

State Senator Liz Krueger
Assembly Member Richard Gottfried
Assembly Member Brian Kavanagh



Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney



Borough President Scott M. Stringer
Council Member Daniel R. Garodnick
Council Member Rosie Mendez

COALITION OF EAST SIDE ELECTED OFFICIALS

Via U.S. Mail

October 20, 2011

Dennis Walcott
Chancellor
Department of Education
52 Chambers Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chancellor Walcott:

We write to encourage the Department of Education to take steps to address long-standing overcrowding at PS 116 by immediately zoning and incubating the new school, PS/IS 281, which is opening at First Avenue and 35th Street in September 2013.

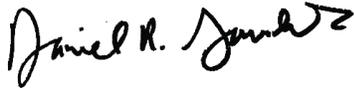
As you know, PS 116 has been beset by capacity challenges for a number of years now, resulting in frequent kindergarten waitlists, the loss of Gifted & Talented and pre-kindergarten programs, and class sizes above contractual limits. Indeed, the DOE recognized the severity of PS 116's capacity issues this year, capping the school's kindergarten enrollment (albeit above the limit of 25 students per classroom).

Rezoning the area in order to incubate PS/IS 281 in September 2012 would help to alleviate this problem. The PTA of PS 116 and the full board of Community Board 6 have formally supported this concept, and we share their desire for the DOE to explore it more fully with due consideration for, and in consultation with, any existing school affected by the co-location. Accordingly, we ask you to seek out appropriate space in the neighborhood for an incubation site and to inform us of what potential options exist. It is essential, however, that PS/IS 281 be incubated as part of a zone, as we saw in the formation of PS 151 on the Upper East Side. The result was a cohesive and dynamic school community.

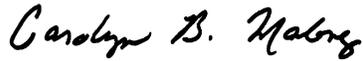
We recognize the tight timeframe for rezoning before intake begins in early 2012, but hope that you will be creative in your search for solutions.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions or concerns, please follow up with Dan Pasquini in Council Member Garodnick's office at (212) 788-7393.

Sincerely,



Daniel R. Garodnick
Council Member



Carolyn B. Maloney
U.S. Representative



Scott M. Stringer
Borough President



Liz Krueger
State Senator



Richard Gottfried
Assembly Member



Brian Kavanagh
Assembly Member



Rosie Mendez
Council Member

cc: Marc Sternberg, Deputy Chancellor
Elizabeth Rose, Director of Manhattan Planning