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

**Phase-out and Replacement for
Frederick Douglass Academy IV
1/30/12**

1 [START 265_591]

2 MS. OLIVIA ELLIS: Good evening. My name is
3 Olivia Ellis and I will be your moderator for
4 tonight's joint public hearing. This is a joint
5 public hearing of the Department of Education,
6 Community Education Council and School
7 Leadership Teams to discuss the proposed
8 truncation of the middle school grades of
9 Frederick Douglass Academy IV, 19K383, beginning
10 2012 to 2013. And to propose opening a co-
11 location of a new school, 16K - - with existing
12 schools Frederick Douglass Academy IV secondary
13 school, 16K383 and PS26 Jesse Owens, 16K26 in
14 the building beginning 2012-2013. Tonight's
15 proceedings will be recorded and transcribed.
16 Before we begin the hearing, we ask that anyone
17 who wishes to speak during the public comment
18 portion of the hearing, sign up at the table in
19 the back. Sign-up will begin at 6:15. If you
20 have a question that you want to be addressed
21 during the Q&A portion of the agenda, please
22 write that question on the index cards provided
23 at the back and submit them to the volunteer by
24 the table. Only people who have signed up to
25 speak will be able to participate in the public

1 comment. All panel participants were asked to
2 be here - - . Now that we've started, if any
3 panel participant arrives late, he or she will
4 be given the time to speak at the first
5 opportune moment. We want to be respectful of
6 everyone's time. There may be elected officials
7 who will arrive at certain times throughout the
8 evening. If they wish to speak, we will do our
9 best to accommodate them at the first opportune
10 moment. Those who are here at the start of the
11 public comment segment will be asked to speak
12 first. Please look at the agenda. The format
13 will include presentation of the proposal,
14 presentations by hearing participants followed
15 by public comment. Speakers should have already
16 signed up at the table in the lobby. Public
17 comments can be no longer than two minutes each.
18 The time will be strictly followed and speakers
19 will be informed when their designated time has
20 been used. There will be a question and answer
21 period. Members of the audience who have
22 questions, you have to write the question on a
23 postcard that was supplied by the assignment
24 table when you arrived this evening. While the
25 public comments are taking place, staff members

1 will organize the questions into categories and
2 get them ready for Q&A. Some questions will be
3 answered directly and others will be - - in
4 order to avoid repetitiveness. Even though all
5 individual questions will not be addressed in
6 the forum, they will be posted online. If at
7 the end of the hearing you still have questions,
8 we encourage you to direct them to us by calling
9 the number on the bottom of the fact sheet or
10 send them to us via email to the email address
11 provided on the fact sheet. I would like to now
12 introduce the panel - - this evening's Joint
13 Public Hearing. Deputy Chancellor, David
14 Weiner. Community Superintendent, Karen Watts.
15 Principal, Elvin Crespo. School Leadership Team
16 Member, Ronald Robertson. School Leadership
17 Team Member, Marta Torres. Community Education
18 Council President, Pegye Johnson. I will now
19 turn the program over to Deputy Chancellor David
20 Weiner who will present the proposal.

21 MR. DAVID WEINER: Thank you Olivia, and
22 thank you to my colleagues here and thank you to
23 everyone in the audience for coming - - . This
24 Joint Public Hearing was convened to discuss the
25 proposed location and placement of the middle

1 school grades at the Frederick Douglass Academy
2 IV secondary school. The decision to terminate
3 the school is not an easy one. We do not take
4 these decisions lightly. We examine many
5 factors and data before we propose a course of
6 action. We also reach out to families,
7 community members and members of the school.
8 Before I present - - proposal, I'd like to say a
9 few words about why we're here. All - - schools
10 provide a high quality education to our
11 students. And we must hold all schools to the
12 same standard of excellence, because every child
13 in this city, no matter where they live, deserve
14 the best possible education. Frederick Douglass
15 Academy IV is located at 1010 Lafayette Avenue
16 in Community School District 16 in Brooklyn.
17 They currently serve students in grades 6
18 through 12. On December 22nd, the DOE published
19 proposals to truncate and replace the middle
20 school grades only of FDA based on its
21 performance struggles and low demand for seats.
22 Under the proposal, the high school, the 9 to 12
23 portion, would remain open. Unfortunately,
24 Frederick Douglass Academy's performance data
25 indicates the school is struggling. Last year,

1 it received an overall F on its 2010-2011
2 Annual Progress Report, including an F grade for
3 student progress, a D grade for student
4 performance, and a C grade for school violence.
5 Its overall score will put it in the bottom of
6 the 1% of middle schools citywide.
7 Unfortunately, many of the students at Frederick
8 Douglass Academy were - - low grade level in
9 English and Math. Last year only 22%, about 2
10 out of every 10 students, were performing at
11 grade level in English, and 32%, 3 out of 10
12 students, were performing at grade level in
13 Math. Demand at the school, the middle school,
14 has also declined in the last several years.
15 Since 2006-2007, student enrollment has declined
16 28%. Because of these evaluations, the DOE
17 conducted a comprehensive review of the school
18 to determine which supports and interventions
19 would best benefit the students and the
20 community. The DOE worked with the
21 Superintendent and other experienced educators
22 who have worked closely with the school, and
23 held a community meeting for parents and staff.
24 Based on the comprehensive review of evidence
25 that initial supports were not as successful as

1 they needed to be, the DOE believes the only,
2 the DOE believes that only serious intervention,
3 the gradual truncation and replacement of the
4 middle school grades, will allow the long-
5 standing performance and allow the - - that will
6 better serve this community. FDA is moving into
7 building K26 and is co-located with the K-5
8 classes of PS26, existing District 16 elementary
9 school. A co-location means that two or more
10 organizations are located in the same building.
11 They may share large common spaces like the
12 auditorium, gymnasium, cafeteria, and other
13 spaces. In a separate EIS posted on December
14 22nd, the DOE proposed to co-locate a new middle
15 school, 16K681 in K26 which would serve students
16 in sixth grade through eighth grade when it
17 reaches full scale in 2014-15. The new middle
18 school would admit sixth graders through the
19 District 16 middle school choice process through
20 a limited unscreened selection method. The new
21 school would provide a new middle school option
22 for District 16 families and replace those seats
23 lost by the proposed truncation of FDA. 16K681
24 could be located in K26 with PS26 and high
25 school grades at Frederick Douglass Academy IV

1 secondary school as the middle school grades
2 are phase out and 16K681 phases in. The DOE
3 does not anticipate that the proposed truncation
4 and replacement of the middle school grades at
5 FDA secondary school will impact PS26. Before
6 we move to the public comments section of this
7 meeting, I would like to briefly discuss the
8 impact of this proposal on the current students
9 and families. If the proposal is approved, the
10 middle school grades will be truncated gradually
11 over the next several years and the school will
12 no longer accept new sixth graders after the end
13 of this school year. Current sixth and seventh
14 grade students will be supported at Frederick
15 Douglass Academy as they progress towards the
16 completion of middle school and transition to
17 high school, either at this high school or at
18 another high school in the District. Currently,
19 - - students who meet promotional requirements
20 will apply through the high school process,
21 through the citywide high school admission
22 process, and one choice could eventually be to
23 remain at this school. FDA secondary school
24 would no longer serve middle school students
25 after June 2014. In June 2014, the final year

1 of truncation, any student who does not meet
2 graduation requirements will be placed in
3 another District 16 middle school, or a middle
4 school - - . Thank you. I look forward to
5 hearing your comments and questions.

