

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION
JOINTLY WITH THE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION

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HELD AT: COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CITY HALL

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Rita C. Joseph,
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1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

6

3 SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a microphone check on
4 the Committee on Immigration joint with Education.
5 Today's date is November 29, 2023. We're located in
6 the Council Chambers. The recording is done by Rocco
7 Mesiti.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Good morning everybody and
9 welcome to the Committees on Education jointly with
10 Immigration. At this time, we ask if you could
11 please place phones on vibrate or silent mode and
12 lastly, just as a reminder, nobody is allowed to
13 approach the dais during the hearing. Thank you for
14 your cooperation. Chairs, we are ready to begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: [GAVEL] Good morning and
16 welcome to today's joint hearing held by the
17 Committees on Immigration and Education regarding
18 immigrant students in New York City public schools.
19 I'm Council Member Shahana Hanif, Chair of the
20 Committee on Immigration. I'm joined by Council
21 Member Rita Joseph, Chair of the Committee on
22 Education to whom I'm grateful for her partnership in
23 organizing this hearing.

24 Thank you to everyone who has joined us today,
25 including my Council colleagues, representatives from
the Administration and the members of the public who

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 7

3 are here with us in the Chambers and those attending
4 remotely. I'd like to acknowledge the Committee
5 members who are here including Council Members Ung,
6 Menin, Louis, Moya on Zoom, Brewer and Schulman.

7 It is obvious that the Administration does not
8 want immigrants to move to New York City. They have
9 distributed flyers at the Southern Border telling
10 asylum seekers that they are better off going to
11 other cities. Senior staff members have echoed
12 Trumpian calls for President Biden to close the
13 border. And Mayor Adams himself has gone to Central
14 America in order to dissuade people from coming to
15 the five boroughs in person.

16 All of these actions run counter to our values as
17 a welcoming city but the most egregious tactic that
18 the Administration has employed is discouraging
19 asylum seekers from coming to New York by
20 intentionally worsening conditions for the recent
21 arrivals that are already here. On October 16, the
22 Administration reached a new low and it announced
23 that the city would begin evicting children and
24 their families from their placements at HERRCs and
25 respite centers after 60 days of residency. For this
administration, the cruelty is a point. As we've

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

8

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2 seen over the past few days, shelter evictions have
3 resulted in asylum seekers sleeping outside in
4 weather so cold that it required the city to declare
5 a code blue emergency. The shelter evictions are in
6 humane and as Chair of the Committee on Immigration,
7 I oppose them in the strongest possible terms.

8 At this hearing, I want to focus on the harm that
9 shelter evictions have caused for public school
10 students, both through this rule and through forced
11 transfers within the DHS system. Our teachers,
12 support staff, principals, students and families have
13 stepped up in a truly admirable way to make our
14 schools a source of refuge and stability for newly
15 arrived students who have experienced unthinkable
16 challenges in their journeys to New York City. When
17 a child is forced to leave a shelter, their place in
18 the school community is threatened. School can be a
19 joyous and healing place for children and it would be
20 shameful to take that away.

21 Under the Federal McKinney-Vento Act, and under
22 the Chancellor's regulations, students in temporary
23 housing have the right to remain at the school they
24 currently attend throughout the school year,
25 regardless if their shelter placement changes.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

9

1 However, I've already seen in my district that
2 maintaining enrolling in a school following a shelter
3 transfer is extremely challenging for two reasons.
4 First, DHS and other relevant agencies have placed
5 students in shelters that are extremely far from
6 their schools. For example, students who are
7 attending schools in my district, in Park Slope,
8 that's Brooklyn have been placed in the shelter in
9 Jamaica Queens.
10

11 Second, due to the already existing
12 transportation staffing shortage, it is difficult to
13 arrange adequate busing for students at their new
14 addresses. I've heard from my district schools that
15 forced shelter transfers have caused students to miss
16 school for weeks on end at no fault of their
17 families. It's unconscionable that the
18 Administration has forced through policies that are
19 significantly interrupting the education of our
20 students and causing undeniable learning loss. I
21 have particular concern about how these dynamics will
22 impact children living in a semi congregate setting
23 at Floyd Bennett Field, which is extremely remote.

24 I strongly urge the Administration not to extend
25 the 60-day rule to children and their families living

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

10

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2 in the DHS shelter system as it would harm even more
3 students. I'd like to highlight that the agencies
4 responsible for these policies are not present at
5 today's hearing. The record should note that DHS,
6 H+H, MOIA and OASA we all asked to testify but have
7 all neglected to appear.

8 I appreciate the presence of the DOE
9 representatives that are here and I am so sorry in
10 advance that you are being tasked to answer questions
11 about decisions you are not responsible for but have
12 clearly impacted your work downstream.

13 This hearing will also cover other DOE programs
14 concerning the over 30,000 new arrivals that have
15 been ruled in our schools over the past year and a
16 half, including Project Open Arms and shelter-based
17 coordinators. We will also dive into longer term
18 issues about impact, first-generation public-school
19 students face including multilingual learning and
20 language access for families. I'm very proud to have
21 been one of those first-generation students not too
22 long ago.

23 I'll close by saying that our Administration has
24 been right to celebrate the enrollment boom caused by
25 immigrant students, which is reversed a year's long

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

11

headcount decline. If we give them the conditions they need to flourish, these students will grow up to be our city's next generation of workers, creators and leaders.

We need to use this moment to ensure these students are not subjected to policies that establish them as lesser than their native borne classmates.

I want to thank work collaboratively to reverse the troubling developments that we are witnessing in real time and make sure all of our young New Yorkers can thrive in our schools. I would like to thank all Immigration Committee staff for their work on this hearing including Nicole Catà, Legislative Counsel, Rebecca Barilla, Policy Analyst, Nia Hyatt, Finance Analyst and Florentine Kabore, Unit Head. I would also like to thank my staff including Alex Liao, Legislative and Budget Director, Mia Perez, our Education Director, Michael Whiteside, Communications Director, and Nora Brickner, Chief of Staff.

Lastly, I want to thank the Sergeants at Arms, the interpreters and everyone else working to make this hearing run smoothly. Now, I will turn it over to my Co-Chair Council Member Rita Joseph for her opening statement.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 12

3 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you Chair Hanif and
4 thank you for inviting the Committee on Education to
5 join Immigration for this very important hearing
6 topic. I'm Rita Joseph, Chair of the Education
7 Committee. Thank you to everyone who is planning to
8 testify today. I'm very much looking forward to
9 hearing your testimony. Chair Hanif covered a lot in
her opening remarks, so I will be brief.

10 During the 2022-2023 school year, approximately
11 43 percent or roughly 344,000 students had a primary
12 home language other than English and approximately 17
13 percent or roughly 134,000 students identified as
14 English language learners.

15 Last school year, ELLs communicated in 150
16 different languages other than English. With a
17 school system as uniquely diverse as New York City
18 public schools and that diversity growing each day,
19 the Administration must ensure that there are systems
20 and strategies in place to fulfill its legal
21 obligation to all students.

22 Unfortunately, some of the Administration's
23 policies impacting newly arrived migrants run afoul
24 of the legal mandate. As a forever educator who
25 spent 22 years teaching ELLs, I am deeply troubled by

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

13

a policy that worsens the trauma of families who fought so hard to get here. This includes striping them of housing security and creating instability in their child's education. Equally disturbing is a policy that uproots families with children to remote setting, almost five miles away from the nearest school.

At our Transportation hearing last year, we spoke about driver shortage. A lack of adequate bus routes and school bus delays. Unfortunately these issues haven't gone away. So, how can policies that overload an already failing transportation system to get our students to school in the first place, fulfill our obligation to provide them with an education when they get there.

These issues are important to me personally and professionally, as I know first-hand how difficult it is for immigrant students and families to navigate the school system and obtain a quality education. I also understand that the shortage of bilingual educators is not unique to New York City and it must be addressed nationwide. However, New York City public schools is a school system located in a city where people speak more than 200 languages. We must

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

14

therefore lead the way in developing creative
programs and policies that harness existing talent
and resources. These are the kinds of policies that
I'm hoping to hear from the Administration today.

As the success of our immigrant student is a
reflection of the success of the city as a whole.
Thank you to the Committee Staff as well as my own
staff for all the work they have put in to today's
hearing.

I also would like to acknowledge my colleagues
present, Council Member Gutiérrez, Council Member
Dinowitz, Council Member Stevens. Thank you. I'll
now turn it over to Chair Hanif to administer the
oath.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you Chair Joseph. Now,
I will turn to Committee Counsel to administer the
oath.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chairs. We will
now hear testimony from the Administration. We will
hear testimony as well as answers to questions from
Melissa Aviles-Ramos, Mirza Sanchez-Medina, Flavia
Puello Perdomo, Trevonda Kelly, John Hammer, Gillian
Smith, Kleber Palma, Glenn Risbrook and John Bensa.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

15

If I just called your name, please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth before the Committee and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

PANEL: Yes.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may begin when ready.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Good morning Chair Joseph, Chair Hanif, and all the member of the City Council Committees on Education and Immigration here today. My name is Melissa Aviles-Ramos and I am Chief of Staff to the Chancellor for New York City public schools. I am joined by Mirza Sanchez-Medina, Chief of Multilingual Learners, Flavia Puello Perdomo, Chief of Schools for Communities Supports and Wellness, Trevonda Kelly, Acting Chief Enrollment Officer and other wonderful colleagues from New York City Public Schools. Thank you for the opportunity to update the Committees on New York City public school's efforts to effectively welcome and support our migrant and asylum-seeking students.

Your leadership and collaboration with this Administration have been absolutely critical in this

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

16

challenging and under – this challenging undertaking
and all of us at New York City Public Schools are
grateful for your support. The Council's leadership,
in particular Chair Joseph, for additional STH
outreach workers has been both timely and invaluable.

New York City will always be a city of immigrants
and our schools continue to welcome every child from
any background who needs a safe and supportive place
to receive an excellent education. Every student has
the right to a high-quality public education
regardless of their immigration status. Since last
summer, New York City public schools has been working
with our sister agencies on Project Open Arms to
support our newest New Yorkers. New York City public
schools has supported approximately 34,000 students
in temporary housing and their families, including
both new arrivals and students in the traditional
shelter system. This is in addition to the nearly
one million students currently enrolled.

As always, we have risen together as a city to
meet this challenge. New York City has cared for
over 145,000 asylum seekers. The majority of whom
are families with children. While New York City
Public Schools does not track students immigration

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

17

status or country of origin, the influx of new arrivals has resulted in a significant increase of students living in temporary housing. Last year, we supported roughly 18,500 students in temporary housing over the entire school year. Since July 2023, we have welcomed approximately 14,000 additional students in temporary housing.

As the Council is well aware, New York City Public Schools has not only helped to launch Project Open Arms from the very beginning, but Chancellor David Banks crucially appointed me as the lead organizations coordination of internal efforts in the New York City Public Schools.

Since then, the team has expanded to include two additional team members to coordinate the work across the city. The New York City Public Schools Cross Functional Open Arms team meets frequently to strategize support for our nearly 34,000 newest New Yorkers. In addition, we meet monthly with our Project Open Arms think tank that consists of various advocate groups and we partner with them to create additional supports for our newest New Yorkers.

Additionally, our school communities have stepped up to help create borough specific supports and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

18

partnerships with CBO's. It is through these partnerships with the Shed, Project Rousseau, Rainbow Vision and others that we have been able to serve thousands of students and their families receiving generous donations for goods including clothing, eye glasses, and shoes.

For the last 18 months. New York City Public Schools has supported thousands of students and their families via resource fairs. While these resource fairs are ongoing, we are pivoting to create care closets, which streamline access throughout the school year to guarantee that families can always turn to their school for assistance with any needs they may have.

Care closets have two key components. A secure storage unit, so for example a closet or room that stores items needed by families in temporary housing including school supplies, clothing, nonperishable food, hygiene products and more. In a community of care at school that brings students and families together in a sense of caring for one another, helping remove the stigma of needing support.

We thank Chairs Joseph and Hanif for their ongoing partnership in this effort. Your feedback to

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

19

our teams is invaluable. We also thank the entire Council for their continued support. From the moment these families arrived in our city, New York City Public Schools has helped to facilitate student enrollment and support families immediate aides. Last year, we set up an enrollment office at the Asylum Seeker Navigation Center, where enrollment counselors helped families connect to schools while providing backpacks, books, and school supplies. As the city had pivoted from the Navigation Center to the Arrival Center, our supports have pivoted as well. We continue to have STH staff members supporting families at emergency shelter sites including the newest site for families with children at Floyd Bennett Field.

Our cross functional team has staff from students in temporary housing, enrollment, early childhood education, and the Office of Language Access. Families are greeted by our staff who provide assistance in filling out intake forms for enrollment. The enrollment team works closely with the district team to determine which schools have availability to welcome our newest New Yorkers.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

20

For elementary and middle school age students, we are compliant with the McKinney-Vento Act, which states that students in temporary housing are entitled to placement at their zone schools. At the high school level, our enrollment team works with students and their families to select a suitable program. Enrollment counselors review transcripts provided and support families with placement. And when transcripts are not provided, enrollment works with the families to recreate an academic history for the student, which may require outreach to the child's previous school in their home country.

No matter the location of the shelter, our staff is working to identify schools with available seats that are closest to the shelters, prioritizing access to programs for multilingual workers. Our division of multilingual learners identify existing programs to support multilingual learners, including which school may need hiring support to create or expand supportive programs.

We are committed to finding schools with available seats that offer supports in multilingual learners and that do not pose a travel hardship for the students. All the materials we provide to

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

21

families continue to be translated into the appropriate languages and we support families in selecting the best language program for their children.

Once students are enrolled, we work closely with superintendents and principals to conduct initial assessments to determine what comprehensive and targeted resources are needed, especially for special education and bilingual programs. We encourage our schools to work with their district budget director if a mid-year adjustment is needed.

Last school year, in fall 2022, we committed \$20 million or \$2,000 per student to school seeing an influx of six or more students in temporary housing, in addition to \$110 million in fair student funding.

This year, we added a new wait to the fair student funding formula that prioritizes students in temporary housing allocating more funding to school supporting these students. We are also continuing to direct advanced registered growth funding to meet the immediate needs of schools receiving incoming students. These allocations enable schools to support the following priorities: Ensuring language access and support in collaboration in

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

22

superintendents, the New York City public schools is ensuring that all families are supported in their native languages and that school leadership is aware of the array of resources available to provide translated content specific information. Providing academic and extra-curricular programming; New York City Public School curricular and instructional resources are culturally and linguistically responsive and we provide educators with additional guidance related to second language acquisition and specialized instruction for diverse learners. Extra-curricular activities are also targeted to support needs and interest with the goal of enhancing their academic and social experiences. Creating supportive classrooms and schools; we are working with schools to make sure students receive universal social/emotional supports that help them build positive relationships, develop social and emotional skills and connect to additional support when necessary. This includes programs like advisory, health education, restorative practices and others that are designed to support the needs of the whole child. Additionally, many schools implement a strength based social/emotional screener that is used

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

23

to assess and support students social/emotional
skills and development while connecting them to
interventions.

School leadership and staff have regular check-
ins to review attendance and social/emotional data
and ensure that interventions and supports are
activated as needed. We are also coordinating
continuously with community providers and community-
based organizations. Project Open Arms is working in
tight coordination with critical CBO partners and
other organizations to provide families with critical
resources and services. Thanks to the advocacy of
the Council, every school has access to a social
worker and in some cases, a school-based mental
health clinic that provides mental health services.

In addition to the approximately 5,000 social
workers and guidance counselors who work in our
school system, nearly 400 New York City public
schools have school based mental health clinics.
More than 170 schools have onsite clinical services
with contracted providers and over 330 schools have
mental health resources at school-based health
centers. Our central team is continuing to work with

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

24

superintendents and principals to deploy additional resources and support as needed.

Schools also have students in temporary housing coordinators who can share mental health resources and make referrals to community-based organizations or to our floating hospital, which provides medical, dental and mental health services regardless of documentation or insurance.

While these investments predate Project Open Arms, they are proving to be more critical with each passing day. We are working closely with New York City Department of Homeless Services to add capacity to shelters through shelter-based families distance and STH community coordinators who are able to share information about shelter and school based mental health resources and can assist with referrals during regular check ins with families.

New York City Public Schools in prioritizing transportation services for all of our students, especially for our most vulnerable students. All students in temporary housing in grades K-6 are entitled to busing and their families receive metro cards to travel. Students in upper grades are also entitled to metro cards. We recognize the vital role

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

25

transportation plays in enabling students to attend school regularly and are dedicated to providing reliable transportation services to ensure that every student can access their educational facilities without hinderance. Whether it's through bus service, metro cards or tailored solutions for families facing transitional challenges, we are working closely to make sure – we are working as a team to make sure that students get to school.

We are working with our chiefs of support and superintendents to address any escalations regarding transportation and regularly connect with Office of Pupil Transportation. OPT's point person for students in temporary housing is also a member of the Open Arms Corp Team, which allows for quick response to end escalations.

Since the arrival of new asylum-seeking families in April, we have worked closely with our partner agencies, including the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs, the Department of Social Services, New York City Health + Hospitals and others involved in Project Open Arms to support these families and students as they navigate their new city.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

26

The Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs connected New York City Public Schools to Rainbow Vision. Dr. Park and Rainbow Vision provide basic eye examinations and eye glasses in underserved communities to school-age children in order to help them see better and increase their chances of success in schools. We have been able to work with Rainbow Vision to help our students in temporary housing in need of vision support to receive free eye glasses. We continue to work closely with the Mayor's fund to attain in kind donations that are given directly to schools to support our students in temporary housing. Since the beginning of this crisis, Project Open Arms comprehensive interagency efforts continue to ensure that thousands of students are provided with a full range of services to start their New York City public school education.

I want to again thank the Council for providing essential supports for this ambitious undertaking. Your leadership in this crisis has demonstrated how the home of Statue of Liberty continues to stand as a beacon for those who want to find refuge and thrive in the United States of America. And on a personal note, I am extremely proud and grateful to be sitting

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

27

up here with my colleagues who all personally
identify with a number of students who are in our
system.

On my right, I have Flavia Puello Perdomo who was
an immigrant herself and came to this country and has
attained great success. On my left, I have Mirza
Sanchez-Medina who came from Puerto Rico and was a
bilingual teacher and eventually a principal of an
international school.

Myself, coming from a Puerto Rican family first
generation, grew up very, very poor and didn't often
know where my next meals would come from and I sit
before you today as well.

In the past year, we have learned that it takes a
village to support our newest New Yorkers. Due to
the work of our dedicated public servants in
partnerships with City Council, CBO's and schools, we
are able to support our students and their families.
And we continue to build best practices to make their
transition into New York City Public Schools as soon
as possible.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with
you today. We look forward to answering any

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

28

questions you have and I now pass it along to my
colleague, Mirza Sanchez-Medina.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you. Good morning.
Thank you Chair Joseph, Chair Hanif, and all the
members of the Education and Immigrant Committees for
holding this important hearing. We are also grateful
to have educators and advocates who care deeply about
the needs of our migrant youth and their families on
the Council.

My name is Mirza Sanchez-Medina. I am the Chief
of Multilingual Learners within the division of
teaching and learning under Deputy Chancellor Carolyn
Quintana. To echo the sentiments shared by my
colleague Chief of Staff Melissa Aviles-Ramos, once a
child is enrolled in our schools, we want to ensure
we deliver on the promise of a New York City Public
School education regardless of age, language,
immigration status.

For the needs of our 34,000 migrants and asylum-
seeking students of diverse and many, we have so much
we can continue to learn from our district and
school-based teams who are our front line of supports
about the practices, processes and partnerships that
work. Specifically, we want to invest in scale

strategies that support our schools welcoming migrant students with facilitating mastery of core academic skills and content expertise, pedagogy that prioritizes critical thinking and problem-solving skills and a sense of belonging and inclusivity for all learners. For migrant students who are English Language Learners, this begins by ensuring they are placed in an instructional setting that will allow them to successfully access and attain grade level content knowledge while developing English Language Proficiency.

The process for English Language Learners screening identification and placement occurs once a child is enrolled in a New York City public school. At a high level, this process includes the following steps: All parents and guardians are newly arrived students complete the home language identification survey to let the school staff know which language this child speaks at home.

For students who speak a language other than English at home, schools may give the students, the New York State identification tests for English Language Learners to determine if they are an ELL, as we call them. Students identified as ELLs, are

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

30

entitled to receive English as a new language and/or
a bilingual education. And schools have ten days to
complete this process once a child is enrolled.

To expand access to high quality bilingual
education program options, the current New York City
Public School Administration has prioritized opening
new and strengthening existing bilingual programs.
Last year, we opened 33 new programs. This year, we
supported 44 additional programs, nearly one out of
five ELLs is served in bilingual education citywide.
In addition, through the implementation of New York
City Reads, we are strengthening core instruction for
80 percent of ELLs served in English as a new
language program only.

In partnership with the New York Immigration
Coalition, education collaborative, we identify the
need to enhance programming for older new comer ELLs
in transfer schools in key boroughs. Last year, we
invested in strengthening programs and services
targeting unique needs of older new comer ELLs at six
transfer schools in Brooklyn, Queens and the Bronx.
These schools were in addition to five already
schools established, transfer school specific

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

31

programs and services for ELLs in Manhattan and the
Bronx.

Due to the increased focus on this population,
New York City Public Schools was able to meet the
increased needs of newly arrived ELLs for transfer
high school setting during the 2022-2023 school year,
surpassing the percent of ELLs served in transfer
high schools in previous years. We continue to work
with our district teams to ensure that the enhanced
programs and services established at these programs
are sustained and to ensure that families and youth
are aware of these programs options when enrolling in
New York City Public Schools.

To ensure our ELLs can be successful in any
program model, grade level or content area, we work
with district staff, school leaders and their teams
with building the capacity of all teachers to be
teachers of ELLs. This includes providing
professional learning, resources, and guidance on how
to first use a team-based approach to creating school
wide systems to support newly arrived ELLs from the
intake to instruction.

Second, scaffold instruction for multiple – for
multilingual learners in ways that build background

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

32

knowledge, target vocabulary development, build student agency and use peer interactions to support learning. And three, integrate opportunities for purposeful home language use in lessons across grade levels in content areas to help multilingual learners understand content, build confidence and see their home language as an asset. They have super powers.

In addition to being English Language Learners, we know that many of our migrant students may also be students with interrupted formal, inconsistent formal education. We invite districts and school-based staff to participate in SIFE share. It's an interactive professional learning network designed to support New York City Public School educators with building strong learning communities with their newly arrived ELLs in SIFE.

Through this network, educators can also participate in weekly office hours with our team. Finally, we work to ensure that supporting the success of our newly arrived ELLs it's a whole school effort. We do acknowledge the need to expand our pull bilingual certified and ESO licensed teachers. To this end, we have partnered with the UFT to design a framework for transitioning teachers into bilingual

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 33

3 or ENL roles in New York school system. Thank you
4 Melissa for leading that effort.

5 Previously, educators who chose to use their
6 bilingual education extension secondary license mid-
7 career will have the reset on their tenure,
8 desensitizing licensed educators from providing
9 bilingual education. This is no longer the case.
10 Teachers tenure under their current license and who
11 have – who are not using a bilingual education
12 extension secondary license will be granted immediate
13 tenure if they agree to immediately pivot to work
14 under this license.

15 These educators receive a salary differential
16 with a pay increase for teachers who earned a minimum
17 of 30 credits beyond a bachelor's degree. Educators
18 who have not earned 30 additional credits yet are
19 still able to receive the pay increase. We are
20 excited to be able to facilitate a process that
21 allows us to support any tenure New York City Public
22 School Teacher who wants to work under the ENL or
23 bilingual license and immediately support our ELLs.

24 As a former principal and a lifelong educator, I
25 know that the importance of schools in our
communities cannot be overstated. We are so thankful

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

34

for the dedication of the district and school-based teams to ensure every New York City Public School is a place where our students and families are safe, welcome and able to access critical information, resources and support. We also know that they cannot do this work alone. We must ensure the efforts to support and serve our migrant children and their families remain an urgent priority for the city as a whole.

We appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about where we can do more, where we can do better. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you so much. I'd like to acknowledge that we've been joined by Council Members Avilés, Narcisse, Hanks, Lee and Rivera. Okay, so first, I'd like to just appreciate your testimonies and learning – having the opportunity to learn about your personal connection to working in our public schools and also being a product of this extraordinary public school system. Which is why it makes it even harder for me as somebody who relates to that story to justify the 60-day directive and how a tier of students will be shuffling around.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

35

So, I hope you know that the questions that will be forthcoming are not directed at you personally and I know how much we love the city and care about students, every single student and care about their joy and uhm, ensuring compassionate care to them. But these questions are directed at the policy, the policy. So, again, just want to extend my gratitude to the commitment you've shown consistently at the hearings I've been a part of and just overall, because I recognize the challenges of this moment. And so, I hope you know that you are appreciated and we see your strength and bravery throughout all of this.

So, I'm going to start off my line of questioning with the 60-day rule. You know as I shared in my remarks, I disagree with this directive. It is absolutely cruel, short sided, unnecessary and the rule has forced DHS shelter transfers that have resulted in students being moved to shelters far away from the schools they attend and as was mentioned under the Federal McKinney-Vento Act and under the Chancellors regulations, students have the right to remain at the schools they currently attend in which they've begun to of course establish a sense of

community, stability and upholding this right and practice. However, it has been extremely challenging due to both geographical distance and operational issues with busing.

I want to dive into the harm that the Administrations directive has created. So first, was the DOE consulted regarding the introduction of the 60-day rule for families?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We were made aware and we began working in close partnership with City Hall and our partner agencies to operationalize what this would look like in terms of enrollment and responding to transportation needs.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Could you describe if that engagement included feedback to what we know would be created as a result of this directive? Did you all agree with it or was there push back to the fact that this would create obvious harm for students?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Like with any productive partnership, we talk about the challenges. Especially the ones that we know very well from our purview and we make sure that whatever the situation is, we do our best to make sure that there is minimal disruption for children's education.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

37

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: I see. So, then to just like put on the record here, the DOE was consulted. There was feedback or engagement and there was essentially a signoff of this policy. How many students have been required to transfer shelters due to the 60-day rule?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: As far as we are aware at this time, only families at the Row Hotel have received notifications of the 60-days and I think the actual implementation of it won't happen until December, in terms of hitting that mark but we can certainly connect with our partners and H+H and NYSIM to get more of an understanding. And what we started to do was to look very closely at where those students are located at their schools, engage principals, engage superintendents, and provide communication so that while we you know can control the implications of the 60-day rules to make sure that we uplift McKinney-Vento requirements and that as much as possible we should ensure that every family is fully aware that they have the right to remain in their schools. And that also if a parent chooses to change a school, that we have to work with them and ensure that they have the adequate

transportation so that children continue to be in
schools.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So then, right now, outside
of knowing that the families at the Row Hotel have
received notice, are you able to give a number of how
many families that entails or how many students that
entails?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I wouldn't want to speak
on like the execution of it because we as an agency
do not provide the family the notices. So, I think
we will have to base it on the total number of
occupancy at the hotel. But I think that's something
that we can come back and get additional clarity for
our partners.

