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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION - OFFICE OF  
PORTFOLIO PLANNING  
PS 332 Charles H. Houston  
January 13, 2010**

1 [START 154\_536.mp3]

2 FEMALE VOICE: - -

3 MS. KATHLEEN GRIMM: Yeah, it should be,  
4 should provide your - - . All of those who wish  
5 to speak must sign up on a speaker's sign-

6 [background noise]

7 MS. GRIMM: --outside - - . The sign-up  
8 will close at 6:15. Speakers will be taking the  
9 floor in the order they signed up. All comments  
10 are limited to two minutes. In addition, we  
11 want any further comments and feedback that you  
12 may have at any time before the Panel for  
13 Educational Policy - - on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2010.  
14 The e-mail address and phone number for comments  
15 may be - - after tonight's hearing. Um, today -  
16 - under the Section for Panel for Educational  
17 Policy, you find that, of course, - - schools -  
18 - .

19 This proposal is something that the  
20 department takes very seriously. It has  
21 considered in a comprehensive manner. Over the  
22 past six years, the Department of Education has  
23 phased out over 90 schools and opened 335 new  
24 schools that have demonstrated remarkable  
25 success in helping students excel.

1           For example, our new high schools have  
2 achieved an average graduation rate of 75%, well  
3 above the citywide rate of 60%. Even though  
4 these new schools - - some of the same highest  
5 needs students.

6           This proposal will continue that important  
7 work. I want to make it very clear that the  
8 department is not - - any individual or group or  
9 - - . But we have determined that it is  
10 important to give students the best possible  
11 opportunities for long-term success.

12           We know that there are a bunch of people  
13 working incredibly hard every day to support the  
14 schools - - , but we simply cannot continue  
15 doing the same things and expect to get  
16 different results. I want to talk a little bit  
17 about the criteria used to make a determination  
18 that the department has made for this proposal.

19           P.S. 332 has demonstrated consistently poor  
20 academic performance.

21           CROWD: Boo. No.

22           [crosstalk]

23           MS. GRIMM: --so you can let me finish - - .  
24 Thank you. P.S. 332 - - 2006.

25           [crosstalk]

1 MS. GRIMM: - - district, elementary, and  
2 middle schools received - - citywide. P.S. 332  
3 school failed to - - . - - other schools in  
4 this district, as well as - - city - - .

5 In the year 2008-09, only 15% of P.S. 332  
6 students were proficient in - - , and only 61%  
7 were proficient in math, compared to 51% and 86%  
8 in the district - - . P.S. 332 was the only  
9 elementary school in District 23 that did not  
10 receive - - .

11 Although the school - - 2009 - - reports - -  
12 several serious concerns suggesting that the  
13 school is not in the possession to turn around  
14 quickly to meet student needs. For example,  
15 professional development was weak, resulting,  
16 resulting in inadequate - - of instruction to  
17 meet individual students' needs.

18 - - further indicated that the school needed  
19 to do a better job providing regular feedback to  
20 students to support consistent academic growth.

21 For 2008-09, learning environment survey  
22 indicated significant dissatisfaction among all  
23 stake holders at the school. Parent engagement  
24 is weak with only 8% of parents responding to  
25 the survey compared to 45% citywide.

1 Additionally, students do not want to attend  
2 this school.

3 [crosstalk]

4 FEMALE VOICE: No, that's not true.

5 [crosstalk]

6 FEMALE VOICE: No, no.

7 [crosstalk]

8 FEMALE VOICE: Stop lying up there.

9 [crosstalk]

10 FEMALE VOICE: --lying--

11 [crosstalk]

12 MS. GRIMM: Only 51.8%--

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. GRIMM: --students enrolled at the  
15 school. And only 30% of the students attending  
16 P.S. 332--

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. GRIMM: In fact, the majority of  
19 students - - , which indicates - - other schools  
20 in the state - - .

21 [crosstalk]

22 MS. GRIMM: --poor performance combined with  
23 evidence that the school is ill positioned to  
24 reverse that pattern, we took - - to phase out  
25 P.S. 332 beginning September of 2007. The DOE

1 proposes to replace the - - elementary school -  
 2 - with a new DOE district school grades K to 3  
 3 next year and then grades K to 5 in the long-  
 4 term.

5 In response to community desire for middle  
 6 school choice options, a new DOE middle school  
 7 will open in a nearby building. And - - middle  
 8 school - - proposed - - grades are - - .

9 - - clear what the consequences of this  
 10 proposal are. Students currently enrolled in  
 11 P.S. 332 who will be in grades K to 3 next year  
 12 will be assigned to the new school that will  
 13 open in this building in September. Schools who  
 14 will be in grades 4 or 5 next year will continue  
 15 to attend P.S. 332.

16 Current P.S. 332 students - - students who  
 17 are promised to Grade 6 can also apply middle  
 18 school choice options in District 23, or they  
 19 will be assigned to the new middle school  
 20 opening in District 23. The students currently  
 21 in the 6th and 7th Grade will be able to remain  
 22 in P.S. 332 - - school.

23 New schools that are opened are - - at least  
 24 50% of the new teaching positions from the most  
 25 senior applicants found in the closing school

1 will qualify for the position. New schools, as  
2 with P.S. 332, will serve a variety of students  
3 and will serve students with special education  
4 in English language - - .

5 I want to thank you, and I look forward to  
6 hearing your comments or questions. In order to  
7 ensure that - - signed up to speak are given an  
8 opportunity. We will limit the comments to two  
9 minutes. After a minute and a half, we have a  
10 time keeper who will show you a sign that says  
11 you have 30 minutes (sic)--

12 FEMALE VOICE: Seconds.

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. GRIMM: --asking you to start winding up  
15 your remarks. And then there will be another  
16 sign--

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. GRIMM: I would now like to, uh, give  
19 the opportunity to our CEC and representative to  
20 make a brief statement.

21 MR. DAVID GRINAGE: Good evening, once  
22 again. Good evening, panel. Let me be very  
23 clear. District 23 - - is adequately opposed to  
24 the closing of 332.

25 CROWD: Woo.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MR. GRINAGE: And for that matter, any  
3 school within District 23.

4 FEMALE VOICE: Got that right.

5 [crosstalk]

6 MR. GRINAGE: Now, - - our schools - - our  
7 children, the DOE's policy - - the board - - is  
8 ridiculous.

9 [crosstalk]

10 MR. GRINAGE: It absolutely - - .

11 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

12 MR. GRINAGE: Nowhere else in government  
13 doesn't - - scrap like a piece of paper, because  
14 an element of it did not work. The proven thing  
15 to do is to evaluate what was or wasn't working-  
16 -

17 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] Right.

18 [crosstalk]

19 MR. GRINAGE: --and make the changes  
20 accordingly.

21 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

22 [crosstalk]

23 CROWD: Woo.

24 MR. GRINAGE: --is not helpful and, in fact,  
25 harmful to the community.

1 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

2 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

3 [crosstalk]

4 MR. GRINAGE: --placed children in foster  
5 families to change the way they have been doing  
6 things from one generation to the next.

7 [crosstalk]

8 MR. GRINAGE: Many of our schools are the  
9 fabric of our community. When a school is  
10 closed, it is demoralizing and tarnishes  
11 community pride.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MR. GRINAGE: --and solidarity. The notion  
14 that an entire system is - - and cannot be - -  
15 is horrible.

16 [crosstalk]

17 MR. GRINAGE: In reality, the "phase outs,"  
18 as they are called, have little to do with  
19 school performance and much to do with the  
20 placement of charter schools.

21 CROWD: Yeah. Woo.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MR. GRINAGE: --of these announcements is  
24 insulting and - - to our children. Educators  
25 and communities always--

1 [crosstalk]

2 MR. GRINAGE: Privatization of public  
3 schools is not in the best interest of our  
4 children.

5 FEMALE VOICE: It is not

6 FEMALE VOICE: It is not.

7 FEMALE VOICE: It is not.

8 MR. GRINAGE: What is at the heart of this  
9 matter is that our children are entitled to  
10 attend school and - - academically. They are  
11 entitled to intend school - - education.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MR. GRINAGE: P.S. 332 is allegedly targeted  
14 closure because of the lack of - - . What  
15 cannot be argued is that a - - education is not  
16 good enough for our children. The difference  
17 between a - - and some - - instructional leaders  
18 - - changes out of his or her own comfort zone  
19 in order to move our children forward.

20 Most recently, last year, as you may recall,  
21 we had - - our schools 150 - - closed.

22 [crosstalk]

23 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

24 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

25 MR. GRINAGE: I had a conversation with that

1 principal. I said, "How are you doing?" She  
2 said--her response was, "We have to keep our  
3 children moving." In contrast, this year, I've  
4 gotten all kinds of reports that this  
5 instructional leader is saying, "What are they  
6 going to do to me? I will retire before the  
7 day's out."

8 [crosstalk]

9 MR. GRINAGE: She - - to bring our children  
10 - - . This is the difference between wanting to  
11 move forward and sacrificing the crew and cargo.  
12 The CEC looking at 332's - - review for the last  
13 two years. - - concerns and heard the teacher's  
14 passion. We pay attention to the remarks that  
15 the principal - - . We recognize that this  
16 school has made some progress.

17 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

18 MR. GRINAGE: A - - that we heard from our  
19 teachers who don't believe that they'd consider  
20 educating their children in this school at this  
21 time. If it's not good enough for our teachers,  
22 it's not good enough for our children.

23 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

24 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

25 [crosstalk]

1 MR. GRINAGE: DOE's proposal to phase at  
2 332 suggests that it cannot be saved. We at CEC  
3 unanimously disagree with this assertion.

4 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

5 [crosstalk]

6 CROWD: Woo.

7 MR. GRINAGE: We believe that it is the - -  
8 instructional leader's responsibility--

9 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.

10 MR. GRINAGE: --to establish a viable  
11 culture that promotes academic achievement  
12 within the school. If they don't have the  
13 expertise to reach a specific goal, they have to  
14 obtain the resources and get it. The CEC has a  
15 great deal of hope for this school to continue  
16 growth and contributions to the community with  
17 the changes as described in the following  
18 resolution. We cannot and will not shortchange  
19 our children any longer.

20 CROWD: Woo.

21 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

22 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

23 MS. SHERYL SMITH: Resolution - - New York  
24 City Department of Education to accept the  
25 following compromise in lieu of phasing out

1 P.S.I.S. 332:

2 Whereas P.S.I.S. 332, the principal is the  
3 chief instructional leader of P.S.I.S. 332,  
4 whereas the principal has been the chief  
5 instructional leader for approximation 12 years,  
6 whereas P.S.I.S. 332 has made some academic  
7 progress, whereas the teachers have demonstrated  
8 commitment to educate their students--

9 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.

