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

**Temporary relocation of P.S. 51 and  
opening of new school in OLGC -  
11/02/11**

1 [START MZ000001]

2 MR. MARIANO GUZMAN: We're going to begin.  
3 It's 6:05. This is a joint public hearing of  
4 the Department of Education, the Community  
5 Education Council, and School Leadership Team  
6 for the proposed temporary resiting of P.S. 51  
7 in Building M816, which we often refer to as Our  
8 Lady of Good Counsel, beginning in the 2011-2012  
9 school year, and the proposed opening of a new  
10 zoned district elementary school and temporary  
11 co-location with existing P.S. 51 in Building  
12 M816.

13 I am the School District 2 Community  
14 Superintendent Mariano Guzman. Tonight we are  
15 also offering interpretation in Spanish and we  
16 have an interpreter with us who will make an  
17 announcement

18 INTERPRETER: [Speaking Spanish]

19 MR. GUZMAN: [Speaking Spanish].

20 We have asked District 2 Community Education  
21 Council and the School Leadership Team of P.S.  
22 51 to participate in this joint public hearing.  
23 I am joined tonight by Lauren Miller from the  
24 School Leadership Team. She is the chair, and  
25 she's also a third grade teacher at P.S. 51, and

1 Shino Tanikawa, and I believe we also have  
2 another CEC member who will be joining us,  
3 Tamara Rowe [phonetic] from the CEC. I don't  
4 believe there are elected officials here as of  
5 yet, but we are expecting that either officials  
6 or their representatives will be joining us.

7 This hearing is being recorded. The purpose  
8 of this hearing is for you to provide comments  
9 about the proposal. Ricky Gutenberg [phonetic]  
10 is here and will be providing remarks. The  
11 purpose of this hearing is for you to provide  
12 comments about the proposal.

13 Before I describe the proposal I want to  
14 make sure you are all aware of the opportunity  
15 to provide your input. All those who wish to  
16 speak must sign up in the speaker sign-up area  
17 located just outside the auditorium. The sign-  
18 up list will close within 15 minutes. Speakers  
19 will be given the floor in the order that they  
20 signed up. All comments are limited to two  
21 minutes. There may be, as I said, elected  
22 officials who show up at different times  
23 throughout the evening. If they wish to speak  
24 we will do our best to accommodate them at the  
25 first opportune moment.

1           Those who are here at the start of the  
2 public comment segment will be asked to speak  
3 first. All comments will be mentioned in the  
4 analysis of public comment to be published and  
5 provided to the panel for education policy the  
6 evening before the panel votes. That vote is  
7 scheduled for Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

8           In addition, we welcome any comments and  
9 feedback you may have at any time before the  
10 panel votes on both proposals. The email  
11 address and phone number where comments may be  
12 made are on the impact statements that are at  
13 the desk but I will provide you that information  
14 as well: it is D02--for District [2--](mailto:2--proposals@Schools.NYC.gov)  
15 [proposals@Schools.NYC.gov](mailto:2--proposals@Schools.NYC.gov). Again, it is  
16 [D02Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov](mailto:D02Proposals@Schools.NYC.gov). And the phone  
17 number is 212-374-3466.

18           On September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the New York City  
19 Department of Education issued an emergency  
20 declaration temporarily resiting P.S. 51, Elias  
21 Howe [phonetic], an existing zoned elementary  
22 school from Building M-051, which is located at  
23 525 West 44<sup>th</sup> Street to leased space at 323 East  
24 91<sup>st</sup> Street, known as Our Lad of Good Counsel, or  
25 Building M-816 as I--

1 [END TAPE MZ000001]

2 [START TAPE MZ000002]

3 --was referring to.

4 P.S. 51 is a zoned elementary school which  
5 serves 334 students in kindergarten through  
6 fifth grade. While P.S. 51 had offered a pre-  
7 kindergarten program in its former location it  
8 will not offer a pre-kindergarten program while  
9 it is located in Building M-816.

10 The emergency resiting took effect on  
11 September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and will be effective for six  
12 months. The DOE, the Department of Education,  
13 is now proposing to extend a temporary of P.S.  
14 51 until September 2013, at which point P.S. 51  
15 would move to its new building which is  
16 currently being constructed on property adjacent  
17 to the school's former site.

18 As stated in the emergency declaration for  
19 P.S. 51 the resiting of P.S. 51 is necessary for  
20 the health, safety and general welfare of its  
21 students. The DOE anticipated completion of  
22 P.S. 51's new facility by September 2013, though  
23 construction on the other projects adjacent to  
24 the school is expected to continue beyond that  
25 time. Nonetheless P.S. 51 will move to its new

1 building upon its completion in September 2013.  
2 At that time the increase in noise level and the  
3 impact on air quality will have subsided because  
4 construction on the new P.S. 51 facility will be  
5 completed; nearby construction will largely be  
6 internal to the new structures which is less  
7 noisy and creates fewer air quality issues than  
8 excavation work.

9 The Department of Education is also  
10 proposing to open a new District 2 zoned  
11 elementary school in M-816 in September 2012.  
12 If this proposal is approved new school would  
13 serve kindergarten students during the 2012-2013  
14 school year and will eventually serve  
15 kindergarten through fifth grade.

16 The new school proposal is independent of  
17 the P.S. 51 proposal and will be voted on  
18 separately by the panel. For one year, the  
19 2012-2013, the new school would be co-located in  
20 M-816 with P.S. 51 until P.S. 51 moves into its  
21 own facility in September 2013.

22 A co-location means that two or more school  
23 organizations are located in the same building  
24 and may share common spaces like auditoriums,  
25 gymnasiums and cafeterias. The opening of a new

1 district elementary school in building M-816  
2 would address current kindergarten wait lists at  
3 the adjacent zone school, P.S. 290 Manhattan New  
4 School, in the growth of elementary demand in  
5 the Upper East Side neighborhood. Thank you.

6 The next presenter will be Shino Tanikawa.

7 MS. SHINO TANIKAWA: Thank you, Mariano. My  
8 name is Shino Tanikawa; I am the president of  
9 the Community Education Council of District 2.  
10 I have a few very general comments to make, but  
11 before I start with the comments I do want to  
12 thank the Department of Education for listening  
13 to the panels from P.S. 51 and finding solution  
14 that really met the needs of the children. So I  
15 do want start with my gratitude that you  
16 listened and have invaluable solution and I'm  
17 very happy about that.

18 Having said that, this is something that I  
19 have mentioned in the past: the educational  
20 impact statements, and I don't mean this  
21 personally to you, Elizabeth, or to Ben--I know  
22 that you prepare 20 zillions of these every  
23 month, but I want these educational impact  
24 statements to be educational impact statements.  
25 To say that there will be no impact at the - -

1 to co-locate or temporarily site P.S. 51 miles  
2 away from its home turf.

3 Yes it's a great solution, I'm grateful, but  
4 let's not kid ourselves: there are impacts on  
5 the children, I'm pretty sure. They have to  
6 take a bus when they could have walked to their  
7 neighborhood school. They are in a building  
8 that they're not very familiar with. Those  
9 things really make a difference in children's  
10 education.

11 So I would really like these documents to be  
12 a better record of what we might expect from  
13 these proposals. When you co-locate two schools  
14 there are impacts. You have to share this  
15 auditorium. There are scheduling nightmares--  
16 well I don't want to say nightmares but it could  
17 be headaches for both--

18 [END TAPE MZ000002]

19 [START TAPE MZ000003]

20 --school administrations. It takes energy away  
21 from teachers having to schedule rooms. All  
22 those little things, mundane as they are, they  
23 have an impact on the education of our children.  
24 And I know that educational impact statements  
25 often say the use of shared space will be worked

1 out between the two school administrations and  
2 it's true. But let's be honest and say they  
3 will have to figure it out, and sometimes it  
4 will be a challenge because the cafeteria size  
5 is such, maybe one of the schools will have to  
6 start lunch at 10 o'clock. That might be an  
7 impact, and that has a direct impact on  
8 students' education.

9 So I would really like to see these  
10 documents be more thorough and more  
11 comprehensive and really touch on what it means  
12 if we carry out these proposals on the children--  
13 -not the rooms, not the buildings, not the  
14 facilities, but the children.

