

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

DANIEL DROMM
Chairperson

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[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much and thank you all for coming out today. Good afternoon I'm Council Member Daniel Dromm and I'm Chair of the Education Committee. Today's hearing is on a preconsidered resolution calling upon the New York state legislature to eliminate the governor's receivership proposal in the executive budget for New York City. I'd like to thank my co-sponsors that signed onto this very important resolution, the members of the Education Committee that has joined me and all of you that have turned out today to testify. New York state governor Andrew Cuomo's executive budget includes a plan for the State Commissioner of Education to designate receivership districts and the lowest 2.5 percent and schools in the lowest achieving five percent state wide. In these cases the State Commission of Education would be authorized to a penitent individual, another district, or a nonprofit organization to assume the management of the school or district. The so called receiver would have the power to unilaterally change school budgets, curriculum, collective bargaining agreements,

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2 school schedules and school staffing. The receiver
3 would also be authorized to convert the school into
4 a charter school uh-huh without a vote from
5 parents. There is no evidence of the effectiveness
6 of this receivership model and many aspects of it
7 are quite concerning. Let me add in districts where
8 we have seen receivership most cases it has failed.
9 And in some cases has even made the situation
10 worse. In addition to the proposals lack of a solid
11 vision or evidence of success it is tied to the
12 budget in a way that could ultimately harm the
13 students of the state and the city. Under the
14 leadership of Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina
15 the New York City Department of Education has
16 designated 94 schools as renewal schools. This
17 renewal schools program includes 150 million dollar
18 investment and an enormous commitment to improving
19 the lives of students and families and communities
20 that these schools are in. While this is a
21 relatively new agenda it is showing signs of
22 working. This plan needs time to take root and to
23 develop. As a former teacher in the New York City
24 public school system I can attest to the importance
25 of commitment and consistency in the lives of our

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2 students. Long term changes are needed in many
3 schools and their renewal program is just a
4 beginning of such a process. The receivership plan
5 the governor proposes could undermine any positive
6 changes and create more turmoil for students and
7 families. Again I want to thank you all for coming
8 and we're going to hear the first witness in a
9 moment but first I want to introduce my colleagues
10 who are here with us today. We have Council Member
11 Mark Treyger from Brooklyn, Council Member Chaim
12 Deutsch the chair of the subcommittee on nonpublic
13 schools and Brooklyn as well, and Council Member
14 Margaret Chin from Manhattan. And I'd like to bring
15 up our first panel and that will be Karen Alford
16 from the United Federation of Teachers 52 Broadway.
17 And before you begin Ms. Alford I do swear
18 everybody in in this committee. So I'm going to ask
19 if you'd raise your right hand please. And do you
20 solidly, do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell
21 the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the
22 truth and to answer council member questions
23 honestly. Thank you. And would you turn the mic on.
24 I think the red light should be on. And then you
25 can begin.

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2 KAREN ALFORD: Thank you Chairman Dromm
3 and members of the education committee. It's
4 certainly a privilege to testify here today on
5 behalf of New York City's public school educators
6 and the 1.1 million students that we serve. I
7 taught in District 23 Ocean Hill Brownsville for
8 many years and I was the district representative in
9 that community. And under the previous
10 administration this community faced a lack of
11 support from the Department of Education and there
12 many many many school closings. The UFT has fought
13 to strengthen school communities and to improve
14 outcomes for our children. And since 2012 the UFT
15 has embraced a community learning schools model for
16 our 24 schools so that schools in communities like
17 Ocean Hill Brownsville receive these holistic
18 approaches that they so deserve. And we understand
19 that all struggling schools must have this holistic
20 approach where we address the whole child and there
21 must be a strong academic core. And that is why we
22 embrace this partnership with Mayor de Blasio and
23 Chancellor Farina and we believe that we are moving
24 in the right direction by having these 94 renewal
25 schools and we certainly hope that we will reverse

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2 the effects of the years of neglect and
3 mismanagement under the previous administration.
4 This 150 million dollar investment will certainly
5 help our schools and give them the supports that
6 they've needed for so long. This community school
7 approach and individual school plans that each
8 school will have to create they'll be developed in
9 partnership between the DOE and the UFT. These
10 schools will be working to add more guidance
11 counsellors to establish academic interventions to
12 make sure that there are more health and mental
13 health programs including dental and eye screenings
14 that we built partnerships with community
15 organizations. In these schools you will see more
16 instructional time in the school day. Smaller class
17 sizes, and you will see that the teachers will be
18 receiving more coaching, mentoring, and
19 professional development. All the ingredients that
20 are needed to help turn schools around. And we
21 understand that under the renewal school process we
22 have three years, three years to set these clear
23 goals and improve outcomes for all of our students
24 in these schools and be held accountable for doing
25 this work. And we certainly accept that challenge.