10 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 MS. SMITH: --whereas parents have expressed  
13 concerns about their older children not being  
14 able to supervise their younger siblings during  
15 the children's travel to and from school,  
16 whereas the District 23 community has requested  
17 a stand-alone middle school, whereas the chief  
18 instructional leader failed to require the  
19 teachers of P.S.I.S. 332 to adequately use data  
20 in order to create curriculum that would benefit  
21 the students, whereas the chief instructional  
22 leader failed to adequately monitor and  
23 supervise the teachers of P.S.I.S. 332, whereas  
24 the chief instructional leader should have known  
25 the importance of classroom - - and recommended

1 in 2008 quality review, whereas the chief  
2 instructional leader failed to actually act on  
3 recommendations that were provided by quality  
4 review evaluations, whereas the students of  
5 District 23, and specifically the students of  
6 P.S.I.S. 332 is entitled to review an education  
7 that is better than - - .

8 But it is resolved that P.S.I.S. 332 be  
9 reconfigured into a Department of Education  
10 school with grades K through 5 and a Department  
11 of Education middle school with grades 6 through  
12 8.

13 Be it resolved that the elementary grade  
14 school maintains the number of P.S. 332. Be it  
15 resolved that both the grade school and the  
16 middle school occupy the same 332 campus. Be it  
17 resolved that the P.S. 332 elementary school and  
18 the Department of Education middle school be  
19 staffed with their own individual chief  
20 instructor leader to the principals.

21 Be it resolved that the current principal of  
22 P.S.I.S. 332 be removed, and the chief  
23 instructional leader--

24 [crosstalk]

25 MS. SMITH: --position of principal in any

1 District 23 school.

2 FEMALE VOICE: No, no.

3 [crosstalk]

4 MS. SMITH: Be it resolved when the  
5 teachers, staff, and assistant principals have  
6 the opportunity to remain within the 332 campus,  
7 if decided.

8 Be it resolved that the proposed charter  
9 school sees no consideration for placement in  
10 332 campus until the sister school P.S. 332 and  
11 the DOE middle school obtain appropriate  
12 upgrading and accommodations that are necessary  
13 to satisfy the need of both schools. This  
14 resolution - - approved by the members of the  
15 District 23 - - Education Council January 24th  
16 of 2010.

17 FEMALE VOICE: Boo.

18 FEMALE VOICE: No, no.

19 FEMALE VOICE: No.

20 [crosstalk]

21 MS. GRIMM: Thank you both very much. - -

22 MS. HARRISON: Good evening parents, staff,  
23 students, and - - faculty. My name is--

24 [crosstalk]

25 MS. HARRISON: --Harrison.

1 FEMALE VOICE: We can't hear you.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MALE VOICE: --very low.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MALE VOICE: It's very low.

6 FEMALE VOICE: --use that--

7 [crosstalk]

8 MS. HARRISON: Thank you. Once again, good  
9 evening parents, staff, students, and panel - -  
10 this public hearing. My name is - - Harrison.  
11 I'm a teacher here at P.S. 332, and I represent  
12 the school solution team.

13 I'm here to read a resolution to propose a  
14 closing of Public School 332 in grounds - - .  
15 Whereas Public School 332 is a true - -  
16 community school that has been educating  
17 children in this neighborhood for over 40 years,  
18 where at the great expense of time and money,  
19 the DOE has - - and quality reviews.

20 And whereas the DOE has also created a  
21 written standard based on them that the DOE has  
22 claimed it will use - - candidates for closing.  
23 And whereas the education impact statements for  
24 closing schools say that schools may be  
25 considered for closing if they receive an

1 overall grade of D or F on the progress report  
2 or--

3 [crosstalk]

4 CROWD: Woo.

5 MS. HARRISON: --is for the low provision on  
6 the quality review. And whereas the DOE has  
7 arbitrarily changed its closing standards for  
8 P.S. 332 by - - the following review and now  
9 plans to close schools even though P.S. 332 has  
10 either a proficient or well developed--

11 FEMALE VOICE: [inaudible] That's right.

12 MS. HARRISON: --on three quality reviews.

13 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

14 MS. HARRISON: And - - review follow either  
15 documentation and independent reviewers - - to  
16 the inspection of our schools. And whereas  
17 three - - reviewers in the last three years  
18 identified P.S. 332 as a good school and gave a  
19 proficient score and most surely did not assess--  
20 -

21 [crosstalk]

22 MS. HARRISON: --as a school that must be  
23 closed saying in 2008-2009 review, for example,  
24 that, "The school leaders make good use of tools  
25 to collect student data in order to improve

1 structural practice and student learning. The  
2 school - - team has developed effective practice  
3 around inquiry process, which has led to an  
4 increase in student achievement."

5 That's what teachers are informed by student  
6 data. They consistently manage in English  
7 language arts, math, and some respect in science  
8 in order to plan and assess student learning.  
9 School leaders make good use of budget to  
10 support the identifying needs of the students,  
11 parents, and teachers within the school  
12 community.

13 Teachers provide parents and faculty with  
14 information about student learning, needs, and -  
15 - efforts to maximize student achievement.  
16 Principal and staff convey high expectations to  
17 students regarding their attendance and  
18 scholastics.

19 Whether or not the DOE - - ignore this  
20 quality review accountability and claim in an  
21 impact statement that they conducted an  
22 assessment of P.S. 332 and decided to close it,  
23 and whereas the arbitrary internal assessment by  
24 DOE is an abuse of power and should not - - of  
25 reviewers or - - of the community, and whereas

1 our own intentional assessment reveals that  
2 percent of students in temporary housing at P.S.  
3 332 increased four-fold between 2007 and 2009.

4 But the DOE was so busy staring at its  
5 numbers--

6 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] All right.

7 MS. HARRISON: --that it failed to provide  
8 the necessary source to ensure that--

9 [crosstalk]

10 MS. HARRISON: --get the great education.

11 And whereas the self-assessment numbers in light  
12 of the changes here at the school show simply  
13 blindly to shut us down. And whereas 20% of the  
14 students at P.S. 332 are special education  
15 students, 66% of who are highly special needs  
16 students, and whereas the DOE has no plan to  
17 address the needs of the students who are  
18 attending community school--

19 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.

20 MS. HARRISON: --once they shut our school.

21 And whereas we - - , because our middle school  
22 will be replaced by - - whose organization - -  
23 three charters in New York City. And whereas,  
24 according to the DOE's own data, the parent - -  
25 report card, these charter schools do not serve

1 the needed students of their district and, in  
2 fact, serve students who enter schools with - -  
3 score that are above the district's average.

4 And whereas we have no choices that children  
5 in temporary housing, who are often literally  
6 homeless, will be able to enter - - and attend  
7 this new school. And whereas we have no  
8 assurance that a charter will accept a  
9 population that is 20% special education with  
10 two-thirds of the students having high needs  
11 because the DOE does not quote a percentage of  
12 special education children on the charter  
13 schools' website.

14 Both - - for regular public schools. And  
15 whereas - - these things as DOE has only one  
16 type of replacement - - 332, and that is to  
17 separate a diverse community for two separate  
18 and unequal communities.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

20 CROWD: Woo.

21 MS. HARRISON: And whereas we know that our  
22 challenge is ahead of us, our students have  
23 affirmed the quality of our education on the  
24 DOE's own forum and confidential survey on which  
25 students scored their score above city's average

1 asserting that 332 teachers helped,  
2 challenged, and inspired their students.

3 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. HARRISON: Whereas we owe these great  
6 kids the preservation of their school and their  
7 community and our community - - every child,  
8 every single child, the education that he or she  
9 needs to lead rich and fulfilling lives.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Right.

11 MS. HARRISON: And whereas the school  
12 community of P.S. 332, the students, their  
13 families, and the staff haven't outspoken in the  
14 opposition and disclosure.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

16 MS. HARRISON: And be it therefore resolved  
17 that this community, educational council, the  
18 school leadership team--school leadership team  
19 opposes the closure of P.S. 332 and calls upon  
20 the New York City Department of Education and  
21 Chancellor Joe Cline [phonetic] to attract - -  
22 closure and provide the proposed schools with  
23 resources necessary for academic success. Thank  
24 you.

25 MS. GRIMM: Thank you - - . Are there any -

1 - ? All right. Then we're going to now hear  
2 a couple of comments from those of you who have  
3 signed up. We will call your names. There are  
4 two microphones, one there, one there. Uh, you  
5 have an orange card. So if you could go get the  
6 number, and if we can make a little line behind  
7 the microphone - - proceed. I'll call a few  
8 names.

9 Uh, I'll ask the odd numbers to line up  
10 here, which would mean that the evens are over  
11 here. If you're on the other side, don't worry  
12 about it. Just go to the closest mic. Number 1  
13 - - , and then there's - - . Number 2 - - .  
14 And Number 2, Derrick - - . And Number 4,  
15 Evelyn Epps [phonetic]. So Number 1. Is it  
16 Alexandra?

17 MR. ALEJANDRO TORRES: Alejandro.

18 MS. GRIMM: Alejandro, Alejandro.

19 MR. TORRES: My name's Alejandro Raymond  
20 Torres [phonetic], and I am an alumni at this  
21 school, P.S. 332 Class of 2005. Currently - - .

22 [background noise]

23 MR. TORRES: It is because of this school  
24 and the wealth of education and the good  
25 teachers that I have risen above the standards

1 within the high school system and in the  
2 honors college program - - college in Westburg  
3 [phonetic]. It is due to the dedication of  
4 these teachers. It is due to the inspiration  
5 that they showed that makes us go above and  
6 beyond what we achieve.

7 For me, the charter school system, and the  
8 splitting of K through 5 is an ideal that I do  
9 not approve of, because it diminishes the  
10 community itself, because that's what the public  
11 school education here is for. It's not for the  
12 teachers. It's not for the--it's also for the  
13 parents, but it's for the community as a whole.

14 For me personally, and for the students that  
15 I know here, they love this school and wouldn't  
16 choose any other place. For me - - .

17 [crosstalk]

18 MR. TORRES: Even for the teachers that--  
19 whatever - - that the charter schools have for  
20 them is inefficient. It's, it's not giving them  
21 the opportunity to educate the future, because  
22 isn't that what the public school system is for?  
23 Educating the future of America?

24 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

25 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

1 [crosstalk]

2 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

3 [crosstalk]

4 MR. TORRES: And so I close with this. I  
5 ask P.S. 332 to remain open, not just for the  
6 future of this community but the future of this  
7 country.

8 CROWD: Yeah.

9 [crosstalk]

10 MR. DERRICK LONGMAN: Hello. Hello? My  
11 name is Derrick Longman [phonetic]. I am  
12 currently a junior at--

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. GRIMM: Speak right into the mic.

