
2 which they are now intending to bring to this  
3 building.

4 So I ask you, if their projected numbers and  
5 proposal at that point, for a proposal that was  
6 accepted, and a school that was opened, was  
7 insufficient for their needs, what can we expect  
8 will happen here?

9 We need to really consider the fact that all  
10 of the schools here are growing. We've had  
11 successes. I think about our incoming freshman  
12 classes, and they are much larger than our first  
13 few classes. We're popular, people like us,  
14 right? So same with you guys.

15 So we're getting outcomes for our students,  
16 and I can't see that a building is underutilized  
17 when that's happening.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. GUPTA: And when I think about the  
20 purpose of school reform, whether it's through  
21 small public schools like our own, or through  
22 charters, the idea is that you reconfigure time,  
23 space and talent. The model that's called for  
24 in this Educational Impact Statement and this  
25 Building Utilization Plan uses an outmoded model

1 of schooling. It imagines that the purpose is  
2 efficiency rather than justice. Right? That  
3 what people need is simply to pack in as many  
4 students as you can into a room and get them  
5 certain results on test scores.

6 What we're trying to provide is something  
7 very different from that. We're trying to  
8 provide quality of education, which means  
9 multiple types of opportunities and exposure to  
10 things outside of the limited scope that you  
11 might receive in a 33-person classroom in a 45-  
12 minute period.

13 Many of the calls for sharing space for  
14 cafeterias and the gymnasiums require that we  
15 limit our time in those spaces, and those  
16 limitations may not match our schedules, right?  
17 Everybody has a vision for how schooling should  
18 work. Maybe we want to ensure that our students  
19 get lunch early in the morning because we think  
20 that makes them more productive in the  
21 afternoon. If we know our population of kids,  
22 we plan accordingly, we shift our schedule to  
23 support their needs.

24 And in this proposal, we don't have that  
25 freedom. We can't respond to our students'

1 needs effectively, because our students' needs  
2 are predated for us. So thank you. I just  
3 would call for the panel to take those things  
4 into consideration.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
7 presenter will be Dr. Max Jean-Paul, principal  
8 of Brooklyn Bridge Academy.

9 DR. JEAN-PAUL: Good evening, bon soir,  
10 parents, community members, Superintendent  
11 Horowitz, and faculty. It has been a journey  
12 for the South Shore Education Complex. The  
13 Complex has made great strides, with strong  
14 leadership and increased graduation rates for  
15 all schools.

16 Last week there was a committee, educational  
17 committee, they met and they said that small  
18 schools were created to get more precise  
19 instruction and environments where the unique  
20 learning styles are understood and nurtured.

21 While we know this to be true, the inclusion  
22 of another school in this campus means that our  
23 schools, Victory, ACE, BTA, BGS, BBAY, VC, would  
24 lose the essence they were created in the first  
25 place.

1           Having a school of 200, 300, 400 is of no  
2 benefit when class sizes become large. The  
3 personal attention cited as a reason for the  
4 success of small schools is literally thrown out  
5 when teachers are unable to provide the highly  
6 personalized instruction a small school is  
7 supposed to provide.

8           There's no possible what that class size  
9 would not rise [phonetic], and our students  
10 would not lose out if additional school slated  
11 to be on this campus.

12           In regard to space, I have major concerns  
13 about the message sent to students, especially  
14 my students, and all students on this campus,  
15 with the prospect of a charter school addition  
16 to our campus.

17           As a principal of a transfer high school, in  
18 collaboration with FGS, my students are the ones  
19 who the system has, in essence, left behind. My  
20 students come over-aged and under-credited, and  
21 yet, are still committed to the prospect of  
22 earning their high school diploma and pursuing  
23 post-secondary options.

24           For many, our small school on the third  
25 floor rotunda is the only academic home they

1 have known for many years. The idea that we  
2 may be moved out, put in another location within  
3 this building, for no other reason than space  
4 needs to be given to someone else, is highly  
5 offensive.

6 Our students have not asked to be moved--

7 [Applause]

8 DR. JEAN-PAUL: Our students have not been  
9 asked to be moved, and have shown no reason to  
10 be moved. In moving them, we are essentially  
11 saying to them you are not as important as  
12 someone else's children. How do we say we want  
13 to create portfolio schools or a system of  
14 choice, and decide to make someone else's choice  
15 more important than the choice options already  
16 made by my students?

17 Moving my school and my students simply says  
18 to them, we don't care about you and what you  
19 need. That is unacceptable.

20 Let me be clear, I am not anti-choice. Any  
21 parent has the option to make the choice that  
22 works for them and their family, but that choice  
23 should not impede or send a message to another  
24 person that says they do not matter. Thank you.

25 [Applause]

1 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
2 presenter will be Ms. Shivika Rajkisore of  
3 Brooklyn Bridge Academy School Leadership Team.

4 MS. RAJKISORE: Good evening everyone. I'm  
5 Shivika Rajkisore with Brooklyn Bridge Academy.  
6 I've been working at Brooklyn Bridge Academy for  
7 just over five years now, so it's my sixth. We  
8 represent the only chance for high school in the  
9 building, as Mr. Jean-Paul just said.

10 Over the last few years there have been many  
11 changes within this building, within the  
12 individual schools, but within all of the  
13 schools within the building. And the thing is,  
14 the schools have gotten into flow. It's taken a  
15 really long time, and you know every little bit  
16 helps, but they've gotten it into a flow. They  
17 have a little bit of a cohesion. They've been  
18 working together. And every single year it  
19 seems to be getting a little better, a little  
20 better, and a little better, because they've  
21 learned to work together.

22 And I think them becoming a unit is  
23 something that we should proud--we should be  
24 proud of. And I think it adds to the South  
25 Shore Educational Complex. It's not perfect,

1 but it's a commendable, it's a very  
2 commendable thing. And over the last few years  
3 I've watched it grow, and all the principals  
4 have watched it grow, and the parents have also.

5 An additional school in this building will,  
6 and I do believe, negatively affect the  
7 structure and cohesion between the schools of  
8 the South Shore Campus. As perfectly planned  
9 out as the Educational Impact Statement is, from  
10 schedules, allotted space, shared space,  
11 etcetera, nothing is as easy or as clean as it  
12 looks on paper. And Ms. Gupta, right, alluded  
13 to this earlier when she talked about the  
14 schedules in the lunchrooms and the auditoriums  
15 and all of that. Everything looks good on  
16 paper.

17 Like as teachers, we can do a syllabus and  
18 it looks beautiful on paper. I can put a lesson  
19 plan down and it looks beautiful on paper, but  
20 when those kids come into class, everything goes  
21 out the window. And if he walks in, everything  
22 really goes out the window. It's the truth.

23 And that Impact Statement looks beautiful on  
24 paper, but it's not going to work. I mean,  
25 that's a reality, right? Schedules don't work,

1 we don't--we're human.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. RAJKISORE: So our biggest concern with  
4 all six schools, and I do like to say as all six  
5 schools, because even though we are individuals,  
6 and I will talk as an individual just now, but  
7 we are one unit, and we are all fighting, or we  
8 all do have the same concerns.

9 So our biggest concern is space. All of the  
10 schools on campus take a loss of space as the  
11 charter is phased in. Some schools just in the  
12 first year lose to three to nine rooms. Imagine  
13 that. We only have about maybe, what, 15 rooms.  
14 We lose four.

15 Where are those teachers going to go? Where  
16 are those students going to go? Where are those  
17 teachers going to have those classes? Where are  
18 they going to plan? Who's thinking about these  
19 questions? How are we going to make our  
20 schedules?

21 So, three to nine classrooms in the first  
22 year, that's next school year, and that's not  
23 even taking into account if an entire school is  
24 displaced and moved to a different floor.  
25 Imagine if ACE goes from 2nd floor to 1st floor,

1 BBA moves--how are we moving all those  
2 cabinets? Do you know how many cabinets I have?  
3 It's a lot. Who wants to move?

4 But think about it. You have displaced  
5 teachers and classrooms, and where are your  
6 teachers and students going? In the end, over  
7 the next five years, schools continue to lose  
8 one to two rooms every single year. Some  
9 schools lose almost 10, 11 rooms over that time.  
10 And uncommon charter schools end up with 34  
11 rooms after everything's said and done.

12 So what happens to the schools that are  
13 already in the building? This reduction in  
14 space affects everyone. And the schools and  
15 their staff are not able to meet the needs of  
16 their students.

17 Looking at all the data for the schools, and  
18 trust me, that Educational Impact had a lot of  
19 data, it said that all of us, all six schools,  
20 had a large special education population. Our  
21 special education population is one of the  
22 subgroups that's significantly affected.

23 Our special education students not only need  
24 special attention and care, but also their own  
25 safe space. And what are we taking away from

1       them? We're reducing their space. So not  
2       only are the teachers not able to properly plan  
3       and best cater to all of our students, whether  
4       it is our special education population or  
5       general education students, we are decreasing  
6       their space, so we are increasing their class  
7       sizes.

8               How can a educator effectively help their  
9       students? How does a student feel comfortable  
10      and not clustered within their own safe space?  
11      So these are the questions that we are now faced  
12      with, as educators, as administrators, as even  
13      superintendents, how do we best serve our  
14      students?

15             So that's thinking of everyone on campus,  
16      but my school, Brooklyn Bridge Academy, up there  
17      on the 3rd floor rotunda, we've made a lot of  
18      significant gains over the last three years,  
19      positive gains, and some call us a second-chance  
20      high school. Mr. Jean-Paul told you how we take  
21      in the over-aged and under-credited population,  
22      and sometimes we are the last chance a student  
23      has of getting their high school diploma.

24             You know, when you get that high school  
25      diploma, you feel a satisfaction. We are

1 essentially your last chance of getting it.  
2 So, when our students come from every walk of  
3 life, with many personal and social issues, from  
4 truancies, we have a lot of young parents,  
5 mothers and fathers. We have young adults who  
6 are taking care of their entire families because  
7 they are from immigrant populations, or they  
8 have come from out of state.