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2 And we see the work that's occurring at Boys and
3 Girls. And since Principal Wilshire's here he will
4 certainly talk about his school. But how you can
5 look at Boys and Girls as a model that in the early
6 stages clearly the school is moving in the right
7 direction and you see the same type of movement at
8 automotive high school and Williamsburg Brooklyn as
9 well as Richmond Hill High School and PS284 in
10 Brooklyn. And there's so many other schools that we
11 can site where you are seeing a stronger academic
12 core. You are seeing more programing for
13 afterschool's. You are seeing more parents
14 engagement and we are moving the dial already in
15 the short amount of time. We believe that our new
16 contract lends itself nicely to the renewal schools
17 to be able to move schools. We have time built in
18 the day for parent engagement. There is time for
19 teachers to work on their craft. And so we do have
20 professional development once a week. There are now
21 teacher, teacher career ladder programs so that
22 teachers can learn from master and model teachers
23 in their school as we help build capacity within
24 our educators. So we believe that New York City is
25 certainly moving in the right direction. And that's

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2 why it's disheartening to us when you look at the
3 governor's proposal. This idea of receivership is
4 dangerous and then we'll certainly impede the work
5 that we've been doing collaboratively here in New
6 York City. And we think that we see that
7 receivership is just a fancy way of saying state
8 control. We are opposed to this idea. We believe
9 that the approach that we're taking in New York
10 City is certainly the right way to go as opposed to
11 the governor's plan which should strip away local
12 control and turn a school over to this outside
13 entity. We've seen that it doesn't work. It hasn't
14 worked in Roosevelt Long Island. It hasn't worked
15 in Newark. It hasn't worked in Indianapolis. And
16 the list goes on and on and on. And Roosevelt what
17 we've seen is that there were a lack of books,
18 sloppy record keeping, and an influx of millions of
19 dollars but yet the system didn't get any better.
20 What we saw in Newark after 18 years of state
21 controlled you saw that the graduation rate did not
22 rise and the test scores was still abysmal. And
23 Indianapolis what you saw in some schools the water
24 was shut off in some school buildings. Independent
25 operators were asking for more and more money. So

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2 what we think is privatization of a central public
3 services tends to mean less public oversight and
4 more problems. And that's why certainly turning
5 over our schools to a private company or
6 organization is the wrong way to go. This top down
7 approach that the governor's proposing is the wrong
8 way to go. And we'd like to ask the governor to
9 please certainly abide by the CFE lawsuit and make
10 sure that that 2.6 billion dollars is restored to
11 the public schools here in New York City because
12 that will certainly help as we try these efforts to
13 turn around our school. In reality this is just the
14 governor's way of playing politics with our
15 schools. And so for all of the aforementioned
16 reasons we strongly support the council's
17 resolution today and we hope that we are able to
18 continue the good work that's beginning in our
19 renewal schools in collaboration with the city, the
20 UFT, and the DOE. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you very
22 much. Appreciate you coming in and giving some
23 testimony. I always like to hear from teachers
24 exactly what's going on in their shoes having been
25 a teacher for 25 years in New York public school

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2 system. I believe deeply that we really need to
3 talk to the practitioners to know what's going on
4 on the grassroots ground level in the classrooms
5 and so hearing your testimony is very very
6 important to me. I do have some questions.

7 KAREN ALFORD: Sure.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I notice that you
9 said in your testimony that the teachers were going
10 to be spending an extra hour of instruction on a
11 daily basis. Is that for all of the renewal
12 schools. I know that that was true I believe in
13 Boys and Girls high school.

14 KAREN ALFORD: Each school is developing
15 their own action plan. And this hour of time may
16 also be offered by the CBOs. So each school may
17 look very differently and what the need is but
18 there will certainly be additional time to the day.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So how is that
20 possible. Is there a provision in the union
21 contract that allows people to decide the hours or
22 extension of the day?

23 KAREN ALFORD: It can be done creatively
24 through a school based option that the school can
25 take. But the CBO can also help add that additional

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2 time to the day so the children will be there. And
3 the instruction will also be provided by that
4 community based organization so it does not
5 necessarily have to be the classroom teacher
6 providing that additional instructional time.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And so the funding
8 for that is worked through the CBO or, or it could
9 be done with procession money?

10 KAREN ALFORD: It could be done with
11 procession money but for this pot of money this 150
12 million that's being allocated to the schools it's
13 from that, from that allocation is my understanding
14 that that would help pay for it for the
15 programming.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Now I believe that
17 CTE programs were also a part of the renewal
18 schools program. Can you elaborate on that further?

19 KAREN ALFORD: Schools are still
20 creating their plans. So again each school will,
21 will have a unique plan unto itself for its
22 neighborhood for its children. So in automotive you
23 do see a CTE approach of course. You might not
24 necessarily see that in every school because they
25 are certainly trying to tailor based upon a needs

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2 assessment what the intervention should be for that
3 particular school.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And in Boys and
5 Gils, and I'll probably ask Principal Wilshire
6 later about this there's been an increase in
7 attendance. Is there any particular reason that's
8 attributable to why the attendance has gone up. Is
9 there something that is keeping the students coming
10 to school more frequently than in the past?

11 KAREN ALFORD: I certainly think
12 Principal Wilshire is the best person to speak on
13 behalf of boys and girls. But from what we're
14 seeing in PS 284 and the other schools yes as
15 they're creating their plans as they're having more
16 afterschool programming as they're looking at their
17 offerings during the school day as you're seeing
18 more and more programs in the schools. Even around
19 the wrap around services because sometimes children
20 are absent because the parent has to take the child
21 out of school to go to the dental appointment or
22 the eye exam. As we're offering more and more of
23 these services in the school children are losing
24 less seat time because these, these different
25 occurrences are happening during the school day.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So this holistic
3 approach to me sees quite a departure from the
4 failed policies of the past where we saw an
5 administration, the Bloomberg Administration to be
6 specific solely focus on test scores and not on the
7 overall benefit of the child. Would you agree with
8 that?

