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

**SCN Brooklyn 5 @ K265 - 12/7/12**

1 [START RECORDING]

2 MS. ELAINE GORMAN: We are now ready to  
3 begin. Given that we have a number of people  
4 that arrived a little bit late, we are going to  
5 allow the sign-up to remain open for another 10  
6 minutes. That way anybody who didn't have a  
7 chance to sign up before will have a chance to  
8 sign up now. Sign-up to speak, thank you for  
9 correcting, I apologize. I'm Elaine Gorman and  
10 I will be facilitating the joint public hearing.  
11 This is a joint public hearing of the Department  
12 of Education, the Community Education Counsel 13  
13 and the School Leadership. I'm going to ask  
14 though that we keep it down a little bit so  
15 everybody can hear, thank you.

16 We are looking at the following proposal:  
17 The Co-location of a new public charter school,  
18 Success Academy Charter School Brooklyn 5 with  
19 existing school, Doctor Susan S. McKinney  
20 Secondary School of the Arts and District 75  
21 Inclusion Program P369K at 265K in Building  
22 K265 beginning 2013, 2014.

23 Tonight's proceedings will be recorded and  
24 transcribed. Once again, anybody who wishes to  
25 sign up should do so now and we will allow an

1 extra 10 minutes. We will hear from our  
2 Citywide Council of high schools representative,  
3 preceded by Councilwoman Latisha James, followed  
4 by the SLT, and then we will take our sign-ups.  
5 If there are elected officials who arrive at  
6 different times in the evening and wish to  
7 speak, we will accommodate them when we can.  
8 And actually, our speakers will start with our  
9 students after we have the panel presentations.  
10 Tonight's format will include a presentation of  
11 the proposal and presentation by hearing  
12 participants followed by public comment. There  
13 will be a timekeeper who will let the speaker  
14 know 30 seconds before their two minutes are  
15 completed.

16 I would now like to introduce the panel who  
17 is at the table. I do want to tell you that CEC  
18 13 was invited to participate and made a  
19 decision that they choose not to for tonight.  
20 That's certainly their right as parent leaders.  
21 Starting from my far right is our SUNY  
22 representative who will speak in a moment to--  
23 I'm sorry, I lost my place, excuse me. To his  
24 left is Monique Lindsay, who is representing the  
25 Citywide Council on high schools. To her left

1 is Karen Watts, who is the high school  
2 superintendent and the superintendent for their  
3 school.

4 Success Academy Brooklyn 5 has been approved  
5 by its charter authorizer, the State University  
6 of New York's Charter School Institute of SUNY  
7 to open a new public charter school and  
8 community school, District 13. Although this  
9 proposal has not been approved yet by the Panel  
10 for Educational Policy, SUNY is required to hold  
11 a facilities hearing to receive feedback on the  
12 proposed co-location of Success Academy Brooklyn  
13 5 and Doctor Susan S. McKinney, Secondary School  
14 of the Arts and District 75 Inclusion Program  
15 P369K at 365K. As such, this joint public  
16 hearing will also serve as the facilities  
17 hearing. There is a representative from SUNY  
18 tonight as I mentioned, his name is Tom Franta  
19 [phonetic] and he is going to tell you a little  
20 bit about the proposed from his end.

21 MR. TOM FRANTA: Good evening, good evening.  
22 My name is Tom Franta, and I am Associate  
23 General Counsel for SUNY Charters New York  
24 Institute. I'm here tonight to-- Good evening.  
25 My name is Tom Franta. I am the Associate

1 General Counsel with the SUNY Charters School  
2 Institute. I'm here tonight to hold a public  
3 hearing on behalf of the Board of Trustees of  
4 the State University of New York. The education  
5 law requires SUNY to hold a public hearing  
6 anytime one of its schools it authorizes might  
7 open in an existing public school building. I'm  
8 here tonight to listen to your comments about  
9 the proposal to move grades K through five of  
10 Success Academy Charter School Brooklyn 5 in  
11 part of Building K265 beginning in the fall of  
12 2013.

13 SUNY is holding its hearing now at the same  
14 time the DOE is holding its hearing so that we  
15 don't have to ask parents and community members  
16 back to attend a different hearing on the same  
17 subject. I will be taking notes on all comments  
18 made tonight. In addition, any of you may give  
19 me written comments this evening that you have  
20 with you or you can e-mail comments to  
21 Charters@SUNY.edu, you can mail them to 41 State  
22 Street, Suite 700, Albany, New York 12207 or fax  
23 them to 518-427-6510. All this contact  
24 information is also posted on the back doors if  
25 you'd like it on your way out. SUNY will accept

1 public comments through December 28, 2012, five  
2 days after the proposed PEP vote for this  
3 matter. Thank you for your comments this  
4 evening.

5 MS. GORMAN: I will now turn the speaker  
6 over to Karen Watts, your Superintendent who  
7 will read the proposal.

8 MS. KAREN WATTS: Thank you. The New York  
9 City Department of Education, the DOE is  
10 proposing to site Success Academy Brooklyn 5, a  
11 new public charter school that will start  
12 students in kindergarten through the fifth grade  
13 in building K265. If this proposal is approved,  
14 Success Academy Brooklyn 5 will open in  
15 September, 2013 and would serve 164 to 210  
16 students in kindergarten and first grade, and  
17 would add one grade each year until it reaches  
18 full scale in 2017, 2018. At that time, Success  
19 Academy Brooklyn 5 would serve approximately 434  
20 to 556 students in kindergarten through fifth  
21 grade. The school would admit students via the  
22 Charter Lottery application process with  
23 preference given to District 13 residents with a  
24 set aside for English language learners.  
25 Success Academy Brooklyn 5 would be co-located

1 in K265 with Doctor Susan s. McKinney,  
2 Secondary School of the Arts, an existing  
3 secondary school that serves students in 6th  
4 through 12th grades and a District 75 Inclusion  
5 Program P369K at 265K in Building K265.

6 In the D-75 Inclusion Program, P369 at 265K  
7 students with disabilities receive special  
8 education services in a general education  
9 classroom along with general education students  
10 - - students at P369K at 265K are enrolled in  
11 general education classes at McKinney based on  
12 their individualized education program  
13 recommendations and receive sects as well.  
14 Students at the P369K at 265K receive special  
15 education teacher support services from staff at  
16 K369. P369K at K265 was allocated one full-size  
17 room for full -- services.

18 The DOE does not anticipate that this  
19 proposal will have any negative impact on D-79's  
20 instruction or programming at K265. K265 Also  
21 houses the District 13 school food, field,  
22 office and two community-based organizations:  
23 Partnerships with Kids, and Beacon. As the  
24 education impact statement states, "The  
25 Department of Education does not anticipate that

1 this proposal will have an effect on current  
2 partnerships and school programming. The DOE  
3 also wants to dispel any concern that this  
4 proposed co-location will displace Beacon  
5 program at K265. That is not the case. The  
6 ability for this Beacon program to continue  
7 providing services after school, evenings, and  
8 on Saturdays would not be limited by this  
9 proposed co-location. There are many Beacon  
10 programs that do so in co-located building and  
11 have done so in the building prior to and after  
12 the co-location. Beacon's plans for usage of  
13 the space after school program and for the  
14 schools in the building will be worked out  
15 through the Building Council. I had a school  
16 opening. Beacon does occupy some admin space in  
17 the building, and will continue to do so if this  
18 co-location proposal is approved.

19 It came to our attention that there was a  
20 possibility that the Beacon contract would end  
21 in August, 2013 and would not be renewed. This  
22 is not something within our purview since Beacon  
23 contracts are managed by New York City  
24 Department of Youth and Community Development.  
25 The DYCD did confirm that the Beacon programs

1 are in fact extended for another year. As a  
2 result, their contracts will terminate on August  
3 31, 2014. If you have questions about Beacon or  
4 the contract, you should contact DYCD's Beacon  
5 Unit at 212-788-6754.

