



## **Public Comment Analysis**

Date: November 15, 2010

Topic: The Proposed Grade Expansion of P.S. 45 Horace E. Green (32K045) to a K-8 School

Date of Panel Vote: November 16, 2010

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## **Summary of Proposal**

P.S. 45 Horace E. Greene (32K045, or “P.S. 45”) is an existing elementary school located at 84 Schaefer Street, Brooklyn, NY, 11207, in Community School District 32. It currently serves students in Kindergarten through fifth grade and offers a Pre-Kindergarten program. P.S. 45 is located in two buildings: a main building (K045) and an annex building (K842).

On October 1, 2010, the New York City Department of Education (“DOE”) published an educational impact statement (“EIS”) describing a proposal to implement a “grade expansion,” that would result in P.S. 45 enrolling sixth graders in the 2011-2012 school year. P.S. 45 would then grow to serve seventh graders in the 2012-2013 school year and eighth graders in the 2013-2014 school year. Beginning in September 2013, P.S. 45 would complete its expansion, at which point it would enroll students in Kindergarten through eighth grade. The proposed grade expansion is not expected to affect the existing Pre-Kindergarten program at P.S. 45.

Currently, P.S. 45 students can attend their zoned middle school or apply to citywide, borough-wide or district-wide middle schools through the middle school choice process. Under this proposal, P.S. 45 students would retain all of those options, but they also would have the new option to remain at P.S. 45 for middle school. As a result, P.S. 45 students would have more options than in the past. While P.S. 45 fifth-graders would receive priority admission to the school’s middle-school grades, any remaining seats would be open to other rising sixth-graders, thereby increasing options for middle-school students throughout District 32.

The proposal to expand P.S. 45’s grade span was initiated by a grade expansion team composed of P.S. 45 teachers and administrators, and was made with the support of the school’s parents and community. In July, a team of P.S. 45 faculty and administration members submitted a formal application to expand the school. That application was supported by P.S. 45 parents and the broader community surrounding the school. This suggests a high level of satisfaction with the school and parent confidence that an expanded P.S. 45 would better suit the needs of their

children than existing middle school options within the District. The application was approved by the Department of Education (“DOE”) in September 2010.

### **Summary of Comments Received at the Joint Public Hearing**

A joint public hearing regarding this proposal was held at P.S. 45 on November 4, 2010. At that hearing, interested parties had an opportunity to provide input on the proposal. Approximately 80 members of the public attended the hearing, and 9 people spoke. Speakers made the following comments at the hearing:

1. A commenter suggested that the proposal’s approval would serve to build on the current success of the school by extending the length of time which students are served by the school.
2. Commenters expressed their belief that the proposal is “great” and will help their children succeed because, in their view and for many reasons, the school is an excellent organization.
3. Commenters suggested that they are eager for the proposed grade expansion because it would be convenient to them and their children by eliminating the need for a transition to a new school.
4. A commenter suggested that the proposal will be successful because of her efforts as a chapter leader to aid other teachers in their development to be good teachers, particularly middle school teachers.
5. A commenter suggested that upper grades should not be added to the school on the basis that such expansion would expose the younger children to difficult issues at a very early age. The commenter asserted that the DOE does not provide parents or the school with the resources to educate young children sufficiently about teenage pregnancy, gang violence, and drug use.

### **Summary of Issues Raised in Written and/or Oral Comments Submitted to the DOE**

No written or oral comments were received about this proposal.

### **Analysis of Issues Raised, Significant Alternatives Proposed and Changes Made to the Proposal**

Comments 1, 2, 3 and 4 express support for the proposal, and as such do not require a response.

With respect to comment 5, across the City, there are many K-8 schools where middle school age students share buildings with elementary age students; potential problems are mitigated by the planning and leadership of the principals involved.