



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph P. Addabbo Jr.

Addabbo's Statement Regarding District High School Closures

JOSEPH P. ADDABBO JR March 7, 2012

| ISSUE: **EDUCATION**

Queens, NY, March 7, 2012 – NYS Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Queens), released the following statement today, reacting to this week's announced proposal by the NYC Department of Education to close three high schools in his district:

I said in January after the mayor's State of the City speech that first forecast the three high school closures in my district that I intended to keep working with both the NYS and NYC Department of Education (DOE), the mayor's administration and other involved parties on ensuring the best quality education available to students at the three Turnaround schools, namely Grover Cleveland, John Adams and Richmond Hill High Schools--the total number of high schools in my district. I also wanted to make sure that each student has a seat at the school they currently attend and that parents' concerns were answered. According to Monday's official announcement, the closures are not expected to yield a net loss of seats in Queens or in any of the three buildings. If this proposal is approved, the schools will close at the end of this school year; all current students who have not graduated before school starts in September will be guaranteed a seat and automatically enrolled in the new schools in the same buildings.

Since the two presidential-named schools of John Adams and Grover Cleveland have played an integral role in the character and history of our communities, I've been promoting that any new name should take into consideration and incorporate each school's current name.

As a member of the State Senate Education Committee, I stated two months ago that the navigation process through the Turnaround would not be easy and encouraged all parents to work with their elected officials in obtaining information and addressing their issues with the Restart and Transformation process affecting the quality of their children's education at these schools. The process puts much at stake, such as the student's education, critical federal funding and teachers' and principals' job stability. Regrettably, the DOE has now decided that data from all three schools' most recent Progress Reports showed that the pace of change was not quick enough to meet their challenges so they now propose to replace all three with new schools that implement more intensive interventions, including allowing new faculty to be put in place who can accelerate the pace of improvement, along with new programs and school supports intended to improve student outcomes. The DOE release also cited the continuing lack of a new teacher evaluation system that led them to propose other available options to improve teacher quality.

For more information, copies of the DOE's Educational Impact Statements are available in all three schools' main offices or on its Web site:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/AboutUs/leadership/PEP/publicnotice/2011-2012/April2012Proposals>.

The DOE announcement invites oral comments by calling [212-374-7621](tel:212-374-7621) to reach its City District Representative, Elaine Gorman, Division of Portfolio Planning. Written comments should be sent to D24Proposals@schools.nyc.gov for Grover Cleveland, or sent to D27Proposals@schools.nyc.gov for John Adams and Richmond Hill. The dates, times and locations of joint public hearings for this DOE proposal are:

April 2 at 6 PM, Grover Cleveland High School, 21-27 Himrod Street, Ridgewood, NY 11385

April 5 at 6 PM, Richmond Hill High School, 89-30 114th Street, Richmond Hill, NY 11418

April 19 at 6 PM, John Adams High School, 101-01 Rockaway Blvd., Ozone Park, NY 11417

The Panel for Educational Policy will hold its meeting to vote on the proposal on April 26 at 6 PM, at Prospect Heights Campus, 883 Classon Ave., Brooklyn, NY.

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