

Public Comment Analysis

Date: April 19, 2016

Topic: The Proposed Consolidation of Upper School @ P.S. 25 (16K534) with P.S. 308 Clara Cardwell (16K308) in Building K308 Beginning in the 2016-2017 School Year

Date of Panel Vote: April 20, 2016

Summary of Proposal

On March 3, 2016, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) issued an Educational Impact Statement (“EIS”) and Building Utilization Plan (“BUP”) describing a proposal to consolidate the Upper School @ P.S. 25 (16K534, “Upper School”) with P.S. 308 Clara Cardwell (16K308, “P.S. 308”) in building K308 (“K308”), located at 616 Quincy Street, Brooklyn, NY 11221 in the 2016-2017 school year. A “consolidation” means that two or more existing school organizations are combined into one school to operate and serve students more effectively.

The DOE is proposing to consolidate Upper School with P.S. 308 because both schools have struggled with low enrollment, which creates budgetary and programmatic challenges, and because consolidation would support healthy enrollment at the consolidated P.S. 308. Upper School is an existing District 16 middle school that serves students in grades six through eight in building K025 (“K025”), located at 787 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11221. P.S. 308 is an existing District 16 school serving students in grades kindergarten through eight, and offering a full-day pre-kindergarten program (“Pre-K”) in K308. K025 is 0.5 miles from K308. If this proposal is approved, Upper School and P.S. 308 will be combined such that students, staff, and resources of Upper School will become part of P.S. 308 in K308, and Upper School will no longer exist as a distinct school option as of the 2016-2017 school year.

On April 13, 2016 the DOE posted an amended proposal to correct a typographical error in the total building enrollment in the projected enrollment and building utilization chart in Section II of the EIS.

Teaching Firms of America – Professional Preparatory Charter School (84K406, “TFOA”), a charter school serving students in grades kindergarten through five, is co-located with P.S. 308 in K308. A “co-location” means that two or more school organizations are located in the same building and may share common spaces, such as auditoriums, gymnasiums, libraries and cafeterias. K308 also houses the Community-Based Organization (“CBO”) Sports and Arts in Schools Foundation (“SASF”). If this proposal is approved, the consolidated school will be co-located with TFOA and SASF will continue to provide services and maintain its space in K308.

As noted above, Upper School is currently housed in K025, where it is co-located with P.S. 25 Eubie Blake School (16K025). Per a prior proposal approved by the Panel for Educational Policy (“PEP”) on January 20, 2016, Success Academy Charter School – NYC 7 (84KTBD) will open in K025 beginning in the 2016-2017 school year. If approved, this proposal will not impact the previously approved opening of Success Academy Charter School – NYC 7 (84KTBD) in K025. Additionally, if approved, this proposal is not expected to impact the remaining school organizations in K025, although the removal of Upper School will likely result in adjustments to space allocations among the remaining co-located schools.

The New York State Education Department (“SED”) assigns an accountability status to each district school—Good Standing, Local Assistance Plan, Focus, or Priority. Upper School and P.S. 308 are both identified as Focus schools. If this proposal is approved, the newly consolidated P.S. 308 will continue to be a Focus school.

In addition, Upper School is currently one of a cohort of 94 schools that have been designated by the DOE as Renewal Schools. Schools selected to be Renewal Schools were assigned the state accountability status of “Priority” or “Focus” by SED, demonstrated low academic achievement (in 2012, 2013, and 2014), and scored “Proficient” or

below on their most recent Quality Review at the time of selection (four schools – but not Upper School - were selected to be Renewal Schools per the Chancellor’s discretion).

As a Renewal School, Upper School is currently being transformed into a Community School. Community Schools are intended to be neighborhood hubs where students receive high-quality academic instruction, families can access social services, and communities congregate to share resources and address their common challenges. If this proposal is approved, the consolidated P.S. 308 would not be designated as a Renewal School, but it would be designated as a Community School. Accordingly, while Upper School receives funds as both a Community School and a Renewal School, the consolidated P.S. 308 would only receive funding through the Community School program.