6 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. We'll now hear from
7 one of the SL Team members, School Leadership
8 Team members, Ronald Robertson.

9 MR. RONALD ROBERTSON: Good evening ladies
10 and gentlemen, students, uh, Deputy Chancellor,
11 Superintendent Watts, Chancellor Weiner, - - ,
12 Principal Crespo, as well as the School
13 Leadership Team members and CEC President. Um,
14 my name is Ronald Roberts, the UFT Chapter
15 Chair. And I've been a teacher at the school
16 for almost eight years, pretty much one year
17 after its inception. It is with much sadness
18 and dismay that on December 9, 2011, the entire
19 large community of District 16 learned the
20 proposed plan by the Department of Education for
21 our middle school. Let me speak to you about
22 the background of this institution. This school
23 was founded by then Principal - - . This middle
24 school was - - one of the top middle schools in
25 District 16. We saw at least 300 students

1 showing up on a Saturday morning to be tested,
2 interviewed for a spot in the school. - - to
3 show you just a quick slide. A couple of
4 interviews - - teacher, Maria, Maria Acedo did a
5 couple of years ago with some of her - - .

6 [Pause]

7 [Plays Audio Clips]

8 MALE VOICE 1: ...on his way to help me and
9 - - with, um, extracurricular math. He said he
10 did like, he did extra classes in the morning
11 and after school to help us, and he got us to
12 Math A one year early. So now I'm in eighth
13 grade and I'm taking Math B which - - . So I'm
14 like one grade ahead in math so that's going to
15 be a great help when I get to high school. So
16 that's why I thank him for that. Like there's
17 not many issues but like one important issue
18 that I think that - - have to realize is that
19 the materials needed for the school. Some
20 classes, they don't have enough books or they
21 don't have books at all. Like I think that
22 would really affect us 'cause when we take the
23 test, if you don't have the right resources, how
24 will we answer those questions. That's the main
25 thing. Yeah, that's about it, that's the main

1 thing we have to worry about and thank you
2 very much - - .

3 FEMALE VOICE 1: One last, one last issue
4 that you would like to address.

5 MALE VOICE 1: Oh I almost forgot, one thing
6 I mentioned that you...

7 [Breaks in audio clips; fast forwarding]

8 FEMALE VOICE 2: ...in our school, because
9 based on what I see, the kids can act very
10 boisterous and some of the students, if the
11 issue happens outside of school, sometimes in
12 the class, they might have an issue with another
13 student and that might get everything worked up
14 and their might be friction in what happens with
15 students' behavior. And this can stop others
16 and the teachers from teaching and others from
17 learning.

18 MR. ROBERTSON: Okay, um, this is, this is
19 common in schools pretty much. Uh, I'll get
20 back to that. However, throughout the years,
21 this school has had its fair share of leadership
22 crisis. That's why we're here this afternoon.
23 Uh, also the Education Department was not
24 servicing many students. Students transferred.
25 Grades were not documented properly. Teachers

1 were not being observed and given the
2 necessary tools and feedback for growth and
3 development. Over the past two years, this
4 school had three principals since - - the
5 founding principal did not return. Leticia - -
6 and - - were sent as supervisor in charge while
7 - - was still the principal in charge of records
8 according to the Department of Education.
9 Letitia - - resigned in the middle of the fall
10 term leaving Mr. - - . He later was sent back
11 to the middle school from which he came. There
12 was no assistant principal to assist the school
13 until the current principal, Mr. Elvin Crespo,
14 took over, with an ATR assistant principal.
15 During this time, the budget was already set for
16 the school year. So no major changes - - in
17 support could have been done. We are - - that
18 teachers currently have to be in the cafeteria
19 on a daily basis - - and lunch to make it a safe
20 environment for our students who we love so
21 much. One student had to be taken out - - to
22 the hospital recently due to the shortage of
23 staff in the cafeteria . During this time, the
24 middle school teachers came together, worked by
25 themselves to make sure that the middle school

1 was in operation. We put together an action
2 plan which is on record for doing, so that we
3 can turn this school around. There was - -
4 school in the right direction, all due to poor
5 staffing, or shortage of staff. We reached out
6 to the networks - - . I have all the
7 documentation in terms of emails that were sent
8 back and forth requesting assistant principal -
9 - then Superintendent - - was in August - - this
10 institution. So it is surprising to me that
11 this afternoon we have to sit here to hear that
12 our community school will be truncated or
13 eventually it will be phased out. Well, where
14 was the leadership? Where was the resources?
15 Where was the Department of Education when we
16 needed it? - - service to the school. The
17 current principal - - 2010 as an - - position
18 based on his - - . He hired an assistant
19 principal who was hired as well who - - high
20 school. The middle school was still without any
21 support. We had no - - 2010, 2011. - - for the
22 school. But then Principal Leticia wanted to
23 remove them and leaving the school without any -
24 - school year. So there was nobody to monitor
25 the classes, nobody to - - . We were just there

1 on our own. - - We are now in - - 611 and as
2 I say to you, they have come in and they have
3 really worked with us so far. We have never
4 really got that much support as we're getting
5 from - - 611. They have written an action plan
6 as well. We have yet to see where that action
7 plan is going. They started out the school year
8 visiting us and they took the time to come and -
9 - because the high school had so many students
10 who transferred - - and they came and they
11 helped us. But yet the middle school is still
12 left on its own. Is there - - ? Yes. - - ?
13 Yes. Are there programs in place? All middle
14 school teachers came together - - an action
15 plan, presented to the principal,
16 superintendent, network leader, the principal -
17 - which we are here, but we're here for other
18 reasons. And also we have implemented our
19 Saturday program which this Saturday, 70
20 students showed up for instruction from 9 a.m.
21 to 1 p.m. The principal is also a participant
22 in - - high school to assist with - - .
23 Extracurricular activities. We have Teen Choice
24 which is an after-school program. We have a
25 Chance program, a - - program, - - and many

1 others. So for us to sit here this afternoon
2 to pretend there is nothing going on in this
3 school, is an injustice for parents, our
4 students and our teachers. I'm asking you, Mr.
5 Deputy Chancellor, to go back to your office and
6 to find this, your team, that this middle
7 school, number one, need the resources to get us
8 going, and instead of putting in a new middle
9 school here where we have to provide all these
10 resources, give them all the money over again,
11 all the programs that they need, why don't we
12 take that resources and put it into the middle
13 school that's already here. Let us work hard
14 and- turn the school around. I'll tell you at
15 the end of the day, you will say wow, we almost
16 closed that school, look at them now. Thank
17 you.

