

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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March 26, 2009  
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HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:

ROBERT JACKSON  
Chairperson

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Simcha Felder  
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Helen D. Foster  
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## A P P E A R A N C E S

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## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Joel Klein  
Chancellor  
NYC Department of Education

Photeine Anagnostopoulos  
Chief Operating Officer  
NYC Department of Education

Susan Olds  
Budget Director  
NYC Department of Education

Randi Weingarten  
President  
United Federation of Teachers

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Dr. Marion Phyllis Cunningham  
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Jung Mi Kim

Casey Kim

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Education Council for district 25

Mihyon Nam

## A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Eric Weltman  
New York City Advocacy Director  
Alliance for Quality Education

Carol Boyd  
Parent Leader  
New York City Coalition for Educational Justice

Jose Gonzalez  
United Parents of Highbridge  
New York City Coalition for Educational Justice

Arnold Gore  
Washington Heights Alternatives to Military  
Recruitment

Cheryl Wertz  
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David Tykulsker  
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Mindy Duitz  
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Jackie Sherman  
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Eugene Gamiel  
Director  
Music Outreach Learning Through Music

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: ...To today's hearing of the Committee on Education and this is our second hearing on the Mayor's preliminary budget for Fiscal Year 2010. The first was a capital budget hearing on March 18th, 2009, which was a Wednesday.

And before I begin, let me introduce my colleagues that are present this morning: to my left is Simcha Felder of Brooklyn, raise your hand, Council Member Felder.

COUNCIL MEMBER FELDER: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Council Member Peter Vallone of Queens; and Council Member Jimmy Vacca of the Bronx; and in front of us Council Member Diana Reyna of Brooklyn; along with Aysha Schomberg, Counsel to the Committee to my right, and Regina Poreda-Ryan, who is our Finance Analyst to my left; along with appropriate staff on the side.

Today, we will review the Department of Education's preliminary expense budget for Fiscal Year 2010. Please notice my emphasis on the word preliminary, this budget is

1  
2 by necessity preliminary for two basic reasons.  
3 First, it is not an accurate projection of the  
4 Department of Education's budget for the coming  
5 year. And second, it would not adequately fund  
6 schools. The proposed operating budget for the  
7 department is about \$17.3 billion. That is \$440  
8 million less than the current budget for this year  
9 and a full \$1.4 billion less than the previously  
10 forecast budget for fiscal year 2010. The primary  
11 budget introduces \$308 million in the new PEGs  
12 which you know are programs to eliminate the gap,  
13 or city budget cuts, whichever one you want to use  
14 adding to the \$385 million in PEGs included in the  
15 November plan for fiscal year 2010.

16 The budget eliminates another \$719  
17 million in state school aid for next year, but  
18 makes almost no changes to departments federal  
19 revenue projections. Clearly the assumptions  
20 about education revenue underlying the preliminary  
21 budget are not likely accurate. The budget does  
22 not contemplate the rise in federal school aid  
23 provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment  
24 Act, normally known as the stimulus package.

25 During the next two years, city

1  
2 schools will likely receive close to \$600 million  
3 in new Title I funding, \$200 million in additional  
4 IDEA, which is Individual with Disability  
5 Education funds, and many millions more in federal  
6 aids for technology and innovative educational  
7 programs.

8                   The stimulus package also sends  
9 funds to New York state for the explicit purpose  
10 of supporting schools. This state's stabilization  
11 grant could bring many hundreds of millions more  
12 dollars to the city schools during the next two  
13 years. The total value of the federal rescue  
14 package for DOE remains uncertain and is, to a  
15 large extent, now in the hands of the state  
16 legislature and our governor.

17                   The preliminary budget assumptions  
18 about state revenue are also likely inaccurate.  
19 The proposed state education budget will be  
20 revised to reflect the new federal aid from the  
21 stimulus packet. This finding could reverse some  
22 of the governor's cuts to school aids. Hopefully,  
23 the legislature will not accept the proposal to  
24 slash support for special education pre-  
25 kindergarten programs and you know that's about

\$97 million, and hopefully the growing state budget gap won't further diminish state school aids.

The Department of Education's preliminary budget, while built on an uncertain and murky revenue outlook, nonetheless presents the Administration's view of how much the city would support public schools next year. The budget shows that if the dim revenue picture that is painted in the preliminary budget were to develop, the Administration would focus all of the new city and state budget cuts directly at public schools.

Public school budgets, the portion of the Department of Education's budget that pays teachers, principals, parent coordinators, buy textbooks, and copy paper, and that supports after school tutoring and enrichment programs would drop by over \$1 billion next year. That's \$1.1 billion cut to a \$5.3 billion budget directly to schools.

The preliminary budget must be preliminary. The city and state cuts taken from schools would mean 15,000 fewer teachers next year. There are about 79,000 teachers working in



1  
2 our schools right now, these cuts to the schools  
3 are absolutely untenable and unacceptable. The  
4 city and state share the burden, the duty,  
5 responsibility, and I might add, the privilege of  
6 educating the approximately one million students  
7 in our public schools. The preliminary plans put  
8 forward by both the city and state for supporting  
9 our schools next years must not be accepted--no  
10 ands, ifs, or buts. We must find the resources  
11 and the will to ensure that the schools and their  
12 students--our children--receive enough support to  
13 continue the gains they have made and to overcome  
14 any deficiencies that remain.

15 And, with that, I will turn to the  
16 Chancellor of the city of New York and so he can  
17 introduce himself and the other people at the  
18 panel for his opening remarks on this preliminary  
19 budget hearing for fiscal 2010 for the Department  
20 of Education.

21 CHANCELLOR JOEL KLEIN: Thank you,  
22 Chairman Jackson and good morning. First thing I  
23 want to observe is I notice all of the members are  
24 sitting at the other end, you're not trying to  
25 send us a signal this morning, are you? Usually

Mr. Felder sits down here and tries to help coach me on the tough questions, so...

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: He's relocating now.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you very much--there you go, there you go.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Listen, you have to have a little fun in life. You know, we work hard and we play hard.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: You're absolutely right that these are serious matters and I appreciate the way you have framed the issues for us this morning.

I'm joined this morning by my Chief Operating Officer, Photeine Anagnostopoulos--now that's a mouthful--and Susan Olds, who's our Budget Director.

I want to discuss our operating budget, as you said, for 2009-2010, but before I do, you mentioned a word about the progress we're making and there's one big note of progress that I want to just bring to the attention of this Committee. In addition to obviously rising math

1  
2 and reading scores, closing the racial and ethnic  
3 achievement gaps, and our highest graduation rate  
4 in decades in the city, just last week, the  
5 Chancellor of City University in an event with the  
6 Mayor and myself, announced that the number of New  
7 York City public school graduates attending the  
8 CUNY schools four-year schools in two-year  
9 schools, is up by about 50% from approximately  
10 16,000 graduates to 24,000 between the years 2002-  
11 2008. Let me say that again--in the last six  
12 years under mayoral control, we've increased the  
13 number of students going to CUNY from 16,000 to  
14 24,000 and I'm particularly proud to say that more  
15 than 70% of those additional 8,000 graduates were  
16 Latino or African-American. That's real progress  
17 and I commend our principals, assistant  
18 principals, teachers, staff, students, and  
19 families who, together, I believe, are  
20 dramatically changing educational outcomes in our  
21 city.

22 This year, Mr. Chairman, as you  
23 just said, we're facing unprecedented economic  
24 challenges. We are all very thankful to President  
25 Obama and the Congress for passing a federal

1  
2 stimulus package that will mitigate the hardship  
3 New York City public schools and school districts  
4 across the country are facing, but the Federal  
5 money alone, as you noted, isn't enough to spare  
6 our schools from all suffering.

7 We are working with the state to  
8 determine how this year's budget will affect our  
9 schools, so I cannot tell you for sure how much  
10 money each school will have next year, but I will  
11 need your help in that. I do know, though, that  
12 no matter how the expected federal, state, and  
13 city dollars are distributed to schools, they will  
14 have less money than they had this school year,  
15 while, at the same time, fixed costs for things  
16 like teacher salaries and special education are on  
17 the rise.

18 What does it mean for our schools?  
19 It means our schools will have to make hard  
20 choices--choices we wish they didn't have to make--  
21 -and they'll have to do more with less, or, in  
22 some instances, simply forego programs. Trust me,  
23 that is unfortunate.

24 What does it mean for the members  
25 of the City Council and the other people who

1  
2 represent New Yorkers in government? In these  
3 hard times, we must do everything in our power to  
4 protect our schools and keep our country's  
5 financial crisis from turning into a crisis in our  
6 classrooms. To that end, I know you want to work  
7 together this year as we have in the past as  
8 partners on behalf of our children. I will urge  
9 you today to do everything in your power to  
10 convince our colleagues in Albany to spend as much  
11 money as possible to support education in New York  
12 City, and, second, to give us the flexibility to  
13 put the money where it's needed most--and that's  
14 especially important in tight times.

15 Let me just walk through the budget  
16 situation right now. For the current school year,  
17 the public schools had a total budget of 21  
18 billion--that's above the operating numbers you  
19 gave because it includes pension and debt. About  
20 half of that amount came from the city, about 40%  
21 from the state, and about 10% from the federal  
22 government.

23 With the severe decline in the  
24 economy, Mr. Chairman, as you noted, we were  
25 expecting a budget shortfall of 1.4 billion before

1  
2 the federal stimulus package came. For the school  
3 year 2009-2010, that includes a 700 million  
4 reduction from Albany, on top of a 500 million  
5 reduction from the city and cost increases for  
6 things like teachers' salaries and mandated  
7 special education services. We're now counting on  
8 receiving significant funds from the federal  
9 government's American Recovery and Reinvestment  
10 Act, which should greatly reduce that budget gap.

11 Stimulus package, as you noted,  
12 will give us additional Title I and IDEA funds and  
13 they should amount to 400 million for each of the  
14 next two years. Now depending on what the  
15 Governor and the Legislature do with the  
16 Stabilization Funds, the city could also receive  
17 slightly upwards of \$500 million in federal  
18 stabilization funds in each of the next two years.  
19 For fiscal year '10, that would bring our budget  
20 gap to about 500 million. However, our budget gap  
21 could reach nearly 650 million if New York City  
22 receives less than its fair share of Stabilization  
23 Funds from Albany and we believe as a legal matter  
24 that we're entitled to the higher number based on  
25 prior practices in Albany.

1  
2                   So let me reiterate: there are  
3 still very many unknowns, but let's take a closer  
4 look at where we are so we can start our  
5 discussion off a common set of facts. The  
6 Governor and Mayor's preliminary budget estimates  
7 are known to us and we know, generally, how much  
8 money is going to Albany from the federal  
9 government. We don't know what Albany will give  
10 us in terms of the stimulus funds, we don't know  
11 how the state will choose to restrict or loosen  
12 its restrictions on how we can spend our money,  
13 and we don't know if there will be any shifting in  
14 the budget numbers from the city or state as we  
15 approach the start of our fiscal year--that's a  
16 lot of unknowns. In addition, the U.S. Department  
17 of Education hasn't yet issued final guidelines  
18 for states and school districts that clarify how  
19 the money in the stimulus package can be allocated  
20 and distributed over time. So this is, in short,  
21 a real time of uncertainty and we are trying to  
22 give our schools and our communities as much  
23 clarity as possible, despite the questions that  
24 still remain unanswered.

25                   In the past four rounds of cuts, we

1  
2 have done all we can to minimize budget cuts to  
3 the school, exacting as much in savings as  
4 possible out of our administrative, non-school  
5 spending. Why? Because I believe dollars as  
6 close as possible to students where they can have  
7 a direct impact on learning is where they should  
8 be. This is important since mid-fiscal year 2008,  
9 when the first of four budget cuts was  
10 implemented, Central and Field budgets have been  
11 reduced by twice their share of the reducible  
12 budget, while school budgets have been reduced by  
13 half their share. For fiscal year '09, the  
14 current one alone, we cut Central and Field  
15 budgets by 6%, while reducing our school budgets  
16 by only 1%. Fiscal year '09 reduction includes  
17 the elimination of 475--almost 500 administrative  
18 positions, which represent an 8% reduction in  
19 overall administrative headcount.

20 Today, and I think this is really  
21 atypical in public education, our Central and  
22 Field costs represent only 3% of our total budget,  
23 and, as we move forward, it's important to  
24 remember that what we do in Central and the Field  
25 is critically important to our schools. Much as



1  
2 we want the money in our schools, some of these  
3 services are indispensable to the functioning of  
4 our district. Payroll and HR, for example,  
5 keeping them up and running and our technology  
6 systems functioning is critical to our schools'  
7 operations. And let me be clear about this,  
8 without a sound accountability system that  
9 provides schools, teachers, and families with the  
10 information they need, we will seriously undermine  
11 our schools' ability to operate and to succeed.

12 Today, as we prepare to cut back  
13 more, we have no choice but to reduce the number  
14 of dollars being sent to our schools.

15 The decisions we must make are even  
16 more difficult because nearly half of our \$21  
17 billion budget cannot be reduced. We have many  
18 fixed costs like pension, debt service, special ed  
19 mandates, energy, and leases. As a result, we  
20 have only \$11 billion available for reductions.  
21 So we must find 500 million or more in savings  
22 from a pot of 11 billion, not \$21 billion. And,  
23 of that \$11 billion, I should also note, almost  
24 90% goes to teachers and other staff covered by  
25 union contracts.

1  
2                   So while we don't know how the  
3 necessary reductions will affect our schools  
4 because of two reasons, we know a fair amount.  
5 First, we don't know how much we're going to get  
6 and, second, we don't know what the restrictions  
7 will be.

8                   If we receive what we believe we're  
9 entitled to, the 500 million plus in state  
10 stabilization funds, the average cut to our  
11 schools would be about 6%. Depending on the  
12 restrictions, however, some schools could see  
13 their budgets rise, while others could see a cut  
14 of 13%, with nearly a quarter of our schools, or  
15 345 of them, taking a cut of more than 18%. And  
16 that's because the way the state money flows and  
17 the federal money in Title I and so forth.

18                  Today, some in Albany are arguing  
19 that the city deserves substantially less than the  
20 500 million from the stabilization funds. Indeed,  
21 one number that's being used is 360 million and I  
22 know I can count on you to join me in doing  
23 everything possible to prevent that scenario,  
24 which would leave our schools with an average cut  
25 of 8%, with some schools receiving a cut of 15%.

Forty five percent, or 653 schools, would face a cut greater than 8%.

Our schools dedicate most of their budgets to paying for the salaries of people who are teaching and supporting public school children. Once in school, 86 cents in every dollar covers salaries of teachers, principals, and other staff. Another 6 cents covers per session and per diem compensation for educators, leaving only 8 cents in every dollar in schools for non-labor costs.

Schools would therefore have to significantly reduce their non-labor spending. With cuts that could be over 30% of per session costs and non-labor costs in many schools, after school programs and other enrichment and support programs will have to be eliminated. So, while we'll work with our schools to help them cut back in areas other than personnel, significant layoffs of school-based staff is almost certainly going to happen under the circumstances that we're contemplating.

Layoffs will likely include teachers as well if Albany comes in at the lower

1  
2 end of the \$362 million number, with some schools  
3 having to eliminate as many as three or four  
4 teaching positions. And, depending on how  
5 attrition falls out, we still may not be able to  
6 avoid a small reduction in teachers if we were to  
7 receive the 500 million in stabilization funds.

8           The severity of the impact on our  
9 schools will vary widely. Variation, as I said,  
10 is due to the impact of Title I and by law those  
11 funds must be distributed to schools based on the  
12 number of students in poverty, characterized as  
13 students receiving free or reduced lunch. A small  
14 number of schools receiving the largest amount of  
15 Title I dollars may actually see an increase in  
16 their budgets year over year for the school year  
17 2010, while those that receive no Title I dollars  
18 could see cuts greater than 10%.

19           This is good news actually, in  
20 preparing for the upcoming budget cut, a little  
21 over half our schools have planned to save, on  
22 average, about 115,000 to offset a portion of  
23 their cuts in the 2009-10 school year for a total  
24 rollover this year of \$95 million. That reflects  
25 smart planning by those schools and I commend them

1  
2 for it. But even with the rollovers, most of  
3 those schools will experience significant cuts.

4 Under the federal stimulus package,  
5 we're also eligible to receive funds from what's  
6 being called, the "What Works Innovation Fund."  
7 We believe, because of our leadership in this  
8 area, we're well positioned to receive these  
9 dollars, the Education Secretary says he's looking  
10 to give it to districts that have successful  
11 reforms and can serve as a model for other school  
12 districts across the U.S. and I note with proud  
13 that one of the first visits by the Education  
14 Secretary was to New York City.

15 We can and will apply for money  
16 that will support our accountability work and our  
17 teacher quality initiative and additional federal  
18 funds will support teacher incentive programs like  
19 our schoolwide performance bonus program that we  
20 partnered with the UFT on, which rewards teachers  
21 at schools that successfully raise student  
22 performance. We'll be working as hard as we can  
23 to get as many of those dollars as well.

24 We have been working behind the  
25 scenes, you know the Mayor and Randi Weingarten

1  
2 and we were in Albany yesterday partnering with  
3 the UFT and others to try to get as much money as  
4 possible for our schools and make this year's  
5 budget situation as bearable as possible for our  
6 educators, students, and their families. We  
7 should receive some clearer answers from Albany in  
8 early April. As soon as we know what to expect,  
9 we will be meeting with principals and allocating  
10 budgets to schools. We know how important it is  
11 for principals to work with their teams and  
12 communities to plan for the next school year, so  
13 we hope to give them a sense of their budgets  
14 within the next month.

15 As usual, I end with how you can  
16 help me and help our kids. Everybody knows how  
17 difficult this year is--tax revenues are falling,  
18 many New Yorkers are losing their jobs, and  
19 lawmakers, including this Council, know how tight  
20 money is in our city and state. But, at a  
21 minimum, I would urge you to take two steps with  
22 us. First, we've got to insist that we get our  
23 fair share of federal education funds and as much  
24 money as possible from our schools in Albany. So  
25 please work with me to secure that.

Second, we need flexibility, and this is important, 'cause sometimes people don't understand it, so that whatever funds we get, we can spend them equitably. Disparate impacts in different schools is not desirable during tight times and so often, the state law restricts how we can spend our money. Principals will soon be in a position of needing to eliminate core programs, while maintaining supplementary programs and that's not an abstract problem. Here's an example I talked about in Albany in January, just to give you one of many of the things our schools are looking at. At IS 231 in Queens, approximately 90% of Principal Emmanuel Lubin's budget is comprised of tax levy dollars, and all but about 2% of those dollars go to paying teachers and other school employees. Mr. Lubin would have to lay off several teachers in order to have enough money to meet the budget cuts and continue operating. IS 231 also receives almost half million dollars in State Contracts for Excellence dollars. Last year, the school used some of that money to hire a coach and mentor for the newly hired teachers. But this year, the school could

1  
2 actually be forced to fire some of the new  
3 teachers the mentoring coach were hired to help,  
4 but under the contract regulations, he would have  
5 to continue to pay for the mentoring program or  
6 some other supplemental program. That doesn't  
7 make sense and we need to make sure together that  
8 we convince Albany to allow our schools to make  
9 rational budget decisions in what are,  
10 unfortunately, tight times.

11 I thank you for your attention and  
12 I look forward to your questions.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well,  
14 Chancellor, it's always good to see you, we would  
15 love to see you here more often in our hearings,  
16 and, as you know, we have several hearings coming  
17 up between now and June. I believe April 1st we  
18 have a hearing on the DOE contracts, I believe on  
19 April 6th we're having a hearing on charter  
20 schools, and obviously then we go into the  
21 executive budgets. So we hope and expect to see  
22 you here in the future.

23 But let me just ask, you talked  
24 about that you and the Mayor and Randi Weingarten  
25 of UFT were up in Albany yesterday trying to



1  
2 communicate loud and clear the message from New  
3 York City, and you talked about what the  
4 expectations are and what you're hearing up in  
5 Albany. Looking at what you're hearing from the  
6 worst-case scenario, you had said that some people  
7 are talking about \$360 million versus a 500 and I  
8 think 80 or 560 that we think that we deserve--not  
9 think, we know that we deserve. If in fact,  
10 Albany does not come through, I want to know what  
11 will be the impact as far as overall, the number  
12 of employees that you, as the Chancellor, may have  
13 to direct to be laid off.

14 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Assuming we get  
15 the 362 million, is that the question you're  
16 asking?

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So I mean  
18 that we get 360 million that some people are  
19 talking about.

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And no  
21 additional city funds.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And no  
23 additional monies.

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I can't give you  
25 a precise number because I don't know about

1  
2 attrition, but I can give you some generalization-  
3 -

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Please, if  
5 you don't mind.

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --which means we  
7 could lay off non-teachers at a level of 25% of  
8 their people, again, depends how many people--our  
9 first preference is always to use attrition, but  
10 depending on how many people leave the system, the  
11 number that we could lay off of non-teachers could  
12 be that high.

13 The number of teachers is harder to  
14 predict, again, it depends. We usually get 5,000,  
15 5,500 teachers that leave, which I'm proud to say  
16 is way down from where we started. I don't know  
17 what will happen in this tough budget times, but  
18 if we were to get the bad situation, we could be  
19 in a layoff situation for teachers for a couple of  
20 thousand teachers, in addition to attrition, could  
21 possibly go higher, but those are big numbers, Mr.  
22 Chairman.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Because, you  
24 know, when you talk about it depends on the  
25 attrition rate and whether or not people retire

1  
2 and leave and what have you, with the economic  
3 situation where people are not having jobs and  
4 even people that may have saved money over the  
5 years and invested monies and, as you know,  
6 investments have dropped off and people have lost  
7 money to the tune of 25 to 50 to 80% of their  
8 investments. So with those facts, people are  
9 basically working harder and longer because the  
10 resources that they had are not there. So I don't  
11 expect that attrition rate, the turnover rate,  
12 will be as high as normal in the past.

13 But you said approximately 25% of  
14 non-teaching staff and that could mean thousands  
15 and thousands of non-teachers, and you said  
16 several thousand teachers possibly. So, I mean,  
17 not knowing the total number, let's say 25%, I'm  
18 looking at a number of--would it be safe to say  
19 that in totality 10,000 employees, meaning  
20 teachers and non-teaching staff, would that be  
21 safe to say?

22 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I think that  
23 number under the assumption we're working on is  
24 too high. Our projection would be that if we get  
25 the 360, we could lose a total of about 4,500

employees approximately.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that includes teachers and non-teaching staff?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That includes attrition?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: That includes attrition.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And it includes attrition, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Includes attrition rate of previous years, like last year?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But if in fact attrition rate is not the same then what would you say, the attrition rate was about 5,000 employees?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Right, but what I'm being told by my Chief Operating Officer is that we would--whether it's through attrition or through termination, we would estimate we lose about 4,500. We think we'd lose quite a few of those through attrition, particularly in the teaching ranks where people do retire, but we'd have to terminate some teachers and some non-

1  
2 teaching staff and all-in it would be a loss of  
3 about 4,500, between four and 5,000 personnel at  
4 the schools.

5 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So rounded  
6 off approximately 5,000.

7 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That's--

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So if in  
9 fact, the positive scenario that we got the 500--  
10 and did you say 560 million that is--

11 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing] I  
12 think it's about 500 million, Mr. Chairman.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. And we  
14 got the additional help that we're seeking out of  
15 Albany, what would that look like as far as would  
16 there be any reductions in staff or would there be  
17 additional hires?

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: There'd be  
19 reductions, I'm just getting the number for it.

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Sure, go  
21 ahead.

22 [Off mic]

23 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: There'd be a  
24 reduction in non-teachers, not in teaching staff  
25 if we get the additional \$140 million, and a

reduction in non-teaching staff could be--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: About 3,000.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --about 3,000.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that 3,000 number of non-teaching staff, that would include taking into consideration all of city's fiscal situation taken into effect the higher amount of money from the state of New York and the stimulus package and the things that you talked about?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yeah, we would still, if we got--again, assuming there's no additional state or city monies coming, we would probably have a shortfall even with the 500 million of approximately 500 million. We started with 1.4, 500 was given to--well 400 million was given to us from IDEA and Title I, another 500 on stimulus package would be 900 million and leave a shortfall of about 500 million. That 500 million we project would lead to a reduction in non-teaching staff of about 2,500 to 3,000.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now as far as the state is concerned, I believe in the governor's message that he planned to reduce pre-K

special education funding by about \$97 million, is that correct?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I think that's the number.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And so if the state moves forward with that, and I hope they don't, would we have to--the city of New York have to pick that up? Are we mandated to pick that up?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yes, we're mandated to pick that up.

[Crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We're mandated?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes, if it's special ed, pre-K, yes.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We are mandated.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But, you know, I've heard when some parents have gone to register their kids in public school, some parents from the day cares, they've been told that kindergarten is not mandated by law, so why would we be mandated to pay for pre-K--not even K, but

pre-K special education services?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's my understanding, but I want to make sure we check with Counsel and have the opportunity to supplement the record, my understanding is different rules apply to students in special education governed by the IDEA and, therefore, different requirements.

Under state law, kindergarten is not a mandated grade and certainly pre-K isn't, but under the federal law, maybe a requirement is-

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: For special--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --for special ed students, correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now of the approximately 3,000 or 5,000 staff that may receive pink slips if in fact it happens, are you talking about school staff or non-school staff?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: School staff.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Cause you know, you have administration, you have the regents, you have the--what is it called?



FEMALE VOICE 1: ISC.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The  
integrated--

FEMALE VOICE 2: ISC.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Integrated  
what?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Service Centers,  
yeah.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Service  
Centers? ISCs and others, so are you talking  
about school staff, are you talking about--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: School staff.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Three  
thousand school staff.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Approximately,  
yes.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: And that's--

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well how  
would it look as far as non-school staff?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: In terms of non-  
school staff, we've already cut I just announced  
500 or 8% this year, we will probably have to cut  
additional next year, but it won't be a large

number. We have in our whole budget, our administrative staff is similar around 3% of the budget, our total thing.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You mean as far as dollars are concerned?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: As far as dollars are concerned.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And so I don't expect that we will see large cuts in non-school staff, because we've been cutting them and this year in particular, we eliminated 8% of our positions, about 500.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So in essence, you're basically what you're communicating with us, you've already trimmed it down to as much as possible, maybe you can trim it down a little bit more.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Somewhat, but not a lot. It wouldn't have a big dollar, I mean, if I cut another I mean, I try to cut another four or \$5 million wouldn't have a huge impact in the--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]

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Overall in the entire--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 'Cause you're talking about 500 million--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Exactly.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --is that correct?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Five hundred to 650 is the range we've been talking about, based on whether it's 362 or the 500 million, okay.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So I'm looking here at the budgeted headcount and it said as of fiscal 2009 adopted budget there were 139,590 employees and that under the fiscal 2010 preliminary budget there's 124,175, with a reduction of 15,415. Can you explain that to--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --us if you don't mind?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I actually can. The 15,000, as you remember, were the number that the Mayor announced when he announced the preliminary budget, he said based on the dollars that then existed, he estimated we'd have to cut

1  
2 our staff by 15,000 teachers. Then we went and  
3 people in this Council went to Washington and  
4 working with our new president, our New York  
5 delegation, we got the stimulus package through.  
6 The stimulus package will give us a minimum of  
7 about 716 million all-in or a maximum of about 900  
8 million, plus whatever grants we can get which  
9 will be targeted areas. That money that's  
10 somewhere between 760 and 900 that we will use  
11 principally to retain our teachers in the system.  
12 We still will have to make other cuts and, again,  
13 if the number dips to 760, we may have to  
14 eliminate somewhere around a couple thousand  
15 teachers. So about a thousand teachers cost us  
16 \$70 million. So that's the way we do the  
17 estimate.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: About a 1,000  
19 teachers cost about how much?

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Seventy million.  
21 So the money in play in Albany, 362 to just--  
22 again, I don't want to get down to micro-numbers  
23 'cause they're far too early, but if you were to  
24 do the difference between 500 and 360, you'd be  
25 light \$140 million, that would be approximately

1  
2 2,000 teachers.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And the  
4 average teacher salary, when you say about 2,000,  
5 you talking about the average teacher salary.

