Delores Rubin
Chair

Jesse R. Bodine
District Manager

March 15, 2017

Ms. Lorraine Grillo
President and CEO
NYC School Construction Authority
30-30 Thomson Avenue
Long Island City, NY 11101

Re: Five Year Capital Plan FY 2015-2019

Dear President Grillo:

At a meeting of the Arts, Cultural Affairs, Education and Street Life Committee ("ACES Committee") of Manhattan Community Board 4 ("MCB4") held on Monday, February 13, 2017, Mr. Michael Mirisola, the Director of External Affairs for the NYC School Construction Authority ("SCA") presented SCA's updated Five Year Capital Plan for 2015-2019 (the "Plan"). While MCB4 is very appreciative of Mr. Mirisola's time, after the presentation, we remained very concerned that the Plan does not adequately address the need for elementary school and middle school seats in the areas covered by MCB4, Chelsea, Hudson Yards and Hell's Kitchen/Clinton.

Residential construction has boomed in the MCB4 area, spurred in part by the phenomenal success of the High Line. Further, there are a huge number of residential units scheduled to come on-line in Hudson Yards in the next few years. Many of the units in these new buildings are multi-bedroom units, designed for families with children.

The ACES Committee learned from Mr. Mirisola that SCA has its own formula that it applies to determine the number of seats that will be needed in each community. When the ACES Committee expressed to Mr. Mirisola our concern that this formula does not adequately reflect the projected growth in our neighborhoods, he invited MCB4 to submit our own estimation of the need for school seats. However, at the same time, Mr. Mirisola stated that, even if MCB4 submitted this information to SCA, SCA would continue to rely on its own internal calculations.

This is greatly troubling to us. Based on information provided to us, MCB4 believes that the SCA formula fails to properly account for the need for school seats in our district for many reasons, including the following:

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- More births in our community
- More families staying in CB4 after kids are born
- More families moving into CB4 neighborhoods
- More families choosing public school, as ratings for schools improve
- Grandfather laws which allow kids to remain in the elementary school they are currently attending, even if they move out of zone
- The closing of Catholic schools which could send several hundred students into local public schools with little warning
- The construction of more 2-3 bedroom apartments in CB4 as the number of residential buildings west of 10th Avenue increases exponentially

MCB4 has written to Robin Broshi, the President of Community Education Council District 2 ("CECD2"), which covers a large swath of Manhattan, including the area covered by MCB4, asking Ms. Broshi to convene a meeting of all of the Community Boards in School District 2 to review and assess SCA's formula. We anticipate being able to provide SCA an updated estimate of the need for seats in our district. However, given Mr. Mirisola's statements to the ACES Committee, we are concerned that SCA will not take the input of the local Community Boards seriously.
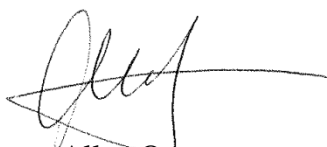
MCB4 asks that SCA, working in conjunction with us, undertake its own reassessment of its formula for determining the number of school seats needed, and specifically, that SCA reassess the need for elementary and middle schools seats in Chelsea, Hudson Yards and Hell's Kitchen/Clinton. Further, we seek your reassurance that SCA will work with CECD2 and MCB4 to review the numbers we hope to be able to provide in the near future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[signed 3/14/17]

Delores Rubin   Allen Oster   Inge Ivchenko
Chair   Co-Chair   Co-Chair
Community Board 4   ACES Committee   ACES Comittee

cc: Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council
       Elizabeth Rose, Deputy Chancellor of Operations, DOE
       Sadye Campoamor, Director of Community Affairs, DOE
       Robin Broshi, President, CECD2