Consolidation decisions are made on a case-by-case basis in partnership with the superintendent and impacted school communities. They are intended to improve under-enrolled schools and address the budgetary, programmatic, and performance challenges that arise as a result of low enrollment. Since most funding in schools’ budgets is allocated on a per-pupil basis based on Fair Student Funding (“FSF”) per capita allocation levels, schools that struggle with low enrollment may also subsequently struggle with funding issues. For example, they may not be able to afford the full range of services or specialized instruction. Consolidations support healthy school enrollment so that schools have the budgets necessary to operate effectively. Other potential benefits of consolidations include increased access to resources and improvements in school performance.

Both Upper School and P.S. 308 are under-enrolled. The DOE is proposing to consolidate Upper School with P.S. 308 based primarily on the benefits students in both school communities would derive from the additional resources made available by consolidating the two school organizations into one. If this proposal is approved, students attending the consolidated P.S. 308 will have access to a wider variety of academic and enrichment opportunities, interventions, and other supports that would not be financially feasible for either individual school to offer in the absence of a consolidation. In addition to increased resources, the consolidation will allow the schools to combine the strengths and best practices of each individual school into a single, larger organization.

This proposal has been developed by the District 16 Superintendent to address limited resources and low enrollment at Upper School and P.S. 308, which became evident over the course of conversations between the District 16 Superintendent and the principals of Upper School and P.S. 308. In addition to working with the school communities, the District 16 Superintendent has worked closely with various DOE offices to determine the best path to support the students at both schools. The consolidation of Upper School with P.S. 308 will improve resources at the consolidated school and reduce the number of under-enrolled middle schools in the district.

K308 has the capacity to serve a total of 1,032 students. If this proposal is approved, P.S. 308 is expected to absorb the enrollment of Upper School. Accordingly, in the 2016-2017 school year, P.S. 308 is expected to serve a projected 371-461 students in kindergarten through eighth grade and Pre-K, and TFOA is projected to serve approximately 360-420 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, yielding a projected building utilization rate of 71%-85%.

The details of this proposal have been released in the amended EIS and BUP which can be accessed here: <http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2015-2016/April202016SchoolProposals>. Copies of the amended EIS and BUP are also available in the main offices of Upper School, P.S. 25, P.S. 308, and TFOA.

Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearings

The DOE held two Joint Public Hearings regarding this proposal: one at K025 on April 6, 2016 and one at K308 on April 11, 2016. At both hearings interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 25 people attended the hearing at K025 and there were 11 speakers. Individuals present at that hearing included: Acting District 16 Superintendent Rahesha Amon; Community Education Council (“CEC”) 16 President, NeQuan McLean; Upper School Principal and School Leadership Team (“SLT”) member, Ativia Sandusky; Upper School SLT members Wendy Gamble, Lesia Wills Johnston, Danta Ford-Wynter, Anne-Marie Bancroft, and Theresa Wilson; P.S. 25 Principal and SLT member, Anita Coley; and Dipa Desai and Greg Whitten from the DOE. Representatives from P.S. 25’s SLT confirmed their availability but did not attend the hearing.

Approximately 20 people attended the April 11, 2016 hearing and there were 5 speakers. Individuals present at the hearing included: Acting District 16 Superintendent Rahesha Amon; DOE Senior Superintendent Laura Feijoo; DOE Deputy Chancellor of Operations Elizabeth Rose; CEC 16 President NeQuan McLean; Upper School Principal and SLT member, Ativia Sandusky; Upper School SLT member Anne-Marie Bancroft; P.S. 308 Principal and SLT member, Sharon Odwin; P.S. 308 SLT members Temika Johnson, Sharelyn Hickman, and Jocelyn Bass; and Sarah Turchin, Jonathan Geis, and Greg Whitten from the DOE. Representatives from TFOA confirmed their availability but did not attend the hearing.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing on April 6, 2016