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Seventy  
7 thousand.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Seventy  
9 thousand dollars?

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well some  
11 district's a little higher, some are little lower,  
12 if you do it through attrition, you may lose  
13 higher, but because of people going into  
14 retirement, you hire new people, it's a little  
15 less.

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now the Mayor  
17 when the federal stimulus package was approved,  
18 the Mayor basically said that the approximately  
19 14,000 teachers that were expected to be laid-off  
20 were under the plan basically is saved in essence.  
21 So the federal stimulus package, are we getting  
22 that money directly from the federal government or  
23 it must pass through, through the state and is the  
24 state going to take some of that money or is it  
25 directed through categorical programs where it has

1  
2 to be directed to certain areas or is the money  
3 flexible?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We lobbied to  
5 get it directly, it's about half and half, 400  
6 million comes through--300 million through Title  
7 I, a 100 million through IDEA--that comes directly  
8 to the school district.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: To us.

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: To us, that's  
11 400 million, but it's earmarked, you understand,  
12 okay. I can't use that as general revenue, right?  
13 Then there's another--approximately how much total  
14 went to the state?

15 [Off mic]

16 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: ...for  
17 education.

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Say you got 2.4  
19 billion for education, we believe based on the  
20 laws written, they should pass through to us 500  
21 million. Now that's a pass-through per year for  
22 two years, right. So that would be \$1 billion out  
23 of the 2.4 and we estimate--

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]  
25 500 million each year.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Each year.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: So think about--  
the number is 2.4?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yes.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: So 2.4, we think  
we're entitled to 41% based as the law is written.  
So 2.4, 41%, it would be a little over 500 million  
each year, right? Now they're taking--some people  
are taking a different view, and that's the  
question and where, again, I need the Council to  
help weigh in, as I said, the Mayor and Randi were  
up there yesterday on precisely this issue. So  
that difference is a swing of 140 million and it  
explains the 2,000 approximately teachers that we  
would lose from the system.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But,  
Chancellor, the preliminary budget also may not  
actually reflect the Department of Education's  
best current estimates for fiscal '9 and 2010  
expenditures in savings. The Carter case budget  
is clearly in our opinion too low according to DOE  
staff and the food budget is likely also  
inaccurate. What are the most significant risks

1  
2 or inaccuracies in the DOE's budget as reflected  
3 in the January plan?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Certainly Carter  
5 cases since that is an unknowable in the sense  
6 that those are court-based cases, that's something  
7 we've looked at very closely 'cause it has been  
8 growing There could be other mandated IEP  
9 services that we're required to provide and those  
10 we make our best estimates, but those are  
11 certainly things that we need to look at. Or at  
12 least raise contingencies in the plan.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now when you  
14 talk about cuts to the schools, already we and you  
15 and I'm sure everyone has heard that principals  
16 and school leaders and parents are saying we're  
17 already cut to the bone, our OTPS, we hardly have  
18 any money for paper and supplies and stuff like  
19 that. How are we going to expect the schools to  
20 run, run efficiently? I'm talking about  
21 efficiently in order to carry out the mandates of  
22 educating our children if we don't have paper, if  
23 we don't have supplies, and in order to do that?

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well as I said,  
25 the number we work with is there's about 8% of



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school budget that goes to OTPS and--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Right, Other Than Personal Service.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Other Than Personal Services and another 6% goes for things like per session and per diem, that's 14%, and the schools will have to make major cuts in those things. And I want to associate myself with the implication of your question that that is not good--these are tight times, we can only spend what we get, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So in essence, I'm trying to lay this out from a practical point of view. If I'm the principal of a school and I've already basically cut some of my programs already, some after-school programs that I had, I've either eliminated one or two or reduced the period of time of the program, I may have hired a retired teacher in order to help out with the tutoring of math or reading, or I may have brought in other staff to mentor, as an example that you've brought in, and now I have to reduce more. So I may have to eliminate all my after-school programs, I may have to, instead of

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2 the teachers in the classroom, the other staff  
3 that I brought in, in order to help my students to  
4 succeed to get up to the level of being an average  
5 student, I may have to eliminate all of those and  
6 just go with the core of a teacher in a classroom  
7 and nothing else. And that could be a scenario  
8 that could play out in September?

9 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I don't think  
10 it's quite that, but you would have to cut a lot.  
11 If you think about it this way, out of that 14% I  
12 just mentioned, the six and the eight, that would  
13 be somewhere around 8 billion, 14% would be  
14 somewhere around, what \$100 million, \$1 billion?  
15 So it would be about \$1 billion in OTPS and in  
16 non-salaried payments to teachers and other staff.  
17 And out of that billion you would be talking about  
18 people cutting possibly, depending on the overall  
19 cuts in the system, somewhere around 400 million.  
20 So you'd still have some money in there, but you'd  
21 have to cut back on tutoring services, Saturday  
22 programs, after-school programs, and it would  
23 depend on the individual school. Some schools  
24 don't have an after-school program, some schools  
25 do; some schools use more F status teachers or

1  
2 other mentors or coaches and they'd have to all  
3 make individualized determinations, but they  
4 wouldn't lose all of their OTPS under this  
5 scenario.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well I'm just  
7 trying to understand from a practical point of  
8 view what type of situation the leaders of a  
9 school are going to be in and to what type of  
10 programs would have to be reduced. So, besides  
11 the other programs that are laid out, I may have  
12 to reduce also as far as actual teachers that may  
13 have been in the classroom and/or  
14 paraprofessionals and or school aides which are  
15 under my jurisdiction?

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: The answer is  
17 yes, and that, again, depends in terms of  
18 classroom teachers, what I'm saying is if we get  
19 the 500 million from Albany, you won't have to  
20 reduce classroom teachers. If, in fact, we get  
21 less than that, we will have to reduce some  
22 classroom teachers. I do think if we get the 500  
23 million, we'll still have to reduce the school  
24 aides and family workers and also cut other  
25 programs. And the specifics of those programs,

1  
2 what I'm saying is, it may be certain coverages  
3 that they have for teachers, it may be an after-  
4 school program, it may be a program where the  
5 teacher is tutoring the student and getting paid a  
6 per session for that--those are the kinds of  
7 things. Some of our schools have Saturday  
8 programs, some of our schools, you know, pay for a  
9 teacher to attend a conference I think, you know,  
10 good conference for professional development, they  
11 may have to cut that.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And when will  
13 we have a clearer picture from our perspective as  
14 to where things are? Give me a timeframe in your  
15 opinion.

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well here's the  
17 critical variable, the most critical variable is--  
18 and you're probably better equipped to answer this  
19 thank I am, when will Albany pass its budget?

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And once we have  
22 that, then I think the last part of this will be  
23 the usual passage of the city budget and in there,  
24 again, is in the past, it maybe things that are  
25 restored to our budget. When we get the Albany

1  
2 budget, we will then notify our schools of a  
3 preliminary sense and the two things that I'm  
4 hoping for is we get the higher number or even  
5 more, and second, we get some flexibility. So  
6 whatever cuts there are, I'd much preferred to cut  
7 each school the same, rather than cut one school  
8 10%, and another school end up being flat from  
9 last year.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Let me  
11 introduce our colleagues that have joined us. We  
12 have Oliver Koppell to my right here from the  
13 Bronx and Dan Garodnick from Manhattan and in  
14 front, John Liu of Queens.

15 And let me turn to my colleagues  
16 who have some questions and my colleagues, five  
17 minutes question-and-answer then you can come back  
18 if you need be.

19 And, as you know, this is all  
20 preliminary hopefully this will not be the budget  
21 that we'll be dealing with, so I'm going to ask to  
22 stay on preliminary budget questions and if you  
23 need specific questions, specific school stuff, I  
24 ask you to contact the Chancellor's office  
25 directly regarding a specific school question.

Now let me turn to our colleagues  
Peter Vallone of Queens and Diana Reyna of  
Brooklyn. Council Member Vallone, Jr.

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you,  
Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: You were  
hiding our colleague, Helen Diane Foster, I'm  
sorry, Helen, I didn't see you. Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you  
again, Mr. Chair. I know that my colleagues will  
go into much further detail in some of those  
stimulus issues, so I want to ask about another  
topic that I realize may not seem as important,  
but it is a very important safety issue with  
parents of children--I'm speaking about cell  
phones and the ability to take them to and from  
school. Very important safety issue for parents  
of public school kids who take buses, especially  
like my two daughters do. We passed a law which  
mandated that these children have a right to take  
cell phones to and from schools which cannot be  
interfered with. As a result of that law, you  
testified not too long ago that you were going to  
institute a pilot program of lockers to store

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2 these cell phones in, I didn't think it was the  
3 best idea, but it was an effort at compromise on  
4 your part. Does this budget include any money for  
5 these lockers and how is the pilot program going,  
6 if it's going at all?

7 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It doesn't, and  
8 we haven't been able to successfully find a vendor  
9 who would be able to do this for us, so right now,  
10 there is no pilot program.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I can't  
12 say I did not expect that because I did not think  
13 it was a possible program to implement. And I  
14 can't say I'm not disappointed in the fact that  
15 you've obviously made no effort to comply with the  
16 law that we passed as representatives of the  
17 parents of school kids. Are there any other  
18 efforts you're making in order to give school kids  
19 the right to take phones to and from school and,  
20 therefore, make them even safer?

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We don't have  
22 any other effort, there are lots of students who  
23 take them to and from school, leave them at a  
24 store nearby, and that's a practice that has grown  
25 up, but we don't have a systematic solution to the

1  
2 problem.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: You know,  
4 8-year-olds making business transactions with  
5 bodega owners is not the way we should be  
6 addressing this problem. There's got to be a  
7 better solution and it's your job to come up with  
8 one or it's our job to go to court and make sure  
9 our laws are enforced. So I can't tell you how  
10 much I disagree with what you just said, but let  
11 me end with--since I know a lot of my colleagues  
12 have questions--again thanking you for the job you  
13 do to educate our kids, my kids in public school,  
14 doing great, and we disagree on some issues, but  
15 overall, I think you're doing a great job. Thank  
16 you.

17 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well thank you  
18 very much, I appreciate that, sir.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: My  
20 colleagues, I'm going to ask you to stay on  
21 general budget questions and not specific topics,  
22 you can talk to the Chancellor later about  
23 specific schools in your district, but stick to  
24 the general of the city's budget, if you don't  
25 mind.



Let me turn to our colleague Diana Reyna of Brooklyn.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good morning, Chancellor.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Good morning.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I just wanted to ask, as far as the total budget that's dedicated to contracted services, can you just give me a figure on that?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Can you--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: OTPS of [off mic].

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: When you say contracted services, things that the city contracts or the department contracts?

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Mm-hmm.

[Off mic]

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It's my understanding that every time we ask for total figure, it's difficult for you to answer the question, because it's separated into different categories and so I'm attempting to get one amount of contracted services.

[Off mic]

[Pause]

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: A billion  
dollar--

[Off mic]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: A billion  
dollars.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Reducible in  
that 11 billion--

[Off mic]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: So it's a  
billion dollars.

[Off mic]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: So Council, it's  
not contracts.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: It's not all  
contracts, so we can get.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: All right. So  
what we know is there is approximately \$1 billion  
in OTPS, most of that, but not all of it, is for  
contracts, some of it by the schools, some of it  
by the department if we're contracting for  
curricula materials. We have the numbers broken  
down by line, we just haven't added them up and  
we'll be happy to supply them to you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Chancellor,  
I'm just trying to get the Department of  
Education, not just schools, as far as contracted  
services are concerned.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: So the--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Just read it a  
bit, Connie, just...

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: The large  
contracts that we have are \$560 million for  
transportation--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]  
Could you just move the--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Five hundred  
and--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --move the mic  
down a--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sixty--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --little bit  
more, if you don't mind. Yeah.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Okay, sure.  
Five hundred and--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]  
Push it down and--Chancellor, there you go, a

little--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --there you go.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Five hundred and 60 million for transportation.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:  
[Interposing] Sixteen, you said.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Five hundred and 60 million.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Sixty million.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Five six oh.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Yes.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Universal pre-Kindergarten of 77 million, building management of 26 million goes into--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:  
[Interposing] What is 26 million?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Right, data processing of 17 million, professional services in this category of about 16 million, and then we, for instance, we have special ed services, so this will be a large number of individuals who are

1  
2 providing services in terms of speech therapy and  
3 so on, that'll be about 128 million, the periodic  
4 assessments are at 16 million, we go into things  
5 like the \$9 million for something like our galaxy  
6 system, which is our budgeting and reporting  
7 system. So we can get you this entire outline if  
8 you'd like listing of these, but those are the  
9 large contracts.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And these  
11 under the Department of Education as a whole, this  
12 is the total--you're going to get us the total  
13 figure.

14 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We'll get you  
15 the total figure, but these are the biggest  
16 categories, if you will.

17 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And food  
18 service?

19 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: And food--

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Food is also a  
21 big number.

22 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yeah, they  
23 just--yeah. These are the ones for tax levy.

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Oh.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So, for

1  
2 instance, I am referring to accounting and  
3 auditing, legal services, engineering, and  
4 architectural services, computer services, direct  
5 educational services, there's a professional  
6 service that's under Other.

7 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: So we'll  
8 provide you all those figures.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And the  
10 question I'm trying to follow-up with is how much  
11 of that total figure is being trimmed as part of  
12 the budget cut in the preliminary process?

13 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Understood.  
14 If you look at the contracts in terms of the  
15 categories, so, for instance, in transportation,  
16 which is going to be the largest bucket of  
17 contracts, it is very difficult for us to trim  
18 anything there, we are reimbursed for 50% and  
19 those are long-term contracts. So that one is a  
20 difficult area to try to trim back on.

21 But we have trimmed back on, for  
22 instance, in some of our professional development  
23 contracts, some in the professional services area.  
24 In the area of the--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:

1  
2 [Interposing] Can you just give me the amounts  
3 that was trimmed down for professional service?

4 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Sure, I can  
5 provide you those later, we did not bring those  
6 with us, so we can bring that to you after offline  
7 if you will.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Okay.

9 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: But we are  
10 cutting back on things like professional  
11 development; we have cut back on assessments  
12 contracts, if you will; we have cut back  
13 significantly on IT contracts. So where we can  
14 take the cut backs, we have done so. The area  
15 that has been increasing is on the, basically as  
16 Chancellor Klein had mentioned, is in the special  
17 ed services area--those are increasing cost.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And I just  
19 want to state for the record, I have a total of  
20 \$3.3 billion of contracted services. I just want  
21 to be able to compare what we have and what you're  
22 going to give us and understand where we have been  
23 able to trim, where it's not going to have a  
24 direct hit in the classroom, so that we're looking  
25 at everything across the board in the Department

1  
2 of Education, not just where each school has  
3 contracted services, but where the Department of  
4 Education has contracted services. And I don't  
5 know if it's possible to get those questions  
6 answered as we continue this hearing to be able to  
7 get an answer, so that while we're here, if  
8 someone back at the offices can answer these  
9 questions.

10 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: If, what  
11 you're trying to drive at is what percentage of  
12 the contracts we've reduced, we can get you that  
13 answer, I don't think we can do that while we're  
14 sitting at this hearing because it was done within  
15 each department's budget, so--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:  
17 [Interposing] Well you already know--

18 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: --we will be  
19 able to get that to you. It'll probably be after  
20 the hearing though.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.  
22 Council Member?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Yes?

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: We're going  
25 to go and you come back a second round?



COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I only asked one question.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm sorry, it's been like six minutes already, though. It's okay, we'll come back to you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. They did take quite a long time to get a response, I'll you an additional minute, go ahead, ask one more question, Council Member.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I didn't get this question answered, but--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Let's get it answered then, go ahead, you go ahead.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: That's the answer I'm looking for, but in the meantime, I can just in the testimony it said, Chancellor, that you need flexibility to spend available funds where they're needed so that principals can allocate their remaining dollars to those programs which best improve student achievement. Is your intent to allow for principals to have flexibility in their accounting?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Flexibility,

yes. There are some restrictions on that, there are restrictions under federal law and under state law, and there are also--there may be implications with layoffs where they won't have flexibility because of all the bumping and other rules in the system. But to the extent we can when it comes to programs or other decisions, we will allow the principals to have flexibility.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: But the restrictions you're trying to lift from--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing]  
Would increase it.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Would increase--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --  
flexibilities for principals.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Exactly. The last example I gave in my testimony is classic of that, the one in Queens with Principal Lubin, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
Council Member. And we can come back and put your

1  
2 name down on the second round? [Off mic] Can you  
3 put it down?

4 And we've been joined by additional  
5 colleagues and I'd like to introduce them.

6 Directly behind us is Melinda Katz of Queens, and  
7 directly in front of myself is Rosie Mendez of  
8 Manhattan, and to her left is Maria del Carmen  
9 Arroyo of the Bronx, and to her left is Melissa  
10 Mark-Viverito of Manhattan and the Bronx.

11 And, with that, I'd like to turn to  
12 our colleague Lou Fidler of Brooklyn.  
13 Councilmember Fidler?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Thank you,  
15 Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Chancellor Klein.

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Good morning.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Since  
18 Councilman Vallone went to my very favorite topic  
19 of cell phones and I'm going to pass on my other  
20 favorite topic of gifted and talented program, I'm  
21 going to go to my new favorite topic, which is the  
22 ACS transfer of 5-year-olds to kindergarten,  
23 because it's become a recurring theme here in our  
24 budget hearings that we, you know, as we are  
25 scraping to try and save every dollar, that we're

1  
2 getting one of those scarecrow in the Wizard of Oz  
3 moments where, you know, the scarecrow says they  
4 went that away. And, you know, ACS's entire  
5 justification for this transfer, which is  
6 disrupting the lives of many parents and  
7 jeopardizing the future of many childcare centers,  
8 is that it's going to save \$15 million. And I've  
9 tried with ACS and I've tried with DYCD and I've  
10 tried with OMB to figure out how this transfer  
11 actually saves us money. Yesterday, the Daily  
12 News was in touch with the spokesman from DOE  
13 about the additional 3,500 students that DOE is  
14 going to absorb as a result of this transfer and  
15 your spokesman said, adding a few students into  
16 one or more existing classrooms in a school does  
17 not increase the cost to the overall system. We  
18 are not asking OMB to add additional dollars to  
19 our budget to accommodate these students. Do you  
20 agree with that statement, Chancellor Klein, and  
21 is there a cost associated when you add a child to  
22 a school?

23 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I do agree with  
24 the statement, there isn't a cost if you have room  
25 at the school and the schools that we think are

1  
2 affected by this are schools where we project will  
3 outgrow them, and this happens every year. And  
4 what I say by that is think about it this way,  
5 some schools get three kindergarten classes, they  
6 can get 56 kids, 61 kids, 63 kids, and that  
7 varies. That's why when you look at precise  
8 class-size numbers, people really don't understand  
9 that that's often a product of just how many  
10 students enroll in an early grade. So we believe  
11 these 3,500 children will be able to be absorbed,  
12 we don't have to build new classrooms and new  
13 space for them.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: But  
15 notwithstanding that, if I understand the funding  
16 formula, when a school gets 10 additional kids,  
17 they get additional money added to the school  
18 budget based upon their registration, is that not  
19 correct?

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes, they do.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: So I mean,  
22 that money is coming from somewhere, right? I  
23 mean, you know, I believe it's about \$8,000 a  
24 child, am I incorrect? You know, 50% of which is  
25 coming from city tax levy money.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And some from the state and the city's tax levy money will be reallocated to cover those people.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: So where is it being reallocated from?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It'll be reallocated, in other words, the per pupil expenditure will be based--of the city tax levy will be based on the number of pupils and we will include those 3,500, if that's what the number is.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: So then let's be clear, what you're saying is there will not be any additional money added to the pool, but as you add additional students to the pool, the amount of money per child going to the classroom will be decreased--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: --so that when your spokesman says there's no additional cost, what he's saying is that the ACS cut will be borne as a cut to the classroom at the Department of Education.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That's correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Well I

1  
2 appreciate your candor, I also don't--

3 [Crosstalk]

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: --we have  
5 an opposing point of view.

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Why won't the  
7 [off mic].

8 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yeah, I'm  
9 actually the spokesman that made comment to the  
10 press and if you will, the way this is working,  
11 it's--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER:  
13 [Interposing] You're William Havemann?

14 [Crosstalk]

15 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Interposing]  
16 Well he's the press person, I'm the COO--

17 [Crosstalk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER:  
19 [Interposing] Oh, okay, I didn't think you were  
20 William Havemann.

21 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: --  
22 information. So the--

23 MALE VOICE: Shouldn't jump to  
24 conclusions.

25 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I try not to.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Okay. The way this works is, because there is room in the classroom, you have to divorce the cost to the system as a whole versus the money that we give out to principals as a way of basically taking care of their entire school, on average, if you will, for the year and also incentivizing them to provide the correct services to the students-- those are two very different things. And so when you're looking at the cost to the system, where we have room, so--and when we've looked at the analysis, we can only do with what the information that ACS has provided us and if you look at where those students are at the centers and where they live and look at them going into their zoned schools or in nearby schools, we can accommodate them into existing classrooms.

So it's very important that we understand that we are not adding any teachers, we are not adding any bus routes, we are not adding any additional need for resource rooms etc. We can accommodate this number of students into the



1  
2 existing structure. So there really is not an  
3 additional marginal cost here.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: There may  
5 not be an additional marginal cost, but there's a  
6 cost associated, and thank God there is, with  
7 educating a child and I guarantee you the  
8 principal of the school that's going to absorb 20  
9 of those kids is going to, you know, expect their  
10 \$160,000 added to their budget. That money is  
11 coming from somewhere, all right? And what the  
12 Chancellor has said is what it's coming from is by  
13 reducing the amount of money per child in every  
14 school in the city before you give that money out  
15 to the principal, hence, there will be a cut to  
16 every budget.

17 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: All right?  
19 So, I mean, it's a zero-sum game, you know, the  
20 money is coming from somewhere and, you know, I  
21 appreciate the argument that while sticking  
22 another child in the classroom doesn't mean you  
23 need another classroom space, but it does, there  
24 are costs that are incurred by the school and  
25 there is a cost to the system. So if you take a

1  
2 step back for one second and talk about the  
3 taxpayer of the city of New York and whether the  
4 ACS transfer of 5-year-olds into the Department of  
5 Education and out of ACS saves the taxpayer of the  
6 city of New York money, you have to look at it  
7 from that global perspective. We're not Macy's  
8 and Gimbels, it's not whether DOE, you know, saves  
9 money or ACS saves money--that's we call it budget  
10 hearings. This is going to cost the taxpayer of  
11 the city of New York \$7 million more.

12 Now you want to argue that it's  
13 good policy, that's a different story, but the  
14 justification is that the city is saving money,  
15 and it's clearly not, all right? 'Cause you're  
16 going to add \$8,000 for each child, there's a DOE  
17 cost to it, and if you're telling me there's no  
18 cost it's because you're actually reducing  
19 spending per child to the classroom. Can't be--  
20 you're shaking your head, it can't be any other  
21 way.

22 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Okay. So the  
23 way that we have to budget our funds in a system  
24 that has over a million students is you know that  
25 you cannot project exactly the number of students

1  
2 that you're going to have, so we set up a reserve,  
3 a very small reserve, to actually be able to  
4 handle the movements and enrollment in the  
5 fluctuation in any given year and actually during  
6 the year. So there within the number of students  
7 that we have this reserve for, which is very  
8 small, it's around 20,000, one could argue that  
9 might be too small, but it's around 20,000 and  
10 when you look at that, within that 20,000 we can  
11 easily absorb the cost of the 3,200--there is not  
12 an additional cost to the overall system. And  
13 then so what we do is we have enough dollars to  
14 actually put into that principal's budget to  
15 handle the two or three extra kids that they will  
16 get. Then in the mid-year we actually have a lot  
17 of movement, if you will, between schools and, you  
18 know, students coming into the system, students  
19 leaving the system, and you will actually see the  
20 enrollment numbers, that's why we always have to  
21 wait until the end of October to actually see what  
22 our registrars are. And at that point, we do move  
23 money around for the principals. This is the same  
24 thing that we do at the mid-year, we make those  
25 adjustments. So there is really from a budget

1  
2 perspective when you're looking at that, there are  
3 savings to the system as a whole citywide because  
4 we're not asking for anymore dollars to cover  
5 that, we have those dollars in our budget.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I don't buy  
7 it, I know my time is up, but you are talking  
8 about the logistics of whether or not the system  
9 could accommodate 3,500 new students. Ultimately,  
10 whether you have a reserve, because obviously  
11 students move during the course of the year or  
12 not, and people come in and out of the system is  
13 irrelevant to the fact that you're adding 3,500  
14 people to the system that you wouldn't otherwise  
15 be adding--they have to have a cost. You can't  
16 come here with a straight face and say that there  
17 is no cost associated with educating 3,500  
18 children, because if you're saying that, there's  
19 something wrong, all right. So clearly there is a  
20 cost, the fact that you may be able to handle it  
21 or that you're going to take the hit for the team  
22 doesn't change the fact that you are going to have  
23 to reduce the amount that you are paying per  
24 child, if you don't increase the amount of money  
25 for the classroom based upon additional enrollment

1  
2 of these 3,500 kids, you can pretend they don't  
3 exist.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
5 Chancellor, we had sent you a--I sent you a letter  
6 regarding questions and asking for answers on this  
7 particular matter, so if you don't have it, we're  
8 going to resend it again, we'll fax it to you or  
9 give it to your government affairs or whoever you  
10 wish and we would like an appropriate response.

11 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I didn't see the  
12 letter, but we're happy to get you an answer. I  
13 think this is in some respects a little less  
14 complicated. I think there are, when you add  
15 additional children to a system, there are costs  
16 associated with that, I think it's entirely  
17 different from the costs that are saved and the  
18 reason it's different is no different from the  
19 principle that if you move from a two-bedroom  
20 apartment to a one-bedroom apartment, two children  
21 may have to sleep together in the same room. We  
22 have the room, and that's the reason it's much  
23 more efficient for us to do it. We have the room.  
24 So if you have, particularly if you do this  
25 strategically, if you had a class and you think

1  
2 about the taxpayers of the city of New York--I  
3 hear the argument you're making, but let me  
4 explain why I think--and I don't dispute the fact  
5 that when you add additional children to the  
6 system there are costs, but if I am a taxpayer and  
7 these students are in one program, and I've got to  
8 pay them \$15 million for 3,500 students, or I have  
9 another ongoing program in which I have space to  
10 accommodate those students because we have  
11 classrooms--and I'm not thrilled by the fact that  
12 a kindergarten class might go from 18 to 20, but  
13 that's a different financial burden on the city  
14 then the burden of paying the 15 million, that's  
15 the only point.

16 And I'll be happy to get you a  
17 written answer to your letter, Mr. Chairman.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
19 The letter that I addressed to you is dated March  
20 12th and the Chair of the General Welfare  
21 Committee, Bill de Blasio also followed up on  
22 March 24th. Okay?

23 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: That's the  
24 letter--that is the letter that went both to ACS  
25 and DOE, so we are happy to meet with you all at

the end of this week, tomorrow, if necessary, we can walk you through the answers.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I would like a written detailed answer to the letter--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --if you don't mind.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: So we'll get that to you early next week then.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Thank you. And let me move on and we'll come back if appropriate on this subject.

Jimmy Vacca of the Bronx.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Several quick questions, Chancellor. I wanted to ask first about your commitments with the budget crisis we're facing. Parent Coordinators, that was an initiative that you started, and are you committed to maintaining parent coordinators or will schools be given discretion to eliminate those lines or make them part time? Is there any thought to this from a policy perspective from your office?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We're looking at

1  
2 all options, if you ask me sitting here now, our  
3 current intention is to maintain the parent  
4 coordinator line. We've been hearing a lot about  
5 the importance of parental engagement and that is  
6 our current intention, but we're not at the final  
7 game here at the end of the budget process, so I  
8 don't want to restrict any options, but sitting  
9 here now, we will keep that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Pre-  
11 Kindergarten tax levy is not required under New  
12 York state law. Are you considering, based on  
13 these budget cuts, a curtailment or restriction on  
14 tax levy pre-K enrollment?