15 And I have one question regarding the  
16 projections that you have on--let's see which  
17 proposal I'm looking at--proposal for the new  
18 zoned district school proposal and on page--I  
19 don't have the page number but it's section:  
20 "Enrollment, admissions and school performance  
21 information". There is a table for enrollment  
22 data. And there is an increase for grade three,  
23 2015-16, going to grade four in 2016 to 2017  
24 school year, and I'm not sure why that cohort  
25 should increase, moving from third grade to

1 fourth grade. We're expecting 60 to 75  
2 students but that cohort, when it moves up to  
3 fourth grade, we're expecting to see 75 to 90  
4 students. So I will show you what I mean on the  
5 table and maybe you can explain it to me.

6 And beyond the nitty-gritty on the table I  
7 would like to know what these projections are  
8 based on so you could help me with that; that  
9 would be wonderful. Thank you very much.

10 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you Shino. The next  
11 presenter, if she would like to present, would  
12 be Lauren Miller, who is the chair of the School  
13 Leadership Team. And Lauren would you like to  
14 present?

15 MS. LAUREN MILLER: Hi, good evening. I  
16 would like to say that we are grateful for our  
17 new location at Our Lady of Good Counsel as  
18 students have adjusted very well to the new  
19 building.

20 One of our major concerns for the  
21 cohabitation in this building for the next  
22 school year would be the timelines for  
23 completion of the sixth floor. Currently we are  
24 using every room in this facility; we are using  
25 floors from the basement to the fifth floor and

1 we are told that the sixth floor would be  
2 completed to house our students new year so that  
3 there is room for the two schools to co-habitate  
4 in the building. Currently that construction  
5 has not started for that floor as of yet; we're  
6 just wondering about the timeline. Thank you.

7 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you, Lauren. We have  
8 completed the formal presentations but I would  
9 like to, at this moment to introduce Nancy  
10 Singbarch, our principal of the school and ask  
11 Nancy if she would like to say a few words.

12 MS. NANCY SINGBARCH: I just want to thank  
13 you; it was a really rough year last year and if  
14 it wasn't for the Department of Education, the  
15 Office of Enrollment, thank you Elizabeth Rose,  
16 many, many people that helped us make this move  
17 to the--really for the safety and the health of  
18 our students. It's not just the construction of  
19 our new school, we have eight new buildings  
20 going up around the block. So you should really  
21 take a visit what's happening on 45<sup>th</sup> and really  
22 44<sup>th</sup> Street and 45<sup>th</sup> Street between 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>  
23 Avenue. In two years it's going to be  
24 beautiful, but at this point there's two major  
25 construction sites going on there: Gotham

1 [phonetic] and also Turner. So there's each--  
2 there's cranes, there's machinery, so there's no  
3 way possible that we could have been in that  
4 school.

5 I guess my concern is similar to Lauren  
6 Miller, that we know that we came in here with  
7 the understanding, knowing that we would  
8 cohabitate together, two schools, but the sixth  
9 floor has not--the renovation has not started  
10 off [phonetic]. We're using closets on the  
11 fifth floor for coaches and every single room is  
12 occupied. We have a school-based health clinic  
13 that we're very, very happy was able to move  
14 with us and they occupy the office on the other  
15 side, across the hall there. I mean we're using  
16 all offices--

17 [END TAPE MZ000003]

18 [START TAPE MZ000004]

19 --here, all classrooms. So we are concerned,  
20 one, that construction will take place.

21 And I think, you know, as far as I think it  
22 can be worked out as far as sharing the  
23 cafeteria, the gym, all that could be easily  
24 worked out between the two administrations. So  
25 thank you very much.

1           MR. GUZMAN: We will now open the floor to  
2 public comments and speakers will be given the  
3 floor in the order that they signed up. All  
4 comments are limited to two minutes. And before  
5 we start the official list I'd like to recognize  
6 elected officials who have sent representatives  
7 and they're in the audience: Ricky Gutenberg I  
8 believe is here. Hi, but is not speaking.  
9 Matthew Walsh is here from Assemblyman Cort's  
10 [phonetic] office. And Christen Else [phonetic]  
11 is here from the Borough President's office.  
12 And Shelby Gurner from Representative Maloney  
13 [phonetic]. Would you like to speak?

14           MR. SHELBY GURNER: Unfortunately the  
15 Congressman [phonetic] couldn't be here tonight  
16 because - - testimony that I - - on his behalf.

17           "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to  
18 offer testimony today. - - families are  
19 choosing to remain in the city and are selecting  
20 public schools for their children. We are truly  
21 fortunate that there are an abundance of good  
22 schools in the neighborhood and families that  
23 are willing to spend time to make sure the local  
24 schools succeed.

25           "I've worked to found a task force on

1 overcrowding, along with Borough President  
2 Scott Stringer [phonetic] that led to the  
3 creation of a new elementary school because the  
4 P.S. 151 zone lacked a school for more than ten  
5 years and student from the area were causing  
6 overcrowding at elementary schools around the  
7 Upper East Side.

8 "P.S. 151, Yorkville Community School,  
9 incubated at the Our Lady of Good Counsel  
10 building and quickly--sorry--quickly outgrew the  
11 space. And while P.S. 151 and P.S. 267 helped  
12 ease overcrowding in our community there clearly  
13 is more that needs to be done.

14 "P.S. 290 remains one of the most  
15 overcrowded schools in the entire city and there  
16 are wait lists and overcrowded classrooms at  
17 many other East Side schools. Since P.S. 151  
18 vacated Our Lady of Good Counsel and moved to  
19 its current location at M-066 this September we  
20 have a golden opportunity to address the  
21 perennial overcrowding at P.S. 290 by creating  
22 another school in the building.

23 "While this space is currently being used as  
24 a temporary space for the West Side's P.S. 51  
25 Elias Howe School that school will soon be

1 located to a new facility. I am delighted  
2 that the Department of Education has proposed  
3 siting a new zoned elementary school, new  
4 school, in the building.

5 "New school would address the overcrowding  
6 at neighboring schools by increasing the total  
7 number of elementary seats while simultaneously  
8 reducing the geographic areas zoned for P.S.  
9 290.

10 "I hope that we will use this opportunity  
11 engage parents and the broader community to  
12 develop common goals for new school and a parent  
13 body that is formed and ready to take on the  
14 challenges of supporting the new school.

15 "The 2009 development of P.S. 151 in the Our  
16 Lady of Good Counsel space should serve as a  
17 guide for the Department of Education's public  
18 engagement. The Upper East Side parents who are  
19 involved in weekly discussions with the  
20 Department of Education relating to the creating  
21 of P.S. 151 were consulted on processes ranging  
22 from curriculum development to principal  
23 selection.

24 "The community and P.S. 151 administration  
25 benefited greatly from the increased blanket

1 [phonetic] participation and the creation of  
2 the new school and I commend the Department of  
3 Education for its receptiveness to the  
4 suggestions and concerns of parents. I am  
5 confident that similar parental involvement in  
6 the development of new school at Our Lady of  
7 Good Counsel would result in the same benefits  
8 and instill the same sense of ownership as was  
9 seen in P.S. 151.

10 "While I'm strongly supportive of the  
11 creation of the new school at Our Lady of Good  
12 Counsel I note that this creates a dilemma for  
13 the leadership at P.S. 290 which may see  
14 resources diminished as a result of being  
15 "right-sized". I am hopeful that the Department  
16 of Education will not punish P.S. 290 by cutting  
17 resources that helped P.S. 290 succeed. Schools  
18 not be perversely encouraged to remain  
19 overcrowded by using resources that support  
20 essential and successful programs.

21 "I hope that a satisfactory long-term lease  
22 for Our Lady of Good Counsel can be retooled  
23 [phonetic] by the Department of Education and  
24 the Archdiocese--

25 [END TAPE MZ000004]

1 [START TAPE MZ000005]

2 --of New York, and that the Department of  
3 Education will make a strong commitment to  
4 heightened community and parental engagement at  
5 the new school.

6 "I await the Department of Education's  
7 confirmation of the creation of new school at  
8 Our Lady of Good Counsel and look forward to  
9 working with the Department of Education to  
10 engage the parents of the Upper East Side."

