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COMMUNITY BOARD No. 2, MANHATTAN

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November 7, 2011

Dennis M. Walcott,
Chancellor
NYC Department of Education
Tweed Courthouse
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Walcott:

At its Full Board meeting October 20, 2011, Community Board #2, adopted the following resolution:

Resolution Addressing the DOE's Plan to Rezone Public Schools Affecting the CB2 Area

Whereas in 2008 Mayor Bloomberg and then School Chancellor Joel Klein announced the creation of a new elementary school to be built at the site of the Foundling Hospital, at 17th Street and 6th Avenue, in Community Board 5,

And Whereas the proposed school, which will serve 563 students from pre-K through 5th grade, will be built in the first six floors of that building,

And Whereas existing elementary schools serving children residing in CB2 and CB5 are severely overcrowded, with some schools overcapacity by 20%,

And Whereas the DOE is considering making this proposed school a Charter School, even though it was originally described as a zoned school in the official press release put forth by the Department of Education (DOE),

And Whereas Manhattan School District 2, as currently zoned, includes: PS 3, PS 11, PS 41 and PS 234,

And Whereas the DOE is now considering a proposal to rezone parts of Manhattan School District 2 (including the West Village and Chelsea) as a response to school overcrowding, even though this plan does not create any new classrooms, but only masks the problem by shifting around the numbers to create an illusion of progress,

And Whereas the frequent and unnecessary rezoning of schools, just to make the statistics reflect a lesser degree of overcrowding, not only fails to alleviate the actual problem, but tends to destabilize communities by making long term planning impossible for: new residents, long term residents who are new parents, and families who are seeking to make an informed decision before moving into the neighborhood,

And Whereas this rezoning would result in Greenwich Village Parents losing the benefit that they have long enjoyed of being able to choose between sending their children to PS 3 or PS 41,

And Whereas the solution to overcrowding is to open new schools, not to rezone existing ones,

Therefore be it Resolved that Community Board 2 joins Community Board 5 in urging the Department of Education to stand by its word to make the proposed school at the Foundling Hospital site a zoned school, as one step toward alleviating the acute problem of school overcrowding in our district.

Therefore be it further Resolved that CB2 opposes the Department of Education's proposal to rezone PS 234, PS 3, PS 41, PS 11, PS 130, and PS 33, as well as their proposal to remove parental choice between the two elementary schools P.S. 3 and P.S. 41 in CB2.

Vote: Unanimous, with 41 Board members in favor.

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

Sincerely,



Brad Hoylman, Chair
Community Board #2, Manhattan



Lois Rakoff, Chair
Social Services and Education Committee
Community Board #2, Manhattan

BH/gh

c: Hon. Jerrold L. Nadler, Congressman
Hon. Thomas K. Duane, NY State Senator
Hon. Daniel L. Squadron, NY State Senator
Hon. Sheldon Silver, Assembly Speaker
Hon. Deborah J. Glick, Assembly Member
Hon. Christine C. Quinn, Council Speaker
Hon. Margaret Chin, Council Member
Hon. Rosie Mendez, Council Member
Sandy Myers, CB2 liaison, Man. Borough President's office
Pauline Yu, CAU