15 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: The answer is  
16 no, and the reason in part is, in large part is  
17 most of the money that comes to us, comes to us  
18 from the state on pre-K, and that's a line item,  
19 so it's not like you can just move it to someplace  
20 else.

21 Second of all, we have a strong  
22 commitment in the city of New York to pre-K and  
23 particularly want to make sure that we get our  
24 children started earlier. So I don't think it  
25 would either make economic sense or policy sense.



1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Of course,  
3 we could look at class size, have you estimated  
4 under the different scenarios what we would see in  
5 class size increases?

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Our hope is that  
7 we won't see any significant class size increase  
8 and the only real jeopardy of that is if we don't  
9 get the 500 million from the state that we were  
10 talking about before with the Chairman. In other  
11 words, that there is a 360 to 504 or \$8 million  
12 swing in the state, if we get the higher number,  
13 we don't think we'll lose any teachers. Our  
14 overall enrollment probably next year will go down  
15 slightly, so we should be able to be okay. If we  
16 get the 360 million, our best estimate is we'd  
17 have to diminish by 2,000 teachers and that would  
18 have an effect on class-size so by probably a  
19 couple of students.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: One thing in  
21 conclusion, Chancellor, that concerned me last  
22 year, is that many of our kindergarten children  
23 were not enrolled in kindergarten until October  
24 because there were waiting lists in their zoned  
25 schools and then they were given other schools. I

1  
2 know that that's a process your office is involved  
3 in, is the budget cut going to aggravate that  
4 situation for parents whose children waited for  
5 placement that long? Are we going to have a  
6 situation where you will be trying to meet every  
7 kids needs, but it may take longer to get them a  
8 kindergarten seat?

9 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I hope not, I  
10 think if anything it should go more quickly this  
11 year.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: School  
13 safety, do our school safety agents face a  
14 reduction? I saw something in the Council's  
15 report that indicates you intend to significantly  
16 increase monies for school security and I assume  
17 that this report is correct, but it talks about  
18 school safety and it alludes to a significant  
19 increase in school safety agents. Is that correct  
20 or...

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I don't think  
22 so, I think there are increases because of  
23 collective bargaining agreements, but not the  
24 number of personnel.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Not in the

number of guards. And what would be the impact of budget cuts on the number of school safety offices?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: At this point, there is none. That's a determination, obviously the numbers are determined by the police department, and that's the number that we think the police department has told us they think are necessary, so we haven't cut that yet.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay. Thank you, Chancellor.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Chancellor, on that question as far as parent coordinators, how many are there citywide and what is the total cost of parent coordinators in the system?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Again, I can give you rough approximations in specific detail, if you'd like me to follow up, but about 1,400 parent coordinators and somewhere around a \$70 million cost.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Overall.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Overall.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: But if you can give us the specifics, have your person get in

contact--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --give us some specific--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Happy to.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --numbers with that.

Let me turn to our colleague, Dan Garodnick, and then--is Yassky here? Then Oliver Koppell.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chancellor, thank you for your testimony. I wanted to just follow up on a couple of things that you said--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: --in your testimony related to the stimulus and stabilization funds. First, I understand from what you said that there is a locked in \$400 million per year for two years dedicated to Title I and the IDEA, is that right?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay. So that is something which is set, there's no issues

1  
2 of discretion by the state of New York for those  
3 dollars, those are direct to the city?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Correct.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay. And  
6 then as to the stabilization funds, now I noted in  
7 your testimony, you referred to them as federal  
8 stabilization funds and state stabilization funds,  
9 I think they are the same.

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: They're all the  
11 same.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Right, okay.

13 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: They're all the  
14 same.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Just wanted  
16 to make sure that that's the issue there. You  
17 talked about the difference between what we could  
18 see from the state of New York, if it's \$500  
19 million, there would be a budget gap of 500  
20 million, and if there were an allocation of 360  
21 million, that there could be a gap of \$650 million  
22 and the average cut per school would be from six  
23 to 8%. Just wanted to see if you could explain to  
24 us what the argument--those who are making the  
25 argument there should be \$360 million as opposed

1  
2 to \$500 billion, what is their argument and why is  
3 that wrong?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's a shares  
5 argument and we've had lawyers look at under the  
6 law they say the shares that the formula has to be  
7 used is one that was, I believe, used in July of  
8 2008 or something, is that--

9 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Off mic]  
10 2008.

11 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: October 2008 and  
12 at that point, I think we had 41.1%. So if you do  
13 the arithmetic, 41.1, I was trying to do it  
14 quickly of 2.4 billion divided by two on an annual  
15 basis. I think there are other people who are  
16 using, for example, that we have 33% of the pupils  
17 statewide, so if you use that number, you get a  
18 much lower number.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: I see,  
20 so it's a question of whether you're using the  
21 41.1 or the 33%--

22 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing] Or  
23 the 33, 34, something like that.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Okay. I  
25 understand. And your recommendations in your

1  
2 section of your testimony about what we should be  
3 doing together you talked about ensuring we get  
4 the fair share of federal dollars and state  
5 dollars, but I wanted to just on the federal  
6 dollars alone, are there more dollars out there  
7 that we should be going to which could involve  
8 direct allocation to the city of New York like the  
9 Title I dollars, the \$400 million over two years,  
10 or are we just talking about the stabilization  
11 funds, the dollars which are now being filtered  
12 through the state by the federal government?

13 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: In terms of  
14 dollars that, so to speak, we're entitled to,  
15 that's the last tranche, there's a couple, you  
16 know, other things I can, you know, in terms of  
17 repair or buildings and stuff that are in this,  
18 but there are also some grants, there's going to  
19 be some number of states that are going to be  
20 eligible for a race to the top, and it's about  
21 4.35 billion that the federal government has set  
22 aside for that and we will work with the state of  
23 New York to get that money. There's another 650  
24 million that we can apply for directly. The  
25 caveat to it, Mr. Garodnick, is those monies will

1  
2 have to be earmarked for very specific things and  
3 they haven't put out the regs. My guess is the  
4 things that President Obama talked about in his  
5 recent education speech-- higher standards, pay-  
6 for-performance, data systems, and all the other  
7 things--in some of those instances we should be in  
8 good shape because we're kind of at the cutting  
9 edge. However, that won't be money that you can  
10 use, so to speak, in the general budget. And the  
11 second caveat, 'cause I think it's important and I  
12 keep trying to make this, is the money you talked  
13 about with IDEA and, particularly with Title I,  
14 which is three quarters of that 400 million, that  
15 will obviously flow to some schools, not all  
16 schools, and that's why the flexibility point  
17 matters, in a growing budget it would matter much  
18 less.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: That's  
20 the Lubin example, the principal of the school--

21 [Crosstalk]

22 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing]  
23 That's one dimension of it, but there's also a  
24 different dimension of it. Title I money goes to  
25 schools that have a high number of free and



1  
2 reduced lunch there are schools, for example, that  
3 are different from Lubin school that don't have  
4 meet Title I numbers. So some school, which is  
5 already getting Title I money will be getting more  
6 Title I money and another school is not getting  
7 Title I money won't get any Title I money. So its  
8 cut could be twice as large and that's an issue  
9 that we should all address because I don't want to  
10 disproportionately impact one school at the  
11 expense of another.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: So from  
13 what I hear from you is that as to any remaining  
14 federal dollars, there are essentially competitive  
15 grants in the amounts of up to essentially another  
16 \$5 billion, but they're competitive and we would  
17 have to apply for them and there's no guarantees  
18 obviously with that.

19 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And they  
20 wouldn't go into general operating.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK:  
22 Understood. Now who does the applying for those  
23 competitive grants? Is that us, is that the city  
24 DOE, or does it have to come from the state of New  
25 York?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Both. The big money, and we argue the other way on both of these, but the big money is 4.35 billion, that's a state thing and we'll partner with the state, and then there's 650 million which is for school districts and not-for-profits and we'll be working in that on our own and with not-for-profits and partnerships.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Thank you, Chancellor.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you, Council Member. Now we'll hear from Council Member Oliver Koppell of the Bronx.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, very quickly, I want to thank you, Chancellor, for your help in getting the annex in Riverdale back to PS 24.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well thank you for your leadership.

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Greatly appreciate it, I know were problems with locating the other school and that has to be worked on, but it was very important for our community and for

1  
2 the continued attractiveness of the public  
3 schools, which has increased substantially, I  
4 think you can take credit for some of that--

5 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --and I'm  
7 really grateful 'cause I know it's difficult to  
8 do.

9 On the issue of the ACS, my  
10 impression is--and I'm going to give you specific,  
11 I don't expect an answer here, but I would like an  
12 answer--that PS 56 in Norwood and PS 16 in  
13 Wakefield are close to ACS centers, and I know  
14 that both of those schools are way overcrowded,  
15 they are busing kids right now, new kids can't get  
16 into 56, I'm not sure about 16, but 16's full. I  
17 want to know, you know, your statement was well we  
18 can accommodate these kids, there's no additional  
19 cost, but I think at the very least there's going  
20 to be a busing cost with those kids which you did  
21 say, I think in your statement, no additional  
22 busing cost. So, you know, I think maybe the  
23 cost--you know, I'm opposed to the transfer of  
24 those kindergarten kids, and I think we should  
25 clarify that there really isn't going to be that

1  
2 cost, so I'd like, in terms of my district, those  
3 are the two schools I'd like to get a response.

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We'll get it for  
5 you.

6 Just one thing on the buses, Mr.  
7 Koppell, typically in those areas we have plenty  
8 of seats on buses, so it's a question of we have  
9 to add another route. Now the bus problem is less  
10 of a challenge, I mean, instead of having 30,  
11 you'll have 32 kids on a bus, but I don't think  
12 generically that's your problem, but I'm happy to  
13 look at the two schools and give you the--

14 [Crosstalk]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL:

16 [Interposing] But let's just as, that may also be  
17 an example, but in any event I'd be interested.

18 I realize--I'm not criticizing the  
19 specific policies and going to mention, but it  
20 seems to me if we're facing a real crisis one of  
21 the things you don't do perhaps is new things,  
22 because you want to keep what you have before you  
23 do new things and I'm wondering what the cost of  
24 some of your new initiatives are and whether we  
25 should perhaps suspend them. First of all, the

1  
2 new schools, all the new schools you're creating,  
3 is there a cost associated with that?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: There is a cost,  
5 yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: And if we  
7 stopped and said no new schools for a year while  
8 this fiscal situation, how much could we save?

9 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Probably some  
10 \$10 million something like that, I can get you the  
11 exact number, it'd be a huge mistake, but you  
12 could save some money for opening a new school.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well it  
14 depends, I mean, it's also a huge mistake to  
15 reduce faculty at the schools that you mentioned,  
16 I mean that's...

17 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure, but I  
18 mean, it's just, you know, to leave students in a  
19 school that is really not performing seems to me  
20 to be intolerable and that's why we close schools,  
21 and indeed I'm meeting with the Secretary of  
22 Education recently where all the superintendents  
23 said that that should be like a number one  
24 priority because those kids are spending years in  
25 a place that hasn't worked for them.

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: No, no,  
3 I'm not talking about closing schools, I'm talking  
4 about creating new schools, new smaller schools  
5 for instance, in the high schools which you have a  
6 whole program, you're creating a lot of new  
7 schools in the Bronx, and I'm not necessarily  
8 opposed to that but if I look at that as opposed  
9 to cutting teachers in all other schools, I might  
10 say, well, I'd rather keep my faculty whole,  
11 rather than doing something that may well be a  
12 good thing in the long run, but we just don't have  
13 the money for it now. I would ask you to consider  
14 that.

15 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: And the  
17 same question with respect to charter schools. Is  
18 the opening of a charter school, is that a cost or  
19 is that a saving to the system? Have you  
20 evaluated that?

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It tends to be--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I'm  
23 talking about dollars.

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --it tends to be  
25 neutral, there's probably some slight cost in

opening because they get an opening grant, but it tends to be neutral because they take the children and they get paid under a different state formula for those children.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: But it's not a substantial cost.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's not a substantial cost.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Okay. Again, as I said, my recommendation would be, given the possibility of cuts across the board, that we stop doing new things, not that we shouldn't do them again when we have more resources, but that's what--if I was in your position and we faced a really significant cut, my order to the whole system would be no new things, let's just keep what we're doing and we'll do new things when we have the money for them.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Appreciate that, sir.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you, Council Member Koppell. Now we hear--I failed to

1  
2 recognize our colleague from Manhattan, directly  
3 in front of us in the green, Council Member Gale  
4 Brewer of Manhattan.

5 But let me turn to my colleague  
6 Melinda Katz, then Council Member Brewer. Council  
7 Member Katz has the floor.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Good morning,  
9 Chancellor Klein, thank you--

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Good morning.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --for your  
12 time today. You know, my colleague, Council  
13 Member Fidler, has a saying, you know, we hate to  
14 dig up the horse, just to bury it again, but I  
15 would like to still talk about the ACS if I can.  
16 In my district, the number one issue we have right  
17 now is overcrowding of kindergarten classes. I  
18 have three schools just within a few blocks of  
19 each other in my district who are turning away  
20 kindergarten kids, literally turning them away.  
21 And PS 303, which Department of Education kindly  
22 enough built in order to take some of this  
23 overcrowding, has 118 applications with only 40  
24 seats. So when we went through a joint hearing  
25 last time with, I think it was Council Member



1  
2 Fidler's committee, I asked the question of who  
3 you sent to represent you, what kind of studies  
4 were done to figure out where these kids are going  
5 and how is it going to affect each of our  
6 districts. They didn't have that answer and so I  
7 mean I know it's been asked and answered a few  
8 times, but I guess the overcrowding issue maybe  
9 hasn't, so what are you going to do with the kids  
10 that deal with the ACS centers in their  
11 neighborhoods and now there's no room for them in  
12 the kindergarten classes?

13 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: In every  
14 district we have two situations--you have some  
15 overcrowding and some under capacity, and we will  
16 have to adjust those to make sure that those  
17 schools that have the capacity take the kids.  
18 That may mean that they'll have to be bussed, they  
19 won't be able to walk, or what have you, but those  
20 are things we're working on doing the work right  
21 now.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: But your  
23 colleague sitting next to you said that we're  
24 going to absorb some of the kids, which means to  
25 me there has to be studies done by the Department

1  
2 of Education which show whether it's financially  
3 better to be doing this because the claim from the  
4 DOE is that they're making money on this basically  
5 saving money--

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing]  
7 No, no, we're not making money--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --saving  
9 money--

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --we're not  
11 making money.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --so there  
13 has to be studies which show where these children  
14 are going and the colleague that you sent to  
15 represent you last time didn't know the answer to  
16 that, so I'm asking you, where are the studies  
17 that show that you can simply absorb the children  
18 and that it won't be more expensive to send them  
19 to other areas of the city in order to go to  
20 kindergarten?

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well it--go  
22 ahead, you want to...

23 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We have  
24 actually received the information from ACS in  
25 terms of where the students are located currently,

the 4-year-olds. And we, unfortunately, it's difficult to figure out where they're going to want to go, but when--

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: [Interposing]  
Well let me give you a little hint, wherever their zip codes are and wherever they're zoned to go to first grade--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Well if you can--

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --is probably where they're going to want to go--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: --actually when we--

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --to kindergarten.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We've actually looked at that and it's not as clear-cut as what you're saying, but making the assumption-- because some people are using this child care differently than they would when the kids go to first grade is what we did find. But, so you know, when we looked at this in terms of the zip codes going from the centers that they're located in and the zip codes in terms of their home

1  
2 address, it is in the Bronx where we have most of  
3 the students located and some sections of  
4 Brooklyn, and in those areas we don't feel there  
5 is a problem of absorbing them either directly  
6 into their zoned schools or within a radius around  
7 their zoned schools that would be easily  
8 accessible for the parents, whether through bus  
9 transportation or not. So we have looked at those  
10 and we're more than happy to share that with you  
11 in detail.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: You have a  
13 district by district breakout of--

14 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Interposing]  
15 We looked at it by district, what we have is we  
16 have there's roughly 7,400 students and they  
17 believe only according to ACS only about half of  
18 those would be matriculating into what the  
19 kindergarten program, and we actually know that by  
20 district at least where they're located in terms  
21 of the residence and in terms of their centers.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Okay. I mean  
23 with all due respect to say that most folks don't  
24 want their kids to go to the kindergarten that's  
25 right in the neighborhood that they'd be zoned for

1  
2 is a little bit troublesome on my part and if  
3 that's the case--

4 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Interposing]  
5 Oh no, what I meant is where they're zoned for is  
6 fine, the issue was that some of these students,  
7 their actual residence is not in the same area as  
8 where the center is, and that was where the issue  
9 was. That's why also a lot of the students don't  
10 end up going into public school.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Okay. I  
12 would venture to say that the vast majority of  
13 folks would like their children to go to  
14 kindergarten where they're actually in the  
15 neighborhood and zoned for. So that's just...

16 The other issue is the  
17 collaborative teaching issue, Chancellor, in my  
18 schools one of the biggest problems is the fact  
19 that we don't have the seats to fill the  
20 collaborative teaching classrooms and so the  
21 question I guess really becomes how does that work  
22 with the funding and if we don't have the kids to  
23 fill in those particular classrooms, is there a  
24 mechanism by which we can turn those seats into  
25 the local school seats?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Off mic] You don't have enough [off mic].

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: I can't-- yeah.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: You're telling me you don't have enough students to fill a collaborative team teaching class--

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Not from the district.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: And so students--

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: So the people are sent in.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well, that's, if that's the case, then I think that is an appropriate policy because we need to make sure our special ed children who often times are bussed outside of districts get the services they need and if a child's IEP calls for a collaborative team teaching program, we have to do that, just as we have to put District 75 schools in traditional elementary schools or middle schools.

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: I was actually--I was not disagreeing with you, I think

1  
2 that where the needs are is really where folks  
3 should be able to go to school. I guess my  
4 question is, is there some sort of numbers--and  
5 this really isn't a budgetary issue as much as  
6 just a need issue--which show how many of the  
7 collaborative teaching classes are not filled by  
8 the folks in the community and those schools be  
9 overcrowded, if there was some way that we might  
10 be able to work with Department of Education on  
11 those numbers?

12 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We'd be happy--I  
13 obviously don't have it, but I'd be happy to do  
14 it. It's the growth in collaborative team  
15 teaching and IEPs has gone up exponentially over  
16 the last several years, and the equity issues of  
17 which communities and which schools will be  
18 something we'd be happy to work with you on.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Yeah, I just  
20 would like to talk about it because we do have  
21 folks being turned away from our elementary  
22 schools--

23 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Right.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: --with  
25 classroom space. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you, Council Member. Council Member Gale Brewer of Manhattan, and then we go back to Council Member Diana Reyna of Brooklyn.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. My question is on Title I, I know it was mentioned earlier, but I have a school, PS 75, that's very close to Title I, they're about 10 families away, which would make a huge difference. So my question is can it be expanded, not just free lunch but reduced lunch? And, number two, there are many families at this particular school who have lost jobs and so I would guess across the city this may be the same situation. So I'm wondering if you're looking at Title I differently 'cause it would draw down a huge amount of money and make all the difference in schools like PS 75.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: The answer is yes, and we are looking at that and the second answer though is we should also work together to make sure that the Title I restrictions don't drive inequities, and that's part of what I've asked the Council to do with respect to Albany. But the answer to your question is, we will look



at the numbers and free and reduced and, depending on where the budget finally ends up, we'll make some changes on that to more equitably--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] How does that work timing-wise when you lose your job say January 2009? How does that work in terms of Title I? Is it like looked at monthly, yearly, how are the numbers derived?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's looked at yearly, they fill out the forms in each fiscal year, we do a big thing with the New York Jets to get families to fill them out. This year, my guess, is our schools will be quite vigilant but we'll also lower thresholds, consider reduced lunch, and make a--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] Right, PS 75 would love to get Title I.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: They should be able to--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --I think they should.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

Number two, I know that Council Member Oliver Koppell said correctly, no new ideas, but I want mental health funding in the schools, we've been talking about this with the Chairman now for a long time. Is there any list that it's a priority on? Obviously some schools have mental health, middle school and high schools, even elementary, lots don't. So two questions, one, are there any cuts in this area? And two, is there any discussion at least about trying to find three or \$6 million? Because I believe, and I think you do [off mic] that if you had quality culturally appropriate mental health services, the reduction in challenges in the classroom, even parental involvement, etc., would be much improved.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I don't think there are any cuts, I don't think there are additional dollars that are going into it. I do think there may be some opportunities in the grant programs to partner with community--and one of the things the Secretary is very interested in is these community partnerships where you have programs such as the kind of program you have with

Children's Aid or Turn Around or some of the others and they--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] Well who's taking the lead on community partnerships on mental health?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well who in my department or--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Dr. Platt?  
Is it doctor...

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well Dr. Platt takes the mental health piece, but there are also programs that are broader but Dr. Platt would do that, Kathleen Grimm would be a person--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] Right, I just wonder maybe we can talk about it later, I would like to make that a priority, because we can't do it without you and I would love to try to get funding for that. We need 6 million exactly.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: All right,  
great.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Arts

1  
2 Education, I know it's to the credit of this Chair  
3 and also of the Chair of the Cultural Affairs,  
4 we've had a lot of discussions about this. It  
5 looks when you do the arts report card, it looks  
6 like we have more money than Project Arts ever did  
7 in the schools, but when you talk to the schools  
8 and even if you talk to others, it's not exactly  
9 clear. So I'm just wondering how are you looking  
10 at that issue of the arts funding? Is there more,  
11 is there less? Again, is this something that's  
12 being focused on as we go towards stimulus?

13 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yeah, there's  
14 clearly more, dozens of schools are always looking  
15 for more and they should, but there's clearly a  
16 lot more money being spent on the arts and one of  
17 the reasons we did arts counts is to highlight  
18 that. We just put together a program based on  
19 some private monies we had for those schools who  
20 were most efficient in terms of arts counts. What  
21 I want to be clear about is that this year, if we  
22 see the kind of budget cuts we're talking about,  
23 that could certainly affect the arts, but through  
24 this year, by and large, we've been growing the  
25 number of arts teachers and the overall

expenditures.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But you're making sure, it was my understanding that there would never be less than what Project Arts had in its pot before it became part of the principal's budget. I thought that was a commitment.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We are, if you're looking at the Project Arts numbers, there's about 68 million or something in that, and the overall numbers and, again I'm happy to get the specifics, there are about 250 million for the arts--arts teachers and other things. The Project Arts money was mostly used for partnerships. However, a lot of our schools have increased the number of art teachers in the schools and that's where the transfer has gone.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. So I think what the issue is to try to do again what you said earlier in addition to the teachers the partnerships are what the schools really, really appreciate because there's sustainable and that's something we need to work on.

And then just finally, the after-school issue, I should know this but there was a

1  
2 time when we were working with some of the Title I  
3 schools on some of the private, I guess, for-  
4 profit and then some of the nonprofits doing SES,  
5 what's the status of that and are there other  
6 programs that are taking their place? 'Cause it  
7 always seemed to me that was a very well endowed  
8 program, and I wasn't sure of the outcome.

9 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It is a well  
10 endowed program, and there's a lot of SES money  
11 and some of it goes to nonprofit organizations,  
12 some to for-profit and--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:  
14 [Interposing] Could we get a breakdown on that?

15 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Line by line.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: With a  
17 name--exactly, the name of the program, profit,  
18 nonprofit, sent to the committee? That money  
19 doesn't--it has to stay in the after-school, it  
20 can't be used for anything else?

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's got to stay  
22 in SES, it's specific earmarked federal dollars.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And do we  
24 have some kind of performance base in terms of  
25 young people who have done well as a result of

1  
2 these fundings?

3 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well those  
4 courses--the answer is we don't have a formal  
5 study, you know, obviously the federal government  
6 says in order to get Title I, you got to devote  
7 this amount of money and make it available in  
8 every school in need of improvement, etc., etc.--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right.

10 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --and so we do  
11 its. Are there better and worse things to do with  
12 those federal dollars?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes, there  
14 are much--

15 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --better  
17 things to do with those federal dollars.

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well then that's  
19 an issue that has to be addressed to Washington.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Well  
21 also, thank you very much, we'd like to see that  
22 breakdown and have that further discussion.

23 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Be happy.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
25 Council Member Brewer. Council Member Diana Reyna

of Brooklyn.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just wanted to ask the Chancellor, what is the total amount needed to avoid the layoffs that you had predicted in your testimony as far as 15,000?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Most of that-- the original budget we had a \$1.4 billion deficit and that was estimated to be about 14,000 teachers or overall employees, but a huge number. That number is no longer realistic. In order to eliminate all layoffs, and it's an approximate number because the schools will have some discretion, there'll be some attrition, but in order to eliminate all personnel layoffs, I would assume we need not just the 500 million--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Right.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --but probably another hundred or \$200 million to eliminate layoffs. There would still be cuts to OTPS, if we get the 500 million, Council Member Reyna, we would be down 500 million. If you say 8% of our schools budgets, which is about 640 million or something like that, is in OTPS, and then if you



1  
2 cut that in half, you'd have 320 million and the  
3 other half would stay in OTPS and then you'd have  
4 to cut about a hundred or \$120 million worth of  
5 personnel and for school aides or family workers,  
6 that's probably a couple thousand is what I'm  
7 saying.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: It's fair to  
9 say that from the state, at best, what you're  
10 hearing is that 360 million is what you're going  
11 to be seeing.

12 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: No, at worst.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: At worst.

14 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: The range is  
15 362, about 505 million.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: But you  
17 really need beyond 500 million.

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: In order to  
19 avoid all reductions in personnel--either layoffs  
20 or through the loss of personnel through  
21 attrition--we need more than that 500 million and  
22 I'm guessing it's not precise, because I don't  
23 know exactly how this will play out, but another  
24 hundred or \$120 million type of thing.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So a total

of about 700 million at best.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That would do it.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: From the state.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: From the state.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And that's counting on an additional 500 million in federal aid.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well the state passes it through to us, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Right.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That would be 500 of the 700.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I thought it was part of the stimulus.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It is, but it comes through the state.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: But this is separate from the state 500 million that you're requesting from the state.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes, an additional 200 or 150 million, yes, to cover all layoffs or all the attrition.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So the state would have to come up with an additional 200 million in addition to the 500 million coming through the state from the federal government--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Exactly.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --as well as the IDEA finding of 400 million.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: IDEA and Title I of 400 million, correct, correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And can you just describe your recommendations to Albany as to how you're going to be spending the federal aid to be used for pre-K to 12th grade education?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Our recommendations to Albany are we want to use the federal aid in order to prevent to the extent we humanly can layoffs in the system. Indeed, you probably have heard President Obama talk about how through the stimulus package we've been able to avoid the original 14 or 15,000 teachers, and that's, as I said, the numbers we're looking at now are much, much lower. So our recommendation to Albany has been to allow us to actually retain our personnel throughout the system and that would

be our first priority.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So that's at 100% retention is the expectation for the federal aid coming through the state.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: No, that's, again, maybe I'm just not being clear.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Okay.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: If we get the 500 million, we anticipate no teacher reduction, we still anticipate some staff.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Staff, right.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: If we had another 150 or so, I think we could protect all the staff.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And that's just a separate ask to the state.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That's correct, although so far there's no indication they're considering that. What I'm really trying to engage this Council on is to make that's between 362 and 505, we get 505. If we get more, that would be great, but what I understand the range right now is 362 to 505.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So I wouldn't be able to ask that part of the recommendation to Albany for the money coming from the federal aid where we're going to be receiving that any of that money would be used for pre-K community-based child care centers, correct?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: That's correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And your colleague had mentioned there were conversations with ACS had taken place and there's a total of 7,400 5-year-olds in ACS system?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Four-year-olds, I think she said.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Four-year-old.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Four-year--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Okay. I wanted that clarification, so there's 5-year-olds, a total of 7,400 in child care ACS centers.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: But there is 3,500 or 3,400 is what ACS has expressed to me in a hearing we had just last week of 5-year-olds that the Department of Education is going to

absorb. And has ACS or has DOE requested information concerning 5-year-olds that ACS does not process through its system that are private slots in daycare centers?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Can you clarify that a bit?