1. CEC 16 President, NeQuan McLean, stated that CEC 16 sent a letter to the PEP expressing their support for the consolidation and that CEC 16 intends to pass an official resolution in support of the proposal at their next calendar meeting, which is scheduled to take place before the April 20, 2016 PEP calendar vote.
2. Lesia Wills Johnston, Upper School SLT member, commented as follows:
 - a. She has concerns about the speed at which the consolidation proposal was rolled out and feels that the proposal was consistently portrayed as a “done deal.”
 - b. She feels that the proposal does not consider the gains being achieved at Upper School in the 2015-2016 school year.
 - c. She feels that the proposal undercuts the school’s status as a Renewal School, since Upper School was supposed to have three years to improve enrollment and performance, but this is only the second year of the Renewal School program.
 - d. She compared Upper School to M.S. 385 School of Business, Finance, and Entrepreneurship, which she claimed was allowed to continue despite their low enrollment.
 - e. She questioned what other considerations were made to support the school before pursuing a plan of consolidation.
3. Multiple commenters, including students from Upper School, stated support for the staff at Upper School and stated that the school has made positive changes in recent years.
4. Multiple commenters expressed disappointment that current students attending Upper School in sixth and seventh grade will not be able to graduate from Upper School.
5. Multiple commenters stated that they felt that the small enrollment at Upper School contributed to the school’s character and allowed staff members to better know the students of the school.
6. Multiple students from Upper School expressed that they felt they had grown both personally and academically at Upper School.
7. Multiple commenters expressed that they feel Upper School deserves more time to improve without being consolidated.
8. Multiple commenters expressed that they do not feel the consolidation:
 - a. Best addresses the needs of students in Upper School; and
 - b. Stated that they are not confident that students from Upper School will want to attend the consolidated P.S. 308.
9. One commenter expressed concern that P.S. 308 and Upper School are not doing enough to share best practices and are not effectively preparing for the consolidation.
10. One commenter questioned why charter schools cannot build their own space instead of coming into district school space.

The following comments and remarks were made at the Joint Public Hearing on April 11, 2016

11. CEC 16 President, NeQuan McLean, commented that he feels the consolidation is best for all students in Upper School and P.S. 308, and that the consolidation will bring both schools together to improve enrollment and add needed resources for the students served at both schools.
12. Temika Johnson, P.S. 308 SLT member, commented as follows:
 - a. She is opposed to the consolidation because she feels that P.S. 308 is a “sinking ship.”
 - b. She stated that she has security concerns for P.S. 308, as P.S. 308 was promised security cameras and additional mirrors in the school, but only the mirrors have been delivered.
 - c. She noted that there is no guarantee that this proposal will lead to increased enrollment in P.S. 308, as students from Upper School continue to have the option of attending a different school if they would like.
 - d. She stated that teachers feel they do not have job security in P.S. 308.

- e. She questioned if P.S. 308 would be receiving more special education teachers.
 - f. She thinks that P.S. 308 should first be improved before focusing on consolidation.
13. Sharon Odwin, P.S. 308 principal, commented that the school is in the process of rebuilding and restructuring to best support teaching and learning in the building.
14. Acting District 16 Superintendent, Rahesha Amon, commented as follows:
- a. She is thrilled with the collaboration that has been occurring between P.S. 308 and Upper School in support of the consolidation.
 - b. She believes that this consolidation is best for the students in District 16, and she looks forward to the results of the consolidation, if it is approved by the PEP.
 - c. She knows that teacher leaders from both schools have been meeting and she is aware that other collaboration meetings are under way.
15. One commenter questioned what will happen with the CBO currently located in K308, SASF, as Upper School's current CBO, Partnership with Children, is anticipated to move with the school over to K308, if this proposal is approved.

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

The following comments were submitted directly to members of the PEP for consideration and were also submitted to the DOE for response.

16. CEC 16 submitted the following written comments in relation to this proposal:
- a. CEC 16 supports the proposal to consolidate Upper School with P.S. 308 in K308 beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, as CEC 16 understands that consolidations are necessary to ensure quality education and support healthy enrollment at each school.
 - b. CEC 16 looks forward to continuing to work closely with P.S. 308 and the Acting District 16 Superintendent to ensure that security, staffing, and budget concerns are addressed before the 2016-2017 school year.
 - c. Despite community concerns about the timing of this proposal, CEC 16 feels that it is in the best interest of the students to consolidate P.S. 308 and Upper School at this time so as to begin the transition and collaboration process between both schools.
17. One commenter stated as follows:
- a. She feels like Upper School has been mistreated in this process and has not had adequate opportunity to have its voice heard.
 - b. She feels that this proposal is not giving credit to the gains that have been made at Upper School, including gaining removal from the state Focus School list.
 - c. She questioned why the school is being proposed for consolidation in the second year of the school Renewal program.
 - d. She compared Upper School to M.S. 385 School of Business, Finance, and Entrepreneurship, claiming that M.S. 385's consolidation was more thoroughly planned out.
 - e. She claimed that Upper School was never given a chance to recruit students or to try other methods to increase enrollment.

