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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
DIVISION OF PORTFOLIO
PLANNING**

**Re-Siting of Beginning with
Children to 14K157**

3/10/2015

5:30pm

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. ALICJA WINNICKI: Good evening. I am
3 going to ask the parents, families, please take
4 your seats. Good evening. I am Alicja
5 Winnicki; I am District 14 Superintendent. I
6 know we have a short delay and I apologize for
7 it. Parents are still filing and they have an
8 opportunity to still sign up to speak. I am
9 going to ask everyone in the audience to please
10 let's give each other respect so all voices can
11 be heard. I will be first to reading the impact
12 statement, the proposal. I will be inviting
13 people to speak. We need to give each other an
14 opportunity so everyone's voice is heard. We
15 will begin shortly. Each speaker will have two
16 minutes to speak as Ms. Rodriguez already said,
17 there are translation and interpretation
18 services available. Let us begin the joint
19 public hearing. Good evening, once again. This
20 is a joint public hearing of the Department of
21 Education, Community Education Council, and
22 School Leadership Team, for the proposed
23 resiting and co-location of Beginning with
24 Children Charter School, grades kindergarten
25 through five, with PSIS 157 in Building K 157,

1 beginning in 2015-2016 school year. I am a
2 Community School District Superintendent, Alicja
3 Winnicki. We have asked the District 14
4 Community Education Council and the School
5 Leadership Team, for PSIS 157 to participate in
6 this joint public hearing. I am joined tonight
7 by Ms. Juliana Notaro, the Interim Acting
8 Principal of 157, [applause], and Anthony
9 Melcontenta [phonetic], from PSIS 157 School
10 Leadership Team. [Applause]. I am also joined
11 by Ms. Debbie Finer [phonetic], the First Vice
12 President of the Community Educational Council,
13 Elaina Manitou [phonetic], Shania [phonetic]
14 Squires, Ramon Paguero [phonetic], and Epifanio
15 Tanunga [phonetic]. [Applause]. These are the
16 members of the District 14 CEC. Also we are
17 joined today by the representatives from
18 Beginning with Children Charter School, Valerie
19 Davis Fells [phonetic], and Mr. King.
20 [Applause]. This hearing is being audio and
21 video recorded. The purpose of this hearing is
22 for you to provide comments about the proposal.
23 Before I describe the proposal, I want to make
24 sure that you're all aware of the opportunity to
25 provide your input. All those who wish to speak

1 must sign up in the speaker signup area located
2 just outside of the auditorium. The signup list
3 will close in 15 minutes. Speakers will be
4 given the floor in the order that they signed up
5 to speak. All comments are limited to two
6 minutes. As a reminder, while the Department of
7 Education understands that opinions on this
8 proposal may vary, we encourage participants to
9 remain civil and constructive in their
10 participation. This forum is an opportunity for
11 all community members of all ages to participate
12 in this hearing process. And we wish for the
13 tone in this course to remain appropriate for
14 all individuals. There may be elected officials
15 who arrive at the different times throughout the
16 evening. And if they wish to speak, we will do
17 our best to accommodate them at the first
18 opportune moment. Those who are here at the
19 start of the public comment segment will be
20 asked to speak first. In addition, we welcome
21 any comments and feedback you may have outside
22 of this hearing. All comments submitted prior
23 to 24 hours before the Panel for Educational
24 Policy votes on this proposal, including the
25 comments presented at this meeting, will be

1 mentioned in the analysis of public comment to
2 be published and provided to the panel the
3 evening before the panel votes. That vote is
4 scheduled for Wednesday, March 25th. The email
5 address and phone number where additional
6 comments may be made after tonight's meeting,
7 are D14proposals@schools.nyc.gov, or at
8 (212)374-0208. This is the proposal summary,
9 and I'm going to ask you to please show your
10 patience and listen to the end of this
11 narrative. The purpose of this proposal is to
12 resite and co-locate Beginning with Children
13 Charter School, grades kindergarten through
14 five, in building K 157, with PSIS 157 beginning
15 in the 2015-2016 school year. PSIS 157 is an
16 existing zoned school in District 14, serving
17 students in kindergarten through eighth grade,
18 and offering a pre-kindergarten program.
19 Beginning with Children Charter School is an
20 existing charter school in District 14,
21 currently serving students on two sides; with
22 one side serving students in kindergarten
23 through fifth grade, in private space at 11
24 Bartlett Street. And the other side serving
25 students in grades six through eight, at 185

1 Ellory [phonetic] Street. This proposal only
2 concerns the Beginning with Children side, at 11
3 Bartlett Street, serving students in grades
4 kindergarten through five. PSIS 157 will
5 continue to serve its current grades;
6 kindergarten through eight and a pre-
7 kindergarten program. And if this proposal is
8 approved, Beginning with Children Charter School
9 is projected to start students in grades
10 kindergarten through five, at Building K 157.
11 The proposal is intended to ensure educational
12 continuity for students currently enrolled in
13 Beginning with Children Charter School, as
14 Beginning with Children has advised that it will
15 not be able to operate in its private space, at
16 11 Bartlett Street, after the 2014-2015 school
17 year, due to financial and operational
18 challenges. If approved, this proposal will
19 ensure that students currently enrolled in
20 Beginning with Children Charter School will
21 continue to receive services in their current
22 program. But the school will be located in
23 Building K 157, just one--just .9 miles from
24 their current location at 11 Bartlett Street.
25 Details of this proposal can be found in the

1 Educational Impact Statement, copies of which
2 are available here tonight. Thank you for being
3 patient and very respectful. I would like to
4 invite the First Vice President of the CEC, Ms.
5 Debbie Finer, to please make a statement.

6 MS. DEBBIE FINER: Good evening, everybody.
7 This is a great turnout; you guys should be very
8 proud. [Applause]. There are others on the CEC
9 who are more familiar with this school, but I've
10 heard wonderful things about this school. And
11 we're going to hear the specifics, we're going
12 to hear from parents, we're going to learn how
13 this co-location is really going to affect the
14 health of this school and how it's going to hurt
15 the school community in a lot of different ways.
16 We, members of the CEC, want you to know that we
17 stand with you [applause] and we'll do what we
18 can. We'll listen tonight, we'll fight, and,
19 you know, we want to hear all of your
20 statements. And this is important that
21 everybody stands up and says their piece. So
22 whatever we can do as a CEC, we're here for you.
23 I'm going to pass the mic back. [Applause].

24 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Ms. Finer. I
25 would like to invite Principal Notaro, to please

1 make her statement. [Applause]. Thank you.

2 MS. JULIANA NOTARO: Thank you so much.

3 Thank you so much, and good evening. I am going
4 to share with you some of co-location concerns
5 that we have gathered. Some external factors,
6 buses, traffic issues on 10th Avenue, and now
7 once again, on Taffy Place. There were more
8 problems when buses were on Taffy Place, for the
9 former charter school, because we did have a
10 charter school here in our building before.
11 Parking, limited parking spaces for staff
12 currently, and needed space is now coming out on
13 Myrtle Avenue. Arrival and dismissal
14 procedures; middle school students in our school
15 currently dismiss on Taffy. With the co-
16 location they will have to dismiss on Kent, with
17 the lower grades. It is extremely difficult to
18 have pre-K students exiting with older students.
19 This will be in place if a charter school moves
20 in. Internal factors; breakfast and lunch
21 delays, and crowded cafeteria space.
22 [Applause]. After school programs, such as OST,
23 which is a CVL [phonetic], our regular after-
24 school programs, such as Test Prep and the
25 Madory [phonetic] Music, they will now be in

1 Daycare Pickups. The sharing of our auditorium
2 space, which we use so frequently, library
3 space; the library is used as an instructional
4 room. There are 25 periods that take place each
5 week in the library, five each day. It is once
6 again an instructional room. Educational
7 factors; class size will be increased. Testing
8 modification; students with IEPs and Ls, need to
9 have the mandated separate location during
10 testing. [Applause]. Limited space for related
11 services; speech, occupational therapy, physical
12 therapy, sets, and counseling. Middle school
13 grant mandates involve special programming
14 needs; MSQI, Worgen [phonetic], Lights Out, all
15 of these wonderful programs will be affected.
16 And middle school daily transitioning; in a
17 middle school, the children are moving from
18 class to class. Cultural factors; tone and
19 smooth operation of a pre-K to eight school.
20 Open door policy for parents; special events,
21 holiday show, dance festival, Cinco de Mayo
22 celebration, Black History Assembly,
23 International Festival, to name a few. Wellness
24 events; and as you know, we are one of the few
25 wellness schools in the City of New York.

1 [Applause]. Some of those activities are
2 Mighty Milers [phonetic], Cycle Kids, Move to
3 Improve, Swim for Life, Relay for Life
4 Activities, our salad bar, Yoga, Zoomber
5 [phonetic], National Running Day. We have
6 worked very hard to get where we are, and are
7 looking forward to an expansion of our school,
8 pre-K to eight. [Applause]. It was very
9 difficult when we had a charter school housed in
10 our building. There was an interruption of
11 programs and schedules. It caused tension and
12 our students felt displaced in their own school.
13 On behalf of the PSIS 157 community, I ask you
14 to please reconsider this co-location and do
15 what is best for our students. Thank you.
16 [Applause].

17 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
18 welcome the councilman for this district, Mr.
19 Steven Levin, to make his statement.
20 [Applause].

21 MR. STEVEN LEVIN: Hi, everybody. Good
22 evening. What an amazing turnout tonight. This
23 is a testament to the fact that you are engaged
24 as a school community, you are engaged as
25 parents, you are here--you are engaged as

1 students. I want to give a shout-out to all
2 the students that are here today. [Applause].
3 I want to thank our principal for hosting today,
4 and the CEC, and our great superintendent, Ms.
5 Winnicki, for an amazing, amazing job. So I'm
6 here today to say that you're voices must be
7 heard; that your voices are very important.
8 I've been a city councilman now, for five years,
9 and I've been through this type of thing before.
10 We've seen a handful of co-locations where
11 they've been able to make it work. However,
12 I've seen a lot more co-locations that have not
13 worked. And especially when those co-locations
14 have been over the community's objections, or
15 beyond what the community is. And so I think
16 that we need to take a deep breath here, have
17 all of those voices--your voices--heard. All
18 the concerns that you are raising about how far
19 this school has come in recent years, the
20 progress that this school has made in recent
21 years--157--has been remarkable. The investment
22 that you've put in--the investment that you've
23 put into your school as parents, as teachers, as
24 an administration, that is, that is--there's no
25 substitute for that. That spells success. That

1 spells success for a school, that spells
2 success for your children, spells success for a
3 community, and so that needs to be respected.
4 And as your school needs to expand, we cannot
5 curtail that, we cannot allow for your expansion
6 to be inhibited. Now we are sympathetic. I
7 understand that there's extenuating
8 circumstances with the school that is proposed
9 to co-locate here. And we're sensitive to that,
10 we understand that and we want to make sure that
11 there's a resolution that is equitable, and a
12 resolution that is suitable for all parties
13 involved, and I'm hopeful that we can get there.
14 One thing that I'm especially hopeful about is
15 that we have now an administration with the
16 Department of Education that prides itself on
17 listening to your voices. It takes special
18 effort to make sure that your voices are heard
19 and that it's taking them into consideration.
20 That wasn't always the case. In the previous
21 administration we would have protests and
22 rallies, and it would be very tense meetings.
23 And then they would go ahead and do whatever
24 they wanted to do in the first place. This
25 administration is not like that. We've had a

1 good working relationship so far, and we're
2 willing to sit down at the table, bring all
3 voices around the table. Everybody's opinion
4 around the table to make sure we can come up
5 with a solution that works for all of us and for
6 all of our children. But I want to thank all of
7 you for coming out today, for making your voice
8 heard, for saying that you need a seat at the
9 table and that all the issues that you bring to
10 the table, that they're all important. Thank
11 you all very much. [Applause]. [Background
12 noise].

13 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. Thank you, Mr.
14 Levin, thank you for coming. Okay. I would
15 like to ask Mr. Anthony Melcontenta, the Chair
16 of the SOT. [Applause].

