



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ERIC L. ADAMS
President

New York City Department of Education Joint Public Hearing

Re: Consolidation of W.E.B. Dubois High School into Brownsville Academy

December 13, 2017

I am Eric L. Adams, Brooklyn borough president, representing 2.6 million residents who call this borough home. I am submitting testimony to you against the proposed consolidation of W.E.B. Dubois High School into Brownsville Academy.

Transfer schools provide our young people with an opportunity for a second chance. W.E.B. Dubois High School is located in Community School District (CSD) 17, where there are no other transfer schools. Moving it into CSD 23, where there are already two transfer schools, robs the community in CSD 17 of their second chance. In education, we simply cannot steal from one community to serve another.

I am very concerned about the well-being of the students in W.E.B. Dubois. Some students have transferred there for safety reasons — to avoid gangs and gun violence. We do them a disservice by forcing a return to the vicinity that required them to need a second chance. There are also unintended consequences of this proposed consolidation, including creating a burden for students who are parents. Changing their commute could impact child care and support and affect work schedules. These students look to us for support — not to create greater difficulty for them.

Some years ago, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) met with local elected officials regarding W.E.B. Dubois and its future. It was agreed that there was a demonstrable need for greater resources such as learn-to-work programs. Although the DOE had agreed to provide and/or spearhead these resources, they did not materialize. Removing the school from CSD 17 at a time when the

community is on the precipice of receiving much-needed resources from the upcoming Bedford Union Armory project is premature and unjust.

I urge you to strike this proposed consolidation, allow the DOE more time to keep their promise(s) to the community of CSD 17 and the students at W.E.B. Dubois, and refocus our efforts away from consolidation and toward revitalization so students can springboard from their second chance to a bright future in Brooklyn and well beyond.

Thank you for your time.