6 A co-location means that two or more school  
7 organizations are located in the same building  
8 and they share common spaces like auditoriums,  
9 gymnasiums and cafeterias. Success Academy  
10 Brooklyn 5 is a new public charter school that  
11 is authorized by its charter authorizer, the  
12 State University of New York Charter Schools  
13 Institute to serve grades K-5. Success Academy  
14 Charter schools is a charter management  
15 organization that currently operates 12 public  
16 elementary charter schools in New York City.  
17 Success Academy Charter schools has been  
18 authorized by SUNY to operate six new public  
19 elementary charter schools starting in 2013,  
20 2014, including Success Academy Brooklyn 5.

21 K265 has been identified as an underutilized  
22 building. K265 has the capacity to serve 1,035  
23 students, but in 2012, 2013 McKinney and P369 at  
24 265K are only projected to serve 470 students.  
25 This yields a building utilization rate of

1 approximately 45 percent, which demonstrates  
2 that the building is underutilized and has space  
3 to accommodate additional students. In 2017,  
4 2018 Success Academy Brooklyn 5, McKinney and  
5 the P369 at 265K would collectively serve 864 to  
6 1,060 students in the building, which yields a  
7 projected utilization rate of 83 percent to 102  
8 percent. While the anticipated utilization rate  
9 is in excess of 100 percent, all schools will  
10 receive space that meets all of their  
11 instructional needs. As noted in the EIS, this  
12 rate does not account for the fact that rooms  
13 may be prorated for more efficient or different  
14 uses than the standard assumptions in the  
15 utilization calculation. In addition, charter  
16 school enrollment plans frequently - - large  
17 class sizes at target capacity; bringing us  
18 here, building utilization to 100 percent while  
19 not impacting the utilization of the space  
20 allocated to the traditional public school. The  
21 building utilization plan describes how space  
22 will be allocated between the schools for each  
23 year that Success Academy Brooklyn 5 phases in.

24 If the proposal is approved, spaces  
25 allocated between the schools based on the

1 citywide instructional footprint, which is a  
2 tool used to allocate space based on the number  
3 of sections of school programs and the grade  
4 levels of the schools. Each school will receive  
5 its baseline instructional footprint for each  
6 year of phase in, and excess space is split up  
7 between the schools proportionally based on the  
8 school's enrollment.

9 The DOE recognizes the importance of  
10 McKinney's performing arts programming and  
11 accordingly has allocated the core of dance and  
12 music rooms on top of the school's baseline  
13 allocation to ensure that McKinney retains sole  
14 usage of these spaces.

15 If the proposal is approved, then the Office  
16 of Space Planning will decide actual room  
17 placement in consultation with the Building  
18 Council. Should the decision include allocating  
19 to Success Academy space currently used for the  
20 arts program at McKinney, the Department of  
21 Education has committed to relocating and  
22 replacing these specialty spaces in order to  
23 continue supporting McKinney's programming  
24 needs.

25 The DOE supports the permanent placement of

1 Success Academy's Charter Schools in District  
2 13. If this proposal is approved, Success  
3 Academy Brooklyn 5 will add approximately 434 to  
4 556 kindergarten through fifth grade seats in  
5 District 13. The four Success Academy  
6 elementary schools that received a progress  
7 report from 2010, 2011 school year received an  
8 overall grade of A. Further, students at  
9 Success Academy Charter Schools have performed  
10 well on state-wide standardized tests. At these  
11 schools, 96 percent of students testing  
12 proficient in Math on the New York State tests  
13 in 2012, and 88 percent of students testing  
14 proficient in ELA. Thank you.

15 MS. GORMAN: Thank you, Superintendent  
16 Watts. At this time, I like to call to the  
17 podium--to the microphone Councilmember Letitia  
18 James [phonetic].

19 We are thrilled to have such a wonderful  
20 student group and other parents here; we ask  
21 that while speakers are presenting that they get  
22 your full attention, thank you.

23 MS. LETICIA JAMES: First, let me welcome  
24 all of the parents and all of the students and  
25 scholars who are here this evening. Welcome to

1 this process. Let me also congratulate or  
2 recognize and acknowledge CEC 13 in their  
3 courageous decision not to participate in this  
4 process, which is flawed, and support their  
5 resolution, which encourages fairness and  
6 transparency.

7 The School District 13 is hurting for  
8 resources. The co-location of Success Academy  
9 in this school will destroy a school that is  
10 thriving and needs Department of Education's  
11 support, and unfortunately has been ignored. I  
12 want to make clear that I do not oppose charter  
13 schools. I've supported a number of charter  
14 schools; however, the co-location process of the  
15 Department of Education is flawed. I also am  
16 not naïve enough to think that this is a  
17 democratic process; I know that the decision  
18 here is already predetermined. The policies  
19 related to co-location have less to do with  
20 competition, education, cooperation,  
21 collaboration, or even raising standards, but  
22 the co-location policies of the City of New York  
23 have more to do with real estate, and that's  
24 clear.

25 Teachers are correct, some schools in our

1 city have been turned into warehouses for high  
2 needs children, denying them supports and  
3 resources. The City of New York is littered  
4 with schools with high needs children, and the  
5 Department of Education sets up for failure  
6 these schools and administrators by starving  
7 them of resources and support. That's clear.  
8 The Department of Education, I wish they truly  
9 saw and would develop the talents of all  
10 children and not cherry pick children. It's  
11 unfortunate that the Department of Education is  
12 yielding this decision to interests who look at  
13 education as a business model, as opposed to,  
14 again, educating the children of the entire  
15 district. I want every child, and I want to  
16 make sure that this film that Success Academy is  
17 filming gets it right. I don't want to cherry  
18 pick the children of Ingersoll [phonetic],  
19 Whitman [phonetic], and Farogate [phonetic], and  
20 Fort Greene [phonetic], all deserve the right.  
21 All of them. Every single last one of them  
22 deserves the right to be educated; and you, this  
23 charter school should not cherry pick the very  
24 best of them. What you should do is what the  
25 Department of Education should do is recognize

1 their genius and invest in this school and  
2 invest in all school - -.

3 [Background noise].

4 MS. LETICIA JAMES: This process ignores  
5 fundamental principles of democracy and fairness  
6 and transparency and cooperation. I have called  
7 the Department of Education, the Chancellor, the  
8 Deputy Chancellor, not one time, not two times,  
9 not three times, not four times, five times.  
10 And what have I gotten? I've gotten silence.  
11 I've gotten silence. The lack of disrespect  
12 [sic] to this elected official that represents  
13 this community, and they should be ashamed of  
14 themselves. And I will argue, I will bet that  
15 the e-mail and the exchanges and the meetings of  
16 the Proprietor of this charter school have gone  
17 on and you have met with them, and yet you have  
18 ignored my pleas for assistance and that is a  
19 shame. They elected me to stand up and I'm  
20 going to stand with them even if no one else  
21 stands with them. Because they need a voice,  
22 because they have ignored it for far too long  
23 and will not be ignored anymore.

24 I recognize that this is a countdown to the  
25 end of the Bloomberg Administration. This is a

1 beat the clock moment, that's what I  
2 understand, to try to gather and grab as many  
3 pieces of real estate in this city as possible.  
4 I understand that. This has nothing to do with  
5 education, don't get it twisted. This decision  
6 will have a deep and profound adverse impact on  
7 this school. And I called this school my - -  
8 school and a profound impact on the District 75  
9 school in this district.

10 And I question why, if you really care about  
11 educating all children, why, why, was a waiver  
12 to serve students with IEPs granted when there  
13 was a need for educating children with IEPs?  
14 There was a waiting list for children for  
15 students who wanted to go into the Julianne  
16 School and they were denied an application to  
17 expand. And my point is that there is a need to  
18 educate children with IEPs, but yet this school,  
19 this charter school was granted a waiver. Why?  
20 Why? Why based on the application is there not  
21 **an** emphasis on the mission of this school for  
22 arts and for culture? Why will this school  
23 operate at 102 percent capacity? Why would you  
24 endanger children in this neighborhood just for  
25 the sake of an additional school as opposed to

1 providing services to the existing school?