11 Thank you. I have copies of the testimony  
12 if anyone would like a copy; I'll be over there  
13 and hand them out. I do not want to interrupt  
14 anyone now speaking.

15 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you. We will begin the  
16 official speakers list, and again, we will limit  
17 each speaker to two minutes. I may interrupt  
18 you and in advance forgive me for that  
19 interruption but in the interest of time we will  
20 limit to two minutes. First speaker is Amy  
21 Rabinowitz.

22 MS. AMY RABINOWITZ: - -.

23 MR. GUZMAN: Okay George James. George, you  
24 didn't want to be first, did you?

25 MR. GEORGE JAMES: Eh, somebody's got to be

1 first. My name is George James, I am a P.S.  
2 290 parent.

3 Let me say that school overcrowding in our  
4 neighborhood is the result of good things  
5 happening in our city. More families wish to  
6 raise their children here, our streets are safer  
7 and cleaner, and our good schools are getting  
8 even better. This is a problem we want to have.  
9 The question is how to respond.

10 The current proposal to add a zoned school  
11 three blocks from another zoned school is an  
12 expedient solution to address today's crisis but  
13 is not the best. The expansion and  
14 modernization of our existing facilities would  
15 not only seat more students but would increase  
16 their quality. Further, many small schools in  
17 old facilities will cost more to operate than  
18 fewer, larger, modern facilities.

19 But I had the opportunity to work on the  
20 recent expansion of the Spence [phonetic], a  
21 private school just down the street. Spence is  
22 currently in the midst of their third major  
23 expansion. Its facility is fantastic, and it is  
24 the result of long-term planning and a  
25 commitment to educational excellence.

1           Less than one mile away P.S. 290 started  
2 with a similar facility but it has never been  
3 modernized or expanded. The cafeteria serves  
4 double duty as the gym. There is no library.  
5 The school is so lacking in outdoor space that  
6 the children have their recess in the streets.  
7 The deficit in the investment in this facility  
8 is staggering. We need to invest in our  
9 existing educational infrastructure like it  
10 matters.

11           Nowhere in the EIS for this school does it  
12 address the concept of quality; it's all about  
13 quantity. We need a long-range plan that  
14 focuses on improving facility quality while at  
15 the same time making sure that every kid who  
16 wants a seat has a seat in the neighborhood. We  
17 need to be smarter and not just make expedient  
18 solutions to address this year's crisis but  
19 focus on long-term solutions to prevent the  
20 crisis from occurring in the first place. Thank  
21 you.

22           MR. GUZMAN: Amy Rabinowitz, and the speaker  
23 following will be Caroline Hall and then  
24 Michelle, is it Lewis? Levits?

25           MS. MICHELLE LEVIT: Levit.

1 MS. RABINOWITZ: I'm Amy Rabinowitz and  
2 I'm the parent of a second grader at P.S. 290  
3 and I'm the chairperson in the PTA's community  
4 outreach committee.

5 Since this is a hearing on whether the OLGC  
6 becomes a new school site I understand that this  
7 is not the venue to raise our concerns about the  
8 number of blocks from our zone or the potential  
9 for under-enrollment that we predict if our zone  
10 is significantly reduced. We know that's an  
11 issue to be raise with CEC and that's what we  
12 have done and will continue to do.

13 However we do want the DOE to know what we  
14 have concerns about how the rezoning lines are  
15 being drawn and how the potential zone is being  
16 development. The question of whether OLGC  
17 should be a zoned school, I think it might serve  
18 the neighborhood better as a specialty school,  
19 like a new home for an expanded lower lab.

20 Given that the goal is to increase the  
21 number of seats available, and given that so  
22 many children qualify for G&T but don't have the  
23 opportunity attend a G&T close to home is there  
24 are too few seats in the neighborhood  
25 altogether. We believe that allowing parents

1 more choices and more control over where their  
2 children attend schools will reduce the number  
3 of children on the wait list at all the schools.

4 The DOE hasn't given us particularly  
5 compelling data projections on the number of  
6 children who will be attending our schools in  
7 the years to come. However, we do know that  
8 each year lower lab is not able to accommodate  
9 so many children who qualify for G&T, increasing  
10 their capacity by going [phonetic]--

11 [END TAPE MZ000005]

12 [START TAPE MZ000006]

13 --in [phonetic] in their space will free up  
14 seats at neighborhood schools like ours and we  
15 believe potentially impact the community more  
16 substantially than the zoned school design  
17 simply to fill in available space.

18 MR. GUZMAN: Caroline Hall.

19 MS. CAROLINE HALL: Thank you very much for  
20 holding this hearing. My name is Caroline Hall,  
21 I'm the co-president of the PTA at 151 and I'm  
22 on the SLT.

23 As a proud parent of 151 who will help get  
24 that school off the ground I applaud the DOE for  
25 recognizing that there still remains and

1 overcrowding issue and for trying to address  
2 it. We gave up this beautiful building and we  
3 miss it and we now are likely to have another  
4 building. The building in which most or many of  
5 us live will now be zoned for this new school  
6 and I'm confident that those parents are going  
7 to rally together to make the new school as good  
8 as 151.

9       The overcrowding on the Upper East Side,  
10 especially 290 has been the rallying cry of 290  
11 for every year that I've been involved in public  
12 school - - now in the fourth year. So it  
13 surprises me when now we hear that they're going  
14 to be unsubscribed. All I know is that our  
15 school had to open a sixth kindergarten class  
16 which we can't house and which impacted our  
17 resources absolutely directly because of the  
18 overcrowding at 290.

19       I don't think that's fair to a fledgling  
20 school; I don't think we should be out of our  
21 building by growing out of our size before we  
22 have a chance to be fully subscribed to the  
23 fifth grade. I think it's important that we  
24 have a zoned school and not a specialty school  
25 because lower lab covers all of District 2 and

1 we need something to handle the Upper East  
2 Side's overcrowding.

3 It's not fair to 151 to expect them to be  
4 the overflow backstop of 290 anymore. I applaud  
5 the DOE for making this recommendation and I  
6 think it should go forward. Thank you very  
7 much.

8 MR. GUZMAN: I'm going to ask if the next  
9 three speakers can line up so that we can - -  
10 and - - Michelle Levit.

11 MS. LEVIT: Michelle Levit. Sorry, I  
12 apparently don't write that well. I am a parent  
13 whose child--doesn't know where their child is  
14 going to be going next year because right now  
15 we're in 290 and another new proposal would be  
16 under 151. I'm here to make a simpler point: I  
17 don't have a vested interest in any of these  
18 schools. It's the uncertainty of not knowing  
19 where your child is going, and I went through  
20 this with my friends last year because you  
21 didn't get ensures [phonetic] on the school and  
22 you were on the wait list. My friend was  
23 number, I think 62, on the P.S. 290 wait list--  
24 was unbearable.

25 So I think the importance of having a new

1 zoned school to deal with the elementary  
2 overcrowding problem, as long as it's resolved  
3 by January will alleviate some of the people's  
4 concern who are in my shoes and who have already  
5 dealt with this in the past and are afraid to  
6 deal with it in the future.

7 And the only position I have is I'm against  
8 a specialty school at lower lab because that is  
9 going to help people throughout the district but  
10 not necessarily in our community, which is what  
11 I think this new school is designed to work on.  
12 So I wanted to make those points.

13 And then I wanted to make one other point,  
14 which is what I think is sort of the elephant in  
15 the room: nobody wants to go to 198. And  
16 someone has to fix that problem. When 198  
17 becomes a desirable school people are not going  
18 to be rushing to move out of that district and  
19 fighting to get into one of the schools that are  
20 more desirable. I don't have any comment or  
21 knowledge about whether it is a good school or  
22 it's not a good school; I only know that no one  
23 wants to go there and perception is reality.

24 MR. GUZMAN: Jackie Filler is the next  
25 speaker and I will also ask Sandra Cohen, Willis

1 Blackburn and Belinda Arnold to line up.

2 MS. JACKIE FILLER: Hi my name is Jackie  
3 Filler and I'm the parent of two children that  
4 go to P.S. 151. I'm on the executive board of  
5 the PTA of 151 and on the SLT. I want to thank  
6 the DOE and CEC for all of their time and  
7 patience in trying to - - with this ongoing  
8 issue.