15 [crosstalk]

16 FEMALE VOICE: --loud.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MR. LONGMAN: Hello. My name is Derrick  
19 Longman. I am currently a junior at - -  
20 Technical High School.

21 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

22 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

23 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

24 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

25 MR. LONGMAN: But before beginning my

1 academic--uh, before entering - - Tech, I  
2 started an academic career here at Charles H.  
3 Houston Academy. I graduated with the six years  
4 that you were discussing earlier. And I  
5 achieved a four out of four - - and four out of  
6 four - - .

7 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

8 [crosstalk]

9 MR. LONGMAN: In 8th Grade, when I took this  
10 - - high school exam, I didn't have a tutor to  
11 teach me how to pass it. All I had was the  
12 education provided by these educators behind me.  
13 And I--

14 [crosstalk]

15 CROWD: Woo.

16 MR. LONGMAN: And I will be attending  
17 college. I want--if you--I grew up in this  
18 neighborhood. I grew up in the neighborhood  
19 around here. If you walk around here, you will  
20 find many things. You will find--you will find  
21 stores. You will find sneaker stores. You will  
22 find a barber shop and nail salon. But there's  
23 not--one thing you can't find is academic  
24 institutions like 332.

25 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

1 CROWD: Yeah.

2 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

3 [crosstalk]

4 MR. LONGMAN: --main focus of the teachers  
5 is not the paycheck at the end of the week.

6 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

7 [crosstalk]

8 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

9 MR. LONGMAN: --success--

10 [crosstalk]

11 MR. LONGMAN: --academic--

12 [crosstalk]

13 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

14 MR. LONGMAN: --whereas most teachers watch  
15 the clocks waiting for 3:00 to come, waiting so  
16 they can have--so they can have the end of the  
17 day's work. The teachers here at 332, they go  
18 above and beyond.

19 When I attended 332, I had trouble spelling.  
20 Well, I never - - now, but at that time, I had a  
21 serious problem spelling. And Ms. Wilson, my  
22 English teacher, she helped me with that  
23 problem. And when I took the--when I took the  
24 English - - --I actually took it early. I'm in  
25 advanced placement English now.

1 FEMALE VOICE: Woo, yeah.

2 MR. LONGMAN: When I took it, I achieved  
3 mastery, which is above an 85.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MR. LONGMAN: In conclusion, I would like to  
6 say--in conclusion, I would like to say that, by  
7 taking 332 away from this community, you will  
8 not only be--you will--you will not only be  
9 destroying this school, but you will be  
10 depriving this community of a quality education  
11 that--

12 [crosstalk]

13 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

14 [crosstalk]

15 CROWD: Woo.

16 [crosstalk]

17 MALE VOICE: - - representative for - - and  
18 the - - responsible. Actually, we hold the DOE  
19 responsible.

20 FEMALE VOICE: That's right. That's right.

21 [crosstalk]

22 CROWD: Woo.

23 MALE VOICE: -- - - can, and that's a very -  
24 - position. You need - - all the time, I'm  
25 sure. - - schools to open and schools to close.

1 - - system where you wouldn't even let the  
2 superintendent who's sitting to your left, Mr.  
3 Andrews [phonetic], come into this school--

4 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.  
5 [crosstalk]

6 MALE VOICE: - - any school in the district  
7 and - - 40 schools in other districts more  
8 visits. That's - - that you set up.

9 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

10 MALE VOICE: You set up this school - - .

11 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MALE VOICE: --700 elementary schools in New  
14 York City. And they only--their only closing  
15 one. You know which one? This one.

16 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MALE VOICE: So are you telling the parents  
19 and the students here that this is the worst  
20 elementary school in New York City?

21 [crosstalk]

22 CROWD: Woo.

23 MALE VOICE: - - on the quality review for  
24 the last few years, which was the time you did  
25 several of them, they were either well developed

1 or proficient. There were schools that were  
2 not proficient, but you kept them open.

3 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

4 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

5 [crosstalk]

6 MALE VOICE: There were schools that - - ,  
7 but you kept them open.

8 FEMALE VOICE: You kept them alive.

9 [crosstalk]

10 MALE VOICE: There were schools that had  
11 kids that had less on the DLA and the - - and  
12 the New York test, but you kept them open.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Why?

14 FEMALE VOICE: Why?

15 [crosstalk]

16 MALE VOICE: Why did you close this school?  
17 You know why? Because you want to put a charter  
18 school--

19 [crosstalk]

20 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

21 [crosstalk]

22 MALE VOICE: --charter school--

23 [crosstalk]

24 MALE VOICE: --about is taking out--

25 [crosstalk]

1 MALE VOICE: --most of the kids in this  
2 school will never see. They will never see,  
3 because they don't accept kids that meet their  
4 standards. Okay? They don't do that.

5 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

6 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

7 [crosstalk]

8 MALE VOICE: So yeah, we - - someone  
9 responsible - - .

10 [crosstalk]

11 MALE VOICE: The DOE and you.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MALE VOICE: Thank you - - .

14 [crosstalk]

15 MS. GRIMM: - -

16 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening. I was asked to  
17 read a letter that was started by the staff--can  
18 you hear me?

19 FEMALE VOICE: No.

20 FEMALE VOICE: No.

21 [crosstalk]

22 MS. GRIMM: --very close to the mic.

23 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

24 [crosstalk]

25 FEMALE VOICE: Can you hear me?

1 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

2 [crosstalk]

3 FEMALE VOICE: The Department of Education  
4 of the City of New York has decided to phase out  
5 P.S. 332.

6 [crosstalk]

7 FEMALE VOICE: P.S. 332 has served this  
8 community for over 40 years as the only barrier-  
9 free school in the District 23. P.S. 332 has  
10 provided a nurturing academic environment for  
11 students with special needs on every grade  
12 level.

13 The school serves grades Pre-K to 8 and has  
14 been a safe haven for students in and around the  
15 community since it first opened its doors in  
16 1967. The school has received a C for three  
17 years in a row as its report card grade, which  
18 is passing. 332 on a 2008-2009 quality review  
19 school has been deemed proficient. P.S. 332 has  
20 been deemed, deemed in good standing based on  
21 its 2008-2009 performance by the New York State  
22 Department of Education under the No Child Left  
23 Behind Act.

24 P.S. 332 is not--I repeat--it is not a  
25 failing school.

1 [crosstalk]

2 FEMALE VOICE: It's not. It is not.

3 [crosstalk]

4 FEMALE VOICE: P.S. 332 and the Depart--  
5 wait. The Department of Education has failed to  
6 take into account any of this important data and  
7 has overlooked the fact that P.S. 332 is not a  
8 failing school. The school serves a large  
9 number of English language learners. Those are  
10 people who don't speak English.

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 FEMALE VOICE: As well as a considerable  
13 number of transient students. That's a fancy  
14 word for homeless.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

16 [crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE: Taking these and other  
18 factors into account, the school has faced  
19 obstacles and has overcome them.

20 FEMALE VOICE: Right.

21 FEMALE VOICE: The Department of Education  
22 is doing a disservice to the people around them--

23 -

24 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] Yes.

25 FEMALE VOICE: --and is making a decision

1 that will displace substantial number of young  
2 children and many of home already face upheaval  
3 in their daily lives. P.S. 332 - - and deserves  
4 to remain open.

5 CROWD: Woo.

6 [crosstalk]

7 MS. YOLANDA SMITH: Good evening.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening.

9 MS. SMITH: My name is Yolanda Smith, and I  
10 have taught in District 23 for 12 years as a  
11 middle school teacher. I am also the UFT  
12 district representative. When I think of a  
13 school phasing out, I think of a slow, prolonged  
14 death. That is what I experienced when DOE  
15 phased out my school, Junior High School 275.

16 The graduates that used to come back and  
17 tell us about high school and college can no  
18 longer do that, because the school had been  
19 erased. I can no longer go back to the high  
20 school I graduated, high school - - that's  
21 located on Blake and Thomas - - , because DOE  
22 closed that school.

23 When a school is closed, a family is  
24 destroyed.

25 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

1 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MS. SMITH: 332 is a family.

4 [crosstalk]

5 CROWD: Woo.

6 MS. SMITH: The superintendent, when he  
7 conducted the quality review for this school  
8 stated, "Upon entry into the school, visitors  
9 are made to feel safe and welcome."

10 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

11 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

12 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

13 MS. SMITH: The students move about with a  
14 sense of purpose and anticipation. Teachers  
15 speak with students, parents, and inform them of  
16 outcomes, progress, and learning needs. Does  
17 this sound like a failing school?

18 FEMALE VOICE: No.

19 FEMALE VOICE: No.

20 [crosstalk]

21 MS. SMITH: 332 is in good standing with the  
22 state. Over the past three years, it has  
23 received proficient or well-developed on the  
24 quality review. 332 is not a failing student.

25 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

1 FEMALE VOICE: No.

2 MALE VOICE: No.

3 MS. SMITH: 332 needs the support of DOE--

4 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] All right.

5 [crosstalk]

6 MS. SMITH: --not to have DOE destroy the

7 school.

8 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

9 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

10 [crosstalk]

11 MS. SMITH: We ask that 332 remain open.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

14 [crosstalk]

15 MS. GRIMM: Number 6--

16 [crosstalk]

17 MS. GRIMM: Karen Alford [phonetic].

18 MS. KAREN ALFORD: Hello, everybody.

19 MS. GRIMM: - -

20 MS. ALFORD: I'm Karen Alford. I am the

21 vice-president of the elementary schools of the

22 United Federation of Teachers. I am also born

23 and raised in Brownsville, NY.

24 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

25 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

1 CROWD: Yeah. Woo.

2 MS. ALFORD: I also taught 17 years in this  
3 community, and I am extremely, extremely  
4 bothered over the DOE and its recklessness. It  
5 is very reckless when you use a bunch of  
6 different measurements to close a school. I  
7 refuse to believe that this is the worst school  
8 in the whole entire city.

9 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

11 [crosstalk]

12 MS. ALFORD: When our superintendent gives  
13 this school a proficient, and then all of the  
14 sudden, he is sitting on the side to close the  
15 school. Something is wrong with the metrics.

16 CROWD: Woo.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. ALFORD: --the school in good standing,  
19 something's wrong with the metrics.

20 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

21 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

22 MS. ALFORD: When there are three C's, and  
23 we know that there are D's and F's out there,  
24 something's wrong with the metrics.

25 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. ALFORD: I can't help but think that the  
3 DOE wants some real estate, and that's--

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. ALFORD: --this building.

6 [crosstalk]

7 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

8 [crosstalk]

9 MS. ALFORD: --has school closures that is -  
10 - District 23. 263 became 323. Vwala, there's  
11 a charter school in there.