2 Why? Why? This school--no.

3 I believe in academics. I believe in  
4 excellence, I believe in demanding high  
5 standards. I don't believe in compromising.  
6 But I also believe that we need to provide a  
7 well-rounded education to all children, and so  
8 this school offers classes in drama, chorus,  
9 dance and visual arts. The reality of the  
10 situation is that all of that programming will  
11 be compromised as a result of this and more  
12 taxpayer dollars for services outside of ours  
13 and unfortunately will be spent for children  
14 with special needs. So I know what would happen  
15 here, but this really is a sham and a mockery  
16 and an affront to democracy and it's really a  
17 blight on this administration, the Department of  
18 Education that they could not see fit to  
19 recognize an elected official and respect an  
20 elected official, to have the Chancellor of the  
21 City of New York return her call. And it's  
22 because I represent a community that looks like  
23 this. We deserve better. We deserve better.  
24 And this is not over. Thank you.

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. At this

1 time I'd like to call the representative of  
2 the Citywide Council of high schools, Monique  
3 Lindsay [phonetic] who will be followed by  
4 Kenneth Marsh [phonetic] and Ms. Greene  
5 [phonetic] from the SLT. Our first speaker who  
6 is a student, and needs to leave by seven, so  
7 I'm hoping that we can make sure that happens.  
8 Ms. Lindsay, are you speaking?

9 Ms. MONIQUE LINDSAY: The Citywide Council  
10 on high schools will not be speaking tonight; we  
11 will stand in solidarity with the CEC. Thank  
12 you.

13 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Mr. Marsh  
14 and Ms. Greene.

15 MR. KENNETH MARSH: Members of the - -,  
16 students of K265, good evening. I'm not going  
17 to take too much time, because I would like to  
18 facilitate everybody to speak. I included this  
19 one statement, I feel that this whole process is  
20 actually undermining the success of these  
21 children, and that unequivocally that this  
22 proposed plan for the charter school should be  
23 null and void in terms of it should not be. It  
24 should not be. You have traded in the kids who  
25 are striving for excellence in academics; you

1 have many opportunities in terms of arts and  
2 culture, things in which will enhance them, not  
3 just now, but in terms of the rest of their  
4 lives. And all you're doing is just undermining  
5 and destroying the foundation of these kids. So  
6 other people can speak, I won't need my full  
7 time, I just wanted to say that I'm totally  
8 opposed to it, I don't think that it should be--  
9 the proposal should not go through and I hope  
10 that all people in this room feel that way as  
11 well. Thank you.

12 MS. GORMAN: Ms. Greene. Ms. Greene. Is  
13 Mrs. Greene here from the SLT? Ms. Greene. Not  
14 seeing Ms. Greene, if she comes in, we'll  
15 accommodate her. At this time--oh, I'm sorry, I  
16 didn't see you. Come to the mike, thank you.

17 MS. GREENE: Good evening. Can I ask one  
18 quick question? You had said two things in your  
19 statement that I wanted to ask directly to--

20 MS. GORMAN: Say again, please?

21 MS. GREENE: I wanted to know if I could ask  
22 a quick question and it won't cut into my time,  
23 per se.

24 MS. GORMAN: Yes.

25 MS. GREENE: Okay, I wanted to ask Ms. Watts

1 two questions. In the thing that you read  
2 before, you said that the Department of Ed has  
3 promised to replace the rooms that are  
4 specialized rooms somewhere else. That would  
5 mean rebuilding the rooms completely, which  
6 would also mean suspending the disciplines, so  
7 whatever discipline the kid was learning, they  
8 would have to stop in order for the DOE to take  
9 time to build. Because as we know, contractors  
10 don't do things in two days, it would probably  
11 take close to a year to rebuild those rooms.  
12 What would the kids do in the meantime? In  
13 terms of time given towards that--time or credit  
14 towards that particular discipline, which they  
15 would not be getting? Would they be offered  
16 another school? Is that the whole idea? Let's  
17 relocate every student in the school so they can  
18 get their discipline?

19 MS. GORMAN: I think what the proposal said,  
20 and we will reread it and get back to you to  
21 make sure that, if in fact, if there was to be  
22 any disruption, they would be rebuild. It's not  
23 anticipated that it necessarily will happen.  
24 But can you leave me your contact information  
25 and let me get back with you?

1 MS. GREENE: By all means. Thank you. - -

2 MS. GORMAN: Thank you.

3 MS. GREENE: The other thing I wanted to  
4 mention is there is no District 79 school. I  
5 realize that District 75 and 79 South - - but at  
6 one time she did mention 79. We are District  
7 75. I have four children in the - - who are  
8 District 75 kids. Okay, no disrespect to  
9 District 79, but there is not one in this  
10 building.

11 As I recollect, the initial public  
12 discussion of the proposal set before us for the  
13 utilization of this school building and the  
14 phrase stands out in my mind, "Don't think of  
15 this as a punishment." This was sent to us by  
16 the representatives of the Department of  
17 Education's office of Portfolio Management.  
18 This was the phrase that was used several times.  
19 "Don't think of this as a punishment."

20 Let us do what we ask our students to do and  
21 base their assessments of a situation on fact.  
22 Fact is this is a Grade A Program which offers  
23 four disciplines in the arts. It is the only  
24 high school in District 13 to do so. It is also  
25 one of even fewer programs open with

1 opportunities to District 75 students. Why  
2 set out--either by intention or not to dismantle  
3 the very essence of a program that has been  
4 proven to work?

5 The students in 265 and the District 75 369  
6 program have been lumped into an equation as  
7 numbers, not student's needs, not student  
8 opportunities, not their assessments at all, but  
9 as part of a square footage formula used to  
10 calculate the utilization of a building. If  
11 this proposal is passed, it will result in a  
12 building that is 110 percent of its capacity.  
13 No school wants to be at 110 percent of  
14 capacity, let alone 110 percent. That means  
15 overcrowded classes, it means less  
16 individualized attention to the students, and it  
17 means greater chance and failure.

18 There has been no consideration also of the  
19 requirements of the students. The state  
20 mandate, such as the IEPs or the city runs  
21 either. The only way that this proposal can  
22 actually work is if you're going to cap the  
23 amount of kids that are going to be coming into  
24 265 and the amount of kids who are coming into  
25 369's program. As of right now, I know they've

1 started to cap the amount of kids from 369.  
2 We have two sets of classes right now, which is  
3 about 12 kids who are appropriate in age and  
4 talent for this program, have requested to bring  
5 them over as of next year and were denied. So  
6 if you're not capping, you have a very strange  
7 way of - - it. As parents, we hope our children  
8 will grow up to be positive and productive  
9 members of society. That being said, we need to  
10 keep opportunities open that will lead to them  
11 becoming strong, independent, well-rounded  
12 individuals.

13 Parents also need choice. A real choice  
14 does not include a lottery. If it was really a  
15 choice for us, it would be a first-come, first-  
16 served basis, and anybody that wanted to serve  
17 would want to serve all of us, not just a select  
18 few.

19 Another thing, education--special education  
20 reform was not even considered in this equation.  
21 The mandate such as speech and OT and PT in a  
22 school-based support team, none of those things  
23 were taken into consideration so far. I don't  
24 see it in the proposal anywhere; not for 265,  
25 not for 369, but it's funny that you all found a

1 whole lot of room for success. There's  
2 actually six success academies scheduled to be  
3 on that PEP vote. Why should any one charter  
4 school have six ones open at the same time? One  
5 is not enough? Two is not enough? Let's  
6 conquer the city, perhaps. Let's displace all  
7 kids who are lower functioning. The whole idea  
8 of charter school for all the parents that were  
9 here was that they were going to take the kids  
10 that were most at need, most at risk and give  
11 them an opportunity. Not ask for waivers, not  
12 to take them. As you can tell, I am opposed to  
13 that, I am not opposed to charter schools, but I  
14 am opposed to the utilization of the building.  
15 I do not think it will succeed, and I hope it  
16 doesn't pass. And if it does, we always have  
17 the options that we can sue so you can give  
18 every single one of us parents in here the money  
19 to send our kids to private school of our  
20 choice.

21 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Please do leave me  
22 your e-mail so I can answer your question. At  
23 this time, we have completed the formal  
24 presentation. I'm going to call up to sit in  
25 front the seven students who will speak first.