9 So, they are coming with all of these  
10 stories, and they are so fragile, but at the  
11 same time very resilient. But what are we  
12 asking them to do? We are asking them to  
13 displace themselves. We are asking them to take  
14 away whatever comfort they had by coming to  
15 school and feel the same way that they feel on  
16 the outside, whether it is in the streets or in  
17 their homes, and we are taking that away from  
18 them.

19 So how do they deserve that? They deserve  
20 space and they deserve comfort to thrive and  
21 grow. This co-location proposal is detrimental  
22 to the growth of all our students, whether it is  
23 BBA, or whether it is the entire South Shore  
24 Complex. Why are you setting the students up  
25 for failure by proposing this co-location? It's

1 failure.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. RAJKISORE: Voting "No" for this  
4 proposed co-location is a vote for our students  
5 here at South Shore Educational Complex, we're  
6 voting for them to thrive. Thank you.

7 MS. HOROWITZ: And next speaker is Mr. Scott  
8 Carlson, for Academy for Conservation and the  
9 Environment School Leadership Team.

10 MR. CARLSON: Good evening ladies and  
11 gentleman, and respected members of the panel.  
12 First off, my name is Scott Carlson, I teach  
13 chemistry for the Academy for Conservation and  
14 the Environment.

15 And my first statement, I'd like to  
16 apologize. I'm sorry for keeping you here so  
17 late. I'm sorry for this conversation  
18 continuing, and I'm most of all most sorry that  
19 I have to be drawn between two worlds, because  
20 as an educator my first belief is that all  
21 students deserve an education. My first belief  
22 is that all students deserve space. Because I  
23 am educator first.

24 Every person in this room, for one reason or  
25 another, be they parent, student, teacher or

1 child, has had to have an opportunity where  
2 they had to be educated and find someone to  
3 educate them. Put simply, education requires  
4 space.

5 In our schools, we have PSL sports programs  
6 that are conflicting already for gym space that  
7 is shrinking as the days go on. In our schools  
8 we study that a tree may grow in Brooklyn, but  
9 trees also require space.

10 In order to show a student exactly how far  
11 these things can grow, in order to show a  
12 student exactly how much they can grow, you need  
13 to give them the opportunities to expand their  
14 knowledge along with expanding their arms beyond  
15 the limitations of the classroom size.

16 [Applause]

17 MR. CARLSON: We've all heard the adage, "It  
18 takes a village to raise a child," but it also  
19 takes a classroom. It also takes the space that  
20 we are being slowly reduced and denied.

21 As a teacher, I've had to advise students on  
22 the choices they've had to make that were  
23 outside of the curriculum of my chemistry  
24 curriculum map, but in order to do that, I  
25 needed a classroom of space. But I did it

1        anyway, whether I had a classroom or not,  
2        because I'm an educator first.

3            As an educator, we practice what we preach.  
4        We learn about the common core. We study its  
5        implications and its emphasis. We study how to  
6        make it so that a student questions why, a  
7        student asks questions about themselves, and is  
8        asked to give evidence justifying their  
9        conclusions. So the same standards that we hold  
10       our students to, we must also allow ourselves to  
11       be held accountable to.

12            [Applause]

13            MR. CARLSON: 700 students is larger than  
14        any currently occupied campus on this location.  
15        Yet we are still not asking "Why?" Our students  
16        are asking "Why?" Our students are asking for  
17        evidence. Shouldn't we?

18            As we go forward, we ask the students to  
19        emphasize their choices, to make intelligent  
20        choices about their own lives as they go  
21        forward, and as they lead their own lives  
22        independent of those educators that we were,  
23        because we were, of course, educators first.

24            But as they make those choices it seems that  
25        the same choice is not being offered to those

1 individuals who will be coming to such charter  
2 schools in the fall, because only a select few  
3 charter schools will be allowed to attend this  
4 coming school [phonetic]. Will our children be  
5 given the choice?

6 The population of individuals coming to this  
7 school in the fall will be coming from a wide  
8 variety of schools, and again, all students  
9 deserve an education, all children deserve a  
10 chance to learn, but as we are studying in our  
11 common core and standards education, why here?

12 Each district where the students are being  
13 pulled from, each district that is being asked  
14 to send their children to this new charter  
15 school, are from places like District 13, and  
16 Ocean Hill. I look around me and I see students  
17 from across the street. I see students from  
18 down the block. I do not see students from  
19 District 13. I see students who need me here,  
20 and I will educate them, as everyone else on  
21 this panel educates them, because supposedly we  
22 are educators first.

23 [Applause]

24 MR. CARLSON: Multiple schools on one site  
25 was an experiment. And of course, as a science

1 teacher, I have to lean toward the side of  
2 experimentation. Yet, an experiment demands  
3 trials. An experiment demands time to see them  
4 grow. And the experiment of South Shore is not  
5 over. We are still figuring out how to do the  
6 best and to excel, and to increase everything  
7 that we were already doing well here. If this  
8 was an experiment, again we ask, why isn't it  
9 over? Why are we changing the parameters now?  
10 Why are we continuing to add more things into an  
11 experiment that is still ongoing?

12 As educators, regardless of who comes into  
13 our classrooms, regardless of what population  
14 they come from, we are going to be there for  
15 them. Regardless of what walks of life, what  
16 location, what district, what creed, what class,  
17 we are going to educate them.

18 But the children are coming in the fall.  
19 The ones that need us, the ones that are--but  
20 the problem is, the children that need us truly,  
21 the children that we've been educating all  
22 along, the children that come from the community  
23 around us, the children are already here.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speaker will be Mr.

1 Michael Friedman of the GED Plus program.

2 MR. MICHAEL FRIEDMAN: Good evening panel,  
3 and good evening everybody here. I want to  
4 thank all of you who have remained. It's now 10  
5 after 7:00. I especially want to thank the  
6 students who have remained, because you have  
7 shown--

8 [Applause]

9 MR. FRIEDMAN: You have shown a real  
10 commitment to the future of the South Shore  
11 Campus. You have shown that you want this to  
12 continue to be as successful as it has been in  
13 the past. I just wish that the adults in the  
14 outgoing Bloomberg administration - - showed the  
15 same commitment that you've shown.

16 So I happen to be the chapter leader of GED  
17 Plus, and I am a teacher in GED Plus. And GED  
18 Plus is a program that has over 70 sites, and  
19 proudly, one of our sites is on this campus and  
20 has been on this campus since 2007.

21 We take students who have dropped out of  
22 school, and we have given them a second chance  
23 in life, and like all the students here, so many  
24 of our students have been successful in an  
25 environment that promotes success.

1           We have six schools in this building, it's  
2 a co-location already, and it has been  
3 successful, and I don't know why, when we have  
4 success already, why the outgoing Bloomberg  
5 administration wants to put something on the  
6 next Mayor, which could bring something  
7 unsuccessful and make it unsuccessful. Why, I  
8 do not know.

9           [Applause]

10           MR. FRIEDMAN: So let me give you some  
11 things that are on my mind that I'm questioning.  
12 Why is it that this was the first time we were  
13 made aware of the size of this school? I don't  
14 know. Why is it that this school is going to be  
15 one and a half times larger than any of the  
16 existing schools in this building, on this panel  
17 here? Why? I don't know.

18           Why is it that the uncommon school will have  
19 a steady growth of 150 students per year, while  
20 the existing schools will have to work within  
21 that? Why? I don't know. And why are we first  
22 learning this right now? Why haven't they told  
23 us this? Why haven't they been concerned about  
24 all of the panel members that we have seen here?

25           Why is it based on assumptions that are

1 arbitrary and not based on something that we  
2 have that is successful now? You have heard  
3 from all six buildings in this building, and all  
4 of them have been successful, yet something is  
5 going to be brought in that could make--that  
6 could change everything.

7 [Applause]

8 MR. FRIEDMAN: We have heard about a theater  
9 arts school that works. We have heard about an  
10 under-credited school that works, from the  
11 principal and from the chapter leader. And yes,  
12 in my program we have seen something that works  
13 so well with kids getting a GED and going onto  
14 college and career. So why is it--why are we  
15 going to mess around with something that  
16 actually works?

17 I'm asking the Panel for Educational Policy,  
18 it's not going to be in power anymore in January  
19 anyway, most of them are going to be out, to  
20 finally do the right thing for our kids and for  
21 the parents that they serve, and not approve a  
22 plan which is going to mess up something that  
23 works so well. Please don't do that.

24 Please look at the panel members, look at  
25 the students here, look at the parents here,

1 look at the teachers here, and see something  
2 that works, and don't do something that's going  
3 to mess up something that has worked since 2007,  
4 and that has brought success to our students.  
5 Thank you very much.

6 [Applause]

7 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next speaker  
8 is Marianne Russo from the City-wide Council on  
9 High Schools.

10 MS. RUSSO: Thank you. I would like to read  
11 a statement from DNS. "The proposed co-location  
12 of Uncommon Charter High School 3 is not  
13 expected to impact the educational options of  
14 students currently attending Brooklyn  
15 Generation, Brooklyn Theater Arts, Victory  
16 Collegiate, Brooklyn Bridge Academy, or Academy  
17 for Conservation and the Environment."

18 As we have heard, these schools were not  
19 even asked this question, whether they will be  
20 impacted. The DNS statement, and the Building  
21 Utilization Plan, is written by DOE. So their  
22 numbers are skewed, so they will support the  
23 new school. So the department that is proposing  
24 the new charter is also writing the documents.  
25 There is no one checking their numbers.

1           As we've heard, Utilization Plan listed  
2 does not take into account the special needs of  
3 these students, especially the arts students,  
4 and their programs. So again, their needs are  
5 not being taken into account. They were not  
6 asked these questions ahead of time. They had  
7 no impact on the Educational Impact Statement.  
8 Nor the Utilization Plan presented to the PEP.

9           So we ask the PEP to remove this co-location  
10 from the list. These documents do not reflect  
11 what's really happening in this school. They  
12 were not consulted in the writing of the  
13 document, so this, to me, this document is null  
14 and void, and should not even be considered as  
15 part of this proposal.