17 MR. Anthony Melcontenta: Good evening,
18 everyone. Good evening, everyone. My name is
19 Anthony Melcontenta; I am a second grade teacher
20 here at PSIS 157, and I'm also the Chair of the
21 School Leadership Team. Various meetings have
22 taken place on all the concerns about issues
23 with the staff. And I'm going to talk briefly
24 about some of them with everybody here today.
25 The main issue that we've been concerned about

1 is lack of space, which could possibly happen
2 next year if the co-location comes through.
3 This turns into a lack of equity and--a lack of
4 equity and equality in education going forward
5 next year. How? If you're an educator or a
6 parent, and parent, you're the outside external
7 forces that don't see this every day. Class
8 sizes will be overcrowded, there's a possibility
9 of internal moving from one school to another,
10 which can in turn cause some teachers to
11 possibly be excess and lose their position.
12 There are space issues which will impact your
13 children on a daily basis; lack of art, lack of
14 science lab, lack of things that may not be
15 possible next year. Push-in with Special
16 Education Services, for a majority of our
17 English Language learners, in Special Education
18 will not look the same moving forward next year.
19 Push-in services because those providers will be
20 losing rooms, is going to impact, directly, and
21 have a very quick impact on the education of
22 your students. So moving forward, I want the
23 panel up here to take into consideration that
24 moving forward and bringing this information to
25 the PEP [phonetic] members instead of just

1 sending them a report. Please speak to them
2 face-to-face and tell them, as they are
3 stakeholders in this education of the future of
4 our students in our school. And they had
5 students that went to public school and they've
6 been, many of those members, also attended
7 public school and have children in it currently.
8 How would they feel if there was not equality
9 with their children's education moving forward
10 next year, and stopping the growth of our
11 children and the school. Thank you.

12 [Applause]. [Background noise].

13 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you, Mr. Melcontenta.
14 I have a few CEC members that would like to make
15 statements. I would like to invite Ms. Elaine
16 Manatou, to please make her statement.

17 [Applause]

18 MS. ELAINE MANATOU: Listen, we're back at
19 the same table again. District 14 has been
20 threatened with co-locations all over the place,
21 and now we're back at the same table again.
22 We're not saying that this other school don't
23 need space. They need space. They need a place
24 to go. They're losing their home; they need a
25 place to go. But this is not the place.

1 [Applause]. Not too long ago, not too long
2 ago this fine school applied to the DOE to
3 become a K through eight, because you as parents
4 felt that you wanted to leave your children
5 here, instead of sending them out to the other
6 middle schools, because this is a fine
7 community. Okay? [Applause]. I know that
8 having another school in this building will
9 impact what you guys can do for your school, and
10 your growth. I know that it's going to impact
11 that, and I also know it's going to stifle the
12 other school as well, 'cause they won't be able
13 to do everything that they may need to do with
14 their kids. We're telling the DOE, we
15 understand that this other school has to have a
16 place to go. We do understand as parents and
17 educators, we understand. But we're telling
18 them to search elsewhere in the district and
19 find out where they can go, because this is not
20 the place. So say no to co-location.

21 [Applause].

22 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. And now Epifinjo
23 [phonetic], Canongo [phonetic], CEC member and
24 parent at 157.

25 MR. EPIFINJO CANONGO: Good evening; how you

1 doing? My name is Epifinjo Canongo; I'm part
2 of the PTA here in school, and I'm also part of
3 the CEC Board, District 14. Now I understand
4 why I joined the CEC, to help my community.
5 [Applause]. As a former student and as a father
6 and a parent of two kids that come in to school,
7 I don't want their education to be lacking. I
8 want their education to proceed. This is our
9 community, we worked for this, this is our
10 community, and us as a community, we're going to
11 be strong. Okay? [Applause]. We will not let
12 nobody take our community school because if you
13 want our school, register. Register in our
14 school. [Applause]. [Background noise]. Yes,
15 I see, yes, I see. Good partners. Yes, we can
16 be good partners. Bring your kids in here,
17 bring your kids in here and we will accept them
18 as our own. [Speaking Spanish].

19 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. Mr. Ramon
20 Paguero, CEC member.

21 MR. RAMON PAGUERO: I'm going to start out
22 in the language of my parents. [Speaking
23 Spanish]. So I just want to start out by saying
24 good evening; I'm very happy to see everybody
25 here, but I'm very saddened by the occasion.

1 You know, we elected a new mayor and promised
2 us that the Tale of Two Cities was going to be
3 eliminated and that we were going to come into
4 the fold and we were going to be one community
5 and one city. But once again, the DOE is
6 disappointing me in their illogical approach to
7 something that, to me, is so logical. About
8 four years ago, they approved to make PS 157
9 PSIS 157, because they believed that there was
10 room for growth. They believed that the school
11 had the potential to grow, and as such it should
12 be allowed to grow. And four years later, they
13 decided there is no space to put somebody else
14 in here with you. Very illogical to say go and
15 grow, and at the same time, stop growing. And
16 this is not--and I just want to say that this is
17 not an issue of PS 157 versus Beginning with
18 Children. Beginning with Children has a long
19 history in Williamsburg of producing fine
20 students and helping our community to grow. So
21 it's not about Beginning with Children is no
22 good, and 157 is good, it is about every child
23 deserves the best education possible. And to do
24 that, I believe that both schools deserve their
25 own space to grow, and to ensure that every

1 child gets the quality education that they
2 need. There is enough space--if you look at
3 this auditorium, you have a very limited amount
4 of students and we have a very limited amount of
5 parents, and it's already packed. Imagine if
6 you were to invite every child that comes to
7 this school and every child that goes to
8 Beginning with Children, and put them in here,
9 the fire department would say this is a fire
10 hazard. Now I don't know why this only happens
11 in certain communities, because in some
12 communities of affluence this is not happening.
13 The same way that other schools and other
14 children deserve to have their own school, I
15 believe that Beginning with Children deserve
16 their own school; I believe that 157 deserves
17 their own school. I don't think that either
18 school should settle for second best. I believe
19 that both schools deserve their own quality
20 education facility to bring the best out of our
21 children. And we will say no to anything less
22 than that. Thank you. [Applause].

23 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
24 invite Ms. Evelyn Cruz, a representative for the
25 Congresswoman Nidia Valasquez, to make her

1 statement. [Applause].

2 MS. EVELYN CRUZ: Good evening everyone.
3 Ms. Superintendent Winnicki, Ms. Notario, CEC
4 board members, thank you for the invitation. I
5 welcome Beginning with Children, I welcome PS
6 157; this is your home. Congresswoman Valasquez
7 is not able to join us tonight, but be assured
8 that she is greatly concerned of what is
9 happening. Once again, government, government
10 is creating division among our children.
11 Government. I say this because I think what CEC
12 member Ramon Paguero said is so important. We
13 should not settle for second best. Beginning
14 with Children is a school that we have always
15 supported in our community. When Beginning with
16 Children was created, I was there along with
17 people from Athquete [phonetic] Transfiguration
18 and other organizations from Williamsburg, - - ,
19 supporting Beginning with Children, because at
20 that time, at that time we had a serious crisis
21 in District 14, with school board issues. We
22 supported Beginning with Children because it was
23 a grass root parent, from the bottom up;
24 community folks from Williamsburg, the south
25 side neighborhood, all working together for

1 better schools. That was many years ago. I
2 will admit in full disclosure that many of my
3 nephews and my children's cousins have graduated
4 from Beginning with Children. So it is not--and
5 I think it's important that I share that because
6 tonight we are here, not to attack Beginning
7 with Children, but to support 157. That is
8 what--it is important and we want to share this.
9 We want to tell Beginning with Children,
10 Congresswoman Valasquez wants to work with you;
11 you deserve a building of your own. You cannot--
12 -Beginning with Children, our kids, all of you
13 cannot be chasing, like ambulances, school
14 throughout a district. It is the responsibility
15 of DOE to make it right for our children, all of
16 our children. And today what I am sharing on
17 behalf of the members is that 157 has a huge
18 amount of children, as you can see. They have a
19 large community of English Language learners.
20 They have a large community of children with
21 special needs. We need classrooms that can
22 accommodate their privacy and their
23 instructional learning. It is not fair, it
24 would not be fair, and I know that the
25 leadership of Beginning with Children respects

1 humanity and respects privacy of our children,
2 just like we want for all kids. If you have a
3 child that has a special need, you as a parent
4 want to know that your child is going to get the
5 adequate and just private instructional learning
6 if he or she needs it. 'Cause I know that you
7 want your child to succeed. Am I right or
8 wrong? So we need to find a way that we can
9 resolve this issue. This school currently has
10 540 students enrolled. It can go to 841, but no
11 one is going to expand if we're at 540 right
12 now. The problem is, too, that for years this
13 school has had an adult continuing education
14 program that has taken up school space. That
15 has been the challenge for 157 to expand. I was
16 here two years ago, they had a waiting list of
17 about 200-plus kids that wanted to come in.
18 They couldn't. These kids, these children could
19 not enter the school, they could not enroll
20 because there was no space. There are adults
21 learning in the school building. So it capped
22 their growth. This school needs a dual language
23 program, which they applied for, and they were
24 recently denied, because I guess people knew
25 they were going to co-locate. You see what's

1 happening? So we're here to say that when you
2 have a school that has 120 English Language
3 learner students, over 138 IEP students, you
4 have adults in the building that are scheduled
5 to move, but those spaces also need to be
6 improved for all kids, especially the home
7 school, 157. We need to wire these classrooms;
8 they need to be improved. There are a lot of
9 needs here. And I think that--I know that
10 Congresswoman has said before, it shouldn't be
11 no child left behind, we need to find a fair way
12 for our Beginning with Children family and our
13 family at 157, because these kids are neighbors.
14 They are from our community, they are from the
15 neighborhood, and they, too, deserve quality
16 education and quality space. I can tell you
17 that my nephews graduated from Beginning with
18 Children and they had an awesome education. I
19 can tell you friends graduated from 157,
20 [Spanish], an attorney today. So public school
21 education matters and is good education. So
22 whether you're 157 or Beginning with Children,
23 you all have the capacity and the potential to
24 grow and to be educated. But we need to make it
25 right for all. So 157 also needs room for

1 expansion; they have children that are now
2 families that are moving into this area that
3 need pre-K services, need pre-K and dual
4 language services, and if they can't expand,
5 Beginning with Children cannot expand. That's
6 not fair to either school building. So we want
7 to continue this dialog. We need Beginning with
8 Children to also--and we'll be there with you--
9 to stand up and say, DOE, we need our own school
10 building. We know that the court is mandating
11 charter schools, public spaces or charter
12 schools and public spaces. And like I said
13 before, Beginning with Children is not a success
14 academy. Beginning with Children is a community
15 school. Okay? So I want to be crystal clear;
16 it is not an evil - - project. We have worked
17 with Beginning with Children, but today, today
18 parents, my friends from Beginning with
19 Children, you know in your heart that you, too,
20 want to give your child and every child a fair
21 education. You want a child who is wheelchair
22 bound, to learn, a child that has the potential
23 to get the services, and if we take up all that
24 space, they can't grow. And privacy matters to
25 your child and it matters to 157. So on behalf

1 of the Congresswoman, I want us to all find a
2 solution and work this problem out. This is a
3 DOE problem and it's not a school/parent
4 problem, it's not your child's problem. It is a
5 DOE issue that we need to work, as elected
6 officials, to resolve. [Speaking Spanish].
7 What I'm saying is we all need to work together,
8 and I see the principal from the school,
9 Beginning with Children, here. And I think that
10 together we need to sound the alarm to DOE, to
11 say that our children's lives matter, that we
12 need to find a school building where you can
13 permanently be there, you can grow, and 157
14 children can grow, kids that are on the waiting
15 list can now enter as the adult education
16 program vacates the premises, and that we wire
17 up the school and give them the best quality
18 education both schools deserve. So I thank you
19 all for being here and I hope that we can make
20 it happen. [Speaking Spanish]. In unity
21 there's justice. So thank you, Beginning with
22 Children, thank you, PS 157. Let's stand
23 together. This is not about co-location; this
24 is about equal justice, equal schools for our
25 kids, whether you're Beginning with Children or

1 157, they're all our kids, we need to help
2 them, we need to enrich their lives. And that
3 is the message from Congresswoman Nidia
4 Valasquez. Thank you. [Applause].

5 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I would like to
6 invite Ms. Valerie Davis-Fells, from the
7 Beginning with Children, to make her statement.
8 And Principal King.

9 MS. VALERIE DAVIS-FELLS: Good evening
10 everyone. Superintendent Winnicki, Principal
11 Nataro, thank you for inviting us here tonight
12 to this forum so that we could bring to you what
13 we're going through at Beginning with Children.
14 My name is Valerie Davis-Fells. I'm the middle
15 school principal of Beginning with Children
16 Charter School. Mr. King is our lower school
17 principal. I have been part of the Beginning
18 with Children family since 1995 when my oldest
19 son began pre-K there. I have three children,
20 and all of the children graduated from Beginning
21 with Children. And there are people in this
22 audience who know me, because I've been part of
23 the Williamsburg community for over 30 years. I
24 taught in Transfiguration, did a lot of work
25 with the West Girls Ninos. I was there when

1 Beginning with Children began at its inception
2 and the hope that we can educate all children in
3 our school. We do not single out children. We
4 welcome everyone. That's what I believe as an
5 educator and that is why I'm still doing that
6 today. It saddens me that we are in a position
7 right now where we are forced to make these type
8 of decisions. Our kids are no better than
9 yours, or vice-versa. All children matter.
10 Right now, Beginning with Children is at a
11 crossroad and we are being displaced; we've lost
12 our home. Our lower school has lost their home.