9 The need to rezone parts of the Upper East  
10 Side to address the overcrowding of P.S. 290 is  
11 clear. For years the 290 community was very  
12 vocal regarding the overcrowding. Since the  
13 reopening of P.S. 151 for all of its three years  
14 of existence 151 has absorbed children from--

15 [END TAPE MZ000006]

16 [START TAPE MZ000007]

17 --who line these wait lists, which this year  
18 resulted in a sixth kindergarten classroom at  
19 151.

20 Even once the P.S. 267 zone lines were drawn  
21 290 was still publicly vocal that they would  
22 have a wait list, and indeed they had one as  
23 recently as this past spring, resulting in 151's  
24 condensing of four second grade classrooms into  
25 three with significant financial ramifications

1 for our principal.

2 After years of ignoring this issue I  
3 appreciate the DOE's continuing attempt to  
4 address the overcrowding, first by opening 151  
5 and 267 and more recently by securing OLGK as  
6 another gen ed [phonetic] zoned school.  
7 Opportunity like this is extremely rare and if  
8 not seized the population of 151 will become  
9 overcrowded before it reaches its full capacity  
10 of K to 5, which is certainly not the way to  
11 incubate a new school.

12 On a related issue, given the soon to be  
13 upcoming opening of the third Upper East Side  
14 elementary school in the last three years it is  
15 clear that additional middle school seats are  
16 very much needed. The upcoming available space  
17 at 158, which has been used as a middle school,  
18 is the perfect and only space for such seats.

19 Given the stellar education among all Upper  
20 East Side schools it would be every parent's  
21 wish to extend their current elementary school  
22 to a K to 8, however given the very limited  
23 space available this is not an option.  
24 Therefore this one existing opportunity for  
25 additional middle school seats needs to be made

1 equally available to all children on the Upper  
2 East Side. Thank you.

3 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you. Eric Wein?

4 MR. ERIC WEIN: Good evening, I'm Eric Wein,  
5 parent of a student at lower lab. Having said  
6 that what I want to stress, and I'm hearing  
7 tonight and I've heard at previous meetings is  
8 division and "My school versus yours" and I  
9 think that that's something that's just an  
10 unfortunate byproduct of the process.

11 But what I want to advocate tonight is a  
12 move by lower lab from the 198 building into  
13 this building in a segmented process. And the  
14 reason that I advocate that is that many of the  
15 issues that have been brought up by many of the  
16 parents from different schools can be alleviated  
17 by that process, namely the president of the CEC  
18 commented earlier this evening that problems  
19 that are inherent in co-location.

20 198 and 77 are currently in a building  
21 together. They work very well together but it's  
22 a process and it's a struggle; having those two  
23 elementary schools separated into standalone  
24 buildings will open up opportunities for both of  
25 those schools.

1           Lower lab has earned an unfortunate  
2 reputation as being a segmented piece of the  
3 District 2 community; it's simply not true.  
4 Expansion of lower lab into this building would  
5 present opportunities not only district-wide but  
6 also with concentration in the Upper East Side.  
7 My understanding on the statistics, and I'll  
8 stand corrected if I'm wrong, is that 74 % of  
9 the students of lower lab are from the Upper  
10 East Side. It will also free up by expanding to  
11 three classes as opposed to two lower lab  
12 classes. It will cut down on the 500-plus  
13 student waiting list that exists for lower lab  
14 and it will free up spaces in kindergarten  
15 classes through fifth grade classes throughout  
16 the district and more specifically throughout  
17 the Upper East Side.

18           The one thing, the last thing I want to  
19 touch on is that there is an existing strong  
20 family support system for the school as opposed  
21 to one that would have to be created for a new  
22 school, and one last quick point is the  
23 efficiencies that are gained by having an  
24 existing principal and an existing  
25 administration start a school that's K through 5

1 as opposed to having some costs concentrated  
2 on kindergarten in one year and then two grades  
3 in the following years. Thank you.

4 MR. GUZMAN: Willis Blackburn?

5 MR. WILLIS BLACKBURN: Hi I'm Willis  
6 Blackburn, I'm the father of a three-year-old  
7 who will be attending the new school in 2012.  
8 So we've heard the proposal from the P.S. 77  
9 people to move P.S. 77 to this building and  
10 expand P.S. 77 so they can accommodate more  
11 gifted and talented children. And the argument  
12 is that we would have fewer schools and that  
13 ought to be more efficient.

14 But as a parent I don't necessarily want to  
15 have few larger schools; I want--I kind of like  
16 small schools; they're nearby where I know the  
17 administration and they're just kind of - - can  
18 get individual more attention. And I think that  
19 under the Department of Education plan even this  
20 school in five years would be overcapacity; it  
21 would be at 107 to 130 % of capacity. So I'm  
22 kind of wondering if we move P.S. 77 into this  
23 building--

24 [END TAPE MZ000007]

25 [START TAPE MZ000008]

1 --then where would kids who were supposed to  
2 be here who would fill up the entire building,  
3 where would they go to, to a smaller space  
4 somewhere else? So I think expanding the gifted  
5 and talented is a great idea and I think that we  
6 should always be - - to do that but I think it's  
7 more important that we have sufficient capacity  
8 in our zoned schools first. Thank you.

9 MR. GUZMAN: Belinda Arnold?

10 MS. BELINDA ARNOLD: Hi I'm Belinda, I have  
11 a daughter who's going to attend kindergarten  
12 next year and I don't know where because I was  
13 in this unzoned territory for many years and  
14 then we were zoned P.S. 151 and now we're here.  
15 So it is very unnerving, as the lady said  
16 earlier. And I'm completely against moving  
17 lower lab here because I truly believe that  
18 gifted and talented is expanding so much because  
19 children, I mean parents are desperate to get  
20 their children into gifted and talented because  
21 they don't have good public schools to go to in  
22 their zone. So they train their kids to test  
23 well and get them into G&T programs because they  
24 don't have another option.

25 So I'm completely all for having the new

1 zoned public school available for us in this  
2 local community.

3 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you. I'd like to  
4 recognize that Michelle Feldman [phonetic] has  
5 joined us from Council Member Lapin's [phonetic]  
6 office, and Michelle would you like to make a  
7 statement?

8 MS. MICHELLE FELDMAN: - -.

9 MR. GUZMAN: Okay. Thank you. I'd like to  
10 ask Sandra Cohen, David Cohen, Andy Lackman and  
11 Alan Rosenbooth to join us, and the next speaker  
12 is Sandra Cohen.

13 MS. SANDRA COHEN: We have plenty of Cohens.  
14 My name is Sandra Cohen, I'm the parent of a  
15 preschooler. I'm currently zoned for P.S. 290  
16 and my zone would flip into this new school.  
17 And I heard comments tonight about this  
18 tremendous parent involvement that we'd love to  
19 have for creating this new school and the great  
20 parent community that created P.S. 151 from the  
21 ground up. But this isn't like that. Where is  
22 that parent involvement for this new Old Lady of  
23 Good Counsel? This proposal was made by the  
24 Department of Ed a little bit out of the blue.

25 I wanted my child to attend an established

1 school with an experienced principal, a  
2 cohesive community, family support just like all  
3 of you. I understand that's to exist at 290  
4 where he's currently zoned and I understand that  
5 too exists at P.S. 151 and our neighboring  
6 schools. But the parents of prior hearings that  
7 I've attended and the P.S. 290 parent that I  
8 heard from tonight don't want to rezone it.

9 We don't have an Upper East Side  
10 overcrowding crisis; we have a wait list crisis.  
11 It caused a tremendous disruption at 151 and  
12 then the wait list has been mismanaged, the  
13 admissions has been mismanaged and it's in large  
14 part due to late admissions of G&Ts very late in  
15 the school year off of that list.

16 Tonight the president of CEC for District 2  
17 talked about the educational impact of  
18 colocation. P.S. 77 and P.S. 198 are the only  
19 collocated schools, other than this one, on the  
20 Upper East Side, perhaps in District 2--I'm not  
21 certain on that--it would benefit P.S. 198 to  
22 have the extra classroom space to build out its  
23 G&T program, which is improving and growing, and  
24 into third, fourth and fifth grade where they  
25 have no classrooms to currently go. If P.S. 77,

1 where I'm also a parent and have an older  
2 child, would move one grade at a time it would  
3 address the overcrowding crisis with a scalpel  
4 and not a sledgehammer.