16           Again, as was stated by many of the  
17 educators here, we should not harm or take away  
18 the quality of the existing schools to create  
19 another program. If you want to invest in a  
20 charter, invest in a building for the charter.

21           [Applause]

22           MS. RUSSO: As this administration leaves,  
23 please leave, and let's not impact our children  
24 until 2020, when it will be totally utilized  
25 with the new school. Let's leave it alone. And

1 I urge the PEP to remove it from their list  
2 and vote against the proposal. Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. HOROWITZ: We have now concluded our  
5 formal presentation. We're going to call up the  
6 speakers in the order in which they signed up.  
7 I'm going to ask the speakers to line up in this  
8 aisle, and each speaker will have two minutes.  
9 We're going to ask that everyone please  
10 respectful while the speaker--I'll call you.  
11 You guys don't have to line up. I'll call five,  
12 and then the next five.

13 And we're going to ask that you please be  
14 respectful, regardless of the position being  
15 stated, please be respectful so that everyone  
16 can hear and listen to the speakers, and so that  
17 each speaker can be allotted their full time.

18 So in this order, and if I mispronounce your  
19 name, please accept my apologies, Richard  
20 Brathwaite, Darby Flynn, Angela Rodriguez--

21 FEMALE VOICE: Angela's not here. She left  
22 me a statement, may I read it? She just left,  
23 she had to go home.

24 MS. HOROWITZ: Yeah. Angelica Melendez and  
25 Suzanne Nelson. So we're going to start with

1 Mr. Brathwaite, please.

2 [Background conversation]

3 MR. RICHARD BRATHWAITE: How you doing,  
4 folks, can you hear me? Unfortunately I've been  
5 through this before, and I've stood here and  
6 I've had this conversation in front of a panel  
7 like this before. I started working in  
8 Brownsville as a teacher, and we had a school  
9 come in right after I was leaving to another  
10 school that was closer to home. Within three  
11 years, those couple of classes that got there  
12 took over the building, and the school I used to  
13 work at no longer existed.

14 I went to another school, and I saw another  
15 charter school come in. They took over the 4th  
16 floor. They're in the process right now of  
17 having one of these panels again to try to stop  
18 them from taking more floors over.

19 For the 5 to 700 kids who are guaranteed a  
20 spot here from other neighborhoods, where's the  
21 proposal to make space for the 5 to 700 kids who  
22 live right here, across the street and so on,  
23 who are losing their spot?

24 [Applause]

25 MR. BRATHWAITE: And also, I've worked for

1 many years as a special ed teacher, working  
2 with special needs students, and I know a lot of  
3 these charter schools do not cater to these  
4 children. They either don't accept them at all,  
5 or they expel them when they get out of hand.  
6 Public schools are open to the public, and we  
7 make all types of, you know, we negotiate, we  
8 try to find ways to work with them. And we get  
9 through to a lot of them, and they become great  
10 citizens, and they do what they have to do in  
11 life.

12 But if they're not making room for them, and  
13 we allow them in, what we're saying to our  
14 community, the people in Canarsie, my community  
15 where I live, we're saying, well, to hell with  
16 your special needs children, they can go  
17 somewhere else.

18 So my question to you is, you know, why  
19 would you offer such an ironically bad idea as  
20 an uncommon charter school in these days where  
21 these charter schools have become so common?  
22 It's a travesty and it's wrong, and we need to  
23 take better care of our community.

24 [Applause]

25 MS. DARBY FLYNN: Hi, my name is Darby

1 Flynn, and I'm a science teacher with Victory  
2 Collegiate High School. There's already been  
3 many salient arguments offered tonight with  
4 which I agree, I will be brief. I want to stand  
5 and be accounted as an advocate for children  
6 from Victory Collegiate High School, and I want  
7 to know where's the justice that we're supposed  
8 to be modeling for our students, that they  
9 count, each one of them counts equally as anyone  
10 else from a charter school, or no matter what  
11 the school is.

12 They're not part of an efficiency  
13 calculator, a footprint allocator of the minimum  
14 amount of space and freedom that our students  
15 can survive in, they need space to grow and  
16 thrive, not just survive.

17 Amazing things are happening at our small  
18 schools on the South Shore Campus. Our students  
19 are learning to make their own footprints in our  
20 world, to claim and own their own educations and  
21 futures.

22 But when we look at education as a  
23 warehousing of students and containing of  
24 spirits in the name of efficiency, giving a - -  
25 school all the clout in our building, we

1     undermine our students by giving away their  
2     power to be counted as an equal among their  
3     peers at South Shore. Instead their voices  
4     would be ignored in favor of a much larger  
5     charter school. They not only would encroach on  
6     our space, but on our voices. Thank you.

7             [Applause]

8             FEMALE VOICE: I feel better now. I'm  
9     reading this for Angela Heller [phonetic] who  
10    just left. Her mom texted her, she's very  
11    protective. "As a student I was there to see  
12    BTA come about. As alum, I continue to see the  
13    school changed into something bigger, something  
14    better. Students are living their dreams to  
15    become someone within BTA; performers, writers,  
16    scholars.

17            "Students are able to make these dreams a  
18    reality by utilizing South Shore's resources,  
19    such as the newly renovated auditorium, and a  
20    dance room to practice dance routines, as well  
21    as rehearse for plays and musicals." I'm not a  
22    performer.

23            "My concern is that when the unCOMMON,  
24    that's unCOMMON, with the common all in caps,  
25    since it's actually very common for reasons we

1 don't know, charter school comes about, what  
2 will happen to the students who strive to become  
3 someone they always dreamt of?

4 "Since the charter school will eventually  
5 expand, who will get dibs on the auditorium and  
6 the dance studio? Brooklyn Theater Arts or the  
7 uncommon charter school? The way I see it, this  
8 is a form of gentrification in schools. The  
9 charter school will take everything over and  
10 leave everyone out in the cold. Is that what  
11 you want? Students to become discouraged to  
12 learn, and teachers to become discouraged to  
13 teach?

14 "As the first valedictorian with special  
15 needs at Brooklyn Theater Arts High School,"--

16 [Applause]

17 FEMALE VOICE: --"I feel that the charter  
18 school will make those with disabilities  
19 unwelcome, because they selectively choose who  
20 gets in and who does not. That's a form of  
21 discrimination, isn't it? Especially with our  
22 public tax dollars.

23 "Shouldn't all students have an equal chance  
24 of attending a school, let alone a charter  
25 school? How would you feel if you were a

1 student with disabilities and you were  
2 applying to colleges, and half of those that you  
3 applied to denied you?

4 "Since a Student Affairs volunteer at  
5 Brooklyn College, I'm always told that colleges  
6 and universities have to let anybody apply, and  
7 get in based on their qualifications,  
8 irrespective of their background. Define an  
9 activist. What do activists typically look  
10 like? Typical people. What do they do? They  
11 see something not right and they'll do  
12 everything they can do to fight against it.

13 We won't give up, from my mother to my  
14 teachers and friends, I learned one thing thus  
15 far in my life, and that is don't be afraid to  
16 stand up and speak up against wrong. I've  
17 carried this lesson, and I'm telling you all not  
18 to give up. Continue fighting like warriors,  
19 BTA."

20 [Applause]

21 MS. ANGELICA MELENDEZ: Okay, my name is  
22 Angelica Melendez. I am currently proud and  
23 lucky to teach global history at Brooklyn  
24 Theater Arts High School, and I have done so  
25 since its inception 7 1/2 years ago. I have the

1 honor to provide my teaching services to the  
2 parents and students of this community, and I am  
3 lucky because I live within this community.

4       You want to talk about full teacher-parent-  
5 student disclosure? Nothing says I'm available  
6 to you when you roll up to me at the Laundromat  
7 on New Lots, and check me folding my clothes,  
8 and we're having a parent conference. Or when  
9 I'm in the grocery store, shopping, and I have a  
10 teacher tap me on--a parent tap me on my  
11 shoulder to ask me about this student. Or when  
12 I'm at the gym at Starrett City exercising, and  
13 I have students come to me and talk to me, "Yo,  
14 miss, what are we doing in class?"

15       So as a public school teacher in this  
16 community, okay, I have worked long and hard to  
17 make myself accessible to this community, unlike  
18 charter schools. The number of charter schools  
19 is growing rapidly without any data that  
20 suggests that they are somehow better.

21       In fact, many charter school companies  
22 around this country are fighting in courtrooms  
23 to keep their data secret from the public, even  
24 though they profit from public funds. I do not  
25 want my tax dollars, as a person living in this

1 community, to support schools like uncommon  
2 charters.

3 This charter school is taking public space  
4 and public dollars and putting public dollars  
5 into the private sector. And as a taxpayer in  
6 this community, I do not give them permission to  
7 do so. Especially as one that lives within the  
8 community that I serve.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. SUZANNE NELSON: This one is not nearly  
11 as fabulous as Angela's. I've taught in this  
12 building for 20 years, and any time construction  
13 is attempted, there are issues with asbestos.  
14 So we're curious, if this charter comes in, will  
15 they alter any of the physical space? And if  
16 they do so, will they use union workers in that  
17 effort? And if they do, will they take  
18 necessary precautions, or will they expose  
19 teachers and students to asbestos? So I guess  
20 that's just a question for the record.

21 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Michael  
22 Cerallo, Donna Rubin, Nathalle Barreau  
23 [phonetic], Ms, I think, Ms. Dickson, Ms. Mills.  
24 Those will be our next five speakers. So, we'll  
25 start with Mr. Cerallo.

1           MR. MICHAEL CERALLO: Okay. I would like  
2 the students who attend South Shore Campus  
3 currently to please stand up. If you attend  
4 South Shore Campus please stand up.

5           [Applause]

6           MR. CERALLO: I want the adults in the room  
7 to take a look at their faces. These are not  
8 numbers on a page, they're people. And I have  
9 some bad news for the students that are standing  
10 up, and I will apologize ahead of time. One  
11 thing has been unfortunately made clear to you  
12 tonight, charter schools do not want you.