What we have done is ensure that the
superintendent in District 2 and the principals there
understand that they're going to have families that
are going to be impacted. They you know receive the
copy of the letter that we received a copy the
families are going to be getting and that we make
sure that they are communicating to families their
rights and points of contact for enrollment, for
students in temporary housing, for transportation so
that we can mitigate anything that's within our power

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

39

to minimize those challenges that you are
highlighting.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So, just to better understand
the kind of like pathway for this, the families at
the shelter receive a notice first. It's not that
they are receiving a notice at the school.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: That is absolutely
correct. We do not like; we don't have the
authority. We don't have the oversight to notify
families that they're going to be moving location.
What we are doing is ensuring that we are uplifting
and that we are supporting and training our
coordinators that are on site, so that when those
families receive that and meet with their case
workers and are given information around what support
exists and what this looks like that we're ready to
you uhm you know to support them with anything that
we can do within our power around educational
stability you know as you highlighted.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So, understood that DOE is
not administering the notices but once the families
at the shelters receive this notice, is there a
connection being made with the school to inform that
hey, this many students have already received the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

40

notice. Here's what to expect. Like our principals and school faculty getting alerted. Are they aware of the substantive students who have received a notice? Could you share a little bit more about that?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I absolutely can and again, I will reemphasize that we really have to work with our partners to be able to know exactly who they're giving the notices but what we did center the leadership of my colleague Melissa Ramos is that we provided communication around the 60-days, the implementation of the 60-day notice and when it will begin immediately once we learn. So, all of the principals received a letter from the New York City Public Schools highlighting what these 60 days is going to mean. But most importantly, we build an FAQ that's listed on the Project Open Arms website that highlight some of the questions that we were receiving so we didn't want to just to do one off, we wanted to ensure that as we learn what we're -- the inquiries and what were the [INAUDIBLE 00:43:55] for principle that we were able to provide that. And then I personally have been working closely with the superintendent at District 2 and other

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

41

superintendents in some of the locations that we know that where emergency shelters are located, so that they know of uhm are fully aware of what the notice is and are prepared to support families.

One, to organize the transportation supports that will be needed if the families choose to remain in their current school. And two, to ensure that as families are transitioning, once we learn where they are transitioning because we don't at the time if they choose to change locations — they end up changing location and choose to select a different school, that then we're able to that expeditiously so that students can continue with their education.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So, principals have received notice or the schools have received overall notice of the 60-day rule going into effect. Who at the school is administering or working with the families directly as they make sense of this rule? Is it the principal directly? Is there like a staff person who has been appointed or already existing office in the school?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I think I'll start — I will start by saying that for me, for my team that I represent the students in temporary housing, it

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

42

starts with equipping the shelter based coordinators, so that from the moment that a family in a shelter is notified of this, that shelters, coordinators have you know the appropriate information that can support families with questions that can ensure that if needed, any families need additional metro cards need to start activating exception forms to get transportation, that we're helping them to fill that out. So, that's like the first layer of support. The first layer of like, we're here. You don't even have to wait to the school where your advocates come to us. Let's try to understand what this means. Then from there and we're still working also around additional engagement with parent coordinators, with school counselors, and others to ensure that everybody that regularly touches students and families, is aware and equipped of like what we as New York City Public Schools are obligated to do and should be encouraging you know families when possible to stay within their schools. But again, if they choose to transition, ensuring that we're organizing all of the appropriate supports, starting with transportation so that they can either remain in their school or select a new school.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

43

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: To add to that, one of the things that we've learned over the last year is that while we have the structures in place to support all students in temporary housing and we deeply value our shelter-based coordinators and I think we realize just how important they are given this experience, we also realize that we need to create an ecosystem across schools to support our students in temporary housing. And that looks very different across schools. Some schools, they are so accustomed to having students who have extensive needs and who are in temporary housing and so they welcome these students and it's habitual to the schools at this point. For other schools, not so much and it's been a learning experience. And so, to add to everything that Flavia just said, we are also engaging with our principals on a regular basis. Division of school leadership is calling weekly meetings with superintendents. My team pushes into CEC's and to principal meetings and really talking about this is not a person's job. This is not a person's role. There is a coordinator. There is a person who is coordinating efforts. I am the Project Open Arms Coordinator for the agency but this is not my job. I

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

44

stand here with a bunch of people who do this work with me and that's the same mindset that needs to happen in districts and schools and perhaps, we didn't do that so well before but it is something that we have learned now and we are working aggressively to change that mindset across leaders and teachers.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: I will add uhm, I was recently at a superintendents citywide meeting and we had developed a resource, I call it the A through Z intake to instruction and how to ensure that schools are developing this team based approach because it's not just you know the teacher or the parent coordinator, it's really a team based to support our students and build affirming and welcoming environment and schools now have that resource and it's also part of us providing the weekly meetings with the staff to support them.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: That's really wonderful to hear and to understand just the emphasis on the entire school staffs responsibility and that it's not just one person's job and to also hear from you that you know you're learning as you're going and strengthening the teams and the school communities as

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

45

you go. Can you share just some of the questions you've received in the process of putting together this FAQ for the principals, what you've noticed about students that have been moved under the 60-day rule? And I'd like to acknowledge that we've been joined by Council Member Sanchez, Krishnan, Restler.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yup, so uhm, just going back to what I shared earlier, so families at the roll receive the notice. As far as New York City Public School understand, they haven't moved yet because the implementation of receiving the notice when happen onto some point in later December but we can certainly lean on our colleagues to get clarity around that but I think from the moment principals learn of this, principals did exactly what I would have done as the former principal. What's going to happen to my case? Where are they going? Do they remain in my school community? If we need additional metro cards, additional transportation information, who do we go to? Who can I call if I have — you know families that are coming to me asking me about you know, housing support and you know other supports? What about families that are struggling in terms of just social/emotional needs? And as best as we could

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

46

1 with the FAQ, I also want to say that I don't think
2 that it's final. As Melissa pointed out, we're
3 learning. This is new. This is something that we
4 have experienced in the past. As a former principal
5 in the South Bronx, I have families who were in
6 shelters at a point ended up moving and we work with
7 those families to you know either keep them there or
8 ensure that if they chose to go to a different
9 location, that we work with the families. That I
10 made the connections with the school communities. I
11 think it's the volume and the numbers of what we are
12 experiencing that is very different and unlike
13 anything that we have done in the past.

14 So, I think it's really testing our
15 infrastructures and really pushing us to lean on one
16 another around the coordination's of support. So,
17 based on those questions, we feel that the FAQ; the
18 first thing was like understanding who are the
19 families who are getting the notice, right? So,
20 we're building our own personal knowledge about who's
21 receiving these. Is every family that has already
22 been receiving it getting it, and then from there,
23 making those considerations so that we can also lean
24 on our partners to create systems where we even know
25

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 47

3 earlier before families are notified, so that we can
4 activate and we can be ready to ensure that we are
5 like rounding the village to make sure that the
6 students and families are supported in terms of
7 educational needs.

8 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Chair Hanif, I want to
9 thank you for acknowledging that we are learning as
10 we go. And I want to give you just a very brief
11 example to you and Chair Joseph of something that
12 happened very recently. One of the big questions
13 that principals have is who do I call after hours?
14 What happens if a family is – and this isn't about
15 the 60-day rule, this is just in general. And so,
16 one of our principals in the Bronx; I get a call from
17 not the principal but I get a call from the CO of the
18 precinct and I was a principal and a superintendent
19 in the Bronx and so, lucky for me, I know a lot of
20 people very well. And so, I get a call at ten
21 o'clock at night and he says a family was just moved
22 out of their shelter. They don't know what to do.
23 They were evicted from their home and they're trying
24 to get to a shelter. They don't know how to go about
25 the process, so the story changed a couple times.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

48

First, it was they were evicted from the shelter then we found out they were evicted from the home etc..

So, I was able to connect with Flavia at about 10:45 at night and we were able to connect with the superintendent and the principal. We were able to get the family over to the proper site so that way they could make sure that they had a place to sleep at night. The principal was already aware that the family was in a very serious situation and reached out immediately to provide support. We continue to communicate with the family throughout the week, all of us. And so, I say this to say that yes, it is testing our infrastructure and yes, we are learning as we go but our biggest learning is that the level of communication has to improve from our central folks to our superintendents to our principals. And while that's one isolated story and I wish I could say that you know we have those same relationships with every single superintendent and principal, we don't. I've never claimed that this is a perfect operation but we do know that based on these relationships and the strengthening of this communication, we are able to answer that question. Who do I call? And so, if they have to call me, if

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

49

they have to call Flavia, if they have to call their
superintendent, they know that they can call us.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I appreciate that
you know I appreciate hearing the complexity of all
of this because that's what I understood when I heard
from some of the principals in my district, just the
constant chaos of receiving minimal information to
the needing to implement directives just being sort
of like, you know in process without any engagement
or feedback. And a big concern that has come up is
around transportation.

And so, I, I would like to understand if the DOE
is coordinating with H+H, emergency management and
DHS to ensure that families are being placed in
shelters close to their schools. Hearing some of the
shuffling, even though I know that the official 60-
day notice has not been enacted yet, hearing stories
of families needing to shuffle and the story I
uplifted in my testimony, you know folks living in
Park Slope now living in Jamaica Queens and then
needing to come to the school in Park Slope. That is
an outrageous; I mean, that is a day trip. It's like
going to Connecticut. It's not, it doesn't make any
sense for elementary aged students to make that trip.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

50

Can you share what the coordination is looking like and why is it that in these instances that we know about? Because we have had a history of serving students in temporary housing and the shuffling of families is not new. What are we doing right now to minimize that? How can we, you know, in this moment of learning, remove that practice of moving students so far that they can't get to their school and it's creating this cycle of absenteeism among other disruptions?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, before I pass it over to Flavia and we're also joined by our colleague from Office of Pupil Transportation Glenn Risbrook, I do want to say, we don't control movement unfortunately. We don't place students, however, what we do know is wherever they go, we have to comply with McKinney-Vento and they have a right to stay in their school and if they want to stay in their school, then we have to make sure that we are working in close coordination with OPT to make sure that the busing is available for the students.

But I'm going to pass it over to Flavia and Glenn.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

51

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, the one thing that

I will add very briefly before my colleague shares his piece is that what we have learned at least from previous years from working with the Department of Homeless Services, that in cases where this movement that's required right, although you know as much as possible, we continue to elevate that keeping families in their current shelter will be helpful. What the Department of Homeless Services have tried to do is really look at the youngest child's school setting and try to you know, especially because all of these families have multiple children. Try to then keep the families closest to that younger child location. So, part of what I have uplifted consistently upon learning around the implementation of this new policy is Melissa is absolutely correct, that we don't dictate or control where families are going to life. And emphasize what has previously worked and what we have you know tried as best as possible to do with the Department of Homeless Services. So, now that the uhm, emergency shelters are working through the 60 day and the movement and we really need to look at the youngest kids because as we all know for high school students have high

1 school choice. So, as a former principal in the
2 South Bronx, when most of my children came from the
3 South Bronx, there were others that chose to come to
4 my school from other locations. When it comes to
5 younger children, it's a little bit more challenging,
6 right? If we don't have them in their zone or their
7 closest school to the community. So, I think that's
8 like a best practice that we have at least uplifted
9 while we don't have ultimately control of where
10 they're going to be residing but Glenn can add more
11 in terms of like other work and other progress that
12 we have made to support transportation.
13

14 GLENN RISBROOK: Good morning everyone. Happy to
15 be here Chair Hanif, Chair Joseph. New York City
16 Public Schools is prioritizing transportation
17 services for all our students. The commitment
18 extends to our newly arrived students and families as
19 well. We recognize the vital role that
20 transportation plays in enabling students to attend
21 school regularly and have equal opportunities for
22 learning.

23 Our efforts are dedicated to providing reliable
24 transportation services to ensure that every student
25 can access their educational facilities without

hinderance. Whether it's through bus services, metro cards, or solutions for families facing transitional challenges, New York City Public Schools is committed to supporting our students in their educational journey.

This commitment reflects our dedication to equity, inclusivity, and education. We understand the diverse circumstances of our students might encounter and we strive to provide the necessary support to ensure that they have the best opportunity to thrive academically. To fulfill this commitment, New York City Public Schools will provide prepaid rideshare for eligible students in the event of a driver coverage issue or delay in routing assignments.

We will provide guidance and support to New York City Public School and shelter-based staff who can assist newly arrived families and families impacted by the 60 day notice to understanding their transportation options.

We will continue providing metro cards to eligible parents and guardians of students in temporary housing. To further illustrate how different things are now and how we're straining our

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

54

1 system. As of November 1, 2023, we have already
2 spent 43 percent more than an entire fiscal year of
3 2023 to meet the growing need. And 271 percent more
4 than fiscal year 2022 in providing parent metro
5 cards. Additionally, as we mentioned Floyd Bennett
6 Field and we know that that's the transportation
7 desert. It takes about 15 to 20 minutes to even walk
8 to the nearest bus station. We provided additional
9 coach bus services that run regularly that are
10 available to the families and it's providing
11 essential support to access local subways, bus
12 services and ensuring a seamless commute for our
13 students. That each bus that we provide from Coach
14 Services, it's about \$1,500 a bus and it's going to –
15 the cost estimate for the year will be about \$625,000
16 for the three buses that we are providing now.

17 This is the commitment that New York City Public
18 Schools is endeavoring to ensure that we can put
19 these families in the best position they can be for
20 transportation day. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you for that
22 information. Can you share how many families with
23 the school age kids are at Floyd Bennett Field?
24
25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

55

GLENN RISBROOK: I don't have that exact number.

Maybe some of my colleagues do.

FLAVIA UELLO PERDOMO: I don't have how many total families but I can say that since November 2018, when the families first arrived till yesterday, we have enrolled 195 children in New York City Public Schools. And you know I just want to double down and echo what Glenn said because literally we visited the site even before families were there. We went with the district team, my team, my students in temporary housing team in collaboration with enrollment and once we understood the distance between the location, the nearest bus, even if we had to do the yellow transportation and came back, it's kind of like it took only a week or less for his team to organize and create a whole new infrastructure of support for transportation at that location. That's unlike anything that we're doing at any other shelter to support that.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: I mean, it's heartbreaking for me to know that we have families with children and at a transportation desert location in the first place. That is excruciatingly — that's a hardship. Are you able to share with us who the city is

3 contracting with for the Coach buses? Is it MTA
4 buses or what's the?

5 GLENN RISBROOK: It's not MTA buses, it's Coach
6 private services. The exact name, I can get for you
7 in a moment.

8 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Okay because I'm just trying
9 to understand the \$1,500 cost you mentioned and if
10 that's like on the higher end versus is there you
11 know something we can to minimize for those costs.

12 GLENN RISBROOK: Any help that could be provided
13 by Council as well.

14 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: It would be great to know
15 which, you know which provider we're working with and
16 you know we've heard about a shortage of metro cards.
17 Can you elaborate on the allocation of metro cards
18 and why is it that you know some of colleagues have
19 heard and providers, community groups have heard
20 about the shortage of metro cards?

21 GLENN RISBROOK: Yes, early on in the school
22 year, there was a shortage of providing metro cards
23 to schools, shelters, alike. A lot of it was data
24 driven problems. Although such have been rectified,
25 all our shelters have the adequate number of metro
cards in our schools and we work closely with the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

57

shelter staff in meetings to determine the level of
metro cards that they do have on hand and what they
anticipate the future need would be to ensure that
there's an adequate number of metro cards at each
shelter in school.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Okay, that is good to know.
I will now pass it Chair Joseph. I have more
questions but we want to make sure everybody has an
opportunity to ask. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you Chair. Earlier
you testified about the importance of the FSF STH
wait but we understand schools aren't getting the STH
wait for any students in temporary housing who
enrolled in December of 2022. How in schools that
saw enrollment increases after December 2022 get
additional resources to help meet the needs of the
students in temporary housing? Can you talk to us
about that?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Yup, so we're taking a
hard look at that and making adjustments and we will
have additional information for you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And once you update the
data, you will be able to share that with the
Council?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

58

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Yup.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I have a question about —
you talked about earlier your six new ENL's on
transferred schools. But we're realizing the SAMs
that the schools only receive \$50,000 per school,
which is not enough to hire bilingual educator but
there's been no SAM for this year. Will the DOE be
issuing SAMS this year and how much funding would
each school receive?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We'll have to get back to
you about that. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: That was a question that you
guys were supposed to be able to answer. The other
questions, I'm saying you cannot but this one, you
should have been able to answer for me. And you know
I will be sending a letter for these questions to be
answered.

Can you also clarify the DOE in schools are not
actually being told which students to receive the 60-
day notice. So, New York City Public Schools doesn't
know which students will potentially need new bus
routes or new schools.

GLENN RISBROOK: Yes, well I can say for well,
let me just explain what the complexity is actually.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

59

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Please do.

GLENN RISBROOK: The students that are in well newly arriving New Yorkers are primarily in HERRC emergency shelters, which is governed by H+H and not DHS.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Hmm, hmm.

GLENN RISBROOK: For those students that are in DHS shelters, there's an automatic fee that we receive for the residences that they're in and if they leave that residence to go to another one, we have that sent to us automatically. Students are automatically routed onto stops that have been previously created and the time lag to have transportation started is short because of that or shorter because of that.

In the HERRCs shelters that is governed by H+H, there is no automated fee that we get. We have to uhm, we have staff at those shelters who work with families for them to submit an exception for transportation and walk them through that process and then that's set. That is entered in our portal online and then that's when the eligibility and routing of those students begin.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

60

So, as soon as we receive the information of where these students live or reside, that's when the transportation routing will begin for those students.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: How many students living in shelters are currently using prepaid rideshare?

GLENN RISBROOK: I will have to get that for you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Please do. How do families living in shelters without New York City Public STH coordinators know about rideshare? How does the word get out?

GLENN RISBROOK: Well, we work with again with the — that do not have shelter staff, is that the question you mentioned?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Correct.

GLENN RISBROOK: Yeah, I'm not aware of any shelter or residence that we're going to have either New York City Public School support services, a central team there or even shelter staff. We communicate with them. We have a point person for our shelter services that does help staff at these shelters when we are notified through escalations that there is a student that's waiting for transportation or that there is no bus service and then we go walk them through the rideshare process.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

61

3 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Chair, Flavia has additional
4 information.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Oh, I was coming back for
6 her. I was coming.

7 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: What I was going to
8 mention to add to what my colleagues had shared, so
9 unfortunately there are some shelters that do not
10 have —

11 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: That do not have STH
12 coordinators.

13 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Based staff. What we're
14 doing at this time, we recently received approval
15 from at OMB partners and we're going to be hiring
16 additional CBOs and temps to be able to creating
17 increased supports in the locations that we don't
18 have just to contextualize. As an example, we often
19 times talk about the 100 STH coordinators. 25 of
20 them who were paid from the Council that were added
21 in addition to the roughly 100 family workers that we
22 have but in total, we have over 363 shelters or
23 roughly around 200, 363. So, if you do the math, but
24 what we have done is really work to like triage and
25 look at like number of families that are in each of
the shelters where we see highest need. Obviously

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

62

paying a lot of close attention to locations like the Row, like Floyd Bennett. What I will add to what my colleagues share that I think out of something that could have been a potential negative situation, which was the possible strike that didn't happen the students and transportation team did a lot of intensive coaching and providing training to school based coordinators as well as other school-based staff, as well as my team so that we could be better you know versed on the rideshare activations. I think with that I'm going to lean into what my colleague has said, right? Like, ensuring the supports of students in temporary housing does not solely live with the shelter-based coordinators or with my teams. The responsibility of all of our New York City Public Schools and I think that's another area where we'll certainly will have to monitor very closely what happened but I think the key of the foundation is highlighting is that until we don't know or learn where families are going to actually live, we won't be able to activate the transportation that they need.

So, we know that the families at the Row received the notice. Depending on where they end up, is going

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

63

to determine what we need to do to ensure that they
have the appropriate transportation.

So, I think just first and foremost, ensuring
that all of those schools that are connected to that
area and the transportation coordinator at the school
level, are ready to fill out and support families to
understand the exception forms is like what's most
critical. Where a lot of them were trained as a
result of the potential strike that thankfully didn't
happen.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: How many vacancies do you
have?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: For the 100 coordinators,
so uh as of today, we have 98 out of the 100 staff.
I know every time.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Just getting better. It was
15 the last time.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: We connect and the two
that we have are unfortunately recently vacancies
that we have. We have somebody who moved out of
state and we have somebody who took a position that
was a promotion. So, we're now working to hire those
two. And similarly as you have highlighted and had
asked, as we're hiring our coordinators, well those

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

64

are not specifically labeled as bilingual positions.

We are really pushing to recruit bilingual staff as
we can to ensure that we can also cover those needs.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: We're also - I'm also very
concerned because 75 of those coordinators were
funded with federal dollars. Those dollars are
expiring, so what's the plan to make sure those
positions are continued funding? Because they were
needed before even before our new New Yorkers were
here, we needed STH Coordinators to make sure we're
navigating our students in temporary housing.

So, what's the plan to make sure that these
positions stay to provide the necessary services for
our students?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I think I will start by
saying Chair Joseph as you know that we have
multiple, critical, initiatives that are funded
through stimulus funds, right? That includes many of
the initiatives that the Council care for, right?
Community schools, early childhood and others. So, I
think when we're looking at planning, what we're
doing as an administration, as a school system is
really looking comprehensively at all of these
critical areas and pioneering with Council,

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

65

pioneering with our elected officials to ensure that there's a level of advocacy that is happening at the state level, right and from my entry point, what I have continued to do and elevate, is how critical these positions have been as you pointed it out, as we enter this transition and how critical they are, they are at now but I think that you know our financial team, our chief operating officer and chancellor, they're looking at all these vulnerable areas that we have considering the current physical climate. So, I will continue to be at the table, elevate the need, you know hopefully continue to work with you and continue to receive the support from Council for the current 25 that you're funding.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Walk me through Floyd Bennett Fields. How do you decide where you send the students to go to school and how are principals notified that the student from Floyd Bennett Field is coming to their school. Walk me through that please.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, we're going to pass it over to our Acting Chief of Enrollment Travonda Kelly. I will just start by saying really quickly that uhm, at our visits to Floyd Bennett Field, yesterday I met with the enrollment team and we were

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

66

uhm, just incredibly proud of the close coordination with H+H enrollment and our STH folks. I met with a young lady yesterday, she got here last week with her three siblings. They had a very difficult journey. They almost drowned. None of them can swim except for dad and dad was carrying two on the front and two on the back and being able to get them out of this very dangerous situation and she was very happy to tell us that she was starting school and she was excited. And she said, "I already know how to read and write." And so, she's real excited about that and so, I want to pass it over to talk about logistics. But I also want to just mention that at Floyd Bennett Field, spirit has not been broken among these families. The bedside manner of H+H and our staff is extremely compassionate and they are looking forward to their life here. So I thought that was important to share with you but Trevonda, would you please walk us through the logistics?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Give me one second. What's the age group of these students?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Uhm, so we're seeing a range. I don't have a breakdown of exact numbers but

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 67

3 the family I met with yesterday, they ranged from 8
4 all the way up to 16.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

6 TREVONDA KELLY: Good morning everyone.

7 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Good morning.

8 TREVONDA KELLY: I want to finish — I want to
9 continue the story that Melissa said, because I also
10 had a staff member tell me something very nice and
11 sweet. It was two boys who were in uh from Argentina
12 and they were the first time they was able to see the
13 snow, so they ran outside and they enjoyed that time.
14 So, you know that there's a lot of stress there at
15 that site but you know kids are definitely in the
16 greatest verse that they can be in. So, I just
17 wanted to add to that story.

18 To answer your question about staff, we do have
19 about three or four staff members at the Floyd
20 Bennett Field site and they have been there to
21 provide on the ground support enrolling students.
22 Prior to them being there, they have scoped out all
23 of the schools in the nearby areas in District 22,
24 District 17 and 18 to see where there was some
25 available seats. And so, they were proactive in
identifying those seats so then once, as they are

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

68

there at the site, they are able to quickly enroll kids into the schools. We also have worked very closely with District 22 superintendency so that they know what schools we're going to be placing kids in so that they can give the principals a heads up. So, we have already done a lot of proactive scouting the seats and then we also have been able to place those kids in those seats with the principals fully aware that kids will be coming to their shelters. And what we have learned is that about 100 and I believe the number is 166 students have already been attending school. So, we see that it's working.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: How do you inform the principal in terms of is given to them and what resources are there to support them? Because I visited one of the schools already.

TREVONDA KELLY: Okay, so what we do is we have a conversation with again, this is from the superintendency. They've been working directly with us, so they have, it's a direct relationship between our uh the director that we have at Floyd Bennett Field, so they are in constant communication, letting them know that we're sending kids. How many kids are coming to the schools and then we rely on them to

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

69

1 alert the principal so that they can provide the
2 sources – so that they can be provided with the
3 resources that they need to welcome those students.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: So, once they exit the Coach
6 bus, what's their next steps?

7 TREVONDA KELLY: Once they exit the Coach buses?

8 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Correct. What's their next
9 steps, right? So, you just drop them right by the
10 target and that's it?

11 TREVONDA KELLY: So, we're not dropping them
12 there but we –

13 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: That's one of the routes.

14 TREVONDA KELLY: The community is welcoming them
15 in because that's exactly our enrollment team, that's
16 what we do. We communicate with the principals so
17 that they can welcome the students into their school
18 community.

19 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Yeah, so the next step is
20 the Coach bus drops them off by the target. So,
21 what's the next step? What do they do? Do they take
22 the bus? Do they walk? What are the next steps?

23 GLENN RISBROOK: Yeah, these uhm, sorry Chair
24 Joseph. These students have metro cards to take
25 busing or a train from the HUB that they're dropped

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 70

3 off at. That's along the Flatbush area and also,
4 just to lift up that we're sitting here ready
5 prepared to provide busing into District 27 as well
6 as that is the nearest district going across the
7 bridge to provide transportation to students and
8 families in the transportation hubs and Far Rockaway
9 as well.

9 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And they know where to get
10 off the bus and all that instruction is given to them
11 and once they arrive at the school who provides
12 support for them?