18 [Applause]

19 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. Our next speaker is
20 also from the School Leadership team. Marta
21 Torres.

22 MS. MARTA TORRES: Good evening everyone.
23 Thank you for coming out tonight. Um, my name
24 is Marta Torres. I'm an SLT member and, um, PTA
25 - - um, PS26. - - As you just heard, um, Mr.

1 Robertson speak, there's been a lot of
2 difficulty with things getting together. So as
3 a result, PS26 has to do a lot of separation.
4 The school is supposed to be sharing space with
5 Frederick Douglass, and our little kids have
6 been--how would I say it--they've been privy to
7 see all the behaviors that little kids, we're
8 trying to teach them not to do. Because of the,
9 of the - - there are situations where there are
10 - - in the cafeteria, they're - - so for many
11 years we have tried to keep our teens separate.
12 My concern with this third school they're
13 building is that we've gone to great lengths to
14 separate them, to keep our children safe. How
15 do we do that with three schools? And then now
16 we have half time in our gymnasium, we have half
17 the time basically in the auditorium, half the
18 time in the cafeteria. And there's one period
19 where we share and that has to be monitored.
20 And how do you do that with three schools? It's
21 not good for other students to have to eat way
22 early in the morning, at 10:30 in the morning.
23 And it's not good for our little kids to finish
24 having their last lunch period at 2-something in
25 the afternoon. How do you propose that it would

1 affect PS26, when just having Frederick
2 Douglass, we're already - - students. None of
3 us have been told that this school was coming
4 in. We understand why Frederick Douglass middle
5 school is closing. Boy, do we understand why.
6 But we have not been spoken to on any level
7 about closing the middle school. All the kids -
8 - that there's no room at 26 for another school,
9 why - - . So my main reason for being here
10 today is to find out how do you propose it not
11 to affect the little children in PS26?

12 [Applause]

13 MS. ELLIS: We've now concluded the formal
14 presentation. I'd ask that the following
15 numbers line up. When I call your number,
16 please line up. When you come to the
17 microphone, please state your name. Please, I
18 do remind you that the public comment must be
19 limited to two minutes. Time will be kept and
20 we will signal you when 30 seconds are
21 remaining. Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.

22 MR. BILL MAHAN: Good evening. My name is
23 Bill Mahan. I'm a field director for the
24 Council of School Supervisors and
25 Administrators.

1 AUDIENCE: We can't hear on this side.

2 [Break in Audio]

3 MR. BILL MAHAN: Good evening. My name is
4 Bill Mahan. I'm a field director for the
5 Council of School Supervisors and
6 Administrators. Recently and again when DOE
7 announced it's intention to consider phasing out
8 a given number of schools for a variety of
9 academic reasons, the announced purpose was to
10 improve student success. The CSA wishes to
11 point out that the - - schools closing were
12 created under the Bloomberg administration.
13 These 11 schools were - - in response to
14 "failures" of other schools. Thus we are about
15 to add a third generation of Bloomberg schools
16 that are supposed to - - improve student
17 achievement. For too long, the Bloomberg DOE
18 has withheld or never even bothered to provide
19 support for schools when the first signs of
20 failure appeared. Once again, students of color
21 have had their lives disrupted because the Mayor
22 failed to support them. The CSA urges the Mayor
23 to rescind the prospect of closing any of the
24 cited schools, and the CSA also urges the Mayor
25 to consider for the first time the needs of

1 schools, students and parents. If he truly
2 wants to be an education mayor, then he has to
3 support schools, not open and close them so no
4 track record of his failures exist. Thank you.

5 [Applause]

6 MS. RAIIVANE KINARD: Good afternoon. My
7 name is Raivane Kinard. Um, this, this is to --
8 it has come to our knowledge that our middle
9 school, Frederick Douglass Academy IV - -
10 education. And they will be, they will be at
11 risk for getting - - . We are writing this
12 letter to inform that, inform you that - -
13 after-school environment, we need better
14 resources for our school, like more activities.
15 We - - educational trips, celebrations, pencils,
16 books, pens. - - functional library - - . The
17 reason you should not close down our school is
18 because we have the ability to do well as
19 students - - . We believe keeping the school
20 open will help us get to college and be
21 successful. We also think about what we have
22 experienced attending this school, which is much
23 better than - - experience. We - - while
24 respecting our environment. We also want to
25 make it better - - people who run this school

1 because they will learn a lot. Keeping our
2 school open will help - - students. We are part
3 of a teen action program and overall we wrote
4 this letter because we do not - - . I hope you
5 take the time to meet us so we can get to
6 explain ourself to you. Thank you.

7 [Applause]

8 MR. MYNUDDIN CHISH: Hello, my name is
9 Mynuddin Chish. I used to be a former student
10 here. I graduated from middle school, I
11 graduated with the class of 08 and I am
12 currently a senior at - - high school. So I
13 just want to...

14 [Applause]

15 ...I just want to point out that the school has
16 - - . I learned the meaning of discipline,
17 starting from the school uniforms, and competing
18 in English and Math, to the courses including -
19 - teacher. Especially - - during seventh grade
20 - - taking electives, A, Math A. And with that
21 - -

22 [Laughter]

23 With that, you have the ability to get into - -
24 . So I think that - - what's required in
25 school in order for kids to succeed. Rather

1 than the school being closed down, I think
2 more money should be put into the classroom,
3 including - - for you know, to make the school
4 more secure, as well as, uh, to provide more
5 classes so we can take 'em. The only thing I
6 came, uh, I was thinking, you know, I was - -
7 classes, telling about my experience here in
8 high school. And I was surprised. A lot of the
9 kids, they were very engaged. They wanted to
10 know - - , they want to know why are you here,
11 what am I doing in high school. They were very
12 interactive. So I don't see that as the
13 students' fault as to the reason why they're,
14 you know, - - . I think it's that they don't
15 have the proper resources, they don't have the
16 proper values. And that should be the main
17 concern, rather than close the school down as a
18 whole. Thank you very much.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. YOLANDA FLOOD-HAWKINS: Good afternoon.
21 My name is Yolanda Flood-Hawkins. Um, I'm here
22 to say that how do you expect all the high
23 schools, middle schools, and elementary schools,
24 to all be on the same page, to mix them all
25 together, when the high school student has a

1 different mentality than the elementary school
2 students. You're trying to shut down Frederick
3 Douglass Academy, you're also pushing out 26
4 also too. Our young people, our young people
5 not to see the things that the high school
6 students are doing or things that middle schools
7 are doing. And here you sit, you're adding a
8 third school inside of the building, when here
9 it is the school we already have that was
10 screaming, crying to come in here and now - -
11 have another school to scream to come inside
12 here, when here it is today - - whole building.

13 [Applause]

14 - - from fifth grade to sixth grade with one
15 principal inside covering it all. But you chose
16 to have two different principals, three
17 different principals who don't, who don't, are
18 not on the same page. And here our kids are the
19 ones whose - - now. It's our kids, our kids - -
20 saying those, it's not, it's not the adults,
21 it's our kids. So here is something for the
22 kids.