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: So in child based childcare centers that are community-based, there are slots that are reserved for private pay families. According to ACS, they have no responsibility for those students. Those 5-year-olds may or may not fall off the chart and that particular category is not being communicated to DOE. Has DOE made an attempt to understand the private pay slots of the 5-year-olds and how many are in child care community-based centers because they may be an additional amount of students that you may have to absorb?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: The information that we requested from ACS was all 5-year-olds that would potentially attend the public schools, that was what we requested. I will go back and confirm that they included both sets of children.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you, I appreciate that. It is very important because there could be a few hundred in that category considering we haven't been successful in Albany to increase the eligibility requirement. So parents who, by \$1 are not qualifying for child care--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Interposing]  
Right, we were aware of that, so I will go back and check, but we did--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you very much.

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: --ask for all.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I appreciate it.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you, Council Member Reyna, I appreciate it.

We've been joined by Council Member Bill de Blasio of Brooklyn and he has a question. Council Member de Blasio.

COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chancellor, looking at your

1 testimony today I want to make sure I understand.  
2 We are united with you, obviously, in fighting for  
3 the federal and state aid we deserve. I would say  
4 that you and the Administration gave us all a  
5 scare a few weeks back by talking about a very  
6 substantial number of layoffs. Now I've heard  
7 your exchange with Council Member Reyna where I  
8 hear you saying there are scenarios of no layoffs,  
9 there are scenarios where there's some layoffs but  
10 not teacher layoffs, and there's still scenarios  
11 where there could be substantial teacher layoffs  
12 as you say in page 3 of your testimony level that  
13 could affect literally every school. So we don't  
14 know where we are on that progression, is that  
15 still a true statement?

16  
17 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It is, and just  
18 so we're clear, the teacher layoff number--

19 [Off mic]

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I'm sorry. The  
21 teacher layoff number, it depends in part on  
22 whether we get 500 or 360 that's that. And then  
23 there are additional, what we talked about school  
24 aid and family workers--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Okay.



1  
2 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --that will also  
3 be affected.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: So we  
5 all agree that the common challenge is to push  
6 federal government and state government. But,  
7 Chancellor, again, I need to say as a public  
8 school parent, I think a lot of us were shocked  
9 when we heard even the notion, even the musing  
10 about thousands of potential teacher layoffs. So  
11 I am very happy to see something that seems much  
12 more calibrated today. I think you can appreciate  
13 what that meant to public school parents to hear  
14 numbers like that. I see this as a stepping back  
15 from that and I appreciate that. Obviously in  
16 your testimony you're indicating any number of  
17 things could happen. Do you feel you have done  
18 all you could to reduce the non--teaching elements  
19 of your budget so that your cuts have been made  
20 sufficiently in administrative areas, in public  
21 relations, in community relations, and all of the  
22 areas that are much less important than front-line  
23 teaching?

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I do, and I  
25 believe we will try to make some more cuts, but

1 they will not have a material impact on the  
2 overall budget picture. In other words, we will  
3 try to cut back in various areas, we have made  
4 cutbacks in those areas and the overwhelming cost  
5 of non-school things, the overwhelming portion of  
6 that is things like human resource work, payroll,  
7 technology for the schools, and so forth, but I am  
8 always looking to cut other things. And the point  
9 I made earlier was this year alone, we cut 8% of  
10 our positions outside the schools, that's  
11 approximately 500 positions.  
12

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Okay.

14 And I know some folks on your team don't agree  
15 with the report that I've come out with today, but  
16 I do want to say we heard your concern and what we  
17 still hear from your team is there's 23 full-time  
18 people doing public affairs and community  
19 relations for the department, a number of whom are  
20 doing media relations. I'm not against media  
21 relations, I know some of its necessary, but,  
22 again, if we're talking about teacher layoffs, I  
23 think it's unacceptable to have that large of  
24 staff focused on that type of work, and as you and  
25 I have discussed before in these hearings, I think

1  
2 we need to look at our testing programs and our  
3 computer systems--all of the areas where there  
4 could be reasonable debate about taking a few  
5 steps back to achieve cost savings, rather than  
6 taking teachers out of the classrooms. And I feel  
7 like when we're in flush times, I could at least  
8 understand abstractly how you wanted to pursue  
9 what you saw as the right program for the schools  
10 even if it was costly, but we're in times like  
11 this where a lot is hanging in the balance, I  
12 would think you would be the first to say okay,  
13 some of the things that you care about are not as  
14 essential as classroom teaching and you're willing  
15 to give a hard look to those things as well.

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I absolutely  
17 agree with you, I just make the point, Mr. de  
18 Blasio, that the President of the United States  
19 actually focused in his speech precisely on the  
20 kind of data systems and I think these are highly  
21 valuable because the teachers need the data in  
22 order to figure out the strengths of our students  
23 and the areas that they need remediation. And I  
24 was struck by the fact that the Secretary of  
25 Education came here to focus on our data system

1  
2 and President Obama said far too states and school  
3 districts have the kind of data systems that  
4 enable us to make sure that our students and  
5 teachers are getting the right information, and I  
6 expect we will get additional federal monies to  
7 actually enhance our systems, that's my  
8 expectation. So I don't think that that's prudent  
9 to cut, but we will look at--we've already cut a  
10 number of assessments, we'll look at other things  
11 in that area, just like you said, and, like you, I  
12 certainly hope we don't have to cut any teachers.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Well,  
14 Chancellor, just to finish, I appreciate your  
15 debating skill because what you said there was  
16 assessment matters, accountability matters, and  
17 you know we all agree with that, but that's not  
18 what I'm saying. I'm saying that there is a level  
19 of degree in all things and I think you would  
20 agree that you have chosen to take assessment to a  
21 higher level well beyond that, obviously, as  
22 required federally, and some of that's been  
23 helpful and maybe some of that is debatable, but  
24 most importantly it all costs money. And I guess  
25 I'm perplexed by the notion that somehow an

1  
2 assessment is more valuable than front-line  
3 teaching. I would think the way we look at this  
4 is we first secure our teaching staff so that our  
5 kids are served and then, of course, if we can do  
6 more assessment on top of that, that's great. But  
7 a lot of people in this town have questions about  
8 the level of assessment we're at as a matter of  
9 philosophy, as a matter of effectiveness.

10 Certainly that discussion comes into a different  
11 perspective when there's a budget crisis, because  
12 it all costs money. So are you willing to not  
13 have any sacred cows here and say even though  
14 you'd like to do a certain level of assessment, if  
15 it's too costly and you might lose teachers,  
16 you're willing to look at that?

17 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Absolutely, we  
18 already--I just want to point out we're not only  
19 willing to say, we've already done it. We have  
20 cut assessments, we have cut other costs in the  
21 system. The point that I was trying to make, not  
22 to debate the philosophy of it, is that one of the  
23 reasons for so long I believe we've got so many  
24 poor results in this city was because we weren't  
25 effectively assessing the strengths and weaknesses

1  
2 of our students and what I think President Obama  
3 said literally was that they're going to put  
4 additional federal monies into enhancing these  
5 data systems so that teachers will have the  
6 information and we're going to apply for that.  
7 But let me be clear, there are no sacred cows,  
8 everything has to be looked at.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DE BLASIO: Thank  
10 you, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
12 Chancellor, I just have some questions and can try  
13 to wrap up in about five minutes if I can.

14 Contract for Excellence, schools  
15 were allocated about \$84 million at 35% of their  
16 discretionary C for E funds to class size  
17 reduction efforts, yet overall class sizes went up  
18 this year. Can you please explain why the C for E  
19 class size reduction funding has not lowered class  
20 sizes?

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I think this  
22 year, as you know, there was some cuts in the  
23 overall budgets of our schools that we had to put  
24 in place and so I think some of the growth was  
25 offset. We are analyzing this on a school by

1 school basis and figuring it out because it's very  
2 hard when you just look at the overall numbers  
3 when somebody says it went up two-tenths of a  
4 point, that's usually not a particularly  
5 meaningful number in this context, but we are  
6 analyzing it and working with the state. I don't  
7 have a complete answer, but what I do know is  
8 overall our budgets went down and purchasing power  
9 at our schools last year was part of the PEG or  
10 cuts that we talked about before.

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So what would  
13 the impact of the budget cuts and teacher layoffs  
14 included in the January plan have on class-size if  
15 that occurs? If the January plan goes into  
16 effect, what impact would that have on class-size,  
17 in your opinion?

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Without the  
19 federal stimulus? Without the federal stimulus,  
20 it would have been an enormous, but we will, thank  
21 goodness, have that stimulus. The conversation I  
22 think is clear in the following sense: if we get  
23 the 500 million, we don't expect to lose any  
24 teachers, so that should mean the class-size won't  
25 grow. It could grow at a particular school, it's

1  
2 just the nature of that, but overall, if we have  
3 the same number of students in a school system was  
4 slightly declining enrollment, we should be able  
5 to maintain overall class-size.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Now with the  
7 proposal to move approximately 3,000 children from  
8 day care into the system, because mind you, the  
9 normal increase in kindergarten students would  
10 occur plus now the transfer of about 3,500 more  
11 and I was at a meeting in a school in my district,  
12 PS 173, where the parent leader said that  
13 kindergarten registration is up 150%, 50% more  
14 than the year before and they're talking about  
15 putting another school in there and they're saying  
16 they need their classes for their own kids that  
17 are coming in as a result of this day care  
18 situation and so forth and so on. So, I don't  
19 understand would it clearly be an increase, in  
20 your opinion, with that day care situation,  
21 assuming it goes through, would there clearly be  
22 an increase, in your opinion, in kindergarten  
23 class registration compared to the rest of the  
24 system?

25 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yes.



CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. And what changes has the Department of Education, you as the Chancellor, or the Administration under Mayor Bloomberg asked Albany to make to the Contract for Excellence regulations, if any at all?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We've asked them to make several which is to not--the supplantation issue, which is the example I gave at the end of my testimony, we've asked them to change that. So if in fact, you've paid for a coach or a mentor and you then shouldn't have to remove the teacher.

Second thing we've done is give us flexibility on which schools are eligible for Contract for Excellence and that's because, if you look at Title I and you look at other things, certain schools get a lot of that money and also a lot of Contract for Excellence money. So those other restrictions we've asked for leniency on or removal.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Under special ed, if you don't mind, Chancellor, DOE recently announced some changes to its central offices, including those that provide special

1  
2 education services, and this was communicated at  
3 Education and Community Oversight hearing on  
4 special ed that information, now the preliminary  
5 budget includes a \$2.1 million program to  
6 eliminate the gap related to the committee on  
7 special education, the budget also moves about \$24  
8 million into PS, Personal Service, budget from  
9 centrally provided special ed and related  
10 services. Can you explain why the \$2.1 million  
11 PEG called Streamline CSE process was included in  
12 the budget and how much does the Department of  
13 Education currently spend on CSE? Meaning the  
14 committee on special education?

15 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: So the cut was  
16 made because we had to make cuts and we thought we  
17 could reduce the number, the overall number for  
18 committee on special ed is--

19 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: They're over-  
20 -I'm sorry, there are over 650 employees, if you  
21 will, in the CSEs and the CSE is largely employee  
22 headcount, so it's about 650 folks there so you're  
23 talking about close to \$100 million I would say on  
24 CSE.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 100 million

on--

[Crosstalk]

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yes, we're taking--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --special education?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: Yes, we're taking a very small cut and keep in mind please that we have not cut the CSEs throughout this whole process. This is the first time that we will have taken a cut to the CSE.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well will the headcount increase due to the \$24 million increase in special education instructional support, which is U of A 423? Will the headcount increase as a result of the additional \$24 million or will it not increase?

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Because under--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing] I think those are service--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: U of A, the

Units of Appropriations 423 it has that increase and so we want to know whether or not do you--

[Crosstalk]

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: [Interposing]  
Yes, it will, it should be and to the extent that we have in-house providers, there will be an increase. We have dramatically increasing special ed needs here.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And how much about \$24 million that equates as far as PS then?

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: I'll have to get back to you with that number.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.  
Generally, special education spending and services levels have continued to rise overall. Can you please explain to us why is that on a continuous rise when everything else is being cut?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: This is an important question and let me say one of the reasons why is special ed is mandated driven.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Mandated by whom? Federal government?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Mandated by federal government, state government, and so what

happens is we don't control the processes, so for example, if the IEP, as I was saying before, if the IEP requires a collaborative team teaching we've got to open up--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]  
Or occupational services or--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Or occupational-  
-

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --speech  
services.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --or speech or  
the Carter case, whatever. And this is a very  
important issue is that, since we don't have the  
same discretion with respect to special ed  
students, then it's harder for us to figure out  
ways to cut in that area. And that means in the  
general education programs they absorb larger  
cuts. So that's been an issue and working with  
the state education department on some mandate  
relief, there's a lot of mandates in here that I  
think really do need relieving and, not to take  
away services--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Right.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --there's a tremendous amount of documentation and compliance.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And that's what I was going to ask you, are there any areas in special education where additional efficiencies can be sought besides like, you know, obviously, if you're mandated to, under some child's IEP for speech services or, you know, occupational therapy, is there any other areas that you can look at? And since you're looking at every area--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We are.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and we're even talking about cuts to the schools, you know, I'm just asking questions about areas where I see increases occurring, such as special education.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We are, but, as I think you and I would both agree, we want to make cuts without impairing the services and that's what we're doing, we have a committee headed by Garth Harries is working directly under Marsha Lyles in that area.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And can you explain what if any budgetary impact a new special education computer tracking system will have

1  
2 overall as far as saving money or does it cost  
3 additional money?

4 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It costs  
5 additional money to build and we needed to do it  
6 for a whole host of reasons, over time it's to  
7 save money because it'll make our operations more  
8 efficient. One of the things I'm looking at is  
9 how far we have to bus so many of our special ed  
10 and whether we could figure out better ways to do  
11 that. Second of all, how much placement movement  
12 there is, all of which costs money in the system  
13 when you to keep moving people. So those are all  
14 issues in this computer system, which, quite  
15 frankly, was long overdue, will in the future make  
16 our operation more efficient and therefore save us  
17 some money.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I have two  
19 more areas, but we've been joined by two  
20 additional colleagues, David Yassky of Brooklyn  
21 and--

22 FEMALE VOICE 2: Jessica Lappin.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --Jessica  
24 Lappin of Manhattan and they have questions, I'm  
25 going to turn to them and then I'm going to come

back to myself, if you don't mind.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Jessica Lappin of Manhattan first, and then Council Member Yassky of Brooklyn.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good afternoon, Chancellor.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Good afternoon.

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I wanted to talk to you about--take this opportunity today an issue that has come up over the last week or so with schools in Manhattan, and in particular in my district at PS 290, where schools are capping enrollment and putting children on waiting lists for their locally zoned schools. And I want to understand how we got to this point, and how it could be that principals are empowered to send out letters to put children on waiting lists and essentially hold their own lottery when there is no plan in place for the families that are then put on these waiting lists.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well there needs to be a plan in place and we are going to devise a



1  
2 plan for all families and start to give them  
3 options. The reason there is a waiting list is  
4 simply because 290 has really been so well  
5 attended and there are lots of students and we  
6 don't have room to add as many students as people  
7 would like, but we will over the next month be  
8 working with those families to say some of those  
9 families will get in because the people, the  
10 students who are on the wait list will go to  
11 gifted and talented programs, other of those  
12 families who are far down on the waiting lists are  
13 unlikely perhaps to get in and we're going to give  
14 them their options and we're doing that on a per  
15 family basis.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: I mean, I  
17 guess I'd like to know what the options are and  
18 it's not just PS 290, I mean that's the one that's  
19 sort of easy to point to, but there's another  
20 school that's about to do a lottery, there is  
21 another school on the East side that did one,  
22 there are other schools that were very close, and  
23 I understand there are schools on the West side  
24 that have done this as well, but all of the  
25 schools are overcrowded in the area, so it's not

as if there's room 10 blocks or 20 blocks away for these families to go. So what are the options?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well, again, some of those students will end up in gifted and talented, we are looking at exactly where there's space for those youngsters and we can only--you know, some of them will have to be bussed a little further and we'll have to do that, but that's what--

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN:  
[Interposing] Do you provide busing to gifted and talented programs?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Not to gifted and talented program, although we--

COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. So--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: No, no, no, that's not right, actually, we do, we do, no, no, we do--we provide busing within the borough, so that's not going to be a challenge, and there are a fair number of those students who will go to G&T programs whether Tag or at Anderson. But what we're doing is just what, I think we all would want to be done, is looking at where there are placements available and saying to the family we

1  
2 think a lot of these waiting list will actually  
3 open up and that's what's happened in the past,  
4 but we will give them options sooner and they can  
5 make the decisions.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: You know,  
7 I'm very frustrated because the first time we met  
8 I brought this up with you that we were facing  
9 this overcrowding three years ago at PS 290 in  
10 particular and at other schools on the East side.  
11 So this didn't pop up overnight, we saw this  
12 coming, and it's, frankly, it's been unsafe in  
13 that building for a couple of years and I  
14 understand the principal has this challenge and,  
15 by the way, all these kids are just in  
16 kindergarten now, but they're going to grow  
17 through the system, I hope, and then we're not  
18 going to have space for them in first and second  
19 and third grades.

20 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well one of the  
21 things we got to stop at 290 and elsewhere is stop  
22 admitting students from out of the catchment area.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: We stopped  
24 that a long time ago--

25 [Crosstalk]

1  
2 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --there's  
3 no sibling policy at that school, I mean all of  
4 those things we did a long time ago. And so I'm  
5 very frustrated and I'm a believer in mayoral  
6 control, I think it's a very important and  
7 positive thing, but you have decentralized to the  
8 point where these principal are acting like  
9 they're sort of islands onto themselves and that's  
10 not what happens, and these schools are so close  
11 together, and there's no communication amongst  
12 them, and there's no room in any of the  
13 neighboring schools for these kids. So we need to  
14 build a new school, which I know we're working on-  
15 -

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: We're doing it.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: --for PS 151  
18 but I'm just I really don't understand how a  
19 system could be put in place where there really is  
20 no plan in place. I hear what you're saying, but  
21 it's let's wait and see, let's hope that spots  
22 open up, let's hope it resolves itself, we'll keep  
23 our fingers crossed, and if not then we'll come up  
24 with some other option.

25 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: No, no, that's

1 not what I'm saying, actually, it's just very [off  
2 mic], what we're doing is much more proactive,  
3 what we're doing is doing the analysis, so it's  
4 not about the principal, it's about us, and we're  
5 doing the analysis and we're going to say to  
6 parents one of three things: either we can expand  
7 the number in the school and in which case those  
8 people on a list will get in; second thing is  
9 we're not sure that there will be an opportunity,  
10 here's an alternative opportunity and you can take  
11 that, it may not be your first choice, but you can  
12 take that, or right now and then your child will  
13 go to this school and that'll be that; or you can  
14 continue to wait. At some point, if you wait, you  
15 may still have to take another opportunity but  
16 we're going to give that information to parents  
17 much sooner, so that some of them will take that  
18 opportunity.  
19

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Okay. I  
21 know my time is up and I'm going to end because I  
22 could go on for a long time, but I don't think  
23 families should be in this spot in the first  
24 place. They're supposed to be able to send their  
25 kid to their locally zoned school that they live

1  
2 very close to and that's, in fact, you know, not  
3 your philosophy when it comes to high school, but  
4 certainly the foundation of the system for  
5 elementary school and whatever ever options you're  
6 going to throw out there, I'm looking forward to  
7 seeing what they are because I can't figure out  
8 what they will be and they're not going to be, I  
9 would guess, things that are acceptable to these  
10 families, but I hope that we will have a new  
11 school in the neighborhood by September and that  
12 that will help us deal with this problem.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

14 Council Member Yassky of Brooklyn.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Thank you.

16 A very briefly--good afternoon, Chancellor, but,  
17 first of all, I have a question, but I just want  
18 to echo what Council Member Lappin said. I mean,  
19 I know that you can't just glibly say you have a  
20 right to go to your neighborhood school because a  
21 lot goes into making that possible, but I do think  
22 that should be the foundational--one of the  
23 foundational commitments on elementary school and  
24 I was very concerned in my area, it looks like we  
25 won't have people this year unable to go to their

neighborhood school for kindergarten, but that was the fear that was widespread throughout the district and where I represent and, you know, we could go--that could happen in my part to and I just think that should be a foundational commitments and I don't underestimate what it takes to live up to that but--

[Crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: [Interposing]

Wait, wait, there's only one way, I mean, let's focus on this for a second because I think it's very easy to say what you're saying except I don't control which children and which families move into a neighborhood, and in 290, for example, people moved there. Now that building was built long ago. So at some point if the building capacity is such that you simply, you know, you've converted non-classrooms into classrooms and so forth. The only solution to that is to rezone and families don't want that. But at some point there is simply no room at the school. The long-term solution which the Councilwoman mentioned is to build new schools, building new schools on the East side of Manhattan I can assure you is not

1 something one does without great challenge and  
2 we've done more than anybody starting down at 57th  
3 Street and we moved that school that Adele  
4 Schroeder [phonetic] was in. So the trouble is,  
5 of course, we want everybody to be able to go to  
6 their neighborhood school, but if you exceed the  
7 capacity, your only two options are building  
8 another school--but even that people want to go to  
9 290, not a new school--or your second option is to  
10 rezone.  
11

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Fair

13 enough, and I want to ask my question but that's  
14 why I said, I don't, one could say it glibly, like  
15 everybody should have a right--and I don't want to  
16 say that because I understand and its neighborhood  
17 by neighborhood, it's each one has its own story.  
18 I was very concerned at what happened at 321, 261,  
19 and PS 8 and each one has its own story of what  
20 you would need to do to make sure it didn't  
21 happen, I do get that. What I'm saying is when  
22 the, you know, when that kind of line was  
23 broached, that was frightening to me because I  
24 would rather see that everyone who works under you  
25 understand that that is a commitment that we're



going to live up to and we're going to figure out how to do and have to plan for two years down the road and you don't have control when all of a sudden people who either move in there or they live there and they decide we're going to--

[Crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Have children?

COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: --school, or they're going to have children--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Or not go to private school.

COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Or not go to private school, I do hear all that, I just, with all that, I would say I would hope that that could be one of the bottom line premises just like we're going to offer a place to every kid. So I just want to make that point.

But I just want to ask 'cause I know we get one question, and this half a question or maybe just half a comment, I really do urge you to look at testing as a cost, you know, control opportunity and there's policy, you know, there's policy here of do you think the testing is the right amount, too much, you know, not enough. But

1  
2 even if the position is this test--that the level  
3 of testing is right, educationally, you know, we  
4 have to choose between things that are right  
5 educationally and rather than see, you know, art  
6 or music suffer or rather than see class size go  
7 up, I would urge you to look at that because at  
8 the very least leave some of the, you know,  
9 incremental test days up to principals to decide  
10 if they want to spend money on. And I just think  
11 that as you're making these very difficult  
12 decisions that would be a place that you could cut  
13 back.

14 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Fair point.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
16 Council Member. We've been joined by students  
17 from PS 241, the family Academy in Harlem, they're  
18 seventh graders with their social studies class  
19 and welcome to a City Council hearing on the  
20 preliminary budget for the Department of  
21 Education, which in totality is about \$21 billion  
22 and that includes debt service and pension. It's  
23 about 17 1/2 billion for expenses so we're talking  
24 about the preliminary budget and the impact that  
25 it's going to have on schools.

Chancellor, concerning charter schools are paid at a per capita rate for each enrolled student by the Department Of Education. The state education department sets a rate based on the Department of Education spending on other public school students in prior years. In addition to the per student rate, how much does the Department of Education spend on charter schools? If you can please itemize some things like in-kind support services as use of DOE buildings, building maintenance, training, or professional development for charter school staff, student testing scores, administrative support, and planning, basically in-kind services, how much do you spend on that?

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I don't have that number, I'll be happy to supply it to the committee though.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah, in fact, I guess this is a preliminary for our hearing on April 6 on charter schools. I'm trying to understand overall, especially since we're cutting back, are there cuts also to the amount of money you're spending on charter schools in a

1  
2 preliminary budget?

3 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Yeah, most of  
4 the money is under state formula, we don't control  
5 the money to charters, there's a state formula  
6 that determines that.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Is that  
8 flexible money or categorical money?

9 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: It's categorical  
10 to charters, I can tell you to answer your  
11 question, I can tell you what we spend out of our  
12 budget, but the state money is a pass-through.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. And do  
14 you have the numbers you spend out of your budget  
15 on charter schools?

16 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I will get--  
17 that's what I said, I will get you.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.  
19 Because I'm trying to find out what is the true  
20 cost of charter schools to the city of New York.

21 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay?  
23 Concerning school safety, I know we talked about  
24 every area and we touched base on that before, but  
25 I'm looking at our numbers and a course year after

1  
2 year for school safety has gone up. And clearly  
3 safety and security is very important to all of  
4 us, whether in our neighborhoods or in our  
5 schools, and I understand that you--meaning you,  
6 the Department of Education--you basically write a  
7 check to NYPD for school safety. But what is  
8 being done to reduce the cost in that area since  
9 we're looking at every single area, are you  
10 looking at cutting back in that area to the same  
11 extent that you're cutting back in the schools and  
12 other than school services and is there a dialogue  
13 taking place between you and NYPD or are you  
14 telling them that listen, I'm cutting your budget  
15 by 10% and you've got to live with that? Do you  
16 have that authority to do that and what is being  
17 done overall?

18 [Off mic]

19 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: They took it  
20 [off mic], but there was a cut.

21 MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We didn't  
22 cut--

23 [Pause]

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: They didn't cut  
25 it--

MS. ANAGNOSTOPOULOS: We just didn't have to cut our budget.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Oh, okay, so basically what my colleague is saying is, there was a cut, but the OMB decided that there shouldn't be and so they covered the cost, so it wasn't an additional cost to us. In other words, this basically came through OMB, they took it out of the PEG, in the original PEG there was something like a 10 million cut, OMB restored the \$10 million.

And ultimately OMB has the final say on this.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Well I'm going to be asking them just like I'm asking you because since we're dealing with two agencies, the NYPD and DOE and overall OMB, those appropriate questions I'm going to be asking, because clearly if we're asking about parent coordinators and how much it costs overall and how many are there, clearly if we're talking about special education and whether or not you can find efficiencies there and especially if they're mandated by federal government and we're looking

1  
2 at all areas, then we should also look at the cost  
3 factor that is constantly rising and efficiencies  
4 in that area. So I would appreciate if we could  
5 press them more--

6 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Sure.

7 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --as far as  
8 to reduce.

9 But we've been joined by colleague  
10 James Sanders, Jr., of Queens and our colleague--  
11 oh, Eric Gioia of Queens. And let me turn to  
12 Jessica Lappin for follow-up, and then we're going  
13 to turn to Council Member Gioia. And I know you  
14 got to leave.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: Thank you.  
16 Just because I feel very passionately about this  
17 and you said that you don't control the number of  
18 people who move into that area. And I know you  
19 personally don't, but the Buildings Department and  
20 the city of Planning department have absolutely  
21 issued too many permits and there has been too  
22 much development without the kind of  
23 infrastructure that we need to support it. So  
24 while you don't, the Administration does, and this  
25 is something that I've been talking about with you

and with Deputy Mayor Walcott for three years. So this is not something that has popped up overnight, and ultimately the reason I like mayoral control is because the buck does stop with you. And part of my frustration is there is nobody for parents to call--they can't call you and they can talk to the principal because the principal doesn't have a plan in place, so they call me and I don't know what to tell them, other than that you are going to hope that gifted and talented seats make the difference and that there will be room for them, if not you're going to come up with some other options. And I just find that to be more than frustrating, but unacceptable and we have made some progress to finding temporary location for a new school this fall, but we do not have a location for a long-term solution, despite the fact that we have been pushing you for years to deal with that. And so when you say that a school doesn't happen overnight, I agree, but it isn't overnight that we're talking about here. And I and Council Member Garodnick last weekend ourselves led a search party to try and find locations to send to you and to your real estate



1  
2 department and we're getting sort of sick and  
3 tired of having to do that. And I still don't see  
4 a long-term plan in place to build a new school in  
5 that area to relieve that overcrowding, unless  
6 there's something I don't know about.