13 GLENN RISBROOK: The school-based personnel
14 there, trained by OPT to how to handle those
15 particular situations. None of this — according to
16 the rules and as a matter of fact, I wanted to answer
17 you again Chair Hanif. It's Accord Bus is the Coach
18 Bus service.

19 In order for the child to use the bus, a parent
20 has to ride with —

21 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

22 GLENN RISBROOK: The child on the bus and they
23 will guide their child onto where they have to go.
24 They are provided metro cards as well.

25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

71

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And once they arrive at the school, how does the principal know that's the students coming from Floyd Bennett Field?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Chair Joseph, can I just jump in?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Please do.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, they get a 7:00 a.m. email. The principals get an email 7:00 a.m. daily with the names, numbers of students that they're receiving. That's the first step.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We also have an incredible STH coordinator at Floyd Bennett Field. She actually rides the bus with the families and she has been helping them to understand the neighborhood. So, our STH folks are working very closely with them. Not just putting them on a bus and saying -

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Make your way. See you when you get back.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: I would like to add, I was at Floyd Bennett Field as well and I actually have uhm I took a picture of how the staff their directs the families on where to go. After that, I went to

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

72

South Shore Campus and met with the four principals there who are receiving students and the superintendents, [01:19:54] and the Deputy and they are actively working with the families. The parent coordinator was there. He told me exactly what happens. How they support the students. How he is speaking to the families and where to go, the students, what are the best routes to get here. They're following up with the students. Again, I want to emphasize the role that schools are playing to ensure that our students are receiving the best attention possible.

It's a struggle, we understand that but schools are stepping up to the plate to ensure they are providing students welcoming and affirming environments.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you. I'll be back. Council Member Brewer. Let me acknowledge Council Member Feliz.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much. I have a couple questions. First of all, I do want to second those who are concerned about the 60 day. My question on that is the Row Hotel, I believe that will be the first. I know that even people to be -

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

73

I'm not mentioning any names but even people at the Department H+H are concerned about it. You don't know how many people of the 2,000 who are there are on that list. Is that a correct statement?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Council Member, my understanding is that all families who are currently there receive the notification but that's certainly something that we can check with Health + Hospital and clarify.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, number two was when the immigration groups and also Council Member Ayala met with the Chief of Staff to the Mayor, now maybe I wasn't in the room but she said that no child, no family that has a child in public school will be moved. Now I took that moved to be from the hotel. Do you know anything about that statement?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We do not.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, can you check it out? I will also but I believe that's what she said and it was understood that it meant from the hotel, not from the school. And the reason I'm concerned is I've spent a lot of time on buses. These buses, with all due respect, I know you work — they just don't show up. They don't show up for New York kids and

they're not going to show up for whatever you're moving these families. I don't know if it's lawsuits but we cannot move these families. It is so wrong on so many levels. I know you know that but I just want to make it really clear. People are so upset.

Do not move these families. That would be the number one thing to do for their future and for our city. I have two questions also. The washer/dryer, we're trying to get more washer/dryers. How many do you need? I believe you need washer/dryers in these schools. Do you have washer/dryers? Is this an issue for you? That's the question I have.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: We can connect with our Department of Facility to sectionally; a full list that they have of all the schools that have washer and dryer. What I can say at this moment is that a lot of the community schools that we support, that's something that we also have historically done and typically when a principal identify that they want to install a washer and dryer, I think the first thing that they do is connect with the school custodial and then from there, they connect with facility to make sure that they have the appropriate wiring and equipment. So, this is something that we have done

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

75

more and more and that we can continue to look into.

So, if you have any schools within your districts
that you want us to support, we're happy to do that.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, you know me, I know
how to do it but I'm just telling you, you need more.
Every single school should have a washer and dryer in
the City of New York.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Totally understood.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, as part of the work
that we're doing with gun violence prevention
taskforce and of course expanding support for Project
Open Arms, that has already been something on the
Chancellor's list and so, I just reached out to Kevin
Moran to ask me for the list of schools that have
washer and dryers.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I have the list also; in
case you need it.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Great, so we are looking
to expand.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright. In terms of
languages. I know the African Service Center is now
working with as a co-op with some of the African
languages. So, my question is, are the languages

3 that you don't have that you need and how are you
4 addressing that issue?

5 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: For the bilingual work,
6 the recruitment?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

8 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, because there's no
9 longer reciprocity with certification in other
10 countries, we are working very closely with
11 university partners to get Asturias in those
12 languages. We also have our homegrown program here
13 in the DOE for our Para's, for aspiring teachers and
14 so we know that those languages are especially
15 important, so we're targeting recruitment in those
16 areas.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, so you're working
18 with the African Service Center as an example. They
19 now have a co-op with different languages just in
20 case you don't know.

21 I'll just focus on the African dialects, many
22 which you do not have.

23 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: That is correct.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, absenteeism, do you
25 keep track of how many children in these asylum
seeker hotels are not getting to school and how are

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

77

you addressing it. Do you have some kind of
information along those lines?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, absolutely. Uhm I
think that is yet another example of how shelter
coordinator staff are critical because from the get
go, one of the first things that they every morning
when they get to their location is – the different
system that different shelters have. In some
instances, they have a sign out notice where they can
check the names of all the children and ensure that
they have come to schools. We also look at the daily
attendance that we are able to get from the school
register to ensure that kids are actually attending
and showing up and I am proud to say while there's
still significantly more work that we have to do that
we saw last year, a slight reduction in the number of
students in temporary housing that we're chronically
out, roughly about a four percent reduction.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Can you get that
information to the Committee so we have the updated
data on absenteeism?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, absolutely.
Actually I believe we have a public report or so that
we're going to be sharing but I know the Chancellor

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

78

has shared publicly that we went from having back in the 2021-2022 school year, 40 percent of the students as a whole have been chronically out to 36 percent, which is a four percent reduction citywide in terms of students in temporary housing. We also saw a similar four percent reduction, but we're happy to share any nuances of that data that you will like.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And then just finally, the issue is, on November 17th, the Comptroller sent to Chancellor Banks what he would think to be a different timeframe for counting the children in shelters, particular migrant. So, I don't think you should look at the letter because my understanding and I know that this may differ for others but the issue is there's more money available depending on how you count when children are enrolled.

And the issue is, we need as much money as possible. This will be state money, so we need as much money as possible or federal money but not city money. We need this money and so the question is, how can we change the date so that we end up with more money for these students? Do you know about this?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

79

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Our team is already
working on it.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Thank you very
much.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you Council Member
Brewer. Council Member Schulman.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Yes, thank you very
much and thank you to the Chairs for this important
hearing today. So, I'm going to go in a slightly
different direction. First I want to say that our
kids only get one chance at a good education and that
includes all of the migrant children coming here. As
Chair of the Health Committee, I'm concerned about
their health needs. So, as a result of their arduous
journeys, asylum seeking children may have trouble
getting acclimated to the new surroundings and have
health concerns due to inadequate medical care prior
to their arrival in the United States.

Migrant children may also experience exhaustion
from sleep deprivation that can be further compounded
by a lack of inconsistent long-term housing, proper
clothing for incremental weather and other
essentials. If a student experiences trauma,

3 exhaustion or anxiety are they still allowed access
4 to class and if not, what are the next steps?

5 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I can jump in. So, I
6 hear you and I agree and understand that access to a
7 quality education and support is critical for all our
8 migrant students and I think we sit here as an
9 example of that. As many of us arrive to this
10 country like myself as a 15-year-old. So, I wouldn't
11 want anything less than the opportunities that I have
12 for this generation and more. They wouldn't, they
13 shouldn't have to even struggle through the things
14 that I had to struggle.

15 So, not only do I hear you and understand you,
16 but that's part of my mission and my vision and what
17 keeps me going in this job and this opportunity that
18 I have that I know that is possible for me and I
19 expect so much for them.

20 In terms of the trauma and the support, what I
21 will start by saying is that the students in
22 temporary housing have 100 bridging the gap
23 coordinator. We originally started with 60 of them.
24 I'm thankful to Council support. Over the recent
25 years, we're able to increase it to 1,200 bridging
the gap coordinators that are concentrated in some of

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

81

our schools that have the highest number of students in temporary housing. So, that's one layer of support.

In addition to that as my colleague mentioned earlier, we stand proud that through the pandemic, through the support from Council, we were able to significantly increase the number of social workers in DOE schools, a little over 500 to now where we have a system where every school has access either to a social worker, a mental health clinic or a school counselor. I think for this population and from what I experience when I visit the shelter is really ensuring that we communicate and are clear with families that these supports are available. And in some instances working through the stigmas of what it means to gain access to mental health and support, we also because of the infrastructure that the city has put in place, as some of the shelters, for example the Row or even when you go to Floyd Bennett Field, there's actually health providers that are there and support the families with intake. You're absolutely right, through their journey here in some instances you have families that through multiple months have been getting access to proper appropriate health care

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

82

and mental health. When we think about the whole
child and all their needs.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: May I ask one more
question Chair? Thank you. Students may not know
typical American school custom such as breakfast,
lunch time routines, permission to use the restroom
and access to feminine hygiene products and given
language barriers, they may struggle to ask questions
about these topics. Can you describe the student
support provided for newly migrated students during
the first days of school? Are students provided with
a Paraprofessional to provide social/emotional
support?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, this is a multipart
response and so, we're going to start with our Chief
for Multilingual Learners to talk about what are some
of the instructional structures in place. Then we
also want to pass it over to Gillian Smith who owns
our work around mental health and working with our
social workers to give you a little bit more of a
response on that.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you Melissa. Part
of the work that we do at the division of
multilingual learners is work with parent

coordinators to help them create a team-based approach to supporting the whole child and we partner with our other divisions at DOE to ensure that we're providing New York City Public Schools our newest New Yorkers all the opportunity to ensure that they are successful. From the moment of the intake and throughout. I was a principal of an international schools, a school for ELLs for almost 16 years. So, we are very accustomed of doing this work with providing the families what they need but at the same time, working with that child and making them feel very welcome, not embarrassing them. Teachers know how to communicate with the students in providing all the opportunity that they need. So, from the instructional perspective, what happens in the school, we are working with staff, especially the schools who are new to this population.

But I'm going to pass it to my colleague Gillian, who does a lot of work in this area with our schools.

GILLIAN SMITH: Good morning everyone.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: Good morning.

GILLIAN SMITH: So, of course again thank you to City Council, we're able to have well over 5,000 social workers as well as guidance counselors and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

84

students have access either to a social worker, a counselor or school based mental health clinic within their schools. I think, not I think, a number of — the number of things that we've done is first doing professional development with our social workers, counselors and also with teachers and staff right, really talking about what does it mean to be culturally aware? What does it mean to be culturally responsive right? And so, in what Mirza was pointing to is being able to work with our families and not embarrass them. Ask them questions. Be able to have them come into the school communities and feel welcome but also feel okay asking and saying I don't know what this is. I don't know where to find this right. And really working with support staff so that they have that awareness. We have also partnered with Project Open Arms to give professional learning to staff, social workers and counselors so they not only understand where the resources are but they work on a multi-tiered system with support to make sure that there is universal services and supports for our new New Yorkers and that they are aware of it in a way that allows them to learn and be authentically compassionate right. This is not about just theory.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

85

This is moving theory to practice. We also have an essential based crisis team that works with the principals and the staff to assess the needs of the schools to assess that there are special needs for the students as far as supporting the families. And once we make those assessments then we also continue to work to gather additional support.

And finally, not finally, we're doing a lot more but we're also working with higher educational institutions to place intern social work interns within the schools with the most need and doing our best to see where we can offer bilingual services and with the interns also doing professional learning with them so they also understand about being conscionably aware, conscionably responsive, understanding school and understanding how to engage with our families.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: I would like to add an example and Chair Joseph was witness to this, we were at two schools on Monday and we have what we call dream squads and we work with the staff. We work with the parents and we work with the students. Because the students are the best advocates and these dream squads build a community of supporting the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

86

newly arrived students supporting each other. One of the students was talking about how he translates and he helps others to ensure that they feel welcome and they feel secure and he actually gave us the example of the pass, the bathroom pass. This is what you do when you need to go to the restroom.

So, that's part of the work that we're doing, ensuring that our schools are equipped. That they have a plan of action to supporting the newly arrived students and the students who have been here for a while to make, build agency for them to fill I can do this. I was here. I came — we saw a group of 10th graders and they were all talking about I started when I came here, I didn't know a word of English but now I am doing this and I'm doing that and I know that those kids are going places because now they feel in a welcoming and affirming environment where they have given the opportunity, not just to be recipients of information but be also part of that community.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: So, I just in closing, I just want to say one thing, I want to give a shout out to PS101 in my district. The 5th graders there took it upon themselves to ask their teachers which

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

87

school had the most migrants in their district at CEC 28, which was PS50. And they conducted a clothing drive and they actually brought the clothing to the school and they helped the kids pick it out and it was just so amazing and the Chancellor actually came and talked to the kids about that. So, I just wanted to share that. Thank you very much.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: It was an amazing experience.

COUNCIL MEMBER SCHULMAN: It was. It really was, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you Council Member. Uhm, just to piggy back off real quick, what's the plan to duplicate the dream squad and other schools that are needed. And also, international high schools are so important. I don't think New Yorkers even know about it and that's again, some of the things I think the New York City Public School should be doing in advertising these practices and we keep them a big secret and they should not be a secret.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you for that complex and great questions. Uhm, I'll start with Dream Squad came about during the pandemic because we were still receiving students and we wanted to ensure that

1 through the screen, students still felt welcomed and
2 that we had the staff that knew the policy, knew how
3 to still create welcoming and affirming environment
4 and also to ensure that the instruction was still
5 rigorous for all students. So, the plan is to
6 continue to develop this work. Uhm, we are working
7 on how that looks like post-pandemic and at the same
8 time, ensuring that we're building that within the
9 fabric of the schools.
10

11 In terms of the international schools, that they
12 are partners with us. We meet with the
13 Internationals Network and we assure actually, I'm
14 speaking in one of their events tomorrow. They are
15 partners in the work. My school was not part of the
16 International Network but I was also included in
17 decisions that were made because of the experience
18 that we have. So, we do include them. As a matter
19 of fact, the Internationals Network worked with us in
20 developing and providing support for the transfer,
21 the six transfer schools that we spoke about and we
22 did school visits peered. So, principals had the
23 opportunity to see the work real time work within
24 other transfer schools.
25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

89

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I want to add Chair

Joseph so you have shared that recommendation recently with us, so we have been partnering the students and temporary housing team with Superintendent Alan Cheng who supports the international schools. So, as recently as Saturday, November 18th, we actually did like an open house recruitment where we brought multiple international principals and leadership right to assign a shelter in Queens. So, I think part of it is that sense of awareness and the flyers but it's also how do you bring the supports closer to the shelter. So, we are thankful for the superintendent and his team who took a Saturday of their time and our shelter staff to do that and want to build upon having more example of this because it's really around unpacking all of the things that we have in a way that's accessible to families.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I know that we've answered this question quite a bit at this point but just to add one more piece Chair if it's okay. I think one of the interesting things that international schools does beyond the recognition for their excellent instruction, is the intake process with the families

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

90

and I know you recently visited Clairmont, near and dear to my heart but Elizabeth Demchak is a phenomenal principal and in speaking with her and other international principals— in principals and International Schools Network, what my team and I want to do is also talk about what does that family intake process look like? What are the questions that you are asking that a principal doesn't normally think of? When I visited Clairmont I was a Deputy Superintendent and I said wow, I really wish I would have connected with International school principals when I was a principal because this changed my way of thinking.

So, what we need to do is also take these amazing principals and really pull out the best practices at a very granular level and then share that. And so again, one of the things that Project Open Arms, our mighty team of three but with the support of everyone across the agency, what we plan on doing is really sharing these best practices so principals can tell their stories and share at the granular level.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: And I will add that that's exactly what this resource does and if we sent it out to the schools already and we took those best

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

91

practices of the internationals, actually the person who worked diligently on doing this was a teacher from the Internationals Network to ensure that principals know and they have case studies and they can see what would happen if I have this case, what do I do because we realize that while the international schools like mine, we had the experience of working with multiple students coming in at all times. Some schools don't have that experience.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you for that and it's very encouraging to hear about the peer-to-peer support that is happening and all the ways in which existing students are really opening up and making sure that their peers feel safe.

I want to go into knowing a little bit more about DOE's process for supporting schools with a sudden influx of students to onboard the necessary bilingual staff and teachers necessary and I'll just point out PS372, the children's school in my district has welcomed around 30 new asylum-seeking students over the past year with four arriving earlier this week and they've been waiting months to receive the funding they were promised to onboard an ENL teacher.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

92

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Can you repeat the number
of —?

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: 372, it's a children's
school.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Okay, so I will look into
that. That is not acceptable and not the norm.
There is an established appeal process in place and
if a school receives students and they need to open a
new classroom, the magic number is generally 15 but
that varies right. It might even be less than that
because if you only have — you know if you have two
ENL teachers or you have two bilingual teachers or
just one section of a particular class. It may even
be lower than that, which requires you to open an
additional classroom.

I say all this to say that the principal
immediately contact their budget director. That
budget director is supposed to do a needs assessment
with the academic policy point person. Why is this
important? We want to make sure that the program is
conducive to the influx of students. So, it's not
just saying, I need an additional teacher or I don't
need an additional teacher. We want someone to look
at the schools program and say well, you know what?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

93

This is pushing it. You do need an additional teacher or you do need an additional ENL teacher or maybe you don't. Let's shift this program.

Once that needs assessment happens, if a school needs their additional funding, they need their mid-year adjustment moved up, we issue that to them, that's not knew and so we want to make sure that schools are getting the money they need. So, I will personally check up on this and reach out to the principal and superintendent and then I will circle back with you.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I appreciate that and then just to build on that, can you share the approach DOE has to increasing the pipeline of bilingual teachers for our ELLs in schools?

MELISSA AVILES RAMOS: Absolutely. One of the things that we did this year, uhm, again, we spent a lot of time reflecting on last year and I think one of the things that we did was kind of rely on traditional pipelines and we said, "what can we do to be a little bit more creative?" And thanks to the UFT, we got together and went to NYCED and we said, "hey we have a bunch of teachers who have additional licenses. They have ENL licenses, they have

1 bilingual licenses. They are scared to work under
2 these secondary licenses because they have to restart
3 their tenure. Why should they have to restart their
4 tenure if they are already successfully tenured in
5 their primary license?
6

7 So, over 500 teachers have the opportunity to
8 work under those secondary licenses. If they secure
9 a position in that secondary license they are granted
10 automatic tenure. They also receive a 5,000 stipend.
11 And so, we're really proud of that. The additional
12 piece is that we're working really closely with our
13 university partners and this is something that we've
14 always done. But really targeting the languages.
15 So, as Council Member Brewer mentioned, everybody's
16 always talking about Spanish. We know that a lot of
17 our migrant students, they are speaking Spanish but
18 there are a number of languages that are being spoken
19 that are not Spanish. And we want to make sure that
20 we're diversifying our teaching population. So, that
21 is something that we continue to work on.

22 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I'd like to pass
23 it to Council Member Menin.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Thank you so much. I
25 actually have questions along the lines of what Chair

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

95

Hanif was asking about language access and for me,
it's personal. My mother came here as an immigrant
speaking very limited English, entered our city's
public school system which she found to be really a
very welcoming excepting place.

So, I just want to make sure I understand. So,
what exactly is the shortage of bilingual teachers?
If you could be very specific about the numbers. And
will the proposed PEGs further exacerbate the
situation?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I can get you the numbers
of uhm, the number of teachers we have by bilingual
license and ENL. The numbers that I have are pretty
old. They're from a couple of months ago, so I just
want to get the most up to date. I can get that for
you before the hearing ends. The second part of it
is, we have not made any cuts to highlight and so,
everything that has been cut is around underspent, so
vacancies, perception but we are not looking to cut
teaching positions. That has not been part of the
cut and so principals still have their budgets and
the way that they spend their budgets is up to them.
And so, if they want additional bilingual teachers,
they can post that vacancy and they can work with

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

96

their budget directors and their HR folks and they can bring in bilingual teachers. I will say this as a formal principal, one of the hesitancies that people had in posting bilingual teacher positions, is that there weren't a lot of bilingual teachers out there. So, they said, "why am I going to post a position, if I can't find a person?" But now, we are connecting our folks, our principals with our HR directors to give them lists of people who have the licenses and who are ready to work and so, now principals are you know they want to establish bilingual programs. Mirza's team has been amazing in opening transitional bilingual programs across the city and she can give better numbers but as this is a priority for this Administration even prior to the influx, we said "why is that there's this bilingual teacher shortage? Why do we not have more bilingual programs?" And the principal said, "if you give me a list of people who are looking for bilingual teaching positions, I will make the vacancy and I will interview them but I'm not going to set money aside if I don't think there's a bilingual teacher out there for me."

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

97

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, follow-up question.

You mentioned that the PEGs are not going to affect teachers. However, OMB ordered every agency to cut asylum seeker spending by 20 percent. How will that effect the agencies operations?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I am not part of the finance team. I do not want to speak in a way that doesn't do service to an answer. So, if you allow me, I will circle back with my colleagues and I will get you a better answer.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENIN: Okay, I think it's an incredibly important issue, like I think we need to as a Council know the answer to that question.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Understood.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you so much Council Member Menin. We'd like to hear now from Council Member Narcisse.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Great, good morning. Thank you Chairs. Uhm, Floyd Bennett Field, I represent the District 46 and Floyd Bennett Field is part of it. Before I start, I have to say thank you to the superintendent Bove and all the folks that have been involved to help me and my Chief of Staff

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

98

Saye and all the staff that have been putting our
head together to deal with the Floyd Bennett Field.

By the way, I am responsible from my
understanding that I am the one that put Floyd
Bennett Field to be a temporary housing of folks that
are coming. But having said that, I'm an immigrant
and I understand and came here at a late age to try
to do my best and I am very hopeful seeing you
sitting here to try to do your very best to
understand that we have to address issues for our
young folks and old folks who ever come to our shore.

So, having said that, we know that is temporary.
Those children will have to move. First I want to
know because I heard that by 190 student age group -

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I said 195.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: 195 and how many, I
think it's about 166 that's already enrolled from my
understanding. I heard it somewhere but we can come
back to that, so I was taking notes on that. But
having said that, how long - I mean what long term
educational plans are in place for the migrant
student over there to ensure the continuity of
academic growth and success? Particularly as they
transition from one place to the next? That's one of

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

99

my questions and the second one, I have a few I'm giving you so you have time to see how you're going to address them. Language, we talk about languages. How many languages that are being spoken over there right now and do we have a support system in there for those young folks? And uhm, answer those two because I have some very important one I want answers for. So three, four.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, I'm going to reiterate the number that I shared earlier. So, since the arrival of students in November 18, we have enrolled 195 students. I believe that what my colleagues shared was saying how many of them have attended and I want to echo also the 195 students includes students that were just registered in school yesterday and that number changes every day as we welcome new families. And I think Trevonda you shared?

TREVONDA KELLY: What I was sharing was how many kids arrived to school and so, we enroll them but then we also monitor when they actually show up to school. And so, that's an approximation and I can give a more specific number but that 195 is the students that we actually enrolled as they came to

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 100

3 one of our enrollment counselors and we actually
4 assigned them to a school.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, now I have a
6 question about — I heard someone mention South Shore.
7 So, I want to know what are the schools those young
8 folks are enrolled in? What are the schools besides
9 South Shore?

10 TREVONDA KELLY: So, I don't have the specific
11 schools but we are focusing on District 18 for our
12 high schoolers and then District 22 for our
13 kindergarten through middle school. So, the middle
14 school are placed in District 22 schools and the high
15 school. So, South Shore is one of the schools that
16 we have placed high schoolers in.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, I had an
18 experience yesterday with some of the students from
19 Floyd Bennett Field because I spent time with young
20 folks. Two of them, we had a project outside in the
21 parks and I realize their coats were not heavy. So,
22 whose responsible to help that transition? They come
23 from a different climate. Venezuela I think some of
24 them was from.

25 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, that's one of the
things that we notice the first day when we had

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

101

registered students, our staff, our STH staff that was inside when knocking on their door trying to figure out like hey, we haven't seen you come out and ride the bus, like you got to get to school. At that point, we work with the site manager at Health + Hospital. Our understanding is that all of the families there receive vouchers to be able to secure clothes that were donated but in addition to that, we're working with our partners. So, even the same Saturday 18, we had a big uhm annual banquet-coat donation that we did in partnership with the United Federation of Teachers. So, we're looking at coats that remain there, so that we can provide it to the families there. So, I think it's both the first line of supporting with the clothes happen with our partners at Health + Hospital but then also DOE works with schools and works with other partners to ensure that we can also support with providing similar donations to the families.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: I can give you the name of the schools in South Shore, Academy for Conservation and Environment, the Brooklyn Theater Arts High School, the Brooklyn Community High School for

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

102

Excellence and Equity, and uhm, Victory Collegiate
High School.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: So, that's in South
Shore but I'm saying other schools, all the schools
that the young folks are enrolled in.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: So, I was referencing that
campus.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, no but I'm saying
throughout the District 22 because the group that I
was with is 251 I think I was with yesterday.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: So, I think, I want to
echo what our colleague Trevonda shared and at the
same time emphasize how critical the partnership and
the support from Superintendent Julia Bove has been
because even before the students have arrived, she
had already worked with Stude in her team who is the
Executive Director to identify multiple schools
within proximity that have the vacancy. So,
following up this hearing, if you want the
specificity of where the younger children are going
in District 22, our enrollment team can provide it
but I also want to echo that these numbers are
changing daily because the site was recently opening
and every single day we're receiving new students.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

103

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Alright, so since it's temporary, how long are you anticipating that you're going to have young folks over there running around in Floyd Bennett Field? Because I heard someone mentioning about the snow yesterday. Yesterday was a little flake that coming right? But in Floyd Bennett Field, it is so cold and the environment, the transportation, everything else that makes it kind of not suitable but we have to do what we have to do, which I understand but how long you think that we can anticipate in having uhm folks in there?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, going back to the coats and the clothing, I know you're asking a multilayered question, so I apologize.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I do because they told me I'm responsible for Floyd Bennett Field, so I have to ask questions.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I totally understand.

COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: That's a joke, sorry. You probably don't know about it.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: No, no, I got the joke. Uhm, so one of the things that you might be aware of but for those who aren't, the families are receiving \$25 vouchers to Salvation Army and we have about

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

104

2 2,000 pairs of shoes arriving I want to say I think
3 it's in February. Yeah, they're coming in February.
4 Project Rousseau has been an amazing partner. I know
5 that's not soon enough, so we meet now. We started a
6 new meeting cadence with nonprofits and CBOs, so one
7 of the things that we talked about is adopting
8 districts in schools. And so, we are coordinating
9 clothing drives to drive brand new items. We're
10 stressing that we cannot have even gently used items
11 so that way we can make sure that we're getting those
12 resources to families immediately.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: By the way, I'm doing
14 one in December 9th but I was — the question was, how
15 long do you anticipate using the Floyd Bennett Field?
16 Is that a question you can answer?

17 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Unfortunately, we cannot
18 answer that.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: I realize that that's
20 why you did not answer it. But to say the least, I'm
21 going to do my very best like you're doing your very
22 best to make sure we support families. So I thank
23 you Chair for the extra time and let's do the best we
24 can for our families.

25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

105

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you so much. Council
Member Rivera.

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Hello. Good afternoon.
I just want to thank you for your commitment to our
children and families. We are clearly in crisis.
It's physical, it's mental, and we just know that
policies like the 60-day shelter stay limitation does
create instability, which is not your choice.

I realize that you know, many of us are here
because we're here to challenge the Mayor's move
because we think that it harms children ultimately
but you're doing what you can and I think you've
tried to lay that out as clearly as possible today.

So, I'm going to try to focus on logistics and
the tactics to ensure that continu- that continuity -
hold on a second. I have a baby at home, I'm going
through changes. To ensure continuity in education,
especially for those who may be shuffled around to
different housing arrangements and my colleagues
asked some great questions and I want to thank them.
Especially around bilingual teachers. So, can you
please describe - there was a mention of like a list
of those seeking bilingual education jobs. Alright,
so I'm trying to understand that. Can you please

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

106

1 describe the language barriers and gaps experienced
2 in our school and what are your latest efforts to add
3 capacity to address those gaps? And I ask because I
4 thought has the department hired or considered hiring
5 newly arrived asylum seekers with work permits and a
6 teaching background to support this need.
7

8 This is something even our community boards have
9 brought up to us and it's very frustrating because
10 you know you have the Spanish speaking students
11 walking around with tablets for translation services.
12 So, have you considered that? And you also mentioned
13 the non-Spanish languages right? The other languages
14 that are in our schools. And so how is translation
15 and interpretation provided on the non-DOE languages?
16 So, that's like Portuguese, some of those indigenous
17 dialects that we're hearing spoken in Mexico for
18 example. So, what additional language and counseling
19 services are provided to these students and what are
20 the costs associated with providing language and
21 educational services for immigration students? Are
22 these services included in the asylum seekers
23 spending assessments?

24 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, a lot of questions and
25 I apologize in advance if it's okay that we ask you

3 to help us in making sure we answer everything. We
4 will start by passing it over to Chief Mirza so that
5 way she can talk a little bit about what happens once
6 we have our teachers. Once our bilingual and ENL
7 teachers are there and how we support them.

8 Another distinction, this is something that I
9 really want to stress. We talk a lot about bilingual
10 teachers. We don't talk enough about bilingual and
11 multilingual staff. And so, we also are making sure
12 that we are recruiting sub para's and social workers
13 and other staff members because if a schools model is
14 ENL, English is a new language, that teacher is not
15 necessarily - that teacher could be monolingual and
16 is definitely not giving instruction in another
17 language. Students of multiple language are sitting
18 in front of them but what we do want to ensure is
19 there are staff members across the school who speak a
20 language that the student identifies with and who can
21 support them.

22 So, we are always careful in making that
23 distinction but I'm going to stop talking because
24 then I get on my soapbox and then I'm going to pass
25 it to Mirza.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

108

COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: Alright, well, I

appreciate that because the last thing I'll add is that I'm also concerned about like placements and working with the superintendents like on the lower east side for example, we have empty seats, we have services for Spanish speaking students and you mentioned in your testimony that you're committed to finding schools with available seats that offer supports to multilingual learners and we've actually approached your agency about trying to make those changes and accommodating those students in our own district. Empty seats, Spanish speaking staff, better environment. So, we'd like to see that happen sooner than later. Thank you for all your testimony today.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: So, I'll start. I guess I'll start with the instructional component and pass it over. Uh, thank you Melissa for highlighting uhm the fact that not every teacher in the classroom is going to speak the language. The home language of the student. However, teachers learn how to scaffold instruction. How to bring home language strategies into the classroom. How to use yes, they can use devices for translation, but more importantly, be

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

109

culturally and linguistically responsive by ensuring
that the environment we have created is able to allow
students to be themselves. I'm going to give you my
own example. I was a chemistry teacher who taught
students who spoke all kinds of languages in the
chemistry subject.

I did not speak French Creole, even though I feel
bad that I didn't. I did not speak Vietnamese. I
had all these other languages but I made sure that I
had created an environment that I scaffold
instruction. That I was able to provide students
opportunities for them to bring their own languages
in. I can only translate in Spanish. So, those are
some of the learnings that our division provides
teachers. There's a lot of professional learning.
There's a lot of resources that we provide for
teachers to be able to access and be able to provide
high-level, high-quality instruction in one language
but at the same time, provide different entry points
for students to be able to access the information in
their own language. So, we call that scaffolding.
But at the same time, there are other resources that
we provide and we have and I've said this before, we
have office hours, we have resources from our

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

110

division. We can sit with that teacher and we also provide, on a monthly basis, professional learning for the superintendents team working with multilingual learners, so they in turn can support schools. So, that's some of the work that we do and we have webinars that teachers, new teachers can access at a different time and professional learning that we provide. I'll stop there for instruction then come back. I'll pass it to enrollment.

TREVONDA KELLY: Okay thank you. In response to your concerns about seats available in District 1. It is, can you hear me? Okay. We work very closely with the superintendents to identify seats in their districts because they are the experts as far as where we should place kids and the resources that they have available at their schools. In terms of District 1, we've been working closely with the superintendent but we have also been working with the superintendents in District 2 as well. And so, we'll continue to explore seating availability and just make sure that we're making placements equitably and we consider all factors when we are placing kids.

KLEBER PALMA: Hello, Good afternoon. I'm here to talk about language access and translation and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

111

interpretation support which I see as an additional layer to everything my colleague has just mentioned right now about having staff and teaching bilingual teachers and so forth and staff also being able to support in additional languages. In addition to all of that, the Office of Language Access supports the system as best we can since it's so diverse in so many languages. Provide translation support proactively in the nine covered languages, provide interpretation both remotely and in person. Over-the-phone services are available to school staff in over 240 different languages.

We know also that there are pockets of communities that speak languages that go beyond the nine that we called covered languages. So, we acknowledge that and we also want to make sure that our partners that we work with, vendors are able to provide that support beyond what our staff is able to do. There's a huge increase in the usage of over-the-phone interpretation support and that's been something we've been leaning on heavily because of the on-demand nature of that service and how easy it is and accessible.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

112

But the other piece here is not just having these services but making sure that staff is aware of them, right? And we are doing a lot more in terms of training staff, raising awareness at the school level, district level to ensure that folks know what services are available and how to access them. Also, that schools receive additional funding for this purpose as well to help them with those language gaps that we at central can't provide proactively with the nine languages. So, we continue to do that work. There's always more, new horizons to overcome with new languages that appear every single year. We try to work with our vendors to ensure that there are resources available to support those needs. I heard African dialects earlier today and there's languages in Latin America as well, that there aren't professional interpreters out there to provide that support and we're working to make sure that we make use of immigrants that come in and see whether or not there is a profession, a possible profession for these folks. It is an industry that has been in the shadows for far too long because it is a professional industry and one can be a professional interpreter in many different languages and that's something that

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 113

3 we're trying to highlight with our communities and
4 also the community partners.

5 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. Council Member
6 Narcisse had a comment.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Okay, I just want when
8 I said December 9th, I'm doing a codrive in clothes
9 and different shoes for those, for everyone from my
10 shelters and as well as the Floyd Bennett Field. So,
11 I'm going to be there to talk to them and see who
12 wants to come. Thank you Chair.

13 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We would love to partner
14 with you Council Member if that's okay. May we
15 contact your staff to partner?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: Oh yeah, sure.

17 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: That would be great.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER NARCISSE: The more the marrier
19 because we need the support. Thanks. Thank you
20 Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. Council Member
22 Sanchez.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you so much Chairs
24 for this important hearing and thank you to the
25 Administration for being here to testify. I just
want to join in my colleagues comments you know

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

114

1 talking and just condemning the 60-day rule,
2 especially its application to families. It's not
3 what we should be doing as a city but understanding
4 as staff in the agency, this is the hand that you
5 were dealt. Thank you for your responses so far.

6 So, it strikes me that at least part of the
7 problem that we're having in accommodating the influx
8 of English Language Learners in the Department is an
9 undervaluing of multilingualism and I know I'm
10 preaching to the choir and it's not you that
11 undervalues this. But I want to just understand a
12 little bit about the Departments approach to
13 multilingualism, right. So, I understand that
14 between 2022 and 2023 of ELLs, roughly almost 80
15 percent were in transitional bilingual education
16 right. So, once they feel comfortable with English,
17 uh would start feeling comfortable with English,
18 they'll transition to full time English and fewer
19 than eight percent or fewer than nine percent were in
20 dual language bilingual education programs, which
21 just strikes me as a missed opportunity to promote
22 multilingualism in the City of New York, just given
23 its value.
24
25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

115

So, can you uhm, two data point questions and then an approach of the department question. What number and percentage of overall New York City students just for the record are ELL students? What percentage of New York City students are served, not just the ELL students but of the entire population of New York City students are in dual language, bilingual education programs, and just again given the power of multilingualism for any individuals future and economic future in the U.S.. How is the department approaching the expansion of multilingual education?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Council Member, thank you so much for that question. We believe in multilingualism because it is a power. And what we are working towards is how we bring actually multilingualism for all but for now, we have been working in opening more bilingual programs. As a matter of fact, we have one in five ELLs are now in a bilingual program. That wasn't the case before. We are increasing. Last year we opened 33 programs new bilingual programs, dual language or transitional bilingual programs. And this year, we are supporting 44 new bilingual programs. The goal is to increase

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

116

as many programs as possible. Bilingual education is the default, uhm so every family who ask for children's are identified as being ELLs. And if the family asks for a bilingual program, they should have the right to access a bilingual program that provides high quality education and that students are able to develop English, you know receive strong content instruction and at the same time, develop their heritage language and not lose it, right. We have that issue that we don't want that to continue to happen.

So, so far, uhm we have increased the numbers. We have 557 bilingual programs in the city. I don't have the numbers of actual students in those programs. We'll see if we can get you that number. We do have 80 percent of our students are in ENL, English as a new language program. But what we've done and the city has done is to ensure that even in those programs, home language is leveraged. So, that student is still using their greatest asset, which is you know the language they bring from home.

So, that's part of the work that we've been doing, this Administration really focused on ensuring that we, that ELLs were at the center of this work.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

117

1 So, we have a project called Revitalizing Bilingual
2 Education. Part of this work is not just to open
3 bilingual programs. It's to ensure that those who
4 existing programs are strong, our strength. So,
5 we're part of New York City Reads with part, we sit
6 at the table to ensure that the decisions that are
7 being made are supporting ELLs and that their English
8 instruction, the reading and their home language
9 instruction is considered.
10

11 We are working to developing even more culturally
12 and linguistically responsive curricula to ensure
13 that all of our students can access their home
14 language and have strong instruction.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Thank you. Chair, if I
16 may, I just wanted to ask an unrelated question,
17 hopefully quickly. In the previous testimony by HPD
18 in June, we heard that there were 300 to 400 families
19 that were housed in downstate hotels. I just want to
20 understand if the department is working to support
21 those children's education and what we know about
22 them.

23 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Are you referring to the
24 families using the HANYC vouchers? The 28-day
25 vouchers?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

118

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: I'm not sure. This is
families that are being relocated by HPD to upstate.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We are working closely
with HPD, yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay and what supports
are you providing to the children, school aged
children in downstate facilities?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: I just, I want to make
sure I'm understanding because there are a couple
things. So, you're talking about, there are the
students who are in hotels here, right?

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: No, I'm talking about
students who are - I'm talking about families who are
outside of New York City that HPD has placed outside
of New York City and what supports the Department is
providing to those children outside of New York City.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, we are working closely
with the school districts, direct supports. Mostly
the supports are coming from their actual school
districts but we are working with the school
districts to share our best practices and what we are
doing here in the city but that's what I can share at
this time.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

119

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay, so just to make sure that I understand, the Department is not working – the Department of Education is not working with these families. That you are leaving it to the district where they are, in the school district where they are.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Where they're going, yes. If they are not enrolled in our school system, then we don't have the touchpoint with them but we are working with the school districts that are receiving them.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay, I think it would be good to understand a little bit more of what you are doing to support and what you're hearing to make sure that you know we're accounting for all children.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We can totally follow up with you and give you a more detailed overview of what that looks like.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANCHEZ: Okay, thank you for your responses. Thank you Chairs.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'm going to follow up real quick with the question Council Member Sanchez. The news report indicate that about – that's under the program 371 households that were staying in 14 hotels

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 120

3 on a 28 day stay in October. How has the DOE been
4 supporting hundreds of households who are moving from
5 borough to borough? That's a follow up on Council
6 Member Sanchez's question.

7 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, now you're talking
8 about the 28 day, the HANYC vouchers right, yes?

9 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Correct.

10 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, the HANYC voucher is
11 definitely, it has been uh it's a challenge. I'm not
12 going to say that it isn't. Uhm, because since
13 they're not DHS, the same services are not there and
14 I will pass it to Flavia but when we immediately
15 found out about this, our team and City Hall were
16 talking about how do we share information? How do we
17 make sure that our STH coordinators and our
18 enrollment folks are setting up shop so that way we
19 have access to those families? In many cases, we
20 also opened up Saturday office hours, so our
21 enrollment folks were made available to target those
22 families in particular. But I will pass it over to
23 Flavia.

24 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, what I will add to
25 that is, to the best of our ability, we have been
training the HANYC hotel just like we treat our

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

121

partnership with Health + Hospitals. So, HANYC as of today, and that's because these numbers continue to evolve as the number of hotels open, closed or move. There are 16 hotels and roughly around 500 students as I'm aware, school-aged children.

So, part of what we do there is work with families to ensure that they understand what the schools within their son are. That we support with enrollment processes. They are staying and residing within the area and enrolling, so we wouldn't necessarily treat them much differently than what we have treated our HERRC's Hotel in terms of the supports that we coordinate. It's just some level of limitation because of how on quickly on average is a 20 day stay that families have at this location.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Would you be able to send us a list of where these students are staying?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Meaning a list of the hotels?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: The hotels.

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: We will be happy to connect with our colleagues so that they could share as of today and if it changes, what the current hotels that are considered HANYC are yeah.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

122

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'm going to pivot quickly
over to Council Member Brewer and I'll come back with
some questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you. I just wanted
to point out like everybody else, that so many people
are doing a lot of work. Mona Oradea(SP?) is PS87.
The parents, they're working with JCC and Ruth's
messenger and it is an amazing effort combined with
what you're doing to get the clothing and the support
and I just want to say, you help but these volunteer
groups are phenomenal.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you Council Member.
We know that some schools were understaffed after the
pandemic. We're not providing all of the ELLs with
their mandated minutes of English as a new language
per week. How does the DOE keep track of each school
compliance with ENL mandates and how is the DOE
addressing instances where schools are not providing
the requisite number of ENL minutes for their
students?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: I can take that question.
Thank you. But before that, can I get the numbers
and to a language.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

123

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Hmm, hmm.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: 16,339 in transition of bilingual education program and 13,990 served in two language programs. Thank you. Thank you for that question. As you know, the state has very clear mandates of what the services that our multilingual learners who are English Language Learners should receive. Our office monitors daily where students are and works with the district officers. I'm drawing a blank of the name because it's a little later already. Uhm, but uhm to ensure that they are looking at the data, we work with uhm the superintendents and give them weekly reports on where those students are and we also have great partners. We have the UFT that keeps us in check to ensure that we are providing the services to our schools. But part of the work and what we've learned is that schools really want to do what's best for students, sometimes they just don't know how.

So, part of the work that we do is to ensure that we are providing the learning. There is a policy guide that goes out every year. There's a report that goes to schools every month. I used to receive it as a principal and check where are my numbers and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

124

ensuring that the superintendents are on top of things. Because it's not about the compliance. It's really about the services, so we want to ensure that uh, schools know what they need to do and also be able to provide the services to the child but that is the number of minutes to ensure that they're in the right classes. Ensure that students were screened, were tested and they're getting ready for [INAUDIBLE 02:20:02]. We just put the instruction out you know, this is coming. So, that's part of the monitoring that we do in our office.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: So, you say the compliance is not important?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I think you need to correct that on the record.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Let me be clear.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Yes, please.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Compliance is not — it's important but some folks see it's just a compliance. What I'm seeing is, is a service. That child not being in the right class, we're preventing that child from getting the right services. So, it's not just a

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

125

checkbox. It's really about the need for that student to be in the classroom to be receiving those services. So, we see compliance as the service that we provide students. Yes, compliance is extremely important.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And what do you do when you do find a school that's out of compliance? What support do you provide for the schools?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Absolutely. We work directly with the superintendents team, that they go work with the school. They work with ENL coordinator, the bilingual coordinator, the teacher. Sometimes they just need support operationally, how to operationalize the work, so we provide that support. Sometimes our team has gone to the school themselves and be able to help that school.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And if the school doesn't have an ENL Coordinator?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: So, the district office is responsible to ensuring that work happens. That child needs the services. Even if the school doesn't have the ENL coordinator and I know that uhm, not all schools have an ENL coordinator but bottom line, the principal if a school is responsible to ensure that

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

126

every single student is receiving the services that they need to be successful.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Chair, I just want to add in, uhm, just something from the leadership perspective. Under the previous administration, the structure was you had a superintendent with a very small team and then you had these borough-based offices that had the instructional coaches and they provided support. And so, if I'm an instructional coach, if I am an ENL district support person and I'm coming into Principal Ramo's school and Principal Ramos does not necessarily value multilingualism or ENL or bilingual programming, then you tell me that I'm not compliant. I check a box. I make sure I'm compliant and I send that person on their way, because I can't be bothered. I'm a principal. I have things to do.

We as an administration made sure that when we gave Superintendents autonomy, we equipped them with a team that they direct, so there is supervision tied to supports. And so, to answer your question for the Ms. Ramos who doesn't necessarily value and is just trying to make sure she's compliant or maybe she's tenured and she doesn't feel like she even needs to

be compliant. The superintendent now steps in and says, this is a nonnegotiable. Not only will you be compliant but you will also make sure this is a quality program. And so, this is why the restructuring of the superintendents team and giving them the folks on their actual team so they can supervise them was so important.

Mirza's team trained our ENL coordinators and equipped them and our teachers with the instructional resources. But let's be honest, sometimes it means that the leader needs to step in and say, this is a priority, make it happen. And so, that is what's happening on the superintendents' teams.

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: And the name of the person came back to me is the ELL Service Administrator, and this is a person whose sole job is to ensure that every single school is providing the services to their students. We also have and this is part of the restructuring, the M-E-S-A or they call MESA is the multilingual English Language Learners Service Administrator and they focus on the instruction. And the beauty of this is that they're now part of the superintendents instructional team because every teacher is a teacher of ELLs.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

128

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Absolutely. Let's talk about our students that are ENL and also have disabilities. What is New York City Public Schools doing to remind schools of their duty under the federal law to identify students who may have special needs? Create comparable services and an education plan and provide evaluation and create IEPs as quickly. One of the things I saw is that the parents didn't know where to go especially on new arrivals. I visited a hotel; they didn't know where to go. They didn't know who to talk to, so I think that message needs to get out to the hotels. To the HERRC's, to the shelters and let them know that they can find an SPSD team or someone. What's the process to put in for an evaluation for their child?

JOHN HAMMER: Well Chair Joseph, thank you for that question and thank you for your advocacy of students with disabilities that are English Language Learners and newly arriving to New York City. You know we know that we have work to do to ensure that every family feels fully supported through the IEP process and that every student is fully receiving their recommended programs and services, we're tremendously proud of the work that our school

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

129

building leaders, our school psychologists or related service providers, our special education teachers, our social workers, have done to respond to this need.

We completely agree with everything you've shared around how important it is to get supports and services to students as quickly as possible and our goal is for students to receive the intervention and instruction that they require, whether or not they are eligible for an IEP. So, to ensure the students receive the help that they need as quickly as possible, we have shared messages for the past about two years through Principals Digest to clarify that English Language Learner status must not be used to discourage a parent from making an initial referral. A school from a school referral from a student suspected as having a disability. And at all parent referrals for Special Education must be processed immediately.

This guidance also clarifies that interim supports through a comparable service plan must be developed and provided immediately while the initial evaluation is being completed. If the family provides a non-DOE IEP or equivalent from their home

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

130

country, or if the parent self-reports information
regarding a student's disability.

After that, bilingual evaluation is conducted.
The IEP team will meet and review and consider
previous instruction in reading and math, as well as
the impact of limited English proficiency so that
students are not over identified for special
education.

This content was also shared with our
Superintendents teams to ensure that they are fully
aware. Our supervisors, school psychologists, and
our Committees on special education this September,
the start of school.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And our preschoolers are
also given the same curtesy?

JOHN HAMMER: Yeah, absolutely, I think we have
seen strong collaboration between our family welcome
centers, our Committees on Special Education, our
Committees on Preschool Special Education to ensure
that families that require, families of preschoolers
that require supports, are able to access their CPSE
and begin that process.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 131

3 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'll be sending a location
4 over to you where some families need some support.
5 Council Member Hanif.

6 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I want to come
7 back to absences and understanding what happens when
8 asylum seeker students are absent? Who does DOE
9 contact living in the shelter, students who are
10 living in the shelters, when they're absent and if
11 they've been moved to a different shelter, how does
12 DOE get in contact with the new location?

13 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Absolutely, happy to
14 address that. So, I think the first layer at the
15 shelter is leaning on the shelter-based coordinators
16 that are on site because they can have direct contact
17 with the families there. So, we don't even have to
18 wait until the next day. Once the coordinators see
19 the report and are able to see who was absent for the
20 day, we can begin the process of like understanding
21 why was the child out, uhm making sure that they are
22 aware of like the implications of chronic absentees
23 and are really demystifying that. Because I think
24 when we speak about what chronically absent means,
25 what it means is a student is absent ten percent of
the time. So, within a month, if let's say you

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

132

started a full month of September, you were absent two days, your chronically absent for that month. That doesn't necessarily make you chronically absent for the year. So, in addition to leveraging the shelter-based coordinators and the supports that we do there is really leaning on school staff and all the different data systems that we have. So, on a daily basis, we send a report to all of the superintendents highlighting all of the students who are absent, and the attendance percentages for each of their school. If any of their schools didn't scan the attendance rosters for the day. Similarly to what my colleague had mentioned, we uhm, in a way for a lack of a better term decentralize a little bit the way that we look at attendance support. So, each of the superintendents teams now have an attendance coordinator within their team, which is new. We used to have nine of them citywide supporting attendance policies and practice. And in addition to that through our partnership and collaboration with the UFT, we were able to move the attendance teachers that were connected to the field-based structures into superintendents teams. So, now superintendents are the direct supervisors of the central attendance

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

133

1 teachers. There schools that may elect to you know
2 to hire attendance teachers out of their own budget
3 but we also have a number of attendance teachers
4 citywide that when a school has through their
5 committee, like initiated supports or out of reach
6 and they are not able to locate families, these are
7 the people that are also in addition to our shelter
8 coordinators are deployed to the communities to visit
9 the shelter or to investigate and to find out where
10 the children are.
11

12 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: And those are you said the
13 attendance?

14 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: We have attendance
15 teachers citywide, yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON SANCHEZ: Who are working with the
17 coordinators.

18 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: They work with the
19 Superintendents team, with the district coordinators,
20 but they work supporting a subset of schools. So,
21 the whole idea is that every school should have an
22 active attendance committee that's looking at
23 attendance overall but absolutely paying attention to
24 targeted pollutions that we know that have struggled
25 in terms of attendance and our students in temporary

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

134

housing being one of them. So, I think the short answer is really like activating all of those infrastructures that I mentioned, making sure that we're providing data daily. You can wait to figure out Friday that a child was absent on Monday and that's something that we have been able to do a lot more effectively over the last couple of years with some of the new ways in which we do attendance reporting on a daily basis but I think also beyond that is really understanding what are the reasons why children are not attending. So, I provided the example earlier what happened during the first couple of days of Floyd Bennett Field when our staff member, the day they all started knocking on doors because she noticed that children weren't getting on the bus to go to school and they weren't getting on the bus because they didn't have the winter coat.

So, right at that moment, we were able to intervene and provide the supports and those were students that otherwise would have been absent right and it's really understanding that while children are out, it's complex. There's many reasons and sometimes there's simple barriers that we can support

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 135

3 and remove and make it a little easier for families
4 and ultimately see improvements in attendance.

5 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I wanted to get
6 clarity on a number that was shared with us earlier
7 on absenteeism among children of asylum seekers. You
8 had mentioned that there was a four percent decrease
9 on chronic absenteeism. Is that for students in
10 temporary housing or is that for students overall?

11 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: That is for students in
12 temporary housing overall for the prior school year,
13 the school year 2022-2023.

14 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Okay.

15 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Because as an
16 organization, we don't necessarily like track
17 immigration of origin. It's not like we track to say
18 like, x number of students who are asylum seekers, so
19 but I do track the number of students who are in
20 temporary housing who are you know chronically absent
21 the same way that I track the students, the number of
22 students in foster care and other population that
23 we're looking to make improvement and make an impact.

24 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: And then what steps are taken
25 to ensure that an undo ACS case isn't opened against
a parent whose child accrues absences?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

136

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: So, I think that the first thing that I will add is that we work in coordination and partnership with our colleague here, from the Office of Safety and Youth Development and her liaison who we have somebody who is a liaison from the DOE with ACS. But in addition to that, that a lot of the guidelines that we have at the state level are very clear that we as a school system are responsible for mitigating and helping support the barriers for while a child is not attending. So, like before we even get to that, it's like really understanding what is preventing that child from coming to school? What are we doing to support so that that child can actually come to school and that we're taking all measures to be prevented and supported rather than you know opening a case as you're saying.

So, the mandated school liaisons are also trained on a yearly basis in New York City Department of Education. And also, we do partnership with our liaison to ensure that shelter staff and others are aware of like what our responsibilities are and that we're not in any circumstance leveraging opening a case for a family who is just struggling for one

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 137

3 reason or another because they're lacking resources
4 or there's like a legitimate reason why that child is
5 not able to attend school in a particular time.

6 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Are there open cases with ACS
7 now and if so, what are the reasons?

