

Rezoning Plan to Remake 3 Upper West Side Schools Will Proceed, City Says

By [KATE TAYLOR](#) NOV. 9, 2016 NY Times



Public School 191 on the Upper West Side of Manhattan, where most of the students are black or Hispanic. Credit Katherine Taylor for The New York Times

New York City's [Education Department](#) said on Wednesday that it would proceed with a [fiercely contested plan](#) to redraw elementary school zones on the Upper West Side of Manhattan in an effort to reduce overcrowding while increasing racial and economic integration at three schools.

The plan, which the department was to present on Wednesday night to the elected parent body that votes on such zone changes, is similar to earlier versions of the proposal, which have drawn strident opposition and have prompted some parents to threaten legal action. In recent weeks, the department had stalled, stirring speculation that it might back down in the face of political pressure, [as it did last year](#).

Instead, the department said on Wednesday that it was forging ahead.

In all, 11 school zones will be redrawn. The three schools that would be significantly affected by the move are at the southern end of Community School District 3, which encompasses the Upper West Side and part of Harlem. While the district is racially and economically diverse as a whole, many of its elementary schools are not.

Two of the three schools, Public School 199, on West 70th Street, and Public School 452, on West 77th Street, serve students who are mostly white and well off. The zone for the third school, Public School 191, on West 61st Street, includes a public housing project as well as expensive apartments, though for decades [white families have avoided it](#), leaving it with a population that is poor and mostly black and Hispanic. It also operates below capacity, while P.S. 199 is overcrowded.

Assuming the rezoning survives any possible legal challenges, a major hurdle for the Education Department will be [persuading wealthy parents](#) to enroll their children at P.S. 191, which has low standardized test scores and was once labeled “persistently dangerous” by New York State. The department has said it would start a [gifted and talented program](#) for third graders at the school next year and would provide financing, starting this year, for an instructional coach to work with teachers on math and literacy.

The department also said on Wednesday that it was moving to consolidate two schools in Harlem, essentially closing Public School 241, which last year had only 112 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. To do that, the department is asking the council to approve redrawing the zone lines of five other schools. Students and staff now at P.S. 241 would be moved to Public School 76, eight blocks north.