7 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well it is  
8 something, you're right, that we need to address.  
9 My only point before was that it's not something  
10 that is remediable overnight, meaning I know  
11 you've been talking about this, but you can't  
12 build a school when you can't site it and you  
13 can't lease space and we've been aggressively  
14 looking for that, it's not like we haven't paid  
15 attention to it.

16 The other point to make which is  
17 anybody who is writing to you, I think then you  
18 should refer to them either directly to me or to  
19 the Office of Student Placement in the department  
20 and we will tell them what is going to go forward  
21 in terms of when they will receive options and so  
22 forth and obviously if we could lease space, we  
23 would be glad to do so.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER LAPPIN: And I hope  
25 that they--you know, it took me two days to get a

1  
2 call back from Ms. Shabara [phonetic], I'm still  
3 waiting three days to hear back from Deputy Mayor  
4 Walcott. So if send parents to you and your  
5 office, I would hope that they will get a reply  
6 promptly.

7 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I will see to  
8 it.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
10 Council Member. And we're going to turn to Eric  
11 Gioia and then you're out of here, Chancellor, let  
12 me just thank you for your patience.

13 But before I turn to my colleague,  
14 there was one quick question. When you talked  
15 about the non-teaching staff that may be impacted  
16 with layoffs, and I know that this is a huge  
17 concern for DC 37 that represents a lot of members  
18 in the non-teaching staff in the Department of  
19 Education, are you talking about actual 3,000  
20 bodies or are you talking about the full-time  
21 equivalents, because many of the employees are  
22 part time which could mean more than 3,000  
23 employees.

24 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: I'm talking  
25 about approximately 3,000 full-time equivalents--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Equivalents.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: --but I'm also saying that some of that will come through attrition.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. All right. Council Member Gioia and then we appreciate you coming and--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --answering all our questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIOIA: Thank you, thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you very much, Chancellor, I know you have to run so I will be brief.

I understand you've gone through a lot of questioning and right now what we're talking about is about \$500 million more from Albany, a \$140 million difference between 360 and the 500--the bare minimum of 500 we need. Part of what I want to ask you about, is it just seems to me that that 500 million is the bare minimum, that in fact, we should be talking about far more because, you know, when it's time for a bank bailout, right? We talk about in the federal

1  
2 government, we say, well gosh it sounds like a lot  
3 of money, but if we don't do this, it's going to  
4 be far worse for a generation of Americans. When  
5 we talk about the MTA we say, you know, this is a  
6 bitter pill to swallow, but if we don't do this,  
7 it'll be far more difficult to get to work. But  
8 we're talking about right now certainly 140  
9 million extra and 500 million, which I think there  
10 is broad agreement on in this room today, but it  
11 seems to me we should be asking for far more and  
12 getting far more and having a frank discussion,  
13 not just with the legislature in Albany, but with  
14 New Yorkers.

15 I remember about a decade ago when  
16 there was a proposal called Safe Streets, Safe  
17 Cities where no one likes to pay more in taxes,  
18 but there was a dialogue with New York City where  
19 we said, if you pay more you will get this and  
20 your city will be safer, and I think New Yorkers  
21 were happy to pay that and they got safer streets.  
22 I know, and I'm speaking to parents almost every  
23 night, when you speak to real people, as I know  
24 you do with frequency, they tell you the  
25 sacrifices they make for their kids everyday--the

1 bills that they'll pay next month instead of this  
2 month so they can get a new pair of sneakers or  
3 put more food on the table. We are talking about  
4 today and they are talking about in Albany a  
5 generation of kids who we are in danger of failing  
6 if we don't get the appropriate resources to fund  
7 these schools, the teachers, and all the  
8 resources. And so I just ask you what else can we  
9 do to get that message across that this isn't just  
10 \$140 million more we need, we need a significant  
11 investment because I mean, as you know, I think  
12 there are--what is the number 150,000 disconnected  
13 youth, 18 to 25-year-olds without a degree,  
14 without much hope, without a job, that will only  
15 get worse unless Albany does right by us and gives  
16 us the resources we need to educate our kids.

18 CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Well we've  
19 certainly asked for it, the state education  
20 department has asked for it, and I would urge you  
21 to join us. As you say, that first 140 million is  
22 critical, but certainly we shouldn't stop there,  
23 we should continue to try to get more resources,  
24 there's no question. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,

Council Member Gioia. Chancellor, let me thank you--

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and your staff for coming in, we appreciate that, we look forward to working with you in order to get all of the monies to make sure that every child receives a good quality education in New York City.

CHANCELLOR KLEIN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Next we're going to hear from the president of the United Federation of Teachers, Randi Weingarten.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Yeah? Yes or no, what?

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: President Weingarten, let me thank you for coming in. We're in the now the public session, we're going to hear from President Randi Weingarten and then President and Chair, Veronica Montgomery-Costa, who is the president of DC 37 and the president of Local 372 of DC 37, but first we hear from President Randi Weingarten.

1  
2 MR. RANDI WEINGARTEN: Thank you,  
3 Chair Jackson. I was actually in the middle of  
4 negotiations with the city of New York on our  
5 health benefit negotiations down at the Sanitation  
6 Union a few minutes ago until I heard what the  
7 Chancellor said and I decided I was going to give  
8 my testimony myself, as opposed to having a  
9 surrogate give it because of what I understand has  
10 just transpired.

11 The reason I tell you that is  
12 because obviously--closer? Closer, farther,  
13 closer. The reason I tell you that is because  
14 obviously both my union, as well as all the other  
15 unions in the city, are very engaged in  
16 understanding the cataclysmic circumstances we  
17 find ourselves under, which is the worst recession  
18 since the Great Depression. And New York City is  
19 not the only city suffering, people are suffering  
20 all across the country.

21 So I actually want to start with  
22 something I heard that is really disturbing to me,  
23 which is this: the Mayor of the city of New York  
24 and I, and you know we don't always agree, we were  
25 up in Albany yesterday together going to see all

1 the leadership, including Dean Skelos, the  
2 governor, Speaker Silver, Majority Leader Smith,  
3 in sync talking about what we needed and talking  
4 about what we needed from the stimulus package and  
5 talking about what we needed in terms of  
6 additional resources and we did that together. We  
7 didn't threaten about layoffs or anything else, we  
8 just said in order to ensure no erosion, and in  
9 order to make sure--you know, the same arguments  
10 that the Chancellor made here today, but without  
11 the edge. With cup in hand, the two of us  
12 together, just like we did with cup in hand the  
13 two of us together when we were down in  
14 Washington, where my national union, by the way,  
15 has done since October has made getting a stimulus  
16 package with education in the forefront as one of  
17 our major priorities, as important a priority as  
18 getting President Barack Obama elected, and the  
19 Mayor to his credit and I don't, as I said, don't  
20 always complements him, ended up doing a very  
21 effective job, particularly with people that I  
22 virtually never talk to. That's what we were  
23 doing together.

24 So you can actually imagine my



1  
2 surprise today when, you know, the first thing the  
3 Chancellor does is the Chancellor is not out there  
4 on the streets like you all were on March 5th with  
5 70,000 other folks talking about the safety net  
6 and with the people talking about the safety net.  
7 Instead one more time he says if we don't get  
8 this, these are the kinds of layoffs or the kinds  
9 of cuts in services.

10 Now I understand that's part of his  
11 job, but this is what disturbs me, because at the  
12 end of the day if we don't get everything that we  
13 need, there are going to be painful decisions that  
14 get made. That's part of the reason I said to you  
15 that this morning I am at the sanitation union  
16 talking about, you know identifying savings in  
17 terms of health care. But when the Chancellor of  
18 the city of New York school system says but what  
19 is sacrosanct is a data system--not the state  
20 testing system, not the federal nate [phonetic]  
21 system, but a New York City data system is more  
22 sacrosanct than services to kids? When their  
23 parents may be laid off or their homes foreclosed?  
24 Or services in terms of classrooms? That a data  
25 system is more sacrosanct than teaching? That

1 holding other people accountable is more  
2 sacrosanct than what we do in classrooms and in  
3 schools? That, my friends, is a misplaced  
4 priority. That, I don't understand.  
5

6 In December, we gave the  
7 Chancellor, and we put some of that in our  
8 testimony as well, about \$1 billion worth of cuts,  
9 hard things, things that are not easy, including  
10 things that affect my member's pockets, such as  
11 the new school based bonus program, which I think  
12 is a good program, I know its performance pay, but  
13 I think it has promoted collaboration. We said if  
14 times are really this tough, we need to cut things  
15 that we may like, but are not core. We said, you  
16 have to have a hiring freeze, yes, that's going to  
17 create a problem in terms of class size, but if  
18 times are really tough and unemployment in this  
19 city is over whatever it is right now, 5, 10%,  
20 then you don't put more people on the street, you  
21 don't lay people off, whether it be teachers or  
22 paras or school aides, where are they going to get  
23 jobs if times are really tough? If times are  
24 really tough, you do a retirement incentive so  
25 that you can actually save cash and can actually

1  
2 maintain class size by hiring or retaining two new  
3 teachers for every senior teacher you replace. If  
4 times are really tough, there were about two or  
5 \$300 million, and it's all in my testimony, two,  
6 \$300 million of administrative costs that you the  
7 school system should do.

8 But to say today that we need this  
9 money, which we really do and which we fought hard  
10 to get and which the president of the United  
11 States of America deserves every bit of props we  
12 can give him as does Senator Schumer, as does  
13 Congressmen Rangel and our whole delegation for  
14 passing a stimulus that had over \$100 billion in  
15 it for education--first time ever, a lifeline in  
16 terms of this.

17 So, yes, we need to work together  
18 to get these funds from Albany and we are doing  
19 it. I've been in Albany three times in the last  
20 seven days or eight days. But when times are  
21 tough, everybody's priorities need--every adult's  
22 priorities need to take second place to ensuring  
23 that New Yorkers have jobs, but most importantly  
24 ensuring that our kids have the nurturing and the  
25 safety and the teaching and learning conditions

they need. That, to me, is our bottom line.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I mean you're so emotional and passionate about this, and let me ask you, why are you so emotional and passionate about this? I mean, because the Chancellor--

MS. WEINGARTEN: Because I had my Wheaties today.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --was not as emotional as you, and so I'm just asking why are you so emotional in your statements about this?

MS. WEINGARTEN: Because I've spent my life's work doing education in the city of New York and ultimately have watched the reason one of the main arguments that we used successfully in Washington to even get the stimulus package was the fact of what happened in the 70s fiscal crisis here. This city school system in the 70s, the 80s, and the 90s, was an under-funded school system. I remember teaching in the school system in the early 90s, sometimes we had to scavenge for chalk, we used to talk all the time about leaky roofs, about exposed wiring, the UFT sued the school system for a warrant of habitability because the schools were in such bad shape. The

1 textbooks, when we had them sometimes would say  
2 even in the early 90s John F. Kennedy was the  
3 President of the United States. Now it would have  
4 been great if John F. Kennedy was always the  
5 President of the United States of America, but it  
6 wasn't actually true in 1991. So the point is  
7 we've, you know, we've had so many years of such  
8 under resource starvation, that's part of why you  
9 brought that lawsuit 13-14 years ago and walked up  
10 to Albany. Another not passionate person. So  
11 when you see at this end where we're going to have  
12 to make tough choices and it's a we, and you see  
13 somebody put out there, no, his particular data  
14 system trumps everything else, what does that say  
15 about what we're doing for children?

17 That's my anger here and I am sure  
18 it will be redefined as Weingarten is anti-test, I  
19 am not anti-test. I just called for a national  
20 basis, better assessments, national standards, the  
21 curriculum to do that, testing is a very important  
22 piece of teaching and learning, but testing does  
23 not trump teaching. You have to teach before you  
24 measure, you have to help kids before you measure.  
25 And so ultimately we are in the thick of it--I

1  
2 mean the rest of it is in my testimony, we are in  
3 the thick of it. We are trying very desperately  
4 to get what we need from Albany, you were a  
5 tremendous help, all of you were at the rally on  
6 March 5th, we're trying to get a progressive  
7 income tax, we're trying to get both our fair  
8 share of the stimulus package and make sure that  
9 the stimulus package is spent wisely. We got that  
10 stimulus package from Washington, but at the end  
11 of the day if we don't get everything we need from  
12 Albany, and we don't then also get everything we  
13 need from the Council and from the Mayor in their  
14 negotiations and your negotiations, given how bad  
15 the circumstances are, there's going to be hard  
16 choices. And we suggest in here what some of  
17 those hard choices are--you deal with a retirement  
18 incentive, you start looking at very, very  
19 carefully what we need to protect core services.  
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well you may  
22 have been here when I was asking him about other  
23 areas like school safety has been increased over  
24 the years and, you know, what can be done in order  
25 to save money there, I talked about special

1  
2 education, I talked about every area, because as  
3 you said, when you're dealing in these tough  
4 times, I don't know whether or not any area should  
5 not be touched. And we asked him, the Chancellor,  
6 what we should be doing up in Albany. Let me ask  
7 you as a president of a union that represents--how  
8 many people do represent in New York City?

9 MS. WEINGARTEN: 200,000.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 200,000?

11 MS. WEINGARTEN: Between the people  
12 at the Board of Education itself, which is still  
13 the legal name for it, it's about 110,000, so  
14 about 50,000 retirees and then we represent 30,000  
15 childcare providers and various other groups of  
16 people.

17 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: What do you  
18 feel we should be doing as members of the City  
19 Council and the City Council as a whole regarding  
20 the Department of Education's budget?

21 MS. WEINGARTEN: Look, I think that  
22 this, it is we do need funds from Albany and we do  
23 need the Chancellor today said 500 million, when  
24 we were in Albany yesterday we talked about 500 to  
25 700 million, we do need funds from Albany, I think

1  
2 those are legitimate numbers in terms of making  
3 sure that there is no erosion, and I think what  
4 the president of the United States did was to say  
5 that, given how the--so I'm going to put the words  
6 in his mouth as opposed to mine--given that the  
7 economy and education are so tied together, if we  
8 pull the rug from under kids right now, we're  
9 never going to recover from it and kids don't--  
10 you've heard me say this before, I don't mean to  
11 be this rhetorical right now about this but, you  
12 know, what makes it right to hurt a kid who  
13 happens to be a 5-year-old today versus a 5-year-  
14 old five years ago when Wall Street was booming?  
15 They didn't create this crisis and we have to  
16 create a way that we insulate them from this  
17 crisis and I think and that's why I give great  
18 applause to the president who can print money for  
19 creating, you know, that 700-\$800 billion bill,  
20 which had this which had 100 billion for stimulus.

21 Now I also believe, even though  
22 some of the things that the president wants in  
23 terms of performance pay and other kinds of  
24 things, those are tough subjects, but it is part  
25 of a march towards assuming or assuring that every



1 kid gets a decent shot at life and I have talked  
2 to members both in New York City as well as around  
3 the country about having to engage in  
4 conversations that may be uncomfortable for us.  
5 Having said all that, even in terms of charter  
6 schools, we have to be very careful--and we run  
7 two charter schools and are involved in a third  
8 one--we have to be very, very careful about not  
9 having charter schools have more of a priority in  
10 this city than public schools. So I will give you  
11 an example, I was at a great public school today  
12 in Manhattan, I think in Gale's district, 185, I  
13 think it was. It is a great early childhood  
14 center, it would be fantastic to make it the early  
15 childhood center of Harlem instead of giving half  
16 that building to a new charter school. We need  
17 early childhood spots, so I don't understand the  
18 choices there in terms of not expanding an early  
19 childhood center in Harlem that's doing quite  
20 well.  
21

22 So you have a lot of priorities  
23 that we need to address and, as I said here, some  
24 of them, if, God forbid, we get to a situation  
25 where we don't get the exact amount of money we

1  
2 need, where you don't do what you all did last  
3 year, which was move heaven and earth to make sure  
4 the core services were protected, even though some  
5 of the things we need like teachers choice was  
6 reduced, you know how hard that was for us,  
7 because teachers dug into their pockets more, they  
8 still provided the supplies for kids, they just  
9 dug into their pockets more. They effectively  
10 took a pay cut to do that because they want to,  
11 but you made choices last year and the choices you  
12 made were to make sure there was a priority on  
13 children. We're getting into that situation again  
14 this year. If we can't get to the exact number we  
15 need to assume no erosion, then that's where tough  
16 choices have to be made and, as I said, we put  
17 out, and we will get you the letter in December,  
18 something that amounted to about \$1 billion worth  
19 of savings. Some of it people would say we're,  
20 you know, I don't think any of it was bogus, some  
21 of it other people might say it was, but it was  
22 our attempt to show there was a better way.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

24 Let me turn to our colleagues Council Member Lou  
25 Fidler and then Council Member James.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Madam

President, first let me tell you I feel your pain-  
-

MS. WEINGARTEN: I know you do.

COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: --and I also  
appreciate your sacrifice. I've been to Albany,  
having to go there three times in seven days is an  
awful sacrifice. I really do.

I want to mention something else to  
you that the Chancellor said and then also mention  
something to you that the Chancellor didn't say  
while you were here. A number of us questioned  
the Chancellor about the plan to move 5-year-olds  
from ACS to DOE. At first, in a moment of  
surprising candor, the Chancellor admitted that by  
saying that there was no cost to adding 3,500 new  
kindergarteners to the system, that that was, in  
effect, a cut to the classroom and then he quickly  
backpedaled and said that there was no incremental  
cost to it because they had the space to observe  
them and likened it to moving a family moving from  
a two-bedroom to a one-bedroom apartment and the  
kids having to share the bedroom. And what he was  
basically saying is it fits right into what you

1  
2 were talking about, which is we all know, I mean,  
3 I'm sure the Chancellor knows, I know you know,  
4 that one of the main factors in, you know,  
5 improving quality education is reducing class  
6 size, and so he was basically saying it's not a  
7 problem, I would increase class size. And that  
8 kind of dovetails into what you're saying is that,  
9 you know, they continue to ignore the things that  
10 we all know and he knows in his heart he's got to  
11 know, I think he's got one, that that work and  
12 then he's going to hold data and testing up so  
13 that he can then prove that what we knew was true,  
14 which is that our test scores will go down because  
15 of increased class size and that makes no sense.

16 The other thing he didn't talk  
17 about in all of his testimony, there was a great  
18 deal of written testimony and there was certainly  
19 he was here for 2 1/2 hours answering questions,  
20 he didn't once talk about cutting the no-bid  
21 contracts for consultants. And for the life of  
22 me, and I've said this here to the department  
23 before, I don't understand why we need to bring in  
24 companies from England and pay them hundreds and  
25 hundreds of dollars an hour totaling tens and

1  
2 hundreds of thousands of dollars in contracts to  
3 come in and analyze our school system when we have  
4 teachers, principals, and parents here who know  
5 what works, why he's got to do that. And before  
6 he cuts one of the 3,000 full-time equivalents  
7 that he says he will have to cut from the DOE  
8 budget, why he wouldn't consider cutting the no-  
9 bid consultant contracts first, I don't  
10 understand.

11 MS. WEINGARTEN: Look, I agree with  
12 you, but I don't understand--and this is going to  
13 sound, this will probably sound a little bit  
14 goony--but I've been around for a long time, I  
15 used to understand the budgets of the Board of  
16 Education far better than I understand them now.  
17 And there was an interesting check and balance  
18 when the school system had a different budgetary  
19 basis than the Office of Management and Budget and  
20 you would see that fight fought out in the press a  
21 lot. I think part of what was in your report  
22 about mayoral control, what was in our part about  
23 mayoral control, and other reports about mayoral  
24 control is what's the transparency and what really  
25 is the budget. So for example, what the new

1 funding formula for kids the so called fair  
2 student funding formula, maybe there needs to be  
3 flexibility on that as opposed to asking for  
4 flexibility off of the campaign for fiscal equity  
5 funding formula that was fought out for 13 years  
6 and was the state formula that's attempting to  
7 help kids who are, you know, at-risk kids. So  
8 maybe that's some thing we where you look at it.

9  
10 The second piece you said about  
11 class size, it does not make sense to me. And as  
12 I said, no, math, I was not a math major, but it  
13 does not make sense to me that there is over \$150  
14 million of targeted money to class-size and  
15 ultimately parents and teachers both believe that  
16 class size is important and, with all this new  
17 money into the school system, class size has gone  
18 up, not down. It doesn't make any sense to me, I  
19 don't understand that.

20 Now in terms of the issue you  
21 raised about ACS. Without engaging in the whole  
22 issue about whether there should be daycare  
23 facilities versus whether there should be more  
24 pre-K facilities and kindergarten facilities in  
25 our public schools, what we do know is this, and

1  
2 the president has said this and others have said  
3 this, we do know high-quality early childhood  
4 programs give a huge head start to children and in  
5 fact in this city we don't have enough of those  
6 slots. And this Council has been a champion of  
7 full-day pre-K because we know that's so  
8 important. So ultimately you need the space to do  
9 that because if you don't have the space and you  
10 just transfer kids to the school system, then  
11 there is going to be a zero-sums game and that  
12 means some other kids are going to lose out and  
13 probably lose out in terms of higher class size.

14 And the last thing I'll say about  
15 this is if you ask teachers, good teachers, they  
16 will tell you that the lower the class size, the  
17 more effective they are at reaching kids.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: Just to  
19 follow up on that include, we don't need to hold  
20 100 hearings, and it seems like we have, to know  
21 what works and that is reducing class size,  
22 increasing parental involvement. I mean, I  
23 certainly know what the Department of Education  
24 thinks about parental involvement, and it's not--  
25 its I have nothing good to say about that. But

1  
2 they seem to be intent on spending money on  
3 reinventing the wheel, rearranging the deck chairs  
4 on the Titanic as opposed to just doing the things  
5 that we know work and just teaching and until they  
6 get out of their own way and allow us to go back  
7 to that, to put people who know what goes on back  
8 in charge of teaching our children, we will  
9 continue not to make the progress that we ought to  
10 be made and our children deserve.

11 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
12 Council Member. Council Member Letitia James of  
13 Brooklyn.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Mr. Chair,  
15 first let me apologize for not being here when the  
16 Chancellor testified, we were having Brooklyn  
17 delegation meetings over in 250 Broadway--

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --and this  
20 morning I was first on deck and I've listened to  
21 over a hundred organizations and there's about 200  
22 that are yet to go and we'll be here this evening  
23 until at least 9 o'clock.

24 But I took a break to come over  
25 here to ask Ms. Weingarten, there's an article in



1  
2 the Daily News with regards to the ACS children  
3 being transferred to the kindergartens and, as you  
4 know, I've been critical of this proposal because  
5 the children who apparently who are currently in  
6 ACS centers are going trying to enroll in  
7 kindergartens and some of other public schools and  
8 the parents are being told that kindergarten is  
9 not mandatory for your child and therefore the  
10 subsidized child does not have to get enrolled in  
11 a kindergarten. And I find that really offensive  
12 that low-income children are not offered an option  
13 and that these low income children are not being  
14 provided the benefits of early childhood  
15 education. And so I just wanted to note, do you  
16 have a position with regards to this transfer of  
17 ACS children to--

18 MS. WEINGARTEN: [Interposing] We  
19 only heard about this proposal by reading the  
20 Daily News today. So, you know, and obviously we  
21 will, you know, write a letter to them, ask for--  
22 the way in which we can do this is ask for impact  
23 bargaining and that will get disclosure of  
24 information to us, that's the way, you know, to  
25 use labor speak, that's how we would do this,

1  
2 which we will do today. However, there is a core  
3 principle here which you just said, as you were  
4 talking, Tish--Council--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Tish is  
6 fine.

7 MS. WEINGARTEN: Councilwoman  
8 James, sorry. And that is since Tony Alvarado was  
9 Chancellor of this city's school system,  
10 kindergarten became a mandated service and, unless  
11 something has changed in the middle of the night  
12 somewhere in a regulation, kindergarten for all  
13 other kids who live in New York City is a mandated  
14 service.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: We were  
16 told--I was told and I believe I forget what  
17 committee since I'm getting confused with all  
18 these hearings, we were told by some Commissioner  
19 that it was not mandatory and that it was part of  
20 state law, that it was not mandatory. The  
21 students in my district, the subsidized children  
22 who currently attend day care centers and attend  
23 kindergarten and daycare centers are being told  
24 that it is not mandatory and in fact being turned  
25 away in some of our schools in my district that do

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not have space and I am offended--

MS. WEINGARTEN: [Interposing] Are you saying to me that in the era of mayoral control--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --with a Mayor who has--and a Mayor and a City Council, as well as a state government who has given us unprecedented amount of funds, and in an era when we know that early childhood education is so important, and when there is an attempt to get to pre-K education, that there is a Commissioner in the city of New York--and, I'm sorry, and when we have had the mandate?

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

MS. WEINGARTEN: Since when Tony Alvarado was Chancellor, never changed, even during terrible fiscal distress?

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes, Ms. Weingarten, yeah.

MS. WEINGARTEN: So you're saying to me that there is a commissioner in this city that does not know that?

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Ms.

1 Weingarten, I believe if my memory serves me  
2 correctly, it was the Budget Director who stated  
3 that it was not mandatory, that state law does not  
4 require kindergarten and, therefore, subsidized  
5 children, low income children, the majority of  
6 them being of color, are not given the same  
7 options as a child of means and that--

8 MS. WEINGARTEN: Then this--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --is  
10 offensive and the Mayor of the city of New York  
11 should come out loudly and reject that as a  
12 notion.  
13

14 MS. WEINGARTEN: What I will do,  
15 Council Member, is that I will task my staff today  
16 to try and do this research and I promise you that  
17 what we will do is that if that is actually the  
18 city's position, we will go to court under the old  
19 regulations and work with some parents to try to  
20 get the court to compel the city of New York to  
21 actually follow the regulations that require for  
22 all these years kindergarten for all kids who live  
23 in New York City.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And, Ms.  
25 Weingarten, I promise you I will come out of

1  
2 retirement and serve pro bono counsel to the  
3 Department of Education, file an amicus brief on  
4 behalf of the City Council and join you in that  
5 lawsuit.

6 Let me also go on to talk to you  
7 about another double-standard. We are moving to  
8 in this city where we are now requiring or will be  
9 requiring Regents Diplomas. My stellar high  
10 schools in my district Benjamin Banneker, Bedford  
11 Academy, Medgar Evers middle school, they were  
12 just informed recently that AP classes will now  
13 come out of their budgets. As you know,  
14 specialized schools such as tech and all of the  
15 other, it's included in their budget. These three  
16 stellar schools, which most of the children come  
17 from public housing, where 90% of these children  
18 or 95% in some cases go on to graduation and  
19 graduate, these principals were just told AP  
20 classes will have to come out of your regular  
21 budget, we don't have money for it. And I'm just,  
22 again, offended by that, again, that they would  
23 take out of their regular budgets, they would  
24 require--impose upon them the requirement that  
25 they pay for AP classes.

MS. WEINGARTEN: So you just got to the issue with why this shift of this entire funding formula to principals has been so problematic.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: Because we've seen this in lots of different ways. For example, how does a principal actually pay for a high-quality full-day pre-K, because it's going to cost a lot more money than other programs. So how do you do that, if it comes out of your pot of money?

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Exactly.