8 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I personally can't speak
9 to open cases that exist within ACS now. That's
10 something that we can look into and clarify in terms
11 of aggregate number and information obviously without
12 compromising anybody's privacy but that's something
13 that we can look into and it will vary. I don't know
14 that we will necessarily be able to say immediately
15 this is because of a neglect versus other
16 circumstances.

17 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Sure.

18 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Because the Department of
19 Education staff is mandated reporters.

20 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Totally, totally, would you
21 say that uhm, you have seen an increase or are there
22 cases involving ACS with asylum seeker families?

23 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I don't -- I mean, I don't
24 know if you're asking specifically about attendance
25 or in general. I personally haven't been notified of
particularly recent cases that have been open. What

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

138

I will say specifically because of the pandemic and because of advocacy from the Council, advocacy from a lot of the partners that we had, we spent a significant amount of time as an agency really working to ensure the school staff and everyone was really taking a supportive stand to family and also like working in partnership with ACS so that people understand that ACS also has an arm that is around support services and prevention that often times doesn't even get tapped because families are not aware.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. Does the DOE proactively inform families that are being subjected to the 60-day rule regarding their rights under the McKinney-Vento Act?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Uhm, we do and I think that's part of the reason why I emphasize the 60-day letters that we share with superintendents and we share with principals as well. And one of the things that specifically called out in that letter is that families have the right to remain in their school. And it's also part of the training that we're doing in partnership with our faith team that supports family and supports parent coordinator, so that you

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

139

1 know, I don't want to say that one email and one
2 training is enough. It's something that we have to
3 continue to double down and continue to just
4 understand what's emerging as this policy is
5 implemented, so that we can then make sure that right
6 at the moment, we are addressing the needs of
7 families.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So, letters are shared with
10 superintendents and principals and then do they send
11 a notice to the families who might get impacted in
12 addition to that or no?

13 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We don't send letters
14 regarding placements. That doesn't happen within the
15 DOE. Our purpose for the letters was to give the
16 superintendents, the principal the heads up that this
17 is happening and that they are going to see movement
18 and they might have some families who are absent or
19 they might have some families who are in transition.
20 And so, this is a way of telling them, get a head of
21 it. You know who your kids are. They are just about
22 to get these notices. So, we don't expect them or
23 even us to have a say in the 60-day notice aspect.
24 We're beyond that.
25

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

140

Our opinions, our feelings, at this point, it's about operationalizing it and making sure that principals and superintendents have a heads up and that they are activating accordingly to support those children. Uhm, we are also working on a data sharing agreement with H+H, so that way we can share data to the families more freely. We want to make sure that as well intentioned as we are, children and their families are their identities are protected. And so, these data sharing agreements are very important, so that way we have the right guardrails for sharing information but I'll give you a specific reason why. If I know that a group of children are -- that they've gotten the notices and maybe one of the families has decided to move out of the city, if there's no data sharing agreement, H+H is not at liberty to give me that information. That very specific information that then we can share at the school level.

So, we're telling the schools, you know your kids. Meet with these families, meet with the students, keep us posted but we don't have a formal mechanism in place to say, "hey, Flavia's family got the notice and she you know, that they're at day 28 and they're going to be moving soon." We don't have

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

141

that and so, legally you know we've made a lot of
strides in terms of reaching that agreement. We
expect that agreement to be finalized before the new
year but it is a key piece to us being able to ramp
up that proactive part you know on our side.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: So, the notices that families
receive at the shelter and then the principals and
superintendents receiving the notice from DOE, both
of these notices clarify that the family can decide
to keep their student. That under this federal law
that they have the liberty to stay at the school.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: That's right and a big
part of it is reminding our parent coordinators and
our school leaders that they are responsible for
having those conversations with families as well.

So, again as we've said in previous hearings, it
is not enough to just issue literature, right? What
are the conversations happening with families to let
them know, you have the right to stay here. If you
want to go, we will make sure that enrollment helps
you find a school that is appropriate and doesn't
pose travel hardship. However, if you want to stay
here, no one is telling you you have to leave.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

142

A family needs to hear that from the school.

It's not enough to hear it from us. I need to know that I'm still welcome in this community and not only that I'm welcome, that I have the right to stay here if I want to.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: And then what about the rest of the school community? Like is there a more centralized notice outside of sort of reading these headlines. I was at a CEC 15 meeting last night where they might be moving to pass a Resolution on their thoughts about the 60-day rule. How is the broader school community being informed? How are you all working with the PTA's, our CEC's and all of the other stuff that's of parent leaders?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: And I'll let my colleagues jump in but again, this goes back to us meeting with division of school leadership on a regular basis and really encouraging and expecting superintendents and principals to establish that communication protocol within their schools. We don't standardize the process because every school community looks very different and we want to make sure that principals have autonomy to establish those protocols in a way that suits their communities. But we are very clear

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

143

about the expectation that if there's anything we've learned, this is not one person's role. This is a school community effort and so, those students teachers should be notified. Social workers should be activated. Schools counselors should be activated and so, that's setting the expectation and then making sure that that superintendents are supporting principals to activate accordingly.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: And uhm, I just want to reiterate to folks who are tuned in, who are here, that the 60-day rule currently applies to families with children at the HERRCs and respite centers. It does not apply to families with children in the DHS shelter system, which includes many emergency hotels. And I again, just want to implore the Administration to maintain eviction protections for this population. Has the DOE been notified by the Administration of plans to expand the 60-day rule to families with children living in DHS shelters?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Not at the moment. So, at the moment, we uh understand the statement just as you have shared, that the rule applies to the HERRC's.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

144

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: And then, uhm does the
Department know how many asylum-seeking students live
in DHS shelters compared to the HERRCs and respite
centers? Is that breakdown available?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Yeah, we have that
information, so it's something that I can share with
you. So, we know that we have 118 sanctuaries that
are run by the Department of Homeless Services that
mostly service like some our newer arrival students
versus as I shared earlier, the HANYC and the HERRC,
where we know that we have 16 HANYCs, 12 HERRCs and
also 12 HPD sites. So, we can look at the
information and you know work with our partners to
ensure that we know how many students are in each of
them. And it's also a number that has been evolving.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Understood but you don't have
a number to share with us right now?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: I don't have a number in
front of me and it will be a lot easier and quicker
to share for DHS, so we can look into that right now
for the HPD and the Health + Hospital hotels as my
colleague has shared with working with finalizing our
data agreement with both of these locations. It
would allow us to like have an opportunity of like

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

145

1 daily feats. In the case of DHS, we get a daily feat
2 between DHS and New York City Department of Education
3 that allow us to see every day what the flow of
4 students are.
5

6 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We just don't have it in
7 front us, but we'll get it to you as soon as
8 possible.

9 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Okay, thank you and then I
10 wanted to follow up on a question that uhm Council
11 Member Rivera had asked about recruiting asylum
12 seekers who have arrived here, who have received
13 their work permits to the pipeline of bilingual
14 educators and in the spirit of you know celebrating
15 multilingualism, I wanted to know if the DOE is
16 involved in any recruitment, job recruitment fairs or
17 any recruitment for translation providers?

18 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Absolutely, we are. As a
19 matter of fact, recently we participated in a hiring
20 fair that Congressman Espaillat's Office and
21 sponsored, and so, any opportunity that we have, our
22 Chief Talent Officer very actively participates in
23 recruitment fairs. The idea of recruiting from our
24 international student population and our families is
25 something that we have been talking about behind the

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 146

3 scenes and working to operationalize. We don't have
4 a specific plan to share with you at this time
5 because as I mentioned, we're still meeting but it is
6 something that we are aggressively working on. It's
7 actually a dream of ours and we're hoping that we can
8 get something up and running before the end of this
9 coming school year.

9 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Okay great, keep us posted
10 please. Those are all my questions. Chair Joseph.

11 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Sure, I have a couple
12 questions. One, piggyback offing the ACS. I know
13 attendance has always been an issue. We saw that
14 during the pandemic where ACS were being called on
15 families because kids were not attending. Not
16 because they didn't want, because language wasn't
17 their first — English was not their first language.

18 So, how are you addressing this now? Is there a
19 briefing that families are being told what the
20 expectations are for attendance? When the kids
21 attend school? How is that being communicated to
22 families?

23 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Absolutely, so I think
24 for us is both leaning on our shelter-based staff,
25 leaning on our parent coordinators to ensure that

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

147

we've been mystified with this notion of chronic absentees, which as I mentioned is being absent ten percent of the time and two absences but also helping families to figure out, how do you leverage the support that exists within your school community.

So, in some instances, you have a family that's keeping their children out because they need a doctor's appointment or because they need an optical appointment and is leaning into the sites where we have clinic that exists to let them know you don't need to have your child miss a day of school to be able to get these supports. These supports can be leveraged and can be provided right inside within your school communities, right? That's the beauty of community schools is an example that we know that we have wrap around supports and we're able to look at ways to mitigate and improve chronic absenteeism and attendance because of the whole child supports and the things that we're able to embed into the strategy.

A lot of it really coaching and working with our shelter coordinators around printing that report right? And for what it's worth, for my luck, I happen to manage both the students in the Brey

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

148

Housing team as well as attendance. So, one of the things that I ensure is that those two teams are working in tandem, are working collaboratively. The resources that we have when the attendance team is looking to support superintendents that they are really paying targeted attention to that population and their needs.

And then from there is really working closely with our partner with Gillian's team whose here with us and her point that works with ACS to make sure that in the trainings that are done around the mandated reporters on a yearly basis, that we pay like clear attention and consideration to this population and a lot of the way that the state required training was done in the past has changed to really talk about like what are the supported structures that need to happen at the school and within our system to ensure that we're like are not waiting for calling a case as a mandated reporter but that we actually are mitigating the challenges. And I don't know Gillian, if you want to add anything about the mandated reported training and changes that have occurred?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

149

GILLIAN SMITH: Yes, I was going to before but
sorry. So yes, so we realize that our partnership
with DOE and ACS, I think we all know this, that most
of the cases that are called are called on whether
it's ELL students or Black and Brown children. So,
in partnership with ACS, really worked on redefining
the yearly trainings that we do. And they're calling
it supporting, not reporting and working with our uhm
the designated liaisons at the schools, school staff,
actually training anyone who comes in contact with
children and families to understand how do you
actually look at the root cause and contact the ACS
support systems before you call it in to SCR. And
what we realized was that a lot of people actually
did not know about the ACS supports.

So, really doing a better job of advertising that
awareness, following up with calls that we receive.
We do like office hours and reach out to different
schools, working with superintendents who — we're not
telling people not to report. Please do not hear
that. What we are saying is, be mindful what
supports have you done before you called in? Poverty
is not an ACS case. Not having a coat is an ACS
case. And so, meeting with different superintendents

3 who support them and their schools, and understanding
4 what resources are in their catchment area, so that
5 they can – some of what Flavia says, send the
6 families to those supportive agencies and those
7 resources versus calling in an ACS case.

8 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I've also received
9 complaints about young children selling candy in the
10 train station. How do we address that and yeah, I
11 know it's the elephant in the room but I'm going to
12 put it there. How do we talk to families and let
13 them know about child labor? So, we get a lot of
14 calls and I get a lot of tweets and I get a lot of
15 DM's about young people in the train station; I'm
16 talking about as young as seven years old selling
17 candy in the train station. How do we inform
18 families?

19 GILLIAN SMITH: So, I'm going to start and then
20 I'm going to just pass it over. So, we actually
21 received a grant to work on human trafficking, both
22 labor and sex and working – and the great thing about
23 the grant is it's not just working with educators, it
24 is working with children and it's also working with
25 families and being able to make them aware, because
to your point Chair Joseph, it's awareness, right?

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

151

Sometimes they don't know right. So, sometimes we're not talking about the big bag traffickers. We are talking about families just thinking that they're doing a good thing and like oh, this is you know - I did it right. My mom didn't know different right. So, making them aware of what's okay and what's not okay.

So, we are actively working on that. We're only year one into the grant but we are - it is on uhm, it is part of our trajectory of strategic planning to make sure that we're sharing that information across the board.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And this information is being shared throughout the system? School based shelters, HERRCs, however you can get that information out. In your 60-day letter, I have a quick question for you, does it talk about education placement? Does it talk about transportation and does it highlight the McKinney-Vento Law?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: It definitely highlights McKinney-Vento. That is the core of the letter and we do go through a number of areas that the principal should be aware of in terms of enrollment and transportation. But I think - and while the letter

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

152

was important, it just got the ball rolling to remind everyone of these different pieces. The real part of it is checking in with the Superintendents and the principals based on the monitoring of the data and seeing where the greatest influxes are – the greatest influx is happening. So, yes and it's also that touch, that additional touch.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you. We're going to talk about something that I know, PEGs and budget cuts. So, describe some of the potential impacts this financial problematic programs and resources that the Mayor's budget cut including 20 percent of migrant services. 15 percent PEG this year and the loss of federal stimulus dollars. In both FY22 and FY23, we provided \$4 million in one year funding for communication and outreach to families of new arrival students. How is that breakdown? Can you provide a breakdown of how the funding was allocated in translation, phone call, text messages, paper notices and collaborations with immigrations facing with CBO's and informational campaigns?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, Chair I want to go to start of the question before I pass it over to a number of my colleagues.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

153

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Of course.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: The reason I did not know what Council Member was talking about earlier is because the asylum seeker budget cuts do not apply to us. That's the good news.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: The bad news is it's going to impact New York City Public Schools.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We understand but the number of your questions fall with our Language Access Coordinators office, so I am going to pass it over to Kleber and then Flavia and I will jump in accordingly.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

KLEBER PALMA: Good afternoon again. The language access funding. Thank you for pushing for that for the last few years. We've had a lot of great initiatives that launched from that funding. We do have a breakdown of the funding, how it was used for the last years initiatives and also this years that I can share with you afterwards. But just to give you a brief overview, a lot of that was used to raise awareness of language access. One of the things that we knew of but it was reinforced with discussions with community partners that we meet with

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

154

frequently is that people just don't know. And I think I mentioned that earlier, people don't know what's available and so we want to make noise on language access and solely on language access. We cover so many different topics, many of which we've discussed today as additional support or a layer of support for these initiatives that the DOE launches but sometimes we just need to talk about language access itself as it crosses so many different workloads. We did a campaign, hopefully you saw some of the ads out in the streets earlier this year that kind of mimic what we do internally for our staff to raise awareness both in the schools but also in the communities. Making sure that families are aware of the ability to request services that know where to access these services, what services are available. We also had direct mailings going out to families, text messages, robocalls, emails. We did everything that we could to make sure that families were aware of the available services.

We also partnered with about a dozen community-based organizations to make sure that we leveraged their networks of families and communities to raise awareness and in those languages as well to advise

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

155

families to raise awareness about what schools offer in terms of translation and interpretation services. And one of the things that I think that went less noticed was the fact that we provided schools with additional interpretation supports, specifically interpretation equipment to make sure that they can pass out for their large convenings when they have group gatherings and make use of interpreters and the equipment available to make that support seamless for those events.

We also had some enhancements in our infrastructure within the Office of Language Access to make sure we manage our projects better, to make sure that we were accountable for the work that we're producing. So, we had some enhancements in terms of our project management tools, translation tools, all sorts of stuff, technical stuff that I can provide you more detail after this session is completed.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Absolutely. Melissa you wanted to jump in with the 15 percent PEGs to New York City Public Schools. Talk to me.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Underspent vacancies, that's what we have so far. We do have another five

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 156

3 percent PEG coming. We have nothing to report yet
4 but you know —

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I sent my letter. I still
6 haven't gotten a response.

7 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We will get you a response
8 and —

9 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: That was in October.

10 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We will, we're going to
11 get you a response.

12 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'm waiting for a response
13 because I want to know the programs that are being
14 impacted. I was told nothing would be impacted but
15 major adjustments was taken off the table for New
16 York City Public Schools. You have 15 percent.
17 That's a lot of money taking out of New York City
18 Public Schools when Public Schools need it more than
19 ever. Uhm, and I think I can't stress it enough how
20 this is the time for this Administration to meet the
21 moment of New York Schools. Community schools have
22 driven data that it works but yet \$10 million was cut
23 from community schools. And in the following year,
24 \$8 million will be cut. 3K is being cut.

25 So, I mean there's so many things on the table.
Summer Rising for our young people and when we talk

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

157

about public safety, these are part of a public safety network. It's not just policing but it's about these little institutions. Our libraries, our immigrant families have been depending on libraries for IDNYC to read, to use the computer, to have access. And I can tell you first hand as an educator for the past 20 years, libraries were a lifeline for my families in my district. They provided all sorts of resources from our seniors, from our oldest to our youngest.

So, 15 percent is a lot for New York City Public Schools and I continue to hope that this administration does the right thing by New York City students and we will continue to be at the table to make sure that our New York City students get all that they deserve, nothing less, nothing less.

So, on October 2022, New York City Public Schools received \$12 million in additional funding for students living in temporary housing and I talked about that earlier. Enrolled at least six new students living in temporary housing to receive \$2,000. We worked on that and that was - on an average it was reported that the school receive an additional \$31,713 in 2022. With the influx of newly

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

158

migrated students, that continued to increase and how
will the PEGs, 15 percent PEGs for Fiscal 2024 impact
these numbers?

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: So, because we issued that
money last year, understanding that our working group
was working on the fair student funding formula, and
we already knew that a core priority was making sure
that students in temporary housing got more money
through that formula. With that being said, that did
not exist last year and we did not expect the kind of
numbers that we got, so we knew we had to issue
emergency money to schools because the STH money that
they get reflects the numbers that they had last
year.

So, if you had 12 students last year but now you
have 50, you cannot support those additional students
based on money for 12 students. That was the reason
for that money. We do not have plans to issue a SAM
this year but because students in temporary housing
get more weight in the fair student funding formula,
schools are seeing more money where they have more
asylum-seeking students.

Now I know mid-year adjustment is a big concern
and I again, I will not speak to that and I'm happy

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

159

for us to take back to the team that we need to expedite your letter because you're right, you're waiting for a response and we want to make sure you get a timely response.

With that being said, when we talk about schools getting over the counter after the October 31st deadline, we know that if a school is getting 20, 30, 50 kids and they need additional money, we are going to work with the school to get them what they need. We are not going to let any school have to provide for students and they don't have the funding for an additional teacher or they don't have the additional funds for a para professional.

It is on a case-by-case basis and that's why we lean on that escalation protocol where the principal contacts the HR, the budget director. We can't issue a blanket statement and say, "okay, if you get extra students, we are going to give you more money." But we are not blind to the fact that these are unique times and some schools will need that additional money. And so, we are not going to leave schools without.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: But according to the Comptroller, some of the schools have not received

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 160

3 funding for having new students. So, when is that
4 going to remedy?

5 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: And the question was asked
6 earlier about that very specific issue and our team
7 has taken a hard look at that and they are making
8 adjustments in real time.

9 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Uhm, I have a unique
10 population of students with interrupted formal
11 education. Tell me the numbers and what is in place
12 for those students and how are teachers being trained
13 and the support staff at the schools and we know
14 that's a unique. We have some interrupted. We have
15 some with no educational background at all.

16 MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We're smiling because
17 we're ready for you.

18 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Oh, I'm ready too. I'm
19 always ready.

20 MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: So, thank you for the
21 question. I also have the right title for the ELL
22 Compliance and Performance Specialists and the MLL
23 Service Administrator.

24 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I'm not giving out stickers
25 today. No stickers today.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

161

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Okay. Uhm, so our SIFE population so we have numbers from last year, are 7339, about five percent of our ELLs then. We know that those numbers are increasing. We can get you the exact numbers later.

And your next question was about services. First of all, like I said, the screening-

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: It's a screening process for folks who don't know. So, walk us through the screening process and what support is in place for them?

MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Thank you. So, part of what I said in my testimony is that we have a SIFE Share. We realize how important it was for staff members to uhm who are not familiar right with the numbers of the volume of working with students with interrupted formal education and uhm, so we provided, we have a whole website that goes into step by step what to do. It's call SIFE Share and also at the same time, it provides step one, how what is the screening process. You can't just label any student as a SIFE Student to ensure that there is a screening process during the intake and at the same time, many days these students need to be tested by the state

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

162

with the state exam assessment to ensure that we are providing the right services. Our office ensures that the district office, superintendents team, this ELL Administrator is ensuring that students, schools know what to do and we are looking at those numbers continuously. This is why we have right now a number. Part of the work that we want to – is educate the folks at the schools that don't label them SIFE just because you think they date miss all this year formal education.

The other piece is that we opened an office hours and every week, we invite educators to come here, ask questions, see our resources and ensure that they are receiving the support that they need.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Are you modeling? I went to visit a school as the Education Chair visits schools all the time. Uhm, SIFE students, quite a few of them, not supported. How are you – are you modeling what needs to be done? Remember this is a unique population. We have the time where we have schools that have been doing this work for 50 years and we have school, this is a new thing for them. So, what kind of support are you providing? Not just the

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 163

3 video. Not just the website. Are you modeling this
4 process for teachers to do this work?

5 MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: Great question and thank
6 you for asking because part of what we are working in
7 that SIFE Share is these are professional learning
8 events that we have that we're inviting folks to
9 attend. Yes, we have the webinar. Yes, we have the
10 resources. Yes, we have a whole guide of all
11 scaffolds that teachers can use but you're right,
12 when you have it in real time and we have one person
13 dedicated to doing this work with schools and on the
14 continuous basis and he's the one who leads this work
15 on the office hours and he's our SIFE Coordinator to
16 ensure that all districts or schools are receiving
17 the support.

18 We started this during the pandemic and post
19 pandemic because we saw the importance of ensuring.
20 Yes, you're right. Many, many schools I said before,
21 I had shared with a colleague, when I was Principal,
22 I had almost 45 percent SIFE. So, I knew what to do
23 with this population. But at the same time, we have
24 schools— this is the first time they're dealing with
25 these wonderful children and how do we ensure that we
provide a welcoming and inclusive environments and

1 that we are providing and giving them rigorous
2 instruction and providing the scaffolds that they
3 need and making them feel welcome. And especially
4 older children who we don't want to give them baby
5 stuff, we want to make sure that we're giving them
6 information grade level. How do we support teachers
7 to see how that looks like?
8

9 So, I appreciate the question, especially because
10 it's something that we've been looking deeply into
11 and providing professional learning. It's called
12 SIFE Share and all New York City public teachers have
13 access to it.

14 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I hope this is not the first
15 time they're hearing about it. Is there funding
16 attached to this SIFE? I know there's federal
17 dollars. Are you guys applying for federal dollars
18 to support the SIFE work?

19 MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: So, my understanding is
20 that SIFE students have – if they're ELLs, they have
21 extra weight. I'm not the expert on funding, yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you. How about our
23 ELL students that are quickly aging out of our high
24 school system and our transfer, what we are we doing
25 to support them and make sure they graduate on time,

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 165

3 making sure we don't kick them out once they're 21
4 but providing the support that they get their high
5 school diploma?

6 MIRZA SANCHEZ-MEDINA: So, I'll start with the
7 work with the transfer schools and I know that
8 District 79 works closely with this population. We
9 also work closely with Superintendent Sullivan and
10 Superintendent Alan Cheng, Dr. Cheng to ensure that
11 there are programs very specific and the beauty is
12 that they're learning from each other as well to
13 ensure that this population receive the services that
14 they need and if a student needs to transfer, where
15 do they go, what happens.

16 We want to keep those students in school. I mean
17 the graduation rate for ELLs has increased to 67
18 percent. That's not just because of all the waivers
19 from the state. There was a lot of work put in place
20 to ensure that schools build welcoming environments.
21 We see that the drop off rate went down significantly
22 from 27 percent to 15 percent now. So, this is part
23 of the work schools are doing to ensure that students
24 are staying in school. We mentioned Dream Squad,
25 that's one of those strategies but there are other
strategies that schools are using to ensure that

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

166

students are receiving the instruction that they need the supports they need. We need to do better, no doubt, but how do we come together and one of the things that we're doing is having this team approach. It cannot be on the shoulders of the ENL teachers or bilingual teacher or the guidance counselor or the social worker. It needs to be, everyone, it's the village that needs to take this approach to ensure that all students are receiving what they need and that we at central offices are doing our work as well.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Of course you are and I'm here to make sure it continues. And our community school reduction, Flavia, this is for you. In the November plan of the \$10 million which I spoke about earlier. In FY24 \$8 million in the outyear, what criteria will New York City public schools use to determine how much each community school would have program funded be reduced by?

FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: Uhm, so because of the way that community schools are funded is a combination of us you know stimulus. We also have grants, 24th century grants, so the focus of the reduction will have to be specifically aligned to the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

167

ones that are funded through tax levy. And it will vary because as you know, while we have 421 community schools, we work in partnership with 80 CBO's, so different CBO's are going to see a different level of reduction depending on the number of programs that they support. And in general, part of what will need to occur is that we're not looking to eliminate a particular community schools but rather, there will have to be a reduction of services across a subset of targeted schools that are funded through tax levy structures.

So, it vary depending on the school because as you know, what I mean by that could vary, what you see changing. The way that we organize community schools, we don't dictate a specific program, we have levers that we ensure that every community school has a wellness component. That every community school has extended learning. That every community school has extended family supports. So, we will have to work very closely with our CBO partners, with our coalition, to look at the subset of schools that will be impacted and do our best to minimize what that could have to the student experience of that school but the ultimate goal is not that a single school is

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 168

3 going to lose all the supports but something is going
4 to have to be reduced within those contracts.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Reduce in terms of services
6 but every single thing you mentioned, is what the
7 kids come to school. What makes parents get involved
8 in schools but if you cut wellness, you cut mental
9 health, so what are you leaving? Set up skeletons,
10 we can't do this. So, we're going to have to figure
11 a better way to make sure that community schools are
12 spending and serve the communities that they serve.

13 FLAVIA PUELLO PERDOMO: And I'm here to partner
14 with you. To work with you on the Council around
15 each and every way that we can ensure that we can
16 continue to do the best and the most that we can do
17 to support children through that initiative.

18 CHAIRPERSON JOSPEH: I know Melissa has to go but
19 I'm going to wrap it up with this last question. 680
20 civilian positions are being reduced in the November
21 plan. Did any of these offices present here, present
22 titles to be reduced? If so, what titles in Office
23 of Transportation, community schools and others were
24 presented. It's going to be in the PEG, in the
25 November plan.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

169

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: Chair Joseph, I will have
to get the answers to that question.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: That was part of my letter.
That was part of my letter. I did ask. I wanted to
know what was on the table. What was on the table
and how can the Council negotiate what's on the table
and I still don't have an answer. And that was one
of my questions. If I go back and I date the email,
I mean the email, I can tell you when I requested
that. What's being cut? What's on the table? How
is it going to impact New York City kids? I still
don't have an answer.