12 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

13 MS. ALFORD: 271, that was closed. There's  
14 a charter school in there.

15 [crosstalk]

16 MS. ALFORD: 150, that was closed. There's  
17 a charter school in there.

18 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

19 [crosstalk]

20 MS. ALFORD: Isn't it amazing that all of  
21 the sudden this school is proposed for closure,  
22 and they want to put a charter school in here?

23 [crosstalk]

24 CROWD: Woo.

25 MS. ALFORD: The DOE - - to be reckless with

1 our children's lives. You have to look past  
2 the real estate. And I'm wondering, after the  
3 second C, and we knew that a third C could  
4 possibly close a school, why weren't all these  
5 folks that are sitting up here now running and  
6 knocking down--

7 [crosstalk]

8 CROWD: Woo.

9 [crosstalk]

10 MS. ALFORD: Please support the school, not  
11 close the school. Thank you.

12 FEMALE VOICE: That's right. That's right.

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. GRIMM: Number 7. 7's not here.

15 FEMALE VOICE: She is. She is.

16 [crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE: Here she is, right here.

18 MS. GRIMM: Number 7? Okay. - -

19 [crosstalk]

20 FEMALE VOICE: I'm representing CSA. I have  
21 a statement. The DOE has announced the closing  
22 of 20 schools, some of them with new principals,  
23 some of them just beginning to turn around, and  
24 - - eight of them that were opened not very long  
25 ago by the head of the DOE himself, Chancellor

1 Cline.

2 CSA embraces accountability and believes  
3 that schools should be closed if they have  
4 failed over a period of three or more years.  
5 Despite receiving full support from the DOE, we  
6 won't tolerate - - or failure. But in the case  
7 of several of these proposed closures, we must  
8 ask if some of the schools being held  
9 accountable while the apparatus that supports  
10 them is not.

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 FEMALE VOICE: In this case, we must inquire  
13 if the schools were really failing and by what  
14 measures they were failing. We must ask if the  
15 chancellor truly put each of these schools  
16 through a thorough process to ascertain whether  
17 they had been provided adequate support and  
18 guidance by their superintendents and SSOs and  
19 that the office of student enrollment had  
20 leveled the playing field.

21 CSA is asking the DOE to lay down the  
22 process by which they determine that each of  
23 these schools be closed. In the case of each  
24 school, we want to know what the superintendent  
25 did, besides visiting the schools to announce

1 their closings. We need to know how thorough  
2 the superintendent was in the process of helping  
3 these schools to succeed over the last few  
4 years.

5 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

6 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

7 FEMALE VOICE: DOE should include an  
8 analysis of the role of the appropriate school  
9 support organizations. Since each school pays  
10 an SSO to advise them on student achievement,  
11 coach principals on school improvement, and  
12 perform many other support functions, what sort  
13 of service did each of these 20 schools get for  
14 their money?

15 FEMALE VOICE: None.

16 FEMALE VOICE: None.

17 [crosstalk]

18 FEMALE VOICE: None.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Finally, DOE should assess  
20 how - - office of student enrollment minimized  
21 challenges in schools that face so many other  
22 challenges. It is important to know if these  
23 institutions were sent an unusually large  
24 proportion of ELL students and children of  
25 special needs.

1 [crosstalk]

2 FEMALE VOICE: When every question is asked  
3 and answered, we are likely to discover that  
4 some of these schools can't be saved. They are  
5 also likely to discover that many of them can  
6 remain open and thrive with adequate  
7 superintendent support, networks, and fair  
8 enrollment practices. Thank you.

9 MS. GRIMM: Thank you. Number 8, Ms. Young.

10 - -

11 MS. YOUNG: Yes.

12 MS. GRIMM: Ms. Young?

13 MS. YOUNG: Yes, I'm here.

14 MS. GRIMM: Okay. Thank you.

15 [crosstalk]

16 MS. YOUNG: Good evening. Instruction, not  
17 destruction.

18 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

20 MS. YOUNG: Instruction, not destruction.

21 CROWD: Not destruction.

22 MS. YOUNG: You mentioned, uh, Ms. Grimm,  
23 who made an announcement that of the surveys  
24 they said that the children and everybody didn't  
25 want to come to, but I look around. I see a lot

1 of folks here. And they're telling me that  
2 they care about this school. There's children  
3 here. There's teachers here. There's parents  
4 here. And they care about this school. This is  
5 a good school.

6 I came from a school where they closed it  
7 down as well. So I feel for you, and I'm here  
8 to encourage you to continue to fight on. Let's  
9 keep it real.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

11 MS. YOUNG: This is about putting a charter  
12 school up in here. That's what it's all about.

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. YOUNG: A charter school is a legal  
15 corporation. Key words, "Corporation."  
16 Cooperation, synonym for that is business.  
17 Every business that I know is about trying to  
18 make money.

19 [crosstalk]

20 MS. YOUNG: Trying to make money off of your  
21 kids. They're not trying to educate your kids.  
22 They're not about to--it's about business and  
23 money. But I'm here to encourage you to  
24 continue to fight on the eve, okay, of Dr.  
25 Martin Luther King's death, and we honor his

1 birthday.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MS. YOUNG: --injustice everywhere. - - is  
4 injustice everywhere. We must--this is our  
5 Brown vs. Brown. That's what this is.

6 [crosstalk]

7 MS. YOUNG: These charter schools are not  
8 going to have the qualified principals. They're  
9 not going to have the qualified educators.  
10 They're not going to have what you get here.

11 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MS. YOUNG: I am from this neighborhood, and  
14 I care about this neighborhood. And I think  
15 it's morally--it's morally bankrupt for you to  
16 come here and destroy. How come the DOE can set  
17 up stuff and mess it up?

18 Okay. And you say, "Okay. People, start  
19 all over again. Give us another chance," but  
20 you won't give 332 another chance.

21 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. YOUNG: Thank you. So I encourage you  
24 to continue to fight. Don't be afraid. Stand  
25 up.

1 [crosstalk]  
2 MS. GRIMM: --9?  
3 MALE VOICE: Number 9.  
4 [crosstalk]  
5 MS. GRIMM: 10? - - Bishop?  
6 FEMALE VOICE: She left.  
7 MALE VOICE: Number 9.  
8 MS. GRIMM: Number 9 is not here. Number  
9 10? Denise Wilson?  
10 FEMALE VOICE: Denise Wilson.  
11 [crosstalk]  
12 CROWD: Woo.  
13 [crosstalk]  
14 MS. DENISE WILSON: --PS 332 for 12 years,  
15 and I am the chapter leader. And yes, I am here  
16 to let you know that you will not silence the  
17 voice of a--  
18 [crosstalk]  
19 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.  
20 [crosstalk]  
21 MS. WILSON: I need to let you know that you  
22 cannot come in here thinking because a survey  
23 said--  
24 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] Woo.  
25 MS. WILSON: --there was no parental

1 involvement that you have the right to shut  
2 our school down.

3 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. WILSON: I need to let you know that  
6 three C's in a row is not a failing grade.

7 [crosstalk]

8 MS. WILSON: If I as an educator allowed my  
9 student who was a C student to think that they  
10 were failing because they couldn't get higher  
11 according to my standards, I would not be an  
12 educator who cared for--

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. WILSON: --child to know that they could  
15 go beyond a C, to know that they could go beyond  
16 a label. And we will not let you label us--

17 [crosstalk]

18 CROWD: Woo.

19 [crosstalk]

20 MS. WILSON: --students and failing parents.  
21 Because if the truth be told, as an educator, a  
22 school cannot stand without parents and teachers  
23 and students working on one accord. So - - we  
24 will see you on January 26th--

25 [crosstalk]

1 CROWD: Yeah.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. GRIMM: Number 11?

6 [crosstalk]

7 MS. GRIMM: Number 11--

8 [crosstalk]

9 MS. GRIMM: - -

10 FEMALE VOICE: - -

11 [crosstalk]

12 FEMALE VOICE: This school is basically my  
13 home. I wouldn't have an education if it wasn't  
14 for this school. These teachers helped me  
15 understand everything and push you for you to  
16 understand it.

17 It, it is a reason they have an academic - -  
18 . Why? Because they - - and want you to  
19 learn. The teachers, it is not about the money.  
20 It's about care and education. Please keep our  
21 school open.

22 CROWD: Yeah.

23 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

24 [crosstalk]

25 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. GRIMM: Number 12?

3 [crosstalk]

4 MS. GRIMM: Thank you--

5 [crosstalk]

6 MS. GRIMM: - -

7 MS. MELANIE BANKS: Good evening. My name  
8 is Melanie Banks, and I - - P.S. 332's reading  
9 lab. I have been teaching for 31 years. 26 of  
10 those years have been spent at P.S. 332. And I  
11 must take exception to the statement that  
12 parents do not want to send their children here,  
13 because I have called the mothers, the fathers,  
14 the sisters, the brothers--

15 [crosstalk]

16 MS. BANKS: --back to P.S. 332. So I really  
17 feel that that statement is lies.

18 FEMALE VOICE: Lies.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Lies.

20 [crosstalk]

21 MS. BANKS: Because right now, I have those  
22 students.

23 [crosstalk]

24 MS. BANKS: During the past quarter of a  
25 center, the school has undergone many changes,

1 mostly for the better. Now, based on the fact  
2 that the school has received a grade of C on its  
3 last three progress reports, it has been  
4 selected to be phased out.

5 The Department of Education's decision was  
6 made only using statistical criteria. However,  
7 this methodology is unjust and unfair. A school  
8 is made up of unique individuals--

9 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.

10 MS. BANKS: --and circumstances--

11 [crosstalk]

12 MS. BANKS: --and cannot and should not be  
13 judged based on percentages and numbers alone.

14 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

16 [crosstalk]

17 MS. BANKS: Supposed we treated our students  
18 as the Department of Education has treated us.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

20 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

21 MS. BANKS: How would this child I'm going  
22 to describe be judged based solely on the  
23 following information. He didn't speak until he  
24 was four years old. And he didn't read until he  
25 was seven. One of his teachers described him as

1       mentally slow, unsociable, and adrift. He was  
2       expelled from school.

3               Based on this information, the Department of  
4       Education would probably want to put this child-  
5       -

6               FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

7               FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

8               [crosstalk]

9               MS. BANKS: --in a special education class  
10       and some type of alternative learning center.

11              [crosstalk]

12              MS. BANKS: The facts belie the truth. This  
13       child's name was Alfred Einstein.

14              [crosstalk]

15              MR. STANLEY: - - right.

16              MS. GRIMM: - -

17              [crosstalk]

18              MR. STANLEY: My name is - - Stanley  
19       [phonetic]. Two of my children attend this  
20       school. - - in this school. Our children were  
21       all here last August. When we do leave the  
22       shelter, we may not remain in this area, and our  
23       children may not attend this school after this  
24       happens. So I speak not for my children but for  
25       those that continue to attend this school and

1 those that yet will attend this school. This  
2 is a source of stability for all children in  
3 this area.