The DOE received zero (0) voicemails through the dedicated phone number for this proposal.

The DOE received one (1) email through the dedicated email address for this proposal.

Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives, Significant Alternatives Proposed

Comments 1, 11, 14(b), 16(a), and 16(c) express support for the proposal. Comments 14(a) and 14(c) note the collaboration that has begun between the schools in support of the consolidation.

The DOE appreciates the support for this proposal that some commenters expressed. In response to comments 14(a) and 14(c) specifically, the DOE recognizes the praise for the work being done by Upper School and P.S. 308 and commends the school communities for their hard work, dedication, and collaboration. The DOE is committed to

supporting both school communities throughout the consolidation process, and in the future, as the consolidation is implemented, if this proposal is approved.

Comment 2(a) expresses the belief that the DOE has consistently portrayed this proposal as a “done deal,” and expresses concern about the speed at which the planning for this proposal occurred. Similarly, comment 17(d) claims that other proposals have had longer planning timelines and comment 17(a) suggests that the Upper School community has not had adequate opportunity to have its voice heard in this process.

All proposals must be voted on by the PEP to be approved for implementation. No decision has yet been made on this proposal. As mentioned at both Joint Public Hearings and throughout engagement meetings that occurred for this proposal, the PEP is scheduled to vote on this proposal at its April 20, 2016 meeting, which will be held at M.S. 131, located at 100 Hester Street, New York, NY 10002.

With regard to the speed at which this proposal was rolled out, the DOE notes that formal engagement began for this proposal as early as October 23, 2015, when the District 16 Superintendent announced plans for this proposal at a public CEC 16 meeting, and the DOE similarly notified representatives from the United Federation of Teachers, the Council of School Supervisors and Administrations, and the DC-37 union on that same date. In total, and as outlined in the EIS for this proposal, the DOE has held nine formal engagement events for this proposal since October 2015 and offered each impacted school community the opportunity to request additional optional community meetings. The nine engagement events included two Joint Public Hearings for this proposal, and a Deputy Chancellor led walkthrough and SLT debrief with P.S. 308 and Upper School in K308 on February 29, 2016. Further, since posting this proposal all timelines have been conducted in compliance with Chancellor’s Regulation A-190, which governs proposals related to significant changes in school utilization.

Comments 2(b) and 17(b) expresses the belief that this proposal does not adequately consider Upper School’s gains in the current school year.

The DOE recognizes the praise for Upper School and applauds the school on its efforts in the 2015-2016 school year. That said, this proposal is based primarily on the low student enrollment in Upper School and P.S. 308, which declined in both schools between the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years. The purpose of this proposal is to combine enrollment from both schools to ensure that all students have the opportunity to attend a school with adequate resources for student activities, planning, and instructional opportunities.

Comments 2(c) and 17(c) questions why this proposal is being proposed in the second year of Upper School’s Renewal School process, and comment 7 expresses that Upper School deserves more time to improve without being consolidated.

All School Improvement Grant (“SIG”) applications for Renewal Schools stated that “[t]he Mayor, Chancellor, and NYCDOE leadership will closely monitor Renewal School progress via regular data reports and frequent visits to the school. Renewal Schools have at most three years to show significant improvement before the NYCDOE considers restructuring the school. If the school fails to meet benchmarks each year, or the Superintendent loses confidence in the school leadership, the Superintendent will make the changes necessary to ensure that each child in the school has a high-quality education. Such changes may include school consolidation/merger or closure.”

The NYCDOE is monitoring schools with low student enrollment for possible consolidations/mergers. As of April 2016, eight consolidation proposals were approved by the PEP, and an additional three consolidation proposals will be voted on by the PEP at the April 2016 PEP meeting, all for 2016-2017 implementation. The DOE believes that school redesign efforts will ultimately provide a much richer educational experience for our students.