13           And in my opinion, this is just not right.  
14 Thank you very much. Sit down, have a good  
15 night.

16           MS. DONNA RUBIN: Hi, my name is Donna  
17 Rubin, I'm an English teacher and theater  
18 teacher at BTA. Charter schools do not retain  
19 teachers, they have a very high turnover rate.  
20 In fact, one of our great science teachers left  
21 our school last year to go to a charter school,  
22 and as a result, she's left the teaching  
23 profession. The principals of charter schools  
24 are very often not educators.

25           We on this campus are concerned at how well

1 these principals, as well as these charter  
2 school teachers, will interact with our teachers  
3 and principals that are currently on our campus.  
4 Thank you.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. NATHALLE BARREAU: Hi, my name is  
7 Nathalie Barreau, and I am a sophomore here at  
8 BTA. I used to go to a UFC charter school for  
9 junior high in Gershwin Building. I don't want  
10 a charter school here, because I don't want to  
11 be treated badly. The students at the charter  
12 school treated the kids at Gersh like they were  
13 dirt. There were fights between the kids at  
14 Gersh in the charter schools all the time. I  
15 don't want that here.

16 The charter schools thought they were better  
17 than everyone, because the school made it seem  
18 that way. The charter schools also try to make  
19 it seem like the students had all these  
20 privileges, but we really didn't. They were  
21 just trying to save their reputation.

22 Teachers at Gersh were leaving because they  
23 were tired of fighting for their space. I don't  
24 want my teachers here fighting a never-ending  
25 war they feel like they can't win. I don't want

1 to lose my teachers or my space. We've got a  
2 really good thing going on here, and I don't  
3 want the charter school to mess that up. Thank  
4 you very much.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. MELISSA DICKSON: Hi, I'm Melissa, I'm a  
7 10th grader, I go to BTA.

8 MS. HOROWITZ: Could you speak into the  
9 microphone, sweetheart, please, so everyone can  
10 hear you?

11 MALE VOICE: Tell her your first and last  
12 name.

13 MS. DICKSON: Melissa Dickson. I'm a 10th  
14 grader at BTA. Sharing this campus with other  
15 schools is already hard enough, because day by  
16 day we look around and it feels like more and  
17 more students are coming here. We share the  
18 lunchroom with 9th, 10th and 11th graders, and  
19 this is already unsafe.

20 But by bringing another school in, it could  
21 become dangerous. As a school gets bigger, our  
22 classrooms will decrease, and it will be harder  
23 for kids to learn and succeed. Thank you.

24 [Applause]

25 MR. YOLLAITRE MILLS: Hi, I'm Yollaitre

1 Mills, and I am presently a junior in Brooklyn  
2 Theater Arts High School. Brooklyn Theater Arts  
3 High School is successful, has grown  
4 exponentially since its inception, and it will  
5 continue to grow if it's given a chance to. We  
6 had to turn students away this year because of  
7 our popularity.

8 But the Brooklyn Theater Arts High School  
9 needs more space, especially in the gymnasium,  
10 not the threat of less. Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. HOROWITZ: Thank you. Our next  
13 speakers, in order, will be Bruce Roderick,  
14 Libya Jordan, Nathana Blake [phonetic],  
15 Ed Maldonado, and Robinson Candia.

16 MR. BRUCE RODERICK: Hello, my name is Bruce  
17 Roderick, I'm an English language arts teacher  
18 at the Academy for Conservation and the  
19 Environment. I'll be quick here. I wanted to  
20 reiterate the point that as the South Shore  
21 Campus, the community voice has not been heard.  
22 The PEP, which will read our comments and pass  
23 judgment, is a corrupt panel. Every member is  
24 appointed by Mayor Bloomberg.

25 [Applause]

1           MR. RODERICK: This is unfair, it's not  
2 the way to treat families and communities. This  
3 is a disgusting and revolting way to deal with  
4 the community resource such as our public  
5 school. Thank you.

6           MS. LYBIA JORDAN: Hello ladies and  
7 gentleman of the panel, my name is Libya Jordan  
8 and I'm a sophomore at BTA High School. Sorry,  
9 because I'm a bit nervous, so if I stutter,  
10 accept my apologies.

11           I have history with charter schools. The  
12 problem with charter schools was the school was  
13 becoming overcrowded, and the charter school was  
14 starting to take over rooms on our floor. Mind  
15 you, this was in my middle school.

16           Another problem, there was conflict between  
17 students and schools, and there was fights  
18 between the students. If the school is willing  
19 to compromise and respect each other, space and  
20 school grounds, it shouldn't be a problem.

21           There's another issue. If this charter  
22 school comes in here and share our school with  
23 us, being that we have to downsize, this 2013-  
24 2014 school year, there was 600 kids who picked  
25 this school as a choice, only 150 students was

1       accepted. So that shows our school don't have  
2       much space as it is.

3               Our school is being recognized as a great  
4       school, especially for performing arts. It's  
5       sad that a community can't put their children in  
6       this amazing school because of limited space.

7               In order to be peace within the building, we  
8       must compromise with each other. Another issue  
9       is students might feel that they don't have the  
10      chance to get privileged opportunities like the  
11      charter school students will. And students may  
12      feel that they don't have a chance to see--well,  
13      have a chance to succeed, it's not fair.

14              And my question is to you, how would you  
15      deal with this, with the chaos, like how the  
16      Romans fell and the empire? So that's my  
17      question. Thank you.

18              [Applause]

19              MS. TATIANA BLAKE: Hello. My name is  
20      Tatiana Blake. I am a student at BTA, Brooklyn  
21      Theater Arts High School. Charter schools  
22      should belong in charter schools. Charter  
23      schools simply do not belong in public schools.  
24      South Shore came a long way as one school to six  
25      over time. We compromise with what we had.

1       Whatever conflict we had in the past, it was  
2       resolved.

3               This school has been peaceful for the little  
4       time that I've been here. Don't get me wrong,  
5       we all are human, so there will be disagreements  
6       here and there, but not--yeah, not everyone can  
7       agree on things, but we still minimize the  
8       conflicts.

9               I start by saying that it is nearly  
10       impossible for the scanning lines to be short.  
11       We do not need any more students. Whether you  
12       come early or late, the scanning lines are  
13       longer than ever.

14              As I've been told, our classroom will be  
15       downsized. I personally have a few classes that  
16       have over 30 students in it already. As more  
17       kids progress, there will be more students  
18       asking instead of telling, as in asking what,  
19       then explaining why. There will be students on  
20       top of students, and that simply cannot be.  
21       This can be avoided.

22              Our school belongs to us. Our floor should  
23       stay within BTA, within ACE, within BGS and any  
24       other school. This is a public building, not  
25       meant for private schools. Once again, this

1 school would not even benefit us, so it is not  
2 needed. This is a public school, and I want it  
3 to stay that way.

4 [Applause]

5 MR. ED MALDONADO: Good evening. My name is  
6 Ed Maldonado, I've been in this building a long  
7 time. I started with South Shore 18 years ago,  
8 I've been in BTA now seven years. So--and I  
9 just want to say one thing before I start. I'm  
10 now debating whether I'm going to vote for de  
11 Blasio or for Danielle Duffy.

12 [Applause]

13 MR. MALDONADO: That was a fantastic speech.  
14 When our students see charter students with more  
15 privileges, they're going to no doubt feel less  
16 than. This could and will strike at their self-  
17 esteem and their confidence, and make them think  
18 they don't matter as much. This will be  
19 devastating for our entire student body.

20 Myself and several of the people in this  
21 room have witnessed this happen when South Shore  
22 High School was phased out and the small schools  
23 were brought in. It was demoralizing for both  
24 the staff and the students.

25 And there's one more thing. At present my

1 kids are discussing how different societies  
2 view justice, how you vote tonight will tell--  
3 their vote tonight will tell them loud and clear  
4 how their own society stands on this issue.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. ROBINSON CANDIA: Hi, my name is  
7 Robinson. I'm class of 2011. Okay. A charter  
8 school in South Shore? Really? Isn't this  
9 school already crowded enough? Adding a charter  
10 school in this building will affect the school  
11 and the students in this building, which means  
12 less classrooms. And imagine 40 kids in a  
13 classroom. Now, let's be honest. Let's be  
14 honest. How will a teacher help 40 kids in a  
15 classroom? And the most important part is, how  
16 would a student learn with 40 kids in a  
17 classroom?

18 BTA is a theater school, it's about  
19 performing school. Removing a dance room, dance  
20 room, what are you telling the young kids, what  
21 to do when they love dancing? Okay. After a  
22 home game of South Shore, either there's a  
23 football game or there's a basketball team, the  
24 BTA performs at half times, okay? Now, removing  
25 those activities, you're ruining the community

1 for us, okay?

2 And picture yourself in our shoes, having to  
3 lose classrooms, less activities, larger crowded  
4 classmates, and many more. Or better yet,  
5 imagine if you were a high school student losing  
6 a dance room, a classroom, a computer room,  
7 whatever it is, how would you feel?

8 I don't care where you put this charter  
9 school, but don't put it in South Shore.]

10 [Applause]

11 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers are Erica  
12 Giglio, Pat Crispino, Charlie Turner, and Yoni  
13 Aguilar.

14 MS. ERICA GIGLIO: Hello, my name is Erica  
15 Giglio, I'm a theater teacher at Brooklyn  
16 Theater Arts High School, and I am reading this  
17 letter on behalf of my colleague, Frances McGary  
18 [phonetic], who filmed a documentary about our  
19 school, "Why Arts Matter."

20 "I am writing this letter on behalf of  
21 Brooklyn Theater Arts High School to express my  
22 dismay and shock to learn that South Shore  
23 Educational Complex has been slated to served as  
24 the home of Uncommon Charter School starting  
25 next fall.