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I would certainly
10 agree with that. We're schools, we're know, we know
11 that certainly academic success is paramount but
12 it's so important that we have to address the
13 challenges and, and the needs of our children
14 brining to our classrooms every day. And so some
15 people say it may not be the place for the school
16 but we know that it is... children come in hungry, we
17 have to feed them. When they can't see we have to
18 offer the eye exams because if I don't have glasses
19 I, I'm not going to work and be able to achieve at
20 an optimal level. So yes the holistic approach in
21 partnering with parents and families we believe is
22 certainly in the right direction. That's why the
23 UFT has been doing this and its community learning
24 schools.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I wonder if that
3 also isn't a part of the reason for the attraction
4 for students to prove their attendance is the, all
5 the wrap around services that are offered,
6 motivates them to come into the building in the
7 first place. I think so and, and you know as
8 teachers are building capacity through professional
9 development as we've added a parent engagement time
10 and so parents feel like they have a voice in the
11 system that I think they didn't have under the
12 previous administration. I think it's all of those
13 things that collectively add to why schools are
14 moving in the right direction under the renewal
15 program.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is part of what the
17 teachers are talking about in the schools when
18 they're looking at the plans that they're drawing
19 up for the renewal schools, something that you
20 mentioned before like almost on a daily basis in
21 the school where I taught at a student would come
22 into the classroom with some type of a problem,
23 some type of an issue that they were dealing with
24 at home. Would there be an opportunity in these
25 schools for somebody, because I was very difficult

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2 for me to stop what I was doing and try to deal
3 with the issue that the student was bringing to me
4 at the same time try to provide some instruction is
5 there anybody who is going to be there like a
6 social worker or a guidance counsellor to be able
7 to deal with the issues that these students bring
8 in almost on a daily basis.

9 KAREN ALFORD: I think if you look at
10 the data on these schools you will see that
11 compared to other city schools there are a higher
12 concentrations of more vulnerable populations. So
13 in these schools you will see more students that
14 live in transitional housing. You will see you know
15 very high free and reduced lunch numbers. You will
16 see... you know all, all of this, high special ed
17 numbers. And yes it's so important to us and part
18 of the renewal schools program is making sure that
19 these schools do have more guidance counselors
20 working with more mental health institutions and
21 organizations so that for children or families that
22 are in crisis there is an outlet, there is a way to
23 help. So yes you certainly will see higher
24 concentrations of guidance counsellors and social
25 service organizations.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: In your testimony
3 you also mentioned the issue of privatization. It
4 does seem to me that the governor is trying to
5 privatize the public schools in a roundabout way
6 through both the receivership and ultimately by
7 turning some of the schools over to charter
8 schools. This committee has held hearings on
9 charter schools in the past and have had very
10 little cooperation from the charter school sector
11 in terms of providing us with information in terms
12 of transparency accountability. And I'm wondering
13 how that would also affect our public school
14 system.

15 KAREN ALFORD: Well we think that our
16 Mayor is very capable of handling our struggling
17 schools and certainly previously there was
18 certainly a move to close schools before trying to
19 support schools. And so we think that that is
20 certainly the direction to go and not to turn
21 schools over to an outside entity with not, with
22 folks that don't necessarily have a proven track
23 record when already in this short time we're seeing
24 that schools are making gains. Schools are moving

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2 in the right direction. And I'm sure you'll hear a
3 similar kind of testimony from Principal Wilshire.

4 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You know this over
5 toward privatization and corporatization of not
6 only public schools but of many what were
7 considered governmental serveries in the past is
8 also something of major concern. Before, prior to
9 being the chair of the Education Committee I was
10 the chair of the Immigration Committee. And it's
11 estimated that approximately 50 percent of all
12 immigrant detention centers are run by private
13 institutions. And we've seen a tremendous amount of
14 corruption in those detention centers and in the
15 way in which services are provided including issues
16 like solitary confinement with very little
17 oversight by government agencies into what is
18 exactly going on in those institutions. And one
19 that particularly comes to mind is juvenile
20 detention centers. Where we've actually seen and
21 had examples of cases around the country where
22 juveniles were kept in these detention centers, not
23 immigration but regular juvenile detention centers
24 because the private corporations that were running
25 them wanted to keep the numbers high so they got

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2 larger amounts of reimbursement from the state. So
3 this is something that I fear when we talk about
4 privatizing our public schools. And I could just
5 see a number of things happening you know including
6 fudging enrolment number, services provided,
7 etcetera. Is that a concern of yours also?

8 KAREN ALFORD: It's certainly a concern.
9 I mean we've seen in state after state city after
10 city where there has been privatization of
11 education it hasn't worked. And as you said
12 oversight has been very poor. And so it's a huge
13 concern to us that if these schools are turned over
14 to some outside entity what does the accounting
15 look like? How do we make sure... as you said that
16 the numbers aren't fudged. We want to make sure
17 that our children are getting a sound basic
18 education and we're not sure that that will happen
19 if you all aren't allowed to have the oversight
20 and the chancellor and the mayor aren't allowed to
21 have the oversight that's so needed once you decide
22 to privatize education.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And this will be the
24 last observation question that I have for you and
25 then I'm going to go to other council members as

1 well. But basically you know we've had a long
2 struggle in this city for local control over our
3 public school. And now it seems the pendulum is
4 going the other direction again where the state
5 wants to come in and impose itself on us after we've
6 fought so hard to have this local control over our
7 schools so that parents have an opportunity to have
8 a say about what goes on in these schools, what
9 happens citywide. Are you of the same opinion that
10 local control over our schools is vitally important
11 to their success?
12

13 KAREN ALFORD: We certainly believe
14 that. You know we breathed a sigh of relief once
15 the last administration was no longer involved in
16 education because we did feel like people were shut
17 out of the process. Parents didn't have voice,
18 educators didn't have enough voice. And so finally
19 to have voice to have a partnership to have a
20 collaboration we feel like, we feel like we are
21 turning things around in a positive way for all the
22 children in New York City. So yes we want to keep..
23 [cross-talk]

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: ...I was always taught
25 also when I went to methods classes in those days

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2 as they might have been called that the parent was
3 the child's first teacher.