13 MR. LES KING: Good evening everyone. I had
14 the pleasure of walking here 'cause I don't live
15 too far from here, and I agree with you that all
16 children should be treated equally. But
17 Beginning with Children is coming here today for
18 the simple thing we're asking for is a home.
19 And our children are being displaced. We are
20 not here to cause any inconvenience or to harm
21 anyone, or to displace any child. We are a
22 small school. You can see when you look back
23 there; we're very small. But we have a long
24 history in this community of building
25 partnerships working together, and in the best

1 interest of children.

2 MS. DAVIS-FELLS: I mean we do have--that's
3 our message, is we're not here to make problems
4 for you. But we are looking for a place for our
5 children so that they can continue to grow. At
6 the present time, we're relocated with PS 373,
7 grades six through eight. And we have a good
8 working relationship with the principal,
9 teachers, and staff of that school. We share
10 resources many times, and we've made it work.
11 Our intent is not to cause problems for you.
12 And I do agree that the solution is for us to
13 have our own space, but again, at this time, as
14 I said, we're at a crossroads in that we have no
15 space. As of June 30, we will no longer have a
16 space to educate our children. And so that is
17 why we are here speaking to you tonight
18 regarding this.

19 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. Thank you. I
20 would like to call on two SLT members from 157,
21 Lorraine Winfrey, and Karen Blight. And then we
22 will call the children that will start the
23 lineup of the public comments.

24 MS. KAREN BLIGHT: Good evening. I'm a
25 teacher here at PS 157, and I'm very

1 disappointed at the prospect of having a
2 charter school co-locate at PS 157. I say our
3 school, because I speak for all the staff, the
4 family, the students, here, who believe in
5 teamwork and dedication. We have worked so hard
6 to achieve the growth in our school, both in
7 academics and size, hoping this path would
8 continue. We have grown from an elementary
9 school to encompass a middle school, however,
10 this growth will be limited if we have to share.
11 We now ask ourselves, how will our hope of
12 expansion continue if we are not allowed the
13 space to grow; and why the system that be deem
14 it necessary to place roadblocks in our way.
15 One of the facts is that what is deemed fair for
16 one is unfair for the other. Another fact is
17 that the Blue Book that is being used to qualify
18 the use of our space in our school is outdated.
19 Are the needs of our primary Ls and special
20 needs population not more important than your
21 need for space? Are we subjecting our students
22 to overcrowded classrooms and lack of proper
23 education at the expense of being cost
24 effective? We are always trying to expand our
25 school and each time we hear from the DOE, no,

1 we have no funding. But yet the DOE is able
2 to provide for the charter school that receives
3 students based on lottery, and a school that
4 receives the DOE funding. We, as a community,
5 are going to keep fighting; fighting to keep our
6 school expanding. We have a suggestion and a
7 good solution. Provide us with funds that we
8 have not been allocated for a school, which will
9 allow us to expand, opening more classes filled
10 with students, to meet your outlandish quota. A
11 charter school with its own problem is
12 definitely not a solution. Thank you.

13 MS. LORRAINE WINFREY: Good evening
14 everyone. I am Lorraine Winfrey; I am a teacher
15 here also at PSIS 157. I'm also the UFT Chapter
16 Leader and I'm also on the school Leadership
17 Team. Co-location is not ideal for PSIS 157,
18 Beginning with Children, and our community.
19 With both student bodies present, taking the
20 space in this building, we will be beyond
21 capacity. I was present at the meeting of
22 Office and Space Planning where we were told
23 that it's about 300 students that will be coming
24 into the building. This is not conducive to
25 either school because there will be no room for

1 enrollment expansion. Both schools will be
2 capped; and how can we serve incoming students
3 in the community? Neither school will be able
4 to accept anyone. [Applause]. The projections
5 that they told us was that they looked at the
6 previous year's enrollment and they estimated
7 that it would be the same numbers. But we ask
8 that they take into consideration that we now
9 have new leadership with Ms. Juliana Nataro, and
10 this is not fair for her vision of where she
11 wants to take the school. Co-location will
12 stifle the growth of both schools, creating
13 issues that do not exist today. Thank you.
14 [Applause].

15 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. We have now
16 concluded the formal presentations and will open
17 the floor for public comments. Speakers will be
18 given the floor in the order they signed up.
19 All comments are limited to two minutes. We are
20 going to start with the students that signed up.
21 I know, Ms. Rodriguez, you're going to help
22 here, so I'm going to call the names of the
23 students that will be speaking. David Mendez,
24 Marilyn Mendez--please let me ready the list.
25 Parents, please let me ready the list because we

1 have to move the line of the speakers,
2 otherwise we will start the school tomorrow with
3 them. We'll never leave. So once again, the
4 following students are invited to speak: David
5 Mendez, Marilyn Mendez, Douglas Granilo
6 [phonetic], Kianna [phonetic] Calderon, James
7 Denagal [phonetic], Marshall Riveros [phonetic],
8 Alexander Lopez, and Emelyn [phonetic] Mendez
9 from Progress High School, and Tyrese Romero
10 from High School for Health Professions. We are
11 all mindful of the time. Okay. David Mendez.

12 MR. DAVID MENDEZ: Hello; my name is David
13 Mendez. If the kids come in I will not have a
14 good education. I am afraid to walk on the
15 hallways because I am seeing strangers. This is
16 like my second home. I hope you change your
17 mind. [Applause].

18 MS. MARILYN MENDEZ: Hello; my name is
19 Marilyn Mendez and I am a fifth-grader at PSIS
20 157. We should keep our co-location out of PSIS
21 157. We are going to sit in the same seat
22 because my science teacher, art teacher, and
23 library teacher, are going to push in. It will
24 be hard to do our education. I am a girl that
25 has IEP and speech. Also I don't want my

1 service to get involved in this change. I
2 have an idea; you guys can build your own school
3 building. [Applause].

4 MS. WINNICKI: Douglas.

5 MR. DOUGLAS GRANILO: I am Douglas Granilo.
6 I'm a third-grader at PS 157. I don't want any
7 co-location. I'm a kid who receives special
8 education programs. For example, I get language
9 from my teacher, Ms. Blessy [phonetic]. I don't
10 want any co-location of her because, yes, the
11 state test coming up. [Applause].

12 MR. ALEXANDER LOPEZ: Hi; my name is
13 Alexander Lopez and I am a second-grader from PS
14 157. How can I pass my computer test in third
15 grade if I don't have a computer lab? My
16 library, I mean I need a library. I need art, I
17 need a science lab. [Applause].

18 MS. KIANA CALDERON: My name is Kiana
19 Calderon and I am a seventh-grader at PSIS 157.
20 I am concerned about a charter school sharing
21 space with our school. This proposal will
22 affect the students and teachers negatively. I
23 am concerned about safety issues. How safe are
24 we if we go over our capacity? Will there be
25 enough security officers to protect us students

1 and teachers? In addition, our school has a
2 high percentage of English Language learners and
3 these students need to be provided with
4 additional help. However, this wouldn't be made
5 possible if the teachers who provide these
6 services have to share their space and
7 resources. However--moreover--it is not fair
8 that we would have to be cramped up in
9 classrooms in order to provide more room for the
10 charter school. We are students who need and
11 deserve a good education. Making an increase in
12 our class size would affect our progress in
13 academics and instructional learning. How can
14 our future be bright if our progress may be
15 jeopardized? What about our school's
16 reputation? Our school should not be
17 responsible for any behavioral or academic
18 issues that may increase with this charter
19 school sharing space with us. We do not want
20 another school's reputation affecting our
21 student enrollment. We have great teachers and
22 a strong administration that can help all
23 students succeed. A co-location will keep them
24 from helping me, my friends, and our classmates.

25 MS. WINNICKI: The next student that will

1 speak is James Denagal.

2 MR. JAMES DENAGAL: Hi, everybody. My name
3 is James Denagal IV, and I'm here to talk about
4 co-location. If co-location comes to our school
5 we will have to share library with them. It
6 will be harder for us to share library with them
7 because my library teacher, Mr. G, it will be
8 stressful to hand out a lot of papers, plus it
9 will be like 30 people in a classroom, and
10 everybody will be screaming his name out, and it
11 would be stressful for him to think.

12 MS. WINNICKI: Marshall Riveros [phonetic].

13 MR. MARSHALL RIVEROS: Hi; my name is
14 Marshall Riveros, and I'm in the fifth grade,
15 and I'm concerned about the over-crowdedness in
16 the classes. Since us children need more--we
17 need attention from our teacher, we won't have
18 the same attention since our teacher will have
19 to give more attention to other kids that are
20 needed more. So we might lower grades and might
21 not pass the state test. [Applause].

22 MS. WINNICKI: Alexander Lopez. Okay.
23 Emelyn Mendez. Tyrese Romero.

24 MS. TYRESE ROMERO: Hello; my name is
25 Tyrese, and I'm a former student at 157. I

1 graduated here as valedictorian and I'm here
2 to say that this school [pause]. This school is
3 very important to me. [Crying]. And without
4 this school I would have never made it to the
5 school I am in now. And this school has seen me
6 grow up and I want that to happen to all the
7 students here at 157. I don't want over-
8 crowdedness. I know because I have 34 students
9 in a class; it's very hard for teachers to
10 attend each and every student, and I was a
11 former L student. It's very hard; these kids
12 need attention, all the attention they can get.
13 And I just really want this school to stay the
14 way it is. It's better for the students, it's
15 better for the teachers. I just don't want to
16 let the school go down. This school is very
17 important to me and I hope you guys understand
18 that. Thank you. [Applause].

19 MS. WINNICKI: Jose Sanchez.

20 MR. JOSE SANTOS: Good evening; my name is
21 Jose Santos and I'm a student at PSIS 157. I
22 disagree with the idea of a charter school co-
23 locating in our school because it could have a
24 negative impact on us students. For example,
25 last year, I was in fifth grade and my classroom

1 had a sum of 32 students. This was a
2 difficult learning experience for me because my
3 class was over-crowded; it was difficult for me
4 to listen to the teacher's directions due to a
5 high noise level. In contrast, this year there
6 are 20 students in my class. It's easier to
7 listen to the teacher's directions; therefore, I
8 comprehend the task at hand. I'm doing much
9 better this year. I'm receiving quality
10 education. For the benefit of all the students
11 at PSIS 157, I respectfully ask that you
12 relocate Beginning with Children to another
13 school building.

14 MS. WINNICKI: Kiera [phonetic].

15 MS. KIERA OTCHA: Hi; my name is Kiera Otcha
16 [phonetic], and I'm a student, a fifth-grader
17 from PSIS 157. If this co-location takes
18 affect, we will not be able to excel and reach
19 our full potential as students. Our school
20 could become overcrowded and our class size will
21 grow. Our teachers will not be able to give us
22 the individualized attention that we now
23 receive. Our programs will be cut and our
24 extra-curricular activities will be affected.
25 Please do not allow co-location to take away

1 from my ability to reach my goals and soar to
2 the stars.

3 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I'm going to
4 check the signup list, but I am going to now
5 call the following speakers. Merriam Garcia,
6 Gianna Monet [phonetic], Conica [phonetic]
7 Strough, Milady Piguero, and Roseanne Dalton, to
8 please come up to the microphone.

9 MS. MERRIAM GARCIA: Good evening, everyone;
10 my name is Ms. Garcia, and I'm the guidance
11 counselor with the school. I've been here for
12 about--this is my 11th year. The Campaign for
13 Education Equity at Teachers College at Columbia
14 University, wrote a report on the affects of co-
15 location on New York City's ability to provide
16 all students a sound basic education. This
17 report was published in June of 2014, and it
18 states some very important facts that affect me
19 as a counselor of the school. Point #1: How
20 co-location brings about the issue of lack of
21 adequate space that will resort to inappropriate
22 and illegal practices within the school
23 counseling guidelines. Point #2: Having a
24 charter school flaunt the spoils of both public
25 and wealthy benefactors in the face of our

1 students, creates nothing more than an
2 environment that demoralizes and devalues our
3 students' concept of self-worth. Again, the
4 concept of self-worth. This type of environment
5 goes against what we as guidance counselors do
6 here to provide a nurturing environment where
7 children could, socially and emotionally,
8 flourish. This report sheds light on how the
9 principals of two co-located schools spend, on
10 average, 20 to 80% of their time in any given
11 week, managing buildings, relating issues such
12 as "which school would access gym first and last
13 period." In retrospect--

14 MALE VOICE: [Interposing]. Time's up.

15 MS. GARCIA: Thank you.

16 MS. GIANNA MONET: Dear panelists; I am an
17 ESO teacher at PS 157. This co-location cannot
18 and should not happen. If this co-location
19 happens it will shatter each and every hard-
20 working moment each student, teacher, and parent
21 at 157 has worked so hard for. We are here to
22 protect what is most precious to us, our
23 students. We were told that at a building space
24 meeting, on January 28th, that nothing as we know
25 it today will change. That is not true.

