



class size matters

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Comments to the SUNY board on the application of Success Academy Charter School to be co-located in District 3

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1. Insufficient space in District schools according to DOE's own standards

Contrary to the assertions in the Success Academy application that there "are numerous buildings that have space available in District 3," according to the space memorandum recently released by the NYC Department of Education this fall, there is only one elementary school in District 3 that has at least 300 excess seats, sufficient for a co-location.

This is PS 145, with approximately 320 extra seats.¹ Yet PS 145 was just awarded a federal magnet grant, with the stipulation that the school must have room in its building for enrollment to grow.

In addition, according to the Success Academy application, by its third year the charter school intends to expand to 401 students, outstripping the space in the building.² By the fifth year, the charter school is projected to grow to 689 students, far exceeding the space in the building. Upon renewal, the school intends to expand even more, to the eighth grade.³

The only other two buildings with at least 300 extra seats in District 3 are IS 188 – which already houses two middle schools -- and the Brandeis HS building, which includes four new high schools, none of them yet at scale.

¹ NYC DOE, Underutilized Space Memorandum as of Oct. 6, 2010, posted at : <http://schools.nyc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/6EBA8731-4A23-4E36-A528-157D795BA9CE/90273/UnderutilizedSpaceMemorandum100610.pdf>

² Success Academy Charter Application, posted at <http://www.newyorkcharters.org/pdf/ApplicationsSummer2010/August2010RFP/SuccessAcademyCharterSchoolFullApplicationRedacted.pdf>

Location	Grade	Code	School Name	Level	Enrollment	Capacity	Code	School Name
Manhattan	3	M088	I.S. 88 - MANHATTAN	MIDDLE	985	1,393	M415	Wadleigh Secondary School for the Performing & Visual Arts
Manhattan	3	M088	I.S. 88 - MANHATTAN	MIDDLE	985	1,393	M860	Frederick Douglass Academy II Secondary School
Manhattan	3	M145	P.S. 145 - MANHATTAN	PS	473	793	M145	P.S. 145, The Bloomingdale School
Manhattan	3	M470	LOUIS D. BRANDEIS HS - MANHATTAN	HS	1,885	2,148	M402	THE URBAN ASSEMBLY SCHOOL FOR GREEN CAREERS
Manhattan	3	M470	LOUIS D. BRANDEIS HS - MANHATTAN	HS	1,885	2,148	M403	THE GLOBAL LEARNING COLLABORATIVE
Manhattan	3	M470	LOUIS D. BRANDEIS HS - MANHATTAN	HS	1,885	2,148	M404	INNOVATION DIPLOMA PLUS
Manhattan	3	M470	LOUIS D. BRANDEIS HS - MANHATTAN	HS	1,885	2,148	M417	FRANK McCOURT HIGH SCHOOL
Manhattan	3	M470	LOUIS D. BRANDEIS HS - MANHATTAN	HS	1,885	2,148	M470	Louis D. Brandeis High School

DOE has already admitted the need for a new location for West Prep Academy (a new D3 middle school) that will likely be moved in 2011 or 2012 to enable PS 452, a new elementary school which shares its building, to grow to scale.

Finally, there are other potential problems with assuming there is space for this charter school in a D3 middle school or high school building. For middle schools, the “Blue book” formula assumes class sizes of 28, and class sizes of 30 in high school, which are much larger than city’s Contract for Excellence class size goals of 23 and 25, and the class sizes that NYC principals believe are required for a quality education.⁴ (See chart below.)

	UFT Contract limits	target class sizes in "blue book"	Five-Year Plan C4E goals by 2012	class sizes for quality education, acc. to NYC principals
Kindergarten	25	20	19.9	20
1-3 grades	28	20	19.9	20
4-5 (Title 1 Schools)	32	20	22.9	23
4-5 (Non-Title 1)	32	28	22.9	23
6-8 (Title 1 Schools)	30	28	22.9	24
6-8 (Non-Title 1)	33	28	22.9	24
9-12 (core classes)	34	30	24.5	24

⁴ Prof. Emily Horowitz & Leonie Haimson, “How Crowded Are Our Schools? New Results from a Survey of NYC Public School Principals,” October 3, 2008. http://www.classsizematters.org/principal_survey_report_10.08_final.pdf

2. DOE’s “Blue Book” overestimates actual space in schools

Even as there is insufficient space according to the “Blue Book” to accommodate this charter school within the district, the official DOE “blue book” formula overestimates the actual amount of space in schools, according to many experts and NYC principals.⁵ This is not only because the formula aligned with overly large class sizes, as mentioned above, but also because it provides for insufficient space for cluster rooms and specialty rooms.