So, today it's on the record. Hopefully New York
City Public Schools will give me an answer because my
parents and my students need to know.

MELISSA AVILES-RAMOS: We will get you an answer
Chair.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you. That's my
questions.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: That's all the questions we
have for the Administration. Thank you all so much
for being here, your clarity and just comprehensive
responses and all the work you put in shows. So, I

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 170
3 deeply, deeply appreciate seeing a team that is very
4 efficient. Thank you.

5 PANEL: Thank you all. Thank you.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you Chairs and thank
7 you to the Administration for your testimony. We
8 will now hear from Lara Lai from the Office of New
9 York City Comptroller Brad Lander, as well as Julia
10 Konrad from the New York City Independent Budget
11 Office. As they are approaching the bench, I just
12 wanted to announce that a few are here to testify in
13 person and you have not yet completed a witness slip.
14 Please visit the Sergeants table and complete a
15 witness slip now, even if you registered to testify
16 online. Thank you.

17 [03:15:11] - [03:15:47]

18 Before we begin I will administer the
19 affirmation. Panelists, please raise your right
20 hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole
21 truth and nothing but the truth before this Committee
22 and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

23 LARA LAI: I do.

24 JULIA KONRAD: I do.

25 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much. Lara
Lai, you may begin when ready.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

171

LARA LAI: Great, thank you. Good afternoon,
Chair Joseph, Chair Hanif, and members of the City
Council Education and Immigration Committees. My
name is Lara Lai and I am the Senior Policy Analyst
and Strategic Organizer for Education in the Office
of New York City Comptroller Brad Lander. Thank you
for the opportunity to testify before you today.

A little more than one year ago, our office was
the first to sound the alarm on the lack of
additional funding from this administration for
schools serving newly arrived students from families
seeking asylum. In response, DOE issued SAM 65
sending additional money to many of the schools
serving these students, and since then, more than
21,000 additional students have arrived in our city
and enrolled in New York City Public Schools,
contributing to the first increase in school
enrollment in eight years.

Our three critical urgent issues are still facing
immigrant students and I would like to help bring
attention to those today. A number of those have
already been addressed in my testimony. It's quite
long, so I'll stop as soon as you tell me to and a
lot of it will amplifying some of the things that

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

172

have already been said. The first is the Fair Student Funding calculations for Students in Temporary Housing. That was the subject of the Comptroller's letter to the Chancellor recently. This has already been touched on but I'd like to provide some detail. DOE played a pivotal role in crafting and funding the new Fair Student Funding wait for students in temporary housing. However, unlike other FSF weights, DOE is choosing to base the new STH weight allocation on enrollment as of December 31, 2022.

If this decision stands, schools will not receive funding this school year for changes in STH enrollment that have occurred since last December. The exclusion of these 21,000 students from DOE's FSF calculations will deny schools serving new arrivals nearly \$11 million in funding for urgently needed additional resources this school year. And I just want to say, it's even more than \$11 million at this point because the 21,000 students we calculated has actually gone up given that we're now at 14,000 students since July. So, we're talking about even more than \$11 million that those schools are missing.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

173

And I heard DOE say that they're going to address this on a case-by-case basis, but case by case what does that mean? How much money is that? Which schools get it? What oversight is there? It should be part of the formula. The DOE implements other FSF weights via mid-year adjustments and is using December 30, 2023 for example as the cutoff for English language learner and special education weights.

Without other explanation, it appears that DOE is purposely creating resource scarcity in schools with new comer students. We are glad to hear that members of the City Council are joining us in urging the Administration to reverse this decision by December 15th, in time to apply the new weight designed to provide resources for students experiencing homelessness via the mid-year adjustment this year. And Council Member Hanif, I just wanted to use as an example, this isn't in the written testimony but I spoke with Maria Interlandi last night. A school in District 15, in your district, PS124, where 55 percent of the students currently are living in temporary housing because there are two family shelters across the street from the school.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

174

For PS124, they were given the student in temporary housing weight according to the online information on Fair Student Funding. They were given the weight for 118 students. It's our understanding that they now have 202 students living in temporary housing and at \$508.49 per student, that school is missing \$43,000 from their budget, just that one school \$43,000 from their budget because they are not going to get a mid-year adjustment for the new students who have come who are living in temporary housing. So, that's tells you the magnitude of the impact to schools that this decision is making.

The second thing I want to touch on is the 60-day limit. City Hall's decision to impose a 60-day time limit on families staying in HERRCs not only violates court affirmed rights of families but endangers the physical and mental wellbeing of children. This has already been noted. Just as thousands of children are settling into the safety and stability of new schools, this administration will force them to leave and apply for shelter after 60 days. This creates unnecessary disruption for the teachers and other kids in the classroom. And something that hasn't been noted, for parents of very young children, who

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

175

have received a childcare voucher through Promise NYC, which is a program that this Council advocated for and received and was put into the budget now two years in a row, that means relocation to another part of the city where there may be a wait for childcare seats. They may no longer have that childcare seat because there aren't any seats available that will accept their voucher.

This also creates instability for those childcare providers who will lose the income when the child leaves. In addition as has been noted, hundreds of immigrant families with children have been placed into isolated hotel rooms through the city's contract with the Hotel Association of New York City. These families have been given no consistent support or services and face a 28-day limit. The administration must reverse these policies.

Finally, I want to touch on the lack of critical support for students in shelter. Shelter based community coordinators, family assistants, and other staff provide critical care to our immigrant students in temporary housing. Something we've talked a lot about today. I just want to reiterate that these services include: enrollment and attendance support;

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

176

translation and interpretation services; ensuring
children are identified for appropriate placement in
3K/Pre-K; ensuring students are screened for special
education services, and this not only prevents
students with disabilities from falling through the
cracks but it helps schools secure additional Fair
Student Funding, which could be between \$500 and
\$9000 per student for those schools; identifying
young adults who may have come here seeking work but
are still entitled to attend high school and help
them enroll in transfer schools; and finally,
connecting students and families to the immigration
legal services needed to obtain pathways to permanent
status. For example, Special Immigrant Juvenile
Status or SIJS.

These workers are helping to provide coordinated
and compassionate care that all newcomer families
need: however, these positions remain severely
underfunded and are at risk of future budget cuts.
There are currently 100 shelter-based coordinators or
98 as we've heard and 117 family assistants working
in New York City shelters. That number has remained
stagnant even as the city has welcomed over 100,000

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 177

3 new arrivals and opened 175 new shelters, HERRCs and
4 respite centers.

5 Lack of communication with schools at the HERRCs
6 in particular is a pressing problem according to
7 advocates. Seventy-five of the 100 coordinators as
8 you know, are funded with \$9 million in expiring
9 stimulus funds. The remaining 25 positions are
10 funded by \$3 million in tax levy money that has not
11 yet been baselined. Translation and interpretation
12 services, bilingual programs provided by DOE and new
13 bilingual transfer programs are all funded by
14 stimulus dollars. As we provide continued oversight
15 over the New York City budget in the face of severe
16 cuts to critical services, we must fight to protect
17 and expand these positions.

18 Thank you again for the opportunity to testify
19 today and for holding this important hearing. The
20 Comptroller looks forward to partnering with the New
21 York City Council to ensure that our immigrant
22 students get the support and resources they need to
23 succeed and thrive in New York City.

24 JULIA KONRAD: Good afternoon Chair Joseph, Chair
25 Hanif, and members of the Education and Immigration
Committees. My name is Julia Konrad and I am the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

178

Assistant Director for Education at the New York City
Independent Budget Office. Thank you for the
opportunity to testify.

Today, I will summarize from my written
testimony, which offers additional details on
supports provided to English Language Learners or
ELLs. In 2022-2023, the K-12 traditional public-
school students who were English Language Learners
increased to nearly 19 percent of all students. In
other words, nearly one in five K-12 students in
traditional public schools is an English Language
Learner.

The school year before, that share was 17 percent
and the year before that it was 16 percent. In 2022-
2023, the number of English Language Learners
increased from more than 148,000 students the year
before to about 159,000. An increase of more than
11,000 students or an eight percent increase. When
new students enter the New York City public school
system as we heard today, enrollment staff will
identify if a language other than English is spoken
at home.

And if so, they then administer a state test that
identifies the students level of English proficiency.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

179

In 2022-2023, the share of English Language Learners scoring at the entering level or the beginning level of proficiency on that diagnostic test increased from 26 percent of ELLs the year before to 31 percent. And so, as of the 2022-2023 school year, nearly one-third of New York City's ELLs were at the beginning level of English proficiency. In comparison, in 2019-2020, 19 percent of ELLs scored at that same proficiency level.

As Chair Joseph notes, while the DOE offers three types of programs to support English Language acquisition, two out of the three dual language and transitional and bilingual are considered bilingual. While the third, English as a new language is not. Bilingual programs are sometimes seen as the preferred placement for ELLs. As research shows they provide cognitive social/emotional and academic benefits. While the DOE offers families bilingual and ENL options, student enrollment ultimately depends both on family preferences and the availability of program seats.

In 2022-2023, roughly 79 percent of ELLs were enrolled in English as a new language program. Ten percent were in transitional bilingual and nine

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

180

percent were in dual language. Between the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, the overall share of students in bilingual programs actually increased slightly from 18 percent of all ELLs to 19 percent. And this slight increase even as the overall number of ELLs was increasing, likely reflects the DOE's expansion of bilingual programs over the last school year.

And as we heard in the current fiscal year, the DOE provided additional funds to schools opening bilingual programs this fall and the following school year. 44 schools received planning funds to open additional programs this year and another 14 schools received planning funds to open programs in 2024-2025. And in a report published this May, IBO identified the number of active bilingual and ESL teachers in schools as of October 31, 2022.

Using DOE licenses, IBO identified 1,873 bilingual teachers and another 3,606 ESL teachers across K-12 traditional public schools. Of those bilingual teachers, the majority of teachers, 88 percent, held bilingual licenses in Spanish. The next most common category of bilingual licenses were in Chinese languages or ten percent of bilingual

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

181

teachers. And the third most common bilingual license was in French, representing one percent of bilingual teachers. For context, that school year, 66 percent of ELLs spoke Spanish at home. The next most common category was also Chinese languages, nearly ten percent of ELLs followed by Arabic which was roughly five percent of ELLs.

And this fall, recent efforts aim to encourage the recruitment of new and already qualified bilingual and ESL teachers and we heard a lot more about those earlier from the DOE. As those incentives take effect, IBO is going to continue to track New York City's teaching workforce and the supports provided to our English Language Learners.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I'm happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I have a question. This was very informative, thank you. Those data points about the number of teachers across our school system is very helpful to know and the disaggregated language breakdown was very helpful.

Lara, thanks for being here and sharing the example of 124 and the thousands of dollars that are not being funneled to the school as a result of the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

182

continued increase of students in temporary housing.

Are there other schools who have a similar amount of money missing as a result of this prohibitive deadline?

LARA LAI: I can't speak to you today about specific schools. Uhm, because this was a you know a one-off interaction with the principal that allowed me to know her you know up to date numbers. Uhm, and we don't have up to date numbers on a school-by-school base— our office doesn't have up to date numbers on the school-by-school basis of how many newcomer students or students in temporary housing are enrolling.

We know in aggregate that across the entire city it's more than \$11 million that schools are missing. And you can imagine that schools that are near shelters, that are receiving disproportionate numbers of students from families seeking asylum, have a larger order of magnitude in terms of the [03:30:38] money that they're missing. Those 21,000 or 22,000 students that have arrived since December 31st of this past year, wherever there are concentrations of those students in schools, we are talking about thousands of dollars. It's \$508.49 per student, so

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

183

as soon as you have two students who aren't accounted for in that calculation, that's \$1,000 that you should have that you're not going to.

And as I mentioned, it's standard practice because for example, it takes awhile to get everyone's IEP recommendations in order after the start of the school year. It takes awhile to administer the state test to figure out how many ELLs you have. DOE allows schools until December 31st of the current school year to tell them how many ELLs and how many students with disabilities they have and that's the cut off and that's why some of the mid-year adjustment funding is given to schools in January and February as opposed to November.

If we have the data, if we have up to date numbers on the number of students in temporary housing, it's unclear why you would not extend the same policy to that wait and say you have until December 31st of the current year to tell us what your students in temporary housing number is and we can make that adjustment. Rather than using literally the number from the year before.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: I had a question that was a follow up which I have forgotten but I have a

question for Julia and hopefully while I ask you this question, I'll remember the question I wanted to ask Lara.

So, in identifying the breakdown of the bilingual license and which languages are the top three, is IBO making a recommendation or discerning that we need licensure of other languages? That this is not fulfilling the needs of the one to five per every student being a bilingual learner?

JULIA KONRAD: So, we don't make recommendations as an agency but what I will say is that you can sort of look at three different measures. You can see what are the breakdown of licenses that we have among our bilingual teachers? What are the breakdown of programs that we have among our ELLs, what we serve in ELLs and then what is the actual population of ELLs and the language they speak?

One mismatch that we identified that's not in this testimony but in our report from May is the languages that we offer in our bilingual programs compared to the languages that are spoken at home by our ELLs. So, you'll notice that the third most common language spoken at home by ELLs is Arabic. It does not match the number of third most common

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 185

3 bilingual program we offer through the DOE. So, I
4 think that's something that we're interested in
5 exploring and seeing how we could see those matches
6 change and whether or not in the new bilingual
7 programs and DOE is expanding and we've seen funds
8 dedicated specifically to open new bilingual
9 programs, what kind of languages those are going to
10 offer and how they match the population we have of
11 ELLs.

12 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you for that. Lara,
13 the question that came to mind is uhm with the money
14 that is not being allocated to schools and in
15 particular like 124, uhm what are the harms of that
16 money not being delivered to the schools by the end
17 of this year? Can you identify just the top three to
18 five issues that are going to you know put a further
19 burden on the principal, the school community? What
20 are some of those missing components that these
21 students are being denied?

22 LARA LAI: You know I hate to say that everything
23 comes down to money but we are the Comptroller's
24 Office, so I will say that a lot of what we've been
25 talking about for the past few hours comes down to
funding. It comes down to money and fair student

funding is specifically designed to be the most flexible form of money that a principal has in their arsenal to fund what they need. I think 97 percent of it is used for staffing. It's used to hire teachers and you know other support staff that whether it's counselors or other folks who work directly with students.

A lot of the funding that schools receive is restricted funding as you probably know. It's not allowed to be spent on full-time staff. Funding such as Title I or a lot of the SAMS that schools receive are allocated for very specific things. You can't take your Title I money and spend it necessarily on a bilingual literacy coach right? That's just not how it works but you can do that with fair student funding.

Not having that funding at a time when you're enrollment is increasing dramatically, and it's not just an increase in enrollment. It is an increase in a number of students who have the most dire needs of any students in our system. They are living in temporary housing. They've encountered incredible trauma. Many of them may have had periods of interrupted learning. Some of them have special

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

187

needs. They have limited English proficiency. I mean the list goes on and on. And to not be given the money to support those students with the staff and the programming that they need in this year to say, "we're going to give it to you next." You're basically saying, "we're going to take the census of students with those needs now but we'll give you the money for it next year." That, how can a school function that way? I mean \$43,000 at PS124 would go a long way toward hiring a teacher. It's not all of it or a Para, right? So, there is no way to really you know minimize the impact that not having that fair student funding. I mean, just as an example, SAM 65 last year gave schools; I'll just use this as an example.

Last year SAM 65 gave schools \$2,000 per student. The base allocation for a student in the Fair Student Funding formula is \$4,000 or more. So, and SAM 65 was restricted. You weren't even allowed to use it to hire teachers. So, the things that a school can do with that fair student funding is just -- it's so important and to not have it and to have DOE say, you know we're going to look at every school on a case-by-case basis, that doesn't tell you whether, what

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

188

kind of kind of funding that school is going to get.

How they'll be able to use it. How much they're going to get. So, those are -- that's probably more than you wanted to hear but that's where I would say the dire you know consequences of this lay.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: No, thank you for that and particularly stressing that the FSF being that it's flexible funding, should be where we put our focus on. Chair Joseph, any questions?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I just wanted to address real quick about the licensing. Historically, we've always been an area that's been short with bilingual support staff, whether it's teachers, ESL, psychologists, all of that. The reason, one of the reasons is because they removed that barrier about tenure. No teacher wanted to lose their tenure. That means everything but when I became an ENL coordinator, I lost my tenure. That program was not around but I knew the needs because I wanted to serve so the fact that they removed the barriers is good but one of the things I told them and I keep saying that and they're not listening. They need to create pathways and I also gave them the formula. I said

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

189

every common branch teacher should have an extension
in ESL period.

So, I finally saw that they started doing that
with Brooklyn College. But how do we continue to
create that pipeline and encourage other young people
to come into that work? ESL, bilingual
psychologists, social workers, guidance counselors?

LARA LAI: Right and I think this was mentioned
kind of briefly earlier, but one of the changes that
happened in this fall was that New York State
education department eased requirements to get a
bilingual extension because if you are a bilingual
teacher, you are certified in a content area and then
have an additional extension, a bilingual extension.
So, when I think about that as the pipeline, that's
an obstacle. That's additional course work. That's
additional investment of your own money to get that
bilingual extension.

So, the state actually I think had a response to
that and they are easing requirements so that you can
get those extensions through either an exam or course
work and not necessarily both, which is what it was
before.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

190

That's a temporary foregoing that requirement, so we'll see how long that last but I think that's a really good point because there are obstacles to getting that kind of license. When we know that we have bilingual staff who might not necessarily have the qualification to do that teaching.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And as you mentioned earlier, they need to start recruiting those languages that we're not having enough because for example, when we have a student that speak Arabic, you have to hire an interpreter to sit next to them to actually read the tests to them in Arabic and then answer the question.

So, I've seen that done first-hand so they know there's also a pipe- they have to create the languages that are also needed and we're seeing a huge influx of languages that again, that New York City public schools doesn't have in their tool kit. For example, we saw Quechua. It's very common in some areas. We saw Tagalog, that's not one of them. A lot of the African dialects that are spoken, we've seen that. So, they have to create a better pipeline to recruiting and maintaining educators. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you both.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

191

PANEL: Thank you.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you both very much for your testimony. We will now turn to public testimony. We will be limiting public testimony today to two minutes each. Please note that if your prepared testimony exceeds two minutes, in addition to testifying before the Committees today, you may also submit your full testimony to the record up to 72 hours after the close of this hearing by emailing it to testimony@council.nyc.gov.

If you are here to testify in person and you have not yet completed a witness slip, please visit the Sergeants table and complete a witness slip now, even if you registered online to testify in person. For the in-person panelists, please come up to the table once your name has been called. For virtual panelists, once your name is called, a member of our staff will unmute you and the Sergeant at Arms will set the timer and give you the go ahead to begin. Please wait for the Sergeant to announce that you may begin before delivering your testimony.

Now, I will call our first in person panel Kesi Gordon, Kate Menken, Aracelis Lucero, Jennifer

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 192
3 Pringle, Jose Adolfo Jimenez and Dante Bravo.

4 [03:42:41- [03:44:04]

5 Give us one moment folks while we make sure we
6 set up this first panel. [03:44:08]- [03:45:00]
7 Alright folks, we're ready to begin. Please begin
8 when you're ready and state your name for the record
9 toward the top of your remarks. Thank you.

10 KESI GORDON: Thank you. Good afternoon and
11 thank you Chairs Hanif and Joseph and the members of
12 the New York City Immigration and Education
13 Committees for the opportunity to testify today. My
14 name is Kesi Gordon with the New York Immigration
15 Coalition. The New York Immigration Coalition or
16 NYIC is an umbrella policy and advocacy organization
17 for more than 200 groups serving immigrants and
18 refugees across New York State.

19 Today, you will hear from many members of the
20 NYICs Education Collaborative on different issues
21 that are affecting our immigrant and asylum seeker
22 students. NYIC will be providing a longer written
23 testimony after this hearing. First, the NYIC is
24 deeply concerned with the effects of the 60-day
25 shelter rules. That the 60-day shelter rules will
have on our immigrant and asylum seeker families even

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

193

prior to this shift in housing rules for these families. It was taking weeks for many families to be enrolled in quality schools for shelters and longer still to figure out their transportation. Displacing families from shelters will interrupt their education, creating even longer commutes or requiring students to hop from school to school. And this will increase absenteeism and create even more instability from families who are already experiencing so much.

These families are guaranteed an education like any other student in New York City but the city is creating massive hurdles for them to jump through to access that education. Secondly, last year, the NYICs Education collaborative worked hard to secure six new ELL programs at transfer high schools across the city where immigrant youth live and work.

ELL transfer schools are full time high schools that socialize in supporting English Language Learner students who need to catch up on credits and/or need additional learning support to graduate and include critical supports like bilingual social workers, smaller classes, access to tutoring and so much more.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

194

While these programs have received some funding, it is not enough to run full fledged programs. The city should fully fund these transfer school programs to meet the current needs.

I have one more point. Thank you so much.

Third, enrollment support remains a major issue for immigrant and ELL families. The NYICs Life Project has successfully enrolled over 650 migrant families in 3K and Pre-K programs in the last six years and has found that four out of five immigrant families said they could not have applied without the additional hands-on assistance.

The city has cited that there are 37,000 empty Pre-K and 3K seats and these seats are not empty because of the lack of need, they are empty because the city has not invested enough outreach to help families understand the opportunities.

The city should invest \$10 million enrollment support for immigrant families through the Life Project to help find families where they are and provide them with a need to get their kids a quality education. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

195

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much. Before
4 the next person begins, I just wanted to announce
5 that as part of this panel we'll hear from Evelyn
6 Zambrano on Zoom and we'll let Evelyn know once we're
7 ready to unmute her but the next in person panelist,
8 please feel free to go ahead.

9 KATE MENKEN: Good afternoon Chair Hanif, Chair
10 Joseph, and members of the City Council's Immigration
11 and Education Committees. My name is Kate Menken,
12 I'm a Professor at Queens College and I'm honored to
13 speak before you today to represent also Dean
14 Bobbicabuto(SP?) and Marcella Zapata who is here with
15 me.

16 Today, you're hearing about many of the
17 educational challenges that immigrant communities are
18 facing in our schools. We're here actually to
19 propose a possible solution and the bilingual
20 educator shortage has received a lot of attention in
21 the media. It's one that you're well aware of. You
22 heard about it a lot today. So, together with New
23 Yorker firms, Queens colleges school of education has
24 developed a proposal to support the recruitment,
25 preparation and certification of 280 bilingual
educators over a five-year period.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

196

We have the capacity where the worlds, you know it's the worlds campus, the worlds borough. We are able to prepare educators of any language for the bilingual extension. So, it continue - bilingual lingual education continues to be at the top of the list of the teacher shortage areas in New York City public schools. For example in Jackson Heights Council Member Krishnan's District IS145 received over 450 newly arrived students last year. They wanted to expand their bilingual classes but they were unable to do so because they did not have the educators to fill those seats.

Likewise, even though we have 40,000 plus speakers of Bangla in just in Queens alone, there's no dual language bilingual education program for them right. So, in order to expand those opportunities, which we know from research are the best approaches for our bilingual students, we need to have the educators. And so, our proposal is to prepare 280 future bilingual educators in bilingual childhood education, secondary math bilingual education and secondary science bilingual education by offering tuition support because tuition we hear over and over again, is a primary barrier to getting those

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

197

certifications. So, the funding would support under graduate and graduate students seeking to go teach in city public schools.

And the funding will also support the start up of a new bilingual education undergraduate degree program. Believe it or not we don't have one at Queens College but we want to start one. And so, we're seeking \$3.6 million over a five-year period to fund the students. And we have a shared responsibility in advancing high quality public education for all and working together to meet the needs of students at this historic moment. So, we're here for you, we're here for it, we're ready.

ARACELIS LUCERO: Hi, good afternoon. Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify on this very important topic and highlighting our newest and youngest New Yorkers. My name is Aracelis Lucero. I am the Executive Director of Masa. We're a community-based organization in the South Bronx who for over the last two decades has been working with immigrants, especially recently arrived immigrants and indigenous communities providing them with critical services around education, family wrap around support services and advocacy and leadership

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

198

opportunities. I'd like to start by sharing some recent observations based on our experience supporting this community and families in our K-8 after school program.

As some of my colleagues have already spoken about, we have also deep concerns around the 60-day shelter rule and how it will be to increase absenteeism for students. Several families have expressed frustration and not knowing what their options are and what rights they have. We have been working with some families who would like to move from schools when traveling is just too far. Many times they don't know they're eligible for metro cards or busing services or not aware of any other existing support for families in transitional housing and don't know who to go to.

It is also unclear to parents what kind of resources are available to support new comer students in schools to acquire the English language and to ensure that they are able to continue to learn. This includes having uniform knowledge about the additional academic support programming traditionally available to students either before school, after school or during Saturday programming. As

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

199

specifically tailored for recently arrived students
as some schools did last academic school years. And
if so, these do exist, how do we make sure that
parents know about it? We must ensure that every
child who needs bilingual instruction and additional
academic and social/emotional support is actually
receiving it.

It has been our experience that either due to
language barriers, the digital divide or varying
degrees of literacy levels, immigrant parents do not
receive the information they need to properly
support, advocate for, and be empowered to be their
child's first teachers as they have every right to
be. As such, we'd like to provide the following four
recommendations: And I'm going to add a fifth one if
I have time.

We need to ensure parents know their rights and
who to go to. We'd like to recommend increased
support for peer, parent, ambassador programs to help
recently arrived parents receive support from
culturally and linguistically competent trained
parent leaders. This especially should include
indigenous speakers in other languages less commonly
spoken. Second, the New York City Department of

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

200

Education have a way of — that they have a way of doing some quality control in the schools to ensure that information and services are accessible to immigrant families. A clear example would be ensuring that all schools at all times have clearly visible who the language liaison is in different languages. Something that doesn't always happen, even though it is a requirement for the schools to happen.

Three, that there is additional funding and support provided to schools and CBO's to provide academic and linguistic support to recently arrived immigrant students in K-12. This past year, in March, Masa benefitted from a \$25,000 grant from MOIA to support an additional 17 English Language Learners and 20 peer tutors who not only spoke the languages but who were newcomer students themselves. And relatedly, older new comer students who may not be eligible for SYEP should receive access to similar paid opportunities during the summer and academic school year so that they too have an equal opportunity to gain valuable life and work skills that are critical to learn in your adolescent years.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

201

And the fifth one is, continued support for what we've been advocating with the Language Access Collaborative, which is the language bank for New York City. We got funding for one year. We advocated for five years and that project because of budget cuts was put on hold this year and it just sounds like from today's conversation language keeps on coming up and New York City deserves to have a language bank. We have a model that we can follow, that we've been learning from and we just need the money to get it done. Thank you.