1 Everything will change, and not for the
2 better. According to the education impact
3 statement, our ESO students will continue to
4 receive their services, but that statement fails
5 to explain where will I service my students,
6 since both ESO teachers at PS 157 will lose
7 their classrooms. I guess we will have to
8 service and pull out our students in the
9 hallways or the cafeteria. ESO - - services, or
10 100 Ls, which is 90% of our population. There
11 are many factors to take into consideration when
12 teaching English Language learners. And one of
13 the most important ones is the setting and the
14 ambiance of the classroom; a classroom with a
15 safe space where students develop trust with
16 their teacher. How can I accomplish this
17 without a classroom, or in a closet? You will
18 take away from one student to give to another.
19 What kind of education is that? Who came up
20 with this idea? And not only give to another
21 student, but give to a struggling charter school
22 that is onboard, ordered in 2014, to close.
23 Again, who came up with this idea? In 2010, we
24 overwhelmingly proved to this panel that we are
25 ready to expand into a pre-K to eight, because

1 we are ready to grow as a school and a
2 community. We have the space, and when we want
3 to occupy it, and we want it all. Yes. Yet we
4 have been deprived of the opportunity to show
5 our potential due to the fact that our space has
6 always been invaded by another school. To
7 finalize--

8 MALE VOICE: [Interposing]. Time.

9 MS. MONET: This co-location will shape
10 [phonetic] and plague our community with over-
11 crowded classrooms, re-restructuring of our
12 school organization, and limit our growth and
13 expansion. Give us a chance to grow and expand
14 our wings; the power is in your hands.

15 MS. MILADY FIGUERO: Good evening. My name
16 is Milady Figuero, and I teach ESL to our
17 students in grades kinder through fourth. With
18 this co-location, my English Language learner
19 students will lose the ability to acquire the
20 new language in a separate location. They will
21 no longer have a classroom equipped with
22 materials assigned for their needs; they will no
23 longer have the opportunity to enjoy small group
24 instruction geared to their language and
25 position process. Since September, I alone,

1 with my students, have been fundraising to
2 have technology in our classroom. We're very
3 close to reaching our goal yet the students will
4 not be able to enjoy it the way that we intended
5 it. If we co-locate with this school or any
6 other school our dreams of expansion will come
7 to an abrupt end. Please don't do that to them.
8 They came to this country to get a better
9 education. Give it to them.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening parents;
11 welcome. I am a teacher here for three years; I
12 have been working for the Department of
13 Education in this district for 15 years. I,
14 first hand, came here and saw the parents, the
15 love they have for this school, the community
16 involvement. I have taught sibling after
17 sibling after sibling. And it is a shame that I
18 would have to tell a parent, your child cannot
19 be in the same school as their brother or sister
20 because there is no space. Not in the building,
21 but in 157. Okay? This is a community school;
22 I have worked in schools where they have co-
23 located; I have had kids come to me crying
24 'cause they could not put on a show 'cause it
25 was too much people in the school, they didn't

1 have enough space, the timing, everything must
2 be shared. Okay. It is unfair. Beginning with
3 Children, I know them, I am familiar with them,
4 I have grown up in this community for the past
5 40 years. My children attended the schools in
6 this community. There are grade schools in
7 District 14, but as the parents up there said,
8 the attorney said, this is not the place for you
9 because you also will not be able to grow.
10 We're not here to say no, that you don't deserve
11 a space; we're here to say this school and this
12 community deserves to be here. We keep getting
13 obstacles in our way when we need to expand as a
14 charter school; we want to expand adult
15 education; we want to expand, now here you come
16 along. Please understand it's not about that we
17 don't want you to have a space; it's about that
18 we want our community's own children to be able
19 to come to their own school when they want to be
20 here. Thank you.

21 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. I'm going to ask
22 for students from 157 to continue their comments
23 and then we will invite the students from the
24 Beginning with Children. Kiera.

25 MS. KIERA SCOTT: Good evening parents,

1 students, and staff. My name is Kiera Scott.
2 I am a seventh-grader at PSIS 157. I have been
3 in this school for nine years. I have enjoyed
4 plenty of the things at school, like the extra-
5 curricular. For example, dance, sports, and
6 OST. There will be no space for it once the
7 charter school comes in. The class sizes will
8 grow and the teachers will lose their
9 classrooms. With the location they won't be
10 accepting kids because there isn't going to be
11 any space. To conclude, I love my school and I
12 do not want to see it go downhill instead of
13 succeed.

14 MS. WINNICKI: Ianna [phonetic].

15 MS. IANNA MURRAY: Good evening. My name is
16 Ianna Murray, and I believe that the charter
17 school, Beginning with Children should not co-
18 locate at PSIS 157, because if you think about
19 it, what will happen to grades K through five?
20 Middle school kids in IS 157 will be walking in
21 the hallways realizing there is not much space.
22 Due to that, our classroom size will increase
23 and it will be harder for many students to hear
24 the teacher and focus on what's important. Not
25 only that, but teachers will have a problem

1 designing their work and evolving into better
2 teachers.

3 MS. WINNICKI: The next student.

4 MR. JOSHUA LUNA: Hello. My name is Joshua
5 Luna, and I am in the fifth grade. I am against
6 this co-location at PSIS 157. It will reduce
7 the chances for my little sister attending this
8 school. Not only my little sister, but other
9 students' siblings. We are a community school
10 and our community deserves fear of--deserves to
11 keep their space without fear or overcrowding.
12 Also I think it's a bad idea because our
13 lunchroom will be overcrowded. This will cause
14 a ruckus. I am happy with our teachers and this
15 will cause larger class sizes. Our students
16 will get less attention and this is why I think
17 the co-location is a bad idea.

18 MS. WINNICKI: Tanaya [phonetic].

19 MS. TANAYA VAZ: Good afternoon teachers,
20 guests, and administration. My name is Tanaya
21 Vaz [phonetic]. I am here to protest for this
22 new charter school coming to our school. This
23 will interrupt the function of our school. I am
24 concerned about the - - that may not get enough
25 privacy as they need. They may not get enough

1 privacy because the teachers that help the Ls,
2 may have to give their room to the charter
3 school, and that's unfair. Also teachers know
4 our strength and weaknesses. In my class there
5 are 25 students. Imagine 30 students in one
6 class. We don't have enough room for more
7 students to join us. You affect our - - because
8 we may have to share them with the charter
9 school. We are going as a school. To conclude,
10 co-location will jeopardize our future and
11 success.

12 MS. WINNICKI: Brian.

13 MR. BRIAN HAMILTON: Good evening everyone.
14 My name is Brian Hamilton [phonetic]. I was
15 here at the ending of seventh grade and now I'm
16 an eighth-grader. I'm speaking for the children
17 that are going to be here in the future, so I
18 stand here today to not let a charter school in
19 this building. This is already crowded and the
20 numbers keep increasing. Another impact is that
21 students won't have one-on-one attention with
22 the teachers that he needs. Even though I was
23 here for a short while, I love this school
24 because teachers make all the learning ideas
25 fun. And every school, if there's a fire, with

1 all the capacity it can cause a safety issue.
2 At this school the grades are up to standard and
3 I don't think that this school should be
4 disturbed. So on behalf of PSIS 157, we don't
5 think that our school should have another school
6 in it. Thank you.

7 MS. WINNICKI: Thank you. Mr. King, please
8 bring students from the Beginning with Children,
9 and let them state their names.

10 MS. ALITA FRASIER: My name is Alita
11 [phonetic] Frasier and I'm a scholar at BWCCS.
12 I'm a fourth-grader and I've been at this school
13 since kindergarten. And I feel that it's a bad
14 idea for you guys not to let us come here
15 because we're just asking for a little bit of
16 space.

17 MS. OLIVIA KEYLEZ: My name is Olivia Keylez
18 [phonetic].

19 MS. WINNICKI: Go ahead, Olivia.

20 MS. KIESHA PERGON: My name is Kiesha
21 Pergon, and I'm in Beginning with Children
22 Charter School. I have been in Beginning with
23 Children Charter School since second grade. I
24 want to help PS 157 and Beginning with Children
25 Charter School to help make a little bit of

1 space for us and to learn more.

2 MS. ISABEL GARCIA: Hello; my name is Isabel
3 Garcia; my school is Beginning with Children
4 Charter School. I was here when I was in pre-K,
5 and my cousins, my sister, and my brother were
6 here. And I just want to--I just hope PS 157
7 share this school with Beginning with Children
8 Charter School.

9 MR. MATTHEW VASKERVILLE: Hello; my name is
10 Matthew Vaskerville [phonetic]; I'm in Beginning
11 with Children Charter School since first grade.
12 I think that this is where I learned, played,
13 and made friends. I think that we should be
14 allowed here because we are a growing charter
15 school. We should not be admitted because of a
16 little bit of parking space or middle school and
17 lower school are going to have end up to save -
18 - . That's just not right. Also the middle
19 school is a co-located charter--the middle
20 school is kind of like this one but this one's a
21 little bit bigger. So if we could share a
22 school with another school, what makes you think
23 we can't share a school with this school?

24 MS. CECILIA CARNEY: Good evening. My name
25 is Cecilia Carney [phonetic], and I've been with

1 Beginning with Children since kindergarten,
2 all the way to the eighth grade. This truly is
3 the best school in Brooklyn. I've had tons of
4 experiences, including college tours, to Cornell
5 and SUNI colleges, we've visited the nation's
6 capitol. I played on the basketball team; we
7 were called the Lady Jaguars. I was in the
8 orchestra and I played the viola, led by Ms.
9 Valerie. Even though I graduated from middle
10 school, I still feel as though I've never left.
11 The Beginning with Children Legacy Network has
12 maintained a close relationship with me. In
13 high school they provided me with mentors,
14 tutors, SAT prep, and more. Now that I'm in
15 college, they still continue to give me the
16 support and motivation that I need, in order to
17 stay on the right path. I know that they are
18 dedicated and they want the best for me and
19 other students. So Beginning with Children has
20 laid the foundation for me to gain opportunities
21 and reach my fullest potential. Let's continue
22 to band together and ensure that this school can
23 provide for the next generation of students so
24 that they can benefit from it just as much as I
25 did. Thank you.

1 MR. COREY ORGIAS: Good evening everyone;
2 my name is Corey Orgias [phonetic]. I'm
3 actually an alumni of Beginning with Children
4 Charter School. I also currently work at the
5 school; I'm the fifth grade math teacher as well
6 as the social studies teacher. I just want to
7 speak a little bit about, I guess, the history
8 of the school, and the opportunities it's
9 afforded me in life. I started at the Beginning
10 with Children, I was in 4th grade, so I was a
11 member of that school community from 4th to 8th
12 grade. I wanted to - - preconceived notions, so
13 I see it as a lot of uncertainty, uncertainty
14 what was going to come with the school.

15 Because, based on preconceived notions, you
16 don't - - when life is based on preconceived
17 notions, you don't truly give yourself an
18 opportunity to see what may come, or what may
19 come to fruition. Most of us wouldn't be in any
20 position we are in life right now without
21 opportunity.

22 Our students are in the same situation
23 themselves; the opportunity to learn, the
24 opportunity to advance their education, the
25 opportunity--that's what we're all about, and

1 that's what we're all interested in. Just,
2 getting an opportunity to be successful, to be a
3 part of what you already established, and to
4 bring something else to the table. Thank you.

5 MALE VOICE 2: Good evening, ladies and
6 gentlemen. Just want to thank you for the
7 opportunity to speak for Beginning with Children
8 Charter School. I am an alumni since 1992, when
9 the school first started. We shared a school
10 with Grand - - campus, just one floor. We
11 finally got a building, and we worked very hard.

12 Every child deserves an education. I
13 understand from you're--you had to look at
14 everything both ways, I understand from your
15 perspective, I understand from my perspective.
16 Every child needs an education. Now, our
17 school, we need, actually, we need a school for
18 our children, because we don't want them in the
19 street, we don't want them to go away from their
20 friends.

