

2013-2014 Panel for Educational Policy Meeting

Transcript of March 18, 2014 Meeting

Welcome

So I'd like to call the meeting to order.

Secretary Jackson Chase, you have an announcement.

Thank you, madam chairwoman.

Before we begin, I'd like to notify those in attendance, in accordance with recent city council for education, the meetings will now be live streamed over the internet for the convenience of those unable to attend.

A recording and transcript will be posted to the panel website following the meeting.

Please be aware that, while you are present at this meeting, your image or voice and the image or voice of your child may be live streamed over the internet, and it also may appear in the recording that will be posted to the panel website.

Thank you, madam secretary.

Can you please proceed are roll call.

Baez?

Present.

Fred Baptiste.

Present.

Debra Dillingham?

Present.

Camilla?

Present.

Robert Powell?

Present.

Robert Refkin?

Laura Zigmon?

Present.

Ariste?

Present.

Thank you.

Can everyone on the stage introduce themselves, please.

My name is Lorraine Grillo, president of school construction authority.

Kathleen Quinn, deputy chancellor for operations.

Laura Fahel, senior superintendent.

Ethan Marcus, student panel member.

Laura Zigmund, Manhattan borough appointee.

Camilla, Staten Island apintee.

Carmen Farina, chancellor.

Courtney Jackson Chase, secretary.

Vanessa young, mayoral appointee.

Debra Dillingham, Queensboro representative.

Milady Baez, mayoral appointee.

Baptiste, Brooklyn borough appointee.

David Ross, contracts and purchasing.

Thank you, everybody.

The first order of business this evening will be approving the minutes from the February 12th panel meeting.

Is there a motion to approve the minutes from the February 12th panel meeting?

So moved.

Is there a second?

Second.

Please raise your hand if you vote to approve the minutes.

They're unanimously approved.

Thank you, madam secretary.

Chancellor Farina, I believe you have some remarks you'd like to share with us.

Yes, thank you.

First of all, welcome to the borough of Brooklyn.

I'm a Brooklyn girl born, bred, and never moved.

I'm very proud of this place.

Also, some of the best -- one of the best high schools is now another kind of school, Bishop McDonnell.

It's actually right around the corner and where a lot of my family went to school.

I understand also there's some great restaurants.

If you get out in time for dinner, feel free to use some of them.

Welcome, and I thank you for coming out.

I'm glad to have this opportunity to address you.

I'm nearly three months in -- seems much longer than that -- and have passed my 25th school visit.

I've been across the five boroughs, seen passionate teachers, eager students, and dedicated principals.

Over that time, what we've seen in the news has largely overshadowed the wonderful things going on in classrooms.

So tonight I want to touch on some of those topics.

Like so many of you, we are concerned about co-locations.

When we started on January 1st, we inherited 49 co-locations, approved at the tail end of the previous administration.

I want to be very clear, this set of proposals represented a challenge we inherited.

It was handed over to us at a time when inflexible enrollment and implementation deadlines approached.

We listened to the feedback given throughout the joint public hearing process, reviewed it all, and made decisions based on sound public policy and what was best for our students and schools.

We had 49 decisions to make, and let me tell you, not a single one was easy, which was evidenced by all the people writing us letters and telling us their concerns.

But each situation, I assure you, was unique.

So we had to use clear, common sense criteria, to review these inherited proposals, which we did.

First, we don't believe new elementary schools should be opened on high school campuses.

While there are examples where it can be effective, overall, we've heard concerns, as well as elementary school concerns, that this is not a viable practice.

It also allows schools to share resources, especially if they're small schools, and it means that, instead of having no AP classes, if there are three high schools in a building, they can have that way of collaborating together.

Second, we want to ensure that all new schools have the resources they need to provide the services students deserve.

Very small schools under 250 students may have difficulty providing the range of support needed to serve our students effectively.

Third, we considered construction.

And if I didn't, Kathleen would remind me -- and Lorraine too.

We look closely at proposals that would have depended on significant capital work to create space for the new school or that required substantial dislocation to the existing schools within the building.

And, fourth -- and this is particularly personal to me -- we considered District 75 capacity.

We will not reduce seats for those students.

We also considered the thousands of families that would have been affected by rescinding every co-location we inherited.

It would have had a dramatic effect on families going through the enrollment process.

In all, we made decisions on 45 co-locations, approving 36 because working with school communities we were confident those plans could be implemented reasonably.

9 proposals were declined because they did not meet these common sense standards.

Contrary to some of the news reports -- and I'm so glad this is going live because maybe we'll finally get some of the story out -- 14 of 17 charter proposals were approved, and 5 out of 8 proposals that were approved from the Success Academy Network.

Since I know it's been in the news, let me address Success Academy 4 in Harlem specifically.

Just as we won't approve a co-location that will hurt special needs students at a traditional public school, we won't turn our backs on the children who attend this school.

We are working to find space for the kids at the school because we know that every child, every public school student is also our charge.

I want you to know that I'm listening closely, and we are working cooperatively with a number of charters right now on a range of shared priorities.

Collaboration is important, and I'm here tonight to tell you that moving forward, things are going to be different.

So here are my pledges to you.

This will be a new era of transparency.

With all future changes in building utilization, we've put in place new procedures that will bring communities into the process.

First, we've created a working group comprised of voices from across the city -- parents, educators and community leaders are going to examine the Blue Book, or the bible, or capacity and give us feedback on how it can better serve our families and schools.

Second, we will also do walk-throughs with senior leadership.

Every building will have a walk-through with a member of DOE senior staff.

That's never been part of the process.

Third, we will create more opportunities for engagement and discussion.

In the past, a joint public hearing, which occurred on a single night and largely limited how much feedback a family could provide, was the main engagement process.

Indeed, instead, we're going to improve our process by going above and beyond in the scope of A-190.

That means increases outreach to CECs, SLTs, CPAC and CSAC.

We really have alphabet soup at the Tweed Building.

As well as additional parent meetings before and after the Panel For Educational Policy votes.

Most of all, you'll see a major and welcome change in tone and approach.

We're here to listen, to collaborate, and to be your partner in change.

In fact, you'll see us develop new partnerships throughout the city to bring innovative ideas and solutions to our schools.

The past few weeks, I've met with 100 representatives of cultural institutions, nonprofits, universities to see how they can support us in a variety of ways.

I'm especially interested in how these institutions can share quality resources with us and how they can better support us.

Partnerships with a diverse group of stakeholders have the power to drive positive change and move our school system forward.

Most importantly, they're an opportunity to listen and learn from one another.

Thank you for being here, and I look forward to tonight's meeting where democracy will be in action.

Thank you.

Thank you, Chancellor Farina.

Before we get under way with the voting portion of the meeting, I would like to say a few words about public comment and rules of decorum at this meeting.

During the public comment period, speakers will be permitted up to two minutes to comment.

I ask that you try your best to keep to the two minutes to also respect your fellow speakers, and I will do my best to also adhere to those two minutes.

I will ask the secretary to call the speakers up from the sign-up sheets and to ensure that the speakers finish their comments in the allotted time.

We will call speakers up in groups of five.

If you have a green ticket, please proceed to the aisle to my far right.

Once your number is called.

And if you have a yellow ticket, please proceed to the aisle to my far left once your number is called.

There is a clock.

The clock will indicate the amount of time remaining for each speaker, and a light will indicate when there is one minute left in the allotted time.

So that speakers will know when their time is up.

At the conclusion of each speaker's time, we will move on to the next speaker.

If a speaker is not here when his or her name is called, we will move on to the next speaker.

Once we move on to the next speaker, you cannot redeem your place in the queue.

We're actually going to ask public advocate Leticia James to step to the mic.

I know there's some scheduling difficulties this evening.

She has to get to another meeting.

So we're going to hear from her now.

I'm also going to note for the record that panel member Robert Revkin has joined us.

Good evening, Chancellor Farina, members of the PEP.

I'm here tonight to speak on behalf of the children, whether they attend public schools or charter schools, they all deserve a quality education.

In particular, I'd like to speak regarding co-locations.

Not charter schools or public schools, but the process of co-locations and how school buildings are used.

I want to talk specifically about the condition, design, and utilization of school buildings that affect educational opportunity, student outcomes, and the health of the students and adults who share these buildings when co-locations happen in the absence of consultation with parents.

As you know in the previous administration, they rushed to approve a number of co-locations in the city of New York, which is why I facilitated a town hall meeting on March 8th, where I believe for the first time CEC members, PTA members, and parents shared together in one room their concerns and experiences of their co-located schools.

These organizations represented the entire city of New York, and this is what I heard.

Community member, no child should be educated in a trailer, and no co-location or expansion should be allowed until children are taken out of trailers.

It's important that the media hear from the 94 percent of the parents who are not happy with co-locations.

In this district, District 17, which I had the opportunity to represent in the city council, 33 percent of the schools in this district have co-locations.

There are four to six schools in a building, and the Department of Education under the previous administration sent an e-mail telling schools they were underutilized.

The process is deeply flawed.

That's why we believe co-located schools under the previous administration should not go forward until best practices and criteria are in place to ensure the DOE outcomes in are place in the affected communities by co-locations.

That is why March 8th we developed and unanimously voted on the following guiding principles.

Co-locations have caused a loss of crucial space to execute services for children with special needs who receive mandated services.

Many children -- and this is what I heard from the meeting we held two weeks ago -- now receive vital services in hallways, bathrooms, and closets.

That is why it is critical for the new administration to review and assess all new co-locations with the focus of space needed for state mandates services for children with individual educational plans, physical education, and hearts, which also have been diminished.

CECs, citywide council and special education and ELL decisions on co-locations should be respected and given greater weight.

Full and accurate educational impact statements should be completed that specify how co-locations impact mandated service.

The impact on classroom size, pre-K, special needs students, building code violations, school finances, enrollment implications, provide current and projected at scale grades.

Review the roll of the office of portfolio planning, require DOE to do a community educational needs assessment, and require the DOE panel on educational policy to be a more interactive body.

It's for those reasons and as a result of being directed by the CECs in the city of New York, the Office of Public Advocate, as you know, Madam Chancellor, has initiated litigation.

I received a letter today from a teacher at PS 811, and she said I want to address the misinformation appearing throughout the discussion of Harlem Success co-location in our building.

I was at the CEC meetings, and the actual proposal is to bring into the building more Harlem Success students and evict our special needs children.

The proposal affects, and we are losing three classrooms and mandated occupational and physical therapy rooms.

I have been working in this building since 2002.

When the entire 118th Street side was a school for special needs children.

It also goes on to say that in 2006 they were told that they were going to become a shared space with Harlem Success.

They indicated that they would have full access to a gym, cafeteria, playground, library, art room, music room, technology room, OT, occupational therapy, and physical therapy rooms, and one-half use of the auditorium.