23 [Applause]

24 MS. VICTORIA WILLIS: Good evening. My name
25 is Victoria Willis and I'm a parent of PS26 and

1 I have a couple of concerns. - - However, it
2 feels like our children are being punished for
3 the downfalls of the state, of administration,
4 the Department of Education, or the - - . It
5 also - - social worker, mixing middle school and
6 high school students together when we already
7 know the registry of offenders, sexual offenders
8 - - activity that go on. Mr. Robertson
9 mentioned earlier about the principal not
10 returning. And you read it in the news how
11 there is a lot of activity, different
12 principals, and she got returned. We don't need
13 this behavior keep going on and on and on. We
14 need you to make a decision. Stop putting stuff
15 on paper, and not getting the resources, paper
16 money, to FDA and - - pushing out PS26. You're
17 adding 450 more students to this building which
18 means overcrowding. How are you going to manage
19 all the volume? How are my child going to
20 experience a science program, art program?
21 There is no sports programs here. There's also
22 - - volunteers. Where are the - - teachers?
23 Why wasn't PS26 given that option, wasn't talked
24 to about this expansion? Why were they left
25 out? - -

1 [Applause]

2 My last comment is that the cost of - - PS23 is
3 more important to the - - and their safety and
4 their education, then there is definitely
5 failure in this system. And it didn't start at
6 home, which are used as an excuse many times,
7 you don't get something at home. It started in
8 here.

9 [Applause]

10 It started in the - - my child and other
11 children's educational endeavors.

12 [Applause]

13 MS. ELLIS: At this time I'd like to
14 introduce - - member, Al Vann.

15 [Applause]

16 MR. AL VANN: Good evening. - - ladies and
17 gentlemen. - - Um, it was said a minute ago
18 that - - PS83 which I guess is - - . Also I
19 came back to teach - - student. I'm here to
20 tell you how thrilling it is to be back in your
21 own community, your own school, teaching your
22 own kids. It's a great experience. - - And I
23 still live 10 blocks away on - - Street.
24 Obviously I have love and concern for this
25 community, and education particularly. Before I

1 read - - it's the same thing I would say here.
2 Before I read that, one of the things that's
3 very disturbing about some of the plans - - ,
4 they fail to understand there is full - -
5 institution that, you know, we've had
6 generations and generations and generations have
7 gone to the same school. And they have a very
8 important significance to us. - - They might
9 have changed the names from George Washington to
10 - - , you know, from Abraham Lincoln to - - ,
11 for which - - as a people but it's not the same
12 institution. It's something irreplaceable in
13 all that, it's something that is an indication
14 of value in that, and I think that the
15 approaches that are now being taken, they just
16 seem like buildings. They're not just
17 buildings, they're institutions. And
18 institutions with a history, institutions with a
19 legacy. And so it is very difficult to make the
20 kind of changes they're making - - consider
21 these buildings to be something more than just
22 buildings. Having said that, these are comments
23 that I expressed to our Chancellor as recent as
24 today. So I'll try not to read it because it's
25 not the best to read a letter to a person before

1 he gets it, but the problems are the same and
2 he's - - , I think he'll understand. But I
3 wrote to raise my objections to the Department
4 of Education's proposal to truncate the middle
5 school of Frederick Douglass Academy IV. The
6 proposal was based on the struggles this school
7 has faced for the past three years, but the
8 Department is aware and responsible for the
9 turmoil that occurred in the school during those
10 years. - - to now intervene in order to remove
11 the middle school grades is really - - given
12 their problems, creation of the school in 2002,
13 and your lack of attention leading to - - .
14 During the summer of 2008, the first sign of
15 issues surfaced strongly from a special
16 education teacher who then made accusations that
17 the school was not providing adequate curriculum
18 for special education students. The teacher - -
19 and said to me, - - and State Education
20 Department inspections of the school confirmed
21 deficiencies in the school's special education
22 services. These problems continued into the
23 following 2008-2009 school year. The principal
24 responsible for the school at that time
25 eventually resigned in the fall of 2009 after he

1 was cited by the State for regarding
2 insufficient services for special education
3 students. His replacement at the school lasted
4 less than a year. And the current principal was
5 eventually installed on - - basis, December
6 2010, and made the current principal in May of
7 2011. Thus, the school has had three principals
8 in just over a year which surely affects and has
9 affected stability. Okay, we all agree on that.
10 Now, in addition to the lack of steady
11 leadership provided by the Department of
12 Education at the school, there were reports that
13 the school lacked books, other educational
14 materials, and also after-school programs.
15 Teachers continue - - changing principals and
16 the lack of leadership, and the Department of
17 Education's only response was to pledge to
18 observe the school more closely. It is
19 unacceptable for the Department of Education to
20 not accept responsibility for providing stable
21 leadership to the schools. I understand the
22 Department's school management model allows for
23 individual schools to control their budgets and
24 then maintain - - . - - the Department of
25 Education is responsible for the selection of

1 principals and providing stable leadership to
2 the school. Schools cannot succeed without
3 effective and stable leadership. The Department
4 has failed to provide this combination for
5 Frederick Douglass Academy IV. In all fairness,
6 you cannot now hold the school responsible for
7 the Department's failure to engage early, and to
8 engage in a very positive way. I strongly urge
9 the Chancellor, I strongly urge you to
10 reconsider the proposal for Frederick Douglass
11 Academy IV and do the right thing by the
12 students, do the right thing by the school, do
13 the right thing by the parents, do the right
14 thing - - . Thank you.

15 [Applause]

16 MS. ELLIS: Numbers 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10.

17 MR. WEINER: Excuse me, the student - -
18 stepped out so he's not going to speak but he
19 actually has to leave to go to mass. So we're
20 going to let him speak for just one minute.
21 Sorry - - one of the students here wants to be
22 able to speak, so.

23 MR. ROBERTSON: He's from Massachusetts, so
24 he's going to speak the, uh... Hello, Rashid,
25 uh, you can go ahead and speak. I'm sorry, I

1 was trying to - - . You can go ahead when
2 you're ready sir. You can go ahead.

3 RASHID: - -

4 MS. ELLIS: Yes.

5 MR. ROBERTSON: Yes, they can.

6 RASHID: Okay, um, - - .

7 MR. ROBERTSON: Yes, go ahead. Yes,
8 introduce yourself. Rashid, introduce yourself.

9 RASHID: - -

10 AUDIENCE: Can't hear.

11 RASHID: - -

12 MR. ROBERTSON: No, no, go ahead, just
13 speak, just speak.

14 RASHID: Basically I, I heard that the
15 school is closing and - - .

16 MR. WEINER: I'm sorry, I didn't realize
17 that was - - . We're going to continue with the
18 speakers - - .

19 [Applause]

20 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. Number 6?