5 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you. David Cohen? Andy?

6 MR. ANDREW LACKMAN: Good morning everybody  
7 I'm Andy Lackman. I founded Parent Leader of  
8 Upper East Side School but I'm not here speaking  
9 in an official capacity, I'm speaking on my own.  
10 On my own, as a parent whose children went to  
11 P.S. 290 when there was 400 people above the  
12 legal fire code in the building now my kids  
13 attend East Side Middle and Eleanor Roosevelt  
14 High School, but we set out when they were in  
15 that school to fix the overcrowding problem on  
16 the entire Upper East Side.

17 [END TAPE MZ000008]

18 [START TAPE MZ000009]

19 At that time there were a lot of people said  
20 that we will never fix this problem. One of the  
21 first things they were banking on, DOE, was that  
22 none of the schools would agree with each other  
23 and they'd fight, and then they wouldn't have to  
24 do anything. But we proved them wrong with the  
25 help of the politicians.

1           Now we're two-thirds of the way towards  
2           that vision of creating schools on the Upper  
3           East Side where every child could attend a  
4           school that was not crowded and was near the  
5           neighborhood. Now I'm going to give you my  
6           opinion but I want you to listen to what I say  
7           at the end because that's really important here.

8           The major thing that we didn't want to touch  
9           when we were talking about this was 198 because  
10          of the perception 198 had. You need to fix that  
11          and fix that now and you can fix that. And you  
12          can fix that and you can fix 151's problem and  
13          you can fix 290's problem, you can fix 267's  
14          problem, you can fix the whole Upper East Side  
15          problem by moving Our Lady of Good Counsel here  
16          and redoing the 198 zone to accommodate the  
17          overcrowding and fix 267's zone at the same  
18          time.

19          But all this hinges upon one thing that's  
20          missing, and it's missing from this impact  
21          statement, is what is the actual data now and  
22          what is the actual enrollment figures that's  
23          going to happen over the next five years.  
24          Because quite simply it appears that there's 900  
25          kids in the lower classes now and that's going

1 to be 5,400 kids in five years or six years  
2 from now and there's only about 3,000 seats.  
3 Thank you.

4 MR. GUZMAN: Adam Rosenbooth.

5 MR. ADAM ROSENBOOTH: Hi, my name's Adam; I  
6 have a son who's four who's going to be  
7 potentially zoned for the new school. And I  
8 actually came here today not having a firm  
9 opinion; I kind of was just listening and took  
10 some notes when I was listening to some of the  
11 proposals that were going on.

12 You know, the one thing that I think is  
13 great--opening new schools is great. When 151  
14 opened people were a little skeptical. But they  
15 kind of came in, they had a clean building,  
16 parent body was able to sort of it, everybody  
17 was able to get involved. And the one thing  
18 I've heard today is it sounds like there's going  
19 to be a ton of issues if the rezoning goes  
20 through this year and the new schools is opened  
21 up. It sounds like there's going to be  
22 prohibition, you know, prohibition issues; it  
23 sounds like the construction on the new floor  
24 might not be done. It also sounds like the  
25 following year the facility at 51 might not be

1 done. So I'm just wondering why you would  
2 take a new school sort of put it in and sort of  
3 put it through with all these issues as opposed  
4 to potentially waiting one year when you, you  
5 know, the construction's done, everything else  
6 is done and being able to put it through.

7 And one other part that I want to put  
8 through is, you know, I think the idea that you  
9 would give a new building to lower lab or just  
10 the gifted and talented to me doesn't make much  
11 sense. I mean you have a great opportunity to  
12 open a new school, to have another new school  
13 that's sort of in the same zone - - it's 151  
14 where the parent body, everybody did such a  
15 great job putting it together, it would be great  
16 to sort of have, you know, 151 be a great  
17 school, have this building a great school and  
18 continue to open up new great schools that are  
19 available for everyone. But I think if you do  
20 prohibition and sort of put everything together  
21 and sort of piecemeal it together now you might  
22 end up, risk opening up a school that might not  
23 be as well-performing.

24 MR. GUZMAN: I'm going to ask Diego  
25 Barbarena, Dana Gross, Cody, it's a blank, and

1 Eugenia Tinsley to come. And Diego?

2 MR. DIEGO BARBARENA: Yeah, my name is Diego  
3 Barbarena. I'm - - for - - school here - - 151  
4 - - the same as you. And I think there is an  
5 option that nobody has talk about and it is the  
6 life science building which is school building  
7 which is in my - - district. It's on 2<sup>nd</sup> and  
8 1<sup>st</sup>, it's being used by students from all over  
9 because they come by subway. And then there's  
10 another abandoned school which is the 97 which  
11 is 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> which can be redone and has  
12 potential for life science. The people from  
13 life science come by subway - - walk to 296<sup>th</sup>  
14 Street then they walk to 98<sup>th</sup> St.

15 Life science can be redone, which is  
16 actually being redone for something, I don't  
17 know, but at least they are working on the  
18 façade [phonetic]. It can house lower lab, so  
19 lower lab going from 198; 198 can expand their  
20 gifted and talent program and we can have our  
21 own little - - here. Thank you.

22 MR. GUZMAN: Dana Gross?

23 MS. DANA GROSS: Hi, I'm Dana Gross and I  
24 have a child who will be attending kindergarten  
25 next year. And I also - - complex. As I

1 understand it there are two issues here: one  
2 is whether to put a new school here and the  
3 other--

4 [END TAPE MZ000009]

5 [START TAPE MZ000010]

6 --is who to put in that school. And I've heard  
7 a lot of different proposals and what no one is  
8 actually mentioning also is there was a proposal  
9 to use this as a strictly overflow school which  
10 I think would be a complete disaster because  
11 then nobody is going to know who goes here until  
12 they're here. You won't have that initial  
13 parent involvement that 151 had the benefit of.

14 So I think if you're going to start a new  
15 school here it's got to be zoned and it's got to  
16 be zoned quickly so that those of us whose kids  
17 will be going here can get involved and make  
18 this school as great as from what I hear 151 is.  
19 We want our kids to have a community and, you  
20 know, Rupert [phonetic] Yorkville was part of  
21 that 151 community and now we're going to have  
22 make Rupert Yorkville another community and  
23 we're going to take the whole zone, whatever you  
24 put in here and make that it's a really good  
25 school. But we need to know quickly so that we

1 can get involved and do it and make it what it  
2 should be for our kids.

3 MR. GUZMAN: Cody?

4 CODY: Hi I'm the parent of Dylan [phonetic]  
5 who attends 151 as a kindergartener. Didn't  
6 come with prepared notes like previous - -  
7 wanted to hear what the other thoughts were.

8 In general I guess in the time I've moved in  
9 New York and on the East Side which has been  
10 about 15 years now overcrowding is and has  
11 always been, and I suspect even after this  
12 conversation will continue to be a watch word,  
13 especially when it comes to the elementary  
14 schools in this area. This seems to be  
15 something that never goes well, especially when  
16 it concerns certain schools and certain school  
17 zones on the Upper East Side. This is an  
18 obvious solution to create a new zoned school.

19 I fail to understand where the divisiveness  
20 is but nonetheless I respect it. I think that  
21 what's proposed in the EIS makes perfect sense.

22 MR. GUZMAN: - -.

23 MS. EUGENIA TINSLEY: Hi my name is Eugenia  
24 Tinsley and I'm the co-president at P.S. 198 and  
25 I'm the mother of Scott, who's in fourth grade

1 and Heathen [phonetic] another boy, who's in  
2 first grade now. And then I have another three-  
3 year-old.

4 And fortunately for the P.S. 198 community  
5 perception is not reality. It's a wonderful  
6 school, it has wonderful teachers. People who  
7 criticize it don't go there, they don't visit  
8 it, they don't look at it. They don't know it.  
9 So that's that. I don't mind if you all don't  
10 go but I just do want to say the people there  
11 are happy.