21 We understand. We're--honestly, we're not
22 strangers, we're just friends, we're a
23 community. We probably pass by each other
24 plenty of times, but we never said hello or
25 goodbye. So, what is--I just want to know, how

1 hard can it be just for another school, for a
2 bunch of kids to get an education with your
3 children? I understand there's a bunch of
4 excuses, but you know, this is a problem.

5 This school needs funding, we understand
6 that. Every school needs funding. But, I just
7 want to say, from what I've learned growing up,
8 there's always a solution to the problem, okay?
9 Thank you.

10 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you, students. I
11 am going to call the next speakers. Ms.
12 Rodriguez, Jessica Lopez, Vanessa Noel, Tiffanua
13 Johnson, and Mark Kishner.

14 MALE MODERATOR: Remember, we have a 2-
15 minute time limit.

16 FEMALE VOICE: I'm the Parent Coordinator of
17 PS 157. I started here as an ESL teacher over
18 15 years ago, serving both students and parents.
19 In 2003, I became the Parent Coordinator, which
20 gave me the privilege to continue serving my
21 school community. I worked with many immigrant
22 parents and students with interrupted education,
23 and their knowledge of the English language.

24 These people feel a sense of belonging here
25 because they are able to effectively communicate

1 with us in their native language, which gives
2 them the determination to educate themselves.
3 We have students and families that have been
4 evicted from this neighborhood, and still refuse
5 to discharge the children from our school,
6 regardless of the distance.

7 They must travel, because they feel that
8 their children are safe here, so much so, that
9 our parents, where they once requested that our
10 school consider expanding to 8th grade, so that
11 the children continue their middle education
12 here. Here, at PS IS 157, they found a second
13 home, a place where they feel hope begins and
14 dreams come true.

15 This is our model, inspired by the trust
16 that our parents and students have placed in our
17 ability to educate and instruct their children,
18 in a safe and welcoming learning environment.
19 PS 157 has worked very hard to achieve this
20 recognition. We take great pride in our
21 accomplishments, and it is our goal to continue
22 to grow as an entity that supports the
23 educational, emotional, and social growth, of
24 our entire school community.

25 I speak for our parents. I speak for our

1 parents when I say they are deeply disturbed
2 with this proposal. They do not want to
3 compromise their children's instruction or the
4 special care they now receive here.

5 MALE MODERATOR: Time's up.

6 FEMALE VOICE 1: In closing, please stop
7 this school location. Give us a space to grow,
8 and a school that provides so many comforts to
9 their students and families. Thank you.

10 Jessica Lopez?

11 MS. JESSICA LOPEZ: I am a proud
12 representative of the Benjamin Franklin Health
13 and Science Academy, PS 157. I am currently a
14 2nd grade Special Education teacher in an ICT
15 classroom. As a Special Education teacher, I am
16 concerned with the charter school coming in next
17 year. The negative impact will force students
18 with disabilities, and students in general, to
19 overcrowded spaces, lack of services, and
20 dangerous safety situations.

21 Children with IEPs require specific
22 attention to their needs. The larger classroom
23 sizes, the individualized attention that I give
24 my students, will now be reduced. Classes will
25 double in size, and eliminate small group

1 instruction, which is mandated by the State.

2 Our students need to be empowered, independent,
3 and motivated.

4 As educators, we need to help these children
5 provide and reach these goals. In order for my
6 students to reach their max potential, we need
7 to tailor their education to their specific
8 needs in order to progress successfully, rather
9 than digress. This co-location will immediately
10 limit our future growth and expansion potential,
11 to attract an enroll new students to PS 157, and
12 we will no extra space available.

13 According to the Department of Education's
14 Environmental Impact Statement, if we are forced
15 to co-locate with this charter school, we will
16 exceed 90-100% capacity. This over-capacity
17 will not allow for at-risk students to work
18 confidentially with social workers and
19 counselors.

20 Due to the lack of space, our school will be
21 out of compliance, according to the laws of No
22 Child Left Behind. Our children will be left
23 behind if this charter is allowed to invade our
24 school. If this co-location is approved, it
25 will deny our students of their right to free,

1 appropriate, public education to meet his or
2 her unique needs. Thank you.

3 FEMALE MODERATOR: Vanessa?

4 VANESSA: Good evening, everyone. I have
5 two children in this school. I have a child in
6 junior high, and I have a child in the public
7 school. I also was a member of this school,
8 graduated from this school, along with a lot of
9 - - here.

10 I had a lot to say when I got here, but as
11 I'm listening to everyone, and all the little
12 children speak, and the teachers speak, on both
13 schools, I only have one question: why is our
14 growth being stifled? Why can't 157 grow? I
15 was one of the parents, along with a lot of the
16 parents here, who wanted the school to become a
17 junior high school. We fought for it, we were
18 denied. Finally, we became a junior high
19 school.

20 We had a charter school here, so the school
21 couldn't grow. We can't allow new students in
22 if there's already students in the school. We
23 also have teachers with overcrowded classrooms
24 as is. These teachers are not going to be able
25 to give that one-on-one to all these children.

1 When children need help, most of these
2 teachers go, bend over backwards, and help these
3 children.

4 They're not going to have to that if these
5 classrooms are overcrowded. Most of these
6 children will not be able to get that little
7 extra help they need. On top of that, I don't
8 understand why we need another school in the
9 school, when that school itself seems to
10 exceeding. So, they need their own space.
11 Their space cannot be here, because we cannot do
12 what we set out to do in this school. Thank
13 you.

14 FEMALE MODERATOR: Okay, Koana? Ms.
15 Johnson?

16 MRS. JOHNSON: Hello everyone, my name is
17 Mrs. Johnson. The decision to resite and co-
18 locate grades K-5 at Beginning with Children
19 Charter School, to PS IS 157, will have a
20 negative effect on student learning. Our focus
21 is on ensuring there is necessary space in our
22 school for our students to thrive, while
23 continuing to provide an equitable education for
24 all students.

25 I believe the negative impacts that I will

1 address, outweighs the benefit of co-locating
2 to PS IS 157. My arguments are as follows: our
3 classrooms will be overcrowded. It will
4 substantially and immediately increase class
5 sizes. We do not have the space to effectively
6 give both schools a sound and effective
7 education. For example, there would be limited
8 space to conduct small group intervention. To
9 add on students who need mandatory services by
10 services providers will experience a negative
11 impact.

12 Think about one-on-one meeting, and lack of
13 privacy and confidentiality with student
14 counseling. Where are the guidance counselors
15 going to meet with the students? In the
16 stairwell? Another negative impact is having a
17 conflict of interest with two elementary schools
18 competing for the same instruction with other
19 children. - - internal transfers, or external
20 transfers to another school, altogether, in a
21 conflict of the shared facilities.

22 Why? Due to the limited access of spaces
23 such as the cafeteria, library, computer labs,
24 and auditorium. Let's think about scheduling
25 the lunch periods. As a result of the complex

1 scheduling to allow multiple schools to share
2 the cafeteria, some students may need to each
3 lunch as early as 10:30 a.m., or 10:00.

4 Again, to sum it up, I believe the negative
5 impacts that I just addressed outweighs the
6 benefits of co-locating to PS IS 157. Thank
7 you.

8 FEMALE MODERATOR: Mr. Kirschner?

9 MR. KIRSCHNER: Uh, yeah, my name is Mark
10 Kirschner. I'm a little bit too short for this
11 microphone, but...so, I've been a teacher here in
12 Special Ed, teaching 15 years, and I'm really
13 very, very fond of this school. There's so many
14 different communities and lives. Our family
15 community, our state and city community, and our
16 school community.

17 This has been a wonderful community for me
18 through all the 15 years that I've been here. I
19 would really hate to see it change in any way.
20 I don't have anything against the other school,
21 the co-located school. We don't have anything
22 against them, but we really--it's going to be
23 divisive for our community, itself.

24 And, so many children at our school, this is
25 a very important community for them. They have

1 the community of their family, and they also
2 have their community of the school, which they
3 really depend on, and it's going to be very,
4 very divisive for them. In so many ways, I've
5 seen the Special Ed kids, over the last 15
6 years, have gone to college, they have--some of
7 them have professional careers. They've done
8 wonderfully.

9 Part of that comes from the space we have in
10 the school, here. The kids really do need the
11 space, they need all the mandated services that
12 they're supposed to get, ESL, the OT/PT. With
13 crowding, they won't be able to get the same
14 type services. They're not going to be able to
15 achieve the way they have. So, I'm really
16 praying that the school stays the same. It's a
17 wonderful place for me.

18 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you.

19 MR. KIRSCHNER: Thanks.

20 FEMALE MODERATOR: I am going to ask
21 [phonetic] Keona Rocha, Donald Wallen, Mr. or
22 Mrs. Blythe, Jose Santos, Maria Mercado, - -,
23 please line up. Donna?

24 MS. DONNA WALLEN: Hi, my name is Donna
25 Wallen. I work here at PS 157--can you hear me?

1 Can you hear me? Hi, my name is Donna Wallen.
2 I am a professional at PS 157. We don't have a
3 problem with Beginning with Children. We have a
4 problem with locating here, okay? We the people
5 have fought long and hard, long and hard, for
6 equality and - -, okay? We cannot accept this.

7 I'm sure--who was this, who said--yes, she
8 had spoke before, saying, we both deserve our
9 own location, okay? What they're putting on our
10 table is segregation. We cannot have this. Do
11 not allow this, okay? We fought years; don't
12 give up, not now.

13 MS. MERCADO: Good evening, PS IS 157, and
14 Beginning with Children. My name is Ms.
15 Mercado. Although this is my first year
16 teaching at PS IS 157, I have to tell you what
17 an amazing group of students we have. They are
18 driven, they are hardworking, and most
19 importantly, they have high hopes for their
20 future.

21 I am afraid that a co-location at this
22 school will put our students at a disadvantage.
23 Not only will they be in larger class sizes of
24 up to 33 students per teacher, but it will have
25 a negative impact on their learning and overall

1 morale. Our school and our community wants
2 the best for not only our students, but for your
3 scholars, as well.

4 That is why we are hoping that our students'
5 education and comfortability not be taken away
6 from them, and that Beginning with Children will
7 find a school building more suitable for them,
8 just not ours. Thank you.

9 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. I'm going to
10 call [phonetic] Asane Gomez, Lisa Kinney, Eva
11 Cochran, Andrew Raven, and Patrick Kern; please
12 line up to the microphone.

13 MS. ASANE GOMEZ: My name is Asane Gomez,
14 and I am a parent at Beginning with Children
15 Charter School. I wanted to thank [phonetic]
16 Evan Cruz and Hamell Pagado for putting things
17 into perspective. We are part of this
18 community. We are not here to displace or to
19 invade 157.

20 And, I wanted to say that to you parents at
21 157, and to let you know that we are respectful
22 of your hesitation as you hear of this co-
23 location. We as parents share the feelings of
24 uncertainty, but we hope that you, in time, will
25 give us the opportunity to prove that we are

1 strong and respectful partners.

2 Our middle school has co-located
3 successfully at a - - building since 2001.
4 Let's not judge each other before you get to
5 know us. You should know that we are staying
6 without a home. We are being displaced. We
7 fought long and hard to keep our school open, so
8 that our children can continue to be educated at
9 Beginning with Children. I am sure if you were
10 in our shoes, you would do the same.

11 We are not - - imposing our presence, but we
12 have been in this community since 1993. We were
13 born in this community, and we want to remain in
14 District 14. As stated in the proposal, we are
15 just looking to guarantee the educational
16 continuity for our children.

17 [Spanish 1:49:10-1:49:33]

18 Our children look just like yours. Our
19 children are also L [phonetic] students. Our
20 children are also children with special needs.
21 We welcome all children, although we are a
22 charter school. So, we hope that your fight
23 turns out positive, as we hope for ours, as
24 well.

25 MALE MODERATOR: Before we continue, let me

1 just make a remark. Okay, I'm sorry,
2 continue.

3 FEMALE VOICE 2: Good afternoon. Good
4 afternoon. I was so happy when I walked into
5 your building, today. I saw lots of signage,
6 because I, too, would say 'no.' If you were not
7 a successful school, I, too, would say 'no.'
8 Knowledge is the key to power. I love it. I
9 wish your students understood what co-location
10 means; it means sharing. Sharing is caring.

11 Today we are here because within our
12 displacement, we have students who are
13 displaced. So, here it is again, we have to
14 tell them, you're without a home. Let the
15 politicking stay with the politicians.
16 Education stays with us.

17 MR. ANDREW RAVEN: Thank you for having me
18 here today, and for all of us. My name is
19 Andrew Raven, I'm the Assistant Principal of the
20 middle school of Beginning with Children. I
21 spoke with a young man, Marceo [phonetic], and
22 his son, Marceo, while I was standing in line,
23 and I asked them what were there concerns.

