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**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION - DIVISION OF
PORTFOLIO PLANNING**
**Relocation of 04M377 to M155 -
3/29/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. LUZ CORTAZZO: It is Thursday, March 29,
3 2012. And this is a joint public hearing of the
4 Department of Education Community Education
5 Council and School Leadership Team to discuss
6 the proposed re-siting and collocation of
7 Renaissance School of the Arts 04M377 with PS155
8 William Packer 04M155 in building M155 beginning
9 in the 2012/2013 school year. I am District
10 Four superintendent Luz Cortazzo. We have asked
11 the District Four Community Education Council
12 and the School Leadership Team in the building
13 to participate in this joint public hearing. I
14 am joined here tonight by, uh, Mr. Nastalio
15 [phonetic] at the end of the table. He's the
16 president of the, uh, CEC Four. Uh, next to him
17 we have, um, Ms. Ortiz, principal of PS155.
18 Next to Ms. Ortiz we have Ms. Santiago, SLT
19 Chair for 155. Next to Ms. Santiago we have Mr.
20 Rasti [phonetic]--no, this is Mr. Rasti from
21 155--Miss Rivera [phonetic] from 155. To my
22 left we have Ms. Rodriguez [phonetic], SLT
23 member of 377, followed by Ms. Pate, principal
24 of MS377 and Ms. Lauren Kilner [phonetic], SLT's
25 chair. This hearing is being recorded.

1 The purpose of this hearing is for you to
2 provide comments about the proposal. Before I
3 describe the proposal I want to make sure you
4 are all aware of the opportunity to provide your
5 input. All those who wish to speak must sign up
6 in the speaker sign-up area located just outside
7 the auditorium. The sign-up list will close in
8 15 minutes. Speakers will be given the floor in
9 the order that they sign up. All comments are
10 limited to two minutes.

11 Okay. There might be elected official who
12 arrive at different times throughout the
13 evening. If they wish to speak we will do our
14 best to accommodate them. Those who are here at
15 the start of the public comments segment will be
16 asked to speak first. All comments and
17 questions will be addressed in the analysis of
18 public comment to be published and provided to
19 the panel of educational policy the evening
20 before the panel votes. The vote is scheduled
21 for April 26th, 2012. In addition, we welcome any
22 comments and feedback you may have at any time
23 before the panel votes on this proposal. The
24 email address and phone number where comments
25 may be made at

1 district04proposals@schools.nyc.gov. And the
2 number is 212-374-3466.

3 Now, I will provide you with a summary of
4 the proposal. The New York City Department of
5 Education, DOE, is proposing to re-site
6 Renaissance School of the Arts, 04M377
7 Renaissance, an existing district middle school
8 that serves students in grades six through
9 eight, to building M155, which is located at 319
10 East 117th Street, New York, New York 10035, in
11 Manhattan's Community School District Four
12 beginning in the 2012/2013 school year.
13 Renaissance will be collocated in M155 with
14 PS155 William Packer, an existing zone
15 elementary school that serves students in
16 kindergarten through 5th grade. Renaissance is
17 currently located in building M099, M zero 99 at
18 14 East 100th Street, New York, New York 10029 in
19 Manhattan's Community School District Four. If
20 this proposal is approved Renaissance will be
21 re-sited and collocated with PS155 in M155
22 beginning in the 2012/2013 school year. A
23 collocation means that two or more school
24 organizations are located in the same building
25 and may share common spaces like auditorium,

1 gymnasiums and cafeterias. M155 currently
2 houses PS155 and P169M at M155, a district 75
3 school, one side of a multi-site District 75.
4 On January 18, 2012, the PEP voted to approve
5 the proposal to re-site P169M at M155 to
6 building M488 located at 23--233 East 56th
7 Street, New York, New York 10022 in Manhattan's
8 Community School District Two beginning in the
9 2012/2013 school year. As noted above, the DOE
10 will relocate the students at P169M at M155.
11 That--there will be a visual space available in
12 the building in the 2012/2013 school year. If
13 this proposal is approved, Renaissance will be
14 re-sited to M155 beginning in September 2012.

15 Okay. So now I am going to open, um, the
16 meeting for public comment to the people at the
17 table. Um, Mr. Nastalio, would you like to make
18 a statement? Okay. Thank you. Uh, any of the
19 SLT members from P155 are willing to make a
20 statement? No? Miss Ortiz? Okay. Miss Ortiz,
21 principal of 155.