4 KAREN ALFORD: Yes.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that if you
6 really wanted to be successful in school you needed
7 to engage their first teacher so that you could
8 incorporate what the parent was doing with what the
9 teacher was doing in the classroom as well. And I
10 think we've, with the proposals by the governor
11 really moved too far away from that idea of parents
12 being the first teachers of our children.

13 KAREN ALFORD: I agree.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay thank you.
15 Alright we don't have questions so you're getting
16 off the hook easy.

17 KAREN ALFORD: Thank you all.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright thank you.
19 Okay our next witness will be Michael Wilshire, the
20 principal from Boys and Girls High school in
21 Brooklyn. Welcome Mr. Wilshire. I have to swear you
22 in. So I'd ask if you would raise your right hand
23 please. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the
24 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth
25 and to answer council member questions honestly.

1 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes I do.

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay thank you and
3 you may begin your testimony.

4 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Okay thank you.

5 Good afternoon Chairman Dromm and members of the
6 Education Committee here today. My name is Michael
7 Wilshire and I'm the principal of Boys and Girls
8 High School and Bedford Stuyvesant Brooklyn. Thank
9 you for the opportunity to speak about school...
10 program and the progress it is bringing to boys and
11 girls. For me the renewal story did not begin when
12 I became principal at Boys and Girls last fall. It
13 started in 2001 when I took over as principal of
14 Medgar Evers Collage... School, then middle college
15 high school at Medgar Evers College. This was a low
16 performing school where only 14 percent of the
17 students gradated with a... diploma and 61 percent of
18 the students graduated in four years. I came to
19 Medgar Evers College Preparatory School from a high
20 performing school district on Long Island where
21 almost all the students graduated and went onto
22 college or entered the workforce. For e the key
23 question was why can't we do the same thing here.
24 Now the graduation rate at Medgar Evers College
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2 Preparatory School is in the high 90s. This school
3 offers an early college program with Medgar Evers
4 College where many students graduated from high
5 school with just a high school diploma but also an
6 associate degree. The school also offer a situation
7 where all high school graduates graduate well
8 prepared to enter college. The question and the
9 challenge has been the same at Boys and Girls. I
10 taught at Boys and Girls nearly 25 years ago. Then
11 it was the pride and joy of Bed-Stuy. I returned
12 because I was confident that with my experience and
13 Mayor de Blasio's and Chancellor Farina's vision
14 for supporting and lifting up struggling schools we
15 can change the dynamics of this school. We know
16 that children on Long Island at Medgar Evers and at
17 Boys and Girls are no different. They all deserve a
18 high quality education while some need more support
19 than others. They all deserve a path for college
20 and meaningful careers. Reeling from a decade as a
21 struggling school Boys and Girls students need that
22 extra support and attention. That's what the
23 renewal, renewal program is for. And since day one
24 at Boys and Girls that is what it is delivering. My
25 staff and I have received the support and resources

1 we need to change the direction at our school. As
2 part of the renewal program we have added an extra
3 ninth period of instruction each day and new
4 Saturday academy where students learn in small
5 groups and prepare for the regions examinations. We
6 have developed an excellent relationship with Aimee
7 Horowitz the Executive Superintendent for School
8 Renewal Program who has been there every step of
9 the way with instructional and operational support.
10 With the guidance of Amy and our renewal coaches we
11 assess where our students were and where they
12 needed to be and developed a, and implemented the
13 interventions to get them from where they are to
14 where they should be. We ask the hard questions
15 about why students were not succeeding in the core
16 subject areas they needed to graduate in time. And
17 we reprogrammed the entire schedule to ensure that
18 students were taking the required courses. We took
19 collective responsibility for the fact that our
20 12th graders were not being pushed to the full, to
21 their full potential. Now we have an individualized
22 plan for every senior in our building. In the
23 spirit of the coming of full community school which
24 is essential piece of the renewal initiative we are
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1 investing in resources and services that meet the
2 needs of students and the families we served. Since
3 I came to Boys and Girls in October we have
4 launched a mentoring program for our struggling
5 students. We have worked closely with good shepherd
6 services, our partner CBO to provide counselling
7 for students. And we are deepening that partnership
8 this summer and next school year as part of our
9 full transition to be in a community school. We are
10 bringing parents into the building for monthly
11 Saturday brunch where they can learn about the work
12 the school is doing, ask questions, and raised
13 concerns. We have worked to strengthen our own
14 craft as educators through frequent intensive
15 professional development leveraging our resources
16 in this case with our partner school Medgar Evers
17 College Prep and our higher education partner
18 Medgar Evers College. We are conducting joint
19 professional development with Medgar Evers College
20 Preparatory School. Our teachers are receiving
21 coaching and improvement strategies from their
22 colleagues who have experience in leading high
23 achieving classrooms. On top of that as part of our
24 assessment and reprogramming process we had each
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2 time for Boys and Girls teachers to collaborate on
3 academic plans for their students. With our focus
4 and transform, and the transformation of Boys and
5 Girls comes high expectation and accountability. As
6 part of this transformation all teachers must
7 reapply for their position at the end of the school
8 year. With only a few months into my tenor in the
9 renewal program we are starting to significantly
10 change the dynamics at Boys and Girls High School.
11 In October when I came to Boys and Girls 40 seniors
12 were on track to graduate on time. Based on the
13 corrective measures that we implemented we now have
14 80 seniors on track to graduate and another 26
15 students who are almost in track. At Boys and Girls
16 our students are not just getting more time through
17 the new 9th period and Saturday Academy. The school
18 attendance is also improving. This is a leading
19 educator of the academic subsets and one that I
20 believe reflects our aggressive work to meet... needs
21 of all our students and engage them in learning
22 again. January regions scores are up. Several
23 students have enrolled in AP courses with our
24 partner school Medgar Evers College Preparatory
25 School. And over a hundred students are

