



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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CHRISTINE BERTHET
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

May 21, 2015

Mr. Gardner P. Dunnan,
Head of Upper School and Academic Dean
Avenues School
259 Tenth Avenue
New York, New York 10001

Mr. Stephen R. Hanon
Chief Financial Officer
Avenues School
11 East 26th Street, 17th Floor
New York, New York 10010

Dear Mr. Dunnan and Mr. Hanon,

Because CB4 has been reviewing the application by the owner of 540 West 26th Street to obtain a BSA special permit for a school in an M1-5 district so that Avenues can occupy a portion of the building at 540 West 26th Street, CB4 has been revisiting the agreements that the Board and Avenues school made in 2011 at the time the Board recommended approval (with two conditions) to the City Planning Commission of modifications to bulk and use regulations for Avenues 259 Tenth Avenue building.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (see attached) was created to address a variety of issues that CB4 felt were of great importance to the community and needed to obtain clear commitments from Avenues about. Those commitments included:

- Traffic Study and Building Egresses
- Scholarships for CD4 Residents
- Job Fair
- Gymnasium and Meeting Space
- Community Partnerships and Service
- High Line Donation
- Leed Design.

One of the most significant MOU issues is Avenue's progress in providing scholarships to CD4 students. The MOU states "The scholarship fund will total \$4 million at full enrollment and will increase at the at the same rate as student tuition. Moreover it is Avenues' goal to annually award

30% of its scholarship fund to academically and financially qualified students residing within Community Board 4.”

Although the MOU was never signed by either party, Avenues has been striving to meet its scholarship commitments. Avenues reports that 35 students in CD4 are receiving full scholarships: nine \$40,000; five over \$45,000. These students represent 21 percent of students receiving financial aid and 19 percent of the monetary value. Avenues acknowledges that scholarship goals have not entirely been met but plans to renew its focus on outreach and education as stated in its April 15, 2015 program description (see attached). CB4 enthusiastically supports this action plan and looks forward to working with Avenues to attract and enroll more qualified students from CD4 who would receive scholarships.

CB4 is pleased that Avenues has honored its High Line Donation commitment : “...to donate \$250,000 per year beginning in 2013. Such donation amount will be increased by 10% every five years to reflect inflation. The annual donation will be allocated 80% to the Campaign for the High Line and 20% to the Friends of the High Line annual operations.”

CB4 aims to establish a robust relationship with Avenues to review all the commitments in the MOU. One of those MOU commitments was a “Staff Liaison: Avenues will have a specific representative whose responsibility includes liaising with Community Board 4 and community-based organizations. When needed, this person will meet with and report to community organizations.”

Specifically CB4 asks the following of Avenues:

1. Avenues will spearhead the review of MOU commitments, including the signing of the MOU.
2. Avenues will provide an annual detailed written report on the status of scholarships given to CD4 students. Avenues will strive to reach the MOU goal of 30 percent of financial aid dedicated to CD4 students as soon as possible.
3. Avenues will confirm in writing their renewed strategy to attract very young CD4 students to the school and will design a new outreach strategy to attract those candidates.
4. Avenues will designate a Staff Liaison to CB4 and will continue to keep this function properly staffed. The Staff Liaison will meet regularly with CB4 to follow up on MOU commitments.
5. Avenues will review with CB4 its April 15, 2015 Outreach and Communication proposal prior to rolling it out.

CB4 has recommended that BSA approve the application submitted by the owner of 540 West 26th Street to permit a school use in a portion of the new building so that Avenues can have

additional space to expand its operations – with two conditions that Avenues school must follow-up on with the owner of the new building:

1. The applicant requires that Avenues will mitigate any sounds from its second floor outdoor space in the new building that neighbors identify as disturbing their quality of life.
2. The applicant requires that Avenues will reach out to the users of buildings between Avenues’ existing and new buildings so that any potential issues with students walking in front of those buildings will be addressed as soon as possible.

CB4 expects Avenues to report back on its outreach to nearby building tenants and owners about any sidewalk issues and how they have been resolved, and to quickly address any noise issues from Avenues’ outdoor space if they arise.

CB4 looks forward to a strengthened relationship with Avenues school.

Sincerely,



Christine Berthet
Chair



J. Lee Compton
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee



Betty Mackintosh
Co-Chair
Chelsea Land Use Committee

enclosure

cc: Hon. Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President
Hon. Corey Johnson, City Council
Deirdre A. Carson, Esq, Greenberg Traurig
Eric DeSimone, Vice President, Savanna Project Management



HEADQUARTERS AND ADMISSIONS
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**Avenues: New York Community Outreach
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

Between

Avenues New York LLC

And

Community Board 4

This Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as "MOU") is made between Avenues New York LLC (hereinafter referred to as "Avenues"), with offices at 11 East 26th Street, 17th floor, New York, NY 10010, and Manhattan Community Board 4, with offices at 330 West 42nd Street, 26th floor, New York, NY.