4 Also, the work that this school does with  
5 special education students - - school to this  
6 community will be a major - - to those with  
7 special education students. These children need  
8 extra help. They do learn, and this school's  
9 one of the few in this area to help them. Why -  
10 - handicap in the first place?

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MR. STANLEY: There was an article today in  
14 the Daily News, "Charters need to focus on  
15 medias, like Diane Lavish [phonetic]." - -  
16 "Most charters in New York City have - - for  
17 admission. A lot of - - students whose families  
18 are not well informed. New York City Public  
19 Schools have 50,000 homeless students, but only  
20 about 100 are in enrolled in the charters."

21 FEMALE VOICE: Uh-huh.

22 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

23 [crosstalk]

24 MR. STANLEY: - - students that have been in  
25 charters tend to be those with the mildest

1 disabilities, because charters are not  
2 equipped to meet the needs of those with extreme  
3 disabilities.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MR. STANLEY: --charters are able to cancel  
6 out students who are not a good fit within the  
7 terms of traditional public schools.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

9 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

10 [crosstalk]

11 MR. STANLEY: - - public education. 20% of  
12 the students that attend here are special ed.  
13 66% are extremely disabled special ed. That  
14 means that those students will not be accepted  
15 by the charter schools. This is bad and wrong.

16 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

17 MR. STANLEY: Now, what are the criteria by  
18 which a child wins the lottery? How many  
19 children will be accepted by this school? How  
20 many will be turned away? How do they cancel  
21 out the children? These questions must be  
22 answered be this goes to a final vote. I will  
23 not sit idly by while the future of my children  
24 is determined by a group of political  
25 appointees.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MR. STANLEY: --confirmed that many of the  
3 city's charter schools get higher test scores.  
4 - - found that 51% of the city's charter schools  
5 produce - - math but only 29% - - reading. Last  
6 year - - charter school found only 17% had  
7 better results - - public schools. 83% - - or  
8 significantly worse. This study - - that  
9 charter schools are - - for poor education.  
10 Thank you.

11 [crosstalk]

12 CROWD: Woo.

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. GRIMM: Number 14.

15 [crosstalk]

16 MS. GRIMM: - -

17 MR. ROBBY LOPEZ: Yes. Uh, my name is Robby  
18 Lopez [phonetic]--

19 [background noise]

20 MR. LOPEZ: Uh, I worked with the Oasis  
21 after school program. Can you hear me?

22 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

23 FEMALE VOICE: No.

24 [crosstalk]

25 FEMALE VOICE: Step to the microphone.

1 MR. LOPEZ: All right. Can you hear me  
2 now?

3 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

4 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

5 [crosstalk]

6 MR. LOPEZ: As I was saying, my name is  
7 Robby Lopez. I work with Oasis after school in  
8 this building. And for me, my education began  
9 as far as I can--the best I can remember,  
10 learning how to tie my shoe laces. Now, I had  
11 trouble with it. It bothered me, but it was the  
12 beginning of my education, and it was the reason  
13 why, when I later on was taking the citywide  
14 test to be used to judge kids, I was highly  
15 upset to find that what I thought was a not good  
16 enough score was actually the highest score you  
17 could possibly get on those tests.

18 [crosstalk]

19 MR. LOPEZ: It was my impression from  
20 learning how to tie my shoe laces. The  
21 difficulty I had is that I simply just had motor  
22 skill issues. My arms now have been fine. But  
23 if you have a child that is trying to learn how  
24 to tie their shoe laces, and you sit them down,  
25 and you say, "Here's how you tie it. Here's one

1 method. Here is another method," and you work  
2 with them to practice it, they will learn how to  
3 tie their shoe laces very quickly.

4 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

5 MR. LOPEZ: Now, if you give that same child  
6 a pair of sneakers, put them at their feet, say,  
7 "I will back in three days. If they're not  
8 tied, I beat you," and you come back, they will  
9 not have tied their shoes.

10 Now, my question is, why does it seem that  
11 the Department of Education is giving us a pair  
12 of shoes, giving us a school, and saying, "Do  
13 well with it. Make something happen. What  
14 we're going to do is we're going to stand over  
15 there. And we're going to look to see if your  
16 shoes are tied yet. Now, here we are a day  
17 later. I give you this report card that says,  
18 'Your shoes seemed fairly tied but not tied well  
19 enough for my standards'"--

20 [crosstalk]

21 MR. LOPEZ: And you come back, and you check  
22 again. The child now has their shoes on, and  
23 yet the shoes still aren't tied. You warn them  
24 if this happens one more time, "I'm going to  
25 beat you, and then I'm going to take the shoes

1 away," and you will have to walk the rest of  
2 your life barefoot, it doesn't make sense.

3 And I just have to wonder if this has  
4 anything to Barak Obama's recent Race to the Top  
5 agenda that is--

6 [crosstalk]

7 MR. LOPEZ: --trying to raise the limit for  
8 a bunch of schools to 200 in order to try and  
9 make us eligible for \$700 million.

10 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

11 MR. LOPEZ: Does that make sense to you?

12 [crosstalk]

13 MR. LOPEZ: It doesn't make sense that these  
14 changes are happening now, because they don't  
15 seem to actually do any active work in  
16 addressing the children's need.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. GRIMM: Number 15? Stephanie Carson?

19 MS. STEPHANIE CARSON: My name is Dr.  
20 Stephanie Carson. And even though I - - father,  
21 I am still a teacher here at P.S.I.S. 332.

22 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

23 CROWD: Yeah. Woo.

24 MS. CARSON: And I would love to talk with  
25 you about my family and my babies. But what I

1 really think you need to hear about the  
2 positive curriculum changes that we have made in  
3 this school the last few years while I have been  
4 teaching here. You have not given us an  
5 opportunity for these changes to take an effect.  
6 Two of these changes are our Treasure Program  
7 and our - - Knowledge Program that we have  
8 wholeheartedly put into effect here.

9 Two years ago, the teachers approached our  
10 principal, Ms. Pierce [phonetic], and we said,  
11 "We need a new - - program that will really  
12 affect our children." She said, "You guys do  
13 the research. You make the proposal. I will  
14 put the money into the program."

15 We gave up our lunches and our breaks to  
16 meet with publishers. We picked Treasure, and  
17 she put the money in. We have new test books,  
18 new teacher guides. We have three test--three  
19 workbooks per student for every student in here.  
20 We have the charts and the overheads. And I  
21 have seen that program make a difference. It is  
22 - - . You will start to see the difference in  
23 the test scores.

24 The second program is Core Knowledge - - .  
25 Ms. Pierce chose to join the knowledge network,

1 and my family here will tell you I am a  
2 knowledge network fanatic. I love this program.  
3 It makes learning meaningful to our students.  
4 We go on meaningful fieldtrips. We do special  
5 events. The parents pack up this auditorium,  
6 and we have our pep rallies, which come multiple  
7 times during the year. I mean, they pack it up.  
8 If you want parent involvement, you come to one  
9 of our pep rallies.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MS. CARSON: --funding to go and each  
14 children to go to learn what they need to learn.  
15 We spend the summers planning. We have weekly  
16 planning sessions. And when the visitors come,  
17 - - same - - changes that I did. We - - here.  
18 And his daughter is a principal at another  
19 school - - .

20 She came to my special education classroom,  
21 which is one of the Core Knowledge classrooms,  
22 and she said that she was impressed by the world  
23 of knowledge that my students and the students  
24 in the--in the school were showing her. These  
25 programs are being phased in here, and you need

1 to give them the opportunity. It has reached  
2 a third grade this year, a testing grade. And I  
3 know - - need to allow our students to  
4 demonstrate to you what they've demonstrated to  
5 me as you - - teachers and parents in the school  
6 that they are learning.

7 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

8 [crosstalk]

9 MS. CARSON: One last thing. Okay. You're  
10 talking about statistics. If students are being  
11 - - in here, are you - - them into a - - school  
12 or a good school?

13 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

14 MS. CARSON: We are a good school, and I'm  
15 ready to come back. I want to come back to this  
16 school that's using programs that have been  
17 proven - - test scores.

18 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

19 MS. CARSON: In urban and suburban schools.  
20 This is my home, and the children are learning.  
21 And I want them back to P.S.I.S. 332.

22 CROWD: Yeah. Woo.

23 [crosstalk]

24 ELIZABETH: - - , everybody. My name is  
25 Elizabeth. - - I'm a teacher at P.S.I.S. 332.

1 And also, I'm a member of - - . I'm current  
2 to many, many - - to fight for justice. And  
3 tonight is my night--

4 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] That's right.

5 ELIZABETH: --because - - fight is right  
6 here at my home, P.S. 332. P.S. 332, as my  
7 colleagues have said, we have, um, - -  
8 neighborhood. Most of us do not leave this  
9 building until around 8:00 p.m.

10 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

11 ELIZABETH: 8:00 p.m., we are still here  
12 working to help our children.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

14 ELIZABETH: P.S.I.S. 332, we are - - numbers  
15 of - - education, and we are - - into regular  
16 education. Many of them are coming back to tell  
17 us how they have been - - by one teacher or the  
18 other - - high school. Most of them came from  
19 another high school - - . Or once they - -  
20 here, they do not - - special Ed - - .

21 [crosstalk]

22 ELIZABETH: Yes, we - - into regular  
23 education. Also, uh, I want to ask why we do  
24 not - - special Ed - - in - - . - - students at  
25 our school in Stanton Island, not yet in Long

1 Island. Why do we - - ? - - is now being - -

2 . Look at - - . Look at Brownsville - - .

3 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

4 [crosstalk]

5 ELIZABETH: What is going on? And I want us

6 to look at--on Saturday, we would like every one

7 of us to come out. Everybody is going to

8 provide transportation to take us to - - to

9 fight for what - - .

10 [crosstalk]

11 MS. GRIMM: I need to ask you to--

12 [crosstalk]

13 ELIZABETH: --our dear brother died for. He

14 died for - - justice. And we have to consider

15 to fight for--

16 [crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

18 ELIZABETH: --children and--

19 [crosstalk]

20 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

21 [crosstalk]

22 ELIZABETH: - -

23 [crosstalk]

24 ELIZABETH: Don't close P.S. 332.

25 [crosstalk]

1 CROWD: Yeah. Woo.

2 MS. GRIMM: Okay. - - Number 17?

3 MALE VOICE: 17?

4 MS. GRIMM: 17?

5 [crosstalk]

6 MS. GRIMM: - - Number 18? - -

7 CROWD: Yeah.

8 MS. GRIMM: - -

9 FEMALE VOICE: Hello. My name is - - , and

10 I am currently attending P.S.I.S. 332. I have--

11 I have been in the top class - - . Right now I

12 am in 601. I feel that this school should not

13 be closed, because all the teachers in this

14 school have influenced me to do better and just

15 to let you know knowledge is power. And I do

16 not want the school to know--I mean--I mean to

17 close.

