

AUTHORIZATION TO CLOSE THE LEADERSHIP SECONDARY SCHOOL AND ESTABLISH THE NEW EXPLORATIONS INTO SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MATH SCHOOL, A COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 1/MANHATTAN HIGH SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENCY COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL

The Chancellor presents the following resolutions for adoption:

WHEREAS, the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency, Community School District 1, and the Leadership Secondary School community, after careful consideration and review of the instructional needs of the school's students, educational programs, and student outcomes, decided that it was not in the students' best interests to continue the operation of the Leadership Secondary School, and recommended that the school be closed; and

WHEREAS, on March 17, 1999, Community School Board 1, at its public meeting, approved terminating the Leadership Secondary School collaborative between the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency and Community School District 1, effective as of that date; and

WHEREAS, Community School District 1 and the Manhattan High Schools Superintendent, along with a planning committee, recognized the need to design and develop a school that would capitalize on the interests of young people in science, technology and mathematics and would provide a seamless Kindergarten through 12th grade education within Community School District 1; and

WHEREAS, Community School Board 1, at its public meeting of January 30, 2001, approved the establishment, in collaboration with the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency, of the New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School, as a Kindergarten through 12th grade school, on the premises previously occupied by the Leadership School; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby authorizes the closing of the Leadership Secondary School, a Community School District 1/Manhattan High Schools collaborative school, effective June 30, 2001; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education hereby establishes the New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School (NEST+M), a Community School District 1/Manhattan High Schools Superintendency collaborative school, as a Kindergarten through 12th grade school, to be located at 111 Columbia Street, New York, NY 10002; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School will open in September 2001, with approximately 200 students in grades Kindergarten, 6, 7, 9 and 10, as a District 1 school of choice for students in grades K-8, and as an education option school, with admissions priority for NEST+M students and students who reside in Community School District 1, for grades 9-12, and that the school will add grades each year until it reaches its target population of approximately 700 students in grades Kindergarten through 12; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Principal of the New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School will be rated annually by the Superintendent of Manhattan High Schools in consultation with the Superintendent of Community School District 1; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the allocations to the school, for grades Kindergarten through 8, will be based on formulas currently used to distribute funds to schools in Community School District 1 and, for grades 9 through 12, based on formulas used to distribute funds to high schools in the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency.

EXPLANATION

The Leadership Secondary School was established on March 17, 1993 as a collaborative between Community School District 1 and the Division of High Schools, on behalf of the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency. The school opened in September 1993, as a secondary school with a dual language academic program, in Community School District 1's J.H.S. 22, located at 111 Columbia Street, New York, New York 10002. As with other collaborations, the evolution of the secondary school caused a review of the school's vision, mission and programs. Grades 6 through 8 were never phased into the Leadership Secondary School. In preparation for the closing of the school in 1999, Community School Board 1, at its public meeting of March 17, 1999, approved terminating its collaboration with the Manhattan High Schools Superintendency in the Leadership Secondary School. After careful consideration, an Instructional Reorganization Plan was developed by the Manhattan High Schools Superintendent and the school community, for implementation during the 1999-2000 school year. No 9th graders were admitted to the school. Although progress was made, there was agreement that a secondary school with a broader academic theme would better meet the interests and educational needs of students. The decision was therefore made to close the Leadership Secondary School at the end of the 2000-01 school year.

The New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School, also to be known as NEST+M, will utilize an interdisciplinary, interactive, project-oriented instructional approach while providing support through a variety of external collaborations with colleges, arts foundations and social service agencies. The school will provide students with quality educational programs through a lower, middle and upper school model housed at the same site. An essential element of the school will be a seamless K-12 approach.

The New Explorations into Science, Technology and Math School will open in September 2001 with approximately 200 students in grades Kindergarten, 6, 7, 9, and 10 and will add grades each year until it reaches its target population of approximately 700 students in grades Kindergarten through 12. Sufficient space exists to accommodate present and future needs of the school.



New Explorations Into Science, Technology & Math

A K-12 College Preparatory School in RoHo

Parent Teacher Association

Frequently Asked Questions

Why doesn't NEST+m want to share their building with the Ross Global Academy Charter School?