MS. WEINGARTEN: And the same is true in terms of when you're dealing with and wanting to give AP courses to high striving at-risk kids. AP courses and [off mic] actual baccalaureate courses are terrific, I taught them at Clare Barton High School--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --they were my most fun to teach and our kids went through civic competitions, which we won at the state and the federal level, but they cost more--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: They do.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --because and they're not part of the Regents Diploma program--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Exactly.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --because they are electives.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: So the issue becomes that's part of the fallaciousness in my judgment of the current budget formula. The simplicity of the current budget formula, it's a great little soundbite--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --we're giving all kids the same amount of money, but ultimately what we need to do is we need to fund schools--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Exactly.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --in terms of the school programming. So I--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: These principals--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: --and these schools should be provided funds for AP classes, I mean, particularly in those schools,

again, where you have, as you describe, high risk, high performing schools. Actually, it should be across the board--

MS. WEINGARTEN: [Interposing] But there should be more--so what should happen probably, but this means going back to the drawing board in terms of a city school system funding program. What it should mean is that even when we had a very under-funded system, you had superintendents in different districts that actually were accountable for budgets and what they ended up doing, some times better and sometimes worse, is that they would see the schools in their catchment area or their districts or their neighborhoods, even the high school superintendents and if a school like Banneker was a high performing school that needed more AP courses, they would and other schools would say no, you're not being fair--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --but they would make the judgment--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Right.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --to focus



resources on that and that doesn't happen now because you don't have that layer of educator judgment doing that.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So it underscores this notion that we are still separate and unequal--

MS. WEINGARTEN: It's a--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --and again we should highlight that to the media and to everyone else who wants to listen. These children, primarily public housing, 90 to 95% graduation rates, with all the challenges in their lives, you would not include in the budget AP classes, offensive. And the last point is arts and culture, in my district--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]  
No, Council Member--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --there is no arts and culture--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --and last, very last--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing]

No, no, no, Council Member, I appreciate that--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: I could go

on, I've got at least--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I know you

can, but--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: --unequal,

it's unequal.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Unequal.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: We're back

to Brown versus Board of Education, we need

another lawsuit, Mr. Jackson.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Council

Member Reyna of Brooklyn, followed by Council

Member Katz of Queens.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Thank you,

Mr. Chair. Ms. Weingarten, I just wanted to

reinforce the issue of the 5-year olds in

kindergarten. The Chancellor before you did not

disagree with the point being raised that

kindergarten is not mandatory. So not only is

1  
2 there a Commissioner, but our Chancellor for the  
3 Department of Education in the city of New York  
4 did not reinforce any mandatory policy for  
5 kindergarten 5-year olds. I just need you to  
6 understand how severe this issue is right now.  
7 And I oppose any shifting of day care 5-year olds  
8 into a system that is not respecting early  
9 childhood education.

10 The lawsuit is perhaps something  
11 that you're going to explore, but your leadership  
12 on this issue more than anything is necessary  
13 because there should be a statewide campaign and  
14 perhaps a national campaign for early childhood  
15 education.

16 MS. WEINGARTEN: We will, as I  
17 said, this was the first--today was the first I've  
18 heard about it in terms of reading the Daily News  
19 and we will explore it--

20 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let me--

21 MS. WEINGARTEN: --and explore it  
22 quickly.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm sorry, go  
24 ahead.

25 Let me ask our colleague Oliver

Koppell to clarify the issue as far as mandated by law.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Well I wanted to--Tish, I'm going to try to say it as best I understand it and I promise you that by tomorrow I will confirm that I'm 100% correct. Under the state education law, you have to send a child to school, but you only have to send a child to school starting in the first grade.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: So when they say it's not mandatory ,what they mean is that the parent doesn't have to send a child to kindergarten. But I think that President Weingarten is correct that the city school system has guaranteed that if you want to send your child to kindergarten, they have to take the child. Now if their principals are trying to dissuade parents by saying it's not mandatory, that's wrong. But I don't think that's the policy, hopefully, not the policy of the city. And I don't think a lawsuit is necessary, I think what's necessary is for the Chancellor to make it clear to the principals that they're not supposed to say to a parent, it's not

1  
2 mandatory, even though, in a sense it isn't  
3 mandatory, it is mandatory for the school system  
4 to take the child, if they can't take the child in  
5 a kindergarten in that school, they have to put  
6 the child in kindergarten in another school.

7 MS. WEINGARTEN: It is an  
8 entitlement for children--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Right.

10 MS. WEINGARTEN: --it is not a  
11 mandate to parents.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I think  
13 that's--

14 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thanks.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --I just  
16 wanted to clarify--

17 MS. WEINGARTEN: And then--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --that's  
19 my--

20 MS. WEINGARTEN: And that was my--  
21 and, Ollie, that was my understanding of the  
22 regulation dating back to Chancellor Alvarado.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: I don't  
24 think anybody really disagrees with that I think  
25 the principals are doing a disservice by saying,

1  
2 you know, the parent comes in and says it's very  
3 difficult for me to get the child here to  
4 kindergarten, it was much better in the ACS  
5 center, and then the principal says well, you  
6 know, it's not mandatory, you don't need to send  
7 your child--

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Council  
9 Member.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --it's not  
11 something the principal--

12 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Right.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: --should  
14 be telling people.

15 [Off mic]

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No, I got to  
17 go, no. Council Member Katz.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KATZ: Well I was  
19 actually going to clarify what Councilman Koppell  
20 was talking about. And also just to reiterate  
21 more of a comment than a question, there is  
22 compulsory education for 6-year-olds in the state  
23 of New York, which is why I put in a resolution to  
24 the state and also tried to fix it by law here  
25 that says 5-year olds are compulsory as well,

1  
2 because what is happening in the district is that  
3 we have many more applications to kindergarten for  
4 locally zoned kindergarten than we do acceptance  
5 of seats and that's been the problem. And I think  
6 what my colleagues and I are facing is that when  
7 we go to a principal and say well, we need seats  
8 for our local kids, they say well it's not  
9 mandatory so, therefore, we can send your child  
10 anywhere we basically want to send them. And  
11 that's the problem, at least in my district, and I  
12 think from what I'm hearing in most folks areas.

13 And so at the joint hearing between  
14 Council Member Fidler's Committee and this  
15 Committee, there was a Department of Education  
16 high ranker, and I don't know who it was, who  
17 basically said the reason we can move these ACS  
18 kids into the local schools is because it's not  
19 mandatory, so if they can't go there, they can go  
20 somewhere else and that's an inappropriate answer  
21 and I would suggest that I would love for your  
22 organization also to look at how much more we're  
23 spending on busing. These children all around the  
24 city of New York, instead of allowing them to go  
25 where most parents, I believe, would want their

1  
2 children to go, which is the locally zoned area  
3 where they would be going to first grade.

4 MS. WEINGARTEN: Exactly, and you  
5 know that this week parents and the NYCLU and we  
6 did actually file a lawsuit on the whole zoning  
7 issue where the CECs really have still have the  
8 residual power of zoning and making sure that  
9 there is appropriate neighborhood schools for the  
10 kids in their neighborhood, and so we challenge  
11 the Enron on their authority.

12 Now I'm going to ask--Paul Egan  
13 [phonetic] is here and Bridget is here and Marvin  
14 is here from our office and I'm going to ask you  
15 guys to actually follow-up off of this hearing  
16 immediately in terms of doing whatever and we will  
17 provide whatever leadership you would like us to  
18 provide on this obviously.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Well,  
20 I want to thank you, President Weingarten, for  
21 coming in. Clearly, you know, the issue we've  
22 heard loud and clear that some principals and/or  
23 staff are saying to parents who are bringing their  
24 kids, that that is not mandated, but as far as I  
25 know, and my daughter is 33 years old and she went



1  
2 to full-day kindergarten, as far as all parents  
3 are concerned, it's mandated, and to say that it's  
4 not mandated is like what, there's been full-day  
5 kindergarten for as long as anyone can remember  
6 except if you're much, much older, and so as far  
7 as we're concerned, it is absolutely a mandated  
8 policy. And if there is a change in policy--in  
9 fact, I'm going to write to them and ask them, is  
10 there a change in policy and let's hear their  
11 answer because if it is, shame on you, if it is,  
12 shame on you and I say that loud and clear and, as  
13 one of the staff members said, if they're  
14 rejecting the children at kindergarten and then  
15 what happens if in fact they're not registered at  
16 that school in kindergarten? What happens when  
17 they want to come back in first grade, and that's  
18 their zoned school and they're going to say  
19 there's no room?

20 MS. WEINGARTEN: I agree.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: These are  
22 issues and concerns that affect all of us and we  
23 must work through it. So President Weingarten let  
24 me thank you for coming in and representing all of  
25 the members of the United Federation of Teachers

and also as a President of the American Federation of Teachers.

MS. WEINGARTEN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you very much.

MS. WEINGARTEN: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Mr. Chairman, can I just ask that we get a copy, we probably got it before the recommendations that you made back in December on possible ways to save money?

MS. WEINGARTEN: Yes, we can--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --we will get you--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOPPELL: Thank you.

MS. WEINGARTEN: --a copy of that letter.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

MS. WEINGARTEN: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And next we're going to hear from Santos Crespo, who is the vice president of Local 372 of DC 37 on behalf of Veronica Montgomery-Costa, the president of Local

372 and the chair or president of District Council  
37.

Vice President Crespo, welcome.

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Thank you,  
Chairman Jackson and Committee Members, and feel  
free to call me emotional and you probably will be  
able to tell when I start sounding like Ricky  
Ricardo at some point. And we also thank you for  
giving us the opportunity to give this testimony  
today.

Local 372, 26,000 Department of  
Education employee members continue to live, work,  
and pay their taxes and also vote and support the  
small businesses in their school community.

Each day our members awaken, most  
in the communities in which they voted to elect  
the council members here today. These dedicated  
employees rise to perform their duties to provide  
essential school life support services to the 1.1  
million school children whom they consider to be  
their life's work. But each passing day, their  
outlook on their lives in our city become more  
grim, less secure, and much more unsettling. They  
begin each day wondering how long they will be

1  
2 able to support their own families because,  
3 historically, their jobs have been the most  
4 undervalued and the first to go. And it makes no  
5 difference that Local 372 members are workers who  
6 send our students to the classroom learning-ready  
7 and learning-able. These are part-time, the  
8 majority of our members are part-time employees.  
9 As it is now, many of them are working two to  
10 three jobs just to make the ends meet.

11 They hear the Chancellor today give  
12 the testimony that they will probably be the first  
13 to get wiped out, not only unprecedented, but it  
14 is a travesty.

15 We regret that the City Council  
16 calendar was changed to schedule this budget  
17 hearing before the contract oversight hearing.  
18 Local 372 considers the DOE contract practice to  
19 be the rotten apple in the DOE budget process.  
20 Local 372 asks the distinguished Council Members  
21 that are present, "What is wrong with the picture  
22 I am about to paint for you?" Keep in mind that  
23 the reason that the American public is currently  
24 outraged while jobs are being lost by the hundreds  
25 of thousands each month across the counties, and

workers' hard earned tax dollars are being used to bail out failing companies, and on top of that, the failing officers are getting rewarded with huge bonuses.

Now let me turn your attention to our situation right here in New York City. Behind closed doors, DOE number crunchers are investigating how cutting student support service jobs will get more money for the ever-increasing pool of increasingly high paid DOE officers to contract out. The Mayor can thus trade off the salaries of taxpaying New York City residents and consumers for multi-million dollar out-of-state contracts.

Let me give you an example. As reported in the New York Times on January 14th, 2009, Mayor signed a contract with Maximus, Inc., which is based out of Virginia, for a 5-year special education data tracking program that will cost \$55 million dollars, with a \$23 million related expense. Local 372 understands the need for improving the tracking of special education, that's not our argument, but at a time when school support services employees, vital to the learning

1  
2 readiness of our children, are facing impending  
3 layoff, this is an extraordinarily high-price  
4 software solution that seems obscene and reckless.

5 Maximus is Virginia-based, as I  
6 stated, which specializes in contracting work  
7 normally performed by municipal workers throughout  
8 the United States and Canada. We, Local 372, will  
9 have more to report on this, by the way, next week  
10 at the April 1st hearing. But, however, using the  
11 \$80 million that is garnered from that contract,  
12 Maximus could displace still more New York City  
13 workers with Virginia workers to perform data  
14 entry and related services at Maximus, Inc. These  
15 workers can work and reside in Virginia, use their  
16 income to pay taxes and support local merchants  
17 and businesses in Virginia. Thus, the New York  
18 City Mayor is, in essence, eliminating jobs,  
19 taxes, and consumer revenue here at home, while  
20 generously creating jobs and increasing revenue in  
21 Virginia.

22 This union's president is not that  
23 old to remember when it was unlawful to spend New  
24 York tax levy dollars on contracts to out-of-state  
25 companies, and we believe that the City Council

1  
2 should take a real serious look at that because  
3 that's in fact what's going on. Local 372 asks  
4 the distinguished Council members present, "How  
5 can elected officials permit such outrageous  
6 breeches of responsibility to their own  
7 constituents regarding that matter?"

8 Local 372 contends that the lines  
9 drawn between service to the electorate and future  
10 personnel gain are getting more and more fuzzy.  
11 Daily News reported on February 27, it call former  
12 New York City Council Education Chair Eva  
13 Moskowitz, who founded a small chain of charter  
14 schools, as "a passionate and abrasive champion of  
15 the charter school movement." Local 372 sees Ms.  
16 Moskowitz as having been instrumental in New York  
17 City's transformation into two apparent school  
18 systems. One is a system of public schools,  
19 usually in lower income neighborhoods, which are  
20 stripped out of vital support services for which  
21 they have the greater need. The other, consists  
22 of small academies with catchy theme names, and  
23 Charter Schools, which siphon off an ever-  
24 increasing amount of DOE's budget. This drains  
25 the higher performing students from their

neighborhood schools and will prevent our public schools from being academically and racially diverse.

Ms. Moskowitz's sustains philosophical dedication to the charter school, and is in fact was rewarded last year a salary of \$310,000, which we find interesting, given the fact that the Chancellor of the city of New York, who has a much greater responsibility to oversee 1,400 school, only made a mere 250. And as for other charter schools in New York City and nationwide, there is no definitive data as of yet as to the superiority of these schools over properly funded and staffed public schools.

We urge the City Council to draw the lines more clearly and require clearly defined line items in the Mayor's budget to insure that the city taxpayer dollars are used to maintain an appropriate ratio of staff to students for vital school support services in our public school.

We also ask the City Council to eliminate the lines that created the two separate school systems by putting the brakes on the creation of additional charter schools at this



1  
2 time. We ask that an independent scientific study  
3 be required to evaluate the educational merit of  
4 these charter schools for the few who attend them.  
5 And we must also ask, are they worth the sacrifice  
6 incurred by the rest of the city's children.

7 Local 372 calls upon also the City  
8 Council to take an active role in overseeing the  
9 DOE contract process to insure that New York tax  
10 levy money is not used to support residents of  
11 other states over our own constituents and  
12 families.

13 We look forward to having the  
14 opportunity to present more details at the next  
15 hearing, which is next week. And, as my parents  
16 will say in my first language, [foreign language]  
17 what is happening here?

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, Mr.  
19 Crespo, let me thank you for coming in and  
20 representing your members and obviously you have a  
21 lot of issues I guess with what's going on. And I  
22 don't know if you were as emotional as Randi  
23 Weingarten--

24 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: No.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --but clearly

1  
2 an emotional subject, especially when you're  
3 talking about contracting out where potential job  
4 loss of employees in New York City to people  
5 outside of the state of New York and the city of  
6 New York. I have a problem with that overall. My  
7 concern is the people of New York City--

8 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Absolutely.

9 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --I'll let  
10 the people in Virginia worry about Virginia, I'm  
11 going to worry about the people in New York City  
12 and your members are members of New York City and  
13 let me just say that we will be going deeper into  
14 the subject of contracts when we have the  
15 education hearing on contracts along with Tish  
16 James my colleague who Chairs the Contracts  
17 Committee on April 1st.

18 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Thank you,  
19 and also, you know, our members have such invested  
20 interest that our children succeed because when  
21 our children succeed in schools, they succeed--the  
22 community succeeds. Everybody winds up getting  
23 elevated because as our children succeed, they're  
24 able to get those jobs, you know, be employed in  
25 positions of economic gain that in many cases

1  
2 aren't parallel and to have this occur is taking  
3 the rug underneath our communities.

4 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let me turn  
5 to our colleagues Council Member James Sanders,  
6 Jr., of Queens.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Thank you,  
8 Mr. Chair. As usual, your hearing is has much  
9 light, but also had heat today, so you had both.

10 Mr. Vice President, it was good to  
11 see you--

12 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Same here.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: --your  
14 union's position on education is well-known and  
15 your local is historic with the role that you guys  
16 have played on making sure that education comes to  
17 New York City and stays in it.

18 There are many things that one can  
19 go into it in your delivery, but I want to speak  
20 of just one of them. I want to go for a moment  
21 into charter schools. I agree with you that if  
22 you're saying that the jury is out, that we really  
23 need some fair evaluation of charter schools. If  
24 they're doing fantastic, let us be first to praise  
25 them; if they're doing less than fantastic, we

1  
2 need more data so that we can perhaps nudge them  
3 to what works and we should be bold enough that if  
4 the experiment is not going in the direction that  
5 we thought it would, we should be bold enough in  
6 that.

7 I am a proponent of charter school  
8 in the public school system--within the public  
9 school system. I believe that we should have  
10 experimentation and things of that nature,  
11 however, we are getting all kinds of mixed  
12 hearings, mixed data on charter schools, and we  
13 really need to have an outside evaluator of one  
14 type or another look at this issue. The general  
15 accounting office of the federal government  
16 certainly did a report and could be an  
17 organization that studies this, but we need this  
18 study desperately because that is a lot of funding  
19 following in a certain area, especially when we're  
20 talking about doing many, many more in the days to  
21 come. So I agree with you and share the position  
22 of your union that this new endeavor, charter  
23 schools, the jury is out, we do need to look into  
24 this and have a fair evaluation.

25 Thank you for bringing that to

light, sir.

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Thank you, thank you for your response. And you're absolutely right, the jury is out. Many of the parents that we are in contact with, we are part of a parent coalition, an extensive large parent coalition that currently wants to see this mayoral control issue sunset because the concept right now is not working. The concept right now needs a complete revamp and we cannot rush to do that, that's going to require a period of time, all factors need to be looked at and including the issues on the charter schools. And it has nothing to do with the current mayor, this could've occurred with any other Mayor and, you know, it's the concept currently right now, it just happens that, you know, we believe this Mayor wants to outsource everything that public service do in the city of New York.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. I was looking and talking to staff about this Maximus, Inc. of Virginia. Any information that

1  
2 you have on that or anything else on contracts and  
3 prior to the April 1st hearing we would like to  
4 share with you and because, obviously, I do  
5 believe that the DOE overall need to have a  
6 computerized tracking system for special  
7 education, I mean, 'cause my understanding from  
8 talking to people before, files literally had to  
9 be transported to uptown and downtown and what  
10 have you and so forth, I mean this should have  
11 been done years ago. But, you know, I would like  
12 to know more about this particular contract,  
13 especially when you're talking about there's \$23  
14 million in related expenses--

15 [Crosstalk]

16 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: A point of  
17 information, Mr. Chair?

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and the  
19 impact that that's going to have on the members  
20 that you represent. Yeah?

21 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Point of  
22 information?

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Go ahead.

24 MALE VOICE: I believe that may be  
25 the same Maximus Corporation that got into trouble

1 under the Giuliani administration.

3 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: You may be  
4 very well correct regarding that and I will  
5 forward to the Chair and the Committee the  
6 information regarding them. It's not that we are  
7 against the tracking, I mean, that is absolutely  
8 needed if we are to provide better services for  
9 our children. However, as the prior speaker  
10 before me passionately illustrated, how do you  
11 make that more of a priority, you know, than  
12 keeping, you know, the services alive across the  
13 board? And that's what's happening, and that's  
14 only one of the contracts and, you know, when  
15 Veronica addresses the committee on the issue in  
16 the contract next week she'll elaborate much more  
17 than I can right now.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, as I  
19 said earlier, April 1st we'll be holding a hearing  
20 on contracts, along with the Contracts Committee  
21 and mainly on DOE contracts and on April 6th at 1  
22 p.m. will be holding a hearing, a oversight  
23 hearing on overall charter schools and that begins  
24 at one and probably go until maybe about 6 p.m.  
25 So I look forward to seeing you and the leaders of

Local 372 and DC 37.

But let me just before you end,  
you're the vice president of Local 372.

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: That's  
correct, and I'm also the vice president of DC 37.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. And  
that's the capacity in which I ask the question  
because you heard us, if you were here, asked the  
question about parent coordinators and I believe  
that they're represented by one of your locals--

[Crosstalk]

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO:  
[Interposing] Yeah, my Local 372.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: 372.

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: That's  
correct.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.  
Because but not only did we ask him questions  
about that, we asked him questions about special  
ed, about school safety because if we have to look  
overall--and we're not saying, you didn't hear us  
saying get rid of them, we're saying that the  
flexibility--

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Absolutely.



CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and so I just want to know, do you have an opinion on that overall, if--

[Crosstalk]

VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO:  
[Interposing] Well it seems to us that if in fact both the Chancellor and the Mayor were really sincere about having parental involvement and the lifeline to make that successful are the parent coordinators, then why would you even want to contemplate eliminating them altogether? And we know for a fact that in many instances that we have gotten reports from our members in those titles and from parents themselves where they in fact have been discouraged from giving parents the proper information and helping parents navigate the system. So, I mean, you know, we have some serious double-talk here.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Because I guess some of the stuff that overall in general we hear that parent coordinators are basically the parent coordinators to do the principal's bidding and not really advocate for parents and what have you and so forth. And that when we hear that

1  
2 overall, they're just another staff member of the  
3 principal instead of, you know, really advocating  
4 for the parents and giving them all the  
5 information they need and they may be a buffer  
6 between the principal and the parents, and I don't  
7 know if that's really the purpose of it.

8 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Yeah, it is  
9 definitely questionable given all of these other  
10 outcomes in terms of how is it that if you're  
11 going to give parent coordinators cell phones so  
12 that they're in contact with parents and you don't  
13 pay your bill, right, which was in the amount--I  
14 mean, they paid it since we've made it public, but  
15 when you owe the service provider \$57,000 and our  
16 folks get disconnected because of a nonpayment,  
17 you know, yeah, a parent have every right to be  
18 upset, you know, and outraged that they're not  
19 being contacted and that there is no follow up.  
20 So in one sense, one would say well, was this  
21 whole thing a set up for failure?

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well to be  
23 continued, for sure.

24 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I want to

1  
2 thank you for coming in and giving testimony on  
3 behalf of your Local and the affiliate DC 37.

4 VICE PRESIDENT CRESPO: Thank you  
5 once again.

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay? And  
7 next we're going to hear from Placida Rodriguez  
8 Make the Road New York; from Natalie Chad. it  
9 looks like, New York Immigration Coalition; and  
10 Barbara Harris, representing herself and Code  
11 Pink, NY Granny's Peace Brigade, and from Dr.  
12 Marion Phyllis Cunningham, she's representing  
13 herself, she's an educator, and a Granny Peace  
14 Brigade. Please come forward. If you're here and  
15 I've announced your name and title, please come  
16 forward. Okay? Have a seat up front and you may  
17 begin your testimony, young lady. No, have a seat  
18 at the table, please.

19 MS. NATALIE CHAP: Good afternoon,  
20 Chairman Jackson and distinguished members of the  
21 City Council Education Committee. My name is  
22 Natalie Chap and I am the Education Reform  
23 Associate for the New York Immigration Coalition,  
24 which is an umbrella policy and advocacy  
25 organization with over 200 members throughout New

1  
2 York state that fight for justice and opportunity  
3 for the newest New Yorkers. I am here today to  
4 urge you to help restore cuts to the Education  
5 Budget, particularly in the areas of the ELL  
6 Incentive Grant Initiative, Translation and  
7 Interpretation Services for Parents, and restoring  
8 the general cuts to school aid, whatever they may  
9 be.

10 We are all aware of the current  
11 uncertainties of the economy. Anyone who opens a  
12 newspaper or turns on the TV will hear at length  
13 about the financial struggles facing our city.  
14 This only underscores the need for investment in  
15 the education of our young people, as they are  
16 soon to be the backbone of the New York City  
17 economy. Immigrant students and students who are  
18 in the process of learning English need particular  
19 attention, as they make up a significant portion  
20 of the student body--over a quarter of all public  
21 school students are ELLs or former ELLs--that's  
22 English Language Learners--and nearly 60% of  
23 students are immigrants or come from immigrant  
24 families. The fact is that our schools have been  
25 under-funded for way too long and the neediest

1 students, including students living in poverty,  
2 students with disabilities and ELLs, have been  
3 chronically underserved for way too long,  
4 resulting in an alarming drop-out crisis. Last  
5 year, a shocking 4-year graduation rate of ELLs of  
6 only 23%--less than half the rate of English  
7 Proficient Students--represented a decrease from  
8 the 2005 graduation rate of 26%. Worse yet, only  
9 one out of ten ELL students received a Regents  
10 Diploma, which is now as of this year, a state  
11 graduation requirement. Furthermore, we know that  
12 with every dollar cut from the education budget  
13 will translate into more kids being left behind.

14  
15 The Campaign for Fiscal Equity  
16 settlement provided New York City with a unique  
17 opportunity to begin to reverse the dropout  
18 crisis. The historic infusion of resources from  
19 the state also came with protections through the  
20 Contract for Excellence, to ensure that funds  
21 predominately benefit students with the greatest  
22 educational needs, including ELLs. It is  
23 imperative that as ELLs are drawing funds to the  
24 city through the Contracts, that this money be  
25 tied to the programs and services for these

1 students.

2  
3 We want to thank the City Council  
4 for having the vision to create the ELL Incentive  
5 Grant Initiative last year, a pilot program that  
6 signaled a serious commitment on your part to  
7 address the ELL drop out crisis. This year, we  
8 must build off the success of this initiative and  
9 continue to put resources towards turning the  
10 crisis around.

11 Similarly, though the economic  
12 stimulus package will play a huge role in  
13 restoring education, the city must also do its  
14 part to ensure that we improve outcomes for all  
15 students. With more than half of all ELLs  
16 dropping out of high school, and ELL dropout rates  
17 continuing to increase each year, the Chancellor  
18 should be talking about restoring all education  
19 cuts and targeting funds and resources to ensure  
20 ELLs receive a sound basic education. In  
21 particular, we urge the City Council to work with  
22 the Mayor and the Chancellor to preserve the  
23 following critical programs and services:  
24 continuing to fund the groundbreaking ELL  
25 Incentive Initiative at \$7 million; restoring the

original funding level for the Department of Education Translation and Interpretation Unit at \$12 million; ensuring that there are no cuts to the classroom by seeing that the city keep their promises to students by fully funding the education budget. We urge the City Council to continue to press the Mayor and the Chancellor to deliver on their promises to our schools by restoring all education aid and adhering to the Contract for Excellence requirements by creating a proactive plan for ELLs.

The stock market can always bounce back, but we do not get a second chance to educate a child. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well thank you for coming and representing your organization. And next we hear from Barbara Harris, representing herself and Code Pink, Granny Peace Brigade.

MS. BARBARA HARRIS: Okay. Is this on? Hi, thank you for hanging in there. I don't take it personally that most of the Council Members have left and I thank you for staying with us.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Some of them

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have other obligations--

MS. HARRIS: I know, I understand.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --Brooklyn delegations and what have you.

MS. HARRIS: I understand.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm sorry.

MS. HARRIS: And each one of the members of the City Council has received a letter about this program. One thing that hasn't been mentioned today is that JROTC program--the Junior Reserve Officers Training Corp--which is in our schools and taxpayers are presently paying approximately 2.3 million anyway in the fiscal year 2010 budget it's allocated and we're here, in fact, about eight people of who had signed on to that letter that was sent to each Council Member is here and, indeed, we represent more than we look like because of our organizations who are outraged at having a military program in 19 high schools in the New York City system--in the public school system.

And the issue about why we are opposed to JROTC is because it's a Pentagon-based curriculum and the textbooks are hard to find or



1  
2 read, there's for a little oversight by the Board  
3 of Education as to what is the content of the text  
4 books, what is actually being taught, there is no  
5 oversight for it, the personnel who teaches the  
6 courses are retired military people, mainly men  
7 who are not New York City certified, which should  
8 be a very big concern to the unions and to us all.  
9 Some are not even college graduates, they've had  
10 some other sort of military test that qualifies  
11 them to teach the course which the military has  
12 designed.