1            "As a K-12 English and theater teacher for  
2 over 30 years, educational theater scholar,  
3 director of instruction for Stephen Sondheim's  
4 Young Playwrights, Incorporated, and presently  
5 the producer of First Online with Fran, a talk  
6 show/arts advocacy blog, I can assure you that  
7 this proposed plan is ludicrous, both in its  
8 professed educational intent and implementation.

9            "One need only cite recent examples of the  
10 debilitating educational effects of this  
11 solution. Vanessa Ramos, a pre-K teacher, and  
12 the UFT chapter leader at Manhattan's P.S. 38,  
13 currently co-located with one charter school,  
14 that will be replaced in September 2014 by  
15 another charter school, that Ramos fears will  
16 want to expand.

17            "'We've already been inconvenienced' Ramos  
18 said. 'It's already affected our music program,  
19 our lunch periods, the times students can use  
20 the gym and auditorium. It limits our program  
21 possibilities to expand as a school, because the  
22 space is already promised to someone else,' she  
23 said about the co-location. It is just another  
24 way of the Mayor limiting what public schools  
25 can do.

1           "Another scenario, students at Washington  
2 Irving High School found they had been neglected  
3 to a second-class citizenship in shabby, while a  
4 success academy charter school has been usurped  
5 by nearly an entire floor, completely renovated  
6 with plumbing that works. It is the microcosm  
7 of the Tale of Two Cities so often cited by Bill  
8 de Blasio, the haves and the have nots.

9           "Co-locations have carved out precious space  
10 and resources in schools throughout the city,  
11 but what about us?"

12           [Applause]

13           MS. PAT CRISPINO: I'm Patti Crispino, I'm a  
14 District rep for two of the schools in this  
15 building. You've heard all the important  
16 arguments, I don't want to repeat them. What  
17 annoys me is, the people making these decisions,  
18 let's go occupy their house and say that they  
19 have unutilized space.

20           [Applause]

21           MS. CRISPINO: I have no doubt the Mayor's  
22 daughter did not have to share her bedroom, or  
23 the kitchen, or the bathroom, or her play area.  
24 Neither did any of the other people that made  
25 these decisions. And what really bothers me is

1 the people that made these decisions don't  
2 work or go to our schools. They look at a  
3 schematic, they say you have space.

4 I lived this, I worked at Graphic High  
5 School for 24 years. Every school in this  
6 building lived this, because this used to be one  
7 school, and now it's become six schools. And  
8 now they want to make it seven schools. When  
9 does it stop?

10 And it's not working. But for the  
11 youngsters in this auditorium, please don't  
12 forget that the power of the vote can make a  
13 difference. Bloomberg almost lost his election,  
14 and he should have. He should not have been  
15 here. And he would have not had the ability to  
16 put the people on the PEP who are making these  
17 decisions.

18 Ladies and gentleman, look at the names of  
19 the people on the PEP. Write them down.  
20 Because you will see them again, and maybe you  
21 can make it stop.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. CHARLES TURNER: Good evening, everyone.  
24 My name is Charlie Turner, and I'm the District  
25 rep for Brooklyn High Schools, and four of my

1 schools are in here, and I have to say a  
2 couple of things.

3 First of all, the UFT is not against charter  
4 schools. In fact, Al Shanker, over 20 years  
5 ago, actually invented charter schools. He  
6 invented them to create an experimental  
7 classroom so that we could all benefit from  
8 these experiments, okay? But the problem is  
9 this, and I think it answers a lot of the whys,  
10 education is big business. Mr. Bloomberg is a  
11 businessman. Charter schools is big business.  
12 Money is why this is happening, okay?

13 I loved every speech that was up here, and  
14 it all came from the heart, but when it boils  
15 right down to it, the PEP is going to vote  
16 against us, we know that. But that should not  
17 be any reason for us to stop, okay? We cannot  
18 let these people do this to this school, okay?

19 [Applause]

20 MR. TURNER: Not one of the students in this  
21 school is going to benefit from this charter  
22 school. And in fact, not one of the students in  
23 this community is going to benefit from this  
24 charter school. In fact, all of the feeders are  
25 from some other community, okay? We cannot

1 allow this happen. You've got to get out  
2 there and you've got to protest this, and we've  
3 got to get down to the PEP and just say no to  
4 this charter school.

5 [Applause]

6 MR. YONI AGUILAR: Good evening. I actually  
7 started in this school, I'm a graduate of BTA,  
8 Brooklyn Theater Arts High School first  
9 graduating class. It is an honor to say that I  
10 am in this beautiful with all of these people  
11 who are in support of this, because we have a  
12 mission, and that is to make this space a space  
13 where we can be creative and we can inspire the  
14 rest.

15 Now, I remember coming in here and having my  
16 orientation in one room. Now that is just my  
17 school, we were a small school, we started out  
18 in one room. Then we wanted to go ahead and  
19 have rehearsals, there was no space to have  
20 rehearsals. There wasn't a room where we can go  
21 and sort of plan whatever was coming next. We  
22 didn't have space for that.

23 Now I am working at a beautiful theater  
24 company, which was a founding partner that  
25 started BTA, and what they did for me was

1 something that changed my entire life  
2 completely. I started, you know, such a little  
3 - - , didn't know where I was going, and I went  
4 and I'm going out into the city and just  
5 working, and I would like to give the upcoming  
6 people the same opportunity that I have.

7 And what are we supposed to say? Oh, but  
8 there's no space for you to go ahead and  
9 practice your interview. There is no space for  
10 you to go ahead and rehearse for your next  
11 audition, which can take you to better places,  
12 there's no space.

13 And there is the space, and that's our space  
14 right now. And we're supposed to say, I'm  
15 sorry, we have to give up our space to someone  
16 else who is coming in. That's not what we do.  
17 We love everyone, we're okay here with everyone,  
18 and we make it work, you know? We make it work.  
19 But yet we still need our space that we can call  
20 our own. And this is our space, and we're not  
21 going to give it up. We're not going to give it  
22 up at all. No matter what it takes.

23 And I'm just telling the students here, this  
24 is just a little, little, little, it'sy bit of  
25 what actually happens, and we are here to fight,

1 and we will fight until the end. That's just  
2 what I'll say. Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Ashley  
5 Zaragoza [phonetic], Brittany Sterling, Dontagia  
6 Britt, Detreia Glover, David Bostic.

7 MS. ASHLEY ZARAGOZA: Good evening everyone.  
8 My name is Ashley Zaragoza, and I am a graduate  
9 of Brooklyn Theater Arts High School. I'd just  
10 like to say that as a part of the second  
11 graduating class I've gotten to see the school  
12 grow tremendously, from just a freshman and  
13 sophomore class, a couple of teachers in a few  
14 classrooms, to more students, more classrooms,  
15 more teachers, and even more opportunities.  
16 Wonderful opportunities like internships, and  
17 chances to work with professionals.

18 These are the things that give the students  
19 something to look forward to in the morning,  
20 Monday through Friday. I know myself, I would  
21 get out of bed on the rainiest days or on days  
22 some might consider blizzards just to get to  
23 school, because I knew that there was something  
24 great waiting for me.

25 By adding a charter school into the mix, you

1 would taking away from them the space that  
2 they can learn, teach, create and continue to  
3 grow together and strive for greater things, the  
4 space they call a second home. I still call BTA  
5 a second home, and I graduated in 2012.

6 Now I've had the chance to learn and grow  
7 here as a student, and as an artist, and as a  
8 young adult, but please don't take that chance  
9 away from the lovely young adults in this  
10 building. Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. BRITTANY STERLING: Hi, my name is  
13 Brittany Sterling, I'm a student at Victory  
14 Collegiate High School, and I feel that we all  
15 deserve the right to focus in our space. I  
16 think it's very unfair to us students and  
17 teachers that are trying their very best to  
18 teach us in all that we need. For an Uncommon  
19 Charter School to move into our school, it will  
20 be a major dysfunction in classes and the whole  
21 school.

22 I am speaking for all of the students and  
23 the school, we all have a right to learn in  
24 peace, and the teachers have a right to teach in  
25 a peaceful environment, without distractions.

1 This is our space, let us decide. We all need  
2 to come together as one school and decide this  
3 on our own, as one. Because this all benefits  
4 us as one school. We are still struggling with  
5 spaces and more children are transferring by the  
6 day.

7 We at Victory Collegiate only have a half a  
8 floor, so with more students coming, think about  
9 this, where will we go when spaces are so  
10 little? Please think about this. We need a  
11 place to grow, and South Shore is our own.

12 So ladies and gentleman at this panel  
13 tonight, please choose wisely. This also comes  
14 down to our future. Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. DONTAGIA BRITT: Hi, my name is Dontagia  
17 Britt, and I'm a senior at Victory Collegiate.  
18 I came to Victory Collegiate because it's a  
19 smaller school, which equals a better learning  
20 environment. Coming to Victory Collegiate  
21 changed me a lot. It helped me find myself as a  
22 person, and since we are a small school and work  
23 together, they're not only our teachers, they  
24 are our family. So adding a charter school to  
25 South Shore Campus can break our family apart,

1 make it difficult for us to learn or do  
2 anything.

3 Why make a small high school suddenly over-  
4 capacity in classrooms because of a charter  
5 school, which will affect our success that we  
6 created as a family?

7 Think about this, in an eminent domain  
8 situation, the owner is required to be  
9 compensated. How are you planning on  
10 compensating the existing school and this  
11 building?

12 What I also don't understand is that charter  
13 schools spend the majority of their money on  
14 prettying the building or their area, instead of  
15 putting all that money towards education.

16 [Applause]

17 MS. BRITT: I, Dontagia Britt, want to look  
18 back 20 years later to my school, Victory  
19 Collegiate, who not only bettered me at  
20 education, but also prepared me for life,  
21 crumble to the likes of a charter school.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. DETREIA GLOVER: Hello, my name is  
24 Detreia Glover, and I am a parent of Victory  
25 Collegiate High School. I'm also the PA

1 president. And I want to first say that I am  
2 not against charter schools. I am against a  
3 charter school being brought here to the South  
4 Shore Campus.