18 [crosstalk]

19 FEMALE VOICE: - - to tell you to protect

20 our school, and P.S.I.S. 332 should be open.

21 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. GRIMM: Number 19? Another student.

24 Would you introduce yourself?

25 MR. ANDRE: My name is - - Andre [phonetic].

1 Um, I'm here because they're closing my school  
2 down, and I don't feel that's right. Um, one of  
3 my best classes is 601. My best teacher is Ms.  
4 Lewis. And - - to close the school down. - -  
5 Oasis. And we have - - teachers at the school -  
6 - and a lot of good kids. So - - to close the  
7 school down.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

9 [crosstalk]

10 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

11 MS. GRIMM: - - Joshua Bunions? Joshua  
12 Bunions? Mr. Bunions?

13 MALE VOICE: Good evening.

14 MS. GRIMM: Joshua Bunions?

15 [crosstalk]

16 MS. GRIMM: - -

17 MR. DANNY LADINE: Uh, good evening.

18 CROWD: Good evening.

19 MR. LADINE: For those of you that know me  
20 or don't know me, my name is Danny Ladine  
21 [phonetic]. I'm a--

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. GRIMM: I'm sorry. I'm sorry. - -  
24 Joshua Bunions.

25 MR. LADINE: I'm sorry. I thought you said-

1

-

2

[crosstalk]

3

MS. GRIMM: I'm sorry.

4

[crosstalk]

5

MR. LADINE: Yes, I did.

6

[crosstalk]

7

MS. GRIMM: - - Thank you.

8

MR. LADINE: - -

9

MS. GRIMM: Okay. So Mr. Bunion is not

10

here? Okay. Number 21, Danny Ladine.

11

[crosstalk]

12

MR. LADINE: First of all, I would like to

13

ask for help--

14

[crosstalk]

15

MR. LADINE: Okay. A long time ago, I used

16

to sit up on that stage on the community board.

17

I loved there. I used to sit with Ms. Page.

18

There's a whole lot of educators in here that

19

helped the young man want to fight for

20

community. I left Brownsville for five years

21

and went to be a DC 37 rep, and it disturbed me,

22

because everywhere I went, I saw conditions

23

better than what was in my neighborhood.

24

FEMALE VOICE: All right.

25

MR. LADINE: Now, it took a great love to

1       come back to Brownsville. It ain't about the  
2       money. It's about every last individual that's  
3       sitting in this audience. And I'm telling you--  
4       and I'm going to be nice, because there's young  
5       people here. But I'll be darned if I'm going to  
6       let ya'll just keep on taking and taking and  
7       taking.

8               Now, I work at a facility right around the  
9       corner at Liberty Family Shelter. Now, it's a  
10       beautiful day when you can do the paperwork and  
11       have a kid to come into a school right around  
12       the corner in the neighborhood that they feel  
13       that it may be - - around the corner. But they  
14       know that right down the block is where they  
15       live, and they can come see people that's  
16       smiling.

17               FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

18               [crosstalk]

19               MR. LADINE: People that I know that I got  
20       my brother, brother - - in the school that's an  
21       educator. Now, ya'll don't understand this, but  
22       I understand a little better than some of ya'll  
23       because my eyes is wide open. I look at the  
24       construction. I see that Queens is a hop, skip,  
25       and a jump down the backstreets--

1 [crosstalk]

2 FEMALE VOICE: Uh-huh.

3 MR. LADINE: Now, for some reason, real  
4 estate seems to be important.

5 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

6 FEMALE VOICE: Uh-huh.

7 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

8 MR. LADINE: Okay. It's so important that  
9 your child's education is in danger.

10 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

11 [crosstalk]

12 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

13 MR. LADINE: Now, I only came here, and I  
14 was sad one time. And I'm not going to put it  
15 on nobody, but I'm going to tell you what I saw.  
16 I saw morale is low.

17 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

18 MR. LADINE: I saw morale was low. That's  
19 the first time I had to walk this school all my  
20 years I've been here and seen people down. But  
21 they were still educating young people.

22 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

23 MS. GRIMM: I need to ask you to - - wrap  
24 up.

25 MR. LADINE: I'm going to wrap it up,

1 because I was upset that - - came here to see  
2 that - - close, because they expect just a few  
3 people to come.

4 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

5 MR. LADINE: But I guarantee next time, my  
6 builders, my projects, my neighborhood will come  
7 out and support you.

8 MS. GRIMM: Thank you. Number 22, - -  
9 Carroll. - - , Ms. Carroll.

10 MS. CARROLL: Yeah, I'm here on behalf of my  
11 child - - . My heart goes out to each and every  
12 one of ya'll - - , but I got a situation - - .  
13 My son attends this school, and he's been trying  
14 to come back to this school. But every time he  
15 comes back - - . - - I'm a very angry mother.  
16 He wrote a letter - - , and now he - - . I  
17 don't appreciate my school has been out of  
18 school from September 14 up until now - - letter  
19 from the--

20 [crosstalk]

21 MS. CARROLL: That's - - here.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. CARROLL: This is my son that goes to  
24 this school. My son - - --

25 [crosstalk]

1 MS. CARROLL: --about my son.  
2 [crosstalk]  
3 MS. CARROLL: My son--  
4 [crosstalk]  
5 MS. CARROLL: --is coming back to this  
6 school tomorrow.  
7 FEMALE VOICE: All right. All right.  
8 [crosstalk]  
9 MS. CARROLL: - - just like - - walked up  
10 to--  
11 [crosstalk]  
12 MS. CARROLL: My son--  
13 [crosstalk]  
14 MS. CARROLL: He has been out of the school  
15 since September 14th.  
16 [crosstalk]  
17 MS. CARROLL: I'm concerned about my son.  
18 And I think my boy should be heard, and I think  
19 my boy should be accepted in school tomorrow.  
20 And just like--  
21 [crosstalk]  
22 MS. CARROLL: --accept him. Thank you.  
23 [crosstalk]  
24 MS. GRIMM: Number 23. Number 23?  
25 MALE VOICE: 23.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. GRIMM: Yes, please.

3 MALE VOICE: All right. I actually started  
4 my career as a teacher here at 332 some years  
5 ago.

6 MALE VOICE: Can't hear you.

7 FEMALE VOICE: Can't hear you.

8 [crosstalk]

9 MALE VOICE: --out of - - . - - this. You  
10 have to be aware here that this is not the end  
11 of the fight. They are trying to control the -  
12 - energy here. Notice the tone of the people -  
13 - certain times you speak. Do not let that bind  
14 anyone.

15 All right. We're going to have to take this  
16 even further, because, remember, they hope that  
17 you will just be satisfied with these small  
18 forums to speak at, even - - coming up in  
19 January, which - - have to be taken to the  
20 streets, because that's the only way you're  
21 going to stop construction or destruction, I  
22 should say, of the building or any other  
23 schools. All right?

24 And also, - - , because most - - outside the  
25 education system have no clue what's going on

1 here today at all. You must keep this fight  
2 up until the end of year and even more.

3 Remember, you have - - increased his net worth  
4 from \$4 billion to \$17 billion. - - been in  
5 office. Do not think it is not about money. He  
6 has spent over \$100 million to reflect himself.  
7 All right?

8 [crosstalk]

9 MALE VOICE: All right? So you must keep  
10 this fight going. All right? So I have to take  
11 - - .

12 [background noise]

13 MS. GRIMM: Number 24 - - .

14 MS. AMBER LUSHER: My name is Amber Lusher  
15 [phonetic]. I am a proud teacher here at 332.

16 CROWD: Yeah.

17 MS. LUSHER: I've been teaching middle  
18 school for three--I'm sorry, four and a half  
19 years. P.S.I.S. 332 is our school. We teach  
20 every single child. We accept every single  
21 child. And we address every single child's  
22 needs. Charter schools only accept students who  
23 are already doing well. Charter schools do not  
24 accept every single child. - - take your child  
25 if they're getting suspended every other day.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. LUSHER: Charter schools do not  
3 education ELL students, students with special  
4 needs, students with attendance issues, behavior  
5 issues, or low schools. Of course charter  
6 schools are successful. They handpick their  
7 students.

8 CROWD: Woo.

9 MS. LUSHER: Public schools are then left  
10 with the rest, which we gladly and eagerly - - .

11 CROWD: Woo.

12 MS. LUSHER: Schools should not be run like  
13 a business. You can't fire the students,  
14 because they don't meet your educational  
15 requirements. You teach them.

16 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

17 MS. LUSHER: If P.S.I.S. 332 closes, where  
18 will our students go?

19 FEMALE VOICE: There.

20 MS. LUSHER: That's right.

21 FEMALE VOICE: There.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. LUSHER: I would also like to address  
24 one other thing to Ms. Grimm who said students  
25 do not want to - - our school.

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. LUSHER: She had cited that a majority  
3 or a high--I'm sorry, high percentage of our  
4 students come from out of zone schools. You  
5 perceive that as the students in our zone don't  
6 want to go here. I pursue that as people making  
7 an effort from out of zone schools to get in,  
8 because this is where they want to be.

9 CROWD: Woo.

10 MS. LUSHER: We - - from the Bronx. We - -  
11 Island. You speak to them. They want to come  
12 here. We have students begging for us to keep  
13 them here.

14 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

15 MS. LUSHER: Students want to be here, and  
16 please, don't take my students.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. GRIMM: --Alberto Rivera?

19 MR. ALBERTO RIVERA: Good evening. My name  
20 is Alberto Rivera, and I'm a member--

21 [crosstalk]

22 MR. RIVERA: --for the City of New York.  
23 I'm also a member of the professional staff in  
24 congress, and I have a bachelor's in information  
25 systems. I am currently enrolled in a master's

1 in public administration. And me and my four  
2 siblings attended this school.

3 CROWD: Yeah.

4 MR. RIVERA: My mother volunteered seven  
5 years and worked 17, a total of 24 years, a  
6 total of 24 years. My mother dedicated her life  
7 to this school. My entire family came to this  
8 school. Um, it saddens me to think that  
9 administrators who have no educational  
10 background--

11 [crosstalk]

12 MR. RIVERA: --businessmen tell teachers how  
13 to teach. It doesn't make sense.

14 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

15 [crosstalk]

16 MR. RIVERA: It doesn't make sense at all.  
17 When I was eight years old in this school, my  
18 youngest sibling was diagnosed with leukemia,  
19 and this school supported me and my family and  
20 continues to support us. My nephew goes here,  
21 and soon, hopefully, my children. Please do not  
22 close this school. Thank you.