With regard to Upper School’s status as a Renewal School particularly, the DOE feels that the decrease in student enrollment and overall low student enrollment in the school in the 2015-2016 school year necessitates this consolidation proposal at this time in order to provide the best educational opportunity for students currently in the school.

Comment 2(d) compares the low enrollment of Upper School to the low enrollment of M.S. 385 School of Business, Finance, and Entrepreneurship. The commenter claims that M.S. 385 was not consolidated despite low enrollment.

The DOE notes that the public commenter was incorrect with the facts regarding M.S. 385. Just as Upper School is being proposed for consolidation due to low student enrollment, M.S. 385 was proposed for consolidation due to low student enrollment. At its December 16, 2015 meeting, the PEP approved the proposed consolidation of M.S. 385 into J.H.S. 57 Whitelaw Reid.

Comment 5 cites low student enrollment as a strength for Upper School.

The DOE understands that the small school environment in Upper School has led to a culture and experience in Upper School where many students likely have intimate and personal relationships with the school staff. However, the DOE notes that this consolidation is proposed to address the limited resources that arise as a result of low enrollment. As most funding in schools' budgets is allocated on a per-pupil basis based on FSF per capita allocation levels, Upper School's low school enrollment impacts the range of services, specialized instruction, and programs that the school can offer students. Thus, while low enrollment may afford opportunities for personal relationships between students and staff, low enrollment also impacts the broader opportunities of programming, instruction, and services that the school can offer all students. Further, the DOE believes that intimate and personal relationships are also possible in larger schools, as such relationships exist in hundreds of schools around New York City with larger enrollment.

Comment 2(e) questioned what other considerations were made to support Upper School before this consolidation proposal was proposed.

Other considerations made to support Upper School before pursuing a plan of consolidation included leadership and programmatic changes.

In addition, the DOE notes that Upper School was identified as a Renewal School and a Community School, both of which have provided additional funds and supports to the school over the past couple of years. Despite those forms of support, enrollment continued to decline in Upper School, and the DOE consequently believes that consolidation is necessary to best support students and ensure healthy enrollment for District 16 middle schools.

Comments 3 and 6 express support for Upper School.

The DOE recognizes the praise for Upper School. This consolidation, if approved, will allow Upper School to share best practices with P.S. 308.

Comment 4 expresses disappointment that current students in sixth and seventh grade at Upper School will not graduate from Upper School if this proposal is approved.

While current students in sixth and seventh grade at Upper School will not graduate from Upper School if this proposal is approved, such students will have the opportunity to remain with their peers and staff that continue teaching in the consolidated P.S. 308.

Comment 8(a) states that this proposal does not best address the needs of students in Upper School.

The DOE understands that there are times when the DOE and certain members of the community differ in their opinions about specific projects. The DOE is committed to ensuring that all students impacted by this proposal have their needs considered and are provided a stronger educational opportunity as a result of this proposal. In that respect, the DOE has proposed this proposal to ensure that students currently attending Upper School have the opportunity to attend a middle school with greater enrollment in 2016-2017 and one that can offer a wider range of activities, programming, and resources for students. Further, Upper School and P.S. 308 have had ongoing collaboration, which will ensure that the consolidated P.S. 308 has consideration and respect for the current needs of students in Upper School.

Comment 8(b) and comment 12(c) state concerns that students from Upper School may not attend the consolidated P.S. 308.

If this proposal is approved, current Upper School sixth and seventh grade students, as well as eighth grade students who are not on track to graduate, will be served at the consolidated P.S. 308 beginning in the 2016-2017 school year in K308, which is only 0.5 miles from their current school building, K025. It is expected that all current Upper School students, with the exception of those continuing on to high school, will attend the consolidated P.S. 308. However, any students who prefer a different school option may seek a transfer for the 2016-2017 school year through the Office of Student Enrollment (“OSE”). OSE will work to match students based on their needs and seat availability.

Comment 9 states concern that Upper School and P.S. 308 are not doing enough to collaborate with one another to effectively prepare for the consolidation.