24 I was proud of the young man, and another
25 young student that I spoke with, because only as

1 an educator can understand, he expressed his
2 voice, and his ideas and opinions, and felt the
3 right to do that. It was beautiful.

4 I've known since the moment I walked in here
5 and had seen your passion, that your values are
6 our values. Your dreams are our dreams. Your
7 children are our children. Your education is
8 our education. We want to be partners. We do
9 not want anything less for you. That's the
10 truth. I can tell you, I know the hearts of
11 Beginning with Children. We would not be here
12 if we believed, truly, that this could not
13 benefit both of us.

14 We believe--and, I respect where you're
15 coming from--we believe that partnership is
16 possible, we do. We have a history of
17 partnership, and we believe that we could have a
18 future of partnership, as well. At the end of
19 the day, we believe in all of our children, and
20 their futures. Thank you.

21 MR. PATRICK KERN: Good evening, everyone.
22 My name is Patrick Kern, I'm the Co-Chair of the
23 Board of Trustees of Beginning with Children. I
24 just wanted to take minute to just let you know
25 that we are a community-run charter school, we

1 are a community-organized charter school.

2 Our Board of Trustees is made up of members
3 of the community that have been in this
4 community for a long time; 10 years, 20 years,
5 longer. We represent the same people that you
6 do. We represent the same community that you
7 do. We aren't any different. We don't
8 represent the kind of charters schools that are
9 going to push anybody out, that are going to
10 limit choice, that are going to take space.

11 We represent the kind of charter school that
12 represents our community, that represents
13 students, that represents families, hardworking
14 families, and people that want the best for
15 their kids, the same way that you do.

16 I also wanted to give a great deal of credit
17 to this community. I've been so impressed with
18 you unity tonight, your loyalty to each other,
19 and your passion for your children's' education.
20 And, I just wanted to echo my fellow community
21 members in saying that we are the same as you,
22 and the last thing that we want is to displace
23 your kids, or make their educations secondary to
24 ours. We're in this together. Thank you.

25 MS. ANTOINETTE EMMANUEL [phonetic]: Good

1 evening. My name is Antoinette Emmanuel, and
2 I am an ELA and Social Studies teacher at our
3 middle school. I started working at Beginning
4 with Children in 1995. I am currently the UFT
5 Chapter Leader. We would not become a charter
6 without a UFT Chapter, we made it very clear
7 that that's what we wanted.

8 Since its inception, Beginning with Children
9 has been about providing equity and access to a
10 good education for all of our students. I
11 believe that if this school is not allowed to
12 continue to exist, it will be the end of a truly
13 powerful legacy of continued educational
14 excellence in this community.

15 We have been through many struggles the past
16 several years, I'm sure you've read about them.
17 And, despite these struggles, I still feel that
18 our families have persevered, our scholars have
19 continued to strive, and our teachers and our
20 staff have stuck together to support our
21 existence as a UFT school.

22 We just ask that the community of PS 187
23 know that we are a community-based school--I'm
24 sorry, 157--my mistake. We are about equity in
25 education for our scholars. We are about

1 providing teachers and staff with the
2 necessary tools to be successful.

3 [Spanish 1:55:49-1:55:01]

4 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. I'll ask
5 Antoinette Emmanuel, Michelle Davis, Veronica
6 Grant, Tisha Lamp, and Patrick Kern. Oh, I'm
7 sorry, Patrick.

8 MR. FRANK HOOKS [phonetic]: Good evening,
9 everybody. My name is Frank Hooks. I have--two
10 of my children go to Beginning with Children,
11 they graduated, they went on. My grandchildren
12 go to Beginning with Children, they graduated,
13 they've been to other school. We're no
14 different than 157, okay?

15 I'm ashamed, I'm really ashamed to be here
16 in this auditorium tonight, because what I've
17 seen is people get up here and point finger this
18 way, and point fingers this way, and use the
19 children to point fingers, and that's not fair
20 to the children, to us, or to anybody here.

21 This is not a 157 or Beginning with Children
22 problem. This is a Board of Education problem.
23 It's a Board of Education problem. I am livid
24 that we should be here, in this auditorium,
25 discussing this. Our fight is not against each

1 other, it's against the Board of Education.
2 Let's unite and go and get a school for you, so
3 you can be what you want to be, and let us be
4 what we have to be. Thank you.

5 FEMALE MODERATOR: Antoinette? Ms.
6 Emmanuel? Michelle Davis?

7 MS. MICHELLE DAVIS: Hello, good evening,
8 good night. My name is Michelle Davis. I am
9 the proud mother of three children that belong
10 at Beginning with Children Charter School. One
11 of my children are in the middle school, and my
12 other two are - -. My older son cohabitating
13 another school that shares, and they do
14 perfectly well.

15 They have their own teachers, they do their
16 own work. They sit up there and even interact
17 with the other school that they share with. My
18 lower educational school children, they do
19 perfectly well in the school that they're in.
20 They just need a home.

21 You don't want your child to be homeless,
22 nor do I want my child to be homeless, when it
23 comes down to their education. I believe that
24 every child deserves an education, including
25 mine, yours, and everybody else's. I think they

1 just need a place, and there's no problem that
2 we cannot share. We was meant--we were put on
3 this earth to share, anyway. Thank you.

4 FEMALE MODERATOR: Veronica Grant? Veronica
5 Grant? Keisha or Veronica?

6 MS. VERONICA GRANT: Good day. This is a
7 personal story. Students, teachers, and
8 friends. Before I had my boys, I did not know
9 much about charter schools, but I have come to
10 believe that charter schools, especially
11 Beginning with Children Charter School.

12 Once upon a time, there was a long waiting
13 list to get into Beginning with Children. I
14 signed up my eldest son, Timothy, when we was
15 three years old. By the time he was five, he
16 did not yet get called. So, I registered him at
17 PS 81.

18 All through Kindergarten, he did not learn
19 to read. Halfway through the 1st grade, he
20 still could not read. His afternoon tutor would
21 often tell me that they should not give him
22 homework that he couldn't read, because he
23 couldn't do it. I wonder where I went wrong.

24 At age three, he could recite the whole
25 alphabet. He knew how to push the delete button

1 on my computer and delete my stuff. At age
2 four, he could count from 1-20. He was still in
3 the 1st grade when a new charter school opened,
4 before it explode.

5 So, I signed him up there, and he got called
6 a few months later. He was immediately placed
7 in small groups of 5-7 students, and with
8 intense practice and reading, he began to read
9 by himself within 6 months. When he was 10, he
10 got called for Beginning with Children Charter
11 School, where he continued to do well.

12 Now, my youngest son, Julius, was able to
13 attend Beginning with Children from Pre-K, and
14 by the time he was 5 years old, he started to
15 read by himself. I noticed the difference in
16 how they learned to read, and how they sound out
17 the letters, and I realized that Beginning with
18 Children had the right approach.

19 Now, I'm not bashing PS school, this is just
20 my personal experience. Now, every place we go
21 and there is books, Julius wants to read one or
22 buy one. After Timothy graduated [crosstalk]--
23 oh gosh, all right. Okay, my last thing to say,
24 in my opinion, charter school really works, and
25 they should be allotted their own space by the

1 DOE.

2 I take this opportunity - - the new Board
3 members for taking on this task, and again, I
4 say, charter school really works, especially
5 Beginning with Children Charter School.

6 FEMALE MODERATOR: Keisha Lamb [phonetic]?

7 MS. KEISHA LAMB: Good evening, PS 157. My
8 name is Ms. Lamb. I am a parent of a child at
9 Beginning with Children, who is in the middle
10 school. This fight doesn't affect my child, but
11 I still stand with my school. Tonight I am
12 reading on behalf of my Principal, because the
13 middle school co-locates with us. It can work.

14 Please be advised that the Brooklyn
15 Transmission Center, 373K, and the Beginning
16 with Children Charter School, Beginning with
17 Children, are co-located within a building at
18 185 Ellory Street, in Brooklyn. The Principal
19 of Beginning with Children, Ms. - - Davis and I
20 have amicably, have an amicable relationship,
21 and readily resolve issues related to shared
22 space and safety.

23 We meet regularly at formally scheduled
24 meetings, building counsel, and school safety
25 meetings, but also meet on an as-needed basis.

1 Our schools have a harmonious relationship,
2 which allows for the sharing of resources and
3 compromise regarding building and pragmatic
4 matters. Thank you.

5 FEMALE MODERATOR: [Phonetic] Lourdes,
6 Lourdes Putz, Amanda Huff, Berke Salsado, please
7 come up. Zaria Dargeles and Janet Espinale.

8 MS. AMANDA HUFF: Okay, so, my name is
9 Amanda. I actually have Ms. - -'s statement;
10 can I hand this to you guys? Okay. First of
11 all, good evening. Thank you so much for the
12 opportunity to come and listen to all of your
13 concerns, and all of your great ideas, okay?

14 My name is Amanda. I Co-Chair Children, I
15 am also the first graduating class of Beginning
16 with Children, so I am from this community. My
17 family still lives in the community. I'm always
18 around, and I see plenty of your faces every
19 time I pass around. A part of being in a
20 community, I service families of children with
21 disabilities as a Parent Advocate for non-profit
22 community - - resource center.

23 So, I've been hearing a lot in regards to
24 Special Education concerns, and I mimic your
25 concerns to an extent. The Department of

1 Education is supposed to provide the services
2 regardless, okay? So, it should not--us moving
3 into a space, should not, at any point, destruct
4 your kids' education or services. It should not
5 disrupt your kids' education or services.

6 The only thing we even want to do is, we're
7 trying to survive. We are a community. We
8 don't want to be put against each other. We
9 want our own space, however, we have been put
10 between a rock and a hard place, and
11 unfortunately, you guys are in that position
12 with us. And, we're just trying to figure out a
13 way that our kids don't get the brunt of it;
14 all of our kids.

15 And, sometimes change is hard, and I've
16 learned that from life, okay? I don't come with
17 a silver spoon, or what have you. I learned
18 that change is hard, but I learned that all
19 things is possible with an open mind. And,
20 that's all we're asking at this point in time,
21 is to have an open mind. I'm willing to
22 collaborate; we all are, because it's for the
23 benefit of our kids.

24 Our kids--okay, 30 seconds--our kids are
25 going to grow up to be us one day, and we want

1 them to be the best us that we can possibly
2 make them be, okay? And, that is what we want
3 to provide, that is what we want to work with
4 you guys on. How can we make our kids possible,
5 better?

6 FEMALE MODERATOR: Ms. Berke Salsado?

7 MS. BERKE SALSADO: Good evening, everyone.
8 I know we're tired, I'm going to make it quick.
9 I understand the whole, you know, us being here
10 and moving in, it's hard. But, I'm a mother.
11 I've been working at Beginning with Children for
12 20 years. My children graduated; they went to
13 the Army, they went to college, they come back,
14 they tutor at Beginning with Children, they
15 assist. We are a community that, we care for
16 our kids regardless of their background.

17 [Spanish 02:06:33-02:05:43]

18 It's not our fault, and of course it's not
19 your fault, either. However, the bottom line
20 is, we need a place to raise our children, and
21 the time being, we're asking, please share your
22 space with us; that's all we're asking. Thank
23 you.

24 FEMALE MODERATOR: Zareda Kalenz [phonetic]?

25 MS. ZAREDA KALENZ: Good evening. My name

1 is Zareda Kalenz. I want to applaud, first of
2 all, this community. I want to tell 157 that
3 I'm proud of the way you represent your school,
4 how you're fighting for your school, and the
5 passion that you have to obtain the space that
6 you say you have been fighting for.

7 I'm not up here to talk politics, and I'm
8 not going to tell you about politics, or
9 bureaucrats; that's not what I want to share
10 with you. I feel each and every one of you. I
11 understand where you're all coming from, all of
12 you. I'm not giving you an attitude. I'm not
13 going to spew hostility at you. I'm not here to
14 do that.

15 I want to tell you that I hear your voices.
16 I've heard everything, and thank you for sharing
17 a lot of factual information, if and so it is
18 factual, with us. Because, we can take that
19 communication back, and those facts, and we can
20 work out a solution with the DOE.

21 And, we're asking, would you partner with
22 us? Would you partner with us? When I say, we
23 haven't even put a solution on the table, and
24 you're just telling us straight, no. We can
25 talk, but I can't talk politics right now,

1 because I don't know all the facts.

2 I'm just asking you to understand that we
3 feel like we've been bullied tonight, and we
4 feel this presence of hostility. We're not
5 coming in here with that presence. We did not
6 come here with that presence. Get the facts,
7 and know that we want the same for our community
8 of children, just like you.

9 We've been--if anybody has ever explained
10 this eviction, you know what that feels. We
11 need a space for our children to be ready to
12 start school in September, just like your
13 children. I thank you for your time, I thank
14 you for your attention, and I thank you for your
15 presence. God bless you.