It goes on to say that they lost their library.

They had to share the gym, the cafeteria and playgrounds.

They also go on to say that they lost a number of services, particularly mandated for special needs children.

The letter goes on and on.

It talks about the impact of locating a school without any standards.

I would urge the Department of Education to review their standards.

Thank you, and just so you know, that is the school that we pulled.
That is the school that we pulled.

Thank you.

I'm sure this teacher, Miss Lynn Manuel, thanks you.

And I thank you on her behalf and for all the students at the school.

And 811, for people who may not know, is a District 75 school serving autistic, learning disabled, and emotionally impaired kids.

So they do deserve all those facilities.

Thank you.

Thank you so much.

So the first voting item on the agenda is the consideration of the proposed fiscal year 2015 through 2019 Capital Plan.

Madam Secretary, could you please present the resolution.

The resolution is entitled resolution regarding approval of the proposed fiscal year 2015 through 2019 Capital Plan.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Is there a motion to adopt this resolution?

We're going to have public comment after we vote through the fiscal capital plan.

It will happen.

Is there a motion to adopt this resolution?

So moved.

Is there a second?

Second.

I'd now like to invite Deputy Chancellor Kathleen Grimm to provide an overview of the capital before we proceed to public comment.

Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

We're very excited to be here tonight to make this presentation.

This is actually the third really significant plan in terms of money being devoted both to increase our capacity and to improve what is really an aging infrastructure.

And I will say I get out to schools a great deal.

There's always more to do.

But I do believe our schools are in better shape than they have been in decades.

And I'm going to ask Lorraine Grillo, who is the president and CEO of our school construction authority, to give you the presentation on the specifics of this plan.

Lorraine?

Thank you.

Thank you, Deputy Chancellor.

Thank you, Chancellor Farina, and members of the panel.

As the Deputy Chancellor mentioned, this is the third capital plan that has made a tremendous investment into our schools.

The last two plans, we totalled almost \$25 billion in new schools and in renovating our existing buildings.

This plan calls for a \$12.8 billion investment.

To be clear, the plan that we introduced in November, the proposed plan we introduced in November was \$12 billion.

We've included \$800 million that we hope will be as a result of the New York state smart schools bond act, and we are actually very confident that that will happen.

So we've included it in this plan.

I'd like to just briefly give you some of the highlights of the proposed plan.

This plan calls for an investment of \$210 million for the creation of 2,100 new Pre-K seats.

In addition, there is \$310 million included for the restructuring of our existing buildings and the creation of 3,100 Pre-K seats within our existing buildings.

We also, as a result of the bond act, included \$490 million for the creation of approximately 4,900 seats to address class size reduction.

As you know, in the past we've been dealing with overcrowding.

We continue to do that, but we are now looking at a portion of this money focused on class size reduction.

The plan also funds the removal of all transportable classroom units.

Let me repeat that.

The plan also funds --

There should have been some applause here.
[Applause].

Thank you.

We also, in the last two plans, we focused on providing science facilities, access for all our high school students to science facilities.

We've really done that.

We've accomplished that.

So we are now moving on to our middle schools, and we want to provide all our middle school students access to science facilities.

The plan is broken down into three categories.

\$4.4 billion for capacity.

\$4.9 billion for capital investments in our existing buildings.

And then \$3.5 billion for mandated programs, which I will explain in more detail.

The plan proposes funding for 33,000 new seats.

That's based on our demographic evaluation, and it looks -- at projections out five and ten years.

We do see a need, identified need for 49,000 new seats.

This plan is funding 33,000 of those seats, 28,000 for PSIS and 3,100 in high schools.

We are also including 4,000 seats from the current plan to be rolled over in this plan.

What this does is keeps the new seat creation approximately at the same level as the current plan, and this is something we're very confident in accomplishing.

Under the new capacity section, as I said, \$3.3 billion will go towards new seats.

That's new schools, additions, or leased sites.

In addition, we have our pre-K initiative, which is creating 2,100 seats.

4,900 seats for class size reduction.

And \$400 million for facility replacements.

As you know, the department leases about 200 different buildings.

70 of those leases are due to expire within this capital plan.

We need to prepare for that.

Most often, we are able to renew those leases, but there's always the possibility that there will be a problem.

So we need to be prepared.

In our capital investment section, we are allocating \$3.3 billion towards capital improvement.

That's in our existing buildings, and this is as a result of the building condition assessment survey that we do every year.

We send a team of architects and engineers to every building to rate the major systems within the building.

We rate them 1 through 5, 5 being the worst.

And this particular allocation will address the 5's.

For the exterior projects, we're talking about roofs, Masonry, windows, and the like.

Interior, we're talking about basic life safety systems, like fire alarms, public address systems.

And then, of course, site improvements -- fencing, sidewalks, that sort of thing.

Again, one more time, transportable classroom units being removed, \$480 million.

And then athletic field upgrades, \$130 million.

Also, in capital investments, we've allocated \$525 million in the restructuring category, \$310 million of that is for pre-K.

We've also allocated \$100 million for safety.

That includes our video surveillance program.

Again, middle school science lab upgrades.

Accessibility, which we're providing additional accessible buildings throughout the city.

Upgrades to our physical fitness spaces, libraries, and auditoriums.

And then bathroom upgrades -- this is a pilot program.

We have a number of bathrooms in our school buildings throughout the city, while they are functional, they are not in great shape, and we'd like to pilot a program to upgrade those.

And then \$650 million for technology.

Under the mandated program category, we've allocated \$480 million for our PCB lighting replacement program.

As you know, we have made a commitment to replace all PCB lighting fixtures by December 2016.

We have allocated half the money in the current plan, and this will finish that project.

Boiler conversions, we are now converting approximately 125 boilers from the number 4 burning oil to a number 2, or to dual fuel.

And then \$650 million for our wrap-up insurance program, which is basically an owner controlled insurance program that insures our contractors.

And then \$650 million for prior plan completion.

Those are projects that began in the current plan that will be completed in the next plan.

Finally, these are basically the schedule for the plan approval.

In November of 2013, we initially proposed the plan.

Then we began our community engagement.

Each community education council had the ability to hold a public hearing, which we attended with parents and elected officials as well.

We attended 31 of the 34 CEC hearings.

In February we updated the plan based on comments from the CECs, and now we are presenting the plan to the panel.

And after the panel's vote, if you approve, it will then go to the mayor and city council for adoption as part of the budget.

Thank you, Lorraine.

Thank you, Deputy Chancellor Grimm.

The panel will now allow time for public comment on both the capital plan as well as other agenda items.

In addition, there will be -- in the agenda, there's consideration for the approval of proposals for significant changes in school utilization.

I'd first like to announce that we will be postponing the Q-11 proposal until the April 9th Panel For Educational Policy meeting, given the significant community feedback received by the DOE.

However, we still want to hear public comment tonight from any speakers wishing to discuss Q-11.

Though panel discussion will have to wait until April 9th, and we'll also continue to keep public comment via e-mail and telephone open through April 8th per standard practice.

So I'm going to actually ask Courtney to call -- or Madam Secretary to call.

Certainly.

We're going to call the elected officials and their representatives first for public comment. David Aguilero from Assemblywoman Katherine Nolan's office.

That's correct.

Last name was perfect.

Hello, folks.

David Aguilero, and I'm representing assemblywoman Kathy Nolan.

She's chairwoman of the Assembly Education Committee, and I'm actually going to read a statement.

I would like to thank both chancellor Carmen Farina and mayor Bill DiBlasio for the decision to delay the PEP vote on the decision to relocate kindergarten students from PS-11 to PS-81.

I would urge them to listen to the concerns of Congressman Crowley, my colleagues in government, parents, and the community and come back with better alternatives that works for all parties involved.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Vijay Chowdry representing Congressman Joe Crowley.

Hello, everyone.

Vijay Chowdry from Congressman Crowley's office.

Once again, would like to thank the parents for all their advocacy on behalf of their children because, without them, none of this would be possible.

I think there's a couple of folks here from Woodside, so thank you for coming out.

I as well have a statement from Congressman Crowley regarding the postponement of this vote.

Because of the significant information that they received from the community and the elected officials regarding the bussing policy of kids from Woodside to Astoria.

Thanks to the Department of Education and the mayor's office for delaying this vote on the proposal to bus over 250 children from Woodside to a school almost three miles away with very little accessible public transportation.

All alternatives, including the proposal by Assemblywoman Nolan, to temporarily use space at other venues, including St.

Teresa's school, for one year must be considered to ensure these young children receive a quality education without having to be uprooted from their home community.

I encourage the DOE and the school construction authority to use the next month to once again consider the serious concerns of the parents and elected officials and come up with a better solution that will not put our children at risk.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Next we'll call CEC members.

CEC member Tessa Wilson.

Good evening.

My name is Tessa Wilson.

I'm president of CEC 14, and I would like to take this opportunity to read a letter.

I'm the first reader.

There will be others who will follow up.

A letter to the public advocate James and council speaker Melissa.

Let us please begin by thanking you for your longstanding support of all public school students and all public school parents.

You have been outspoken supporters of parents and teachers, having key input into shaping the schools our children attend.

You have been outspoken supporters of reducing class size, alleviating school overcrowding, and working to implement our children's right to a sound, basic education.

Unfortunately, despite the change in administration, we continue to need your assistance in achieving these goals.

Under the administration of Mayor Bloomberg, the Department of Education pursued a reckless program of closing schools and starting new schools and charters and inserting them into existing buildings where schools were already located, oblivious to their impact on students and the existing school programs.

Under the DOE, the Bloomberg administration ignored nearly unanimous complaints of parents and the objections of administrators and teachers and approved hundreds of co-locations that caused more overcrowding, the loss of critical classroom space, as well as art, music, and science rooms, and caused children with disabilities and learning issues to be pushed out of the rooms required for their mandated services.

The creation of hundreds of new schools caused a sharp increase in administrative spending and bureaucracy, concurrent with a sharp decline in the number of classrooms and a sharp increase in class size.

In the last months of the Bloomberg administration, the DOE pushed through 45 co-locations, ignoring the input of communities and the harmful impact of these proposals on students and school communities.

We were thrilled when you, along with others, sued to void this massive round of co-locations and waited patiently as you did, with the hope that Mayor DiBlasio would reverse most, if not all of these plans.

We ask that you too support that.

There will be others who will read in my stead.

Ayesha Irvin?

I'm kind of continuing on with the letter.

I'm a speaker number 6.

Can you state your name for the record.

David GoldSmith, CEC 13 president.

I would like to also state as an FYI to all, those of us in District 13 remain puzzled by the collaborative process that supposedly went on with the new administration to examine the viability of the proposed co-location at 113.