JENNIFER PRINGLE: Hi, thank you for the opportunity to discuss newcomer immigrant students. My name is Jennifer Pringle. I'm a Director of Learners in Temporary Housing Project at Advocates for Children. Based on our work with newcomer families, we're highlighting several concerns as well as recommendations. Many of these you've already touched on today, so I'm going to try to run through them very quickly and there's details in the written testimony.

First, as we've talked about families have sought our help because their children with disabilities are not receiving special education services and often

times that they are discouraged from requesting evaluations and told to wait until they've been in New York City Public School for a period of time in violation of the law. Schools need more training and more support and oversight to make sure that students suspected of having disabilities are promptly referred for evaluations and not told, discouraged because they've been in the U.S. a short period of time or because they're an English Language Learner.

Second, we've talked about the transfer schools. The five new transfer schools for English Language Learners. Got some funding last year but to date, this school year, they have not gotten any funding and it's unclear whether they're going to receive funding to support English Language Learners. You know these transfer schools are so; I don't need to tell you, so critical support to supporting our older newcomers.

Third, we are very concerned obviously about the 20-day placement limit, as well as what folks have talked about these 28-day stays in HANIK Hotels. You know while students have the right to continued enrollment, it is a right in name only when the city is implementing these policies that make it basically

impossible to continue in the same school given the challenges with commuting times and transportation obstacles. At the very least, if newcomer families have to be moved after these 28- and 60-day placements, if they could be moved to a shelter placement in the same community school district or same borough, that would do a tremendous amount to ensuring school stability.

And finally, we've talked about these 100 shelter-based community coordinators. I want to thank you all for your support for these positions, which was so critical. However, as we've talked about, there's no plan to continue to fund these positions. They are so critical to making sure that students get connected with school and we will need the Council's leadership to ensure that this program as well as other programs that are slated to end at the end of the year, are continued next year.

Again, more information is in our written testimony and thank you again for this opportunity.

DANTE BRAVO: Good afternoon. My name is Dante Bravo, Senior Policy Analyst over at Childrens Aid. I'm also going to ask if after I testify if my

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

204

colleague Evelyn Zambrano can virtually testify right
after.

On behalf of Childrens Aid, I'd like thank Chair
Joseph and Chair Hanif for the opportunity to
testify. For 170 years, Childrens Aid has been
committed to ensuring that there are no limits to a
young persons aspirations. Today our over 2,000 full
and part-time staff members empower nearly 50,000
children, youth and families across Harlem,
Washington Heights, the South Bronx and the North
Shore of Staten Island. We are currently serving
nearly 150 asylum seeking families in our Early
Childhood Education Centers, NYCHA facilities,
community schools and community centers. Families
have come to us in need of appropriate clothing for
weather, culturally appropriate food, mental health
services and so much more for their children's
education. Our staff at these sites have had to step
in and fill in gaps left by city government. To add
insult to injury, this Administration called for a 15
percent PEG to city agencies and then blamed asylum
seekers for this cut. A cut that will significantly
harm the human services sector.

This means even less funding, coordination and resources for asylum seeking families when their needs were not met in the first place, as well as a catastrophic lack of services for all New Yorkers. Childrens Aid therefore calls on the city to do the following: Comprehensive multilingual messaging around the rights and resources available to all New Yorkers, better coordination of city agencies with their local community-based partners, community-based organizations, excuse me. The investment of more resources in human services contracts, which have historically been under funded.

We also need specific resources for human services workers with the vicarious trauma that they've experienced. Our workers also come from an immigrant background and they need support and they need better wages.

We also call on the city to commit to housing asylum seekers in permanent housing specifically in the neighborhoods that they've already received services in.

It's true that our New Yorkers, that New Yorkers are coming to the city with great need and at the same time, the services that we offer extend beyond

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

206

immediate assistance. They represent investments in the city's future. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify and please let me know if you have any more questions.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you much to you all for your testimony. Before we turn to questions for this first public panel, we'll next turn to Evelyn Zambrano on Zoom. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may begin before starting your testimony.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

EVEYLYN ZAMBRANO: Good afternoon. My name is Eveyln Zambrano and I am the Regional Family Services Director in the Early Childhood Education Division at Childrens Aid. Thank you for the opportunity to testify at this Committee meeting today.

We currently serve 30 asylum seeking families. Our Early Childhood staff have had to step in and fill in the gaps in communication and resources for these families. Today, I'd like to share a few instances that we've had with our newcomer families. At one of our sites, there is a family with an underweight two-year-old child.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

207

The shelter they are living in gave this family a single banana as their whole meal and gave no access to a kitchen that would allow this family to feed their toddler other options. Other instances include asylum seeking children coming into Childrens Aid sites without weather appropriate clothing. We've provided metro cards for parents, so that they are able to bring their child to and from school, gift cards for groceries and gift cards for clothing for the family and more.

We work hard to stay in contact with families who sometimes lack reliable access to cell phones, so that there is no interruption in services. Additionally, asylum seeking families are missing opportunities to receive life changing services because of misinformation they are receiving from the city. At one of our Early Childhood Centers located in the NYCHA building, we have a three-year-old and a single father. Their shelter worker told them that there are no services for a three-year-old child because she's too young for public school. This family didn't get any referrals or any support services and was under the impression that there were simply no resources available to them.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

208

The father only found out about us because he walked in off the street and inquired about what was in the building. We have concerns about the 60-day shelter rule. As an Early Childhood Educator, stability, consistency and safety, are important to the social/emotional wellbeing and healthy brain development of children. We are retraumatizing children and their families. We have to do better and find ways to work together to meet the needs of all New Yorkers. I'm happy to answer any additional questions you may have. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify today.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you all for your testimonies. I am very excited to hear about the proposal at Queens College. I am a graduate of our CUNY system, though not Queens College, Brooklyn College. Uhm, and this has been on my mind for so long because I got started in this work as a language justice fighter and that was how I got into tenant organizing, immigrant rights organizing in the lower east side.

So, can you talk a little bit more about this proposal? Have you been in contact with the DOE? What kind of support from the Council are you looking

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

209

for? Is this a program that is being replicated? I
would just love to take in some more information.

KATE MENKEN: Sure, so we've gotten commitments
from yes, with regard to partnerships with the New
York City Public Schools. We've gotten commitments
from Districts 24, 30 and Queens North High Schools
to partner with us on this initiative. You know
Districts 24 and 30 are two of the districts that
oversee the largest numbers of newly arrived
students. And the idea is that we would work in
partnership with them to place student teachers
within schools in those districts so that they could
then hire them once they're prepared and what was the
other part of your question?

Oh, yeah, \$3.6 million and I don't know you know
I don't really know how this works, I'm a professor
at the public university but we're just seeking funds
for our students to get tuition.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Understood, okay. Uhm, and
then what would the curriculum entail? So, like is
the recruitment of these students, the 280, would
they be according to languages like Bangla that you
identified and is there like a priority list of

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

210

languages that you're looking for and then what would
the curriculum entail?

KATE MENKEN: Right, so it's, do you want to talk
about it?

MARCELLA ZAPATA: Well, the curriculum would
satisfy the needs or the requirements for the
bilingual extension and we tailor our -- one of the
courses to address the -- to teach in the language
that the student is pursuing their extension. So, we
have flexibility to address the needs of students in
different languages.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Got it, so there isn't a sort
of like marker of like we would like to bring on this
many Bangla speaking students or this many? Okay.

KATE MENKEN: Not necessarily. Uhm, you know the
ideal is of course to get a cohort of students
together and that's usually what's done. At the same
time, we can graduate a single student at a time.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: And how would recruitment
take place?

KATE MENKEN: So, the recruitment efforts would
come from those districts specifically. Uhm, and
additionally you know we have undergraduate students
at our campus who would want to continue on for those

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 211
3 certifications who are also interested but then, what
4 we found is that when we were even just talking about
5 this, you know last year with the ITI, we started
6 getting all these inquiries from educators who wanted
7 to seek that additional licensure and take the course
work to do it.

8 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Well, I uh, support this
9 proposal without knowing too much. I have the packet
10 here of the proposal but I'd love to just stay
11 connected and really find ways to bring in the
12 Council to support this and I know that you would
13 find many champions, particularly because this
14 Council is filled with CUNY alums. So, excited to
15 connect and learn ways to make sure that this is
16 something that we're able to bring into
17 implementation.

18 KATE MENKEN: Thank you so much.

19 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Uhm, have you thought about
20 partnering with bilingual pupil services?

21 KATE MENKEN: Yeah bilingual pupil services is
22 going to be a critical component of this because we
23 see the paraprofessionals as a key ladder, career
24 ladder to the bilingual extensions. So, thank you.
25 It's a great program.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

212

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Yes it is. I'm an alumni.

3 KATE MENKEN: Oh, wonderful. That's wonderful, I
4 didn't know that.

5 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Yes. So, thank you yeah,
6 that would be a great pipeline.

7 KATE MENKEN: Yeah, it is a key pipeline for
8 paraprofessionals as they're pursuing their
9 undergraduate license.

10 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Wonderful, thank you so
11 much.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you all so much for
13 your testimony. We will now hear from our next in-
14 person panel. So, we'll hear from Jose Adolfo
15 Jimenez, Gina Cirrito, Natasha Quiroga, Melissa
16 Escano, Tamia Blackman-Santana, and Trenton Price.

17 I believe Mai Lee had to leave but Mai Lee, if
18 you are still present, please also approach. Thank
19 you. [04:08:35]- [04:08:55]. You may begin when
20 ready. Please state your name toward the top of your
21 remarks so that we know who is speaking. Thank you.

22 JOSE JIMENEZ: Sure. Is that better? Oh okay.
23 Alright, here we go. Good afternoon esteemed members
24 of the Council. My name is Jose Jimenez and I'm here
25 to share my testimony with the hope that my story

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

213

will help to elevate the importance of supporting the education of multilingual learners. I stand before you as a proud graduate of International High School at LaGuardia Community College, a school which supports this special community which is often overlooked.

International changed my life and empowered me with the tools that allowed me to seek opportunities I couldn't have dreamed of when I first arrived in this city. I was able to graduate from high school, college and graduate schools. I was the first person in my family to achieve this. In fact, at the time, my very own sibling and cousin attended other traditional high schools in our neighborhood, and eventually dropped out.

That marked difference resulted from the different educational experiences we had. I've dedicated the past 20 years of my professional career to public service here in New York, and I recently joined the executive team at Internationals Network. Why share my story now? Since my days at International High School, 15 other Internationals Network schools have been opened in New York City and 15 others across the country under the mantle of an

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

214

educational non-profit called Internationals Network
for Public Schools.

They serve over 6,000 in New York City alone. My
story is only one of them. That's a real impact in
our community, and now more than ever, recently
arrived immigrant communities need our support. In
New York City, there are over 120,000 newly arrived
immigrants, adding almost 30,000 to our schools, with
22,000 students overall in shelters.

Newcomer multilingual learners including asylum
seekers have higher rates of interrupted formal
education resulting in lower literacy levels,
limiting their opportunities to succeed under the
extremely difficult circumstances they already face.
They need our help.

Internationals is stepping up to the challenge.
We've submitted proposals for two new schools and
raised money to support ten existing New York City
schools in order to give a fighting chance to
countless lives of students and their families. I
was once given this opportunity through education all
those years ago, so I'm asking you to step into the
moment by supporting schools serving the students.
Thank you for your time.

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 215

3 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Whoever would like to go
4 next can go ahead. And just please state your name
5 at the top. Thank you.

6 MELISSA ESCANO: Melissa Escano. Good afternoon
7 Chair Joseph and Chair Hanif. My name is Melissa
8 Escano, I use she, her pronouns. I am a social
9 worker with Make the Road New York at the Bushwick
10 Campus Community School. We're being thrown around
11 with no real help. I just want to a stable place for
12 my children, cried the mom I spoke with as she shared
13 her experience of being evicted with her entire seven
14 family members in just 24 hours. This family
15 received only a 24-hour notice that they were being
16 evicted from one of the shelters that they were in.
17 Her son is a student at our Bushwick Campus Community
18 School. A teacher had already shared with me that
19 she had noticed that the students seemed disconnected
20 and worried in class and was not the same since the
21 eviction.

22 The family was living in a shelter in Bushwick
23 near the school and was just moved to a hotel in
24 Queens. It's almost taking him two hours to get to
25 our school now. Her other two children are also
attending a school in Bushwick and are having the

1 same experience. The mom works at a factory in New
2 Jersey and the father goes out to look for work every
3 day. They arrived from Ecuador seven months ago.
4 They're undocumented and they're waiting to see if
5 they can get a legal consultation to see if they have
6 any immigration relief. The mom says that the food
7 at the hotel is not good. It depends on the time
8 that it's being given. There is no kitchen for them
9 to cook and she fears that her children will be ill
10 because they're not eating the food that is being
11 given at the hotel.
12

13 The student also shared with me that a worker
14 from the hotel had told them that they should start
15 looking for housing soon because ICE was going to
16 come and do a raid in the hotel. The story of my
17 student and his mom seemed to be the one of thousands
18 and thousand being displaced each month in the city
19 uncertain of what's to come in the next few weeks, as
20 the holidays approach. Just last month, a new report
21 from Advocates for Children stated that an alarming
22 rate of one in nine students in New York City are
23 homeless. It also showed that in the district I work
24 in, District 32, we have one of the highest
25 concentrations of students experiencing homelessness.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

217

Less than a few weeks later, Mayor Adams announced sweeping budget cuts to the city agencies, including massive cuts to education services and supports.

As a formally undocumented immigrant myself, who spent more than 18 years undocumented in this country, I know first hand the uncertainty and fear of the being moved around the city and by city and federal agencies with this regard for stability, respect and genuine humanity. So, I can only imagine what our young people and their families are experiencing. I am currently the social worker of Bushwick Campus providing different mental health supports and attendance supports to our students. I work with a lot of our recent arrival students, many who are feeling disoriented, lonely and their mental health is being impacted.

Our young people and their families are struggling in severe and in humane ways. Large families of being placed in a single hotel room with only two bedrooms, just like my student. He shared that his seven family members had to share the two beds and they only get air mattresses to sleep in this room.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

218

I recently went to Roosevelt Hotel to see for myself what was happening outside and I spoke to a family with a five-year-old. The family has been moved around the last three months from Rock Away to Brooklyn and now they're in Flushing. Their five-year-old has not been able to be enrolled in school. How is the DOE not seeing that it's own city is doing education and neglect. Mayor Adams has vowed that no child's education will be disrupted. From what we know students and families are facing every day, this is entirely untrue. This is completely unacceptable in a city that claims to be a sanctuary city. As a mother, as a social worker and immigrant, as a human, I am demanding that our city agencies like the DOE and our Mayor to stop these inhumane attacks against our most vulnerable communities.

No matter where you live, when you arrive here or where you're from, everyone deserves a home. I'm asking that we, if we have to go ourselves to see what's happening in these hotels, in these shelters outside of them and speak to the families and get direct testimony from them, because they're telling us exactly what's happening there. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Any one of you can speak.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

219

TAMIA BLACKMAN-SANTANA: Hi, how are you? I'm
Tamia Blackman-Santana. I'm the Chief Officer of
Engagement and Inclusion Ballet Hispanico. Ballet
Hispanico is celebrating 53 years with the largest
Latina Hispanic Arts Institution in America and we're
located right here in New York City. I'm really here
to testify for the children of New York City and for
the joy and genius of the arts. I know speaking to
City Council members that I'm preaching to the choir.
We're all in it together. No one has ever seen
anything like this in New York City. City Council
members have endorsed Ballet Hispanico to be in over
18 CASA after school programs. We bring a curriculum
that is in partnership with Columbia Universities
Teachers College to really celebrate the Latina
African Disapora that's located in Latin America and
celebrate Latin American history.

We know that New York City does not have a
required ethnic studies course and so we're really
proud about the curriculum that we're able to bring.
This is a child centered approach and ask everyone to
really, where they come from, what their values, what
their culture is and bring it into the room.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

220

So, here I don't know if any of my fellow arts cultural institutions are here but we're just here to say, I'm here to personally say, I read the City Council's budget that went back with Mayor Adams and I have faith that the City Council will continue to fight for funding and culture and the arts for students. We know especially children who are new to America what healing the arts can be and we think our teaching artists are first and second responders. We met with the Chancellor of the DOE last September when this really we first start receiving our newest New Yorkers and asked how we can integrate together and how we can help welcome these students.

And so, I just want to say as you continue uhm, you know the arts is such a huge economic boom and pillar and anchor in New York City and I'm happy to gather my colleagues as you continue to talk to the governor and continue to talk to federal programs about how much they also need to kick in in order for all of us to help New York. And I know it goes back and forth but I'm happy to sort of gather the arts community, the Met and large institutions to talk about how much we need state and federal government now. Thank you.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

221

NANTASHA QUIROGA: Good afternoon and thank you
Chair Joseph and Chair Hanif for the opportunity to
speak today. My name is Natasha Quiroga. I'm
Director of Education Policy and inside schools at
the New School Center for New York City Affairs. For
20 years, inside schools has been the premier source
for millions of families who want to better
understand New York City public schools and we are
supporting newly arrived migrant families with
resources and support.

Since this past summer, Inside Schools has
facilitated in person workshops and met one on one
with parents at the new school and at nine HERRCs,
MDA shelters with no service providers throughout the
city. We work to fill the service gaps and helped
over 400 newly arrived families navigate the New York
City public school system, learn how to enroll in
school and figure out how to access school
transportation.

In the two weeks before school started this year,
we were at five HERRC sites. A few which had a TH
coordinator on site but often only one day a week.
But most families didn't know there was someone on
site or where to find them. There was no coordinator

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

222

at the Roosevelt the week before school started. At the five DHS shelters we are serving now, only one has a coordinator onsite one day a week. At this shelter, 20 percent of families who share their information with us had children waiting weeks to over two months to enroll in school.

Other families struggled to find childcare or early childhood opportunities because many parents have not initiated their My Schools account, several children miss getting off waitlists for Pre-K and high school. The number one concern parents brought to us was their child's school was too far from their shelter. So many families are already struggling to obtain transportation to school. Several families told us less than two weeks ago, that they can't get metro cards for themselves and their kids at their shelters, nor at their schools.

Others struggle with the distance to get to school on time, racking up tardies and unexcused absences. Another father worried about the long subway commute his teenage daughter would have to take alone to high school after the trauma she experienced before coming to the U.S.. Almost half of children living at the shelters we visited are

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

223

1 elementary school age. Parents who are able to
2 obtain metro cards struggle to take their kids to
3 school, care for younger children not in school and
4 work. Several moms have lost their jobs because they
5 had to pick their kids up from school or couldn't
6 find child care or 3K program.
7

8 We acknowledge the immense work of the DOE and
9 shelter staff have to do but too many kids are
10 impacted and are falling through the gaps. The vast
11 majority of families we met with were unaware about
12 their children's rights and unsure of who to reach
13 out to if they had problems.

14 More must be done to address the destruction, the
15 60-day role will have in children's lives in
16 education, such as allocating more resources to
17 support school transitions, increase coordination
18 between DOE, the shelters and community-based
19 organizations and assisting families access early
20 childhood opportunities near their shelters. We
21 don't just want our children to go to school, we want
22 them to succeed and thrive.

23 Thank you for the opportunity to share these
24 experiences with you and for your interest and
25

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 224
3 support of immigrant children, youth and families in
4 New York City.

5 TRENTON PRICE: There we go. Thank you Chair
6 Hanif, Chair Joseph and both Committees for hosting
7 this important conversation today. I am the
8 Executive Director of the Salvadori Center.

9 At Salvadori, we provide STEAM education
10 services, that is STEM plus the A for Arts and
11 Architecture, to schools, after-school sites, and
12 NYCHA community centers across the five boroughs
13 focusing on the built environment. Last year for
14 context, Salvadori taught over 8,000 students in 129
15 schools and community centers. And we are grateful
16 to receive support through CASA, Digital Inclusion &
17 Literacy, and the Speaker's Initiative.

18 I am speaking today as a former middle school
19 teacher, school and district leader, and now the
20 Executive Director of Salvadori, and as a parent.
21 Serving children is core to who I am and the work we
22 do at Salvadori. We at Salvadori have heard the
23 Council and the Mayor's pleas for innovations to
24 support the new families and children arriving to New
25 York City seeing asylum. Our hearts break for the
terrible situations so many are fleeing, and we want

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

225

to be part of the solution. As with many in the nonprofit education sector, we stand ready to lead and support these efforts. The challenge we see is families and children coming into temporary shelters with only 60 days to handle many immigration logistics.

But we also see an opportunity to welcome the young people into New York City and prepare them for school. Salvadori has developed a program to provide drop-in STEAM education services in these temporary shelters. These out-of-school sessions will introduce youth to New York City's urban landscape, provide them bilingual opportunities to practice English, and allow for collaboration with other children to create community. And all of this in a safe space in their shelter so parents can coordinate all the daunting immigration logistics. This model can be utilized by other nonprofit organizations to provide a variety of educational opportunities into shelters. We ask the Council to consider leveraging the model of CASA to set aside funding for nonprofits to provide these much-needed out-of-school services in the temporary shelters. Programs like this will allow young people to learn about their new home in

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

226

New York City, create community, and set them up for starting in school, all while providing parents time to work through the logistics of immigration.

I thank you for facilitating this hearing and for your commitment to these important issues. We are grateful to be able to serve New York City's youth and stand ready to do more. Thank you.

GINA CIRRITO: Hello, my name is Gina Cirrito from Manana Otro Dia. I have three children 5th, 7th and 12th in the New York City public schools and I know it takes a village. Last October, I witnessed the incredible resilience and compassion of our community at PS87 on the upper west side. 38 new New Yorkers arrived at our school carrying more than fear in their hearts. Our community, however, rose to the occasion coming together to provider these families with more than just material support. We gave them a sense of belonging, warmth and strength to face their challenges. Out of this spirit, District 3 Open Arms emerged. A collaborative effort involving District 3 schools, community institutions, and houses of worship, working tirelessly to ensure that these new New Yorkers would not only survive but thrive in our midst.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

227

Together with the JCC Manhattan and others, we created a network that goes mere assistance. It's a lifeline of support. People part of this conversation included your own Gale Brewer, Deputy Mayor Williams Isom, Superintendent Daniel and Ruth Messinger among others. This is a testament to the power of community. In the face of the 60-day rule, this vital community is under threat. Our schools have become homes. The bedrock stability for these children who have already endured so much. The fear that has been part of these families in the 60-day rule, we risk dismantling the very fabric of this support system that has been a beacon for those who found solace and hope without our District 3 schools.

I implore you to recognize the immense values these new families bring to our schools and community. They are not just statistics but cherished members of our extended families. Please, in the spirit of compassion and understanding, do not include families with children in the 60-day rule. At the core of New York City policy, let us passionately commit to every possible endeavor to safeguard these students educations from further disruption. Let there be allowing them to remain at

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

228

their current schools, meaning allowing them by
having transportation and metro cards or not sending
them far from where they go to school now.

We need to focus on real problems, not create
more. Real problems or the fact that schools don't
have all the metro cards they need. PS244 still
needs 50. They need a lot of support, mental health.
They need teachers and aides need support for second
hand trauma. I can go on and on but please, just let
our schools continue to be consistent nurturing homes
for these children. They deserve it.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: I have a question for Jose.
Can you elaborate on uhm, the supports that the
Internationals Network nonprofit has been giving to
schools over the last 18 months to support asylum
seekers on the influx?

JOSE ADOLFO JIMENEZ: I keep forgetting to turn
it on. We actually just started a new cohort
supporting school leaders for ten schools in New York
City, that includes supporting not just preparing
teachers to help the particularly community but also
leaders working with superintendencies and you know,
we're just looking for help to open up more schools
because we know that there are schools already at

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 229

3 capacity. We started the first cohort we're looking
4 for support. We raised over 200K from philanthropic
5 to continue this work over the next year or so. We
6 want to do another cohort but we need financial
7 support.

8 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you. I don't have any
9 additional questions.

10 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you all very much for
11 your testimony. We'll now hear from our next in
12 person panel. So, I'm going to call up Jonas Wooh,
13 Karen Kong, Aqida Rama, Jessica Selecky and Nurys
14 Leroux. And Jonas Wooh, you may begin when ready and
15 folks, if you could remember to state your name when
16 you begin speaking, that would be fantastic. Thank
17 you so much.

18 JONAS WOOH: Uhm, good afternoon. First, I want
19 to thank Chair Joseph and Chair Hanif and the rest of
20 the Council for allowing this conversation. My name
21 is Jonas Wooh and I am a Sophomore at NYC Lab High
22 School.

23 As the nation's only pan-Asian children's
24 advocacy organization, the Coalition for Asian
25 American Children and Families CACF, aims to improve
the health and well-being of Asian American and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

230

Pacific Islander children and families in New York City. I'm a youth advocate at the Asian American Student Advocacy Project or ASAP. ASAP is CACF's youth leadership program. I'm a part of ASAP's Language Access campaign. Our Language Access campaign aims to identify the academic and social needs and challenges faced by AAPI English Language Learners.

We also aim to advocate for an inclusive and welcoming school environment and culturally responsiveness resources for all students. I joined the Language Access campaign because I was not fully aware of how poorly ELL students were and are currently treated beforehand. Because I am not an ELL student myself, I felt it was important, even more important for me to learn about these issues. This is because I come from a background of privilege in this context, growing up speaking English at home, and so I need to make sure I can use that privilege to advocate for all students.

Two very impactful challenges our campaign discovered were a lack of culturally responsive staff and faculty, and a harmful and non-nurturing environment for ELL students. Now, these two

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

231

challenges go hand in hand. By that, I mean that they both are caused by each other, but are also the result of an unjust system behind them. Our team has found that staff and faculty in NYC public schools are severely untrained in cultural responsiveness.

Some schools even have staff and faculty that feel discouraged to be culturally responsive in the first place, so as to present better grades to principals. When the people nurturing the environment are apathetic and ignorant to students, especially to students who are learning English and adjusting to a new environment, they are naturally not going to feel like they belong, valued or supported. Cultural responsiveness in a classroom can be anything from simple things such as teachers taking initiative with clarifying things for ELL students. To more elaborate things such as making sure ELL students are not alone during class work.

For many immigrant students, especially AAPI immigrant students, asking for help is not commonly seen in the classroom, however, teachers should not assume students do not have questions or do not need help when they are not asking questions. The city, the Council and the Department of Education need to

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 232

3 ensure that staff are being trained on a regular and
4 consistent basis.