16 FEMALE MODERATOR: Janet Espinale?

17 MS. JANET ESPINALE: [02:09:22-02:10:49
18 [Spanish with interpreter, nearly
19 unintelligible]

20 Thank you for allowing me to speak in this
21 school. - - have two children - - but we have
22 to move. - - they have to move - -. My child
23 is - - my other child is fourteen - -. - -
24 Department of Education - -. We will know - -.
25 Thank you.

1 [Crosstalk]

2 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. [Phonetic]
3 James Stoval, Emmanuel Oliver, David Abose,
4 Mindy Rosier, and Iana Aliyah Santiago, and
5 Ingrid Chicolle, please line up. James Stoval?

6 MR. JAMES STOVAL: Good evening, everyone.
7 My name is James Stoval. I'm a supporter of
8 Beginning with Children Charter School. That
9 does not mean we are opposed to you guys at all.
10 We want you to know that we are community-lead,
11 community-managed, community-grown. You've
12 heard that for some time now, tonight, and
13 that's an important thing for you to know,
14 because Beginning with Children has been here
15 for many, many, many years. We're not opposed
16 to you.

17 The people in blue are your neighbors.
18 They're your friends. They're people who you
19 see on the subway, walking down the street.
20 And, what we ask of you is what you would ask of
21 anybody, if you were being evicted from your
22 home, and you went up to one of your neighbors,
23 you would ask them for a helping hand, and
24 that's all we're asking here, tonight.

25 When you think about it, 50 years ago,

1 people just like you and I went down to
2 southern Alabama, to help support people, to
3 prevent the government from preventing people
4 from voting. And, prior to that, people just
5 like you and I marched against the government to
6 prevent children from being stopped at the
7 schoolhouse.

8 We have another situation where the
9 government is pitting us one against another,
10 and that need not be the case. It's an
11 unfortunate fact. The fact of the matter is,
12 we're asking for some help, here. If there was
13 a way that we could resolve this on our own, you
14 know we would.

15 We're asking for your help, and instead of
16 staying stop, can we say, start a partnership
17 conversation, okay? Instead of saying no, can
18 we say yes to some friendship, here? That's all
19 we're asking tonight. We ask that you think
20 about that as we contemplate the conversation
21 going forward. Thank you.

22 FEMALE MODERATOR: Emmanuel Oliver? David
23 Dobosh?

24 MS. MINDY ROSIER: We're switching; I'm
25 going to go first. My name is Mindy Rosier, and

1 I'm a proud Special Ed teacher and member of
2 the movement of rank and file educators of the
3 UFT. I am here to support my union public
4 school brothers and sisters. I know what it's
5 like to be in a co-location, having been in one
6 for over 8-and-a-half years with Success
7 Academy.

8 My school has lost a technology room, an art
9 room, a library, a music room, classrooms, and
10 their ultimate goal is to take over our space
11 and evict us. And, they tried to do that--and
12 we fought back. Our school is reminded every
13 day that we are the have-nots, while they are
14 the haves.

15 We have lost so much, and it saddens me that
16 this still goes on in other public schools,
17 which is why I'm here to say, enough to co-
18 location. I say no. More says no, and I want
19 to stand with this. Who's schools? [Crowd
20 response: Our schools.] Who's schools? [Crowd
21 response: Our schools.] Who's schools? [Crowd
22 response: Our schools.]

23 FEMALE MODERATOR: David?

24 MR. DAVID ABOSE: I'm David Abose, a retired
25 school teacher, and a husband of one of PS 157's

1 Pre-K teachers. I agree with those who have
2 said that our enemy is this Department of
3 Education. This Department of Education has
4 chosen to act at 157 like the Bloomberg
5 administration did: separate and unequal,
6 purely for cost-effectiveness, because they
7 don't want to pay the rent for all the charter
8 schools they did give separate space to last
9 year.

10 I tell you, folks, pitting people of color
11 against people of color would not be happening
12 over at Green Point. You wouldn't be co-
13 locating white against white, the way this sham
14 went on. It is ugly, it is racist, it is
15 corrupt. Shame on the De Blasio administration,
16 because in Crown Heights, when folks like us
17 protested and said, give us our own space,
18 Beginning with Children, you know you want your
19 own space. Don't allow this DOE to make you
20 grovel and want to play partner games, and
21 please help us out.

22 It's so demeaning to you to act like that.
23 Please act proud, and say, I want my own space
24 just like 157 does. If this is allowed to go
25 through, and the De Blasio administration

1 continues to act like Bloomberg, guess what,
2 157, where they're going to begin? The same
3 place my retired school, 150, went.

4 They begin with the Junior High. They phase
5 it out to make more room, so both schools can
6 expand. If you lose your Junior High, is that
7 expansion for you, 157? No. So, don't allow
8 it. Do not allow it, do now allow it. It is
9 racist and ugly.

10 [Crowd chanting]

11 FEMALE MODERATOR: Ms. Ingrid Chicolle
12 [phonetic], - - President?

13 MS. INGRID CHICOLLE: [Spanish interpreter]
14 Good afternoon. Our kids need the space for a
15 better education. They deserve their space to
16 receive their hour at lunch, because it is very
17 important for the health of our children to
18 concentrate on a better education. Because, our
19 teachers don't move forward in the teachings
20 that they give, the capacity they have to teach
21 our children. From our teachers or the charter
22 school's teachers, we do not deny their
23 capacity.

24 To locate a new school in our school will
25 deny the increase in education that our kids

1 have had. Each kid deserves his own space.
2 Don't take our capacity to increase our own
3 space in 157. That's why we say, what do we
4 say, parents? No co-location. Thank you.

5 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. I'm going to
6 call the following speakers: [Phonetic] Laura
7 Peterson, Shirley Montan, Anthony Flores, and
8 Laura Morales; please come up.

9 MS. LAURA PETERSON: Good evening, diehards.
10 It's not the packed house I was hoping for. I'm
11 sorry, yes, Laura Peterson. Bear with me, I
12 have to read. 11 years ago, a landmark decision
13 was reached on the West Coast. In the case of
14 Williams vs. the State of California, a team of
15 a lawyers argued that all students she be
16 afforded the basic tools necessary for their
17 education.

18 It was an important case, and it took four
19 years for it to work its way through the courts.
20 One of its points was this: public school
21 students are often stuck in overcrowded
22 facilities, and this negatively impacts their
23 learning. Overcrowding negatively impacts
24 learning.

25 Imagine my surprise, then, when I learned

1 that one of the lawyers in this groundbreaking
2 case was none other than Ellen Eagan, the
3 Syracuse lawyer who was representing Beginning
4 with Children Charter School, the school, the
5 school that wants to squeeze into our building.
6 You see, on the surface, on the surface, I can
7 understand why this seems like a good idea to
8 everybody at the DOE.

9 They crunched the numbers, and they look
10 good, like a warehouse filled with boxes of all
11 different sizes, a little rearranging can often
12 mean great gains in space. This, of course,
13 saves money. Unfortunately, the children in
14 front of you are not cardboard, they're flesh
15 and blood.

16 When you rearrange a school building so that
17 two schools can fit in a building intended for
18 one, you're effectively breaking it up. Class
19 sizes go up, and learning goes down. My 3rd
20 graders will tell you, and 14 out of 20 attended
21 tonight, my 3rd graders will tell you, breaking
22 something into fractions must result in pieces
23 of equal size.

24 The breaking up our facility will result in
25 equal parts for both schools. But, the problem

1 with fractions is this--I'm almost done--once
2 you divide something into fractions and give
3 away a piece, what you are left with is less
4 than the whole.

5 By dividing our school building, and denying
6 our students access to the resources that
7 students in other schools enjoy, you are giving
8 them less than the whole, less than the whole
9 education that we, as partners, have promised
10 the children who walk through our doors each
11 year. This is counter to the case of Williams
12 vs. the State of California, and counter to our
13 purposes of providing a good education for all
14 students. PS 157 - -.

15 FEMALE MODERATOR: Laura Morales? Ms. Laura
16 Morales, please.

17 MS. LAURA MORALES: Okay, okay, okay. I
18 know everybody's tired, but we here all
19 together, don't we? Yes, yeah. My name is
20 Laura Morales, and I'm the Testing Coordinator
21 here at PS 157. I am going to speak tonight of
22 our children's needs. - - students are mandated
23 to receive special accommodations, there are
24 English language learners, and students with
25 disabilities.

1 We're mandated to provide separate
2 locations, small-group intervention, and testing
3 arrangements for these students. If we have to
4 give up the rooms, the rooms that we're
5 currently using--and, believe me, we use every
6 room in this building, including the halls--it
7 would be almost impossible to accommodate our
8 students with our modifications.

9 I want to ask the Board of Education, are
10 you going to guarantee to the students of PS
11 157, that they will have space to accommodate
12 our modification, as they've stated in their
13 Individual Education Plans, or IEPs. It is
14 important to understand that we are here--if we
15 are forced to share our space with a charter
16 school, not only will it be unfair to our
17 students, but it will be unfair to the charter
18 school, as well. We won't have space to grow
19 and expand, neither will them.

20 This co-location will not benefit anyone. I
21 hope that the education of our children is
22 seriously considered, and if you do, find
23 another school that can offer the space to the
24 charter school needs. Not here at PS 157, we
25 don't have the space. Please allow us to expand

1 and grow. Thank you.

2 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. I am asking
3 everyone, that we let everyone speak who signed
4 up. And, it's already 8:40. I'm going to call
5 for [phonetic] Ms. Madeline Mendes, Veronica - -
6 Martinez, Marta Nichol, and Maria Garcia;
7 please come up. Veronica?

8 MS. VERONICA MARTINEZ: Hello? [Spanish
9 interpreter] The efforts that the kids put, day
10 to day, the kids, we are workers, that we have
11 the confidence to be with the kids here, to have
12 an education, to be better than us. And, we
13 cannot permit, we can't permit that other school
14 come, that multiply what they have here. This
15 is a zone that is very transit--that there
16 shouldn't be more transit. And, we don't want -
17 - to try like a - - immigrant.

18 Yes, we are immigrants. Yes, we're Spanish.
19 But, we have a lot of heat. Take away what we
20 have, our race, it's Hispanic, and we have to,
21 we have to get a translator, we don't know
22 English. Because, nobody's going to come and
23 take our - -, our schools, nothing. We know the
24 other kids need it, too, but they have more
25 funds than us. We're a public school. Us, as

1 well, we don't need a number to have a seat
2 for our kids. No, we don't need it.

3 FEMALE MODERATOR: Maria Garcia?

4 MS. MARIA GARCIA: [Spanish interpreter]
5 Good evening to the audience. My name is Maria
6 Garcia. I'm part of the SLT, PTIN [phonetic],
7 the Treasurer, and I've been volunteering many
8 years in this school. I have a child that
9 graduated last year. For 12 years I've been
10 here, and I've seen an increase in the school.
11 And, now I see and feel that it's not just for
12 this school, or the other one that's coming,
13 occupying the space that supposedly, in commons,
14 there is.

15 Now that I've so many years in this school,
16 I have fought with the Directors, with the
17 teachers, with the parent of this school, that
18 never negates helping us. We are a big group,
19 which are worried at the same time, because for
20 some time, since middle school opened, to occupy
21 that space, so we can continue to grow.

22 But now, bringing this new school in, it's
23 going to interrupt our growth. Student-wise,
24 like academic. And, I see all that work that
25 we've done all those years that will go to the

1 floor. But, otherwise, all the kids will be -
2 -. And, where are they utilizing? They have
3 time for expression.

4 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. I'm going to
5 ask...

6 MS. HOYTA MARTINEZ [phonetic]: [Spanish
7 interpreter] Good afternoon, my name is Hoyta
8 Martinez. I'm a volunteer at 157. The reason
9 I'm in disagreement is because my daughter, this
10 is like her house, I leave her here since 8:00
11 in the morning 'til 5:30 in the evening.

12 In the charter school District 14, they want
13 to occupy the third floor to bring in 500
14 students. The school has 540 students. I have
15 a space very reduced for a space where there's
16 an emergency, if there's a fire, where are they
17 going to escape? I'm also worried because the
18 people who are here are from the community, they
19 are immigrants, we're immigrants, we're working-
20 class people.

21 I am worried because they're going to take
22 Mariata's [phonetic] school, and the summer
23 school from my child. That's why the teachers
24 at the school is very small. My daughter was in
25 this school, 157. That's it.

1 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. [Phonetic]
2 Marta? Ms. Marta? Dolca Dominguez? Malina
3 Pinga, and Maritza Lopez?