13                   The program is a militarization of  
14 our youth because the bottom-line goals of the  
15 program is to train the students in a military  
16 style of learning--it's obedience, it's  
17 regimentation, it's drills, it's marching, it's  
18 even guns--how to use them, how to put them  
19 together--and students have told me that in their  
20 high school the JROTC marches into the assembly  
21 programs in uniform with a gun and the policy of  
22 New York City school system is zero tolerance for  
23 weapons. So it seems like hypocrisy here, we are  
24 permitting military voice and presence and  
25 attitude when that's what we're really opposing

and taxpayers are paying almost \$2.4 million to support this program in the schools.

The military curriculum does not belong in our educational system, it is not consistent with the teachings of democratic values and the principles of civilian leadership because JROTC is authoritarian in nature and teaches unquestionable obedience, it conflicts with education's goal of encouraging students to learn through the development of thinking skills. There is little discussion, there's little conflict resolution, it's this is the way it is, the military wins wars we fight right and wrong, and we have the answers and the truth for you and if you just listen and obey, things will work for you. No oversight or transparency of course contents or outcomes of the programs either. The military just has their presence in the school and their curriculum and whatever happens we don't know about it, we don't know if the students graduate, how many dropout, and actually what's really happening.

JROTC should be the lowest priority for the New York City Department of Education

1  
2 budget. And as, I think it was Council Member  
3 Yassky said, you have to be pretty strong to  
4 choose between things that are right educationally  
5 and we do not feel that this program is correct  
6 educationally in the New York City public school  
7 system.

8 So I am here with many others  
9 sitting here and outside and when we meet with  
10 people in the streets who are outraged that they  
11 pay for this program, to urge you to eliminate  
12 funding of the JROTC program from the 2010 budget.

13 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well I want  
14 to thank you for bringing it to our attention. It  
15 was not mentioned today and it should have been.  
16 I am against the funding of JOTC in our schools.

17 MS. HARRIS: We appreciate, we so  
18 appreciate--

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And I have  
20 already talked to staff to make sure that we get  
21 the information on that and make sure that there's  
22 clearly an issue that we raise, and I ask you to  
23 continue to press on that.

24 The next, Dr. Marion--

25 MS. HARRIS: Thank you so much for

1  
2 your support.

3 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --Dr. Marion  
4 Phyllis Cunningham representing yourself, you're  
5 an educator and you're part of the Granny Peace  
6 Brigade.

7 DR. MARION PHYLLIS CUNNINGHAM:  
8 Right, and also a few other organizations--Women's  
9 International League for Peace and Freedom and  
10 Peace Action, I belong to West Side Peace Action  
11 and Grandmother's Against the War.

12 I'll move up here.

13 Thank you just for being here,  
14 Chairperson Jackson, and also Council Member  
15 Reyna, and all people here who are interested in  
16 the education of our children.

17 As a member of Granny Peace  
18 Brigade, the Granny Peace Brigade and Code Pink  
19 and many of the supporters, we hold almost weekly  
20 actions out in the community to inform the  
21 community about things that are happening that are  
22 of great importance.

23 And one of the issues that we have  
24 been addressing is our tax levy funds that's going  
25 to support Junior ROTC in 19 high schools in this

1  
2 city, and the high schools are located in areas  
3 where the major recruitees have been coming from  
4 going into the military and that is, really I  
5 mean, we feel very strongly, obviously Barbara  
6 said this already, we feel it's unacceptable for  
7 our tax levy funds to be going for Junior ROTC.

8 In the street--and this is what I  
9 really wanted to share with you--people are  
10 unaware of this. We have been doing phone-a-thons  
11 in Brooklyn and what we do is we inform people, we  
12 discuss with people the issue at hand, and this is  
13 the tax levied funds for Junior ROTC--people are  
14 totally unaware of this and many of them are very,  
15 very upset. They have been making calls to their  
16 local elected officials, and in this case it's the  
17 City Council people, to ask them to look into this  
18 and to have a hearing on tax levy funds going into  
19 the school system for Junior ROTC.

20 So I just want to bring to your  
21 attention that there are people in the community  
22 that don't know about this and that it should be--  
23 this should be transparent, it should be out  
24 there. The public needs to know that their tax  
25 levy funds are going for military curriculum in

the schools. And I'm hoping that the city Council will hold a hearing on this and we'll be able to do something about it.

In light of all the problems within the school and the problems down the road, \$2,000 may seem insignificant, but it is significant, if it's being used for military curriculum and not for the much-needed services that our children need.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well and thank you all for coming in and expressing your viewpoints on the preliminary budget of 2010.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I'm sorry.

FEMALE VOICE: Anyone else?

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Council Member Reyna.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I just wanted to ask, going back to the testimony on the ELL students, the issue as far as flexibility in the funding for the contract for excellence for this campaign for fiscal equity funding through the state, do you agree or disagree with those

1  
2 changes in policy that the Chancellor had been  
3 testifying to?

4 MS. CHAP: Well our concern when we  
5 hear flexibility is that it means that just as I  
6 said money that is only in the city because of the  
7 number of ELL students that there are is being  
8 driven to the city, that's the reason why it's  
9 here, then, if there is more flexibility, then  
10 that means they can go to other students. And the  
11 reality is that a very, very, very small  
12 percentage of the money that's driven by ELLs  
13 already is actually going to ELL programs and  
14 services. So even getting any more flexibility  
15 than there is now is definitely something that we  
16 don't stand by.

17 And he really didn't define what  
18 flexibility meant--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Correct.

20 MS. CHAP: --exactly, so I can't  
21 say for sure exactly--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Right.

23 MS. CHAP: --I can't completely  
24 respond to it, but the term in and of itself does  
25 make me nervous, certainly.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: I can certainly understand why and you had mentioned that we are seeing 1 out of 10 ELL students passing their Regents?

MS. CHAP: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And also--

MS. CHAP: [Interposing] That's of the small number of students who are actually graduating. The 23% who are actually graduating, only 1 out of 10 of those students actually get a Regents diploma--

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Right.

MS. CHAP: --so that means that we can't exactly make the [off mic]. But it's such a small, small number of students and next year when this regulation will actually be able to graduate.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Right, and as far as the Title I funding, obviously Title I is associated to free lunches, which means it's in the very poor neighborhoods that are mostly disenfranchised. The policy that the Chancellor is looking for, the flexibility of hitting schools across the board equally and trying to increase more Title I funding to come into schools, do you



1  
2 agree or disagree with that policy?

3 MS. CHAP: Well I think it's still  
4 the same question, so Title I does go to schools  
5 that have a lot of immigrant students generally  
6 speaking, but, again, I would have to know the  
7 specifics of what he means by flexibility before I  
8 can answer that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: And I would  
10 agree with you, there's very little that is said  
11 to understand why there's so much call for  
12 flexibility in Albany. I just wanted to  
13 understand, you know, you mentioned that we're  
14 graduating less ELL students now and this is when  
15 we're seeing more money--

16 MS. CHAP: Right.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --go through  
18 the Department of Education, so I ask, what are we  
19 doing wrong. And so the demands and the  
20 expectations are continuing to rise and our  
21 students are less and less equipped, you know, not  
22 graduating, dropping out, so where or what  
23 recommendations would your advocacy, you know,  
24 suggest to us?

25 MS. CHAP: Well we can meet with

1  
2 you individually too, to give you like our full  
3 outline 'cause some of it is kind of programmatic,  
4 technical things that we can get into right now.  
5 But the three things that I outlined are really  
6 important though--the Translation and  
7 Interpretation for Parents really is key because  
8 the parent, as we were talking about parent  
9 engagement, if the parent can't communicate  
10 effectively with their school, with their teacher,  
11 or they're using their child to interpret for  
12 important meetings or other family members, they  
13 really can't interact with the school in a way  
14 that we would like to see and by the DOE's own  
15 definition. So that's one area that money has  
16 been cut over the years as well since--

17 [Crosstalk]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA:

19 [Interposing] And so that area having been cut,  
20 your figure as far as the recommendation to be  
21 increased to what level?

22 MS. CHAP: It was at 12 million, I  
23 think it's at like 10 million now, so it's been  
24 decreasing since 2006, and so we just don't want  
25 to see any more cuts, we'd like it to go back to

the level that it was that.

[Off mic]

MS. CHAP: Right, so we've worked out a deal here.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: There is no proposal right now to cut it, so we just have to follow that.

MS. CHAP: Right, right, and then there's also a pilot program which the City Council supported last year, it's at \$7 million, it's kind of like a matching program of the money that's coming through the Contract for Excellence, schools could use that money and then have it be matched for ELL programs and services and from what we've heard from the schools, it's been working great, it shows that when you actually are putting resources towards these kids and giving them the support that they need--former ELLs actually have a higher graduation rate than the school system as a whole. So once a child is able to transition out of ELL status, they're bringing up the graduation rates of the school system as a whole. So they're really a group that we can look to, to support in order to move our whole system

forward.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: Well I  
appreciate the--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNA: --  
clarification, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
Thank you very much. The next panel is Christine  
Colligan, president of the Korean-American Parents  
Association; Jung Mi Kim, Bayside high school;  
Casey Kim, PS 26Q, Queens; Hwang Yong Lee,  
Community Education Council for District 25; and  
Mihyon Nam, PS 165, please come forward.

[Pause]

...goes next.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Where?

FEMALE VOICE: Just came in.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: This one just  
came in.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Welcome, you  
may begin your testimony. Just identify yourself

and your position within the organization, you may begin.

MS. CHRISTINE COLLIGAN: Thank you, Chairman Jackson and Council Member. My name is Christine Colligan, President of Korean-American Parents Association, and I thank God for the opportunity to speak honorable Council and I would like to speak about the Korean class in the high school.

And last year, Flushing High School has closed the Korean class and also best high school in New York City Stuyvesant will close the Korean class this coming September. And I believe that Korean parents contribute a large part of the economy and pay tax and also that it's not none of this Korean class mandatory, they are elective, and also that's why they have the danger [phonetic] over there, if they take Korean class and they might have fail the foreign language. So even though I mean, I like to I like all language and even though [foreign language] but there's a lot of language in the world and also the Korea is the 10 largest country, who has traded in the United States and also now Army recruiting the

1  
2 dual language the soldier that it is very  
3 necessary for the future word and at the moment  
4 too.

5               So now I'm asking that this is very  
6 necessary that we should have the Korean language  
7 as a mandatory and when they come out to the word  
8 and also now the Korean is most popular in the  
9 increasing in the number in the college but  
10 there's no really good education in New York City.  
11 It is very necessary and also MS 142 there is a 56  
12 the school in Bronx and they brought Korean and  
13 then Korean comes with a culture that respect the  
14 older and the teacher and this is coming great  
15 outfit and you can hear the testimony if you will  
16 and things like that. So it is now that we have  
17 to recognize that Korean language as a mandatory  
18 and also that this language have to educate to the  
19 older student.

20               And that's why I'm here.

21               CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Next,  
22 just identify yourself and you may begin your  
23 testimony.

24               MS. JUNG MI KIM: [Foreign  
25 language]

1  
2 MS. COLLIGAN: I would like to  
3 explain, I request for the translator, but there's  
4 no translator so if you don't mind, I be a  
5 translator, Chairman Jackson?

6 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I don't mind  
7 at all.

8 MS. COLLIGAN: Thank you.

9 MS. KIM: I'm the mother of two  
10 children who work hard and pay tax. My children  
11 through the elementary school, junior high school,  
12 now they are in senior of the high school. And  
13 also I'm proudly announce that my older son will  
14 be the guardian of this country who will be the  
15 soldier very soon.

16 The reason I'm here today because  
17 there's no chance for my children to learn Korean  
18 in the school. The language is very important  
19 these days. The language is also almost beginning  
20 of the education. Please help my children to  
21 learn Korean at the school. And the Korean  
22 language come with the respect the older and also  
23 good manner that it'll be the good role model for  
24 the older student. I'm not asking for my children  
25 or Korean to learn Korean, but all other cultures

should learn and share, it will dedicate lot of part of the advantages to the society.

Please, please help us to have a Korean education in public school. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Next, just identify yourself and you may begin.

MS. CASEY KIM: [Foreign language]  
PS 26.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Can you just pull your mic a little closer please?

MS. CORRIGAN: Okay.

MS. KIM: I'm Casey Kim from the PS 26, mother of student from PS 26.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay.

MS. KIM: Personally I have experienced that in February we have a whole school has a lunar New Year and they share the Asian culture through the whole school was very fruitful and then it was the joy of the older student. I'm very disappointed my children have no chance to learn Korean and also the other student. And I'm strongly disagree that as the mother and also as a taxpayer the discontinue of this Korean education.



The language itself contain the way [off mic] and also you bow to the older and teacher and it comes with the language that you be polite to the older and you're polite to the teacher and this will be greatly the good education for the whole student.

And I request to equally have a chance to, not only the Korean student, but all other student from the other culture and deal the language [off mic].

And lastly, there's no Korean speaking professional at the Board of Education level to help us whatsoever.

It is very necessary to have the tight, the close relationship between parents and the school and the education department to have a best education for my children. Okay? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
Next, just identify yourself and you may begin.

[Foreign language]

MR. HWANG YONG LEE: Good afternoon, Mr. Chair, and Council Member. My name is Hwang Yong Lee, I'm a member of Education Council for District 25. I'm also a parent of

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three kids who are attending public school.

I'm here for two things. First one as Chair Jackson mentioned about school safety, our [off mic] about that school crossing guard, so we ask [off mic] community relations department, they all said is a budget problem. So we have to think about what is our priority of, you know, our kids. So I really appreciate you mention about the school safety, think about [off mic] school crossing guard, so next term we have, you know, I hope that we have school crossing guard, so I will give you one example. Junior High School 194 has 1,100 kids, their principal very concerned about the school safety so she came out every single day and guarding about the school. She has to prepare the school starting and she must improve the school and education policy, but she's [off mic] for is the guarding of her school, I think this is not good for the [off mic] school and kids.

My second thing is the Korean class in our public school. As you know, this generation is a global generation, we have 1.2 million students I want that give them the opportunity to learn about these Korean language

1  
2 in school. I'm still [off mic] about language, I  
3 know so about the importance of the language. So  
4 as you know the Korean is a [off mic] and all  
5 these cultural system, so I hope that our public  
6 school Korean education keep going on, so our  
7 children in New York City learn about our language  
8 and culture.

9 Thank you for letting me speaking.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well let me  
11 thank you for coming in and especially as a  
12 representative of the CEC, its important. I think  
13 we have one more panelist, Mihyon Nam, PS 165.  
14 Just identify yourself and you may begin your  
15 testimony.

16 [Foreign language]

17 MS. MIHYON NAM: I'm a mother of  
18 the two children who go to elementary school. So  
19 as parents I think it's important that my children  
20 grow with speaking dual language and excellence in  
21 Korean and English. To grow up to be the  
22 excellent, the dual languages speaking person is a  
23 very benefit to society in United States.

24 And I'm looking forward to my  
25 children to have a Korean education in junior high

1  
2 school and Korean, but junior high--I'm sorry, in  
3 high school, but I'm very disappointed that it  
4 will be discontinued. And this is they'll take  
5 away chance have their language education they  
6 need for their future.

7 Please help us to have a chance to  
8 learn Korean at the public school and also when  
9 they need to have a fund that available, not only  
10 the elective, but mandatory so they feel  
11 comfortable, the parents feel comfortable to send  
12 them without failing the foreign language.

13 If you give my children chance to  
14 have the Korean language education, they will be  
15 the great citizens of America and then they're  
16 great for the society.

17 And I once again I request that  
18 with the deep down from my heart.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Well  
20 first let me thank all of you for coming in  
21 representing your children and the Korean  
22 community with respects to asking for, not only  
23 the classes in those various schools not to be  
24 cut, but also you're asking for at least some of  
25 you a mandatory Korean instruction.

MS. COLLIGAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Clearly it's an issue for you and issue for your community that you represent, and I suggest that more specifically in those schools that have Korean classes at the various grades that the decision at the school is made to determine to continue it or discontinue it, to my knowledge, that is not a citywide issue and--

MS. COLLIGAN: [Interposing]  
Because of the budget cut.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I understand. So it depends on the priority of each school and obviously being involved in a parents association is extremely important, being involved in a school leadership team, the district leadership team, depending on, you know, how many schools in each district, and also the CECs like Mr. Lee is, it's important to express your opinions about what type of curriculum and language should be taught. And I say that to you specifically to pursue that locally at those levels, but also they, I guess the administrators and principals and leaders are saying because of the budget situation. Well you

1  
2 may have been here when the Chancellor was talking  
3 about the budget and how much money we're trying  
4 to get from the state and city, I think you need  
5 to be asking questions, okay, what if we, you  
6 know, what is it going to take financially to  
7 maintain the classes that we have and those are  
8 the types of questions that you need to be asking  
9 locally.

10 I guess if I was involved in a  
11 parents association I would say okay, it costs X  
12 amount of dollars, what if the parent associations  
13 raise that money?

14 MS. COLLIGAN: They've been doing  
15 it for years.

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well, you  
17 know, right, and I guess these are all of the  
18 questions that I'll be asking in order to try to  
19 maintain--

20 MS. COLLIGAN: [Interposing] The  
21 Korean parents are nervously preparing for the  
22 event for the fundraising that the hopefully this  
23 money will continue and also, I'm not asking for  
24 the new fund that the money that teaching other  
25 language that they really don't want to take it,

1  
2 but they have to take it anyway in order to  
3 graduate, so they don't have to just take the  
4 Spanish or other language that they're not--I  
5 mean, there are some of them who love Spanish and  
6 the other language, but there is a lot of them  
7 it's wasting that they cannot use.

8 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: So I guess  
9 one of the questions like to have Korean in one  
10 school, give me an example of a school, what is  
11 the cost factor, if you know?

12 MS. COLLIGAN: Oh I don't know the  
13 detail, but I'm willing to send you all the detail  
14 information later.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. But I  
16 mean, is it one full-time Korean teacher or is it  
17 a part time individual? And the reason why I ask  
18 that is because there are discretionary monies  
19 that members of the City Council, that members of  
20 the state assembly, state Senate, they can  
21 allocate to schools and so I don't know if for  
22 example if the Korean--

23 MS. COLLIGAN: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --teacher is  
25 full-time or part-time and what's the cost factor

there in order for you to come up with a strategy  
in order to--

MS. COLLIGAN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --maintain  
what you currently have and I think that that's  
what you have to look at.

MS. COLLIGAN: Chairman Jackson,  
this is a big step for us, the Korean community  
and Korean parents, we never done this before--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: No.

MS. COLLIGAN: --so we plan, this  
is like we're just quiet and take it and just be  
quiet, be nice to the teacher, that's what's been  
doing for many, many years and we have like a big  
courage to come up here and speak to you and  
very glad and that you heard us.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And let me  
just say, I'm very happy to see you here and in  
fact, as the Chair of the Education Committee,  
this is the first panel that I've had where  
members of the Korean community--I'm not saying  
they weren't here, but where they spoke in Korean  
and it was translated for us--

MS. COLLIGAN: Yes.



CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and I'm just very happy to see you participating, because, as you said, you've been quiet for years and trying to deal with it yourselves and now you're speaking up, that this is having a negative impact on your children in the community and that is important overall that you speak on behalf of yourselves as individuals and as a community. So I'm very, very pleased to see all of you here.

I'm going to ask you to speak to Jan Atwell over here, she's our Policy Analyst, to talk about more strategies to network in order to raise funds.

MS. COLLIGAN: Okay. Running the classes cost \$35,000 and Bronx science [phonetic] Korean parents who have been donate the \$100,000 costs over three years, so we did their personal funding money.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I see.

MS. COLLIGAN: Just for the one class.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: One class.

MS. COLLIGAN: Yes. And also I'm asking that, as you know, the Korean are very hard

1  
2 working, but they don't know how come, like I  
3 really take the [off mic] from the African-  
4 American community and the Latino community, they  
5 come and speak out, even they don't even speak,  
6 they come in and that's where we the benchmarking  
7 from and we not just sitting down and be quiet and  
8 then this is not only for us, it's for the future  
9 of America.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let me just  
11 say I appreciate all of you for coming in and  
12 representing yourselves and the groups that you  
13 represent, and I'm happy to see you here.

14 MS. COLLIGAN: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And so I'm  
16 going to ask you to communicate with Jan so we  
17 can--

18 MS. COLLIGAN: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --network  
20 more--

21 MS. COLLIGAN: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --as far as  
23 to move forward.

24 MS. COLLIGAN: Okay. Thank you  
25 very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you very much.

MS. COLLIGAN: And also I'd just like to share one last thing--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Please.

MS. COLLIGAN: --the Korean-American Parents Association meets the May 28th is a 19 teacher's celebration this mean that respecting teacher is a Korean custom, we brought that to the New York City and we invite [off mic] teacher and then have the sharing the culture and food and we honoring the teacher for the 19 years with our personal funding.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well please invite me to that. If I'm available I would love to--

[Crosstalk]

MS. COLLIGAN: [Interposing] You will be the speaker. You know--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I didn't--

MS. COLLIGAN: --I'm married to American, I'm not shy anymore, so you will be the speaker, yes, yes, thank God, hallelujah. Yeah, I be pray for this, yes.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Let me thank you very much.

MS. COLLIGAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: I appreciate you coming in. Thank you.

MS. COLLIGAN: Yes, thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Then that know is Eric Weltman, Alliance for Quality Education, commonly known as AQE; Carol Boyd, New York City Coalition for Educational Justice; and Elyse Barbell, Literacy Assistant Center; and Jose Gonzalez, the Coalition for Educational Justice, United Parents of Highbridge, and that's in the Bronx. Please come forward if you're here.

Let me get the next panel. And let me just introduce the next panel before this panel begins. The next panel after this is David Lisker of Brooklyn for Peace; Arnold Gore, Washington Heights Alternatives to Military Recruitment; and Cheryl Wertz, Peace Action of New York State.

So with this panel of--Eric, please, you may begin. Oh, introduce yourself and you may begin.

MR. ERIC WELTMAN: Good afternoon, my name is Eric Weltman, I am the New York City Advocacy Director for the Alliance for Quality Education. On behalf of AQE--

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing] One second, please. Arnold? Arnold, just have a seat over there, you're the next panel. Just sit right there.

And our colleague, Domenic Recchia has joined us, welcome Domenic.

Okay. You may begin, I'm sorry.

MR. WELTMAN: Thank you. So, again, Eric Weltman with the Alliance for Quality Education, as you said, commonly referred to as AQE. On behalf of AQE, I want to thank Chairman Jackson for the opportunity to testify. We also want to thank you, Chairman, as well as the entire City Council for your strong leadership and commitment to education funding, particularly your leadership in restoring \$129 million in cuts proposed by Mayor Bloomberg last May.

In this spirit, AQE urges the City Council to reject Mayor Bloomberg's proposal to cut \$306 million from our schools in next year's

1  
2 budget. Mayor Bloomberg's cuts would have a  
3 devastating impact on our children's education  
4 that would result in, among other things,  
5 continued increases in class size and reductions  
6 in after-school, tutoring, middle grade reform,  
7 and English Language Learner programs. The state,  
8 as you're aware, is phasing out local diplomas and  
9 requiring every student in the freshman class of  
10 2009 to graduate with a Regents Diploma. We  
11 cannot ask our students to meet higher standards  
12 while reducing the resources necessary to meet  
13 those standards.

14           The proposed cuts come in the wake  
15 of \$884 million in cuts to education already  
16 initiated by Mayor Bloomberg last year. They come  
17 at a time when the city is required by law to  
18 increase its funding contribution to education by  
19 2.2 billion from 2007 to 2011 under, as you're  
20 aware, the Education Budget Reform Act of 2007,  
21 which settled the CFE lawsuit. The federal  
22 government has stepped up to the plate, delivering  
23 an increase in Title I and IDEA funds, with the  
24 city slated to receive \$697 in additional Title I  
25 funds alone. This influx of funds demonstrates

1  
2 the federal commitment to education. New York  
3 City needs to take this opportunity and use this  
4 additional funding to provide excellent education,  
5 rather than an excuse to go forward with budget  
6 cuts.

7 Our economy needs an educated  
8 workforce. We need good schools to sustain our  
9 communities. Most importantly, our children need  
10 a quality education to achieve their dreams,  
11 fulfill their opportunities, and support their own  
12 families.

13 Rejecting Mayor Bloomberg's  
14 proposed cuts is a moral imperative, a social  
15 obligation, and an economic necessity.

16 In conclusion, the City Council has  
17 been an essential partner in education, making  
18 every effort to shield our children from cuts. We  
19 urge you to reject Mayor Bloomberg's proposed cuts  
20 and maintain our commitment to our children and  
21 their future.

22 Thank you for your consideration.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well thank  
24 you, you gave that presentation with a lot of  
25 compassion.

MR. WELTMAN: Well I appreciate that, I've got some fire in me, I didn't eat my Wheaties this morning, but I did have a bagel with tofu cream cheese.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Next, Carol, introduce yourself and you may begin.

MS. CAROL BOYD: Well that's a hard act to follow, but--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: [Interposing] Pull that mic up a little closer or turn it on.

MS. BOYD: I'm on. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, members of the Education Committee. I'm Carol Boyd, a parent leader with the New York City Coalition for Educational Justice, CEJ. My being here today has, unfortunately, become an annual pilgrimage on behalf of the 1.1 million children of New York City's public schools. It's unfortunate because, once again, state and local government have taken the position that the solution to overcoming our current fiscal crisis is to shortchange the education of powerless children. I say powerless because most school-aged children do not pay taxes nor do they vote;



1  
2 however, if we continue to regard education as low  
3 priority, they will never achieve the skills  
4 necessary to become future taxpayers, voters, and  
5 productive citizens. As far as I know, most  
6 people who don't vote or pay taxes are usually  
7 incarcerated.

8 New York City's high need students  
9 will continue to fall behind without the adequate  
10 funding. Successive budget cuts mean New York  
11 City will fail to keep its promise to adequately  
12 fund education, class sizes will increase, after-  
13 school and tutoring programs will be cut, Middle  
14 Grade Reform, and the needs of English Language  
15 Learner students and students who don't reach the  
16 elusive Level III will not be met and subsequently  
17 our children will be short-changed from their full  
18 opportunity to learn.

19 As you know, the Coalition for  
20 Educational Justice fought long and hard for major  
21 reforms that have made a difference: a lead  
22 teacher program in the South Bronx that has grown  
23 to become a citywide initiative; a commitment to  
24 science labs in every middle grade school by the  
25 year 2010; the Middle School 51 initiative, which

1  
2 came out of the formation of a task force by the  
3 City Council, of which I was a member; the  
4 Campaign for Middle School Success. If all of  
5 these programs are cut, they will be threatened  
6 and they are making a difference. The Campaign  
7 for Middle School Success has a funding commitment  
8 of only one year and, while this is a start, it's  
9 painfully obvious that if struggling middle  
10 schools are going to turn around, they need more  
11 than one year of support. As you know, if our  
12 middle schools don't turn around, our children's  
13 chances of long-term success are dismal.

14 We have barely scratched the  
15 surface. As recently as 2008, there were more  
16 than 100 middle grade schools, which is 25% of all  
17 middle schools, where less than a quarter of the  
18 students were reading and writing at state  
19 standard. Almost 300 middle schools where less  
20 than half of the students are reading and writing  
21 at state standard. How can we even consider  
22 cutting funding now?

23 On top of all of this, as Eric  
24 mentioned, state's in the process of phasing out  
25 the local diploma. All of those who entered high

1 school this past--9th grade this past September  
2 will be expected to fulfill the requirements for a  
3 Regents Diploma in order to graduate. If you look  
4 at last year's data, this means that we will be  
5 facing a dramatic decrease in the high school  
6 graduation rate. In 2007, only 37% of children  
7 graduated high school with a Regents Diploma and  
8 in four years. Now that's pretty dismal  
9 considering it's the whole city, but when you look  
10 at African-Americans, this number becomes 28%, for  
11 Latinos, it becomes only 26%. With these new  
12 standards in place, what this means is that  
13 potentially over 70% of African-American and  
14 Latino students will not graduate. CEJ, of  
15 course, believes in high standards, but only with  
16 the necessary supports in place so the young  
17 people can have and meet these standards. How can  
18 we ask more of them and give them fewer resources  
19 to succeed?