21 BRIAN: Can you hear me? Okay. I'm Brian.
22 I'm here - - what's been happening in FDA IV and
23 the lack of resources and - - DOE. Let me
24 introduce myself - - the UFT - - representative,
25 United Federation of Teachers. I've been in

1 this District for 45 years. I was a teacher
2 at PS81, I was a Chapter Leader, I've been a
3 District Rep for around 31 years. And I just
4 would like to say that this - - , let me just
5 thank the parents, parents and staff for coming
6 out tonight to support this school, to support
7 26 and support 393.

8 [Applause]

9 - - that so many of you have come here. But
10 unfortunately you will see that the DOE will
11 disappoint you once again because that's what
12 they do. They - - they try to perpetuate it
13 throughout the city, of opening schools, closing
14 schools, not giving - - FDA IV was created by
15 the DOE. This was the - - community loved this
16 school. [Crosstalk] Everybody wanted to send
17 their kids to this school. And now they want to
18 truncate the school. And the reason is because
19 they did not provide help to the school when it
20 was starting to go down. Now let me tell you
21 something. - - They had a meeting to help the
22 school, to have a proposal, and they had that
23 meeting in December. And the parents they want
24 to - - , reopen. They had two proposals, to
25 help the school, one to close the school. In

1 two weeks they said they're going to close the
2 school. They're having this meeting, joint - -
3 meeting. They want your input. Really? Then
4 how come, Karen, how come the DOE has already -
5 - principals for the new school.

6 [Applause]

7 They already have the names. I know that the
8 way they have fixed--they don't want to hear
9 from you! They know better than you! To come
10 in here and they say what they're going to do
11 and then go and do it - - . The Mayor, the
12 Deputy Chancellor, just came here? They've got
13 to be thrown out! They need to be thrown out!

14 [Applause]

15 - - That's ridiculous. These people have lived
16 - - . I've been here 45 years. They telling me
17 and telling you what they're going to do. But
18 they've done it! They have - - tonight. They -
19 - .

20 [Applause]

21 - - And they need to be thrown out!

22 [Applause]

23 MS. EDOSA AUWOYENA: Hello, my name is Edosa
24 - - . - - even though we are not currently in
25 the high achieving schools, we believe we can

1 change our - - to make an effort to improve.
2 We have - - to help change our schools - -
3 influence our students. - - recognize us a
4 better school and no one wants to be known as a
5 failure. We believe there are certain factors
6 that will help change our school. We need - -
7 we would love to see each of them learn to
8 respect each other, teachers and students,
9 creating a climate where everyone will prepare
10 for high school and college, will help better
11 our school. - - for helping out for you and
12 your environment to change - - . We can make it
13 better - - study hall, teachers - - jobs and
14 school assignments - - . This - - the gap
15 between teachers and students at FDA but we
16 really hope you take the time to - - our school.

17 [Applause]

18 PRINCESS CHARLES: Hello, my name is
19 Princess Charles and I'll be reading this letter
20 - - which is located here - - . It has been
21 brought to our attention that the Board of
22 Education, Department of Education - - . We are
23 writing this letter to inform you that we, as -
24 - do not want our school shut down. - - 117
25 schools have been shut down because of poor

1 performances. Knowing the level of success
2 that we can achieve here at Frederick Douglass
3 Academy IV, we do not want to be one of those
4 schools. One of the reasons that we feel that
5 our school should remain open is the - -
6 economic state in our country. Parents and
7 others are not able to afford private
8 institutions for their child, and more private
9 schools are based on a lottery system. It is
10 very important that we continue to enrich the -
11 - public schools we have in our area. Also, we
12 are wanting, we want to learn in this school.
13 Frederick Douglass Academy IV is teaching us how
14 to grow to successful young adults. We make it
15 better by enforcing the rules. Teachers who are
16 - - . Also we need more after-school programs
17 so nobody remains out of, to stay out of streets
18 and out of trouble. For example, - - because we
19 are doing the best as they can - - . - - high
20 school, but this is not the ending of it for the
21 parents, students or community. Sincerely - - .

22 [Applause]

23 MS. MARTHA LANE: Good afternoon everyone.
24 I'm Martha Lane. I am the UFT Special
25 Representative assigned to this school. I'm the

1 liaison to this building from the UFT because
2 the school has so many issues and concerns. Now
3 I live in this community. I live on Third and -
4 - and - - between - - . So I've lived here all
5 of my life. I went to 35. In fact, Al Vann was
6 a teacher of mine. I'm the one that took that -
7 - .

8 [Laughter]

9 - - when they talk about truncating this school,
10 and they make no support to the school, and of
11 all people I know, because I've been here for
12 the last five years dealing with all the
13 problems that this school is facing. And where
14 was the DOE? Where was the DOE? When this
15 school did not have books and supplies, where
16 was the DOE? When this school started every
17 school year off with seven teaching vacancies,
18 where was the DOE?

19 [Applause]

20 - - When the former - - joined - - was sitting
21 there - - supplies and materials into the
22 school, where was the DOE? The DOE neglected
23 the school, and it was on their watch that these
24 things happened. So how dare you come in here
25 and say you're going to truncate the school

1 because you failed the school? The only thing
2 I want to...

3 [Applause]

4 - - they gave us some - - , affection, and let
5 me tell you, on the second page of this document
6 there is a section here that says I hope you
7 pass strategic improvement, the things that - -
8 supposed to done to help the school improve.
9 I'm telling you because I've been here. Well
10 this is a bunch of lies. It is a lie!

11 [Applause]

12 - - once a day was done by the principal as he
13 came in. All the - - support, instructional
14 support, operational support and student
15 support. So how dare you come here and say that
16 you have the supported the school? You have
17 done nothing for this school!

18 [Applause]

19 MR. LEVONE SAVAGE: Good afternoon,
20 representatives of UFT, teachers and parents.
21 My name is Levone Savage. I'm an alumni of the
22 middle school as well as the high school. I
23 graduated from the school as a valedictorian.
24 I'm honored to come back and speak on this
25 occasion. The first thing I want to talk about

1 is Frederick Douglass quote "Without struggle
2 there can be no purpose." And I want to start
3 with a message which is really short by saying,
4 you see it as a struggle - - meaningful, and I
5 see it as a struggle, this is a school that had
6 to struggle to keep hoping.

7 [Applause]

8 This is a proposal to end the cycle, a cycle
9 that is keeping schools in struggling
10 situations. The fact of the matter is the only
11 way that these [crosstalk] or anyone who has
12 struggling and arriving at that pitfall or - -
13 by effective leadership. Effective leadership
14 at the top level can never start - - . We have
15 to give these people, the community, that you're
16 trying to serve, you have to prioritize their
17 needs as the essential thing - - . We have to
18 set sustainable goals for this institution, for
19 this school, and you have to see it as a model -
20 - from years back, from anybody that's working
21 with you. We have to, 'cause the thing with, we
22 have like a misconception about leadership, it's
23 just that, it's about forcing people around,
24 just giving words. But it's not that. It's
25 also listening. Listening to the people you're

1 trying to serve. So to better serve this
2 community, the things that we want you to know,
3 that you have to really consider what your terms
4 are and take into context who you're serving,
5 because you really are serving. And the final
6 thing I'm going to say on this is that there is
7 a final judgment among us, everything that's
8 been mentioned - - final judgment - - every
9 decision that you make. And we have a decision
10 that came on tonight and - - .