23 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

24 [crosstalk]

25 MS. GRIMM: Number 26? Number 26?

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. GRIMM: Hello.

3 MS. CLARA ALISHA ALLEN: Hi. Uh, hi. My  
4 name is Clara Alisha Allen [phonetic].

5 MS. GRIMM: Are you Number 26?

6 MS. ALLEN: Yes, I'm here.

7 [crosstalk]

8 MS. ALLEN: Um, - - not - - , because - -  
9 things - - about my family. I'm - - Christopher  
10 Avenue that was most - - . It's the last stop -  
11 - . We got every bad, stereotypical thing that  
12 they push our society, push up against us.

13 But P.S. 332 is awesome. I did not - - into  
14 me and into my family. Uh, I'd like to start  
15 off--if I had enough time, I'd like to speak for  
16 everyone. But my mother has five kids. She  
17 adopted one, because kids - - . So - - . He is  
18 now a group - - counselor for lost and misguided  
19 teens, and he got an education here at P.S. 332.

20 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

21 MS. ALLEN: These children I have to the  
22 left of me, it's - - my sister - - . She  
23 received her education here at P.S. 332. - -  
24 military war hero. My - - Allen was classified  
25 with literary problems, and he has a lot of

1 issues. He had a lot of issues - - . He is  
2 also now a military - - military a decorated  
3 soldier.

4 I, I - - . I Clara Allen obtained a job  
5 with the most affluent branch of the military  
6 for the United States Air Force. I got the top  
7 job in the nation for military Intel. And I was  
8 the only black woman who received a - - award  
9 for - - .

10 [crosstalk]

11 CROWD: Woo.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MS. ALLEN: Now, I'm - - from this school.  
14 I don't work here. I--

15 [crosstalk]

16 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

17 MS. ALLEN: --to do with this school, but  
18 this school kept me and my family - - the job.  
19 And we got a decorated - - . I now--I now  
20 retired military - - , and I'm an alternative  
21 model. Alternative means - - . And I'm - - ,  
22 and this is me on my shirt. I - - on my shirt.

23 [crosstalk]

24 CROWD: Woo.

25 MS. ALLEN: And I--

1 [crosstalk]

2 MS. ALLEN: And being - - , I know all  
3 about--

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. ALLEN: --and being exclusive. But  
6 honestly, if it wasn't for 332 opening their  
7 warm arms to me and my family, we wouldn't be  
8 real life GI Joes - - and war heroes that we  
9 are.

10 [crosstalk]

11 CROWD: Yeah.

12 [crosstalk]

13 MALE VOICE: My name is--

14 [crosstalk]

15 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

16 [crosstalk]

17 MALE VOICE: You free to talk after--

18 [crosstalk]

19 MALE VOICE: Uh, my brothers and I--I had  
20 five brothers. Four of us graduated from  
21 P.S.I.S. 332 - - , and we have all obtained our  
22 degrees from college. - - Virginia Tech, - -  
23 Wilson College, myself from - - University - - .  
24 So to say that students don't enjoy coming to  
25 the school is not true at all.

1 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

2 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

3 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MALE VOICE: --here today, Mr. Steiger

6 [phonetic], Ms. Ray, Ms.--

7 [crosstalk]

8 MALE VOICE: --Ms. Gilbertson, Ms. Sphinx

9 [phonetic]--

10 FEMALE VOICE: [interposing] All right. All

11 right.

12 MALE VOICE: --they instilled in me--they

13 helped me--they inspired me so much to become

14 the best individual I could be. And I had such

15 a great foundation from them that I took the

16 special - - and passed it and was accepted to

17 the Bronx High School of Science.

18 CROWD: Woo.

19 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

20 MALE VOICE: Being that I'm from--

21 [crosstalk]

22 MALE VOICE: --high school and also got

23 accepted to Brooklyn Tech. But my foundation

24 also enabled me to pass the independent school's

25 entry exam, and I was fortunate enough to obtain

1 a full scholarship to - - school in Brooklyn.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MALE VOICE: So the education I have gotten  
4 here is second to none. The dedication that  
5 these teachers have is second to none. And for  
6 a review to say that the - - school may have  
7 received a grade of a C. But - - is not  
8 quantitative.

9 FEMALE VOICE: Right.

10 MALE VOICE: You're not--you're not really  
11 seeing how much these students have gained.  
12 You're looking at exams. And anybody can do bad  
13 on an exam. - - sick. I don't feel well. I  
14 throw up. I'm not going to perform on an exam.

15 [crosstalk]

16 MALE VOICE: But if you look at my body of  
17 work, if you consistently and thoroughly look at  
18 my body work, you will see that this school is  
19 an excellent institution and cannot be closed  
20 down. Please don't deny these students, these  
21 student students and these future students, the  
22 same opportunities that I've been blessed with.  
23 Thank you, and have a great night.

24 [crosstalk]

25 CROWD: Woo.

1 MS. GRIMM: Um, Number 28 has spoken.

2 Okay. 29? Jane - - . Jane--

3 [crosstalk]

4 MS. GRIMM: - -

5 JANE: - - , and I graduated. And I have a  
6 sister who's in the 3rd Grade, and I heard there  
7 is going to be no - - . - -

8 [crosstalk]

9 MS. GRIMM: Take your time.

10 FEMALE VOICE: Take a deep breath.

11 [crosstalk]

12 JANE: She is going to be the only person in  
13 my family who will graduate at 332. - - 332  
14 schools - - 332 - - , right? And - - my family  
15 - - .

16 [crosstalk]

17 JANE: - - phasing out when you should be  
18 phasing them in. Thank you.

19 MS. GRIMM: Thank you. Number 30, Allen  
20 Fisher? Mr. Fisher?

21 MR. ALLEN FISHER: Yes, I am a--I am an  
22 employee here at P.S.I.S. 332. I am also glad  
23 to say--very much happy to say that I am a  
24 father - - as well. I reside in Brownsville--

25 [crosstalk]

1 MR. FISHER: Can you hear me now?

2 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

3 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MR. FISHER: I am a product of Brownsville,  
6 and I am happy to say that--I'm happy to say  
7 that I am just glad my colleagues are here in  
8 support of - - the principals of P.S.I.S. 332.  
9 Now, I want to speak from the perspective of  
10 just a resident in Brownville.

11 I think that if you close the school, it  
12 will be - - . There are people here that spend  
13 their days, nights, and weekends here that don't  
14 even - - , and I think that says a lot for the  
15 staff here as well. There's just so many things  
16 like someone pointed out how could you measure--  
17 how could you measure the care? You really  
18 can't. There are intangibles here that are not--  
19 -that goes beyond measurement.

20 And, um, I would also like to say we serve  
21 about 20% of the special needs children in this  
22 community. There is schools--there are schools  
23 closing all over the city, especially, i.e.,  
24 Maxwell--

25 [crosstalk]

1 MR. FISHER: --Maxwell, because they're a  
2 large special Ed population as well. If you do  
3 that injustice by closing I.S.P.S. 332, you're  
4 doing disservice not only to the community, but  
5 you're doing a disservice to those who care  
6 about their communities and who do not have a  
7 voice today to speak as we are. Thank you.

8 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

9 CROWD: Woo.

10 MS. GRIMM: Number 31--

11 [crosstalk]

12 FEMALE VOICE: Well, people--

13 [crosstalk]

14 FEMALE VOICE: And I am an educator, a - -  
15 developer, and a program supervisor. And my  
16 question s, "If I had a program that was  
17 receiving C for three years in a row," I think  
18 my pressure would all be on me. What am I  
19 doing? What support am I getting? What  
20 resources am I getting? What tools of  
21 evaluation, what measurements am I giving them?

22 [crosstalk]

23 FEMALE VOICE: --in order to improve their C  
24 status. And for it to be three years - - C  
25 report, it's not the school's fault. It's the

1 supervisor--

2 [crosstalk]

3 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

4 [crosstalk]

5 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

6 [crosstalk]

7 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

8 FEMALE VOICE: My other question is also,  
9 "Where will these high percentage of students in  
10 temporary housing go? Where would these high  
11 percentage of special needs go if charter  
12 schools are just picking, and they have the  
13 lottery?"

14 I also - - serving the communities in ten  
15 years. I have an after school program here for  
16 seven years. And let tell you something. Our  
17 progress reports, which is the same case in 332,  
18 we have B's and A's. And this is outside--

19 [crosstalk]

20 FEMALE VOICE: This is the 21st Century, by  
21 the way, so I don't understand where the big  
22 difference is going. They are succeeding, and -  
23 - part of the school that was here also in  
24 Brownsville, also shut down. And I just am  
25 floored with where are those students going to

1 go?

2           And just like the person before me, their  
3 system is not measureable. You can't measure  
4 what happened here. You can't measure the  
5 stories of the overtime that parents had, the  
6 students have. I think you need to take that  
7 into consideration before you really think about  
8 destroying the school.

9           FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

10          CROWD: Woo.

11          MS. GRIMM: Number 32, Cristina, Cristina?

12          MS. CRISTINA ROUNDTREE: Yes.

13          MS. GRIMM: - -

14          MS. ROUNDTREE: I'm Cristina Roundtree, and  
15 I'm an educator here at P.S.I.S. 332. My son  
16 went to school here. Some of the staff that is  
17 still here taught my son. I thought this school  
18 was good then when they taught him, and it's  
19 still good now.

20                I don't take the time to teach here because  
21 of the money. I'm here because I care about the  
22 children. I care about this community. My son  
23 comes back and volunteers and helps the staff  
24 here, because he cares about this community.  
25 I've instilled that into him, and I instill that

1 into every child that they need to give back  
2 to their community.

3 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

4 MS. ROUNDTREE: These children are not a  
5 bunch of numbers. They are my children.

6 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

7 MS. ROUNDTREE: Every child that walks  
8 through this door is my child, and I care about  
9 them, because they are my child.

10 [crosstalk]

11 MS. ROUNDTREE: --because they are my child,  
12 and I resent the fact that we are told that our  
13 children do not want to come here. That's--

14 [crosstalk]

15 MS. ROUNDTREE: --the children that come in  
16 here and there be a hug every morning, because  
17 they want--

18 [crosstalk]

19 MS. ROUNDTREE: How dare you say that this  
20 school is failing our children? I invest my  
21 child? I stay here. I stay here longer than I  
22 need to, because I love these children. And I  
23 will continue to be here, whether you want us  
24 here or not. I will be here to care for these  
25 children.

1 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

2 MS. ROUNDTREE: And I want this school to  
3 stay open, because we need caring people like  
4 the staff that we have here at 332.

5 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

6 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

7 MS. ROUNDTREE: And we will continue to  
8 fight for our children, and we will not let you  
9 close our school down without the fight that we  
10 are giving you now.