12 The other thing is a statement from our SLT,  
13 which says: "I'm writing on behalf of the P.S.  
14 198 SLT on the topic of new zoning on the Upper  
15 East Side. It would be a positive move, P.S.  
16 198 if P.S. 77 were to move into this building  
17 for the following reasons and only with the  
18 condition that another, smaller school is not  
19 moved into the space P.S. 77 vacates for the  
20 reason of cohabitation.

21 "P.S. 198 has a thriving and popular G&T  
22 [phonetic] program that has been added to its  
23 curriculum. There are currently two G&T  
24 classes, one kindergarten, one first. Next year  
25 another will be added and each year after until

1 there is one G&T section in each grade, K  
2 through 5. There is also a very popular pre-K  
3 program with two sections. It used to have  
4 three sections.

5 "At this point the school has lost all their  
6 - - classrooms except one science room. That  
7 and mostly like the pre-K classrooms will be the  
8 first to go in order to fit the incoming G&T  
9 classes.

10 "Our school needs this space for G&T and  
11 would also benefit to have its cluster rooms  
12 back. Our students would also benefit immensely  
13 by having full use of the gym, yard and  
14 auditorium. We have a good relationship with  
15 P.S. 77 but both schools suffer as you know,  
16 when schools are compared in the press and in  
17 the community, which they are constantly. We  
18 both look bad.

19 "Please consider letting P.S. 198 expand  
20 back into the building and giving P.S. 77 the  
21 space to expand into."

22 You know, I mean there's so many people in  
23 this community that didn't get into 77 that  
24 would have wanted to. - - .

25 MR. GUZMAN: The next three speakers:

1 Jessica Rodriguez, Vivian Newman and Bobby  
2 Calman. Can I have your names?

3 MS. VIVIAN NEWMAN: Yeah, I'm Vivian Newman.

4 MS. BOBBY CALMAN: Bobby Calman.

5 MS. NEWMAN: We can sort of speak together  
6 because we live in the same building and we've  
7 been going through this process. Last year when  
8 we were rezoned, initially for P.S. 6, and P.S.  
9 6 parents didn't like that so they agitated,  
10 then we rezoned for P.S. 198.

11 MS. CALMAN: No 151 first.

12 MS. NEWMAN: 151, then 198, and then back to  
13 290. We thought we were done; we have kids  
14 entering kindergarten next year and then all of  
15 a sudden we're back to not knowing where they're  
16 going to be. And it causes a--

17 [END TAPE MZ000010]

18 [START TAPE MZ000011]

19 --tremendous amount of anxiety, especially when  
20 you move somewhere and you establish your family  
21 through tremendous sacrifice because of the  
22 school you're zoned for. Then to be told at the  
23 11<sup>th</sup> hour that you don't know where your child is  
24 going to be; it causes tremendous stress. And  
25 believe, that has an impact on our children. As

1 parents we can't help it but we're anxious  
2 about this situation.

3 I want to echo the thoughts of someone else  
4 who spoke who said what we want is an  
5 established school with an experienced  
6 principal. This new school might be a great  
7 school. We don't know. So as parents we're  
8 going in blindly to this situation. If we're  
9 just told, "You're here, no you're there," we  
10 have no say over this situation. We don't know  
11 what we're walking into, and it's very  
12 frustrating.

13 I don't see why we have to be told in  
14 January that we're going to be possibly put into  
15 a new school without any information about what  
16 this school is going to be, and why we have to  
17 be cohabitating with another school at the same  
18 time. It seems like a tremendous amount of  
19 change and upheaval which cannot possibly be  
20 conducive to our children starting a whole new  
21 ongoing school experience.

22 MR. JESSICA RODRIGUEZ: So when I moved to  
23 the neighborhood specifically towards P.S. 290  
24 and now my child is four years old and again, as  
25 Vivian expressed, we have so much uncertainty.

1 I also have older stepchildren that attend a  
2 school that was a startup school. It's now two  
3 years in and I can tell you there's always  
4 growing pains.

5 Now every school has to be new at once but  
6 it takes a long time. I don't know - - 151 but  
7 it sounds like it was time for the community to  
8 know a couple years or at least a year in  
9 advance and get a parent group together and have  
10 a voice in how our school was developed.

11 It takes a lot of--I mean to start a school  
12 just out of the blue is very--there's just so  
13 many growing pains that will happen and I think  
14 you need more ramp up time.

15 I also want to add to a point someone made  
16 about the wait list. We have neighbors who were  
17 on the wait list for 290 this year and it's very  
18 upsetting because they fought to stay in the  
19 zone and here they were facing, it was kind of a  
20 rude awakening: they really fought to stay in  
21 the zone and there's still overcrowding.

22 But yet first of all everyone did find a  
23 place although I understand the points the  
24 parents at 151 made. But I do think that the  
25 wait list could be managed better; there were a

1 lot of people that, for whatever reason, maybe  
2 their kids were going to private school and they  
3 weren't sure or they were moving out of the  
4 community and then there's the whole late  
5 notification for G&T.

6 I don't feel the wait lists are well managed  
7 because somehow, you know, the people that are  
8 on the higher wait list all got into generally  
9 their zoned school or a very good school that  
10 they were all happy with and the good school in  
11 most cases - - 151. But that's also a great  
12 option.

13 It doesn't sound like on September 1<sup>st</sup>  
14 there's that much overcrowding, at least in  
15 terms of the wait list. Maybe we can manage the  
16 wait list better.

17 MR. GUZMAN: Thank you, Ms. Rodriguez. So  
18 our speaker list is now exhausted. Again we  
19 want to welcome any comments and feedback you--  
20 I'm sorry?

21 MR. JEFF SCHLAUB: I got in late - -. I'll  
22 be very brief. My name is Jeff Schlaub, I'm a  
23 parent at P.S. 198. I was at the last meeting  
24 that 116 and unfortunately didn't get up to  
25 speak. I just had a couple of takeaways from

1 that meeting. I don't remember the official's  
2 name at the beginning of the meeting but I  
3 assume she's from the DOE.

4 She said two things: one is they would  
5 never put two schools in one building. P.S. 198  
6 exists in a building that's sub-scale today.

7 The second thing she said is the G&T  
8 programs were taken out of some schools and  
9 started in other schools. It is not a winning  
10 strategy to put a G&T program in a school where  
11 there is not room for them, where there's not  
12 scale of that program, there's one class for  
13 each grade, and it's supposed to grow. But as  
14 you just heard there's no room to grow in that  
15 program. So you're kind of setting it up for  
16 failure. And I don't think that's a winning  
17 strategy. I think expanding the program that  
18 thrives and does well is a much better strategy.

19 The principal from P.S. 116 spoke as well.  
20 She talked about losing [phonetic] specials and  
21 having the ability that if things continue and  
22 the crowding in your school, those will go away.  
23 P.S. 198 is a school that does not have specials  
24 full stop [phonetic]. And so I think we have an  
25 asset that we're not utilizing. I think that

1 for a lot of degree P.S. 198 does not have  
2 that big a voice as some of the other schools  
3 here and I don't think whatever happens here I  
4 think it's going to change but I don't think we  
5 can lose sight of what's happening in that  
6 school, and the need for that school to expand  
7 and have its own identity, its own space and to  
8 really put a G&T program in there - -.

9 [END TAPE MZ000011]

10 [START TAPE MZ000012]

11 I think there is a ton of merit to having a G&T  
12 program within a gen ed. I think there's things  
13 that both sides bring and you can bring the  
14 school up together. So I'm not fully--I'm  
15 probably talking out of both sides of my mouth  
16 to say let 77 have its own school; I think there  
17 is merit to leave the G&T in 198 and let that  
18 grow with the school but I just think there's a  
19 lot of things that can be improved there, rather  
20 than, you know, just shuffling the deck chairs.

21 MR. GUZMAN: Who else is here that arrived  
22 late? Please come up. Anyone else?

23 MR. DAVID WEISS: My name is David Weiss.  
24 I've lived in this neighborhood almost all my  
25 life. Overcrowding didn't used to be. When I

1 went to P.S. 6 there was no overcrowding; you  
2 just go into this school and you sign up and it  
3 was your right - - the day before you go that  
4 day - - that school.