1 participating in our early college program with
2 Long Island University. I must tell you that I'm
3 extremely proud and indeed excited to see so many
4 of our seniors receiving their college acceptance
5 letter. This is progress but it is nothing rest, to
6 rest on... In fact the work is picking up as we
7 headed towards the end of year one and the
8 beginning of year two of our renewal. There had
9 been more assessment and intervention like
10 reprogramming and developing plans tailored to each
11 student's need. We will be, we will be more work to
12 tur boys and girls into a true community hub a
13 holistic program that meets students and families
14 where they are with community school services. And
15 there will be more thoughtful professional
16 development to improve teaching and learning in our
17 classrooms. This is unprecedented work for boys and
18 girls. My staff and I are confident as we approach
19 the work ahead and we expect to be held accountable
20 for the success. I look forward to working with Amy
21 Chancellor Farina, the mayor, and our city
22 including the city council to make Boys and Girls
23 high school once again the pride and joy of Bed-
24 Stuy. Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Pride and joy of
3 Bed-Stuy. Alright. I'm so glad to hear in your
4 testimony that your expectations for Medgar Evers
5 and also for Boys and Girls are the same
6 expectations that you had when you were an
7 administrator in Long Island. Because I do really
8 deeply believe that our students deserve and need
9 those same types of expectations and standards set
10 for them because when the standards are held high
11 our students can achieve. And I, I also, I went to
12 a catholic school it was St. Mary's Boys High
13 School but it was a college preparatory school. And
14 I think just having those words in the title of the
15 name of the school to me meant you're going to
16 college kid. You know and I think having that in
17 the, in the, in the name of the Medgar Evers School
18 as well with the expectation you're going to
19 college is a really good way to start. So let me
20 congratulate, congratulate you on that. And I, I
21 also saw in your testimony that you've done an
22 individualized plan for every senior in the
23 building. Can you just describe how that went and
24 how you work that out and the logistics of that
25 because that to me is very interesting to hear.

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2 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes so at Boys and
3 Girls we have 189 students in the court meaning
4 that 189 students started the 9th grade. When I
5 arrived at Boys and Girls I mean about 16 students
6 transferred and we currently have 146 students
7 attending boys and girls in the, in the 12th grade,
8 146 students in the 12th grade. Of these 146
9 students we have around 80 of those students who
10 are on track to graduate so they have a graduation
11 plan. We then have another 26 students who are not
12 quite on track but almost in track. So for those
13 students we have given them a mentor. We have set a
14 Saturday academy program for them and so we have
15 develop a plan specific for those students to meet
16 their needs. We then have another 39 students who
17 are highly over age and so and under credited.
18 Those students are placed in a task program in the
19 school where they're working towards their high
20 school, New York state high school diploma. And
21 we're hoping that about 20 of those students will
22 graduate. Part of the plan with those students is
23 that they spend half of the day working on their
24 high school equivalents and the other half therein
25 a CTE program with CuabTech [phonetic] And there

1
2 are another small, smaller group of students who
3 are reading below the fifth grade level. Those
4 students we have placed them with District 79 in a
5 literacy program so that every student who are
6 currently at Boys and Girls in the 12th grade we
7 are account, we have accounted to, for, for, for
8 everyone. So this seems to me to be a very detailed
9 plan which is obvious from your knowledge of the
10 numbers of students. I mean that is quite admirable
11 to hear that you know that there's a 98 here and a
12 110 here or whatever your numbers were. I can't
13 even remember them at this point. And I think
14 that's really important to individualizing the
15 instruction that you're providing to those
16 students. What is your class size, your average
17 class size? Has that changed at all in your school?

18 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: They, I don't think
19 the average class sizes change but the average
20 class size at Boys and Girls I would say is around
21 20 students.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How many?

23 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: 20.

24

25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay... [cross-talk]

Who are the mentors that you're assigning the students?

PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: We have assign teachers and other staff members to no more than one or two students. And basically what they do they would call those students in the morning, the students would come and they would meet with them. Someone, a trusted adult in the building that these students can look up to, someone who really cares about them and can give them that personalized attention. And I think that was significant in improving our attendance and also students' academic performance as well.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I notice in your testimony also that you said it was a part of the transformation teachers must reapply for their positions. My first question in regard to that is how did the teachers in the union react. And number two do administrators also have to reapply for their jobs.

PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Administrators will also have to apply for their jobs, yes.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what about the,
3 the teachers in the union contract.

4 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Well I think that
5 was part of the agreement between the UFT... [cross-
6 talk] So I, I think you know I think it, it's a
7 difficult situation but you know just something
8 that has to be done.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. So how do we
10 beat the self-fulfilling prophesy of Boys and Girls
11 High School being a quote unquote failed school? In
12 other words how do we change that idea in the
13 public's mind so that we can attract students to
14 that school if they want to go to that school.