5 Many of us remember when South Shore High  
6 School was one school. It housed over 3,000  
7 students. And it was proven that it didn't  
8 work. It was too many students, they did not  
9 learn. And in effect what happened was the  
10 school was closed. And now we have smaller  
11 schools. There are less students in the  
12 classroom, the teachers are more comfortable  
13 that they can teach our students, and that is  
14 the most important thing, that our students  
15 learn. They need to have the space to learn.  
16 They need to have the space to grow.

17 Our school, Victory, consistently every year  
18 has been given a grade of A, A, A, for our  
19 school, and we are so proud of that. We are so  
20 proud of that. And bringing a charter school  
21 into this building would just hinder that. Why?  
22 Because they would be taking class spaces from  
23 our students.

24 What about our students? Not to say  
25 anything against anybody else's students in

1 District 13 or wherever that school is from,  
2 but our school, our students are important to  
3 us. We are the citizens of District 18 and our  
4 students matter to us. So we would say--I would  
5 say that I am against bringing a charter school  
6 here.

7 And another thing is, because our scanning  
8 lines, our scanning lines are ridiculous now,  
9 because of all the schools that's in the  
10 building. Adding another one, adding another  
11 one will just make them even later for their  
12 classes. It is ridiculous, I am against it.  
13 Thank you.

14 [Applause]

15 MR. DAVID BOSTIC: My name is David Bostic,  
16 and I'm a senior at BTA High School. A lot of  
17 my senior friends didn't come out tonight  
18 because they wondered what did it have to do  
19 with them since they're leaving while this is in  
20 process, and my teacher reminded me that this is  
21 about leaving a legacy.

22 My classmates and I have put on a lot of  
23 shows on this stage, and we have dedicated  
24 endless hours and weeks and months to just  
25 perfect one craft, and just to let one school

1       come here and probably take over the school,  
2       that would just like delete everything, it's  
3       like we worked for nothing, which would probably  
4       be a waste of time.

5               Why do we need a charter school? What is  
6       the charter school going to do for us? And  
7       wouldn't it be a little taboo, because we're  
8       still a work in process? It's like you asking a  
9       baby to have a baby, why would you do that? It  
10      doesn't make sense.

11             [Applause]

12             MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Jonathan  
13       Bridgeman, Donna Lawit, Kalia Monlyn, Louise  
14       Bogue.

15             MR. HASSAM AKALA: My name is Hassam Akala  
16       [phonetic], I'm an aspiring business student  
17       attending Victory Collegiate High School.  
18       Normally I wouldn't mind adding an extra school,  
19       but this case is totally different. There are  
20       literally half a dozen schools in this entire  
21       complex. We barely have space as it is here.

22             How are you going to come to our school, no,  
23       our building, and tell us that you want well  
24       over 100 students in the first year, the first  
25       year alone, a non-traditional charter school,

1 and tell us that you're going to take up most  
2 of our space to begin with? And we don't even  
3 have that much.

4 We're here, and you're going to take it from  
5 us? You offer absolutely nothing, and demand to  
6 come over here. My school, Victory Collegiate  
7 High School alone, is one of the smallest  
8 schools in the building, and I guess they just  
9 probably want to subtract our numbers. This is  
10 our school and we have a right to say no.

11 [Applause]

12 MS. DONNA LAWIT: Hi, good evening everyone  
13 who is still here. My name is Donna Lawit, I'm  
14 the UFT chapter leader from the Kurt Hahn  
15 Expeditionary Learning School which is on  
16 Tilden. Congratulations, you guys won the game  
17 this weekend, but we're still here.

18 I'm standing here in solidarity with the  
19 teachers, with the parents, and with the  
20 students who are in opposition to this plan.  
21 Charter schools, not charter schools, that is a  
22 distraction. The real issue is there's stuff  
23 going on, there is poverty, there is an equal  
24 distribution of resources, there is racism, and  
25 instead they have us fighting over charter

1 schools, not charter schools, everyone just  
2 wants good options for their kids. And  
3 unfortunately charter schools have just proven  
4 themselves to be at best a mediocre intervention  
5 for a much larger problem.

6 The final question I want to raise is, who  
7 are we even talking to right now? Because I  
8 haven't even heard one person stand up for this  
9 plan. So we're all here, good working people,  
10 we overcame a tornado warning to defend these  
11 awesome programs, and for what? Who are we even  
12 talking to?

13 [Applause]

14 MS. LAWIT: So it's the record our  
15 opposition tonight. We'll be at the PEP on  
16 October 15th. We'll be voting on November 5th,  
17 and we'll see you on January 1st, when we have a  
18 new Mayor who wants to start fixing these  
19 problems instead of making us show up on a  
20 Monday night, and not even listening.

21 [Applause]

22 MS. JOCELYN BELLO: Good evening panel. My  
23 name is Jocelyn Bello [phonetic], I'm a senior  
24 for BGS. I would like to talk about BGS' dreams  
25 and goals for its students. Year after year it

1 has progressed, making the school a better  
2 place for everyone. It has provided quality  
3 time through college and career. In order to  
4 continue the dream, this school will have to add  
5 AP courses and intensives. Sadly, this won't be  
6 the case if it has to be suffocated by the  
7 charter school moving in.

8 As a senior, I am concerned for my fellow  
9 classmates, because they will not have the  
10 opportunity to have these courses. They will  
11 need these courses to compete against other  
12 college students. A great solution would be  
13 that both BGS and the schools in the South Shore  
14 Complex to be given a chance to keep the minimal  
15 space it already has.

16 Why can't the charter school relocate to the  
17 new building instead of disrupting the goals and  
18 dreams of the schools established here already?  
19 How can you ask students and parents to relocate  
20 when they have already built a strong foundation  
21 in this community? Thank you.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. KALIA MONLYN: Hi, my name is Kalia  
24 Monlyn, I'm a senior at the Brooklyn Generation  
25 High School, and I wanted to talk about some of

1 the issues I see with this proposal. So, with  
2 the charter school proposal I see that it's  
3 going to put a limitation on a lot of the things  
4 that are available to the students in these high  
5 schools in this building.

6 I see that we're going to have to force  
7 students to have earlier lunch periods, because  
8 the size of the school that they're trying to  
9 build here within the next four years is going  
10 to be double the size of any of the schools  
11 represented in this building.

12 It's going to also have--it's going to also  
13 cause students to have to wait on longer lines  
14 outside for scanning. It's also going to put a  
15 limitation on the amount of elective classes  
16 that each school can provide for their students.  
17 And it was through my elective classes that I  
18 was able to join the internship, the Arthur Ashe  
19 Internship for Urban Health, which I'm really  
20 enjoying.

21 So I don't feel like the uncommon charter  
22 school should be present in this building. And  
23 I also feel that it's limiting our school's  
24 educational development. So yeah, my question  
25 to you guys is, how do you say that our school

1 is undercompensated when you haven't even  
2 given it a chance to blossom yet?

3 [Applause]

4 MS. TANYA ODUMS: Good evening, I'm Tanya  
5 Odums [phonetic]. I began at BGS as a social  
6 worker, and worked my way up into an  
7 administrative position. And I really want to  
8 just advocate on behalf of the support services  
9 in terms of what BGS needs and the rest of these  
10 schools need.

11 As the director of Wellness & Preventive at  
12 BGS, one of my concerns is space for my social  
13 workers and guidance counselors, speech  
14 therapists, substance abuse prevention, and  
15 intervention workers to provide confidential  
16 counseling services.

17 For the past seven years that I've been here  
18 I've been advocating and negotiating for  
19 adequate counseling space for our IEP mandated  
20 students and students referred for counseling  
21 due to their personal crisis. How are we, as  
22 related service providers, supposed to provide  
23 quality services to our students if we do not  
24 have the space?

25 Right now I share an office with one of my

1 deans. The guidance counselor shares an  
2 office with AP Garcia, and Ms. Reyes, who  
3 assists with programming. The social worker  
4 shares an office with two interns. And we all  
5 have to share one counseling room when we need a  
6 private space to meet with students and parents.

7 There are times where my deans are using my  
8 office to address crises. I am counseling and  
9 consoling parents, and supervising detention,  
10 all in one at one time. With six schools  
11 already in this building, we are making do with  
12 the space we have, but this is not high-quality  
13 services, because there is always a risk of a  
14 breach of confidentiality.

15 We need the space to provide mandated  
16 related services, in order to remain in  
17 compliance with IEP related service mandates.  
18 But more importantly, we need the space to help  
19 students deal with their emotions and their  
20 personal crises in their lives, so that they can  
21 excel academically.

22 It is very important for this committee to  
23 consider how moving a larger charter school  
24 inside of this building will further reduce the  
25 availability of space, and adversely affect the

1 quality of related services we deliver to  
2 students. Thank you.

3 [Applause]

4 MS. LOUISE BOGUE: Good evening, my name is  
5 Louise Bogue. I'm a first-year teacher here at  
6 Brooklyn Generation. I come from a transfer  
7 high school background. And I also sat on these  
8 panels as a member of the City-wide Council for  
9 Special Education, so all too often I have read  
10 these Educational Impact Statements, which truly  
11 are not. Educational Impact is not driven by  
12 data, it is a narrative. And it is the  
13 narrative that is something from this statement.

14 I hope that the PEP will recognize the  
15 stories that were told to create a clearer  
16 picture. But my largest question, and possibly  
17 the only nugget from this, is that according to  
18 this, the application for this Uncommon Charter  
19 High School 3 has not even been submitted yet.  
20 It is not to be submitted until December 2013,  
21 but that the DOE and Uncommon are confident that  
22 it will be approved.

23 So I'd like to know, why are we discussing  
24 location when their application has not been  
25 approved? And I encourage the PEP to realize

1 this site is off limits.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Hassan  
4 Mccullough [phonetic], Shamona Kirkland, Mike  
5 Beckles [phonetic], Collegia Decembre  
6 [phonetic]. If none of them are here, Ghandi  
7 Brisson [phonetic], Daquan Harvey [phonetic],  
8 Brenda Hydleburg and Kimberly Laboy [phonetic].