Nor are DLT, CEC, the MS-113 community, the D-75 community, the PTAs, nor the superintendent were ever consulted as this deliberation process went on.

So we're a little concerned by that.

I go on with the letter.

The mayor has not done that and instead chose to go ahead with most of these proposals, many of which will have devastating effect on existing schools.

We oppose 35 of these proposals, 16 of which will be -- will push the building at or above 100 percent utilization, according to the DOE's own figures.

If the blue book formula was accurate and pegged to reasonable class sizes as well as allow sufficient space for special education services, art rooms, music, and science, and adequate access to lunch rooms, libraries, and gyms, every one of these co-locations would be seen as pushing the existing schools into unacceptably overcrowded conditions.

This is why 35 of these co-locations must be reversed.

In every case, they will either result in an increase in class size or make it impossible to reduce class size in the future.

Despite the fact that class sizes in many grades are now the largest in 15 years and the mayor has pledged to reduce them significantly by the end of his term.

Moreover, the state's highest court has concluded that the class sizes of New York City students must be lowered for them to receive their constitutional right to an adequate education.

I pass the mic.

Good evening.

My name is Dr.

Vera Daniels, CEC 28, and I continue the open letter.

First, let me preface by stating that the blatant act of the past administration to ignore the cry of the stakeholders of the district schools hopefully will not continue with this administration, and we certainly look forward to good things moving forward.

Let us say that this is why 35 of these co-locations must be reversed.

In every case, they will either result in an increase in class size or make it impossible to reduce class size in the future despite the fact that class sizes in many grades are now the largest in 15 years and the mayor has pledged to reduce them significantly by the end of his term.

Moreover, the State's highest court has concluded that class size in New York City students must be lowered for them to receive their constitutional right to adequate education.

They will hand the ability of the school to address the needs of students requiring special education services by providing adequate space and as well as the ability of the schools to address the learning needs of English language learning individuals.

They will also restrict the amount of space available to expand pre-K, an important program and one of this administrations to stop priorities because the DOE has in recent years redefined a full classroom size as only 500 square feet, down from 750 square feet.

The building code requires 35 square feet per kindergarten student and 20 square feet per student in other grades.

Many of the classrooms in these schools will trigger violations in the building code, risking children's safety.

In all cases, the addition of new schools require the addition of new unnecessary bureaucracy, an excessive number of administrative positions, when resources could be better used on instruction.

None of these demanding impacts on safety, learning conditions, and/or spending are reflected in the educational impact statements.

In cases involving co-location of charter schools, the allowance of rent-free space results in their receiving more funds per capita than noncharter schools, creating inequities within school buildings with two classes of students, one with smaller classes and more resources and programs, and others with larger classes and fewer resources and programs.

In all cases, the DOE has ignored the input of parents, community members, and community education councils who have opposed these co-locations for the reasons cited above.

And more, to be sure these proposals were approved only because the public hearing process was a sham.

The public input process was a sham.

And because the panel for education policy rubber stamps them without serious review.

In all cases, the voices of parents were not heard.

And this, ladies and gentlemen, is unlawful.

We urge you to proceed with your lawsuit and to see that the process going forward adheres to the law.

We pledge to join you in this effort.

Sincerely, Leona Hanson, John Egger, Brian Otava, Marvin Shelton, Tessa Wilson, Felicia Alexander, Heather, Aurora Perkins, Alicia Hagman, Sam Perazola, Eduardo Hernandez, Ph.D. Tamara Roe, Olivia roster, Ben Green, and so forth.

Thank you.

So is Ayesha Irvin Here?

Debra Alexander, CEC 30?

Hi, I'm Valerie Moore, CC 30, queens.

I'm here to speak about Q-11, which you took off the agenda today.

I ask the committee, first and foremost, to consider finding a way to hold off the expansion of PS-11 and keep the money allotted for this project intact to break ground the following year, as this would be less disruptive to the lives of the students and families of the PS-11 community.

If not possible, please consider bussing the older students, the fifth and sixth graders TORBGS a closer location, such as the Hunters Point Middle School, or Kathy Nolan's suggestion.

Hunters Point Middle School has the room for them as they do not have eighth graders online at that school for the whole of 2014.

The Office of Portfolio had trunkation of the sixth grade on the table in preliminary talks with the CEC, and I believe this to be a better solution to overcrowding when shipping off our younger students.

Finally, if you are to keep this plan, by bussing our smaller students, 250 kindergarten children, you need to give a way for parents to go to another school in our district.

Kindergarten Connect never advised parents that children being accepted to PS-11 would be bussed three miles away to another building.

Also, the admittance to this school does not inform the parents that first through third grades, there are co-teaching classes with over 45 students in each classroom in which I believe violates building codes and is not an ideal teaching environment for our students, as class size does matter.

Finally, please consider planning out a middle school for this area in Sunnyside and Woodside, queens, as overcrowding is a major concern in our area.

We are the second most largest overcrowded district in New York City, and we are busting at the seams due to our expanding population growth.

Thank you.

Sorry, if this is redundant.

Good evening, shiny new PP in Chancellor Farina.

My name is Debra Alexander, and I too am a shiny new member of CEC 30 in queens, and this is my first meeting as a community representative.

Speaking in advance of now next month's vote of construction of an annex to PS-11 in Woodside.

We believe in this long fought for project, but we would not be doing our job representing the entire community if we did not echo the politicians' concerns over the incoming kindergarten class being bussed three miles away to PS-171 in Astoria.

The simplest, most obvious solution would be to hold the funds one year, whereby the children can spend one displaced year at PS-339 in their own neighborhood before they could return to PS-11.

We have been told there is no way to hold the funds, and if the construction doesn't happen now, it will not proceed.

But school construction is routinely planned a year in advance.

If we earmarked funds for this project to begin in 2015, everyone wins.

Particularly disturbing, as Valerie said, the stakeholders most affected by this proposal are the incoming parents and students who largely have no idea that, when they selected PS-11 via Kindergarten Connect, that their children would not be attending the PS-11 building in Woodside.

When they receive their acceptance letter in a few weeks, they will go to that building to register their children, and find that information out for the first time.

At this late date, changing schools will be complicated.

As you consider this proposal, we ask for a commitment to begin construction one short year from now, and we respectfully ask that we find a way to contact the incoming kindergarten families.

We'd be happy to help with that.

And afford them the opportunity to change their kindergarten selections now if they so choose when there is still time.

I must tell you, on a personal note, how encouraging it is to be speaking to this panel knowing there's a real chance the outcome of our issues have not been predetermined.

Thank you for hearing and listening.

Thank you.

CEC member Eduardo Hernandez?

CEC member Valerie Williams?

Hi, I'm Valerie WIM.

First of all, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity because CECs do not get the chance to speak at hearings such as this, and Chancellor Farina, thank you for hearing us all.

I was an original member of the 811 public speaking, and we definitely applaud you in deciding not to take away children's classrooms for District 75.

I'm also a District 75 CEC member.

I have a daughter that is in a District 75 school.

I feel as though Portfolio, in particular, constantly ignored our cries, our conversation, and definitely what we wanted to say was why would you allow a charter school that made \$23.6 million last year to turn around and take classes from children that need it the most?

Why would you decide that is the best operation for someone to have.

And our children, most of them are nonverbal.

They don't have a voice.

They have parents that are working two and three jobs, making sure they're going to various therapies in order for them to also be successful.

Then again, why would the DOE side with something like that?

I would also like to adhere to the idea that the Governor has lost his mind as well.

And with him losing his mind, he definitely doesn't want another term in office because that \$800,000 that success gave to him, we can also take his away through election time.

CEC member Naila Rosario?

My name is Naila Rosario, and I'm a new member of CEC 15.

I'm glad to be here.

This is the first panel I present for, so I'm really glad for the opportunity.

I ask you to please reconsider these co-locations.

The process has not been transparent, and our public school parents deserve more, our children deserve more.

We need smaller sized classrooms.

Our districts are overcrowded as is, and I feel like they have not been fair to our children.

I really urge you to please proceed with this lawsuit and truly help the working parents.

Thank you.

Everyone who has a yellow ticket go to my left, which would be your right.

Everyone who has a green ticket, go to my right, which would be your left.

Please don't stand.

Work with the folks who do the coordination so you can sit and be comfortable.

It looks like we're ready on the yellow side.

So yellow ticket 1.

Are we ready on the yellow side?

Yellow ticket 1?

Good evening, Chancellor Farina.

This is a wonderful opportunity for me to be here.

It's also an emotional time for me.

I am Jacqueline Showry.

I've been a teacher with the Department of Education for the past 25 years.

I have dedicated my entire life.

My family members and my friends could attest to that.

My church members as well because I really believe in educating the whole child.

But there are crises, Chancellor Farina, that I'm begging you to listen to.

One, I have a beautiful, wonderful daughter, who I waited 42 years to have, but she has severe food allergies.

She is an excellent student.

She actually had all A's last semester.

But Chancellor Farina, the problem is when I tried to enroll her in the Department of Education, I had terrible difficulties.

Actually, I went through a horrific experience that I would never want any parent to experience.

I tried to enroll her at PS 235 in Brooklyn, and before the principal addressed me as a parent, when he heard that my child had severe food allergies, especially to fish, where she cannot eat, ingest, or inhale fish because of a life-threatening allergy, I don't know what his day was like, but the reaction was outrageous, and as a mother, it broke my heart, and it caused me to pray earnestly and beg God to help me stop being so afraid to speak out.

Help me to put to use the fact that I am a fighter for children.

And so I'm begging you, Chancellor, because the Board of Ed still has not addressed the issue of severe food allergies for children, and there is no policy that is in place, just as there are policies that now we have to address for children with severe allergies to peanuts.

We need to look at the fact that there are many children these days who have severe allergies to fish.

It is life-threatening, and as her mother, I do not want to see my child go through this.

I do not want her education to be stunted, her growth to be stunted as a result.

Thank you.

My child is now in a private school, other I'm still fighting to get the services for her.

Well, if you'll wait right there, someone will come down and get your information.

Just wait right there.

Thank you.

My name is Norman Scott.

Today I'm going to speak for myself with regard to charters.

I'm unequivocally opposed to charters in any form.

They should not exist.

I don't take the equivocal position that some are okay and some are not.

They are basically like global warming.

Just like global warming will destroy the earth, charters will destroy the public school system.

I believe people who say charters are okay are like global warming deniers.

Basically, I feel this department was rolled.

The day after DiBlasio got elected -- by the way, DiBlasio was elected with 71 percent of the vote on an anti-charter platform.

Joe Loda lost.

Joe Loda, who is pro charter, lost the election, and yet somehow it's being treated like he won. The fact is the day after the election, Eva Moskowitz started planning a little caper of closing the schools.