1 I want to apologize in advance for any  
2 mispronunciations. Desiree Lynch [phonetic],  
3 Kyle, Danielle, Jasmine, I can't read the next  
4 name, it's number five, N-A-S-I-H-M. Nasrey  
5 [phonetic] and Codasha [phonetic], and I  
6 apologize, and T-Y-L-I-E-H, would you all come  
7 and sit up front so that we can call on you. At  
8 this time, Desiree.

9 MS. DESIREE: My name is Desiree Lynch, and  
10 this is my letter to the charter school.  
11 Success Academy needs to--needs to snap into  
12 reality and realize how unintelligent this idea  
13 of coming into my school's building is. The  
14 most important reason why you shouldn't even try  
15 to come here, - -. In your eyes, all you see is  
16 space, space, space. All the dance rooms,  
17 classroom space, and the art room, the theater  
18 room, but you don't realize what it's used for.  
19 It's used to take students one step further to  
20 their dreams and teach them new things. Also,  
21 if you bring your students here, it's going to  
22 look like the Yankee Stadium. Students already  
23 have trouble going from class to class. Now  
24 imagine with you here. On top of that, if you  
25 come here, you could take away talent, what?

1 Many students come here only because of  
2 talent. Students like me do dance to become  
3 professional dancers or choreographers. Others  
4 do vocal to become singers or vocal coaches.  
5 What's a performing arts school with no  
6 performing arts? Lastly, if you come in, we  
7 would have to accommodate to you, we would have  
8 to--maybe we would have to enlarge the amount of  
9 students in one class. And I don't know about  
10 the other students, but I can't learn in a class  
11 with 30 students. Needless to say, you're  
12 getting in the way of our learning process. And  
13 why would you be so cruel to fail students? In  
14 conclusion, the Success Academy needs to stay  
15 out of McKinney, because your students will get  
16 trampled over and you will fail our students.  
17 This is obviously an unintelligent and ludicrous  
18 idea. Don't be like the--don't be like the  
19 English people who made the blacks their slaves.  
20 I understand you want to start a school; well  
21 crash in with another Success Academy's  
22 building, but not here.

23 MS. GORMAN: Followed by Danielle. Please  
24 begin.

25 MS. DANIELLE: I would like to thank all the

1 students and the parents who care about what  
2 happens in the school, who cares about their  
3 child's education, who cares about what they do  
4 in their life. I'd like to start by saying that  
5 the idea of putting 800 to 1,000 students in a  
6 400 student building is appalling. It's  
7 appalling in a way that--why would you want to  
8 put 400 students, and already 400 students here.  
9 Like, what's the point? The building will be  
10 overcrowded, lunch will be early, and they will  
11 have you starve through the day. And I don't  
12 know about anybody else, but I can't go through  
13 seven hours without a snack - - that's just me.  
14 It's also getting in the way--the education  
15 work. They are preschool. Why would you put  
16 preschoolers in a high school, middle school  
17 building? High school and middle school share  
18 things that the preschool shouldn't even see at  
19 least until - -. I also like to state--I also  
20 like to state that preschool needs to go to  
21 another building. If you want to push 400  
22 students into this building, why can't you make  
23 another building and then put them in there?  
24 What's the rush? Can't you see the building  
25 that you already have? That's all I'd like to

1 say that this idea is ludicrous, appalling and  
2 I'm not having this.

3 MS. GORMAN: Danielle and Jasmine.

4 Danielle, thank you. Danielle, please begin.

5 MS. DANIELLE: Thank you. Good evening, I  
6 just want to start out by saying this charter  
7 school idea is a bad idea. I don't know about  
8 anybody else, but I enjoy my talent, and me  
9 being a singer, - - you're right, me being a  
10 senior, I mean, you know, this is my major, so  
11 the charter school coming, there's no more  
12 dance, it's no more drama, no more art, I mean,  
13 we got to - - back there. We got some art  
14 majors, we got some drama majors. I mean, what  
15 about us? - - and I don't want to share the  
16 stage and me being a basketball player. We got  
17 to share the gym, it's not happening. It's  
18 hazardous in a way because the school is big  
19 enough as it is, we get new students every year,  
20 the middle school gets new school students every  
21 year and then having the charter school with  
22 another 800 student's, it's not going to work.  
23 High school on first, second floor, definitely  
24 not going to work. All the little preschool on  
25 the third floor. Third floor is not that big.

1 First and second floor's not that big, and the  
2 high school put together, that's about, what,  
3 900 students? And two floors, no third floor,  
4 no gym, and they share the the cafeteria. It's  
5 not enough as it is.

6 I wasn't prepared to speak, I'm out of  
7 breath, but that' all I had to say - -.

8 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Jasmine, followed by  
9 Ms. Pratt.

10 MS. JASMINE: Good evening students. My  
11 name is Jasmine Reyes, and I'm senior at Doctor  
12 Susan S. McKinney. McKinney has greatly  
13 benefited me over the years. When I arrived  
14 here, I didn't know what I would become or even  
15 how much I would accomplish as an eager and  
16 fascinated student. Our performing arts school  
17 is full of diverse culture, arts and people.  
18 And it's because of our wonderful teachers,  
19 supporting staff - - our talent and perfecting  
20 our crafts that we were able to accomplish so  
21 much and have so much success over all as a  
22 whole student body. McKinney in itself has so  
23 much to offer for inspiring youth of today and  
24 tomorrow and turning our school into a charter  
25 school will not only hurt our potential as

1 aspiring artists, but the development of our  
2 talent to - - students as well.

3 I'm feeling a little emotional so I'd rather  
4 express how I truly feel about my school through  
5 song. I will now perform for you what McKinney  
6 has done for me.

7 [Performs a song]

8 MS. GORMAN: I would not want to be the  
9 speaker after that, but Ms. Pratt, N-A-S--yeah.

10 MS. PRATT: Good evening. My name Nasim  
11 Pratt [phonetic], I am here this evening to  
12 speak for all the students, staff and families  
13 who come out to support McKinney against the  
14 charter school. All right, the first thing I  
15 want to say is I don't think it's fair, even - -  
16 head of Success Academy Charter School should  
17 bully her way into McKinney. It does not set a  
18 good example. As you know, this is a performing  
19 arts school, but what you may not understand or  
20 even care about is if your charter school makes  
21 its way in this school, you're ruining some  
22 kid's dreams. Like my sister, Naya Pratt  
23 [phonetic], who is currently in drama, which I  
24 also enjoy myself along with many other kids as  
25 well. She would like to be an actress. I think

1 McKinney is the perfect school to help her  
2 succeed in that dream. So Success Academy, with  
3 all due respect, McKinney doesn't want you here.  
4 Thank you.

5 MS. GORMAN: We have three young ladies who  
6 will be speaking together, followed by our last  
7 student, Mr. Jackson.

8 MS. NASREY YOUNG: Hello, hello, hello,  
9 hello, hello. My name is Nasrey Young  
10 [phonetic], I'm a sophomore and I personally  
11 feel that co-locating Doctor Susan s. McKinney  
12 with an elementary school would be extremely  
13 dangerous. There's already a junior high school  
14 in this building. The effects of putting a  
15 charter school in Doctor Susan s. McKinney are  
16 not beneficial to the success of Doctor Susan s.  
17 McKinney students. This school is a performing  
18 arts school and all of our practice space is on  
19 the third floor, which is the space that the  
20 charter school wants to use. This school may be  
21 able to hold 1,035 students, but having that  
22 many students in this school comfortably is the  
23 question. This school is not a - - school and  
24 students here need their space to better our  
25 education. The motto of the board of education

1 is, "No child should be left behind." But  
2 1,035 students in a school this small, students  
3 will begin to be left behind. This is the only-  
4 -this is the only performing arts school in the  
5 community. Taking away performing arts rooms  
6 upstairs will take away the reasons for us being  
7 here.

8 Dancers, artists and vocal students all come  
9 together to show that we have talent. This  
10 neighbor is already dangerous. Why would the  
11 Board of Education make our school dangerous?  
12 We oppose this. We oppose this movement of  
13 bringing the charter school in Doctor Susan s.  
14 McKinney. Thank you.