21 In the 21st century, we can't  
22 afford to graduate students who will become  
23 members of an undereducated workforce and expect  
24 them to compete in a global society. As Mr.  
25 Crespo said, after all, we can't outsource

1  
2 everything. Children attend school because we  
3 require them to do so. Under the current state  
4 law, New York City is obligated to increase its  
5 local education funding between 2007 and 2011 by  
6 the amount of \$2.2 billion, which, Chairman  
7 Jackson, I'm sure you know well. Okay.

8 As yet, rather than increasing this  
9 funding, Mayor Bloomberg and Chancellor Klein  
10 implemented and proposed financial cuts to schools  
11 for both the current year and the previous year.  
12 Now he is asking you to take more money out of  
13 classrooms and divert resources away from our kids  
14 education. The Mayor's most recent proposed cut  
15 of 306 million has been put forward despite an  
16 increase in federal Title I funds, IDEA funds, all  
17 granted by the federal stimulus bill. New York  
18 City is slated to receive almost 697 million in  
19 Title I funds alone, meanwhile, the Governor's  
20 proposed budget asks the New York City schools cut  
21 \$1 billion. The proposed cuts are unacceptable by  
22 the Governor, just as they're unacceptable by  
23 Mayor Bloomberg.

24 The New York City Council has been  
25 a partner in education and has made every effort

1  
2 in the past to shield children away from harmful  
3 budget cuts. Now the Mayor wants you to join him  
4 in an additional \$306 million? City Council needs  
5 to reject these cuts. These cuts mean resources  
6 are being taken out of classrooms and students  
7 aren't getting the tools they need to succeed. At  
8 a time when we should be making progress, Mayor  
9 Bloomberg is asking us to take steps backward.  
10 You must reject the \$306 million proposed budget  
11 cuts and demand that we move forward with our  
12 education funding commitments to New York City  
13 schools and their students.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well thank  
16 you for being so detailed and passionate about  
17 what we must do and let's see whether or not we  
18 follow through.

19 MS. BOYD: Fifteen years is not  
20 enough.

21 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: The proof is  
22 in the pudding.

23 MALE VOICE: Amen.

24 MALE VOICE: Amen.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Next. Jose

Gonzalez, Coalition of Education Justice, United Parents of Highbridge. Please introduce yourself and you may begin.

MR. JOSE GONZALEZ: Good afternoon. First I would like to thank City Council, especially Council Chair Robert Jackson and the Highbridge representative, Helen Diane Foster, and Maria del Carmen Arroyo.

My name is Jose Gonzalez, I'm a parents of two children, PS 73, representative of United Parents of Highbridge, and New York City Coalition for Educational Justice.

I will ask you to vote against these 306 million cut to the Department of Education budget. For my perspective, as the parents of PS 73, we've seen major improvement with our new principal, Mr. Jimmy [off mic] and his staff. However [off mic] that proposed budget cuts could affect class size and the progress of English Language Learner and our sole concern about this cuts affects graduation rates with the new Regent's graduation requirements.

As [off mic] EJs, we have worked on middle school reform and we have heard implement a

1  
2 middle school program across the city to improve  
3 middle school. I'm afraid what will happen if  
4 this funding was cut?

5 With [off mic] in our community,  
6 Higbridge community in mayoral campaign to bring a  
7 middle school in our community, we have been with  
8 four [phonetic] years without middle school in  
9 Highbridge. We are an isolated neighborhood,  
10 which is one side we have like 12 stairs, we live  
11 in a hill, and the other sides we have the  
12 mayoral--

13 MALE VOICE: Mayor Digin  
14 [phonetic].

15 MR. GONZALEZ: Mayor Digin, thanks,  
16 and we have five elementary school in our  
17 community and these children when they left  
18 elementary school, they have to travel, taking  
19 trains, taking buses, in one of just one avenue  
20 that we have in our neighborhood that go up and  
21 down there is Ogden [phonetic] Avenue. We were  
22 put into the capital plan this year, this 5-year  
23 capital plan, but they just gave us 389 seats from  
24 the last capital plan and 389 seats is not enough  
25 when we have more than 2,000 kids traveling

outside of our community at the age of 9 and 10-years-old.

We have a large percent--the majority percent of the United States of children with ACS cases in our neighborhood. I know the city is trying to change these by putting [off mic] neighborhood, but by not having this middle school we have a [off mic] to bring more kids into this system, to ACS system.

We've been, I want to say, like desperate to bring this middle school because our neighborhood every time, every day is growing up and we have more, more, more housing for families in our neighborhood. That means that we have a crowded, crowded school system, elementary school system in our neighborhood and we need to stop that.

We still are fighting to increase the number with the last meeting that we have with Deputy Mayor Walcott and the SCS? Yes.

MALE VOICE: SCA.

MR. GONZALEZ: And DOE and they are just looking at the number, the data that we already gave them, like years before and we want



1  
2 that they consider to increase this number of 389  
3 seats to increase it, you know, at least 1,200  
4 because we want to stop putting these kids as I'm  
5 seeing parents--single mother in our community  
6 putting one kids on the school, bringing of the  
7 other one to elementary school that we have over  
8 there is like a mess. Our children are not being  
9 educated by traveling so far from our community.

10 And now as Deputy Mayor said, that  
11 the capital--because they don't have money, but I  
12 want to ask to Mayor Bloomberg why they put  
13 another Yankee Stadium in our community. Now we  
14 have two Yankee Stadium in our community, in our  
15 poor community we've had a lot of issue and parent  
16 concerns and this has been like a struggle for  
17 parents just asking for education for our  
18 children.

19 So I will want that you take that  
20 in consideration and help us to bring this middle  
21 school into a reality.

22 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well let me  
23 thank you for coming and representing the  
24 Coalition of Highbridge for Schools. I mean I've  
25 seen you and Carol and others here advocating and

1 obviously it's in the 5-year capital plan, but as  
2 you said, that's not enough.

3  
4 As far as your question to Mayor  
5 Bloomberg, I think you're going to have to ask him  
6 yourself because it's a very legitimate question,  
7 but you should press him and ask him. Because the  
8 needs are there, I mean you--and I say you, the  
9 Coalition has demonstrated the need. And I give  
10 one example, I went to visit--this was several  
11 years ago--about four or 500 parents and children  
12 in a auditorium in Sunset Park Brooklyn and they  
13 were fighting for a high school there for 30  
14 years--

15 MALE VOICE: Wow.

16 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: --and finally  
17 with the CFE settlement on the capital plan, then  
18 Governor Pataki signed into law the legislation  
19 for \$11.2 billion in education, and it was signed  
20 into law at a warehouse or a factory where the  
21 high school was going to be built. But at that  
22 meeting several years ago, they were asking me why  
23 hasn't a school been built when the school at that  
24 time I guess was going to cost about \$94 million,  
25 rounded off to \$100 million. When you look at the

1  
2 totality of the current budget, 21 billion, let's  
3 put at that time, let's put several years ago,  
4 let's \$18 billion, I said the reason why it's not  
5 built is because it's not a priority. If in fact  
6 it was priority, it would have been built. And I  
7 believe the school is either built now or almost  
8 finished and what have you and so forth.

9 MALE VOICE: Opens in September.

10 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well thank  
11 goodness, they've been fighting for it for 30  
12 years. So keep the pressure on your elected  
13 officials and citywide officials to get what you  
14 want, that's the only way you're going to get it.

15 So thank you all for coming in, I  
16 appreciate it very much.

17 MALE VOICE: Thanks.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Next we'll  
19 hear from--we have two more panels and we're out  
20 of here, but the next panel is, as I said, Arnold  
21 Gore, my neighbor up in Washington Heights,  
22 Washington Heights Alternative to Military  
23 Recruitment. David--

24 MR. DAVID TYKULSKER: Tykulsker.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Huh?

MR. TYKULSKER: Tykulsker--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Tykulsker is Brooklyn for Peace and Cheryl Wertz, Peace Action of New York State.

And after this, we have our last panel who is Mindy Duitz, Learning Leaders; Nydia Leaf, representing herself; Jackie Sherman, Center for Court Innovation; and Eugene Gamiel, Music Outreach and Learning Through Music, that's our last panel.

So Arnold, you may begin.

MR. ARNOLD GORE: Thank you. I'm Arnold Gore from Washington Heights Alternatives to Military Recruitment. At this time of scarce resources for vital educational programs, the Council must try to eliminate those items that were not initiated at our own desire but are more of a mandated match that does not serve our children's best interests.

The Junior ROTC program currently costs the city 2 million in municipal funds to match the federal participation. As a result, we have allowed a military culture to permeate our

1 schools and to become dominant in many of them.  
2  
3 At George Washington High School the military  
4 recruiters have even hosted or assisted on open  
5 school nights. The JROTC instructors are not  
6 licensed teachers, but nevertheless instruct  
7 children.

8 If it is desirable to involve  
9 outside school personnel, schools should try to  
10 coordinate programs with local community service  
11 organizations such as Alianza Dominicana in  
12 Washington Heights. In particular, focusing on  
13 outreach to prepare youth for civilian jobs.

14 The recent federal stimulus package  
15 provides for funds to reach out and help the  
16 former school dropouts who were failed by the  
17 education system on the first try, but have come  
18 to realize that the value of the education and  
19 training received in school is essential for their  
20 future. DOE must now focus on reaching out to  
21 these young adults who are now motivated. Thank  
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you,  
24 Arnold. Next, just introduce yourself, and you  
25 may begin. Ladies first.

MALE VOICE: Go ahead.

MS. CHERYL WERTZ: Sure. Council Member Jackson, thank you so much for this opportunity to testify this afternoon. My name is Cheryl Wertz, and I'm the Executive Director of Peace Action of New York State. We are an affiliate of Peace Action, the largest grassroots peace organization in the country. We have a 50 year history of promoting the non-violent resolution of conflict, the abolition of nuclear weapons, building a human rights culture, and supporting human needs instead of militarism. In New York State we have 3,000 members organized into 17 grassroots chapters, including five here in New York City.

There is one thing that I think all of us that have attended this hearing today can agree on and that's that New York City public schools need more money. We need smaller class sizes, we need higher teacher pay, and we need better extracurricular activities, but the budget that's being considered today by this body includes over \$2 million of funding for Junior ROTC--Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp

1  
2 programs in 19 New York City high schools. JROTC  
3 programs are, in my opinion, particularly  
4 nefarious because, unlike traditional college-  
5 based ROTC programs, Junior ROTC targets kids.

6 As a society, we believe that high  
7 school students are too young to drink, too young  
8 to vote, and barely old enough to drive. And yet  
9 when they are dazzled by \$4 million worth of high-  
10 tech advertising, we allow them to sign-away their  
11 lives without even consulting their parents.

12 I could sit here for you today and  
13 recite a long list of concerns about U.S. policy  
14 abroad, but this is a hearing about New York  
15 City's kids, so let me be specific. Le Ron Wilson  
16 graduated from Thomas Edison High School in  
17 Jamaica Queens and enlisted in the U.S. Army at  
18 17. One year later, on July 17th, 2007, his  
19 family buried him in Long Island, he was 18. In  
20 the seven years since the U.S. invasion of  
21 Afghanistan, almost 5,000 American men and women  
22 have been killed in combat in Iraq and  
23 Afghanistan. Their average age was 27, but one-  
24 third of those are between the ages of twenty and  
25 twenty-two.

I want so much for New York City's young people. I want them to live happy, fulfilling lives. I want them to be able to accomplish their dreams. I want them to raise families of their own and become active and engaged members of all of our communities. So many of those dreams can be accomplished through the New York City public school system, but even in times of fiscal crisis, it takes dedicated teachers, well-funded science labs, and music and arts programs. As members of the Education Committee of the New York City Council, each of you has a personal responsibility, to New York City's students and to its tax-payers, to use our education budget in the most prudent way possible. We simply can't afford the \$2 million for JROTC. So I urge you today to stand up for New York City's students and their needs. We need money for computers, for teachers, for books, and for programs. Please remove the \$2.4 million in JROTC funding from the 2010 fiscal budget and use that money to fund programs that our kids really need.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.



Next, you may identify yourself and begin your testimony.

MR. TYKULSKER: Thank you, I am David Tykulsker, the Vice Chair of Brooklyn For Peace. I join my colleagues on this panel and several who have testified before in asking you to remove the \$2.4 million from the Mayor's budget that is currently being used to subsidize the Pentagon in its efforts to recruit the youth of New York City.

I've given you a copy of the proposed testimony, but let me emphasize a few points. JROTC is really a recruitment program. The Army has ordered its instructors to make recruiting efforts a part of their official duties. As former President Clinton's Secretary of Defense William Cohen told the House Armed Services Committee in 2000, JROTC is one of the best recruiting devices we could have and as New York City public school graduate Colin Powell wrote in his autobiography, liberal school administrators and teachers claimed that we were trying to militarize education. Yes, I'll admit, the armed forces might get a youngster more

1 inclined to enlist as a result of Junior ROTC.  
2  
3 The fact of the matter is JROTC has been  
4 successful in its recruiting goal. Military  
5 statistics show that somewhere between 30 and 55%  
6 of JROTC students eventually enlist compared to 4%  
7 of other students. To put it simply, Council  
8 Member, it is bad fiscal policy for the city of  
9 New York to be spending the taxpayer money to be  
10 helping the armed services meet their recruiting  
11 goals. It's also bad educational policy.

12 First, JROTC, like every other  
13 aspect of the military, follows the don't ask,  
14 don't tell program. That's overt discrimination  
15 against lesbian and gay male cadets. You cannot  
16 join the JROTC program if you are out and open as  
17 a gay man or a lesbian.

18 The city of New York is right now  
19 funding a program that is overtly homophobic. The  
20 educational message to all students and to the  
21 citizens of New York, and not just the JROTC  
22 cadets, is that somehow bigotry if it's tied to  
23 the military is okay, that it comports with good  
24 citizenship. If you vote to maintain the JROTC  
25 appropriation, you are undermining one of the

1  
2 basic purposes of education in this city--namely,  
3 the promotion of tolerance and acceptance of  
4 diversity.

5 We all hope that the don't ask,  
6 don't tell policy will be ended shortly by the  
7 Obama Administration, but in the meantime you have  
8 a duty to the children and citizens of this city  
9 not to vote money to support homophobia.

10 In addition, JROTC promotes  
11 disrespectful law in general and international law  
12 in particular. The whole world, including this  
13 country, has accepted that children should not be  
14 soldiers and that efforts to recruit children into  
15 the military must be ended and that means  
16 including the United States which has ratified the  
17 optional protocol on the involvement of children  
18 in armed conflict. What that says is that  
19 children under 18 should not be recruited and  
20 deployed to war, the provision sets an absolute  
21 minimum protocol on recruitment at 16-but JROTC  
22 students at 14 and 15 are part of the program. It  
23 is wrong, it sends the wrong message, and the  
24 conclusion is simple--this Council should  
25 eliminate this appropriation and we look to your

leadership to do it.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well thank you and I say to all of you that I will be following up on this specifically concerning the funding and to make sure that I have a knowledge base on the fact that is it funding that is mandated to be in there, like special education, or is it voluntary funding, is it matching funding? I'll be looking into all of that so that I know from a knowledge base, so when I'm advocating it to be removed, I will be able to stand and discuss this with anyone that wants to keep it in.

MR. TYKULSKER: We'll be happy to get you additional information on that.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Please.

MR. TYKULSKER: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you. Our last but not least panel, Mindy Duitz--

MALE VOICE: Duitz.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Duitz.

FEMALE VOICE: Duitz.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Learning Leaders; Nydia Leaf, she's representing herself.

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Cool, I love it, beautiful.

FEMALE VOICE: Really.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Jackie Sherman, Center for Court Innovation.

FEMALE VOICE: All right.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: And Eugene Gamiel, Music Outreach and Learning Leaders. Anyone else? Cool.

All right, you may begin. Introduce yourself and you may begin.

MS. MINDY DUITZ: Okay. Chairman Jackson and everyone else, thank you so much for having me. I'm Mindy Duitz, I'm the President of Learning Leaders, I've had the honor of speaking with you before and frankly I'm just want to comment that I'm proud to be participating in this civic engagement. That you are an inspiration in your patience and your commitment to, frankly, you know, the whole world of education and to letting us to speak. So I'm here for that reason, I want

1  
2 to go on the record and I want to just say it's  
3 clear that today is--I won't read all this, I  
4 promise I'll be very quick--a dramatic time and  
5 the testimonies today have reflected the impact of  
6 this weakened economy in our city schools and I  
7 echo the sentiment that everyone else has  
8 expressed to, please, City Council, make sure that  
9 we get our fair share of the stimulus and try to  
10 make the schools whole again.

11 In this period of school reform,  
12 we're also seeing an enormous national and local  
13 call for service, and we are also seeing a rise in  
14 volunteers, skilled volunteers, because of the  
15 rising unemployment, which leads me to my  
16 organization.

17 We are a part of the support  
18 structure for the schools. We are small in  
19 budget, we are large in impact. We are the city's  
20 largest volunteer-based educational program and we  
21 really believe that we're more important now than  
22 ever.

23 We support all the DOE and Council  
24 priorities--parent engagement, increasing family  
25 literacy, support of ELLs, the transitions, we

1  
2 ease the transition from middle to high school,  
3 and we increase access to post-secondary education  
4 all through volunteers.

5 I won't give you all our  
6 statistics, but there are some 12 to 14,000  
7 volunteers reaching over a quarter of a million  
8 students in the school and we have received cuts  
9 to our DOE contract in this year and next year,  
10 which will total 25%, which is \$125,000. Again,  
11 it's small money in this large budget, but  
12 restoration of any kind may well impact us. We  
13 will be restructuring, but we are projecting a 15%  
14 reduction in our services, that would mean 25,000  
15 fewer students.

16 I want to refer to some comments  
17 Speaker Quinn made a while ago about us where she  
18 recognized that our volunteers are also  
19 instrumental in supporting the outcomes of your  
20 Middle School Task Force, and we are carrying that  
21 out this year and we'll be seeking support from  
22 the Speaker and hope you will echo support as well  
23 in the coming year.

24 And I would just like to quote one  
25 of the principals from a high school for overage,

1 under-credited students with 130 active Learning  
2 Leaders volunteers. He said, no other  
3 organization consistently provides functioning  
4 adults on a one-to-one or small group basis. If  
5 you come back to graduation, some of my students  
6 have no one there except their Learning Leaders  
7 tutors. Learning Leaders creates for us a cadre,  
8 in a sense, of foster parents for the school.

9  
10 So we are seeking to maintain our  
11 current level of DOE support. We will be  
12 approaching the Council to maintain our current  
13 level of Council support and we think that we are  
14 a great example of a public-private partnership,  
15 we're a great investment with high returns,  
16 especially in this down market.

17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you and  
19 thanks for the group and your organization and you  
20 for your advocacy.

21 And next?

22 MS. JACKIE SHERMAN: Good  
23 afternoon, Chair Jackson, and thank you for the  
24 opportunity to speak today.

25 My name is Jackie Sherman and I'm



1  
2 here on behalf of the Center for Court Innovation  
3 and I've submitted written testimony today that  
4 details the breadth of the Center's work. I want  
5 to focus my brief remarks today on our work to  
6 help ensure that at-risk and court-involved school  
7 age youth get the services and supports they need  
8 to stay or get back on track and get a sound,  
9 basic education.

10 The Council has provided critical  
11 support for this and other work of the Center for  
12 Court Innovation, which we again seek this year.  
13 I'm going to briefly describe three programs that  
14 together form points along a continuum of  
15 preventive and supportive services for at-risk and  
16 court-involved youth.

17 The programs use different methods  
18 to engage youth at various stages of involvement  
19 with the justice system and first we run  
20 preventive programs, which work with children to  
21 get them on track before they become involved in  
22 the justice system at all.

23 In the fall of 2007, we launched  
24 our Tenants Court, which is a pilot program to  
25 fight chronic absenteeism in New York City schools

1  
2 and the program was developed by Family Court  
3 judges across the country who became frustrated  
4 with the limits of what they could accomplish when  
5 cases, typically educational neglect cases, but  
6 others as well, came before them in court and  
7 wanted to see what they could do to partner with  
8 schools and community organizations to prevent  
9 children from coming into the system at all. So  
10 the program is a voluntary strength-based program  
11 that's loosely modeled on our problem solving  
12 courts and brings families--parents and their  
13 students and their children--and school officials  
14 as well together for biweekly, and sometimes  
15 monthly, informal hearings with a hearing officer--  
16 a justice system professional typically--to  
17 discuss attendance issues and obstacles to  
18 maintaining, to accomplishing better attendance  
19 and maintaining better attendance. We typically  
20 provide referrals for a host of supportive  
21 services both for students and their families, and  
22 we, in the process, deepen connections of families  
23 to schools and students to their schools as well.

24 In our first year of this pilot  
25 program we've been working in two schools and in

1  
2 our first year we realized gains among most of our  
3 students--an average drop in unexcused absences of  
4 40% and 96 of our participants were promoted to  
5 the next grade.

6 The Center is also involved in  
7 early intervention efforts and we run youth courts  
8 in three boroughs. These programs train teens to  
9 step into the shoes of all actors in criminal  
10 proceedings and to hear low-level cases involving  
11 their peers. They are not only a wonderful civic  
12 education and leadership development program, but  
13 they also give respondents who are referred by  
14 schools, courts, the police, local DAs, who have  
15 committed minor offenses, opportunities to take  
16 responsibility for their behavior, pay back their  
17 communities, and get the services they need to get  
18 back on the right track.

19 Finally, we run alternative to  
20 detention programs for court-involved youth, and  
21 for nearly 2 years the Center has operated QUEST,  
22 a program that helps keep the youth with pending  
23 delinquency cases out of detention in Queens.

24 Youth participating in the program  
25 receive after-school programming, supervision and

support, instead of being detained. The program has served almost 250 youth and has a very high rate of success. We have recently expanded the program to Staten Island and we've also expanded the program to include an initiative to use systematic procedures to identify, assess, and create individualized treatment plans for youth arrested for delinquency, who have mental health disorders.

I hope you will keep these programs in mind, these programs that are cost efficient and employ a problem-solving approach to keeping our young people in school and out of the justice system as the Council considers this year's budget.

Again, we thank you for investments you've made in our work in the past and hope that you will be able to continue to do so this year.

Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Thank you.  
Last, but not the least.

[Crosstalk]

MR. EUGENE GAMIEL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you City Council for this

1  
2 privilege.

3 My name is Eugene Gamiel, I'm a Co-  
4 founder and Director of a program that has learned  
5 to connect with children that are potential  
6 dropouts, are not learning, and it's called Music  
7 Outreach Learning Through Music.

8 In 1979 we were awarded a \$97,000  
9 ESEA Title I grant from the Board of Education. at  
10 that time to develop a pilot program to engage or  
11 intervene with the potential loss of kids dropping  
12 out or disinterested or not functioning. It  
13 included special ed at that time, but later  
14 mainstreamed through a foundation granted. I  
15 wanted to see if special ed children and general  
16 ed children could really function in a challenging  
17 educational environment. We proved the case, and  
18 using music we connect with children to develop  
19 reading, language, writing, and learning skills,  
20 including social skills.

21 Through a series of these workshops  
22 targeted initially for special ed children, we  
23 pioneered the use of music as a powerful tool for  
24 engaging these minds and hearts of young learners.  
25 As a result of advocacy and endorsements, 51

1  
2 community planning boards each--each I want to  
3 say--chose this method of intervention for their  
4 kids. They realize that with all the problems  
5 they were existing and at that time, very little  
6 funds, they made room because they saw firsthand  
7 what reaching a child's imagination can do to get  
8 them to focus and begin functioning in the  
9 classroom.

10 We've enclosed teachers comments--  
11 those are our credentials--we don't have any big  
12 degrees to talk about, I'm not even an educator,  
13 but we are essentially accomplishing miracles in  
14 classrooms for children who are not learning.

15 This grew to a \$1.2 million budget,  
16 because of these 51 planning boards and providing  
17 services to over 100,000 to these elementary  
18 school children from all over the city.

19 In 2005, DYCD canceled these school  
20 time programs, ignoring some of the important  
21 things about early childhood, which is why I'm  
22 here.

23 Early childhood is an area that  
24 cannot be served after school. I can make that  
25 statement because I've been doing this for almost

1  
2 40 years. Discretionary funding which saved the  
3 day from wonderful Council people like yourself,  
4 Mr. Chairman, and others, they observed firsthand  
5 what we were trying to do and allowed us to  
6 maintain a minimum level of activities in schools  
7 in their jurisdiction.

8 Music Outreach is in jeopardy right  
9 now. With the economic downturn and the erosion  
10 of matching funds from every sector, we are  
11 requesting a special request of \$450,000, which  
12 would give us or restore 38,000 services citywide.  
13 Now I'm asking for this amount of money because of  
14 the initiative that the president is now driving  
15 forth--a very powerful directive that wants to  
16 address the needs of early childhood and we're  
17 hoping that the City Council could be that vehicle  
18 to make these funds available.

19 With the advance of brain imaging  
20 and the research shows that musical activities  
21 activate neural pathways and have significant and  
22 lasting benefits for the students. Children of  
23 diverse cultural and economic backgrounds,  
24 including special ed, are engaged in all aspects  
25 of language arts, cooperative learning, and music

1  
2 appreciation. Teachers observe creative  
3 strategies for integrating music into their lesson  
4 plans for a more vibrant classroom. Motivation is  
5 the key to learning and with the selective use of  
6 music, we engage even the most reluctant learner.  
7 Our music and literacy workshops have received  
8 recognition from specialists in the field of child  
9 development. Our presenters--professional  
10 musician, educators--are role models trained to  
11 communicate with children. Please see the  
12 attached what educators say.

13 We trust that with the President's  
14 commitment to early childhood and to special ed,  
15 the Education Committee will consider the  
16 allocation of these funds to Music Outreach. This  
17 will ensure that these learning experiences for  
18 children in their primary years of academic and  
19 social development remains secure and  
20 uncompromised and a wider community ultimately  
21 benefit. There is only one childhood.

22 Thank you for this opportunity and  
23 the consideration by the education committee. I  
24 appreciate this.

25 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well let me



1  
2 thank you all for coming in representing  
3 yourselves and your organizations and obviously  
4 the type of money that you're asking for are  
5 citywide request. And I assume that you have  
6 already submitted your forms and to the City  
7 Council overall to the Speaker's office asking for  
8 a citywide ask. And I don't know what the status  
9 of that will be, but I mean, I'm sure you've done  
10 that; if you haven't, then you need to do it like  
11 pronto.

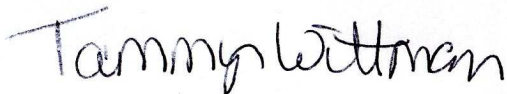
12 MR. GAMIEL: I was told by Mr.  
13 Crowley of the Finance Committee that you must  
14 apply directly to the DOE. That is not going to  
15 work that way, we thought that through your good  
16 offices that there could be some connection to the  
17 method or the channeling to obtain the citywide  
18 funding.

19 CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Well I think  
20 that you should--if Mr. Crowley said that you  
21 should apply through DOE you should do that, but I  
22 will also speak to them about the documents that I  
23 have here concerning your program, and I'm not  
24 saying that that's going to happen, but I will be  
25 speaking to them.

|    |   |     |
|----|---|-----|
| 1  | COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION                            | 274 |
| 2  | MR. GAMIEL: I appreciate that.                    |     |
| 3  | That's really nine-tenths of the battle.          |     |
| 4  | CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: Okay. Thank                  |     |
| 5  | you all for coming in.                            |     |
| 6  | MR. GAMIEL: Thank you again.                      |     |
| 7  | CHAIRPERSON JACKSON: This                         |     |
| 8  | Education Committee hearing on the preliminary    |     |
| 9  | budget for the department of education for 2009-  |     |
| 10 | 2010 school year is hereby adjourned at 3:02 p.m. |     |
| 11 |   |     |
| 12 |   |     |
| 13 |   |     |

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Wittman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T'.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date April 13, 2009\_\_\_\_\_