Imagine if you closed the schools, do you think you could have gotten a couple thousand people out?

I did.

It was called a snow day.

We should have had a rally in Albany that day.

Imagine that, if we said, oh, I'm closing the schools, not for the snow day, but for the rally.

And you were attacked for that, which is funny.

But Eva was allowed to get away with it, and I really feel that the political administration has allowed that to happen, has allowed her to tell her story.

Basically, you're giving -- you might try and find the 194 seats.

They're not interested in seats.

They're interested in the buildings.

It's about real estate.

Bloomberg allowed them into 20 -- over 20 buildings, and in essence, you're allowing them to a bunch more.

They are setting up little political operations in every part of the city and using the children and the parents for political means.

I think it must be clear, and I think people have to say that.

This is their game.

It's always been the game.

I'm not going to talk about the other charters at this point.

I'm only concerned with this one.

They eat the building.

They eat the classrooms.

They destroy the collaboration in the building, and basically you only took away three?

That's not enough.

I was at the Seth Low rallies, two Seth Low rallies in Bensonhurst, and they are outraged.

The basic choice is they do not want Eva Moskowitz to co-locate, and somehow the choice argument has been flipped on its head.

I believe this administration, which I believe has good will, has got to start taking a stand and explaining what this operation is all about.

Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Can we have the next speaker on the yellow side?

I just want to remind everyone you should be on the yellow side or the green side, whether you signed up for school proposals, general public comment, or to speak about the capital plan.

We are going to have everyone participate in public comment at this time.
So just make sure general public comment, capital plan, or school proposals, be on the right side with the color, and we're going to hear from everybody now.
Next speaker, yellow.

Good evening.

My name is Rachel Thompson, and I'm here as a parent of a child who attends PS-11, and as my CEC representatives already said, I thank you for listening to us, and I do really feel like we are finally going to be listened to and that this hopefully is not just a done deal and that there is still hope that we can try to find a better solution for the children at PS-11.

I'm urging the panel to work with the budget, with the SEA, to postpone this plan for only one year.

And the reasons are under this plan, kindergarteners and first graders will be bussed almost three miles for one year.

Those same students will then attend a closer co-located site in our neighborhood for one year.

Then some of those same students will return to PS-11's main building.

So that they will have attended three schools in the first three years of their early childhood education, not including wherever they went to pre-K.

The second troublesome problem with this plan is class size.

Miss Grillo spoke about reducing class size, but with this proposal, some of the classes at PS-11 are going to reach up to 45 students in the rooms.

New York City building code requires that students have 20 square foot of space each.

That plan, which is considered an official part of the proposal, clearly puts PS-11 in violation of New York City building code.

Beyond that, the classrooms at PS-11 are approximately 770 square feet each.

This comes from the facility's report and survey that is done of the school.

That means the maximum class size at PS-11 should be 38.

The principal has kindly promised to the parents of her community to put two teachers in the rooms with those 38 students, but regardless of having one or two teachers, the attention that those children are going to lose and the management of the distractions that we're asking 5, 6, and 7-year-olds to deal with, of being in a class that is so large, it defies educational common sense.

It also raises questions of safety.

For the past two years, kindergarten students at PS-11 have already been in co-teacher classes of beyond 40 students.

There is a parent here who will speak to that.

Already, that means that for the first three or four years of some of our children's education, they will be in classes that exceed 40 students.

It is educationally unconscionable for New York City to put forth a plan that continues that kind of class size effect.

In the name of educational common sense, we ask that the panel goes back and helps us to find another way to help PS-11, District 30, deal with the overcrowding that we're facing but in a way that doesn't sacrifice the education of the present children.

Thank you.

I understand CEC member Noah Gotbaum is with us.

Could he approach the microphones, please.

Thank you very much.

I'm Noah Gotbaum, vice president of CEC 33, parent of three, including one special needs son. First of all, I want to thank you, Chancellor Farina.

In rolling back the co-locations that you did, we really have to support you.

I want to speak out for the 98 kids at the Mickey Mantle school, kids who are now getting services in hallways and bathrooms.

I want to speak out for the 375 kids at PS-149, Sojourn of Truth, who are eating lunch at 11:00 a.m..

25 kids at Mickey Mantle are homeless.

51 kids at 149 are homeless, that's 59% of the student body there.

There are 18 special needs classes between the two schools, the two public schools.

That is 17 more than Eva Moskowitz has among all of her 22 schools.

Currently, at a capacity number which we all know is broken, gym is being provided for the Mickey Mantle kids in a classroom.

They have recess twice a week if they're lucky.

You turned around this co-location and said stop.

If you hadn't, one-third of Mickey Mantle would have been moved to points undetermined but certainly far away from where the school is right now, and this is a high performing school.

For those parents and those kids, they are working wonders.

Capacity on this co-location would have increased to 132 percent if you had not stopped this.

Already, the hallways are overcrowded.

It's unsustainable.

And we thank you for doing that.

Anyone who stands up and says this co-location needs to go forward is not thinking about all the kids.

But I would only say that you know, and everyone around this table and everyone in this room knows that the co-locations that were approved by Bloomberg in the 11th hour and 59th minute without any public support, based on capacity calculations which are corrupt, which do not provide room for special needs kids, need to be turned back.

They were wrong.

So I thank you for doing what you've done because it is the right thing.

But those 39 other co-locations, they really need to be reevaluated, and I hope you do so.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Next speaker, yellow side.

Hi, I'm Patty Crispino, I'm a UFT direct rep for District 79 and approximately 28 transfer schools.

I commend you.

I agree with you, elementary school students do not belong in a high school.

So I'm going to give you food for thought.

Should high school kids be in an adult ed building?

We have a co-location at mid-Manhattan Learning Center, where children 14 years old are in a building with grown adults.

I think, since there's a similarity here, that maybe that needs to be revisited, please.

In addition, I have Brownsville Academy is a school in Brooklyn that was successful in keeping Eva Moskowitz out.

Her people came in, and they looked at rooms and said, I'm taking this room, I'm taking that room.

It's not shared space.

It's whatever she wants.

That's not working together, and that's not keeping all children's needs in the same basket.

In addition, Brooklyn Academy and Bed Stuy Prep in the old boys school building, they have a charter school in there.

There's a meeting about the space as it grows that has to be given to the other school.

I ask you, reconsider looking at the lens that the person who said you have X amount of kids, you need X amount of space.

Their math was not accurate.

So they're coming in, and they're going to start taking more rooms based on judgment calls people made that were not accurate.

In addition, I ask that you consider the fact that transfer school students didn't make it in a regular school.

They need a different lens -- extra space, smaller class size, maybe they need a time-out room.

They need a whole different approach so that they succeed.

So I also ask that you look at the schools that have transfer schools and a co-location in them because it's not fair to the kids that we're trying to serve.

I also want to quickly share with you I worked in a school that had a co-location.

I watched the kids that came in got new lockers, new desks, new equipment.

I had kids look at me and say, Miss Crispino, how about us?

Why not us?

If you're going to co-locate and fix things, fix the whole building.

I don't agree personally with co-locations because the population that we had, they lied to parents, they lied to children and said, oh, well, your school is only going to have 125 kids in it.

What they forgot to say is they over -- the capacity that the building could really hold exceeded what we had to start with, but yet they were able to make space for these other schools.

So I ask that you reconsider all of these co-locations.

I ask that you look at the ones in my caseload, especially mid-Manhattan Center, where we have kids and adults in the same building, sharing bathrooms.

Thank you.

Next speaker on the green side.

My name is Joan Haymont.

I'm a science teacher at Clara Barton high school across the street and a movement of rank and file educators.

Coming tonight, I had a certain speech ready, and then I heard lovely things from Chancellor Farina that I only hope are true, and then I heard other things I know are not true.

Let me start a little bit.

For one, I don't like a lot of the way students and teachers are treated in this system.
I don't like the metal detectors that scan our black and Latino kids and not our middle class white kids.
I don't like a lot of conditions in our school that to me seem inherently racist because those kids don't matter much.
And I work in a school where school construction authority came in the last ten years -- I've only been there ten years although I've been teaching longer -- and built labs that break down.
I teach biotechnology in a lab where the lights go out.
We have a leak in a room, and they're not replaced.
We talked to custodians, yeah, they just patch it.
We need a new roof.
We need a lot of things.
We need a lot of things in these schools, and we need students and teachers to be treated decently.
We need teachers, when they complain not to be harassed out of the building and arrested, which is a couple people I know of.
People need to be treated differently.
We can't have principals harassing people out rather than working with them to help them teach better.
We can't have these things going on in our schools and all the horrible conditions.
Sorry, school construction authority, you've blown it in my book.
There are all these things that don't work that haven't been fixed.
I'm not even going to use my whole two minutes.
I'm too pissed.

Thank you.

Next speaker on the yellow side.
Next speaker on the green side.

Thank you.
Thank you, Chancellor Farina.
My name is Ken Coriss.
I teach at the Mickey Mantle school, and I want to thank you for the decision that's already been made.
Since I'm here, I'm an art teacher at the Mickey Mantle school, and I teach without an art room.
So if it's possible, I would ask that many -- well, I won't go there.
Just that, if we could have at the Mickey Mantle school, room for our therapists and room for music and art.
Thank you.

Are there any speakers left on the yellow side?

Good evening, once again, my name is Dr.
Vera Daniels.
I'd like to say thank you all for the promise for our failing district schools that are in existence.

I would like to say that, although we have been subjugated to a rogue and centralized administration that has failed our district schools that where we are still rendered underserved, under educated, and overpopulated.

A rogue past administration that has ignored the voices of the stakeholders, that have propagated divide between parents versus parent, students versus students, public schools versus charter schools.

We would like reform.

We ask that we want reform from an administration, and the hope lies with you all here this evening.

Where decisions are made and that are serving the communities effectively.

We no longer want blatant disregard for guides and also advocates such as the CECs that are there to help the community.

We also are asking the constitutional violations of our children's rights be adhered to by every, every written word of our Constitution.

We say that by clearly ignoring the community and the stakeholders is a clear message that says that our communities are incapable of self-governance, and that has got to stop.

We also say that this administration appears to be a promise for hope for our failing district, and I hold this administration responsible.

We ask for immediate reform where we can produce worthy citizens that will be worthy and capable of self, capable of helping their families, their community, and ultimately our country.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Next speaker on the green side.

My remarks are addressed to the panel, which is being asked to vote on this proposed capital budget.

My name is Josh Karen, a former president of CEC 6, the district in which more than 20 years ago Robert Jackson initiated the historic lawsuit known as the Campaign For Fiscal Equity.

I'm hopeful by cautiously observing this new administration and panel.