22 MS. LILLIAN ORTIZ: Good evening. I just
23 wanted to welcome everyone. Um--

24 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

25 MS. ORTIZ: --I hope, um, that this endeavor

1 is going to be an exciting one. Principal Pate
2 and I shared the same high school. We both
3 graduated from La Guardia, so we're both people
4 that are very interested in the arts. So my
5 hope--

6 [crosstalk]

7 MS. ORTIZ: I know she is. My hope is that,
8 you know, that this is going to be a marriage
9 made in heaven. I'm hoping that my students
10 will be able to interact with her students in
11 reference to the arts, and that, um, it'll work
12 out for both schools. So please welcome, and,
13 um, I hope everything works out for all of us.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. CORTAZZO: All right. At this time I am
16 going to ask the members of the SLT of, uh,
17 M377. Uh, Lauren, would you like to make a
18 statement? You defer. Okay. Miss Rodriguez?
19 No. All right. So I will pass the mic on to
20 Miss Pate.

21 MS. TAMMY PATE: Good evening, everyone. We
22 are so excited, um, by this tremendous
23 opportunity. As Miss Ortiz, the principal here
24 at PS155, has previously stated, we find
25 ourselves to be sort of kindred right now. And

1 there are so many possibilities for growth and
2 improvement to both of our schools by joining
3 together. We are definitely here to learn more
4 how we can serve, um, our new joint communities
5 and just to help everyone to see Renaissance for
6 the wonderful school that it is and to learn
7 about the incredible things that are happening
8 at PS155. Thank you so much for coming out.

9 MS. CORTAZZO: Okay. At this time we will
10 open the floor for public comment. Speakers
11 will be given the floor in the order that they
12 signed up. Remember that all comments are
13 limited to two minutes, two minutes. So, um, do
14 we have the list? All right. Thank you. Oh,
15 this is going to be short and sweet. Okay.
16 Number one, Risa Schneider, please come to the
17 microphone.

18 MS. RISA SCHNEIDER: Hi, everyone. Good
19 evening. Um, I'm the visual arts teacher at
20 PS155. And, uh, I just want to preface my
21 comments by saying that I hear really--

22 MS. CORTAZZO: Wait. All right.

23 MS. SCHNEIDER: I hear really great things
24 about Renaissance from our alumni who come back
25 and talk to us about what they're learning

1 there. Um, and if we are to have a new school
2 collate--collocating with us at PS155, it seems
3 like a very good choice. However, I do still
4 have some comments that I--uh, questions that I
5 have that I know some of my colleagues have, and
6 I imagine some of our parents would have as
7 well. Um, the letter that went home to parents
8 that was telling about this meeting at the
9 bottom said "The DOE does not project this is
10 will significantly impact your student--your
11 children." However, it seems a little
12 disingenuous because parents need to realize
13 that there are going to be these common spaces
14 that are shared and what the plans for that are.
15 And I feel like that's not really fair to the
16 community of parents. And I think perhaps not
17 so many of our parents showed up because they
18 saw that and thought, "Oh, it's not going to
19 impact our students." So I feel like in this
20 process that needs to be a little clearer. And
21 this document, though it does speak to it, I
22 have three advanced degrees and I had to read it
23 a couple of times. So I don't know if it's a
24 particularly community-friendly document to
25 address those concerns. So that was something

1 that I wanted to raise.

2 Um, and the other question that I had was
3 that I noticed looking through the projections
4 that within a year there's a possible projection
5 of 105% capacity up to within a few years 111%
6 capacity. And even though I'm reading through
7 the footprint and I hear there's claims of
8 excess rooms, although all the rooms that we
9 have we actually are serving students and
10 serving their needs, I'm interested in knowing
11 what's the plan if--because it does sound like
12 that once Renaissance is here the enrollment
13 might increase. What are the plans for
14 accommodation? I would hate to see any of your
15 students or ours, like, being taught in the
16 hallways or the bathrooms or something. So I'm
17 interested in learning more about that, and I
18 think our parents would be, too.