15 MS. TAMARA: Hi everyone, my name is Tamara  
16 [phonetic], I believe that we should not have a  
17 charter school here because one, it's a  
18 performing arts school. We dance, we sing, we  
19 do art, we do all different kind of things and  
20 to bring a charter school in here would be very  
21 dangerous. This is not a nursery, we are not  
22 watching nobody kids, and we shouldn't have to  
23 do that. Like it's already bad enough that we  
24 have a middle school, then to add kindergarten,  
25 mm-mm.

1           And I would like to get back to what  
2 happened before at the end of all of this. One  
3 of you asked about contact information to let  
4 them know what you are saying. I believe that  
5 we would all like to know what's going on.

6           MS. GORMAN: We can get back to your  
7 principal as well as well as your SLT member.

8           MS. TAMARA: All right.

9           MS. GORMAN: Thank you. And our last  
10 student who signed up is Talley Jackson  
11 [phonetic].

12           MR. TALLEY JACKSON: All right, hello, good  
13 evening everybody, my name is Talley Jackson;  
14 I'm a senior at Dr. Susan S. McKinney. I just  
15 want to say that this school has been absolutely  
16 nothing but the best to me. A charter school  
17 here would only mean a downfall to the well-  
18 structured staff and the success of individuals  
19 who come from - - all over. I arrived at the  
20 school in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, and I remain all the way  
21 till now. I'm a senior, an upper classman to  
22 any grade below mine. I would like for them to  
23 go through a decent four years of high school as  
24 I did. To my knowledge, the charter school will  
25 eliminate space for current students to be

1 instructed in the dance program, the visual  
2 arts program, theater program, the vocal  
3 program, and the instrumental program that I'm  
4 enrolled in. Though I will be long gone, I  
5 truly care about the future of the school I will  
6 graduate from. I think it's rather undermining  
7 to just come and take over as if we don't thrive  
8 and work hard to become successful. I, as a  
9 college bound student, do oppose of a charter  
10 school in this area because it's just unfair.  
11 All the hard work from staff to student has  
12 created a bond that's rather unbreakable and we  
13 will not let another school barge in as if it  
14 belongs to them. The expansion of the school  
15 will cause confusion and problems. A middle  
16 school already exists, there's absolutely no  
17 reason for grades K through five to be in an  
18 area with mature kids who are on their way out.  
19 In a nutshell, the school is mine, it's yours,  
20 and it's your child's. This is a democracy, we  
21 don't approve. Thank you.

22 MS. GORMAN: That concludes the student  
23 list, I'm going to ask that the next five  
24 speakers, I'll call you names, please come sit  
25 up front. And again, I apologize for any

1 mispronunciations, Shirley Blakely [phonetic],  
2 Tasheer James [phonetic], is this the same Ms.  
3 James that spoke before? So, Cecilia Greene  
4 [phonetic], Kenneth Marsh, you choose to speak  
5 again? - - Frat [phonetic], and Kurt Connley  
6 Burkley [phonetic]. Please come forward.

7 Is Shirley going--thank you. Please feel  
8 free to begin. Let's give our speakers the  
9 attention they deserve.

10 MS. SHIRLEY BLAKELY: Good evening,  
11 everybody. I said good evening everybody.  
12 Thank you. I would like the opportunity to  
13 introduce myself. My name is Shirley Blakley.  
14 I live - - I have niece, nephews, a grandchild  
15 and a son who attends the Beacon for years. I  
16 am pleased to have - - of this place. Here they  
17 help my kids with homework and activities such  
18 as dance, art, computers, movies, game rooms and  
19 chorus which they love. In addition, the CIT  
20 program which is the counselor in training for  
21 the teenagers. This program taught them how to  
22 deal with children playing activities, trips and  
23 more. Last year, a group of my team attended  
24 CIT and they enjoyed it. They called their  
25 friends and invited many others to come.

1 There's nowhere else in this community that  
2 offered our kids activities and opportunities to  
3 have fun while learning. I always believe that  
4 it takes a village to raise a child. And Beacon  
5 is our village. So, please, please, allow these  
6 resources to continue.

7 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. - - James.

8 MR. TASHEER JAMES: Hello, my name is  
9 Tasheer James. I live in the community, I went  
10 to - - when I was a kid. And I'm really--I'm  
11 here partially on behalf of my mother who is a  
12 public school teacher and - - her name is Brenda  
13 - - . For 33 years and so this community--I've  
14 lived here for my whole life in this community.  
15 And I'm not against charter schools in principal  
16 at all and speaking directly to the DOE, I'm not  
17 even--I wouldn't not want to get embroiled in  
18 the argument of whether they're successful or  
19 not, I think that's more complicated than I know  
20 and I think some of them probably do very good  
21 things and others don't. I'm here tonight  
22 because speaking from the experience of my  
23 mother, which is a personal experience, she's a  
24 public--she was a public school teacher, and  
25 when charter schools co-locate in public schools

1     like they did in - - whether the school is  
2     successful or not, the aftermath is telling.  
3     It's really brutal and teachers are unhappy, the  
4     students feel the - - and they can see the  
5     difference between the charter schools and  
6     themselves. And again, charter schools, in  
7     principal, I don't have a problem with it, and I  
8     don't know anything about the Success Academy,  
9     but the DOE should listen to the people and the  
10    teachers that are here right now because even if  
11    the charter school is a good thing, clearly the  
12    people have a problem with it. So I think it  
13    would very responsible and it's actually the  
14    duty of the DOE to acknowledge the people who  
15    have a problem with this charter school even if  
16    the DOE thinks it's a good thing. I can say  
17    that we need to be addressed and at least have a  
18    way that if this thing is going to come in, it's  
19    not going to leave such an unpleasant taste and  
20    a derisive, unprogressive community in the  
21    future. So if it's got to get done, do it more  
22    responsibly, please?

23           MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Cecilia  
24    Greene. Cecelia Greene? She's already spoken.  
25    Kenneth Marsh did you want to speak again?

1 MR. KENNETH MARSH: No.

2 MS. GORMAN: Miss or, Ms. Pratt. Thank you,  
3 I apologize.

4 MS. ANTONINE PRATT: Hi, good evening.  
5 First of all let me begin by saying that I am  
6 not against Charter Schools as I am a parent as  
7 well, and I do believe every parent has the  
8 right to... I do believe that every parent  
9 should have choices as to where and what kind of  
10 education their child receives. Now with that  
11 being said, I am and I repeat I am against the  
12 Success Academy Charter School coming here.  
13 First off you want elementary kids to cohabitate  
14 with middle school kids and high school kids;  
15 socially they don't have anything to offer each  
16 other. Second, as you already know this is a  
17 Performing Art School which means that arts are  
18 incorporated with their regular studies. These  
19 children audition to come with Dr. Susan S.  
20 McKinney because they have a passion for  
21 whatever talent they choose whether it be drama,  
22 dance, or art. If that Charter School comes  
23 here, then you will be killing the dreams and  
24 hopes of so many young children. [Applause]  
25 These kids are bursting with talent, and they

1       aspire to go places with it. So what happens  
2       to our kids when we also have special needs kids  
3       who attend this school, and we know that Ms.  
4       Markowitz [phonetic] does not have to accept  
5       them, so what happens to them? The bottom line  
6       is that in order for your Charter School to  
7       succeed our school must die. You know that  
8       every year you are here means that we will have  
9       to cap off how many kids we can accept. Once  
10       again what happens to them? In the words of my  
11       son just of Due Respect [phonetic], "We don't  
12       want you guys here." Have a nice day.

13       [Applause]

14               MS. GORMAN: Thank you. I'd like to call  
15       the next five speakers to please come forward:  
16       Curt Conliffe-Berkely, Lisa North, Faith Hester,  
17       Gloria Brandon, and Marilyn Floyd. Our next  
18       speaker Curt Conliffe-Berkely will be speaking  
19       from over on the right, my right.

20               MR. CURT CONLIFFE-BERKELY: Good evening  
21       everybody. First I'd like to thank you for  
22       allowing me the time to speak and to hear the  
23       words that I have to project to you. I would  
24       like to applaud all the performances that you've  
25       just seen by the students of this beautiful

1 school. All of the words that came out of  
2 these babies mouth; let the children lead the  
3 way. Hear their voice 'cause they do have  
4 something beautiful and intelligent to say.