11 [Applause]

12 MS. ELLIS: Numbers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

13 MS. MARTA TORRES: Good evening everyone.
14 Before I spoke as an SLT member, a PTA member,
15 um, a school activist. Right now I'm speaking
16 as a parent. I have two children that go to
17 school at - - . My oldest graduated from PS26
18 last year. My youngest is in first grade this
19 year. All of the children and kids from the
20 state had already been tested by having
21 Frederick Douglass in the building. No longer
22 have a library because Frederick Douglass high
23 school students need that and required it to
24 graduate. We no longer can use our - - because
25 Frederick Douglass also - - . We no longer have

1 a science room for our kids because classes
2 were taken away from us so that Frederick
3 Douglass could expand. Frederick Douglass was
4 brought to 26 as a temporary until it was found
5 another school. It never found another school.

6 [Applause]

7 We are still finding a school. It has already
8 affected PS26 students. It's continuing to
9 affect 26 students. How do you propose to feed
10 all these children at different times and deal
11 with all the issues that all the kids have? For
12 the students, for the Douglass students, I
13 believe would be better at a different school,
14 not have all the crime, not have all the, the
15 shelter that they don't have now, if it had a
16 place where they can stay. They can go to their
17 teachers. They don't have to feel crowded.
18 Instead of - - children that they're not
19 important. And our children are important.

20 [Applause]

21 MR. STAN MORSE: Hello, my name is Stan
22 Morse and I'm a parent. My kids are in PS26.
23 And it's really hard to explain to them about -
24 - they got to go through - - . It's hard to
25 explain to my kids - - in the school which is

1 absolutely crazy. So we don't need more of
2 that type of drama in our schools...

3 [Applause]

4 ... - - . I can't see how you can even - - .
5 Do a better job - - instead of doing - - .

6 [Applause]

7 MS. MARIA ACEDO: October 4, 2004 and I was
8 there, I clearly remember the day I came, walked
9 in FDA IV. My name is Maria Acedo and I've been
10 with FDA IV for the past three years now. Um,
11 everything has been said about how we, we're
12 supposed to be on the top. Instead we are
13 slowly sliding to the bottom. It's because of,
14 um, lack of resources and support and effective
15 leadership. From a teacher's point of view--the
16 teachers at FDA IV, in all its glory and all its
17 turmoil, have worked diligently, exhausted all -
18 - .

19 [Applause]

20 We have our students, our hearts, in our hearts,
21 working, um, working - - . I used to remember
22 having college trips and overnight trips - - .

23 [Applause]

24 None of these teachers--sorry. Giving 10%, an
25 extra mile. And I see out the door, welcome to

1 Jersey - - and come back here at 7:30 to serve
2 the students that I have regardless of what's
3 going on outside. So I have - - the Department.
4 FDA IV middle school has been a home to many of
5 our children. Some of them are here and so I
6 say...

7 [Applause]

8 ... - - Thank you.

9 [Applause]

10 MS. NAJMAH LOGAN: Good afternoon everyone.
11 My name is Najmah Logan. I have a 10-year old
12 child attending - - junior high school. She's
13 actually graduating this year. But the reason
14 why we're all here tonight is because the DOE
15 has failed - - . It has failed our schools,
16 failed our children, - - ...

17 [Applause]

18 ...we need your support so that we can build
19 this school to the place that it used to, and
20 see where it was before - - .

21 [Applause]

22 We are appealing to your understanding and think
23 that your challenge is to - - .

24 [Applause]

1 What would you expect from your school and
2 from your Department of Education to provide for
3 your children? We ask that you give us a
4 chance. You've taken out 100 schools, and put
5 100 schools in. That is not making any sense.

6 [Applause]

7 - - Give us a chance, give us - - , give us - -
8 we need so we can build this school bigger and
9 better than anyone in this neighborhood - - ...

10 [Applause]

11 ... - - not just public schools but other
12 schools. Thank you.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. CIRGEO DEMMIS: Good afternoon everyone.
15 Uh, my name is Cirgeo Demmis. I'm - - .

16 [Applause]

17 I also have a full scholarship to Stanford
18 University and I start class - - .

19 [Applause]

20 I'm disgusted about what's going on in politics.
21 It's just - - . I'm tired of seeing - - close
22 down a school - - students. - - as soon as we
23 lost value, everything fell apart. - - that's
24 ridiculous. So I don't know whether that's - -
25 that's just ridiculous. It's not fair to the

1 students, it's not fair to the parents, it's
2 not fair to everyone in the community. So I
3 don't know...

4 [Applause]

5 So like I said, I'm a musician and you know, I'm
6 also studying to be an archeologist. I can't
7 tell you how to do your job, but guess what?
8 I'm telling you right now, you're not doing the
9 job right.

10 [Applause]

11 MS. ELLIS: Numbers 16, 17, and 18.

12 MR. MALCOM KARDELL: Um, good afternoon,
13 good evening, whatever time it is. Uh, my name
14 is Malcom Kardell - - . I got a Facebook post
15 telling me what was going on, and I came back to
16 my home because this is my home. Uh...

17 [Applause]

18 ...I'm glad to see the teachers, the faculty who
19 helped me develop into the man I am today, and
20 it's - - . So I don't - - for the most part it
21 was amazing and I received a lot of education,
22 knowledge and support from my teachers. And I
23 see that - - has taken - - from a lot of support
24 which is very crazy and it makes me sad and - -
25 I'm very nervous because this is just

1 outrageous. It's mind-blowing how this can
2 even happen. Um, um, yeah. Thank you, thank
3 you, thank you. All right, I was thinking of an
4 analogy to say - - make this more political,
5 when people make a statement for their side, so
6 our side - - . So basically the DOE is the
7 legs, no support, the school goes down. It's
8 basically like you would pull one school, the
9 school pulls on students, the students can pull
10 the world.

11 [Applause]

12 Oh, my time is up? Thank you. Love y'all.

13 [Applause]

14 MR. JENSEN ROMERO: Good evening ladies and
15 gentlemen. My name is Jensen Romero. I'm - -
16 in the Marine Corp. I been in the Marine Corp
17 for a year and a half.

18 [Applause]

19 I'm also going to college full time and I got a
20 \$160,000 scholarship.

21 [Applause]

22 And none of this would have been possible
23 without the foundation that this school brought
24 to me. If it wasn't for this school, I wouldn't
25 be where I am today. I wouldn't be supporting

1 my family like I am now. I graduated, I
2 attended this school back in 2004, I came here
3 in the seventh grade. At eighth grade I got an
4 opportunity to take Math A. This is rare and
5 this is odd. This is not, not familiar to a
6 middle school student. - - and I got a letter
7 and a certificate from Congress commemorating me
8 on my...