Subject: Community-Related Commitments from Avenues

Purpose: The purpose of this MOU is to memorialize the commitments Avenues made at meetings on June 13, 2011 with the Chelsea Preservation and Planning Committee and on July 27, 2011 with the full Community Board 4. Avenues intends to fulfill its stated commitments to be a good neighbor and a contributor to the social fabric of Community Board 4 and the City of New York. It is understood that the commitments outlined in this MOU are intended to be fulfilled by Avenues and are not meant as consideration in return for Community Board 4's vote recommending approval of Avenues special permit application to the City Planning Commission.

Background: At its regularly scheduled meeting on July 27, 2011, Community Board 4 voted to recommend approval of Avenues' application for a City Planning Commission special permit, pursuant to section 74-711 of the New York City Zoning Resolution, modifying certain bulk and use regulations for the building at 259 Tenth Avenue that will house its school. Prior to the Community Board's vote, Avenues reiterated its intent to fulfill the commitments contained in this MOU.

Avenues Commitments

Traffic Study & Building Egresses

Responding to Community Board 4's concerns over potential traffic disruptions during drop-off and pick-up at the school, Avenues commits to conduct a traffic study in a timely manner. The study will project traffic conditions during the school year. Should the traffic study recommend that traffic-mitigating measures be undertaken by Avenues as a result of additional traffic impacts caused by school activities, Avenues will, if feasible, put them into practice as well as request necessary City agency participation and assistance with implementation.

At CB 4's recommendation, Avenues has also agreed to evaluate an additional entrance on West 25th Street as a third entrance/exit for students and faculty. The purpose of this West 25th Street entrance would be to mitigate potential school-related traffic impacts on Tenth Avenue.

Scholarships for CB 4 Residents

Avenues is committed to a diverse and well-represented student body. To achieve this goal, Avenues will maintain a scholarship fund for academically and financially qualified students as determined by Avenues. The scholarship fund will total \$4 million at full enrollment and will increase at the same rate as student tuition. Moreover it is Avenues' goal to annually award 30% of its scholarship fund to academically and financially qualified students residing within Community Board 4.

In order to maximize its outreach to academically qualified students residing within Community Board District 4 that are in need of financial aid, Avenues will embark on a community outreach campaign ("Campaign"). The Campaign will include Avenues partnering with Community Board 4 and other community-based organizations identified by both Avenues and Community Board 4 to inform the community of this academic program, to encourage academically qualified students to apply for admission, and to inform prospective applicants that there are scholarship funds available to financially qualified students.

Job Fair

Avenues intends to fill as many of its 250 jobs (at full enrollment) as possible with qualified local residents. Towards this goal, Avenues will work with Community Board 4 to organize and hold a job fair. Further, Avenues requests that Community Board 4 help Avenues identify and work with neighborhood job training programs for potential candidates.

Gymnasium and Meeting Space

Avenues' gymnasium and meeting spaces will be made available for community events as school usage permits. Once Avenues' staffing, class and athletic schedules are

determined, Avenues will communicate to Community Board 4 times that the gymnasium and meeting spaces may be available for community use.

Community Partnerships and Service

Staff Liaison

Avenues will have a specific representative whose responsibility includes liaising with Community Board 4 and community-based organizations. When needed, this person will meet with and report to community organizations.

Partnerships with Surrounding Community Organizations and Public Schools

Avenues aspires to advance education generally and will seek opportunities to work with neighboring public schools and other community institutions to share its teaching techniques and global focus with the goal of fostering learning environments sensitive to global issues and concerns as manifested in Avenues' World Course.

Students' Community Service

Focusing student community service activities within Community Board 4 will be an important part of the Avenues curriculum. Younger students will learn about the importance of community service as part of their classroom activities. Students from grades 6-12 will undertake service projects in the surrounding community, including but not limited to such activities as:

- Assisting in the process of providing food services and other aid for the homeless
- Tutoring area students who do not attend Avenues

High Line Donation

Avenues has entered into a long-term commitment with Friends of the High Line, Inc. to donate \$250,000 per year beginning in 2013. Such donation amount will be increased by 10% every five years to reflect inflation. The annual donation will be allocated 80% to the Campaign for the High Line and 20% to the Friends of the High Line annual operations. This donation honors Sherry and Douglas Oliver and the Hanson Family.

LEED Design

Avenues pledges to use design, construction and methods of operation that are intended to achieve a high degree of environmental sustainability, including meeting or exceeding the standards for U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

Effective Date and Signature:

This MOU shall be effective once signed by authorized officials of Avenues New York LLC and Community Board 4.

Avenues New York LLC

Community Board 4

By: Avenues World Holdings LLC

By:

Name

Name

Title

Title

Date

Date