Therefore, I will pose three questions, which I distributed in writing.

I hope you've received.

Which pertain to the relationship of your impending vote on the capital budget to the inaccurate data in the so-called Blue Book regarding capacity and utilization of school buildings.

These questions challenge the appropriateness of your voting tonight on this capital budget since you do not have the data to determine the true extent of need.

Ignorance of which has led to such decisions as that of approving egregious co-locations.

A set of principles based on adherence to CFE must serve to guide this budget.

Will you attach to your resolution, one, a pledge to have the school construction authority establish at its mission the building of schools that provide for the full programmatic expression of the standards stipulated in the words of New York State courts in the CFE proceedings for a, quote, meaningful, sound, basic education.

Number two, to achieve this, will you assign to your newly created Blue Book task force the use of such standards to measure whether existing schools provide the space for provision of

such a curriculum and therefore in determining whether an existing building has room for another school to share its space.

Number three, how can you vote on a capital budget which is predicated, as were the past two, on data that does not show the true extent of overcrowding in schools but which will allow you to attempt to excuse its exacerbation from co-location decisions made in ignorance of these real decisions.

Co-locations are a symptom of refusal to comply with the constitutional mandates stipulated in the CFE resolution.

This inadequate and flawed capital budget, together with an inadequate operating budget will result in failure to provide the space necessary to provide the full range of programs required for meaningful education as the courts defined it.

As you heard previously, that pertains to class size, which the DOE has signed contracts of excellence that mandate what class sizes should be limited to, and it also pertains to violations of the consent decision of the 1970s in which there's a guarantee that ELL students have access to a wide array of ELL programs.

I ask the panel to not be mute, as its predecessors were the last 12 years, and to have a full discussion of this capital plan before you take a vote.

In the interim, attorney Michael Robell, who litigated the CFE case, has returned to state court in order to force compliance.

Please don't believe that that doesn't implicate you just because your big brother in Albany may tell you it's okay to non-comply.

Thank you.

Next speaker, yellow ticket.

Good evening.

My name is Francesco.

I'm a father to two lovely young sons in Staten Island and husband to a lovely young wife.

I would rather be there than here, but I was compelled to come up here.

I have, unfortunately, a lot of enemies in this room, some sitting up front.

The reason is because, when I became a parent a little over two years ago, I started raising concerns in my school, a school I taught in.

Thanks to everyone here who pays their taxes, you pay me to be a New York City teacher, and I thank you for that.

My family who's eating now without me thanks you for that.

Unfortunately, when I raised those concerns, the previous administration did not like that, or they set into motion certain things that, when you do speak up, whether you're a parent or a teacher, you get targeted.

I apologize to everyone here because you do pay your taxes, but I have not taught in front of a classroom in over 692 days.

Today I took my Bachelor's Degree in engineering from Poly, my Masters from Brooklyn College, and I filed papers in the nonexistent rubber rooms that don't exist anymore.

I guess you could say, hey, he's working.

At least it's not the rubber room, and he's not sleeping.

If you're happy with that, if you're happy with me getting paid \$75,000 a year to file papers, then I feel bad for you.

778 days ago is when they targeted me.

I was in school for a while before I was removed, and I made a decision when two investigators came into my classroom on February 28th to take my computers and come to my house and confiscate computers, I said, not on my watch.

Not in my neighborhood.

33 allegations against one teacher after he raised concerns, after one parent raised concerns.

Last week I was arrested because of allegations of this new administration -- and I don't know what's going on there, Miss Jackson Chase, what's going on with the legal department there.

You guys got to redo something.

I spent 33 hours in jail only to be dismissed and told, oops, yeah, that was a mistake.

I slept on the floor.

I don't see the American flag here, but I'm almost positive we're still in the United States.

And to treat educators and parents like that is appalling.

Some change needs to go on.

I know there's a little tension here.

Ms.

Grimm, I apologize.

I know I've been blogging a lot on my educator fights back.org.

People are reading it, and you keep giving me new material.

So what am I supposed to do?

I'd rather have a blog called Principal Portellos when I'm an administrator one day, but you keep me in the dark in exile.

Please consider protecting the people in front of the classroom, not going after them.

Thank you.

Next speaker on the green side.

Hello, my name is Lanie.

I'm the head of an organization called class size matters, and I'm going to speak about the capital plan.

I want to thank Chancellor Farina for repurposing the \$210 million that went to charter school construction, to put it into more space for pre-K.

I want to thank her also for putting \$490 million from a yet unpassed bond act providing more space for class size, which I think is incredibly important to most parents and is one of the few education reforms that we know for sure work to improve kids' opportunities.

But I am sad to say that this capital plan will provide none -- achieve none of the goals that is stated to say in the plan.

It will not eliminate overcrowding.

It will not eliminate the need for trailers, and it will not provide space for smaller classes.

Why do I say that?

First of all, there are 33,000 to 38,000 seats in the plan, depending on how you count them.

The enrollment projections from the DOE's own consultants say they're going to be an increase of 60,000 to 70,000 students over the next ten years, and the DOE's own utilization figures show that in only those districts over 100 percent officially, there's a need for at least 30,000

seats just to bring them down to 100 percent, and we know that there are many districts, including district 2, which are not officially above 100 percent, but where hundreds of kids get turned away from their zone school every year for kindergarten and hundreds of more students sit in trailers.

We also know, as the chancellor has admitted, that the Blue Book figures are incorrect, and they underestimate the actual level of overcrowding in our schools by not being pegged to appropriate class sizes, a full complement of art, music, and science rooms, access to lunch at a reasonable time, access to libraries and gyms, and the allowance for special needs kids to get their mandated services and dedicated spaces.

So I ask that two things happen.

There should be no more co-locations in this city going forward until, one, the Blue Book task force has come up with its recommendations and they have been put into practice.

And number two, for the first time in over ten years, we need an honest, credible, and transparent needs assessment from the DOE about how many seats we really do need in order to achieve all these goals.

We have not had one for at least 20 years, and it's long past time that we, the public, deserve an honest, transparent needs assessment.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Good evening, I'm Alice O'Neal, the UFT high school representative.

Thank you so much on behalf of the chapter of Murray Berkstrom, on behalf of the incoming CTE high schools, most of all, thank you on behalf of the children.

I can say -- I can give you three tangible examples tonight as to why co-location of Eva Moskowitz's organizations do not work.

I was at one yesterday morning at the graphics campus.

I will not tolerate students from the business and sports school being told that they have to go down the stairwell during the fire drill after her organization's students.

Yesterday afternoon I was at the Brandeis campus.

I will not tolerate -- remember I say "I" on behalf of we, the members and students there.

At the Brandeis campus, we will not tolerate that, when staff and students tried to enter a building, they are ignored, and they are blocked still.

That will not be tolerated.

It will not be tolerated that the students of Global Learning Collaborative have to wait before descending a stairwell to go to lunch so students from her organization -- notice I don't say school -- organization go to lunch.

Today I was at the Washington Irving campus.

We will not tolerate the adults being spoken to as though they are dirt.

Actually, dirt is treated better than the way the adults in the six high schools within the Washington Irving campus are treated.

And not just Washington Irving International High School.

And I'll be honest with you, I'm not stopped in either location, in any of those three campuses, because people think I have a 5-year-old there.

That is always wrong.

I will not tolerate -- I happen to be white.

I'm not scanned because someone thinks I'm part of her organization.

No, I'm not.

I am still a public high school teacher every single morning at my home school, M-288.

I see that I'm out of time.

Once again, the chapter of Murray Bertram thank you.

A 100 percent Latino transfer school was not shut out of Brandeis.

Bill DiBlasio, before he was mayor, was out on the street with us.

Thank you for your time.

You're listening, you're looking at me.

It's a new day.

Thank you very much.

Good evening.

My name is Rosalee friend.

I'm a retired representative of the national grass roots group, Save Our Schools.

I would like to say I'm very happy to have Carmen Farina as our chancellor because she was our reading coordinator when my daughter entered school.

I have a good impression since way back then.

However, what has happened since my daughter was a little kid is denying children the opportunities she had, and I'm speaking specifically of the influence of large corporations on the political process and the school administrations.

In particular, I and my organization have the old fashioned notion that schools should be for the child to grow and develop, to develop intellectually, emotionally, and injustice as well.

We have to set a model for the children in equity.

We have to provide the same services for all children.

The charters should not be allowed -- if any charter that harasses out or counsels out a child should not get one penny of public funding.

Any charter that does not serve English language learners, that does not serve children with special needs should not get one penny of public funding.

Any school that claims that any group of children is better than another school should be censored and reprimanded.

And any school that's not willing to serve a kid that's ornery, you know, the kid that's ornery when he's little, you can counsel him so he's not a problem when he's older.

Kicking him out is not serving the public.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Are there any speakers remaining with yellow tickets?

Next speaker with green ticket.

I'm going to pass something up to the panel.

Hello, Chancellor.

I arrived just in time -- it was indeed uplifting to hear the end of your opening statement.

We are all very hopeful for this change in the administration.

My name is Tricia Joyce.

I'm the chair of the Youth and Education Committee of community board 1.

I'm here tonight to talk about the capital plan vis-a-vis our community district as well as city-wide.

I have been on the community board and also the chair of the PS 234 overcrowding committee since 2008.

I've appeared in front of this panel many times to deaf ears.

Under the past administration, we suffered neglect downtown in terms of school planning that really I couldn't believe.

I was driven to serve by what I witnessed in lower Manhattan.

Our mayor set out to revitalize this community district after September 11th.

Planning and signing the building permits of over 23,000 apartments.

I've passed you some data that we ran, and just for comparison's sake, the growth in Community Board 1 in the past decade is at 78 percent while the growth in Manhattan was at 7.

I witness witnessed buildings in the financial district that were made for finance convert without any discussion about infrastructure -- 900, 1,200, 700 apartments apiece.

There was no conversation about school building and parks and recreation.

I watched one after the other as these buildings went up, and the louder we screamed, the less happened.

It will interest you to know -- you may know already -- but the parents of Community Board 1, and I'll speak as quickly as I can, but it won't make any sense to tell a third of this story.

The parents of this neighborhood and our elected officials cited all five of our schools.

The DOE did not cite any of them.

In fact, they did not want to build any of them because they said we didn't need them.

So as we dug deeper, we found that the planning methods used by the SCA and the DOE are perfectly fine when you're looking at migrating populations within the city.

They are absolutely nonfunctional when looking at deliberate development of this size.

If you look to Levittown, which is almost as big as, that included 11 elementary schools.

The financial district has grown 230 percent, making it the largest growing community in the United States of America, and yet no schools were planned.

I don't know how anybody could think that that was okay.