9 [Applause]

10 Keep in mind that was when the lack of su-, that
11 was with the lack of support, the lack of
12 funding, and as you heard, the lack of
13 leadership that this school had. All we're
14 seeking - - the resources that they can bring
15 back to their school.

16 [Applause]

17 This school has done amazing things - - and a
18 silly student like me, come - - this community,
19 this school has done a lot. And it was possible
20 when they couldn't have everything that they're
21 supposed to have.

22 [Applause]

23 MS. EBONY MONTES: Hi, my name is Ebony
24 Montes. I have two children that attend FDA IV.
25 One is in ninth grade, one is in sixth grade.

1 The one in sixth grade - - he's chosen to stay
2 here. Um, I can come up here and repeat the
3 same thing that everybody was saying. The lack
4 of resources, you know, but I'm going to give
5 you all an example. My son got his report card
6 in October, November, and he's in sixth grade.
7 And most of his classes had dashes next to it,
8 and I'm trying to remember well why - - classes
9 that have dashes next to these? Lack of
10 resources. Why couldn't a friend ever call his
11 friend to find out if his friend could meet in
12 the library or come over to his house or
13 something, so they could do their homework?
14 Lack of books. How can y'all point the finger
15 when y'all are to blame?

16 [Applause]

17 - - but y'all have to realize - - was fixed, it
18 was fixed on - - . So before we crash and
19 crumble, y'all just try and clear it up, okay?
20 I'm a parent, okay? And it don't start at home
21 'cause I teach my kids very well. - - report
22 investigate middle school teachers. My son came
23 here, his math grade was scattered. He didn't
24 want to do it, how is he going to do it, we
25 could never - - . So they can tell us anything.

1 Without homework and teachers, I just got a
2 good report for my son's math grade. His grade
3 went - - and that's because Mr. Watkinson
4 [phonetic] stood by him...

5 [Applause]

6 So - - , I'm running out of time, - - FDA, I
7 think that it would be shameful, just use
8 whatever money that I have to fix the school and
9 I'm learning, appearing here, if I have to
10 volunteer from 8 to 3 every day, I don't have a
11 job, I will be there. It is not because y'all -
12 - it's 'cause I want - - .

13 [Applause]

14 MS. ELLIS: I would like to introduce a
15 representative from - - .

16 MR. NOAH KAUFFMAN: Thank you very much.
17 Members of the Community Education Council of
18 District 16, members of Frederick Douglass
19 Academy IV secondary school, School Leadership
20 Team, members of parents association, members of
21 the Douglass faculty and staff, students of
22 Frederick Douglass Academy IV secondary school,
23 parents, members of the public, honorable
24 elected officials, honorable Chancellor and
25 Deputy Chancellor of the New York City school

1 system, Superintendent Watts and other
2 representatives of the City Department of
3 Education. My name is Noah Kauffman, and I am
4 the appointee of the parent members of the
5 Citywide Council on Special Education to sit on
6 the Citywide Council on High Schools. Ms. Jamie
7 Smallie [phonetic] and Mr. John Engler
8 [phonetic] are the co-presidents of the CCSE,
9 and Ms. Paula Decroft [phonetic] is the
10 president of the Citywide Council on High
11 Schools. I convey their greetings and I convey
12 their regrets that they're not able to attend
13 this meeting. I am a parent of children in the
14 public school system. I'm speaking today as a
15 parent volunteer who has observed this school
16 system for the past 13 years and I'm here to
17 voice my opinion and my opposition to the
18 proposed truncation and replacement of Frederick
19 Douglass Academy IV secondary school, case
20 16393. The proposal is wrong on many levels,
21 and it is a continuation of the New York City
22 Department of Education's program of closing
23 schools as opposed to supporting schools and
24 growing schools and aiding schools in order to
25 provide opportunities for all children. I would

1 like to take this moment to say these parents
2 should not be fighting each other over a school
3 or schools for our children. Pitting one set of
4 parents against another is not the right thing
5 ever. And I would like to say that as a parent
6 of high schoolers, I know how difficult it is
7 for large high-school type people to be stuck in
8 a school designed for small elementary-type
9 people. Something is wrong with that picture.
10 Prior to my appointment as a parent volunteer
11 member of the Citywide Council last November, I
12 had presented - - to the Department of
13 Education, requesting the Department provide
14 sound planning to accommodate our students and
15 to alleviate the overcrowding which occurs in so
16 many communities across our city. Last year at
17 this time, I listened to community members and
18 local elected officials and representatives and
19 parents comment on a school closing proposal.
20 At that time, the Superintendent and the DOE
21 Portfolio Planners were asked to reckon just
22 what level of community opposition would the
23 Department need to reconsider proposals that are
24 the subject of these joint hearings. The DOE
25 was asked directly, how much "no" do you need to

1 hear? And the representatives of the
2 Department declined to answer. I wish to
3 support the students who work so hard to get to
4 school, to complete their assignments, and to
5 channel their energy to productive and creative
6 endeavors. They deserve a high school that is
7 built up and not built down. Diane Ravitch is a
8 noted historian of education. And she's written
9 a very interesting book entitled *The Death and*
10 *the Life of the Great American School System*.
11 In her concluding chapter, Dr. Ravitch writes
12 "If there's one thing all educators know, and
13 that many studies have confirmed for decades, is
14 that there is no single answer to educational
15 improvement. There is no silver bullet, no
16 magic feather, no panacea that would
17 miraculously improve student achievement. There
18 are no grounds for the claim made in the past
19 decade that if passability all by itself is a
20 silver bullet, nor for the oft asserted argument
21 that choice by itself is a panacea.
22 Accountability and choice may or may not raise
23 test scores. But neither is a sure-fire way to
24 improve education." Dr. Ravitch continues,
25 wishing what we want for our children. We want,

1 she says, all of these children to be able to
2 read and write and enumerate. Those are the
3 basic skills on which learning builds. But that
4 is not enough. We want to prepare our children
5 for a useful life. We want them to be able to
6 think for themselves when they're out in the
7 world on their own. We want them to have good
8 character and to make sound decisions about
9 their life, their work and their health. We
10 want them to face life's joys and travails with
11 courage and humor. We hope that they will be
12 kind and compassionate in their dealings with
13 others. We want them to have a sense of justice
14 and fairness. We want them to understand our
15 nation and our world and the challenges we face.
16 We want them to be active, responsible citizens
17 prepared to think issues through carefully, to
18 listen to different things and reach decisions
19 rationally. We want them to learn science and
20 mathematics so that they understand the problems
21 of modern life, and participate in finding
22 solutions. We want them to enjoy the rich
23 artistic and cultural heritage of our society
24 and other societies as well. I wish to point
25 out to the Chancellor's representatives here

1 today that this school, FDA IV, has had until
2 the appointment of Mr. Crespo, seemingly a
3 principal a year. I am not certain how any
4 village or any town or any city or any growing
5 school could survive such upheaval at the helm.
6 Former Deputy Chancellor, the late Dr. Maureen
7 Monroe, was a founding force behind the
8 Frederick Douglass Academies. One of her quotes
9 is "The job of a good leader is to articulate a
10 vision that others are inspired to follow."
11 Seems to me that this is what FDA IV is trying
12 to do every day. And I say fix our schools,
13 don't close them down.