5 As a senior member of this community I've  
6 known the old Fort Greene, you don't want to go  
7 back to the old Fort Greene. The old Fort  
8 Greene was death, drugs, and destruction. This  
9 new Fort Greene is talented with beautiful  
10 angels that has something positive, their gifts  
11 to give to this world. I look at the walls and  
12 these faces of these pictures of these talented  
13 artists who also had a dream, they fulfilled  
14 their visions, their dreams, don't stop theirs.

15 Please listen to the words I have to say.  
16 Uphold the performances of Dr. Susan McKinney's  
17 students, improving self as well as community.  
18 McKinney's partnership, special programs, and  
19 initiatives is [unprecedented]. Their  
20 partnerships include: Alvin Ailey, American  
21 Dance, City College, Carnegie Hall, Brooklyn  
22 College, Brooklyn Hospital Center, Goodwill  
23 Incorporated, and I emphasize goodwill, Helen  
24 Keller, my god Helen Keller, Stanford  
25 University, St. Frances College, Princeton

1 University, Yale Universities and Georgetown.

2 If my memory stands correct I just mentioned  
3 some Ivey League Colleges. I just mentioned  
4 some Ivey League Colleges. Their initiatives  
5 include, and I had to list this first, chess,  
6 I'm the certified United States Federation Chess  
7 Coach, I applaud that because chess helps  
8 improve a child's, an adult's, a teenager's  
9 mental powers. It's phenomenal what chess can  
10 do for our youth. Dance, drama, fine arts,  
11 marching band, I've seen marching bands all  
12 across the United States, if you haven't seen  
13 this school's marching bands you're missing out.  
14 [Applause] They can stand in tough with any  
15 college or any university in the United States,  
16 and they're only children, they're only  
17 teenagers, they should be commended not  
18 decimated and thrown to the wind, they should be  
19 commended. Marching band, regents classes in  
20 integrated algebra, original - -, vocal and  
21 instrumental music. My god that is  
22 [unprecedences].

23 These partnerships and initiatives should be  
24 applauded and positive successful entities  
25 within our communities. Help these programs to

1 flourish within McKinney. Studies have proved  
2 and proven that students that participate in  
3 arts programs are the least likely to be  
4 involved in crime. McKinney students, faculty  
5 members, and parents are committed to see the  
6 dreams of these beautiful angels become a  
7 reality.

8 Dr. Susan McKinney as the first Black Doctor  
9 in Brooklyn realized her dream, I'm sure that  
10 she will be very proud of the many  
11 accomplishments of the students of PS265, the  
12 school which is being named after her.

13 The changes that you plan to institute will  
14 create less space for PS265, and time for gym,  
15 auditorium, library, and in the future less  
16 space for after school programming. Please, I  
17 implore you, you have the power to help Dr.  
18 Susan McKinney flourish and continue to be a  
19 successful entity within our community. Thank  
20 you. [Applause]

21 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Young  
22 people I want to remind you these people are  
23 speaking on your behalf [Background comment], so  
24 if we could make sure that everybody listens. I  
25 want to agree with you, I think our young people

1 spoke very well, and what can we say about  
2 that singing. So congratulations. I again want  
3 to remind speakers you have two minutes, and  
4 you'll be given a 30 second reminder. But this  
5 is Lisa North.

6 MS. LISA NORTH: Hi, my name is Lisa North.  
7 I have been a teacher in District 13 for 24  
8 years, currently I teach at PS3, and I'm just  
9 here to support the school. I know the  
10 teachers, the fifth grader teachers in my school  
11 often recommend this school because it has a  
12 very good reputation. And I can go on, but I  
13 think the students and the families of the  
14 school have really explained why the Charter  
15 School would really hurt this school, so I am  
16 going to just say that I support the boycott by  
17 the CEC, District 13. Because we know that this  
18 is a very undemocratic process that's going on  
19 here, that we can talk and support and we know  
20 what this school is, but the Department of  
21 Education is going to do what they do. They'll  
22 go to the PEP, and that's a puppet policy panel  
23 that will just vote against what everybody has  
24 said here and the support that this school has  
25 in the community. I want everybody to remember

1 that the Mayoral election is next November. I  
2 think we really, really need to pay attention to  
3 who the next Mayor of New York City is, because  
4 in New York City we have a very undemocratic  
5 system. Out in the suburbs they get to vote for  
6 their School Boards, here in New York City it's  
7 a dictatorship of the Mayor, he decides what  
8 happens. We need to vote for another Mayor  
9 that's going to give back the right of democracy  
10 to our communities and to our schools; so pay  
11 attention to who's running.

12 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Faith Hester,  
13 Gloria, and Marilyn.

14 MS. FAITH HESTER: Thank you so much for  
15 hearing me. I trust that you are people of  
16 integrity, and this is truly a democratic  
17 process as you have said it is. And I am  
18 representing a McKinney family, but oddly enough  
19 I'm also representing Success Academy because I  
20 represent all children. As a parent I love all  
21 children, and this situation will not work for  
22 any of the children involved.

23 Now I don't understand a lot of things, but  
24 I do understand that when you phase in  
25 something, something has to be phased out. For

1 example my pocket might hold five items, so am  
2 I phasing in more items, I have to phase  
3 something out. So what is being phased out as  
4 you're phasing Success students in?

5 I looked at a photograph of where people  
6 were being transported from the Atlantic Ocean  
7 Synagogue to America as slaves. Yes they fit.  
8 The chains on their legs and their arms fit.  
9 This is not a plantation. This is not a prison.  
10 It's a school and it's our future. We have to  
11 stand up for our children, all of our children,  
12 McKinney children, Success Academy children,  
13 PS67 children, all of our children they are our  
14 future.

15 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Gloria Brandon,  
16 Marilyn Floyd, Jeff Utz, and Irving Pantin.

17 MS. GLORIA BRANDON: Good evening, my name  
18 is Gloria Brandon, and I have taught in the  
19 public school system in District 13 for over 30  
20 years. I work with PS307 just three blocks  
21 away, and I'm here to say that even my school  
22 should not be allowed to call Co-locate in this  
23 building. You've heard from the students and  
24 from the families, and there's no way I can  
25 speak any better than they have about the

1 wonderful things that are going on in this  
2 building. And if you believe that putting a  
3 Charter School in this building will not affect  
4 it, well I can tell you sell you a bridge  
5 because it will. We've seen it all over the  
6 City time and time again.

7 Charter Schools simply put is an attempt to  
8 privatize public education. Even Ms. James was  
9 wondering why did Eva Moskowitz get a waiver so  
10 that she would not have to accept special needs  
11 children. Well, Ms. Moskowitz's salary is over  
12 \$300,000. Special needs children cost more  
13 money to the services, perhaps she doesn't want  
14 to have a cut in her salary, just one  
15 possibility.

16 The last thing I'm going to say, I had a  
17 bigger speech, but I'm going to go join the  
18 boycott too because it might be the best thing  
19 to do. Will this Panel listen? Will they  
20 listen? Most of the public hearings that I've  
21 been to in the last few years the Panels they  
22 attempt, they seem to listen but they always go  
23 and give approval for the Co-locations. The PEP  
24 meetings, they approve the Co-locations. Why is  
25 this happening? Well, the last thing I'm going

1 to say is will this Panel listen and do the  
2 right thing? Will they allow democracy to  
3 prevail and just say no, we don't want you  
4 either, don't come into our school, and as a  
5 matter of fact get out of New York City  
6 altogether. Thank you.