With the two schools that we did get because of Sheldon Silver and Community Board 1 together are not the size of PS 234, our anchor school.

In addition to this, in 2009, because of the recession, we're told, David Steiner gave us a pass on the class size reduction that came with the contracts for excellence.

At the very same time, he also cut my school's budget by \$1 million.

I'm going to ask that you sum up.

I am trying to wrap up.

Thank you.

What happened is that now principals are motivated to take more sections than our schools can handle.

We cannot get to any of these things without saying to ourselves, how are we planning our schools?

This is not functional.

We have Hudson Yards coming up, we have NYU.

We cannot afford to make this mistake again.

We also cannot be lied to again.

The DOE told us we were getting 1,000 seats in this capital plan.

They then retracted it to 456, saying that, oh, the other 456 are north of Canal at Hudson Yards, which the developer at that development paid for.

This lack of transparency really has to stop.

I'm very hopeful it will stop with this administration.

We need those seats restored.

As you will see in the document I've sent you, we have years and years ahead of us.

Thank you very much.

I really ask you to take a look at them.

Thank you so much.

Thank you.

Next speaker with a green ticket.

Good evening.

My name is Visham, and I'm very thankful to see the focus of this panel.

At least you're not texting, and I'm very happy.

I am here to represent Richmond Hill high school.

Richard MOND Hill high school is a special co-location because you're bringing in -- you're trying to bring in a new school at the expense of my current school.

Richmond Hill High School is now recovering from a past poor administration.

Massive overcrowding, multiple schedules, and poor attendance.

Currently, we have controlled that, and we are going forward.

At the last PEP meeting in the past administration in December, this August panel voted 7-4 to oppose the annexing of Richmond Hill High School annex.

I came up, and I spoke to the chancellor, and I called repeatedly to the offices that are important so that they can listen to our voice.

Currently, you are surrounded by the same set of people that were making the decision from the past administration.

You are not listening to us.

We are the voices.

We are the parents.

We are the community.

Sarah Kaufman falsely submitted data about the utilization using the TCU information, and I challenge her publicly on that.

We have currently 22 trailers that are placed in our sports facility.

So my community and all the children in that school are denied access to a critical entity.

Now, in addition to that, we're looking out to have a meeting with you, chancellor.

You come with a very good background, and everyone here spoke largely and loudly about who you are.

We need to have you in our community to listen to what we have to say.

Since we have been asking, we have solicited Senator Sanders to ask you to come to our community because it seems as though our voice is not loud enough.

I have an invitation that I would like to set out to you so that it is seen here that there is an opportunity for you to be part of us.

I'll leave it with one of our attendants here.

Thank you.

Now, you're taking community assets and giving it away to all of queens at the expense of the children in Richmond Hill High School.

We need to make sure that we don't have to take the law and go to court to get our voices heard.

Richmond Hill High School is a signatory to the letter that was read.

We are trying to avoid going to court.

We're looking to have a conversation.

Please, facilitators, I would like to take this opportunity of saying thank you to this panel because the last time the representative from the borough listened and they made the right decision.

The people from the administration also voted as a bloc, and they went 7-4.

Please do what is right.

Thank you very much.

Thank you.

Next speaker with a green ticket.

Hi, my name is Debra McGowan, and I'm a parent of a kindergartener at PS 11.

I do want to thank you for delaying the vote for next month.

I do have some solutions that I would like to present.

One of them is to look into St.

Teresa's for leasing in District 24, which is much closer than three miles away at 171.

Unlike the CEC, I am not an advocate for delaying a year.

I'd like you to proceed with providing an annex.

To highlight the reason why is I am a kindergarten parent who didn't know that her child was allowed to attend PS 11 until the first week of August.

We got wait listed at five schools, and I also am not against charter schools because that was a great hope and opportunity for maybe my child to have an education in New York City.

Overcrowding has been going on in district 30 and 24 for the last 30 years.

I do have some site proposals for our neighborhood, for our middle school zone that does not consistently -- does not have a middle school in it.

We are north of Queens Boulevard in District 30 and south of Sunnyside Yards.

Both these major expressways or transportation things isolate us in a sense.

Traditionally, the smaller -- we didn't have as many students in our neighborhood because our neighborhood aged, they would go to 25, IS 125.

That school is at 2,500 students, asking for an addition of 600.
We have new elementary schools being built in our area that won't even -- that will fill that 600 in no time at all.
So we desperately, desperately, desperately need seats in our neighborhood.
And I have a site map with locations for you to look at.
One of them is very, very viable.
It's a flat lot.
I have owners' information on here that you can call.
There's another building cross corner from it that's not in our historical district.
It's 26,000 square feet, two stories.
It could easily be accommodated into a middle school or an annex.
The flat lot is in a tree lined neighborhood.
Thank you.

Thank you very much.

Stop right there.
I have to say something.
If more citizens did the homework on real estate for us, life would be a lot easier.
So could you please give me your site map or leave it with somebody.
This is so we don't have to pay Corcoran to do the job.

Next speaker with a green ticket, please.

Good evening.
My name is Mary Melendez, and I'm a public school charter student.
I took the trip down here tonight on not only behalf of my daughter but all students.
Charter schools are public schools too.
They are serving 70,000 New York City children and doing a great job.
All public school students, charters and traditional, should be treated equally.
We need to ensure as a city that we do what is right and fair for our kids.
Right now New York City charter schools are uncertain about their future, and I stand before you supporting our Governor and legislators in New York State.
All we want and deserve is equal funding and equal access to free space in public buildings.
I, along with many other parents, support what the state legislators is considering.
It will help level the academic success and resources.
Statements you have made that you are willing to meet and work with public charter school parents make me very hopeful, and I look forward to that.
Thank you very much.

Speaker with a green ticket.
There should be one speaker remaining with a green ticket.

Hello, good evening.
My name is Shimona Kirkland, and I would like to first say we are all many minds with one mission.

That mission is to ensure that every child in New York City has access to a high quality education no matter what school they are attending.

I am a parent of a child in a traditional public school as well as a child in a public charter school.

So I am a parent who believes in options and believes in choice.

I'm also a resident of East New York and have lived in Brownsville my whole entire life.

So I know the state of education in this city, and I know what it has been over the last 30 years.

As a parent, I thought that it was my duty to ensure that my children were going to go to schools that were going to prepare them for the world and also to compete in a very competitive world globally and not just locally.

I beg this city to come together as one to ensure that everything that ensures that every child, every child in New York City -- I am not only speaking today for Shaniya and Kavon.

I am speaking for my niece, my nephews, my neighbors.

Both my brothers graduated with IEP diplomas.

They were special needs.

I have two nephews that are D-75 students.

I speak about excellence for all.

If my children only succeed, it means nothing for the rest of my community.

If my children only gain, it means nothing for rest of my community.

I have to fight for all.

I wish our city would come together and make decisions that is best for everyone.

That means we're all coming together.

It means we're all invited to the meetings.

It means we're all talking together because it's about us.

I always say conduct reflects leadership.

As the leader, we need to show our children that unity will prevail all.

Thank you.

Excuse me.

Miss Kirkland?

I'm going to take you on the tour around the city that I have to do, and you can introduce me with that speech.

Thank you.

We have three remaining speakers who signed up.

Eduardo Hernandez from CEC 8, Paula Simpson.

These will be our final speakers.

Good evening.

I'm Dr.

Eduardo Hernandez, the treasurer for CEC 8.

Chancellor Farina, congratulations on your appointment, but it is sad that we now have to spend our time and energy cleaning up the mess from the previous administration.

The issues of the charter schools, don't get me wrong.

I have nothing wrong with that system.

I think it might be a good system.

It's the implementation of the system what is wrong.

You cannot come into a school that is already overcrowded and just displace the local kids for the reason they're not performing.

We don't even know why they're not performing.

I haven't heard of a commission being created to analyze the reason why the schools are failing.

The region started by just closing schools, opening three, four schools in the same building.

It's a hit or miss.

Some schools thrived, most of them didn't and had to be shut down again and reopened.

So nobody really knows.

Nobody has ever bothered to find out why.

Now charter schools came along, and we have all forgotten the reason why they created it originally.

It was supposed to be created to generate a model to be used in public schools.

Somehow that was forgotten.

And the special interests got involved, and now they just want to take over the schools.

At school IS 131 where my daughter is attending, they're bringing a primary school to the middle schools.

How has that helped the kids, the middle school kids graduate from primary schools in our district?

There's already a shortage of middle schools.

We had three schools in the area, two of them are failing.

So how does bringing a primary school to a middle school take the resources?

It's not a co-location.

It is a displacement.

For every kid that's coming into the charter school, I say for a K through 5, the middle school is losing seats.

At the five-year plan, every kid that's coming into the charter school is on the back of the middle school kids.

So where are these kids going?

You think a metro card is going to solve the problem?

No, it's not.

So that's something that needs to -- that's IS 131, if you haven't noticed.

That's the problem.

It's not a co-location.

It's a displacement of the local schools.

This relationship between charter schools and public schools should be a symbiotic relationship.

They come in working together to help each other.

Some charter schools have decided to become a cancer and kill the host, and just because you have made good on your test scores doesn't give you the right to take away the education of the other kids in the other schools.

Thank you.

Paula Cunningham or Ed Hobson, either one.

Hi, everybody.

I'm Ed Hobson.

Hi, Chancellor.

I guess mostly -- I'll keep this pretty brief.

I mostly just wanted to say thank you.

I'm a special education at PS 11 and at 149.

I support a group and an inclusion program there.

I spoke before the board at a couple times before, and I mentioned that the rooms that were in question before were rooms that I pulled students out of to take them into 149 into the general education population, and by saving those rooms now, I still have those children to draw from. It's an important part of that school.

149, I'm in a lot, and I know it's a struggling school that has a lot of needs and very little resources, as opposed to the other schools that are co-located there.

One of the things about the students that I take upstairs into the general Ed population, I think the assumption often is that they're gaining so much from being in that general ed school, my experience has been that the general ed students gain much more from having them there, and because of what you did, that's going to continue now.

I really want to thank you for that.

I think I probably should stop there because that's really why I came, to say thank you, but I just want to mention one more thing about co-location.

I also am a part of the safety team there, the building response team, and I spend a great deal of time collaborating with all the entities in the building.

When I do that, I try to put aside my biases with regard to who's getting favoritism and who isn't, and I think safety is an issue, especially given the climate that we've been in of late.

That's enormously important with regard to all the students in the building.

My experience has been that the general education school 149, P 811M show up at the table to collaborate.

We're in contact constantly with both the APs and the principals of both those schools whereas for the co-location of HSA, I really don't know who represents that position.

