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Subject: Pool report - Bronx

Mayor de Blasio visited the JFK campus in the South Bronx, which houses seven high schools and was rocked by an explosion in August.

He surveyed the construction site in a restricted area of the building on the 6th floor, which was severely damaged and unlike the rest of the campus, has not reopened. "Things have gotten a lot better," he said. "What a difference a few weeks makes." He said officials initially thought there was "no physical way" JFK could reopen for the school year, but managed to get it ready.

Deputy Chancellor Elizabeth Rose and the principals of all seven schools accompanied him. Rose said every student at the schools is being accommodated in the building. De Blasio asked what it would take to get the remaining area of the building back on line. Rose said the biggest issue would be rebuilding the exterior walls, which were blown out by the explosion. She said the worst hit area, where science labs were, would likely take until next September to complete, but they will try to get other exterior rooms back open sooner than that. "This whole area is entirely cut off from the students?" de Blasio asked. Rose said yes, it's "sealed off" and there is only one key which the custodian has. She said that mobile carts are providing science lab tools to replace the destroyed facilities.

De Blasio took an up close look at the area where the explosion blew out the walls, which now have just blue tarps hanging where the walls used to be. He then walked over to the other side of the room to look out the window at solar panels, which he had visited this school to unveil last year. A staffer told him they generate 25% of the campus's electricity.

De Blasio greeted each of the seven principals individually. He told them he had spent the rest of the day visiting pre-Ks. "We have a lot of kids who are going to be very, very prepared by the time they get to you," he said. "You're going to get a great group of kids." One of the principals said that her own daughter started pre-K today. "It went fine," she said. De Blasio noted he saw a lot of kids who were eager to get to class while their parents were the clingy ones, not dissimilar to his own experience bringing Dante to college. "I just dropped Dante off to college. It was a very polite cold shoulder."

Kara Sperling, principal of the Bronx Engineering and Technology Academy, spoke about how the schools have had to share space and make sure every room is being used in order to fit in the reduced space. Teachers volunteered to move rooms more than the three times a day that is the max under their contract. "It's been hard work. I left here at 2:30 this morning and then came back at 6:30."

"Today was absolutely smooth, every child programmed, every child in a classroom, everybody ready to go."

"I feel 100% supported."

"This is the best case scenario you could ask for in such a horrible circumstance."