7 MS. GORMAN: Marilyn Floyd, Jeff Utz, Irving  
8 Pantin, and Aaron Whitley.

9 MS. MARILYN FLOYD: Hi, my name is Marilyn  
10 Floyd, I'm a very active parent. If you can't  
11 hear me it's that I have speech problem, I'm a  
12 cancer survivor for 27 years. Anyway, I have  
13 three children in Dr. Susan S. McKinney, and  
14 they're on honor roll. Okay and Dr. Susan S.  
15 McKinney became a second family to me and my  
16 kids, and I love everybody in this school like  
17 the teacher and parents; and I'm against the  
18 Charter School. And the reason why I'm against  
19 the Charter School is because I have three - -,  
20 and the Charter School - - first and them.  
21 Okay, you know, I can cry right now, okay,  
22 because my kids and other kid been through so  
23 much in the Charter School okay. And they  
24 supposed to be there learning, instead of  
25 learning they mentally disturbing them. Oh my

1 gosh, okay. I had a minor stroke behind this,  
2 because I'm up to the school every day, I'm  
3 sitting in classrooms. I'm talking about - -  
4 first and never went to the Charter School. And  
5 I'm seeing so many parents, children stressed  
6 out, okay. They have the kids in detention,  
7 they not learning like they supposed to be  
8 learning because they so much - - . The kids in  
9 detention. It's like they mentally abusing our  
10 kids, and a lot of parents need to realize this  
11 is serious, okay. Our children need us, and we  
12 need to be more involved, okay. The Charter  
13 School, you know I'm for a good education, but  
14 not when you're going to mentally abuse a kid,  
15 when the kids supposed to be learning, and they  
16 just stressed out being in a class because if  
17 they turn their head, if they move they - - they  
18 going to be in detention. And they even had  
19 Special Ed in the detention, you know and that's  
20 wrong. And then you saying I have 30 second,  
21 listen I need a little more than 30 second,  
22 because I've been mentally abused by the Charter  
23 School for years, okay. And I need to be heard  
24 now, because I once advocated for the Charter  
25 School and everything, I was sitting in the

1 classes, and dealing with the parents, and  
2 dealing with the students, and it's wrong, okay.  
3 You're taking away the public school and you're  
4 putting Charter School in here, you need to get  
5 the... Well I ain't going... You need... You  
6 need your own building because they funded by  
7 private organization, all this money they have  
8 why they can't have their own school? Why are  
9 they messing with Dr. Susan S. McKinney? Dr.  
10 Susan S. McKinney is a school of art, dance,  
11 music, it's a good school, okay. My kids stand  
12 up high, and we not having it. That's all I'm  
13 going to say.

14 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Jeff Utz,  
15 Irving Pantin, Aaron Whitley, and Eleanor Chung.  
16 Mr. Utz.

17 MR. JEFFERY UTZ: My name is Jeffery Utz, I'm  
18 a AKR [phonetic], excuse me, I'm an AKR which is  
19 a member of the African Reserve Board, and that  
20 means I go around from school to school. So  
21 I've been to a lot, almost every single middle  
22 school in this district. And the reason why I  
23 chose to come here, I don't benefit anything, if  
24 I don't find a permanent position I'll be here  
25 for a week or something next year, so it doesn't

1 really benefit me to be here. But what I see  
2 is that the kids here behave very well compared  
3 to the kids in any other middle school in this  
4 district and other schools I've been to outside  
5 the district. One of the reasons is because  
6 they have the arts here. [Applause].

7 As an educator I know how important the arts  
8 are, and as educators too, you should know that  
9 the stuff you show consistently that kids who  
10 have arts they do better in BLA, they do better  
11 in math, they do better in science. I'm a  
12 science teacher and I see that. So that the  
13 arts are not like an extra thing, they're a  
14 necessary thing. [Applause] So you're talking  
15 about space on the third floor that is  
16 underutilized, that is incorrect. Every square  
17 centimeter upstairs is well utilized.

18 [Applause] As a teacher, when students do  
19 something that they shouldn't do something, or  
20 they're thinking something that they shouldn't  
21 think, the students here might recognize phrases  
22 like, "Are you crazy?", or as "What are you  
23 thinking?", and that's what I ask the people who  
24 made this proposal. You have a school that's  
25 working. You have a school that has giving the

1 arts. And as you guys should also note is  
2 that in the United States five States have now  
3 got grants to put in more art and stuff, and  
4 right now you're trying to take away the arts  
5 from the school when other places are trying to  
6 put that in. This is silly. Give the kids what  
7 they need. Not just what they want, but what  
8 they need. [Applause]

9 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Irving Pantin,  
10 Aaron Whittey, Eleanor Chung, E. Dale Smith, and  
11 Wanda Williams.

12 MR. IRVING PANTIN: Good evening, hopefully  
13 when what I have to say I can leave here safely.  
14 I am a parent of a child in Success Academy. I  
15 fully support Success Academy. [Heckling] Can  
16 I speak please? [Heckling] Can I speak please?  
17 Okay. My 6-year-old son since he came into  
18 Success Academy, his reading level has been high  
19 up. He reads four to five books a night. We  
20 read to him. He loves to read by himself.  
21 Okay. So, again, you guys have your own  
22 opinion. Yes, you can fight against not having  
23 'em here. [Heckling] Miss could you please--

24 MS. GORMAN: We are going to be respectful  
25 to everyone's opinion, it's a public hearing.

1 MR. PANTIN: And that's one thing that's  
2 taught in Success Academy, respect. Okay. Now,  
3 [Booing]

4 MS. GORMAN: We're going to stop. [Heckling]  
5 We're going to stop and be respectful to each  
6 opinion. [Background conversation]

7 MR. PANTIN: Again, what I'm saying is you  
8 guys have the right to protest against what you  
9 fighting for, all right. I'm not denying that.  
10 I'm just stating that the school has done a lot  
11 for my kid and others that I've seen there. So,  
12 I applaud each and every one of your kids that  
13 spoken tonight and fighting for what they  
14 believe in. Okay, I have no problems with that.  
15 Have a good night. [Heckling]

16 MS. GORMAN: Aaron Whittey, Eleanor Chung,  
17 E. Dale Smith, and Wanda Williams.

18 MR. AARON WHITTEY: Hi there, I am a  
19 neighbor of a school - - and a friend of  
20 McKinney. I found that a little ironic that  
21 someone with a union jacket on would support  
22 something which is really about union - -, but I  
23 guess brotherhood is going to have - -. I - -  
24 neighbor, this is a great school. We have no  
25 problems, high school kids, wonderful. I've

1 taught in about 25 schools peripatetically, I  
2 know what good school this is. I actually do,  
3 I'm like everyone else; I do have a big problem  
4 with Charter Schools.

5 Now as parent pragmatically I probably  
6 wouldn't apply as my choice is unlimited, but I  
7 think Charter Schools are a disgusting way to  
8 try to educate our kids. Education by lottery,  
9 the only thing more disgusting is paying for  
10 education by the local property taxes. It  
11 should be the same funding for every school in  
12 the country, that's my opinion. With a big  
13 luxury tax on those people that's paying 40  
14 grand a year for their kids, put 40 grand back  
15 into the public schools. As far as I was  
16 concerned, we all know these private schools,  
17 Mayor Bloomberg children - - and probably most  
18 of his cohorts, they all have music and arts in  
19 their schools 'cause they know how important it  
20 is, you know.

21 I get really frustrated with the double  
22 standards, and now triple standards. Basically,  
23 as far as I can see it Charter is a reverse  
24 bussing. They used to bus kids to rich areas so  
25 poor kids could get the benefit of their

1 resources, now they're bussing middle class  
2 kids if we - - see who's on the buses. And now  
3 they're bringing them into poor schools and  
4 taking the resources. It's a disgrace.

5 I have a 4 year old, I'm looking for an  
6 elementary school next year in this zone. I am  
7 - - people from the Department of Ed say, oh,  
8 this you get priority. No, I only have the  
9 public schools only - - zone. The only - - PSA,  
10 - -. PS11, maybe. You understand? They have  
11 to - - them, so I'm told I get priority. No,  
12 this is District 20. So this is a real  
13 disgusting, in my opinion, abuse of public money  
14 and abuse of communities. I really think... I  
15 can't wait for Bloomberg to see the - - because  
16 this is his agenda. And clearly this is a done  
17 deal because Success are not here, they're not  
18 even here to defend themselves 'cause they know  
19 the result, and it's a real shame that that's  
20 how it works. [Applause]

21 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Aaron  
22 Whittey, Eleanor Chung. I'm sorry that was  
23 Aaron Whittey. Eleanor Chung, E. Dale Smith,  
24 Wanda Williams.