15 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Alright I, I, I may
16 go back to what we did at Medgar Evers College
17 Preparatory School. What you do, we have to change
18 the entire culture, the perception of the school.
19 And part of what you do to do that is you ensure
20 that you bring to the school the quality academic
21 program, the other support that our students need.
22 You, my approach is to have a holistic academic
23 approach so that we bring back I mean rigorous
24 academic programs. We bring back the fine and the
25 performing arts. And we couple that with the, with

1
2 the athletic programs. And so that the community
3 can begin to see I mean how students fair in these
4 areas. And that was what we did at Medgar and the
5 population at Medgar Evers College grew from 600 in
6 2001 to 1300 where it is today while most other
7 schools were going down were, were chopping up into
8 small schools. So I think it has to do with the
9 kind of academic program and, and so forth that you
10 bring to the school that will attract the
11 community.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So when I visited
13 Boys and Girls I saw that former councilman Al Vann
14 was there and a number of other community leaders
15 were there in the school. I also met a nun, a
16 catholic nun who is having involvement with your
17 school. And I forget what organizations.. [cross-
18 talk] and what, what is good shepherd services
19 going to provide to your school?

20 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Good Shepherd
21 Services is our CBO partners. They provide what
22 they call advocate counselling. They also help with
23 our tenants outreach. They also provide tutoring
24 services and so forth. So they're kind of embedded
25 in the fabric of the school.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. I'm going to
3 turn it over now for questions from other council
4 members. And if I have something more I'll come
5 back and, and ask... Next will be Council Member Inez
6 Barron. Thank you very much.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr.
8 Chair. And Mr. Wilshire it's a pleasure to see you
9 here. And I just want to say that your record is a
10 stellar record and I'm sure that's a part of what
11 motivated the decision to bring you to that school
12 that has such dire needs. I know that you're going
13 to be successful. You've got a staff that's behind
14 you. I know people there and you know people talk.
15 They're there, they're supporting you, and they
16 want, every one of them wants to be associated with
17 success. No one wants to be associated with
18 failure. So I applaud you for taking on this
19 challenge and want to say that I'll be there
20 supporting you. And just in terms of the
21 receivership that the governor is proposing I think
22 it is just disingenuous for the governor to expect
23 that a school that has been through 12 years of the
24 Bloomberg regime and has consistently declined
25 under that program that puts such huge emphasis on

1 testing did not have a well-rounded curriculum in
2 terms of allowing for the arts and athletics to be
3 incorporated in that so that children can have many
4 opportunities to shine and then hopefully
5 transition those successes to the academics.
6 Schools were underfunded. The governor at one point
7 had said that as far as he was concerned CFE was
8 done. And it's only now that there's a more
9 continued effort and push that there's discussion
10 about bringing forth that money. We can't say that
11 education is important without funding it to the
12 degree to reflect what we think is its importance
13 so we're hoping that that will happen and will,
14 that will come class sizes that have a manageable
15 number of students in the class as well as a
16 wraparound services and professional development
17 and also support for the principals that are there.
18 So I just want to say I encourage you with what
19 you're doing and in any way that I could be
20 supportive please reach out to me, I'd be glad to
21 do that.

23 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay Council Member
25 Treyger.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you Chair
3 and welcome Principal. And we, we here believe in
4 you and believe in your school and your vision and
5 mission. And so we don't always hear those words in
6 the past decade. But we, we as a, especially this
7 committee, many educators here we, we, we, we
8 believe in what you're capable of doing, what your
9 staff is capable of doing. I just want to ask a
10 couple of questions about how many total kids are
11 in Boys and Girls High School?

12 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: There are 512
13 students in register at the moment.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: 512. And are
15 they from Bed-Stuy community or are they from all
16 over...

17 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: They're from all
18 over.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: From all over.
20 And can you just tell us there are some who think
21 that schools operate somehow in isolation of their
22 communities. And I think that that's, that's the
23 wrong view of schools. It takes a village to, to
24 really educate and raise the child and, and the
25 school that yes has an impact on the village, the

1
2 village has an impact upon the school. Can you tell
3 us about the surrounding dynamics of the community
4 challenges, strengths, opportunities that you've
5 been able to kind of partner and connect with with,
6 with your school. I think one of the things that,
7 there, there has been tremendous good will from the
8 community we have, able to have lots of community
9 support, many people from the community have come
10 in and asked me what can they volunteer to do. You
11 know so sometimes excess is not too good but I, I'm
12 really moved by just the tremendous amount of
13 goodwill from the community, from, for Boys and
14 Girls.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: And, and if we
16 put let's say test scores aside and not look at
17 kids as numbers and people as numbers what are
18 things that you enjoy seeing in your school every
19 day? What are things that you like to celebrate,
20 things that you want to cultivate and build that
21 are not captured through a test score, not captured
22 through a progress report or, or a state report
23 card? What are things that you're proud to see in
24 your building happening every day that you're
25

1
2 celebrating that are not always captured on a piece
3 of paper?

4 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: And... a first
5 student. They want to learn. And the, and, and if I
6 may just give you an example of that. I have a
7 situation where we had these students were not
8 doing well. They were all under credited. They had
9 no really hope of graduating end, at the end of
10 this academic year. I met with those students about
11 18 or 19 of them and I told them that I was going
12 to develop a plan for them to get at least a high
13 school, a new York state high school diploma. And I
14 outline the plan where we, they will come in half a
15 day and then the other half a day they would go to
16 CuabTech and I asked them when would you like to
17 start and they said tomorrow. And I said if you're
18 serious meet me here at 8:00 the next morning.
19 Every single one of those students turn up. As a
20 matter of fact they got there before I did. And
21 that tells me that our students, all that they want
22 is to get that opportunity. They need to have that
23 caring and that supportive environment where we
24 believe in them. And you know those are some of the
25 the things that I really celebrate.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Isn't it
3 amazing that, that the thing that we needed, we
4 needed the most in our system doesn't really cost a
5 dime.

