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Testimony Of State Senator Daniel Squadron at the Joint Public Hearing Regarding the Proposed Expansion and Co-location of P.S. 008 Robert Fulton (13K008) with Existing Schools George Westinghouse Career and Technical Education High School (13K605), City Polytechnic High School of Engineering, Architecture, and Technology (13K674), and a D75 School (75K369@K580) in Building K580 Beginning in 2012-2013

My name is Daniel Squadron and I represent the 25th Senate District in the New York State Senate. My district includes Greenpoint, Williamsburg, Vinegar Hill, DUMBO, Fulton Ferry, Brooklyn Heights, Boerum Hill, Cobble Hill, Carroll Gardens and Gowanus in Brooklyn, and the neighborhoods of Tribeca, Battery Park City, the Lower East Side, Chinatown, the Financial District, Little Italy, SoHo and the East Village in Manhattan. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today.

I've long pushed for the expansion of P.S. 8 to include a middle school, along with the community and my colleagues, and I'm pleased the Department of Education (DOE) has heeded our call. The new P.S. 8 middle school will help support P.S. 8's continued success and provide a necessary, high-quality middle school for District 13 students.

Under the stewardship of Principal Seth Phillips, the community has seen P.S. 8 transform from an underperforming elementary school to a diverse high-performing option for the community. P.S. 8 has expanded, but it is still beyond capacity due to skyrocketing enrollment. The amazing turnaround that has been achieved at P.S. 8 provides a model for similar success throughout the district.

However, many P.S. 8 students do not go on to attend a middle school in District 13. Rather, communities that have grown up together through the incredibly successful elementary school are broken up - because there is a severe lack of high-quality middle schools in the district that would allow them to continue their success.

It's not just P.S. 8 families that face the challenge of where to send their kids to middle school. For far too long, all District 13 families have faced extremely limited middle school options for their children, creating nothing short of a crisis point.

Simply put, District 13 needs improved middle schools district-wide to maintain families and provide the options students deserve. This is a critical step.

The Westinghouse building is the logical choice for the co-location, due to its proximity to the P.S. 8 elementary school and the building's utilization rate of only 79 percent. Of course there remain a number of issues to finalize regarding shared spaces, and the DOE has committed to



making the co-location work harmoniously and to the advantage of *all* of the schools in the Westinghouse building.

By answering our calls and providing the community with a high-quality middle school, DOE will help ensure the continued success of P.S. 8 and improve options for all District 13 students. I urge quick approval of this plan so that the middle school can be up and running by next school year and more District 13 kids can get the excellent education they deserve.

I'm proud to have worked with great partners - P.S. 8's PTA, Principal Phillips, DOE, and my colleagues, Assemblymember Joan Millman and Councilmember Stephen Levin - to get to this stage. Our work is not done; much more progress must be made to meet District 13's needs. I look forward to collaborating with DOE, the P.S. 8 community, the principals of all four schools at Westinghouse, and my colleagues to ensure the success of the P.S. 8 middle school and all of District 13's students.

Thank you.