5 A one-time training is not going to be enough as
6 we should know, a very general and broad training is
7 not going to set teachers up for success and cannot
8 help the teachers to feel equipped or prepared to
9 respond to the diverse needs of the students.
10 Teachers and schools need to spend more time thinking
11 of ways to create an inclusive school environment,
12 where all students can feel like they belong and are
13 supported. Immigrant students should not be afraid
14 to ask for help or feel helpless in school, and all
15 students deserves to be seen as human and to be
16 valued. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

17 KAREN KONG: Good afternoon. First I want to
18 thank Chair Joseph and Chair Hanif and the rest of
19 the Council for allowing this conversation. My name
20 is Karen Kong and I am a senior at Midwood High
21 School. I'm a youth advocate at the Asian American
22 Student Advocacy Project, ASAP. I'm part of ASAP's
23 Language Access campaign.

24 Often times, people would assume the challenges
25 that ELL students face are all related to
translation, while it is true that there needs to be

adequately translated resources for ELL students, we cannot ignore the challenges that go beyond translation. One challenge is facing stereotypes. For example, one of my AAPI ELL friends would recall moments when her peers assumed that she's good at math and learns things quickly.

As a result, she was afraid to ask for help. When her classmates were engaged in conversations, she felt lonely because she didn't know what they were talking about. She also didn't get enough opportunities and have the confidence to interact with other students. School is not only a place to focus on academics, but also a place to build social skills, which are crucial for building relationships and feeling supported in their community.

Last year, my team collected the stories of AAPI ELL high school students in New York City. Our team learned that the barriers ELL students face go beyond academic challenges. They face cultural challenges as well as barriers in social interactions. One student said, "I wanted to be American so I abandoned my culture and language." But no one should feel the need to give up their identity to feel belonged.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

234

This is far from the inclusive and welcoming school environment that ASAP expects schools to have.

We recommend including more culturally responsive staff, which includes teachers and counselors. With school counselors that understand AAPI ELL students' individualized experiences as opposed to lumping their story with the entire AAPI community, it allows these students to feel recognized and valued in schools. We recommend schools putting in more effort to integrate ELL and native English speakers because they should not feel isolated from the student body. Schools are places where students spend a lot of time in, so it is very important for schools to be inclusive and welcoming so immigrant students can comfortably build those relationships with their peers. We believe that all students deserve to be supported, seen and valued in the school community, therefore we also ask the city and schools to think beyond the language barrier when serving the immigrant students. Thank you.

AQIDA RAMA: Good afternoon. First, I want to thank Chair Joseph and Chair Hanif and the rest of the Council for allowing this conversation. My name is Aqida Rama and I'm a senior at Brooklyn Technical

High School. I'm a youth advocate at the Asian American Student Advocacy Project, also known as ASAP, and within ASAP I'm a part of the Language Access Campaign.

As a former ELL student, my experiences weren't great. I often felt lost and teachers didn't seem concerned because of that. At parent teacher conferences, they depicted me as a quiet kid who didn't want to talk to other children. But since I wasn't academically behind, there was no real issue. In reality, I hoped to talk to others but I found it challenging and I was scared of others judging my accent or mispronounced words. I wish there was more understanding from teachers about the importance of social connections for students like me. Having someone notice and offer support would have made significant difference during my time as an ELL student.

Last year, my team started to identify that challenges faced by immigrant students. We collected responses from students from 18 high schools across the city. We gave valuable insights into the challenges faced by AAPI ELL students in New York City High Schools. One struggle was the struggle

with judgements and identity. This goes beyond academic hurdles and directly impacts their sense of belonging. Some students share that they were afraid to make friends in school because people made fun of their English pronunciations leading to social isolation in schools.

Some students shared that their teachers assumed that they didn't have any questions because they were quite in class. Many students expressed in their responses that they only wish to be treated and seen as a regular high school student, not as a foreign student who didn't belong. This is not okay. We need schools to actively foster an environment where AAPI ELL students feel genuinely welcome. To tackle this, we strongly recommend an increase in culturally responsive staff, including teachers and counselors. These staff members should be aware and celebrate students diverse backgrounds. Avoiding stereotypes and integrating cultural elements into their interactions, lessons and assembly's. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that every student, including immigrant students, regardless of their background, feel proud of their identity and fully see themselves in a school setting.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

237

It's crucial for schools to step up and create an environment that truly embraces and supports students learning English. This means more than just having resources. It's about implementing special programs that cater to their language needs and providing engaging materials for an inclusive learning experience. By doing this, schools aren't just helping these students academically. They're fostering a culture of understanding and respect among all students. As well ensuring that everyone regardless of their language background, feels valued and included in schools. Thank you.

NURYS LEROUX: My name is Nurys Leroux. I am a forensic social worker in the Education Law Project in the Legal Aid Society's Civil Practice and I thank the Council for their advocacy for new arrivals. At the Education Law Project, I collaborate with a team of attorneys who advocate for equitable educational access and opportunities for low-income students, primarily students with disabilities. Prior to joining Legal Aid, I advocated for education services for children in foster care.

Most relevant to today's hearing, I am a former New York City public school student who was

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

238

classified as an English Language Learner, often referred as an ELL. I was born in the United States, however, my family moved to the Dominican Republic when I was one year old. At the age of ten, we returned to the U.S. and enrolled in a New York City public school where I had to learn about an unfamiliar culture and navigate a completely new school environment.

I attended a 4th grade bilingual class, but there was no English Language instruction at all. The entire day was conducted in Spanish, including the extra ESL instruction I received. By middle school, my bilingual classes had some English instruction but not enough to get me to fluency. I had to learn English on my own by listening to music, watching TV and trying to talk to English speaking peers. I was isolated from my peers and could not connect with the school community. What I did have when I arrived in New York was stable housing and the ability to attend the same schools consistently. Acclimating to a new culture or environment is already intimidating and can negatively affect a students social, emotional and mental wellbeing. Now, the newest students are facing the added threats of frequent displacement due

the city's 60-day notice, potentially disrupting school stability on top of food insecurity, limited to no income, and unimaginable trauma.

Thank you for highlighting Chair Hanif and Chair Joseph, the inhumanity of this plan early in the hearing. As a social worker, I know that cultural competence is vital for helping newcomers adjust to a new country and it is important that we create school environments that are inclusive and stable. First and foremost, the city must stop issuing 60-day notices and retract the ones that have already been sent out so that new arrival students can have the stability that their schools provide.

Second, New York City public schools need more bilingual social workers, guidance counselors, and educators. Third, parents must be provided with translation services so that they can fully participate in the school community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony today.

JESSICA SELECKY: Thank you Chairs Hanif and Joseph, Council Members and staff, thank you for this opportunity to speak. My name is Jessica Selecky and I am the Director of the Special Education Unit at

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

240

the New York Legal Assistance Group. NYLAG's Special Education Unit advocates on behalf of low-income children with disabilities. I appreciate the opportunity to offer the following comments and I have also provided detailed written testimony. We are deeply concerned that imminent and severe budget cuts to NYCPSS budget paired with the recent surge of newly arrived immigrant students will exasperate existing inequities in an already ailing NYCPS. Which routinely fails to provide legally mandated supports and services to our most vulnerable student populations, including immigrant children, children with disabilities and children living in poverty.

For English Language Learners, the disparity and the quality of special education services that are provided is stark. According to a recent Comptroller data report, while 88 percent of students citywide received their IEP mandated SETTs or special class, only 36 percent of English Language Learners received the bilingual SETTs, ICT, or special class that they needed to progress.

Two challenges in particular that we are seeing that we expect to get worse are a lack of proactive outreach to the newly arrived immigrant community and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

241

an ongoing NYCPS transportation crisis. There's a lack of outreach to new immigrant students and their families to educate them on their children's right to education, bilingual education, special education, and bilingual special education services. Recently arrived immigrants report to NYLAG that they do not have the information that they need to request an initial evaluation for special education services or to even enroll in school at all.

Recently arrived immigrant children face distinctive hardships, which makes it imperative that NYCPS reached these families and helped them access the supports they need. Many of these children have experienced significant trauma in their home countries and on their journeys to the U.S., which can impact their educational needs.

Additionally, NYCPS is falling horrifically short already on its transportation obligations for students with disabilities and without. For students with disabilities, buses routinely don't show up. There's excessively long routes, buses lack the child's required accommodations for disability or medical condition or get in repeated accidents. For

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

242

newly arrived immigrant families, they have to wait
at minimum 60 days before a school bus is provided.

Parents who have no English, no familiarity with
New York City are handed metro cards and told to take
their children to school by themselves. However,
many such parents have several children in several
different schools, sometimes located over an hour
away from each other. It's impossible for these
families to get their children to school in a
consistent and timely manner.

In terms of what can be addressed, done to
address the challenges, the city must repeal the 60-
day limit for families in shelters so these
vulnerable children are not required to move and
these problems do not get worse. Additionally,
support for flexible funding could help and could
enable community-based organizations to respond to
the mirative of needs that these immigrant
communities are facing in order to help the
communities thrive. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you for testifying. I
want to just extend gratitude to the ASAP folks who
are here. I believe I was at your conference a
couple of months ago but thank you for your continued

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 243

3 advocacy and your commitment as young people to the
4 fight right now. We need your voices. We want your
5 voices to be the loudest ones in the room and your
6 direct experience and impact with the public school
7 system as ELLs makes a huge difference to this
8 conversation. So, thank you so much. We are so
9 appreciative that we get to learn from you. Thank
10 you. No questions.

11 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Oh, no wait. I also want to
12 thank you so much for being young people. I started
13 at 19 years old as an advocate, so I'm so proud to
14 see you here. Keep yelling and we'll keep listening.
15 I have a quick question for Special Education. How
16 long is the delay in getting families screened and
17 are you seeing this across the board including pre-
18 school with early intervention and all of that?

19 NURYS LEROUX: Unfortunately, I don't have that
20 information. You know at this point in our view the
21 lack of outreach is so severe that you know we just
22 have no idea.

23 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Thank you.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you so much for your
25 testimony. We will now hear from our final in person
panel before turning to our virtual panel. So, we

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

244

will next hear from Heather Choi, Alexander Reyes,
Jason Autar, and Lupe Hernandez. Heather Choi, you
may begin when ready.

HEATHER CHOI: Good afternoon. Thank you Chair
Hanif and thank you Chair Joseph and the rest of the
member of the Committee Council. Thank you for the
opportunity to speak today. My name is Heather Choi
and I serve as the Coordinator of Community and Youth
Engagement at the Korean American Family Service
Center.

Since 1989, KAFSC has remained committed to
providing culturally competent linguistically
appropriate services for survivors of domestic
violence, sexual assault and child abuse. Notably,
98 percent of those we serve face limited English
proficiency. We recognize the pressing need for a
culturally and linguistically appropriate services
within the Asian immigrant community.

In addition to our core services, KAFSC has been
actively engaged in supporting immigrant families and
students through a program such as the [04:47:23],
meaning little tiger after school programs serving
over 200 students and their caregivers daily and the
youth community project team.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

245

While many of our students have benefitted from English programs designed for limited English proficient students, they desire more comprehensive initiatives. These students often feel isolated, facing challenges in fully understanding academic requirements and expressing themselves due to the absence of English-speaking peers. A shortage of qualified teachers proficient in their mother tongue and language and the lack of resources including text books in their Native languages. The availability of support groups for extracurricular activities bridging both mother tongue and English-speaking environments, would greatly enhance their ability to connect with other English-speaking students on an equal forum.

Despite existing family support systems that are just orientation for parents with translation services, the lack of resources and staff has resorted in significant delays in accessing translation services. Additionally, inadequate translation of academic journey, materials for para's contributes to parental difficulties in navigating the school process.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

246

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter and for your continued support of the Korean American Family Service Center.

LUPE HERNANDEZ: Good afternoon. Hello Chair Joseph, Chair Hanif and all the Committee members. Thank you for granting me this opportunity to speak about this very important hearing regarding not only our immigrant and asylum seeking but our newest New Yorkers here in New York City public schools.

My name is Lupe Hernandez and I am speaking to you today in my own personal capacity as a New York City public school parent. I have a student in D2 and uhm, I'm also coming from you as a parent that's been very engaged in this work long before the pandemic, specifically acknowledging the supports needed for our students in temporary housing and our English Language Learners.

I have been boots on the ground from the very beginning with Project Open Arms and the Borough Response teams, as well as even being appointed to the taskforce to address our transportation issues for our students in temporary housing because it is a long existing problem that has been historically, we've been voicing our concerns and I appreciate the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

247

administration taking this past year to acknowledge
some of these issues.

Aside from the many concerns that have been
spoken about today regarding the 60-day rule, I want
to remind you again about the historical context the
city has been facing that has only compounded in the
recent year. But prior to doing that, I think it's
really important that we acknowledge and uplift and
thank all of our parents and volunteers, community
members, CBOs, schools, PTA's, PACs, many people have
been on the forefront volunteering and filling the
gaps. And I think it's really important that we just
acknowledge that. Because I can't emphasize enough
how much community care has done for these families
in providing a safe and welcoming environment.

We've helped form everything from community
closets, pantries, the resource fairs that you heard
about earlier. Many nonprofits are doing this work.
Many parents are doing this work. And so, aside from
our community schools and language access and social
workers and students with disabilities, I want to
thank Lara for highlighting that discrepancy in the
financial fair student funding weight that's
currently impacting these students. And I also want

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

248

to thank NYLAG advocates for children and our special education because they really highlighted the impact of our students with disabilities.

But the lack of communication has and continues to be at the root of the problem. I just want to remind you, D2 lost about 3,500 students. This was pre-pandemic and even during the pandemic, when shelters were closing, and the reason for this is that our family shelters were closed and these families were moved without any notice to boroughs really far, Queens, the Bronx and there was zero communication or even organization of how these students would get back into their schools that they had been at. The stability is really important for these kids and uhm, I am very concerned if this historically has been an issue for OPT, just dealing with DHS. We know that every other agency that is now involved is just making that much harder.

So, I implore you to again just I thank you for holding this space. Uhm, but we know that a lot of these issues existed before and we need more not less. So, anyway, many of the solutions provided today we are part of as parents and we are encouraging you as City Council members to play your

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

249

part because we are definitely doing the most that we
can as parents in this front. So, thank you very
much.

JASON AUTAR: Good afternoon Chair Hanif, Chair
Joseph. My name is Jason Autar and I serve as the
Chief Operating Officer for the Oyate Group, a
nonprofit organization.

The Oyate is derived from the Lakota Sioux
language translating to the people. In alignment
with this, the mission of the Oyate group is to serve
the people.

Today, I am here to share with you the inspiring
journey of our beyond rising undocumented internship
program and it's transformative impact on the youth
of New York City.

In the summer of 2022, the Oyate Group
collaborated with Fordham University to establish an
undocumented internship program for high school youth
age 16 to 20. Our goal was simple, to place 20 young
people across the university by providing hands-on
experience. Throughout the five-week program, the
Oyate provided participants with on-the-job training,
along with a weekly stipend of \$500 distributed
through prepaid visa gift cards. Interns worked four

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

250

days a week and attended workshops at Oyate headquarters on Friday, covering topics such as financial literacy, time management, communication, and advocacy skills. The workshops laid the foundation for the interns, many of whom experienced a professional setting for the first time. The inaugural cohort expressed that the opportunities presented at Fordham University gave them access and the belief that they could attend a post-secondary institution.

Additionally, our Friday sessions at the Oyate offices allowed for special bonding experiences outside of a typical work environment. Including trips such as an escape room challenge, a city scavenger hunt and a culminating trip to Six Flags adventure. For many of the participants, it was their first time going to New Jersey, let alone Six Flags.

In the summer of 2023, we expanded the program in partnership with Lehman College, accommodating 40 participants, with two cohorts of 20 each at Fordham and Lehman. The programs philosophy remain unchanged, to foster meaningful partnerships and provide impactful work placements. Two interns were

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

251

assigned at Fordham's Her Migrant Hub. Their resource for women asylum seekers. One of the interns who was a migrant herself reflected on designing pamphlets and asked, what would I have benefited from that I never received. Another notable placement was at CUNY's Mexican Studies Institute at Lehman College, where participants supported by the staff and faculty develop the podcast. They use photography to express themselves artistically and curating a segment of the departments oral history project.

For Oyate, this optimized this transformative vision of beyond rising, empowering young people to leverage their skills and their life experiences as subject matter experts. Both departments at each institution requested the return of these specific interns for the academic year. Beyond Rising has expanded to an academic year cohort. In order to better align with participants interest, we added placements at Hostos Community College, the Center for Educational Equity at Teachers College, at Columbia University, the social entrepreneurship labs, the Public Relations Firm Task group. The academic year cohort requires interns to dedicate

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

252

upwards of 25 hours a month providing scheduling flexibility while receiving a \$500 monthly stipend via prepaid gift cards.

The Beyond Rising undocumented internship demonstrates Oyata's commitment to inclusivity, providing opportunities and making a tangible difference in the lives of young people. Our program can be used as a template to ensure that undocumented young people across New York City have equitable access to resources. Thank you.

ALEXANDER REYES: Good afternoon honorable members of this Committee and distinguished guests. My name is Alexander Reyes and I'm here on behalf of the Oyate Group. A nonprofit organization whose main mission is to alleviate poverty across New York City and empower and represent our communities.

New York City is a city of immigrants who work hard to provide for their families and children. They live in our neighborhoods, work in our restaurants, clean our city and attend to our schools. However, they cannot live a normal life due the fear of deportation and the lack of [04:57:42]. Despite this, there is a tremendous potential in the immigrant community, especially among students.

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

253

Undocumented students aspired to be doctors,
engineers, scientists, teachers and lawyers.
Unfortunately, the lack of the same opportunities of
domestic students due their immigration status.

However, Oyate Group is working to change this
reality for the better. Oyate has created
undocumented students internship called Beyond
Rising. At this program participators are not judged
by their status, but by their ability to explore,
learn, and become professionals who will continue to
be valuable members of this society. Beyond Rising
participants are able to grow in the sciences,
humanities, law, marketing and higher education. At
Oyate Group, we value our participants contribution
which is why we compensate them with a \$5.00 gift
card for every 24 hours of work.

This opportunity helps participant to make
valuable connections leading to college admissions
and potential jobs. Beyond Rising is building future
leaders who will likely one day run this institution.
Oyate Group not only helps our student to succeed and
reach their full potential but also hires former
undocumented individuals. I came to this country
with no clear path to succeed. I crossed the

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

254

Southern Border in 2012 as an unaccompanied minor. I

was later adopted and obtained a residency.

Graduating at the top of my class, I earned a full
scholarship to attend to St. Lawrence University.

After graduating, I decided to join Oyate because I
believe in their mission and the work that they do
for youth. Together, we have opened many doors and
proven that it's possible, which is the reason I'm
standing here delivering this testimony. Thank you
and we are ready for questions.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Oh, where are you located?
And thank you, you are the American dream.

ALEXANDER REYES: Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: And in invest in you, you
are the epitome of the American dream. Where are you
located and where do you service?

JASON AUTAR: So, our primary catchment area is
uptown in the Bronx but we have young people – so,
just to put it plainly, we only have 20 slots for the
academic year cohort. We received over 400
applicants. About five of our young people, one
young person lives in Glenn Oaks and she travels to
Fordham every Saturday, every Saturday. That's the

1 COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
2 THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 255
3 opportunity that we create. It's just a drop in the
4 bucket.

5 ALEXANDER REYES: I also would like to add that
6 we also take college students who are freshman's and
7 sophomore's and every day that they're done with
8 school, they go straight up to their internships and
9 work and you know gain that experience in different
10 fields across the city.

11 CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: Wonderful, so thank you for
12 that work. We'll have continued conversation.

13 PANEL: Thank you.

14 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you all very much for
15 your testimony. I'll now turn to our virtual panel.
16 We'll first hear from Nancy Beddard followed by
17 Delvin Bartley. Uhm, and Nancy Beddard, please wait
18 for the Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may
19 begin before starting your testimony.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

21 NANCY BEDDARD: Thank you for the opportunity to
22 testify at this hearing and for your ongoing efforts
23 to support students who have recently arrived in the
24 United States, their families, and the staff in our
25 public schools. Again, my name is Nancy Bedard, and

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

256

I am a Senior Staff Attorney at the Education Project
at Legal Services New York City.

The Education Rights practice at Legal Services
assists hundreds of New York City school children and
their families each year to ensure access to
education and I am education training in that office
and today I would like to share that the experience
that I had trying to advocate for students who are
newly arriving to the United States and who have
limited to no English language skills. And what my
experience has been is that it's been very difficult
to navigate the emission process for these students
and train mid-year and students of limited to no
English Language skills, many of these students
deserve an opportunity to be placed in high schools
quickly. These students have the intention of
attending high school and learning English and being
gainfully employed upon completion and/or attending
higher education programs. As we've heard, many of
these students today [05:02:52]. Our experience as
advocates have been the inability of families to
quickly sign document requirements and the long wait
to be placed in these high schools make many of these

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

257

teenage students who their goal is the American dream.

And so, what we're asking is that we need more high school options for arriving high school students. These options should include more dual language programs referred today about how it is limited and how dual language programs are much required and needed for these students and many of these students are older.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

NANCY BEDARD: The travel time is very difficult. We are hopeful that our city can assist these newly arriving students with placements at the high schools and welcome center with appropriate translation and interpretation. I'm not sure if my time has expired. If it has not, we also want to applaud the New York State Regents for their policy of less regents scores and with the exemptions but what we really ask is that these students attempting to pass the Regents and pass high school in New York City that they be given ELL and dual language tutoring to assist these motivated students in completing their course. As we know the New York State right now has Regents requirements that are for high school and we know

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

258

that the amount of students, ELL students and newly arriving students are not able to complete high school in four years. We also are seeking that New York City be mindful of the traumas that many of these students face traveling to an arriving in the United States. New York City DOE should embrace the differences in the cultures and offer them a broad range of services like arts, music and sports, that do not require or may not require the English language to be useful and therapeutic. And that we're very hopeful that these students are given an opportunity to be educated in a healing centered school. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much for your testimony. We'll now hear from Dalvin Bartley. Please wait for the Sergeant at Arms to announce that you may begin before starting your testimony.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time starts.

DALVIN BARTLEY: Good afternoon. Thank you Chair Joseph, Chair Hanif, and members of the Committees on Education and Immigration for the opportunity to testify. My name is Dalvin Bartley and I am a Mid Atlantic Program Manager at Generation Citizen based

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

259

in New York City. Via our "Action Civics"
curriculum, secondary school students apply social
studies learning to the real world by studying and
advocating an issue of importance in their
communities.

Over the past two years, Generation Citizen has
experienced tremendous demand for our programming,
allowing us to expand from about 150 classes in
Fiscal Year 22 to over 230 classes in FY23, and about
321 classes in the current Fiscal Year 24. This
constitutes at least 8,025 students served across all
five boroughs. Our project-based learning program
allows students to connect with one another and their
communities, supporting middle and high schoolers'
social emotional learning and culturally responsive
and sustaining education.

Interest in our programming has boomed as schools
seek to support students' emotional and community
needs as we gradually emerged from the pandemic and
have seen an increase in immigrant students in our
schools. Many of our school partners serve districts
and neighborhoods that house many students whose
families are immigrants to this country, and many of
the students we serve speak a language other than

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

260

English at home. For example, at I.S. 125 58 percent of their student body is Latinx and 30 percent of their population is Asian. For East Bronx Academy for the Future, 66 percent of their student population identifies as Latinx.

GC works to ensure that our curriculum is accessible for all students, providing the student handbooks in different languages for many of these schools. This is a common thread throughout all of the schools that Generation Citizen partners with, which is proof that immigrant students in the NYC DOE need to be kept at the forefront of conversations when discussing support that can be provided to ensure that all students have an equitable opportunity for a high-quality education.

Over the years, Generation Citizen students advocated on a range—

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

DALVIN BARTLEY: Of issues, including school-based campaigns like advocating for healthy and equitable school lunch options, which resulted in the introduction of Halal food to the school lunch menu. Others focused on community concerns like increasing protections for low wage workers, particularly

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

261

immigrants, the lack of affordable housing in New York City, and addressing racism and discrimination against Asian Americans and other marginalized groups, including families who have immigrated to this country.

All students, especially youths of color, socioeconomically disadvantaged youth, immigrant and refugee youth for whom our public education system may be their first exposure to a democratic process and other youths from underprivileged or otherwise under represented backgrounds need meaningful and powerfully engagement within our public institutions as an integral part of their core social studies education. GC is incredibly thankful for the City Council's renewed funding in the past few years. Generation Citizen hopes to continue with the partnership with the Council and the Department of Youth and Community Development to bring civic education to schools as we continue to support students of all backgrounds in the action civics process. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you very much for your testimony. We have now heard from everyone who has

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

262

1 signed up to testify. If we inadvertently missed
2 anyone who would like to testify in person, please
3 visit the Sergeants table and complete a witness slip
4 now. If we inadvertently missed anyone who would
5 like to testify virtually, please use the raise hand
6 function in Zoom and I will call on you in the order
7 of hands raised.
8

9 Seeing no one else, I would like to note that
10 written testimony, which will be reviewed in full by
11 Committee Staff, maybe submitted up to the record up
12 to 72 hours after the close of this hearing by
13 emailing it to testimony@council.nyc.gov. And now, I
14 will turn it over to Chair Hanif to close out the
15 hearing.

16 CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you so much. I'd like
17 to acknowledge that we have been joined by students
18 from NYU from the NYU Democrats in particular. Thank
19 you all for joining us for this urgent critical
20 hearing joint by Committees on Education and
21 Immigration. We've learned a lot and we have many
22 questions still to be answered, particularly on the
23 impacts of the 60-day rule and the shuffling that is
24 happening within the DHS shelters, which are not a
25 part of the 60-day rule. We still have pending

COMMITTEE ON IMMIGRATION JOINTLY WITH
THE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

263

questions about transportation and busing issues,
particularly for students whose shelter reassignments
are far away, further away from the school that they
are beginning to build community. And of course, we
remain uhm, very critical of the staffing shortages
particularly around bilingual educators and want to
make sure that with the influx of students, that we
have the resources and adequate educators needed to
ensure that they have a successful time in our school
system.

And with that, Chair Joseph, if you have any
final thoughts?

CHAIRPERSON JOSEPH: I think you said it all so.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: One more announcement from
Nicole.

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: In abundance of caution, I'm
just going to call names of those who registered just
to make absolutely sure they have the chance to
testify if they're still present. I'll call on Mai
Lee, Sharon Leslie Brown, Christopher Leon Johnson,
Tamon Ula, and Paulette Healy. Alright, turning it
back over to Chair Hanif.

CHAIRPERSON HANIF: Thank you all. Till next
time. [GAVEL]

C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date December 10, 2023