The formula also does not take into account the actual number of students needing special education and intervention at each school. Thus there is inadequate provision as regards the dedicated space required to provide special education students with their mandated services, leading to these services being given in hallways or closets when new schools inserted in their buildings leads to overcrowding.⁶

At PS 145, as of the latest available data, there were 87 special education children out of 473 students, about 18 percent of the total population, with about half of them in self-contained classes. This is higher than the overall city average of 16 percent students with disabilities.⁷ Also, about 105 children -- 22 percent -- are in bi-lingual or ESL classes; these children need extra services, and/or smaller classes as well.⁸

Special Education Enrollment:			
<i>(As of October 31)</i>	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
# in Self-Contained Classes	47	39	43
# in Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) Classes	10	16	18
Number all others	36	34	26
<i>These students are included in the enrollment information above.</i>			

⁵ See letter to Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein from NY City Council speaker Christine Quinn and Councilmember Robert Jackson, dated Oct. 28, 2008; also principal survey in: Prof. Emily Horowitz1 & Leonie Haimson, “How Crowded Are Our Schools?” October 3, 2008.

⁶ “A Better Capital Plan: October 2008; A Report from the Manhattan Task Force on School Overcrowding, Class Size Matters, the United Federation of Teachers, and The Center for Arts Education http://www.classsizematters.org/A_Better_Capital_Plan_final_final.pdf See also Rob Sgobbo, “Public schools feeling squeeze of charters,” NY Daily News, September 14, 2010, for how this has occurred this fall at schools in the Bronx sharing space with other branches of Bronx Success Academy.

⁷ NYC DOE, Division of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, “Accelerating Learning & Achievement of All Students: A System-wide Initiative: An Update to the Citywide Council on Special Education, September 16, 2010.

⁸ [CEP School Demographics and Accountability Snapshot 2009-2010](http://schools.nyc.gov/documents/oaosi/cepdata/2009-10/cepdata_M145.pdf) for PS 145M, http://schools.nyc.gov/documents/oaosi/cepdata/2009-10/cepdata_M145.pdf

3. Rapid enrollment growth in District 3

Finally, District 3 is one of the fastest growing school districts in the city at 16 percent, for Kindergarten general education students in 2009-2010.⁹ Nearly 200 District 3 children were placed on waiting lists for their zoned school for Kindergarten this fall. This rapid enrollment growth is expected to continue in future years.

Table 6-1a
Multipliers for Estimating Public School Students
Generated by New Housing Units of All Sizes

Borough	Elementary level per unit (Age 4-10)	Middle school level per unit (Age 11-13)	High school level per unit (Age 14-17)
BRONX	0.39	0.16	0.19
BROOKLYN	0.29	0.12	0.14
MANHATTAN	0.12	0.04	0.06
QUEENS	0.28	0.12	0.14
STATEN ISLAND	0.21	0.09	0.14

Note: Housing units exclusively for seniors, aged 55 or older, or New York City Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) supportive housing facilities for special needs populations may be excluded from the analysis. HPD supportive housing facilities consist of studios for single adults who are referred to HPD by the Department of Homeless Services.
Source: New York City School Construction Authority, 2008.

According to DOE's list of housing starts, at least 6,917 additional residential units are projected to be built in the district by 2012, and 8,246 additional residential units by 2017.¹⁰ The City Environmental Quality Review ("CEQR") standards estimate that each residential unit in Manhattan generates the need for at least .12 elementary school students, .04 middle school students, and .06 high school students. Thus, this would be expected to require an additional 890 additional elementary seats, 330 middle school seats, and 495 high school seats by 2012.¹¹

Yet the NYC School Construction Authority's five year capital plan for 2010-2014 contains not a single new seat or new school for District 3.

⁹ Enrollment data provided by the NYC Independent Budget Office.

¹⁰ NYC SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY, Projected New Housing Starts as Used in 2008-2017 Enrollment Projection for 2010-2014 Capital Plan; posted at http://source.nycsca.org/pdf/capitalplan/2009_HousingWebChart.pdf

¹¹ New York City's Revised City Environmental Quality Review ("CEQR") Technical Manual, May 17, 2010; relevant section posted at http://www.nyc.gov/html/oec/downloads/pdf/2010_ceqr_tm/2010_ceqr_tm_ch06_community_facilities_and_services.pdf

Conclusions

We urge you to reject the Success Academy application, based upon the fact that there is insufficient space within District 3 schools for it to be sited. If the SUNY board authorizes this charter school, it will likely overcrowd the existing schools in the district, causing class sizes to increase even further, leading to the loss of critical cluster and intervention spaces, undermining the quality of education provided to District 3 students, as well as putting at jeopardy the federal magnet school grant received by PS 145.