6 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yeah.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: It's about
8 having faith and belief in our kids and our, and
9 our... but speaking of costing dies the state has
10 historically as it's, it's been recorded and, and,
11 and a lawsuit. It's well publicized. The state has
12 short changed the city, this, the school district
13 billions of dollars. And if you divide that by the
14 number of schools that we have in the city of New
15 York your school is owed millions and millions of
16 dollars. What could your school do with millions of
17 dollars in enhancements it doesn't have right now.

18 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Okay let, let me
19 tell exactly what we could do.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Please, I'd
21 love to hear it.

22 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: We could look at
23 our science labs. We'd renovate and upgrade all of
24 those science labs. We'd bring back some of the
25 career technical education programs such as the

1
2 welding program, such as the building trades, such
3 as our architecture and design program. And so we
4 would bring back, we developed an outstanding
5 career technical education program. We would
6 upgrade our science labs. We would improve some of
7 our facilities like our dance studio and so forth.
8 And so that would go far away in bringing some new
9 changes, facility changes and so forth that we..
10 [cross-talk]

11 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Well I hope, I
12 hope Albany is listening to you because they are
13 really notorious for imposing mandates but not
14 funding them. And when I keep hearing the term
15 college and career ready and career technical
16 education programs then you obviously have the
17 vision. You have kids and staff on board but your,
18 but you're lacking what they're lacking is the
19 faith from their own government and not just in
20 words but in actions.

21 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: You know if I may
22 the way in which we have structured our program now
23 is that there're really three strands. We have our
24 early college. We also have our, what I call our
25 college bound. And we have our career technical

1
2 education. So students who would like to take on
3 the challenge of beginning college work very early
4 they can begin that early college program. If they
5 want to do advanced placement courses and prepare
6 for college they have that opportunity. If they
7 want to go directly into the workforce they will be
8 able to get a career that can give them a living
9 wage so that they can enter the middle class if we
10 still have one. And, and so you know that is, that
11 is how I vision. I mean Boys and Girls... in the
12 future.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you. And
14 I, and I, and just some closing I turn over to the
15 chair as a former teacher myself I know firsthand
16 and I know what you're talking about. The things
17 that you see happening in your school that are
18 amazing, that are extraordinary that are never
19 captured on a piece of paper. And I take issue when
20 people call the, when people all schools and people
21 failure, children failures when they're doing
22 extraordinary things and if you have kids working
23 on architecture and building trades those are
24 careers that they can make, they could support
25 families and buy homes and really become middle

1
2 class. So that's not a failure. The failure here is
3 the failure on the government's part to support
4 schools like yours to really meet the needs of our
5 kids today. Thank you. Chair thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
7 And I met a student at the school who has already
8 been accepted to Syracuse University and was wait,
9 awaiting other acceptance forms, letters before he
10 made a decision what college he's going to go to.
11 So that was great as well. Now we're going to turn
12 it over to questions from Council Member Rose and
13 Council Member, and then followed by Council Member
14 Chin. And we've also been joined by Council Member
15 Allen Maisel, Council Member Mark Levine, and
16 Council Member Antonio Reynoso.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Good afternoon
18 Principal Wilshire.

19 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Good afternoon.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: As a, a person who
21 worked at CUNY in a dropout prevention program for
22 20 years I truly truly recognize the challenges
23 that you've had and the wonderful achievements that
24 you've accomplished in a very short period of time.
25 and I want to congratulate you. And I am a firm

1
2 believer in the holistic approach in terms of
3 academic achievement. And so while you were
4 speaking I, I was really pleased to hear that your
5 expectations and your standards are high. Because I
6 believe that if we set the bar high our students
7 rise to that standard and that level. And I think
8 for far too long the bar's been too low. And so
9 again I want to thank you for what you're doing
10 there. But in your testimony I didn't hear anything
11 about parent engagement. So are you doing anything
12 in terms of parent engagement, in terms of maybe
13 trying to change the culture in the home that would
14 help sort of reinforce all of the, the wonderful
15 things that you're reinforcing during the school
16 and after school hours. Is there any effort to
17 bring the parents in and make them a part of that
18 student planning... [cross-talk]

19 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes, yes there is.
20 I must say I was very disheartened when I arrive at
21 boys and girls in the first PTA meeting that we
22 had, we had maybe less than a dozen parents showed
23 up. I mean what...

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I'm sorry, could
25 you speak into your mic.

1
2 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Oh... [cross-talk]
3 better? Yes? So what I'm saying that, that I was
4 very disheartened at first when I arrive at Boys
5 and Girls and that there were not many parents
6 participating in the schools.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Absolutely.

8 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: So we have come up
9 with a plan and one of the ways in which we can get
10 parents out is to find some way to acknowledge the
11 accomplishment of their children. They will always
12 come out to celebrate their child. So we're doing
13 Saturday brunch where we can, where we get students
14 awards for their achievements in attendance,
15 academics, and so forth and also invite the parents
16 to come and celebrate that with us. And also on the
17 28th of this month for example we are bringing out
18 the parents to be a part of our planning for next
19 year. I've also... retreat in the school we are
20 invited the parents to come out and for, for, so we
21 can hear their voice, what their, their needs are.
22 And so we're making a concerted effort to get the
23 parents involved because you know the, the
24 education of the child is, as you may well know is
25 not just the teachers but the parents they play a

1
2 pivotal role in this, the students and, and so all
3 of us it takes to be on the same page. So yes that
4 is of high priority for me to engage as many
5 parents as we can.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Thank you. I'm
7 really glad to hear that and I'm sure you're
8 helping them sort of demystify the college process,
9 the application process and, and just some of the
10 trepidation or even the fact that parents sometimes
11 don't believe that their children are college you
12 know material and, and don't plan for them to be
13 college bound. So I'm sure that's also a part of...