There's a facilitator -- a facilities manager, I guess, who does a wonderful job and is very open and collaborates wonderfully, but it's odd to me that there isn't somebody I can go to that represents the same position that my principal and my AP do and that I've never ever been introduced to that person.

There's six of us on that safety committee.

That's strange to me, and I think it's like that on purpose on their part.

So I just wanted to bring that up.

Again, I came to say thank you.

Thank you.

Paula Cunningham?

I want to say thank you also.

Really, all these thank yous are going to my head.

That's good because you deserve it because you're going to have to be Hercules holding up the world compared to all of these things that are coming down on you, and it's so unfair.

I mean, I can't believe that Albany is trying to take over our school system now and make certain decisions.

You are a tough lady.

And you're an incredible educator.

I want to say thank you.

And thank you for my little students who are severely emotionally disturbed and autistic that are the voiceless at 811M.

That people would say could go anywhere.

No, they can't go anywhere.

In this country, we're having a debate.

I'm not against charter schools.

I want everyone to have a wonderful education.

I want everyone to have wonderful things and supplies and technology, but we're becoming a tale of two cities across the nation.

So many of our public schoolchildren and 94 percent, very few can get into a charter school.

They're like the little match children at the window looking in at all the wonderful things.

I want everyone to have wonderful things.

But we have to think about all of our children, truly all.

Some people say they're caring about all the children, but they're just caring about their children, and I want to thank you, Chancellor, for caring about all the children.

Thank you.

I understand that we are joined by CEC member Laurie Frey.

Former CEC member, but I'm speaking on behalf of my husband, who is CCHS appointed by CCSE.

I apologize that I didn't get here to sign up in a more timely fashion.

I have quick comments.

You've heard the stories.

We know the impact.

We know the harm is real.

I'm here tonight to ask this entity, this panel to use the authority and power that you have to take action and begin to remedy the inequitable co-locations that we have at PS 149, 811M 149, and other schools.

I have a cheat sheet of some of the issues that we have with our implementation of the 2011 footprint in January.

I mentioned we have a 2009 instructional footprint.

We have a 2011 instructional footprint.

I think, when you look at the documents, you will see that most of these inequitable co-locations happened under the 2011 footprint.

Why?

That footprint essentially slashed by one half the number of rooms allocated for administration and support services.

Guess who got squeezed out?

Guess who has services -- speech, counseling, whatever -- in a hallway, behind a curtain on the stage, behind a partition?

Not a delivery service area that will provide timely and effective services as the IDEA calls for. I'll leave the rest of the cheating points, or whatever, my parents for you, chancellor.

I'm sorry I don't have a copy for everyone.

I have an old, feeble desktop printer.

I want to point out my final point.

Double dipping is an unfair practice, and that could easily be done, remediated without worrying about 2009, 2011.

We have co-locations in multisites being allocated at each site, a full suite of administrative rooms.

Not fair, double dipping.

Thank you.

We will now hear comments from panel members.

Are there any questions or concerns regarding the proposed fiscal year 2015 through 2019 capital plan?

Yes, I have a question with regards to the mandated programs.

We have \$3.5 billion allocated for the various categories.

Should that allocation be made?

Where do we stand exactly in terms of will this remediate all problems or not and not appear on the next plan, or is there still work to be done?

For example, the PCB remediation will be completed.

So that will not show up in the next plan.

The boilers will continue because we have 1,200 buildings, and we are moving forward with the plan, which is basically DEP's plan to convert all boilers by the year 2030.

So this project -- this process will continue.

And with the \$650 million -- all right.

So basically, the \$650 million, that will complete all the plans from the fifth plan?

Yes.

So that should not show up on the next plan either, right?

Right.

Are there any other questions?

Actually, I know this plan, the goal is to remove all the trailers.

How many seats are -- classroom seats are in trailers?

There are about 700 students in the trailers -- 7,000.
I'm sorry.
I apologize.
I wish 700.

So if this plan, which is for roughly 32,000 seats and 7,000 of them.
So it's really 25,000 -- we're eliminating 7,000 and creating -- I'm concerned that it's really not going to be -- make that 33,000 seats beyond what we already have.

It's not something where we just snap our fingers.

No, I understand.

Absolutely right.
We have established an internal multi-departmental subcommittee to look at all of the locations and to create a multi-year plan.
First, where are the TCUs that we can eliminate in the first year or the first 18 months of the plan?

That will be the low hanging fruit.

The other -- removing the others, you're absolutely right, is going to take, not just time, but planning because we have to figure out through a combination of whether it's constructing new seats, whether it's new seats that are coming on from the old plan, whether it's perhaps rezoning that might be going on with CECs, whether it's enrollment shifts that we might be seeing in some areas.

And might we hit a brick wall on some of them?

I hope not, but anything's possible.

It is a very complicated process.

It's certainly going to take us probably most of the plan to work through it.

And in the end, will every one of them be eliminated?

I can't promise that.

But at least we have the funding and we have the aspiration to go through that process, and that is in motion right now.

But it is complicated.

I do have a question.

I see where this \$750 million being allocated for the upgrade of the boilers in 125 schools.

Will that -- are we going to vote on allocating the money and then the process of bidding for the job goes to various vendors?

Or is this going to -- I don't have anything against them.

Is this one contract going to Keyspan?

No, absolutely not.

The process is that you will vote for the funding for the plan, the allocations.

The projects themselves will be designed and then go through a public bidding process.

So, no, none of these will be given to one contractor, no.

Thank you.

So when you mention access, can you just clarify what you mean by that?
Money in the budget for that.

Accessibility.

In a perfect world, every one of our buildings would be totally and functionally accessible. They're not, we know they're not.

We do have in almost every single district at least three elementary schools, two middle schools, and I'm not sure if it's two or three high schools that are accessible.

But what we have found is that, as we look a little more closely, especially at the elementary school level, we can probably do a better job of making sure the districts have better coverage. You know, it doesn't mean every district should have exactly the same number.

Bigger districts maybe should have more.

We need to work with our colleagues who work with our children with special disabilities to see where the enrollment might be.

So this year we allocated additional funding to do a pilot to see what we could do, maybe not to make a building totally accessible, but to perhaps make it functionally accessible for a child who would then be able to go to the first floor, have a bathroom available, be able to participate in all of the services.

We're very excited about it, and I hope not only do we get some of our facilities upgraded for accessibility, that also maybe we'll learn some lessons and best practices to apply going forward.

Kathleen, can I add something?

The word that we use terminology, because we're all about jargon, is barrier free.

The problem with not having barrier free, the kids who most need not to travel often can go to their zoned schools.

So the premise is also more barrier free schools we have within certain areas, the less traveling our most handicapped kids -- the less traveling most handicapped have to do.

So that's really the idea.

Just a quick question and comment.

First, under the capital investment for the \$4.9 billion, it says \$650 million for technology.

Could you specify what exactly you mean by technology, like in terms of is it smart boards?

Is it computers?

What exactly?

Primarily, it is the infrastructure in our schools.

It is bringing not just our buildings, but our classrooms up to date in terms of bandwidth, wireless capacity, so that when we get the -- when we have the equipment, it works, and it works really well.

Exactly.

So the bulk of this money goes into the system-wide infrastructure investments that you really don't see at the end of the day that are so vital.

It's the non-sexy expenditure.

That's it.

And also, I think a piece of this is that many local officials love to give us Rizzo grants, which is great, because they give us the stuff, but no one wants to give you the nonsexy stuff because you don't see it and you can't put a plaque on the window.

I think it's important to have us do a combination of the nonsexy and let other people do the sexy stuff.

So you see the sexy technology expenditures coming through the contracts that I would present to you.

What you see now is the capital.

That's not the sexy stuff.

And sorry, just to finish with one comment.

It's a little off topic.

I just want to say that I did highly support what Chancellor Farina did in terms of the nine withdrawals for the co-locations, but I do believe that -- I was a little disappointed to hear the rest were not withdrawn.

I do believe the others should ultimately be reconsidered.

I know this has been said, but I just want to reiterate they should be reconsidered to be withdrawn.

Just one more thing.

This may be a little off topic.

But I just want to take the opportunity to say this because I've been thinking about it all week in my day job.

It didn't really come up.

This past week was high school admissions decision week.

We've been talking about the young kids.

Teenagers are not as cute and cuddly.

Just to point this out, I don't know what the conclusion is, but I know it represents something that's not good.

It didn't happen on your watch.

It's just -- and I understand that.

But round two, the supplemental round, where students who did not get matched in the main round, or students who were unhappy with their match, they go into.

Most people don't look through that list.

I do to advise parents.

Just roughly counting, at least 50 to 60 of the high schools have more than half their seats unfilled after the main round.

A bunch of them have not filled any seats in their main round.

That's a reflection of people not ranking them and wanting to go there.
Now these seats will be filled by students who didn't rank them the first time.
I'm sure there's a few anomalies where it's a school that has a blip one year.

That happens every year.

But the bulk of them reflect that -- this is not anti-small school.

I have a child in a small school.

The small schools do a lot of good THIPGS.

things.

But just too many schools that are not doing enough and too many schools that kids don't want to go to for whatever the reason.

But 50 to 60 schools, Brooklyn and the Bronx bear the brunt of those, where no one's ranking them.

No one wants to go.

I'm sure there are people working hard there and everything, but it's just stark something to consider and something to look at going forward for next year because the high school process every year seems to get more stressful and more out of control.

Again, not on your watch, but going forward it will be on your watch.

Thank you.

I think one of the things we started talking a little bit about it is doing a better job of getting information out.

One of the things we're starting to do is doing not only school visits -- I realize you guys probably don't get it, but I started putting something out called Principal's Notes.

You got it?

One of the things I'm listing in Principal's Notes is comments about the schools I visit so people actually start hearing about schools they don't know a lot about.

As the other deputy chancellors of visiting schools -- in fact, we're meeting on that on Friday -- how all of us are going to put comments in there so we highlight schools that people may not think of or may have had a prior negative opinion about but that now we will start celebrating.

I see that we've put in for pre-K seats, which is a wonderful thing.

I think most of us would agree.

I just want to make sure that we are accommodating our kindergartens, that we have enough seats to accommodate our kindergartens as we create new seats for pre-K.

And just as an aside, nonbudget issue, regarding the co-locations, we heard a lot this evening about co-locations.

I know there have been a lot of letters written regarding co-locations.

And I do echo that I believe we should relook at some of those.

One more thing that's a little off topic, and it's about District 75 and the transition as the student ages out of District 75.

I find that the transition process begins when the child is 20, and it doesn't give ample time for the parent to explore the afterschool programs.

I think -- and I might be wrong, but my child went through District 75, and we started the process earlier, start at 14, 15 with the parent going to visit the various aftercare programs once they graduate because to start at 20, it's a waste.

Children graduate or they age out at 21.