9 MR. ERIC HABER: Yes, hello, my name is Eric  
10 Haber, I'm a school social worker at Brooklyn  
11 Generation School, and I am proud to have been  
12 here since the school was founded in 2007.

13 I wanted to just address the panel regarding  
14 the fact that, I think it was mentioned earlier,  
15 about how small schools and bringing small  
16 schools onto this campus is an experiment, and  
17 it is an opportunity for all the different  
18 schools to try out innovative educational  
19 systems and models, and at our school, as it was  
20 mentioned earlier, we do have a very interesting  
21 model, which reallocates the resources for  
22 students' both time and space, and to hopefully  
23 give children a smaller class size, and to  
24 deliver unique and individualized programming  
25 for students.

1           I think it's important to note that South  
2 Shore just started phasing out in 2007, and so  
3 it didn't finish phasing out until 2010-11. And  
4 so that--it's only two years ago that our  
5 schools have truly existed, already co-located,  
6 really living the experiment that we're working  
7 on. And it's very much, as was said before, a  
8 work in progress.

9           And so bringing a school of this size and  
10 scale of the proposed charter is obviously  
11 pushing aside and suffocating the programs that  
12 are just beginning to try to develop a momentum.  
13 And I can say at our school we definitely have,  
14 over the last three years, developed a momentum  
15 to grow.

16           And the fact that when you look at the  
17 numbers and you see for every single school the  
18 same range of students that's been predetermined  
19 over the next five years, while one school gets  
20 to grow and take over more space, obviously  
21 that's not a recipe for success for the schools  
22 existing here in the building.

23           And lastly, I think it's important to note  
24 that we have theater middle schools, Bildersee,  
25 Huddy, Meyer Levin, those students are not

1 included in the charter school, it's only  
2 their own middle schools that would be feeding  
3 into the school. Thank you.

4 [Applause]

5 MS. SHAMONA KIRKLAND: Hello, good evening.  
6 My name is Shamona Kirkland and I'm a proud  
7 parent of a student here at BTA and I'm also a  
8 charter supporter. My daughter attends a  
9 charter school. And uncommon has done wonderful  
10 things with my niece and my daughter.

11 I'm here tonight to say that as a parent and  
12 a community leader, I believe in education for  
13 every child, and I believe that we are all  
14 accountable for every child in New York City,  
15 not just in our concentrated communities, in New  
16 York City.

17 We are a devastated community, we see it  
18 every day on the news, crime is raising,  
19 everything is raising. Children are not being  
20 able to prepare themselves and be ready for the  
21 world, and growing up and getting jobs that can  
22 help them to be productive citizens and take  
23 care of their families.

24 I believe that this building is an excellent  
25 building, and I was so excited when my son got

1 into this building, and he is getting an  
2 excellent education, he is very happy here. But  
3 I also believe that uncommon is going to add to,  
4 not take away from the building.

5 I see the leaders here, you're all so very  
6 passionate and strong about education. Just  
7 bring along another partner who will partner  
8 with you to ensure that every child in New York  
9 City is getting an excellent education  
10 regardless of their zip code. Thank you.

11 [Applause]

12 MR. JOLIN SHIELDS: Hello, my name is Jolin  
13 Shields, I'm a director of school culture for  
14 Victory Collegiate High School. I'm speaking on  
15 behalf of Michael Beckles, who had to leave, one  
16 of the basketball coaches and special education  
17 teachers at our school.

18 "The campus has had success while sharing  
19 common space, but bringing another larger school  
20 will hinder all of our successes. This is  
21 unfair for students who enrolled for smaller  
22 school settings, and it will affect the quality  
23 of education.

24 "This is unfair for parents who chose the  
25 school because of the success rate. This will

1 also affect the quality of the high school  
2 experience. This will cause shared space  
3 issues."

4 Mr. Beckles is a physical education coach,  
5 so he knows firsthand how this will affect the  
6 gym. Ms. Miller is another one of our PE  
7 teachers, and she knows that there's already  
8 enough--there's already overcrowding in our  
9 gyms, and this will contribute to more  
10 overcrowding.

11 "Reduction of school sizes will decrease the  
12 number of rooms that we can use, and will make  
13 it so that we can't have a conversation directly  
14 after class if a student needs help, because  
15 another class will be coming in. And what will  
16 that do after-school tutoring, and after-  
17 school enrichment programs, we'll have to share  
18 the space for all of those things as well."

19 "Lastly, we currently have students eating  
20 lunch at around 11:00 a.m., with an additional  
21 700 or more students, will students start eating  
22 as early as 10:00 a.m.? What are we going to do  
23 about the lunch?" That's all. Thank you so  
24 much.

25 [Applause]

1           KALISHA: Good afternoon. My name is  
2 Kalisha and I'm currently a 10th grader from  
3 Brooklyn Theater Arts. A charter school would  
4 be a great benefit if it benefitted other  
5 students. They talk about kicking out a school  
6 if--excuse me if I'm mistaken--and taking away  
7 space from other schools, it's absurd.

8           South Shore already has many schools within  
9 the building, we don't need another one. The  
10 fact that this charter school is only offered  
11 for those who graduated from a charter middle  
12 school is also a problem. Besides those who  
13 have graduated from a charter school, who is  
14 this benefitting?

15           We students would like to have the right to  
16 choose what education we want, because we have a  
17 voice. The funding that you use for that  
18 charter school, if possible, could be used to  
19 benefit South Shore as a whole, to make it  
20 better, not worse. Thank you.

21           [Applause]

22           MR. DAQUAN HARVEY: Hi, my name is Daquan  
23 Harvey, and I am a junior in Brooklyn Theater  
24 Arts High School. I love BTA, and I--this  
25 building is wonderful with all the schools and

1 stuff in their own way. I don't think we  
2 another school, let alone the charter school,  
3 because mostly each school has half a floor  
4 already. We need space for our school to grow,  
5 but not just us, other schools also.

6 And as you say, charter school students are  
7 more advanced than public school students. I  
8 believe if BTA can do plays, - - , and can still  
9 balance their grades with it, well, I consider  
10 that we are smart.

11 Also, if there is a charter school there  
12 will be less time or any time in the auditorium,  
13 less classrooms, so teachers won't have  
14 classrooms to teach in. And if they do have  
15 classrooms to teach in, they will be large  
16 classroom sizes, and large classroom sizes for  
17 schools makes it harder for the teachers to  
18 teach and the students to learn.

19 This school has changed my life in many  
20 ways, completely for the better. And if this  
21 charter school comes in our school, I will be  
22 devastated, the other students will be  
23 devastated, the teachers will be devastated. We  
24 fight for what we believe in, and BTA and all of  
25 the other schools will go on for years to come.

1 We are not going to take it.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Ghandi  
4 Brisson [phonetic], Kimberly Laboy, Davern  
5 Green, Tristan Foy. Go ahead, you can start.

6 MS. KIMBERLY LABOY: Hi, I'm Kimberly Laboy,  
7 I'm the assistant principal of Brooklyn Bridge  
8 Academy. We've heard a lot of stories and a lot  
9 of voices from a lot of the students and staff  
10 and parents, and I want to bring to light again  
11 some more stories from the transfer school  
12 experience, because it is very unique.

13 In a transfer school, students who come in  
14 and are over-age and under-credited, that means  
15 they come with basic foundational skills that  
16 they've lacked. They come in years behind in  
17 basic literacy skills and math skills. And what  
18 we need to do is bring them up to speed in an  
19 accelerated way, and we have little time to do  
20 it.

21 They're only supposed to be with us for two  
22 years. It's an impossible task most of the time  
23 when students step through the door, yet our  
24 staff and our students commit to it. The way  
25 that we're able to do that is we commit to

1 interventions, and we commit to  
2 individualized, specialized programming, and  
3 literally figuring out for every individual  
4 student what they need.

5         What does that look like? It looks like ten  
6 mini-lessons in an hour class. It looks like  
7 five to six stations in a science room, so that  
8 we're making sure that we can give the student  
9 who was absent yesterday because they had to  
10 take care of a sick relative, or has to be the  
11 bread winner in the family, that they can do the  
12 project and the parts that they've been missing.

13         How do we do that when our class sizes go  
14 from 15 to 30? From 18 to 35? The answer is,  
15 we don't, and we can't. And that is not fair.  
16 Students have made the choice, the system left  
17 them behind years ago, and they've been told  
18 that they have a second chance, and we're now  
19 pulling that chance away to give it to somebody  
20 else. It's not fair.

21         [Applause]

22         MR. TRISTAN FOY: My name is Tristan Foy, I  
23 am a senior at BTA, and I believe that there  
24 should be no charter school in here. That is  
25 adding on more complication of what we already

1 have, of what we're building.

2 Imagine putting a charter school in here,  
3 that is adding on more problems. You're  
4 probably cutting half the teachers off, half the  
5 classes off, and half of the creativity of the  
6 students that are here.

7 Imagine we bring in another school in here.  
8 We're breaking up the dreams of the first  
9 seniors that was here when they performed their  
10 first musical. That means the charter school is  
11 going to take up our space of what we're doing  
12 to make this community a better place. Because  
13 when I came here, I wasn't only a student, I was  
14 a family member.

15 Ms. Duffy over here is like my aunt. She  
16 taught me everything that I learned. She knows  
17 me back and forth. Ms. Giglio is like a mom.  
18 She don't only see me as another actor, another  
19 student, she sees me as her son. She grew me up  
20 with what I was born to be, to be - - .

21 So we're not only just breaking up students,  
22 we're breaking up family members. We're  
23 breaking up creativity. We're breaking up  
24 dreams of what we're already learning. Because  
25 I believe that we are proceeding of what we're

1 doing already in BTA at South Shore.