While P.S. 308 and Upper School are not co-located, the Acting District 16 Superintendent is working closely with P.S. 308 and Upper School leadership to plan collaboration, and to share resources and best practices as well as encourage participation in joint school events. The Parent Teacher Association presidents have already met to plan parent activities, teacher leaders are forming inquiry groups, and student leaders are part of an ambassador program where they meet to plan for the consolidated school. The school communities have also begun thinking about a joint consolidation newsletter that is displayed/distributed across the schools. If the PEP approves this consolidation proposal, the school leaders will begin a more unified collaboration across all groups of each school community.

Comment 12(a) expresses concerns about the quality of P.S. 308, and comment 12(f) states an opinion that P.S. 308 should first focus on its own improvement before being a candidate for consolidation.

The DOE feels confident that P.S. 308 provides a strong educational option for students to currently attend, and that the proposed consolidation of Upper School and P.S. 308 is aimed to improve the educational options at P.S. 308 and for the greater District 16 community. This proposal will support P.S. 308’s improvement by increasing student enrollment at the school, which will lead to greater resources, and by allowing Upper School and P.S. 308 to share best practices and staff collaboration. The DOE disagrees with the opinion that P.S. 308 is not a strong candidate for consolidation, as the DOE believes that P.S. 308 currently offers students a strong educational opportunity in District 16, and that this proposal stands to only benefit P.S. 308.

Comment 12(b) questions whether security cameras will be added to K308.

Although this comment is unrelated to this proposal, the DOE recognizes that there were assurances that K308 would receive additional security equipment, including cameras. The DOE is fully committed to providing that equipment in a timely fashion, irrespective of whether this proposal is approved.

Comment 12(d) states that teachers do not feel secure in their placement as a result of this consolidation.

The DOE notes that while this proposal may have an impact on school personnel, the DOE will seek to minimize excessing of represented staff in either school. In the event that staff excessing is required, staff from Upper School and P.S. 308 will be merged into one list to determine seniority by license, and all contractual rules regarding excessing will apply.

Comment 12(e) questions whether P.S. 308 will receive additional special education teachers as a result of this proposal.

If this proposal is approved, the consolidated P.S. 308 will receive funds for students in special education classes aligned to the FSF formula for each student. Consequently, it is expected that P.S. 308 will hire additional staff as appropriate to serve the student enrollment as it exists in the 2016-2017 school year. Any additional staff hired would be aligned to an increased need for special education teachers, if one exists as a result of this proposal.

Comment 13 references planning for continued improvement efforts at P.S. 308, and comment 16(b) expresses enthusiasm to continue to work to support P.S. 308.

The DOE encourages continued plans for school improvement at P.S. 308, including the planning and collaboration efforts underway between P.S. 308 and Upper School, and the DOE appreciates the support of CEC 16 in supporting P.S. 308 in District 16.

Comment 15 questioned the planning for SASF in K308 if this proposal is approved.

K308 currently houses the CBO SASF. As described in the EIS and BUP that accompanies this proposal, SASF is currently allocated space in K308. This proposal is not expected to impact the space or services offered by SASF.

In addition, Upper School is currently served by two CBOs in K025: Pure Elements and Partnership with Children. If this proposal is approved, Partnership with Children, a CBO affiliated with the Community School program, will move to K308 with Upper School, and this proposal is not expected to impact the services offered by Partnership with Children. While Pure Elements is not expected to move to K308 with Upper School if this proposal is approved, after-school programming similar to that currently provided by Pure Elements may be offered through P.S. 308's partnerships with SASF and Partnership with Children.

Comment 17(e) states that Upper School was never given a chance to recruit opportunities or try other ways to increase enrollment.

The DOE disagrees with the suggestion that Upper School did not have opportunity to increase its student enrollment over the years. Since 2010-2011 Upper School's enrollment has decreased 62% in grades six through eight, and the DOE notes that only 19 students are registered in sixth grade in Upper School in the 2015-2016 school year. Given the low enrollment that currently exists in Upper School, the DOE feels that this proposal is necessary at this time to best support students and families in attending viable middle school options with enough enrollment to support diverse programming, academic opportunities, and extra-curricular programs.

Comment 10 questioned why charter schools are not located in private space.

This proposal is about the proposed consolidation of Upper School and P.S. 308, and is not a proposal determining the use of public school space for charter schools. Consequently, comment 10 is unrelated to this proposal and does not require a response.

Changes Made to the Proposal

No changes have been made to this proposal.