5 I am also the parent of two kids and I think  
6 I'm most annoyed with the "Whack-a-Mole" that  
7 the DOE is playing in my district. My first  
8 child is now in fourth grade, and for those  
9 doing the timing, as someone who lives two  
10 blocks from here that also makes her a Guinea  
11 pig. She was zoneless at the time and she was  
12 also the youngest kid to take the - - the first  
13 year they were giving them. The teachers hadn't  
14 even [phonetic] an administrator.

15 Whatever you decide to do, figure it out  
16 fast. Okay? Figure it out fast. She goes to  
17 77: should 77 be here? Should 77 be in another  
18 school? Should the DOE break new ground instead  
19 of a private school on 95<sup>th</sup> Street? I mean  
20 shouldn't it be easier for the state [phonetic]  
21 to break ground in a private entity? Maybe not.

22 Whatever you decide to do please get it  
23 together and figure it out. Soon. It's bad  
24 enough that if you're considering private school  
25 you know the arbitrage and the timing. The

1 timing doesn't work out; it doesn't work out  
2 even in pre-K. But this is just public school.  
3 So please, whatever you do, decide soon. Don't  
4 wait until--what did we find out when my  
5 youngest was going?--in August, where she's  
6 going in September? And now my second child is  
7 going to be entering kindergarten next year;  
8 he's in a zone that, unlike her he's not  
9 zoneless but he's like multizoned. I live two  
10 blocks from here, so please: I'm not sure what  
11 you should put where, but I just hope you decide  
12 quickly.

13 MR. MARK NEWMAN: Hi my name's Mark Newman.  
14 My wife spoke earlier: our daughter's starting  
15 kindergarten next year. I want to say first of  
16 all I'm really enthused to see so many parents  
17 that might be part of this new school where we  
18 might be part of this new school that you're all  
19 just as concerned and a little nutty as we are.  
20 It's encouraging to know that our child is, that  
21 there's--already I see some encouraging signs  
22 because we didn't really know what we're walking  
23 into here.

24 But the other thing I just wanted to  
25 reiterate and it's really a question is about

1 the timing of this, and the fact that this  
2 school's going to be happening, I guess this  
3 September. And I'm thinking that maybe there's  
4 a reason for that, why it's not being put off a  
5 year so that everybody has time to adjust, you  
6 know, to reiterate some of the points that were  
7 brought up before. If there's a reason that it  
8 has to be done more, if it's because there's a  
9 lease that's coming up or something, I'd be  
10 curious because the timing does seem to me--and  
11 we've been recent--you know, our block has been--  
12 -in the last year it's been proposed that we're  
13 a part of, you know, 6, 290, 198, 151 and now  
14 this one. So I'm curious why the sudden need to  
15 make the change now. I'm guessing it's because  
16 of some reason that I'm not aware. That's it.

17 FEMALE VOICE: I want to offer to new people  
18 - - opportunity to speak - -. That's all.

19 MR. GUZMAN: So again, we welcome any  
20 comments and feedback you may have at any time  
21 before the panel for educational policy votes on  
22 the proposal, and that date is November 17<sup>th</sup>.  
23 The email address, as I mentioned earlier, which  
24 is in the materials you've received, and the  
25 phone number that you may call are D02Proposals-

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[END TAPE MZ000012]

[START TAPE MZ000013]

[--@Schools.NYC.gov](mailto:--@Schools.NYC.gov), and 212-374-3466.

MALE VOICE: - -.

MR. GUZMAN: Elizabeth?

MS. ELIZABETH ROSE: Good evening. I'm Elizabeth Rose from the Department of Education. I'm the director of Manhattan Planning. Thank you all for being here. Let me respond to that question.

First of all, for those of you who remember when 151 was getting started this building was leased in April and four floors of the building were renovated before the beginning of school in September. So we are very comfortable and confident with the knowledge that the sixth floor will be ready before the beginning of school next year and that there will be no issues or concerns about is that sixth floor capacity done and ready for P.S. 51 to take the top floor of the building and to allow the new school to have the classrooms that are designed for kindergarten students on the lower floors of the building, which is actually the second and

1 third floor. So from a renovation perspective  
2 that should not be a concern for anybody who is  
3 a future parent at the new school, for the P.S.  
4 51 community; the team that did it before is the  
5 same team that's going to do it again.

6 MR. GUZMAN: In terms of the urgency and why  
7 we're looking at zoning a couple blocks of the  
8 290 zone last year in lots of different  
9 directions and why we are looking to open this  
10 new school next year it is because we have had  
11 large wait lists at 290 for multiple years in a  
12 row. And while in the end the families who are  
13 on the wait list at 290 received offers, be they  
14 at 290 or 151 or gifted and talented or private  
15 school or left the New York City or made other  
16 choices we don't know how much of that was  
17 influenced simply because they were on the wait  
18 list. And that's a lousy way for any family to  
19 have to make a decision about their lives and  
20 their child's life. So why are we trying to do  
21 this now? We want to eliminate the wait and  
22 this is the way we can do it.

23 MALE VOICE: What about schools that are  
24 underenrolled - -? Why would you create another  
25 - - sized school? It just seems to me that the

1 wait lists are not actual wait lists, okay?  
2 Every person on - - as you said - - seat. I  
3 don't know how many of those and, you know, how  
4 many of those went to 151. It sounds to me, and  
5 I don't know all the figures so I don't want to  
6 - - or misrepresent but it sounds like 151 is  
7 really the only school that - -.

8 We know 267, that while - - is not bright  
9 enough because we don't have enough zoned  
10 [phonetic] kids to begin with, and even the - -  
11 actually are taken back to their zoned school,  
12 which means that that zoned school - - wait list  
13 - - able to pull those kids out. And so it  
14 severely compromises to a) the school community,  
15 b) my principal's ability to hire a new team,  
16 staff, administrators, teachers, educators, and  
17 it just--I'm not sure what the basis is - - for  
18 creating another school - - size when the  
19 perception - - wait list - - the end of the day  
20 - - by the kids in that - -.

21 So again, there may be some - - 151, I don't  
22 know, but it's also odd to me that 290 would  
23 complain to someone about overcrowding and - -  
24 try to fix the problems complaining about  
25 underenrollment. It just seems odd to me and

1 that's just my opinion and concern.

2 MS. ROSE: Right. So what one of the  
3 toughest challenges is in this is that every  
4 school is - - . And there's greater demand and  
5 there has been greater growth in demand in the  
6 northern part of the--

7 [END TAPE MZ000013]

8 [START TAPE MZ000014]

9 --Upper East Side than there has been a little  
10 bit further south. There is more demand further  
11 south, in Midtown East than there has been in  
12 the area right around 267. It doesn't--I mean  
13 yes, I hear the point about 267 and its zone and  
14 we know 59 is moving into its new building and  
15 we are opening another new school in Midtown  
16 East in 2013. So we see that as an opportunity  
17 to look at that southern part of Midtown East  
18 and sort of the Upper East Side in the rezoning  
19 process when we create a new zone for the Solar  
20 [phonetic] School, for P.S. 281. And we may  
21 need to make some adjustments that will also  
22 help 267 at that time.

23 But it doesn't help that we haven't seated  
24 267 when we have a wait list up at 82<sup>nd</sup> Street,  
25 and families who are living north of P.S. 290

1 who end up on the wait list. So we do have to  
2 look at the localities but not just--and the  
3 totality.

4 MALE VOICE: - - ? In other words, if there  
5 is - - , so if 151 - - .

6 MS. ROSE: If there is a wait list at any  
7 school we try to offer families a seat at the  
8 closest school that has a seat available. So  
9 every family--and this is actually important for  
10 all of you future pay parents: every family can  
11 apply to any school they want to, but schools  
12 have to take families in a particular order.  
13 They have to take their siblings of existing  
14 zoned school students, they then have to take  
15 all of their other zoned students, then they  
16 have to take their out of zone siblings, then  
17 they have to take their out of district  
18 siblings, if they have any, then they can take  
19 other District 2 applicants. So you can be  
20 zoned for 290 and apply to 267 and the principal  
21 at 267, if she has room, has the ability to  
22 admit those students who apply.