At 20, if they're starting to do the transition then, it doesn't give the parent an opportunity to view them all and still have the services in a public school because after 21 they age out and there's no services, and then they don't have the ample Medicaid that will pay for them to be in the aftercare.

We track children going into colleges, but we don't track District 75s going into transition support, after care.

That needs to start a lot sooner than 20.

It actually needs to start when they're 17, 6 months because then they have an opportunity at maybe 18, 19, if they want to sign their child out of school, they can do that.

I actually agree, and that's something we have been talking about.

Okay.

So you and I can continue this conversation.

I was actually very involved in this years ago as a superintendent.

Sure, I think I met you down at 400 First Avenue about six years ago, eight years ago.

I do have an additional question as well.

Yes.

With regards to some of the seating we're planning, we're talking about 33,000 new seats.

A conversation has come up on a number of occasions in the community with regards to what some of these numbers are based on, which is in reference to the Blue Book.

So the Blue Book, I think, has already been -- the general consensus has been the Blue Book is not accurate.

So I'm trying to understand what are the implications?

We're talking about 33,000 seats.

We're probably not really talking about 33,000 seats.

Or if you could tell us a little bit in terms of are there any general principles we're looking at in terms of revising the Blue Book?

Are we looking at providing more space?

If we're providing more space, how is it going to impact these numbers?

Well, first of all, the 32,500 seats are the seats we have funded.

We acknowledge there's a need city-wide for 45,000.

So we're faced with a situation where we're going to spend every dollar we have.

We don't have enough.

Nobody ever does.

But we think this is a good plan for spending the money we have.

With the Blue Book process, that is in motion, and we are working, as the chancellor said, with many stakeholders from the community, not only to hear what their problems are with it, but to try to learn if we have generated misperceptions or if we're doing something wrong, frankly.

So that will be revised.

Will it have an impact on the capital plan?

It very well may.

And this plan, one of the things about this plan is it's a living, breathing document.

We'll be back next year with an amendment to this plan, which we do every single year based on new data we gather in terms of enrollment, in terms of whatever the Blue Book or the Green Book becomes in terms of this process we're undertaking.

So the short answer to your question is we have to wait and see what happens, but no matter what happens with that Blue Book, we'll be back here because change always happens somewhere.

And I just want to add one thing because the Blue Book, I happened to go in the other day to say hello when they were meeting.

This is the beginning of this administration, and every decision we make has an advisory group consisting of stakeholders on that topic.

We have an advisory group of principals, yesterday which met, with our first chancellors SLT team, that we didn't give any publicity to.

For the first time at the table, you had the head of the UFT, CSA, Lucille Roberts representing District 37.

We had one person representing District 75, District 79.

And that's the way we're going to have major discussions on things that are relevant to all of us because for so many years the silos have had the discussions, but the groups have not had the discussions, and they got a homework assignment to bring back in six weeks because I always end meetings with homework assignments.

And the homework is to come back with what is the most urgent change that they feel for their constituency.

It's something we all need to talk about because, instead of arguing, then that's where the compromising takes place.

So that's part of why I'm very excited about the Blue Book, not the nature of the book itself, but the process we're using to get there.

Understood.

Thank you very much for that.

I also do have some additional questions regarding the co-locations, but I'll defer those until a little bit later on after we've gone through our agenda.

Thank you.

Any other comments?

Before we vote, Madam Secretary, please note any recusals on the proposed resolution.

There are no recusals for this resolution.

I should also note for the record that panel member Alzora Cleveland arrived quite some time ago and heard the presentation on the Capital Plan.

Thank you.

Panel members, raise your hand if you vote to approve the resolution regarding approval of the proposed fiscal year 2015 through 2019 Capital Plan.

11 in favor.

It's unanimous.

Thank you.

We do have another resolution around school utilization.

Madam secretary, could you present the resolution.

First resolution is entitled resolution regarding the proposed temporary partial reciting and co-location of PS 056 Norwood Heights, 10X 056 with new school 10X 077 and a District 75 school, 75X to be determined in new building X 177 for two years beginning in the 2014/2015 school year.

Is there a motion to adopt the first resolution being considered tonight?

A motion, yes, so moved.

Is there a second?

Second.

As is customary, we'll hear questions from the panel on the aforementioned proposal. Hearing the questions and concerns of the respective borough appointees first and then the other panel members.

Panel member Powell, do you have any questions or concerns?

No, actually, this went very well with the walk-through with Jesse Mojica.

All the stakeholders were at the table.

Everyone's buy-in was accomplished.

The only thing I would ask, once this is all meshed together, is another walk-through be done for the assurance of everything anticipated was achieved.

I love to hear that.

Everything went well and that all our new processes are really actually accomplishing what we set out to do.

So thank you.

And, again, I think one of the things that we said to panel members, we want you not just to come here and vote, we want you to be actively involved in helping us make the decisions.

So thank you.

Do any panel members have questions or concern regarding the Bronx proposal?

Since we do not have any proposals from the remaining boroughs, we're going to go to a vote.

Madam secretary, could you please note any recusals.

There are no recusals on this proposal.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Please raise your hand if you vote to approve the resolution regarding the proposed temporary partial resiting and co-location of PS 56 Norwood Heights 10X 056 with new school 10X 077 and a District 75 school, 75X to be determined in new building X 177 for two years beginning in the 2014/2015 school year.

It's 11 in favor.

It's unanimous.

Thank you.

The final voting item on tonight's agenda requiring a vote is the consideration of contracts. I will now ask the contracts committee chair Fred Baptiste summarize for the panel the committee's recommendations for the contracts on tonight's agenda.

Thank you, madam chair.

The contracts committee met on the evening of Monday, March 17th, and reviewed the contracts being considered by the panel tonight.

I met with contracts committee members.

At the meeting, the committee unanimously recommended the approval of contract items 1 through 3 and 5 through 16 to be considered as a resolution for approval.

The contracts committee recommends that contract items 1 through 3 and 5 through 16 be considered in one resolution.

Thank you, panel member Baptiste.

Before we begin, David Ross, executive director of contracts and purchasing, would like to read text into the minutes pertaining to today's contract items.

Thank you.

It's just one minor correction.

The change has been made to item 8 of this month's agenda, the contract for foreign language interpretation services.

The agenda indicates the vendor's name is Geneva Temps.

The vendor's legal name is Geneva Worldwide.

Thank you, Mr.

Ross.

Do panel members have questions or concerns for resolution one containing contract items 1 through 3 and 5 through 16?

We will now vote on the resolution.

But first, Madam Secretary, could you please note any recusals related to these contract items.

Panel member Fred Baptiste is recused from voting on contract item 5.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Please raise your hand if you vote to approve resolution regarding approval of contract items 1 through 3 and 5 through 16.

It's ten in favor, noting the recusal of member Baptiste.
So it's a unanimous vote.

Thank you.

That concludes the voting portion of the meeting.

You wanted to see if there were -- I know that panel member Baptiste wanted to comment.

Yes, thank you, Madam Chair.

I do want to thank the Chancellor for all your hard work, and I definitely want to applaud the fact that it is a different atmosphere currently in the public schools among parents, and I think there is a very, very high feeling.

I think we're definitely headed in the right direction.

With that being said as well, I definitely have heard, I have heard commentary from the ground as a PTA president and from people in the borough of Brooklyn and all around in terms of the concern over the process.

Once again, regarding the process of co-locations and how they were decided.

I will concede that not all 35 are necessarily to be overturned.

There were examples, as a member of the previous PEP, there were definitely some considerations, some with merit, that communities approved of, that they wanted those, and I wouldn't want to stand in the way of that, and I believe that many of us would not either.

But at the same time, I believe that there are also many proposals that should be reversed on the merits.

With all due respect, I believe the values you have put forth and the criteria you have put forth, they didn't necessarily address some of the needs of the communities in terms of they didn't address some specific location details.

Basically, at the end of last year, I believe on record I put in terms of they should have postponed those votes until the new administration.

At the beginning of the year, as we welcomed you, I went on the record as well saying, while we welcome you here, this is something that does definitely have to be addressed very quickly.

So I think that there is some concern in terms of when you say they were inflexible deadlines and time was basically running out, that that's a matter that should have been taken into consideration way further and action should have been taken before that.

What some of the concerns are with regards to some of the 35 schools, we definitely applaud the nine that you took care of -- and I think we're all in agreement with the value stated in terms of we shouldn't have elementary schools in high school.

We shouldn't have our D-75 students affected.

But at the same time, I think that we have still doomed some kids in these 35 schools because some of the effects cannot be reversed.

With some of these co-locations, basically, what you're doing is we're putting two schools in a location and you're preventing both schools from growing.

In terms of if class size is a priority, in allowing some of these co-locations to go forth, you really make it very difficult to reverse a class size, especially as there is no incentive to do so

because, when funding is based on how many students you have and you only have so much room, the only choice you have is to pack the classes, in terms of trying to make sure there's certain services and certain funds that are available to students, which is antithetical to what we're trying to accomplish with smaller class sizes.

I think that there are a number of -- you know, as a matter of fact, I know that one of the parents come talking about the mid-Manhattan location for the transfer schools.

That's a scenario that doesn't fall necessarily into one of the criteria, but I think that's one of those that definitely on the merits deserves more consideration.

At this point, I think you're in the unenviable position there are lawsuits to the left and to the right of you.

Really the best we can do is at least open up this process and really consider this, and especially as some of the points that have been brought up before.

If the decisions were made on faulty EIS's and inaccurate information, how do we continue to let those stand?

I think there needs to be more consideration, and I'm looking for a process by which we can actually engage communities.

I don't mean to say that you speaking to school communities at this point is not helpful or it's not good, but I'm not sure it's sufficient if you go in and say, well, listen, I'm sorry it happened.

Better luck next time, and it won't happen again because the damage is done.

We are dooming kids in up to 35 schools -- I don't know what the number is, but up to 35 schools in terms of not really addressing this co-location situation.

Going forward, I trust that you are going to have our best interests at hand, but I think we cannot in good conscience let it stand and blame the last administration.

We have an obligation, I believe, to take care THF and address it now and bring communities in and engaged.

The transparency you're talking about, I think we need to practice that right now in terms of allowing these communities to come and state their cases and say yea or nay, we're in favor of this or offer alternatives.

I believe we've heard from our audience members before that our people know what they want in our schools.

They have great ideas.

They're on the ground.

They know what's going on in the buildings, and really can probably offer some solutions that will help us achieve that quality education we all want for all of our children in all of our schools.

That concludes our meeting.

The next regular meeting of the Panel For Educational Policy will be held on Wednesday, April 19th, 2014 here at the Prospect Heights campus.

The meeting is now adjourned.

Thank you, everybody, and have a good night.