2 [Applause]

3 MS. DAVERN GREEN: Good evening, my name is  
4 Davern Green, I'm a parent of two children, one  
5 goes to Victory, she's a 9th grader, and one  
6 goes to BGS, she's an 11th grader. I'm also an  
7 SLT member, and I was the PA president for 2012-  
8 2013.

9 Now, my biggest problem is bringing a  
10 charter school into a high school with six  
11 different schools in the building. It's not  
12 only hard for the students and the teachers that  
13 have to give up classrooms, but it's also hard  
14 for us parents to have to worry more about our  
15 kids being in a school with a charter school  
16 that thinks they're better than everybody.

17 My daughter just came out of a junior high  
18 school public school where charter school came  
19 in two years before and took over their whole  
20 4th floor. Now they taking over the whole 4th  
21 and 3rd floor, and they got rid of their  
22 principal.

23 So this is something where if they come into  
24 the building, it's going to end up where they're  
25 going to end up owning the school and everybody

1 is going to be out, and it's going to be  
2 bigger than what it is. Yes, the building may  
3 be big, but it's not enough room.

4 The teachers, they are, like they said, they  
5 are already filled with capacity with the little  
6 room space that they do have. When they have to  
7 leave and move to another room, what's going to  
8 happen to the students?

9 My daughter had problems when she was in  
10 junior high school, she's now an 11th grader.  
11 She came to BGS and a small size classroom is  
12 the best thing for her. So for her to be in a  
13 classroom with 30 or more students is going to  
14 even mess her up even more. Thank you for  
15 listening to me, and South Shore is doing a  
16 wonderful job. Thank you very much.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. SHAKIA KING: Good evening, ladies and  
19 gentleman, my name is Shakia King, and I am a  
20 student, a junior at Brooklyn Theater Arts High  
21 School. I know there's a time limit, so I'll  
22 just make this quick. I understand that you  
23 want to put a charter school in our building,  
24 but I have to say I'm against that.

25 Everyone's been telling me that it's the

1 student's voice that matter, and if that's  
2 the case, then I want you to listen and  
3 understand. Placing a charter school in this  
4 building will hinder my education and everyone  
5 else's. There's a possibility that if a charter  
6 school is placed here my classes will get  
7 bigger, because of the lack of classrooms. And  
8 that's the thing, I love my classrooms. Some of  
9 them are small, while the others are already  
10 big.

11 Taking away our classrooms will make it  
12 harder to learn. If our classrooms are getting  
13 taken away there will be no place to learn,  
14 create, sing, dance or act. Our teachers take  
15 pride in what they teach. Don't take that away  
16 from them, and don't take them away from us.

17 Remember, creativity takes time, space and  
18 dedication. Without my school, my family, the  
19 word create has no meaning, because that's what  
20 we do, we create. And taking that away from us  
21 is just cruel. Thank you.

22 [Applause]

23 MR. TYLER BUSBY: My name Tyler Busby, I'm  
24 currently a student at Brooklyn Theater Arts  
25 High School. I'm also an 11th grade

1 representative on the SOG. Before I came, I  
2 understood that smaller schools with a smaller  
3 population would have smaller classes, and that  
4 would be more helpful to nurture children's  
5 needs in their own personal fashion.

6 In my freshman year this stayed true. But  
7 my sophomore, and as I arrive at this junior  
8 year, it's been--I've had certain classes with  
9 30 plus students. But I grew to understand BTA  
10 was growing, and that the number of freshman  
11 coming in, the population was greater, and that  
12 children were actually wanting to come to BTA.  
13 And they came to what they understood was a well  
14 successful flourished art school.

15 I'm aware that BTA is short six classrooms  
16 to accommodate for the amount of students that  
17 we have now. Also that the shared space, the  
18 gym, the cafeteria, and most importantly for a  
19 theater arts school program, the auditorium,  
20 where shows are put on to show off our talents,  
21 to do what we love, a gym and athletic space  
22 where our successful basketball team and  
23 football put in work day in and day out to show  
24 what they love. So why shorthand these children  
25 from educational opportunities to accommodate

1 another school?

2 I believe an additional school will only  
3 cause a digression of what BTA has become. And  
4 I'm pretty sure that is across the board for all  
5 six schools. Dreams are like seeds that need  
6 space to grow, and they need to be expressed.  
7 So don't take what little we have. This is for  
8 us and for future classes, let us flourish,  
9 don't stop our growth. Don't take away what is  
10 needed and shorthand us. Thank you for your  
11 time.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. HOROWITZ: Our next speakers, Lily  
14 Brooks, John Devalos, Burchell Marcus, and  
15 Devron Green [phonetic].

16 DR. BURCHELL M. MARCUS: My name is Burchell  
17 M. Marcus, well, Dr. Burchell M. Marcus, I have  
18 a PhD in engineering, and thanks to South Shore  
19 that I was able to get a scholarship and go to  
20 Syracuse, and onward - - , and everywhere else.

21 I just want to say, back in the '70s, when  
22 South Shore was just one school, when South  
23 Shore was one school, guess what? It was a very  
24 competitive school. You could go and look and  
25 see all the trophies and stuff that we won,

1 right, that made this school recognizable.

2 And ever since the Bloomberg administration,  
3 Kathy Black and all these foolish educated  
4 dummies who think that our children are  
5 products, we have to stop them at all costs. If  
6 you are parents, you're going to act like  
7 parents. We can't treat our children like  
8 product.

9 We have--I just testified at a City Council  
10 hearing, we have three resolutions to stop this  
11 nonsense in its tracks, thanks to Bill de  
12 Blasio, who will be the next Mayor of this city,  
13 right? He's going to be working closely with  
14 us.

15 I am the Community Director now for the  
16 Borough of Brooklyn, and as I go around, I sit  
17 also on the Education Committee, and as I go  
18 around this great City of Brooklyn to all the  
19 different schools, analyzing and trying to find  
20 ways to educate our children and make things  
21 work, guess what? Bloomberg is literally trying  
22 to--was literally trying to take all of that  
23 away. But thank G-d his term is up, and we can  
24 hardly wait for him to leave.

25 Don't count your blessings, because guess

1       what? Another charter school will not be  
2       coming into this school, we're going to see to  
3       it, even if we have to take Bloomberg and  
4       everybody else to court. And they also took--  
5       tried to take Brownsville High School and make  
6       it a charter school. They want to bring the  
7       little children in with the grown children. And  
8       guess what? We're going to--we have to stop  
9       them at all costs. We took them to court and  
10      won, and we'll do it here again. Thank you.

11               [Applause]

12              MS. LILY BROOKS: Good evening, my name is  
13      Lily Brooks, and I'm the parent of a child  
14      support scholar. First and foremost, I'd like  
15      to educate you all. Charter schools are public  
16      schools, don't let anybody tell you different.  
17      Any of you can apply, you can get it. It's not  
18      private, that's not true.

19              Secondly, I feel there's a lot of negativity  
20      happening tonight. There's no reason why you  
21      should be saying, oh, it's about space, it's  
22      about space, it's about space. It's not about  
23      space, it's about education.

24              My daughter is in a class, and it is a  
25      crowded class. My daughter is propelling, my

1 daughter is reading. She was not doing that  
2 in her regular public school. My daughter has  
3 been doing great in her school. Do not let  
4 anybody tell you that you cannot do something  
5 because of a size. It is not about size. That  
6 is not what we're fighting for tonight.  
7 Education is the fight. And that's what should  
8 be staying in everyone's mind.

9       Secondly, I think it's horrible about all  
10 the negativity that is coming from you adults  
11 and parents to these children. The thing you  
12 should be planting in their minds is not  
13 negativity, it's not about space being taken  
14 away, it's about a chance to show the little  
15 kids that will be around you guys, that's coming  
16 into this school, the positiveness.

17       All these people up here have talked about  
18 the success of students in South Shore High  
19 School, take that success and show the children  
20 in our communities that they can achieve exactly  
21 what you're doing, because they need that. They  
22 need the positive role models that are coming  
23 out of this school.

24       Take that success and use it, do not take  
25 this as a negative thing, it is not. It is

1 going to happen. Use it to the utmost  
2 positive that you can. I'm not a speaker, I  
3 know I'm stuttering, I know my mouth is dry, but  
4 I wanted to say this, because you need to know.  
5 You are all role models, use that success for  
6 positiveness. I'm done. Have a good night, you  
7 all.

8 [Applause]

9 MR. JOHN DEVALOS: My name John Devalos, I  
10 am a 10th grader in BGS, Brooklyn Generation  
11 High School, and first of all, I want to say  
12 that I love my school, I love my teachers, my  
13 classmates, because in BGS I feel like we're all  
14 family, we all work together. And when I came  
15 to this school I didn't come with good grades,  
16 but now I'm starting to get what I didn't get,  
17 90s and 80s. And if a charter school comes  
18 here, there's going to be more kids in the  
19 classroom and there's going to be less attention  
20 to the kids that need it.

21 And also, we don't have enough room for  
22 everybody. When we come every morning outside  
23 in December, we have to wait in a long line to  
24 get inside and go through security. We have to  
25 wait outside when it's snowing, when it's

1 raining. And also, we have to wait in line  
2 every time we go to lunch, and the kids eat  
3 their food when it's like five minutes before  
4 their class starts. And there's a lot of kids  
5 in the gym, and there's not enough equipment for  
6 everybody. That's it.

7 [Applause]

8 MS. HOROWITZ: The speaker list is now  
9 exhausted. I want to thank all of you for  
10 contributing your comments and for being  
11 respectful of all of the speakers and listening  
12 to the different points of view.

13 Again, we welcome any comments and feedback  
14 you may have at any time before the Panel for  
15 Educational Policy votes on this proposal at its  
16 October 15th meeting. The email address and  
17 phone number where comments may be made are D,  
18 as in David, [18proposals@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:18proposals@schools.nyc.gov), and  
19 (212) 374-0208. Thank you for your  
20 participation. This Joint Public Hearing is now  
21 closed. Get home safely.

22 [END RECORDING]

23

24

25

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

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 \_\_\_\_\_ October 10, 2013 \_\_\_\_\_