



June 8, 2015

Dear SOF Families,

Recently the Task Force held a meeting with SOF Parents to discuss the impending construction work that will be going on next door to us. There were some strong reactions as to what should be done about the possible noise, safety and health issues that may arise due to such a large building project. Several parents have urged that we move SOF to another building until this project is over. We'd like to take this opportunity to say that John and I feel we should stay in our current location. While that may not sit well with some of you, we feel it is our best course of action at this point and here are the reasons why:

- We have been told by the head of the NYCDOE Department of School Facilities that there is nowhere for us to move to. John and I have inquired on several spaces in District Two that we thought might be opening up but they have been spoken for by almost a year. We are open to visiting any possible openings in a nearby District Two vacant space that meets our needs, but we are not optimistic about finding one.
- We wish to remain in District Two. We have relationships with elementary and middle schools and serve a population in this District. It allows us to keep the diverse student population we all cherish.
- We risk losing our beloved teachers who may not be able to make a long commute due to childcare and travel.
- We do not want to risk being placed within a shared school building. This would be a strong possibility and it is very challenging sharing a physical space with another school.
- Who would pay for the cost of moving on both ends? There would need to be rooms packed and computers, furniture and file cabinets moved, not to mention paying teachers to box and pack their classrooms. This is an expense we as a school could not cover.
- A new building would need to have the right amount of classrooms including pull out rooms for small group instruction for students with special needs. This is a unique advantage of our building.

- Moving seems like a gift to the developers. What would be the developer's incentive to support any upgrades to the building if we move? If anything, this will be a financial burden for our school.

We have been assigned a School Construction Authority liaison who will be meeting weekly with the developers, John and myself to ensure your children are safe. That is our number one priority and we will be meeting weekly to ensure any distraction to our students' learning is kept to a minimum. Currently we are working with local officials at the Department of Buildings to change the demolition date to the summer when we have an open window with little to no students in the building.

We know that some of you may not agree with our decision, but we hope the above reasons allow you to understand why we choose to stay. We will be in communication over the summer as to the progress of the construction and what to expect when students come back in the fall.

Have a great summer!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

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