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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

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June 27, 2017

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor  
Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

Lorraine Grillo  
President and Chief Executive Officer  
10-10 Thomson Avenue  
Long Island City, New York 11101

Dear Chancellor Carmen Fariña and President & CEO Lorraine Grillo:

At its Full Board meeting June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

### **Resolution in Support of Extending the Option to Build the Bleecker School**

#### **Whereas:**

1. New York University has made a series of shrinking commitments to build a public school over the last 50 years:
  - a. Starting in the 1960s, NYU promised to build an elementary school for neighborhood children on the site of the former Coles Sports Center and the future 181 Mercer building,
  - b. Again in 2010, NYU promised to build the core and shell of a new 600-seat public elementary school on one of its three superblocks, and,
  - c. In 2012, NYU promised the land for the SCA to build a 100,000 square foot school in the Bleecker Building (“Bleecker School”), with the option expiring in 2025;
2. In 2012, as detailed in the final Restrictive Declaration of Large-Scale Development for the NYU LSGD (“Restrictive Declaration”), NYU promised the land for the Bleecker School, but the option or “School Election Notice” would expire on December 31, 2014;
3. In October 2014, both CB 2 and Community Education Council District 2 unanimously passed resolutions in support of extending the “School Election Notice” to 2025, which was NYU’s original proposal and which would allow the Bleecker School to be funded in the SCA’s next five year capital plan as opposed to requiring an amendment of the current one;
4. In a letter dated October 21, 2014, NYU extended the “School Election Notice” to December 31, 2018;
5. This option is worth in excess of \$65 million, based on the average land value in Manhattan in 2016 of \$681 per buildable square foot, and failure to exercise this option would be a loss of \$65 million to NYC taxpayers;<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “The Performance of the Manhattan Land Market in 2016” *Commercial Observer*, January 25, 2017.

6. The 2025 date is fair, just and needed because:
  - a. 181 Mercer construction may impact the phasing of construction for the Bleecker School,
  - b. The Trinity Place and Duarte Square Schools are delayed, and
  - c. There is no funding for the Bleecker School in the School Construction Authority's Capital Plan for FY 2015-2019, updated February 2017;
7. The Bleecker School would benefit NYU as well as our children because:
  - a. A public school on NYU's core campus would be attractive to its faculty, staff and their families and,
  - b. NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development and its student teachers could benefit from a public school on the NYU campus;
8. In June 2016, CB 2 updated its 2014 analysis of the current and projected need for the Bleecker School, based on the following assumptions:
  - a. The 100,000 square foot Bleecker School would provide 600 school seats,
  - b. The Study Area consists of the current elementary school zones for PS 3, PS 11, PS 41, PS 130 and PS 340 based on the assumption that new construction and population growth in Chelsea will reduce capacity for Greenwich Village families currently zoned for PS 340, and,
  - c. Flaws in the City Environmental Quality Review Process (CEQR) as detailed in a CB 2's resolution passed unanimously in February 2017, whereby:
    - i. Most new construction falls well below the 310 units required to trigger an analysis,
    - ii. CEQR does not take into account the significant increase in family-sized apartments – increasing from 7% to 27% of the downtown condo market from 2007 to 2016, and,
    - iii. Use of a CEQR multiplier of only 0.12 even though actual data from 2002 to 2016 show a multiplier of 0.16 for the Study Area; and;
9. The updated demographic analysis continues to demonstrate the need for the Bleecker School based upon:
  - a. The need for more than 600 public elementary school seats today, due to:
    - i. 148 to 337 seat shortfall from overcrowding at all three CB 2 elementary schools for 2015-2016, based on outdated Blue Book figures that underestimate overcrowding, at 112% at PS 3, 109% at PS 41 and 109% at PS 130 as well as 114% at PS 11,
    - ii. 88 seat shortfall at the Duarte Square School, based on a CEQR multiplier of 0.16,
    - iii. 169 to 225 seat shortfall resulting from the 550 Washington rezoning, based on a CEQR multipliers of 0.12 and 0.16 respectively,
    - iv. 100+ seats to reduce kindergarten class size to comply with Contract for Excellence class size reductions (and 650+ seats for grades K-5),
    - v. 69 seats to expand pre-kindergarten seats to 50% of the kindergarten cohort,
    - vi. 131 seats to expand 3K programs to 25% of the kindergarten cohort,
    - vii. 44 seats for District 75 students at Duarte Square,
    - viii. 60 seats for District 75 students at Bleecker, and,
    - ix. Additional square footage and seats to comply with physical education requirements,
  - b. The need for additional public elementary school seats based on projected population growth, due to:
    - i. 31% growth in the under-five population from 2000 to 2010 vs. less than 1% in Manhattan,
    - ii. 26% growth in births from 2000 to 2010, a stark contrast to a drop of nearly 2% in Manhattan, which the DOE mistakenly has used to predict the continued growth in our under-five population,
    - iii. Mid-range population projections for 2022 showing a need for a 600+ seat school,

**Therefore be it resolved** that CB 2 recognizes the need for 600 public school seats at the Bleecker School;

**Be it further resolved** that CB 2 urges NYU to reinstate the School Election Notice to 2025 and to extend the requirement to commence construction from July 1, 2020 to 2025, that was NYU's original proposal and will allow the Bleecker School to be funded in the SCA's next five year capital plan; and,

**Be it further resolved** that CB 2 urges the School Construction Authority and the Department of Education to take into account the demographic analysis and projections developed by CB 2 and fund the Bleecker School in the SCA's next five year Capital Plan.

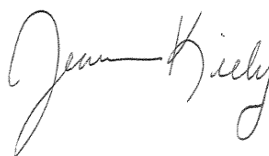
**VOTE: Unanimous, with 37 Board Members in favor.**

Please advise us of any decision or action taken in response to this resolution.

Sincerely,



Terri Cude, Chair  
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Jeannine Kiely, Chair  
Schools and Education Committee  
Community Board #2, Manhattan

TC/EM

- c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman  
Hon. Deborah Glick, State Assembly Member  
Hon. Brad Hoylman, NY State Senator  
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member  
Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Robin Broshi, President, CECD2  
Andrew Hamilton, President of NYU  
Lynne Brown, Senior Vice President for University Relations and Public Affairs