4 MS. LUCIA DIAZ [phonetic]: [Spanish
5 interpreter] Good evening. My name is Lucia
6 Diaz. I am very worried, but one that really
7 bothers me is my child is going to cross to
8 Kindergarten, that because another school is
9 coming in, my daughter will be put out, because
10 she has a brother here that's going to 2nd
11 grade. Because, if another school come in,
12 she'll lose the opportunity to study together
13 with her brother.

14 This school, there is no discrimination, and
15 I'm a witness because I heard it with my own
16 ears. When the charter school came, they said
17 they were going to call Immigration because we
18 were outside saying 'no co-location.' I am a
19 witness, I heard it. I don't speak well
20 English, but I do understand.

21 Here, there is no discrimination. This is
22 my son's school. I would like it to be my
23 daughter's school, and my son's kids, and my
24 daughter's kids, in the future. Thank you very
25 much.

1 MARLIZE [phonetic]: [Spanish interpreter]
2 Good afternoon. My name is Marlize. I have a
3 child with disabilities. I want to talk about
4 the law, DEA. It's the federal law that talks
5 about the DEA law, children with disabilities.
6 This law assures children with disabilities,
7 that an appropriate education is afforded to
8 them, to empathize an educational system for
9 them, and the services in relation to them.

10 140 students that receive the service,
11 speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical,
12 counseling. If we have a co-location in our
13 school, there won't be space for this. That
14 means the law will be violated, and we will not
15 permit that this happens. Because my kid has
16 rights, and this is the best school for him.

17 MS. MARITZA LOPEZ: Good evening,
18 everyone. My name is Maritza Lopez. I have a
19 daughter here that's in 1st grade, and a brother
20 that's in Kindergarten. The reason that I am
21 against co-location is because now our lunch
22 periods are really very limited. Our children
23 are barely having time to have their lunch.

24 Even today, my daughter came up to me and
25 told me that she did not have time to finish her

1 lunch. And, she came and she told me, what
2 would happen when Beginning with Children
3 Charter School come in, and they won't have time
4 to finish their lunch. That is a concern that
5 my daughter has for her school and Beginning
6 with Children.

7 That is the reason why, actually, this is
8 affecting our children, their lunch periods.
9 Sorry, their lunch periods. And, that's why I
10 am very limited to the co-location that will
11 happen. Thank you.

12 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. [Phonetic]
13 Michelina Duran, Michelle Johnson, Joseph
14 Johnson, Jr., are they present? Gabriella
15 Martinez, Julie Parnal, Lucia Diaz?

16 MS. JULIE PARNAL: [Spanish interpreter] My
17 name is Julie Parnal. I am a member of the
18 school because of my daughter. I consider
19 myself one more of the students. It's a late
20 hour. A lot of people have left. Maybe a lot
21 of people are not going to hear a lot of things
22 we're going to speak about.

23 The school that has come now to share their
24 thoughts, but for the people who are still back
25 there, who I see, I only want to say one thing:

1 you have the opportunity for a school for your
2 students, and we want the space for our own,
3 that you don't come to change what we already
4 have here.

5 In all respect, we ask that people who have
6 this case to think right, because all action has
7 a consequence. And, don't wait before something
8 happens with the kids we have here, or the kids
9 who are going to come in, but we cannot permit
10 it ourselves. We are all united with the
11 school. So, a new school does not come in to
12 take away what we already have. Thank you.

13 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. [Phonetic]
14 Lucia Diaz, Veronica Gonzales, Alison Rocha?

15 MS. VERONICA GONZALES: [Spanish
16 interpreter] My name is Veronica Gonzales. I
17 have my daughter in the school. I only came
18 here to give a testimonial; I have my son in a
19 charter school a long time ago. The reason I'm
20 here, I want to share with the new school that
21 wants to come in with 157. It's more important
22 that they listen to this testimony I'm going to
23 give. It's very difficult sharing with another
24 school.

25 My son suffered a lot with that type of

1 situation, but the parents that were in that
2 charter school fought, and we sent letters to
3 the Education, so they could give us our own
4 building. And, it was given, and thanks for the
5 back-up of all the parents that was at charter
6 school.

7 Thank you for having, responding to the
8 education of my kid. But, there are a lot of
9 schools, and I find in this school the efficient
10 education for my kid, for my child, and I don't
11 need another charter. Thank you.

12 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. Alison?

13 ALISON: [Spanish interpreter] Good evening
14 to all. It's very shameful for the Department
15 of Education, I put shame on them, because this
16 problem should be resolved in another way. I
17 have shame that you have decided to put this
18 proposal to - -, and fight against each other
19 when you can solve the problem instantly. You
20 give us the truth--somebody here was saying, oh,
21 they have provided with truth. What truth?
22 Half of the truth.

23 I'm an educator, I'm a parent. And, the
24 schools that you supposedly gave us, it's not
25 even a half. And, now you want to come and take

1 it away? How's it's going to work? How are
2 these educators going to work with my children,
3 if you're going to bring more children from
4 another - -, because they have no state funding,
5 because they haven't well, and we are doing
6 well. That's the truth.

7 Everything is about the money; money
8 matters. They lost their funding, now DOE run
9 to us to solve the problem, and taking away all
10 our tools, all our effort, all our work, all our
11 sweating, and just put them here, and say, hey,
12 we solved the problem for them, and we're going
13 to take the funding.

14 No, it's not fair, and it's not fair to the
15 locators, and it's not fair to me as a parents.
16 It's not fair for them, and it's not fair for
17 our children here. We have been here years, and
18 year, and years in a community which is coming,
19 I'm sorry. I really feel sorry for you guys,
20 but it's not fair to us that we have sweat to
21 build what we have right now. Sorry. Shame,
22 shame to the DOE. They are the ones that
23 supposed to solve the problem, not us. They are
24 the one.

25 Shame to them, shame to De Blasio, shame to

1 - -, shame to the funding that they gave us, a
2 little bit. Good night.

3 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you, thank you.
4 Ellen Eagan, Matthew Baskerville, Chantal Diaz?

5 MS. ELLEN EAGAN: Hi, my name is Ellen
6 Eagan. I'm the school attorney for Beginning
7 with Children, I'm also the attorney that worked
8 on Williams vs. the State of California. And,
9 in fact, the very purpose of that case was to
10 bring equal access to all children. I have been
11 fighting for children my entire legal career,
12 and I represent one type of charter, and that is
13 a community charter like Beginning with
14 Children.

15 This school is not a Success Academy, it is
16 not a First Achievement. It's not a KIP
17 Academy. It is a school that started well
18 before the charter law was in place. It was a
19 school that was started by the Chancellor, by
20 the Department of Education. [Crosstalk] Yes,
21 it does. Because, it was started, it was
22 started by this very community.

23 FEMALE MODERATOR: Excuse me, please let's
24 listen to the speaker.

25 MS. EAGAN: The problem here is that you

1 don't have the facts, and the facts started at
2 the beginning, at the top of the--three hours
3 ago. Where, you were sitting here being fed
4 lies, that things are going to be taken away
5 from your children. And, in fact, that is not
6 going to happen.

7 In the District--the Office of District
8 Planning did the analysis, and the folks that
9 are going to be entering this community--the
10 disrespect, and lies, and the lack of facts is
11 shocking, and this community should educate
12 themselves, and recognize [crowd noise].

13 FEMALE MODERATOR: Let the speaker finish.

14 MS. EAGAN: The focus, the focus of--

15 FEMALE MODERATOR: [Interposing] Please, let
16 the lady finish her statement.

17 MS. EAGAN: Okay, okay. So, the bottom line
18 is that there was an analysis done, and there's
19 a legal process here, and it was followed. And,
20 you could not get better partners than the folks
21 at the Beginning with Children Charter School,
22 who have an interest to work with you, to have
23 our children co-located, educated together.

24 [Crowd noise] Thank you.

25 FEMALE MODERATOR: Is Chantal Diaz

1 [phonetic] here? Matthew Baskerville, Elana
2 Espinoza, Adrian Mechta, Francisco Fidera, and
3 Evelyn Morales?

4 MS. ADRIAN MECHTA: Hi, my name is Adrian
5 Mechta, I'm the Program Director for Goodwill
6 Industries After School Program here. I've
7 worked with Leah, who also runs the middle
8 school after school program. Our program has
9 proven successful, so we have expanded. And, I
10 don't want our - - to end because of this. I do
11 not know if our program will be able to stay,
12 and that is something that will be taken away
13 from the children if this happens.

14 We currently have a wait list for the kids
15 who want to be in our program, because our
16 parents need to work. So, for our parents to be
17 able to work, to improve the community, to keep
18 the growth happening, our students need a place
19 to be until 6:00 every day.

20 I want to spend my time as a Program
21 Director writing curriculum and planning and
22 scheduling activities that further their
23 education, that further their experiences in
24 life. I don't want to spend my time as a
25 Director trying to organize when I can use the

1 gym, trying to compromise when I can use the
2 auditorium to have shows. That's now how my
3 time is better spent.

4 FEMALE MODERATOR: Elana, Francisco?

5 FRANCISCO: Good evening, everyone. I'm
6 trying to say this in English, even when it's
7 not my first language. I want to say something
8 to them: I'm sorry for what's happening to the
9 school.

10 I registered my kids in this school because
11 they have the bilingual program for Latinos who
12 want their kids keeps their language. That's
13 the first thing I was looking for, my kids to
14 keep their language. That's something what this
15 school have. But, it's a lot of things they
16 need to get at their schools. It's a lot of
17 programs they don't have. And, I know other
18 schools in other neighbors, they have.

19 And, I'm kind of mad, feel bad about it.
20 But, I'm not going to try to put my kids in
21 other schools, because I think these teachers
22 right here prove me this is the right school for
23 my child. I'm sorry for Beginning's school
24 children's--my kids, my kids have this problem
25 with me, right now. I forget, or I don't know

1 any way to teach my kids to share something
2 they don't have. I'm so sorry for that. Judge
3 me; I'm so sorry for that. Thank you.

4 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. Evelyn
5 Morales, Maria Zaratan, Reyes Martinez, Ms.
6 Stewart?

7 MS. MARIA SANDEZ: [Spanish interpreter] To
8 all, my name is Maria Sandez. I have a Special
9 Ed child. I am very worried, because this other
10 school wants to come into our school, and I feel
11 that the space that the other school is going to
12 take up, going to take away from the kids that
13 need Special Education.

14 And, a consequence of all of that, our
15 children, their level of education is going to
16 be lowered. Please, I ask you, - -. They need
17 an education like our children. We don't want
18 to be like a sardine here together. Thank you.

19 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you. Reyes
20 Martinez?

21 MR. REYES MARTINEZ: [Spanish interpreter]
22 Good evening. My name is Reyes Martinez. I am
23 very discomforted by this notice. My kid is
24 going to another school, is coming to this
25 school, and they don't have space for them to

1 study. If my kids are here studying in this
2 school all right, wouldn't there be another
3 location where those kids get another school?
4 They need a school with progress.

5 I am also worried because I have a child
6 that is taking verbal therapy, speech therapy.
7 I wouldn't like that tomorrow the teacher will
8 say we eliminated that program because we have
9 too many kids that they brought from the other
10 school. We can't give him that class, now.

11 My child, where is he going to be, then? My
12 child will not continue to learn. He's going to
13 come nervous, going to ask his dad, what do I
14 do? I don't have the classes that I had. Now,
15 what am I going to do? Now, I'm going to have
16 to worry about it.

17 We have a great school. Why do they want to
18 do this to us? I don't - - having so much space
19 for other schools. There's a lot of space in
20 other schools. Maybe there are some properties
21 - - for the children that need it. Don't take
22 away from these kids what they already have.
23 These children are happy, we have them happy
24 with their teachers.

25 FEMALE MODERATOR: Thank you.

1 MR. MARTINEZ: Thank you. That is all.

2 FEMALE MODERATOR: Ms. Stewart, Michelle
3 Batista, and Saria Lopez? Anyone? Okay. We
4 are--I understand. We welcome any comments and
5 feedback prior to 24 hours before the panel for
6 education policy be held on this proposal, and
7 it's meeting Wednesday, March 25th.

8 The email address and phone number where
9 comments may be made are:

10 D14proposal@schools.newyorkcity.gov, or at the
11 phone number (212)374-0208. Thank you for your
12 participation, and this joint public hearing is
13 now closed.

14 [END RECORDING]

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The prior proceedings were transcribed from audio files and have been transcribed to the best of my ability. I further certify that I am not connected by blood, marriage or employment with any of the parties herein nor interested directly or indirectly in the matter transcribed.


Wanda Henry

Date March 12, 2015

C E R T I F I C A T E

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9 transcribed.

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11 Signature *GG Atkinson*

12 Date 03/13/2015
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