11 FEMALE VOICE: Yes.

12 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

13 [crosstalk]

14 CROWD: Woo.

15 MS. GRIMM: Number 33--

16 [background noise]

17 MS. GRIMM: - -

18 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

19 [crosstalk]

20 FEMALE VOICE: - -

21 FEMALE VOICE: Good evening, everybody.

22 CROWD: Good evening.

23 FEMALE VOICE: I used to work in P.S. 332  
24 also. And when I hear about them closing the  
25 school - - the community, because I sit on

1 different community boards. Number 1, there's  
2 one reason why they - - say it's money. By  
3 using public money and public faculty, okay,  
4 Bloomberg planning to use the public money for  
5 charter schools. They're not telling you that.

6 Number 2, they're having two - - children.  
7 Okay? Two - - scholar. Okay. The charter  
8 school kids are scholars. And other Board of Ed  
9 children are students. I think it's high time  
10 for - - to stop - - board - - .

11 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

12 [crosstalk]

13 FEMALE VOICE: --spend money - - to educate  
14 a child. I'm also special Ed - - now. And I  
15 was told that--

16 [crosstalk]

17 FEMALE VOICE: --I couldn't do it neither.  
18 So where are our special Ed children going to  
19 go?

20 FEMALE VOICE: Right.

21 FEMALE VOICE: They go to charter school,  
22 and their children have problems. - - don't. -  
23 - charter school - - children with problems. We  
24 have a lot of children with issues. Before you  
25 start separating, go to the meat. Cut the pie.

1        Eat the meat. Find out about the children,  
2        because these are our children. Brownsville is  
3        - - .  
4        [crosstalk]  
5        FEMALE VOICE: --over here where the real  
6        issues--  
7        [crosstalk]  
8        FEMALE VOICE: --tonight and tell them about  
9        how the kids don't want to go to school--how the  
10       kids don't want to go to school. We need the  
11       panel here to encourage the community. Don't  
12       come in here and tell that to my community. How  
13       dare you?  
14       [crosstalk]  
15       MS. GRIMM: Number 34--  
16       [crosstalk]  
17       MALE VOICE: --here and--  
18       [crosstalk]  
19       MS. GRIMM: - -  
20       MALE VOICE: Okay.  
21       MS. GRIMM: Start again--  
22       [crosstalk]  
23       MALE VOICE: All right. My name is--  
24       [crosstalk]  
25       MALE VOICE: And I am a special educator

1 here at P.S. 332. Uh, I teach special  
2 education. And, uh, as you consider this  
3 proposal, um, I would like you to look at  
4 additional variables, variables - - currently  
5 being used. Uh, data, the type of data and  
6 criteria that you're using, fluctuates  
7 historically, right? The Board of Ed used a  
8 certain criteria at one period of time. And as  
9 you move on, the criteria changes.

10 332 is in a unique, uh, position, a unique  
11 situation, in a sense, because, uh, it has a  
12 population of, uh, - - population. And with  
13 that population, it has been able to, uh,  
14 accomplish a great number of things. We have a  
15 special Ed--uh, a special Ed, uh, population  
16 that consecutively, right now, uh, - - special  
17 Ed being involved - - too.

18 The measure of year to year progress is  
19 evident in the school within the special Ed - -  
20 . How many schools in our cohort can attest to  
21 this fact?

22 [crosstalk]

23 MALE VOICE: You have achievement going on.  
24 So, uh, this board needs to be very careful in  
25 the way that it is evaluating 332--

1 [crosstalk]

2 MALE VOICE: --332. Consider other measures  
3 that are not so easily quantified, right? Uh,  
4 this school does not just educate in terms of  
5 academics, but it provides, uh, ethics and value  
6 to the students that have a different culture  
7 outside.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

9 MALE VOICE: So this school is a social  
10 agent. This school is, is, is transforming not  
11 only the students on a base level, but  
12 ultimately transforming the community. So you  
13 truly need to look at other variables as you  
14 talk about the future of this school. Thank  
15 you.

16 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. GRIMM: Number 35, - - James Boots  
19 [phonetic]--

20 [crosstalk]

21 MR. JAY BOOTS: James Boots.

22 [crosstalk]

23 MS. GRIMM: Boots. - -

24 MR. BOOTS: My name is Mr. Boots.

25 MS. GRIMM: Mr. Boots, do you want to come

1 up to the microphone?

2 MR. BOOTS: This is good? Everybody can  
3 hear me?

4 CROWD: Yeah.

5 MR. BOOTS: Um, I'm a parent. Uh, my kids  
6 attend I.S.--Um, I.S.P.S. 327 down the block.  
7 Um, and my wife is also a PTA member. Uh, over  
8 the years, myself, I've been an activist in the  
9 community. Many people know me. - -

10 And over the years, we have come to realize  
11 that, um, this is not the first time that the  
12 Board of Ed has attempted to do what it's about  
13 to do right now.

14 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

15 FEMALE VOICE: Right.

16 MR. BOOTS: So the last eight years - -  
17 investigation begun of the Board of Ed. - - you  
18 have no knowledge of it. You don't even know  
19 about it. But just for the Board of Ed's  
20 information, Mr. Boots, again, well known in  
21 industry for - - issues. But they're not  
22 finished at all.

23 I heard about five people mention the Board  
24 of Ed, Brown vs. the Board of Ed. We don't need  
25 to be debating with these people about what

1 they're about to do.

2 [crosstalk]

3 MR. BOOTS: --they're already doing.

4 [crosstalk]

5 MR. BOOTS: So we need to actually focus on  
6 what needs to be done to stop them from doing  
7 what they're doing.

8 FEMALE VOICE: Exactly.

9 [crosstalk]

10 MR. BOOTS: And in junction, to stop your  
11 program - - eliminate your charter schools that  
12 you are trying to place - - is right around the  
13 corner. This is only the beginning of your end,  
14 not theirs. - -

15 [crosstalk]

16 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

17 [crosstalk]

18 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

19 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

20 [crosstalk]

21 MS. GRIMM: Number 36, Victoria Walsh  
22 [phonetic].

23 MS. VICTORIA WALSH: Hi. My name is  
24 Victoria Walsh, and I have a daughter that's in  
25 the 7th Grade and a son that's in kindergarten.

1 Now, - - parent involvement. How much more  
2 parent involvement can you get - - 9:00 to 2:50.  
3 We're there all day with our kids, and - - ain't  
4 no parents here--ain't no parents here. Like I  
5 said, - - over seven years volunteer. They need  
6 to stop saying parents. - - We're - - . - -  
7 those three - - . What happened to - - ? - -

8 You understand, ya'll are going to come down  
9 and close out our school. Don't close our  
10 school. Go back and get all of the rich people  
11 who ya'll taking all that money, start with  
12 them.

13 [crosstalk]

14 MS. WALSH: --and - - close the school - -  
15 school. You got a school right here on Dumont  
16 and - - over--

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. WALSH: - - Okay.

19 [crosstalk]

20 MS. WALSH: I've done been through it. I've  
21 done heard the - - . Stop playing with my kids  
22 - - in your hands.

23 [crosstalk]

24 MS. GRIMM: Number 37?

25 [crosstalk]

1 FEMALE VOICE: - -  
2 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.  
3 [crosstalk]  
4 CROWD: Woo.  
5 [crosstalk]  
6 MALE VOICE: - - I taught - - .  
7 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.  
8 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.  
9 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.  
10 MALE VOICE: - -  
11 [crosstalk]  
12 MALE VOICE: I went to the - - which we now  
13 call the - - Library.  
14 [crosstalk]  
15 MALE VOICE: --over 40 years in our  
16 community. Please, don't destroy the community.  
17 Just look at their faces. I'm begging you.  
18 Look at their faces. They've been hurt so much.  
19 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.  
20 MALE VOICE: Instead of building us a high  
21 school, they put a youth center over here.  
22 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.  
23 [crosstalk]  
24 MALE VOICE: --show our children this is  
25 your future.

1 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.  
2 [crosstalk]  
3 MALE VOICE: This is what's going to happen  
4 to you. We don't want that. We're doing the  
5 best we can. All I'm asking is, "Help us."  
6 FEMALE VOICE: Right.  
7 [crosstalk]  
8 MALE VOICE: Don't close them.  
9 [background noise]  
10 MALE VOICE: Make I.S.P.S. 332 the light of  
11 the community.  
12 FEMALE VOICE: Yeah.  
13 [background noise]  
14 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.  
15 [crosstalk]  
16 MALE VOICE: These are all children. We go  
17 home. In fact, they can't even pronounce my  
18 name. They call me Mr. Tiger.  
19 [crosstalk]  
20 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.  
21 CROWD: Woo.  
22 MS. GRIMM: Thank you. Number 38?  
23 [background noise]  
24 CROWD: Tiger, Tiger, Tiger.  
25 [crosstalk]

1 MS. HATCHA: Uh, my name is Ms. Hatcha  
2 [phonetic]. I am a--uh, my child is a Number 2  
3 student--

4 [crosstalk]

5 MS. HATCHA: --a school that was closed and  
6 reopened. Um, everyone basically covered some  
7 of the stuff that I just wanted to say, but I'm  
8 just going to repeat. You know, I'm curious to  
9 know what exactly does the DOE stand for this  
10 matter when - - . - - struggling children. And  
11 why is it so necessary to close a public school  
12 that caters mostly to the children in the  
13 neighborhood, when there is so much - - across  
14 the community?

15 What happens to the academic future of the  
16 child that does not make the cut?

17 FEMALE VOICE: That's right.

18 MS. HATCHA: I also want to recommend a book  
19 to everyone in here, old and young, called *Jim*  
20 *Crow's Children: The Broken Promise of the*  
21 *Brown Decision* by Peter Irons, and read you, uh,  
22 uh, a brief quote from it.

23 "Schools today are even more segregated than  
24 they were before the Brown movement." This is a  
25 book that everyone needs to read. It is truly

1 insightful. It is--you'll get a, uh, a  
2 clearer insight into the Department--uh, Board  
3 of Education and the way that they practice and  
4 run things and, you know, the future of our  
5 children. Thank you.

6 FEMALE VOICE: All right.

7 [crosstalk]

8 MS. GRIMM: Thank you.

9 [crosstalk]

10 FEMALE VOICE: Woo.

11 MS. GRIMM: - - I want to thank everyone on  
12 the panel for their time - - . - - so much.  
13 Please remember, if you have additional  
14 thoughts, uh, we have our telephone line and an  
15 e-mail--

16 [crosstalk]

17 MS. GRIMM: - - Thank you very much.

18 [crosstalk]

19 CROWD: Save our school. Save our school.  
20 Save our school. Save our school. Save our  
21 school. Save our school. Save our school.  
22 Save our school. Save our--

23 [END 154\_536.mp3]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Signature April C. Hodson

Date January 14, 2010