23 MALE VOICE: - - and the unfortunate part of  
24 that process though is that while they could be  
25 - - to apply their principal may not be able to

1 place that non-zoned student - - the school  
2 until September 8<sup>th</sup>, September 9<sup>th</sup>. So that  
3 doesn't leave that parent much of a choice. And  
4 then it ends up that - - kids at zoned school  
5 does have a seat on September 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> and  
6 that's - - . But then it would come to - - if my  
7 principal was able to say - - "We've got a seat  
8 here; come on in." But she's not able to do  
9 that.

10 MS. ROSE: We understand that the process is  
11 a little off but we can continue that prep  
12 discussion with Principal Macavoy [phonetic].

13 MALE VOICE: - - one year from now - - open  
14 - - kindergarten class can come in, - - open a  
15 new building - - as opposed to sharing - - other  
16 school - - . Why this - - why does that happen  
17 this year - - ?

18 MS. ROSE: Right. Well a) in general we  
19 don't think colocations are a terrible thing.  
20 We actually have a lot of schools that are  
21 collocated. P.S. 158 used to be collocated with  
22 East Side Middle School, P.S. 198 and 77 have  
23 been collocated for years. We've had schools  
24 throughout the city that are collocated. And I  
25 think at this point about half of our schools

1 and a third of our buildings have more than  
2 one school in the building. So we don't see  
3 that as a bad thing.

4 The second is, again, let's talk about the  
5 impact and the ripple effect of if we didn't  
6 open the school: we would have wait lists, we  
7 would be overflowing children to schools--

8 [END TAPE MZ000014]

9 [START TAPE MZ000015]

10 --that are already feeling that they are full,  
11 or concerned about excess demand. And yes, you  
12 would take them, I understand that, but those  
13 parents may not wish to travel down to 63<sup>rd</sup>  
14 Street where you all will be in your own  
15 building next year in order for their child to  
16 attend school. So one year--P.S. 51 is a  
17 terrific school; we know that Principal  
18 Singbarch is committed to making the colocation  
19 successful for both schools and we have strong  
20 confidence in that.

21 MALE VOICE: - - superintendent? Isn't it  
22 the case that - - ? Isn't it current policy  
23 that once you're in school you are entitle to  
24 stay in that school?

25 MS. ROSE: That is correct.

1           MALE VOICE: - - dammed up for five years.  
2           Isn't that the main reason - - ? Number one.  
3           Number two I would suggest that - - presentation  
4           you not leave something out, "Oh, - - ." It  
5           would be helpful - - zoning. We say - - this is  
6           not a new school; we have somebody else who's  
7           arriving. "Oh my God, our kids are - - ." So  
8           they move here. - - about - - kids in the  
9           school now are not. So I think - - candor - -  
10          would be helpful to say - - or give a period of  
11          time - -. Isn't that the main reason - - .

12          FEMALE VOICE: - - this building, literally  
13          in May it looked like it should be knocked down.

14          MALE VOICE: - - .

15          FEMALE VOICE: Okay, so we said to parents -  
16          - , "Oh my God, there's no way it can be done in  
17          September." We walked into this magnificent  
18          hall on the first day of school and this floor  
19          all the way through - - were completely turned  
20          out and gutted. They won't even do the sixth  
21          floor until the kids are on summer break. Then  
22          it will be done in four weeks.

23          So I hear the concern and I get it - -  
24          because it's just--

25          MALE VOICE: That's actually not my concern

1 - - .

2 MR. ROSE: We are not building a new floor;  
3 we are renovating an existing floor of the  
4 building that's currently not in use.

5 MALE VOICE: You're not putting another  
6 floor in?

7 MS. ROSE: No we're not. There is an  
8 existing floor in this building that is not  
9 currently in use.

10 MALE VOICE: That's actually not what I'm  
11 concerned about. If - - my son - - going to  
12 school here - - be happy. What I'm concerned  
13 about is you just - - do it quick - - now. - - .

14 MS. ROSE: I don't know what document you  
15 are referring to.

16 MALE VOICE: - - schools. It's been around  
17 for two months now.

18 MS. ROSE: I now understand that document  
19 you are referring to; it is purely a rezoning  
20 document about creating the zone. It is--there  
21 have been multiple documents and multiple  
22 discussions at CEC meetings as well as the  
23 documents relating to the proposal to open the  
24 new school that are crystal clear that there  
25 will be a one-year colocation with P.S. 151 in

1 this building.

2 MALE VOICE: - - .

3 MS. ROSE: That I can't help you with.

4 FEMALE VOICE: - - .

5 FEMALE VOICE: - - didn't know - - 151 and  
6 we were - - as well.

7 [END TAPE MZ000015]

8 [START TAPE MZ000016]

9 FEMALE VOICE: We were very excited about -  
10 - zone and we're a block away from - - . And so  
11 - - zone - - what school, we - - found out - - .

12 MS. ROSE: So to be clear on timing: the  
13 panel for educational policy will vote on the  
14 proposal to open a new school in this building  
15 on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The District 2 CEC will vote  
16 on the creation of a zone for this new school on  
17 December 14<sup>th</sup>. So all families will have clarity  
18 as to where they are zoned, whether the school  
19 will open, and therefore where they might  
20 anticipate their child will attend kindergarten  
21 in advance of the kindergarten intake process  
22 which begins in January.

23 FEMALE VOICE: I have one question about - -  
24 .

25 MS. TANIKAWA: Before I take a question I

1 just want to add to what Elizabeth said in  
2 terms of the timeline. So the PEP will vote on  
3 this proposal on November 18<sup>th</sup>, but next week on  
4 the 8<sup>th</sup> of November, Tuesday, the CEC will be  
5 hosting another zoning committee meeting at the  
6 Beruth [phonetic] Middle School which his in the  
7 lower 20s where Elizabeth will be presenting  
8 revised final zoning proposals. So if you can  
9 make it to that meeting I urge you to come to  
10 the meeting so you can see the revised final  
11 proposals.

12 Then we will be having another zoning  
13 committee meeting on November 28<sup>th</sup> where we have  
14 deputy chancellors Grimm [phonetic] and  
15 Sternberg [phonetic] attending the zoning  
16 committee meetings. You can voice your concern  
17 directly to the top [phonetic] people at the DOE  
18 at the zoning committee meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup>.  
19 That meeting is going to be at P.S. 130 in  
20 Chinatown. That venue was decided by the deputy  
21 chancellors.

22 And in December the CEC meeting is on the  
23 14<sup>th</sup> of December where we hope to be able to vote  
24 on the proposals. I say "we hope to" because  
25 the Upper East Side proposal will hinge upon

1 what the PEP does with this proposal. If the  
2 PEP rejects the proposal to create a new zoned  
3 school in Our Lady of Good Counsel, then there  
4 is not going to be clarity for the families,  
5 unfortunately, because we're going to have to  
6 then figure out what to do with the space.

7 It's not likely: PEP probably votes yes on  
8 99 out of 100 proposals that come their way. So  
9 I don't mean to scare you but I do want you to  
10 realize that this Our Lady of Good Counsel being  
11 a new zoned school is subject to the vote by the  
12 PEP.

13 There was something else I wanted to say--  
14 oh, I do have to say the CEC District 2 has a  
15 list of preschools in District 2. We did send  
16 our meeting notices to all the preschools that  
17 we have contact for, preschool directors' email.  
18 So if you did not receive anything it could be  
19 that your preschool is not on our mailing list  
20 or it could be that your director did not share  
21 the information with you guys.

22 We do need your help reaching out to  
23 preschool families because we represent public  
24 school parents which means we can do a decent  
25 job of reaching out to parents in public schools

1 already, but it's very difficult for us to  
2 find those parents who have yet to start public  
3 schools.

4 We do have a Facebook: if you go to  
5 [www.Facebook.com/CECD2](http://www.Facebook.com/CECD2) that is our page. Feel  
6 free to post comments, leave us messages. We  
7 also have a zoning committee dedicated email  
8 address where you can send zoning comments, and  
9 that address is D2Zoning@gmail.com.

10 MR. GUZMAN: Excuse me. I want to thank  
11 everyone for attending tonight and this meeting  
12 is now closed. Thank you.

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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



Date 11/04/2011