19 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you, Miss Schneider.
20 Okay. The next speaker will be Hector Cases. -
21 -

22 MR. HECTOR CASES: I don't need a mic
23 because I can speak very loud. So my question
24 is, um, I was born and raised around the
25 neighborhood. And we're looking forward to

1 coming to the new school here. And I've had
2 relatives come to this school also. My question
3 is about the space for the arts program. And
4 the location is wonderful and we just looking
5 forward to coming to the school, you know. And
6 it was a pleasure meeting all of you. And
7 that's about it. The location's good, like I
8 said. And I look forward to all of our children
9 to come to this school. And it's a blessing to
10 me tonight. Thank you. I look forward to
11 meeting you even more.

12 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you.

13 MR. CASES: All right.

14 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you.

15 MR. CASES: Thank you.

16 MS. CORTAZZO: Okay. The next speaker is
17 Miss Bennet.

18 MS. VYULMARY BENNET: Good evening. My
19 voice is kind of loud too, but I just didn't
20 feel like standing over there yelling. Um, I'm
21 really proud--well, in all fairness, I've known
22 about this meeting for weeks. And a lot of
23 notices went out and I got it during my--when I
24 went to my daughter's school. So as far as--I
25 don't know why parents didn't get it. I think

1 it's a great move. I love the fact that we're
2 coming to this school. I think our kids will
3 love the fact that we're coming to this school.
4 And I think all of the kids in the school will
5 generally get along 'cause these kids just love
6 to see new children. So I hope for the best.
7 And I thank Miss Ortiz. I've known her for many
8 years. I've worked with Miss Pate this late
9 year, so I think, I think we're doing very good.
10 So thank you.

11 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you, Miss Bennet. Are
12 there any other speakers? I guess not. So we--

13 FEMALE VOICE: In concern of the teachers -
14 - and spacing, no one addressed that issue. Is
15 there an - - for Renaissance to come to this
16 facility?

17 [crosstalk]

18 MS. CORTAZZO: If you--we are not going to
19 answer questions. You asked a question.
20 Because what we are here for is for you to
21 provide feedback. But, Mr. Patterson?

22 MR. DREW PATTERSON: Sure.

23 MS. CORTAZZO: Okay. Mr. Drew Patterson
24 from Portfolio Planning will address the
25 question? Okay.

1 MR. PATTERSON: Sure. I, I--with the
2 issue of, of the space, um--

3 MS. CORTAZZO: Use the mic.

4 MR. PATTERSON: --and the, the kind of
5 citation of the percentage of, of utilization
6 and that reaching up to 111% with the
7 projection, uh, part of that is, uh--has to do
8 with the way that we, we look at space and how,
9 um, currently there's a District 75 program in
10 the building. And the capacity of those rooms
11 are, are much smaller because we don't have, uh,
12 nearly as many children in a District 75
13 classroom as we do in a typical classroom. And
14 so once Renaissance, um, Renaissance moves into
15 the building if the proposal's approved and
16 those classes are programmed for a different
17 purpose, um, a different--you know, for, for gen
18 ed, general education classes, the--we expect
19 that the capacity will, will actually increase,
20 um, because the rooms will no longer be used for
21 the, the, um, types of programs that require,
22 uh, you know, class sizes of, of 12. And so
23 that's, that's a part of why, um, that
24 utilization rate is a little bit misleading and
25 it is kind of difficult to understand. Um, but

1 we also looked, um, at the, the actual space,
2 the number of rooms. Um, and so while, you
3 know, the rooms, of course, won't change, um,
4 but the, the capacity of those rooms, the kind
5 of technical capacity, uh, will change we think.
6 And, and so that will mean that, uh, the
7 utilization rate will ultimately change.

8 MS. CORTAZZO: Thank you. Again, we welcome
9 your comments and feedback you may have at any
10 time before the Panel of Educational Policy
11 votes on this proposal at its April 26th meeting.
12 Again, the email address and phone number where
13 comments may be made are D, for district,
14 04proposals@schoolstatnyc.gov. And the phone
15 number is 212-374-3466. Thank you for your
16 participation. This joint, this joint public
17 hearing is now closed.

18 [inaudible]

19 MS. CORTAZZO: 212-374-3466. Again, we
20 welcome you. If you like to come, join us on
21 April 4th at M099. We will have another public
22 hearing about this proposal, and again on April
23 26th before the educational panel. So again, if
24 you want. Thank you so much for coming out here
25 tonight. Thank you. - -

1 [crosstalk]
2 [END RECORDING]
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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6 Signature



7 Date April 2, 2012

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