25 MS. ELEANOR CHUNG: Hi, I'm Ms. Chung, I'm

1 the art teacher at McKinney, and-- [Applause]  
2 So I've had this discussion with my students  
3 about what would happen to our school if the  
4 Charter School came in, and the first thing they  
5 say to me is where's the art room going? And my  
6 answer is I have no idea. We always talk about  
7 how much space we need and how we have to share  
8 this room through 6 through 12th grade, that's  
9 six grades. That's at least... You know my  
10 classes run from probably like 25 to 40 kids per  
11 class. So how am I supposed to store any of  
12 those materials for people? How are we going  
13 to get the kids to make the arts in, you know  
14 the spaces that you think are underutilized,  
15 it's not underutilized. We are overcrowded  
16 already in the third floor. I don't have room  
17 to store any of my plate, or somebody's  
18 ceramics. I have no sculpture space, and always  
19 trying to fight for a space. I'm trying to  
20 fight for wall space in the school. So, it's  
21 one of those things, logistics, you need to  
22 explain this to us. It wasn't planned out. I  
23 heard that the dance room and the instrumental  
24 room, and the vocal room would be accommodated  
25 for. What's going to happen to the arts? We

1 are a school for the arts not just, you know,  
2 one or the other. This isn't something that we  
3 pick and choose. My students come here because  
4 we have an arts program. So, that's all I have  
5 to say and - - [Applause].

6 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. We have  
7 five speakers left if they would all come  
8 forward. E. Dale Smith, Wanda Williams. I'm  
9 sorry number 18 I cannot read your name, I  
10 apologize. Kara Batanloy [phonetic], and  
11 Cassandra Austin-Townsley.

12 MR. E. DALE SMITH: [Audience yelling,  
13 applause] Hi. So, I am really glad to hear that  
14 the chorus, the vocal, the instrumental, the  
15 dance rooms will be saved. Unfortunately, I'm  
16 the theater teacher. When you go up to the  
17 third floor I have a double room. My room, one  
18 side is setup as black box theater. Other  
19 theater teachers often come here, we're part of  
20 the Arts Achieve Program. There's inter-  
21 visitations. We get visited a lot. [Applause]  
22 They step in and they gasp when they see my room  
23 because I have a black box theater. The other  
24 side of my room is setup like a traditional  
25 classroom. I have a library that has over 200

1 books in it. We have a timeline where we talk  
2 about everything from Medieval Liturgical Drama,  
3 to the avant-garde. My students could tell you  
4 about any of it, my middle schools students, and  
5 correct you when you were wrong. We have a  
6 fantastic program where our arts to teach  
7 students have scored higher than any other in  
8 the City, [applause] and we have 100 % percent  
9 passage of the exit exam in theater for seniors  
10 every year. That is because we have this space.  
11 To you it looks like two rooms where one isn't  
12 utilized. To my kids it looks like an  
13 opportunity to actually learn something instead  
14 of creating another excuse. [Applause] I do  
15 not understand how it benefits elementary school  
16 kids to walk around the halls where there's high  
17 school kids behaving as high school kids behave.  
18 Not that my kids don't know respect, but my kids  
19 while respectful are teenagers, and I don't see  
20 how that could possibly be a good idea. I  
21 really, really hope the implications that this  
22 is a done deal are the ideas of jaded New  
23 Yorkers and not reality, because if it's reality  
24 it's pretty, pretty sad. Thank you. [Applause]

25 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. Wanda Williams.

1 MS. WANDA WILLIAMS: Good evening, my name  
2 is Wanda Williams and I am the parent of a  
3 Special Needs child that attends Dr. Susan S.  
4 McKinney. And I want to say that Dr. Susan S.  
5 McKinney had been the greatest thing for my  
6 child, because my child is now, has been made  
7 free. And she has a thing for teachers here  
8 that is - - Ms. Beth, Mr. - -, Ms. Russell  
9 [phonetic], all of them - - for my child. And  
10 to bring Success Academy here would be a shame,  
11 because what's going to happen to the other  
12 children that need them. Now you tell the  
13 healthy children, you tell - - all children. And  
14 - - McKinney, 'cause they'll get trampled, and -  
15 -. And I don't want my child to loose what we  
16 have learned in McKinney. He's enrolled in - -  
17 . He's into band. He's playing tenor sax.  
18 And I'm very proud of my child. So - - do  
19 anything to deny - - and I - - in my power to  
20 keep Success Academy out of here. - - something  
21 and I am a - - and I believe in - - because - -  
22 so keep Success Academy out of Fort Greene. - -  
23 . [Applause]

24 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Number  
25 18, is number 18 here? I apologize I cannot read

1 your name. I'm sorry.

2 MR. KYLER COHEN [PHONETIC]: That's okay, I  
3 get that a lot. My name is Kyler Cohen, I'm a  
4 member of this wonderful community of Fort  
5 Greene. And I very much ditto the remarks of  
6 our Council Woman Latisha James [phonetic]. I  
7 happen to know, I should say I was reading the  
8 documents over here and I noticed that the  
9 reason why this Charter School wants to come  
10 over here is because of the fact that you're  
11 talking about upping utilization of the space.  
12 Well, the space is up, underutilized because the  
13 people was relocated. The people was relocated  
14 here. We cannot have these students in this art  
15 school move out of here. [applause] Let them  
16 tell - - of their consciousness grow in this  
17 art, and this culture, and this music. Arts is  
18 one of the greatest forms of mental development  
19 that you could have. [applause] - - creativity  
20 that you can have. But you want to take this  
21 out of our schools. You want to take this out  
22 of our communities, and for what? And for what?  
23 And for what and for whom? President Barak  
24 Obama said that we're not going back. We're  
25 not going back to a segregated time. We're not

1 going back to the time - - equal education - -  
2 equal because this is what the financial or the  
3 privatization program has done is giving us  
4 separate by unequal education. We have - -  
5 getting funding that should be going to our  
6 students, that should be going to these  
7 children, that should be going to teachers. - -  
8 public education. Now where is it going? It's  
9 going into the hands of private corporations.  
10 No, no, no, we don't need that. So I oppose  
11 this. I don't oppose Charter Schools, but I  
12 oppose them coming over here because this is  
13 nothing more than a part of the - - program  
14 that's been taking - - and we're just tired of  
15 it [applause]. - - people to come and not - -  
16 people to do - - business - - , the people in  
17 the surrounding area, the people in the  
18 community - - take our resources - -.

19 [Applause]

20 MS. GORMAN: Thank you very much. Cara  
21 Belton-Lloyd and Cassandra Austin-Townsley  
22 [phonetic]. Is Cara Belton-Lloyd here? Then  
23 our last speaker will be Cassandra Austin-  
24 Townsley.

25 MS. CASSANDRA AUSTIN-TOWNSLEY: - - Good

1 evening ladies and gentlemen, parents,  
2 students, I want to properly introduce myself.  
3 I'm Cassandra Austin-Townsley. I am Co-Chair or  
4 Vice-Chair, excuse me, for the Education  
5 Committee for the NAACP Brooklyn Branch, I'm not  
6 representing them this evening though. I am  
7 also - - Vice -President for - - Communication  
8 Education Council so I'll be seeing you again on  
9 - -. I am not representing them this evening, I  
10 am not on their - -, so I am speaking right now  
11 as a parent who has a student who just  
12 auditioned for the high school for Susan S.  
13 McKinney. [Applause] - - I have a son at the  
14 age of 13 years old who is a public speaker. -  
15 - entertainers, okay. So I can definitely - -  
16 I'm not opposed to Charter Schools they - - a  
17 wonderful jobs, okay. But I am opposed to Co-  
18 locations, and I'm opposed to you taking  
19 advantage of my community, okay. Now, I just  
20 have a few questions. You - - down, because - -  
21 I have never - - what gives you the right to  
22 accept applications for - - [Applause]

23 MS. GORMAN: Thank you. I want to thank all  
24 of our speakers. I do have a little bit of...  
25 [Background noise] I do have a little bit of

1 information to provide you [Background noise].  
2 - - at 6 p.m. at - - Fashion Industries - - at  
3 225 West - - Street - -. - - opportunity to  
4 speak - -.

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