14 [Applause]

15 Before I close, I just want to bare some
16 statistics published by the Department of
17 Education about enrollment at this school. I
18 have only respect for parents of children with
19 special needs or special education. I am one
20 myself and I know how hard it is to do the best
21 for our children every single day. The number
22 of special ed students according to the DOE's
23 own statistics, their quality review of 2008
24 suggested that of the 530 students enrolled at
25 that time, 5% were special education students.

1 That would be 27 in the school. By the end of
2 their report in school year in 09, that number
3 had risen to 70. In the year of 010, on which
4 so much of these grade scores are based and on
5 the progress, the so-called progress reports of
6 the DOE, that number increased to 86. And now
7 we find in the previous school year that number
8 is up to 96. And I'm wondering how a school
9 that changes principals every year could cope
10 with a student, an increasing number of students
11 with special education needs by almost 200%. I
12 just want to point out too, that children who
13 are under-credit, and I know exactly what we're
14 talking about. Children who may not be the best
15 test-takers in the world has increased in this
16 school. And then in 2007, the DOE statistics
17 there were no overage or under-credit students
18 enrolled in FDA IV. In 2008, their own
19 statistics say they have one. Year following,
20 October 2009, statistics say 25 of the enrolling
21 students were overage or under-credited. Those
22 are statistics that show that the school has
23 children in our community who need special help,
24 who need a hand, who need another chance, who
25 need a second chance, a third chance, as many

1 chances as it takes. And that means keeping
2 the school open with the support they all need.
3 Thank you so much for your time.

4 [Applause]

5 I do ask that when you consider this proposal -
6 - do not bring it to the - - bring the school
7 up, not out. Thank you.

8 [Applause]

9 MS. ELLIS: Thank you. We will now begin
10 the question and answer period. Remember there
11 will be some individual questions and others
12 that have been - - where we will have
13 representative questions asked. Any question
14 that is not answered for tonight will be
15 answered on the website. If you have additional
16 questions at the conclusion of tonight's
17 proceedings, we ask that you direct them to us
18 here. The phone number or email address is on
19 the fact sheet. I'd like to turn the meeting
20 over now to Deputy Chancellor.

21 MR. WEINER: Thank you. I just want to
22 thank everyone for speaking and for having your
23 voices heard, especially the students - - .
24 Your input - - . Several students who spoke
25 were in college or had scholarships to college,

1 and I really do appreciate the fact that they
2 came back to speak about the school. Even some
3 of the middle school students - - and so we
4 really do appreciate all of the kids, and the
5 adults as well, teachers - - . We just have one
6 question that was asked. But before I answer
7 that question, I actually want to address the
8 question that was raised by Ms. Torres right at
9 the beginning about PS26 and the involvement in
10 a new school that would be placed - - be placed
11 here. Um, so first of all, it seems like PS26,
12 I looked at some of your data before I arrived.
13 It's really a wonderful school. I think it got
14 an A on a recent report card and it's just a
15 thriving school - - a lot of schools continue to
16 thrive here when other schools are placed here.
17 The proposal is very - - to be approved at some
18 point in February. And if the proposals are
19 approved, then a move forward would be to PS26
20 and Frederick Douglass Academy middle school as
21 well as the new school coming forward. They
22 will have an opportunity to be, they'll - -
23 together, a building will be established - -
24 work with some of the questions that we have.
25 So the proposal hasn't been approved, is the

1 reason we haven't brought forth any new school
2 yet. The other question was what supports were
3 given to this school, and I'm assuming you're
4 talking about Frederick Douglass Academy, in the
5 last three years to help the school succeed. So
6 we just have a little bit of background
7 information available. First of all, all
8 schools currently receive assistance and support
9 for their Superintendent and their network
10 leader. Um, stronger schools receive supports -
11 - . I'm going to talk most recently about
12 supports that have - - this past school year - -
13 by the Superintendent. Um, - - when we're
14 finished talking, I'll take some questions maybe
15 - - . Um, so first of all, what has been
16 provided this past school year has been - -
17 assessment designs, - - , student fee - - ,
18 meeting standards for students, providing
19 support to students that are behind grade level.
20 Students - - . Some other supports include, um,
21 support of school and staff, - - , making sure
22 that students are being supported - - and also
23 by creating school-wide policy - - . The entire
24 support of the school as well - - resources,
25 improvement, and in building - - . And finally,

1 - - communications and - - so students in
2 seventh or eighth grade have some similarity in
3 the - - . So this is actually the only question
4 I've received.

5 AUDIENCE: I have a question.

6 MS. ELLIS: So all questions...

7 AUDIENCE: I asked a question. The question
8 was what has been the last three years. I know
9 - - last year, and everything on that fact sheet
10 was the items that was listed with the - - . So
11 I want to know from the DOE what support have
12 you given to the school in the last three years
13 because my contention is that there was no
14 support given. So that's why I asked the
15 question.

16 MR. WEINER: Thank you. I'll answer your
17 question. I appreciate the clarification. So
18 we'll take a little...

19 AUDIENCE: Can you try not to use
20 educational jargon. I don't understand what
21 you're saying.

22 MR. WEINER: I'm sorry, I...

23 AUDIENCE: And you're speaking very rapidly.

24 MR. WEINER: - - I apologize if I - - speak
25 fast. If wasn't speaking too clearly, I

1 apologize.

2 AUDIENCE: And using terms that may not be
3 familiar with everyone in the audience.

4 [Crosstalk]

5 MS. ELLIS: This is a question and answer
6 forum.

7 MR. WEINER: Yeah, there's public commentary
8 here. I appreciate the..

9 [Crosstalk]

10 MR. WEINER: Unfortunately, we don't have
11 great answers for the last three years because
12 neither the Superintendent nor the network
13 leader - - . We'll make sure that your question
14 is answered - - that information is sent out - -
15 . But I do appreciate your question and I'll
16 make sure you get an answer.

17 MS. ELLIS: Okay. And whatever question,
18 uh, no questions have been - - . We've heard
19 many significant comments this evening. We
20 appreciate the feedback and contributions.

21 AUDIENCE: Here's my question.

22 MS. ELLIS: That information will be shared
23 with the panel on educational policy. We - -
24 this hearing on February 9, 2012, to vote on
25 this proposal. Please use the phone number or

1 website on the bottom of our fact sheet if you
2 have any additional questions - - . Thanks for
3 coming out. The Joint Public Hearing is
4 officially...

5 [END 265_591]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2 The prior proceedings were transcribed from
3 audio files and have been transcribed to the
4 best of my ability.

5
6 Signature

7 *Jenni L. Anderson*

8 Date: February 1, 2012

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