NEST+m is three schools in one building – NEST+m Lower School, NEST+m Middle School, and NEST+m High School – and we are already overcrowded. Students start eating lunch at 9:30 AM! Only 30 percent of our student body can fit into our auditorium at any one time. Having three schools in one building is a daily challenge. How on earth could another K-12 school fit in here?

DOE says there is room for 1,400 students in your building. Why are they wrong?

DOE conveniently recalculated NEST+m's official capacity of 860 to 1,407 in order to argue that there was room for Ross. DOE took every room in the building not assigned to a homeroom class from the HS chemistry lab, to the school's library, next years' fifth grade classrooms, even a room deemed unsafe for health reasons, into their calculation.

The numbers DOE offer regarding the NEST+m building's alleged capacity shift with the wind, varying by as much as 62% depending upon what appear to be DOE's political and personal aims rather than good and sound educational policy.

NEST+m says their school was promised exclusive use of the building. DOE says that is not true. What's the true story?

After an entire year spent designing NEST+m, a formal proposal concretizing the vast plans that resulted was submitted to and approved by then Chancellor Harold Levy. The accepted proposal includes the following: "To fulfill its instructional program adequately, the school will need to occupy the entire building."

As to the commitment under Levy, isn't it important for they're to be consistency in education policy? This means if a school is opened with a certain philosophy, it must be given time to evolve. Here, a new administration comes in and decided that charter schools are great and other commitments be dammed.

DOE says that NEST+m has sought to distort the appearance and actuality of its enrollment. Is this true?

In fact, it is the DOE that has, by distorting the source and meaning of NEST+m's enrollment numbers, engaged in deceptive and misleading practices. For example, the DOE has conflated and confused NEST+m's projected and adjusted enrollments, a peculiar error given that the DOE itself defines what each are and how it should be determined. While NEST+m's February 2006 projected enrollment reflect the school's best estimates of the number of students who will attend in the coming school year, the April 2006 adjusted enrollment is based on actual acceptances of its offers.

Why the disparity between projected and adjusted enrollments? Not all students accept a school's offer of admittance. So, to fill their classes, school must develop, and over time improve, a formula called a yield rate, that is, the percentage of students who will tend to accept the school's offer of admittance. But yield rates are not an exact science. Sometimes more students than the formula suggests accept the school's offer. In such cases, the school cannot rescind its invitation, but must instead accommodate more than its projected population. The need for at least some flexibility vis-à-vis available space for such unanticipated enrollment is, of course, yet another reason why it is unreasonable – perhaps unconscionable – of the DOE to insert another school into the NEST+m building.

Is it true that the DOE has issued an edict that limits NEST+m 2006-7 enrollment to 899? NEST+m says its enrollment for 2006-07 is 1,050. Is DOE forcing NEST+m to rescind acceptances?

No, the NEST+m Administration has made a stand; they are not going to tell these already accepted students they cannot attend. After they have competed with over 3,000 applicants for a highly desired seat at NEST+m. If you start with the DOE's flawed capacity figure of 1,407, then subtract the Ross Charter's enrollment of 500, you end up with nearly the exact number that DOE is attempting to restrict NEST+m to with their edict.

Why are NEST+m parents so committed?

Unlike other public schools that are structured K-5, 6-8 or 9-12, NEST+m is K-12 and spans 13 school years. Some NEST+m parents who have more than one child will be members of the NEST+m PTA parents for over twenty years. The commitment of our parents is a long-term commitment. The majority of their family lives will be spent at NEST+m

Department of Education CEO of New Schools, Garth Harries, said that "only 32% of the schools (NEST+m) population lives in District 1, and there remains a compelling need for high quality options for the students of the Lower East Side who cannot qualify for citywide gifted and talented programs." What is your reaction to this statement?

We see a serious contradiction in this statement.

Just like the Ross charter school, NEST+m accepts applicants from all five boroughs. And just like the Ross charter school, NEST+m is not required to give priority to District 1 students. The Ross charter school cannot legally screen students and unfortunately there is no way District 1 students can turn to Ross for guaranteed "high quality options". District 1 students are put in the same random lottery as students from everywhere else in New York City, the Ross charter school is not a school designed for them.

NEST+m screens every applicant and gives a priority to qualified D1 applicants. Mr. Harries 32% District 1 figure is incorrect; NEST+m has approximately 50% District 1 students.

Is NEST+m against charter schools?

This argument is not about opposing or supporting charter schools, it is about the impossibility of sharing this space.