14 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: ...the conversation.
16 And I just wanted to, to say to the chair that I'd
17 like to have my name added to this reso. And again
18 I thank you for what you're doing, having,
19 acknowledging the challenges and really welcoming
20 the forward progress that we're, we've seen there.
21 Thank you.

22 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
24 Council Member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you Chair.

Principal Wilshire I also want to add my
congratulation to the success of boys and girls
high school and it also for me as a parent, as a
former teacher I think every kid's going to school
want to be successful. And they want to have the
opportunity to learn. I don't think any kid's going
to school just want to fail. So they do need the
resources and the support and I'm so glad the
school is finally getting that. So my question to
you is that in this whole renewal program how much
more funding are you getting directly from DOE to
be able to implement the kind of program that
you're doing right now for the individual students?

PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Well the, the DOE
has been extremely supportive of our program and
the things that we've planned that's for example
the, the development of our welding program and so
forth. They have, they are supporting that and I'm
sure they will be funding that. So I, I'm satisfied
at this point that we're getting a tremendous
amount of support from the DOE.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So out of that
3 budget of 150 million right now you're satisfied
4 with the amount that you're getting?

5 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: I don't know how
6 much I'm getting... yet.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But you, I heard
8 your wish list earlier so I think it's, it's good
9 to let them know early on that the science lab
10 needs to be fixed. I need to be the you know first
11 class for our student. And also when you were
12 answering the questions about the average class
13 size you said 20. And when I heard that I'm really
14 surprised, it's good. So what is the largest class
15 that you have there?

16 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: The largest class
17 that we have, may be about 30 students.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: That, that's, that
19 is amazing for high school So we, and that is I
20 guess one of the reason why the kids are doing
21 better when you're a smaller class size you get a
22 lot more attentions and individualized learning
23 and, and that helps right?

24 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes that does mm-
25 hmm.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Good. And, and we
3 just wanted to make sure that the governor hear us
4 loud and clear that schools like Boys and Girls
5 High School and all our school are New York City
6 schools. And we're on our way to improving our
7 school and we wanted to keep it under our control.
8 And so I thank you for the good work that you're in
9 there and we look forward to working with you.

10 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: You're welcome,
11 thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Council
13 Member Chin and I, that measure was also delivered
14 loud and clear yesterday when we went to Albany to
15 speak with the legislatures there that we agree
16 with the 63 percent of the folks who were surveyed
17 in the Quinnipiac poll that they disagree with the
18 governor's plan and that we continue to believe in
19 local control over our schools. So thank you for
20 reminding me of that. Now we hear from Council
21 Member Mark Levine.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Thank you Mr.
23 Chair and thank you Mr. Wilshire for being here and
24 for your very eloquent powerful comments. I think
25 that you have probably given us the best proof of

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2 why this proposal for receivership is just so
3 unfair and unwarranted and a receivership is used
4 by states in extreme circumstances; when there's a
5 locality that goes bankrupt or there's some sort of
6 endemic corruption or massive financial
7 mismanagement organized crime, infiltrating local
8 government or some sort of willful sustained
9 negligence and none of the applies here. Even those
10 who might quiver with the details of the policies
11 that, that the DOE's implementing on turning around
12 schools have to, can see that there is an intense
13 well thought out well intentioned effort. And with
14 leaders like yourself on the ground one that I'm
15 betting has a great chance of succeeding and for,
16 for the governor to come in and seize control in
17 this environment midcourse of, of such an intense
18 effort is, is I believe a violation of sovereignty
19 of New York City and so we want, we want to give
20 you the, the room to succeed , a chance to succeed
21 and we want to make sure that you're not interfered
22 with by any outside forces. Really just a comment
23 from me and a thank you to you for your effort sir.

24 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Oh you're welcome.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Not only does the
3 governor of Council Member Mark Levine want to come
4 in and take control of our schools but he wants to
5 re-implement failed policies from the past. I mean
6 you can't make this stuff up. It's unbelievable.
7 Anyway I want to thank Principal Wilshire for
8 coming in and I, actually Ambassador Principal if
9 I'm not mistaken is your correct title. Because you
10 do for two schools...

11 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: ...am I right?

13 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: ...sir. Thank you very
15 much for coming and we appreciate your time and
16 letting us know what's happening in your schools.

17 PRINCIPAL WILSHIRE: Again thank you for
18 the opportunity.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And our
20 next panel will be Zakiyah Ansari from the Alliance
21 for Quality Education and Natasha Capers from the
22 Coalition for Educational Justice. I see we have
23 Communities for change in the house so... We know
24 when you're here. Okay thank you. And I do swear
25 everybody in in this committee so I want to ask if

1
2 you'd raise your right hand please. Do you solemnly
3 swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth
4 and nothing but the truth and to answer council
5 member questions honestly?

6 [combined affirmations]

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay who'd like to
8 start?

9 ZAKIAYAH ANSARI: So thank you to the
10 council for having this hearing on receivership. I
11 think there's a lot of better more important things
12 we could be talking about but we have to talk about
13 this so I'm glad that we are having it here. So my
14 name is Zakiayah Ansari. I'm the advocacy director
15 for the Alliance for Quality Education, a statewide
16 alliance that for the last 15 years has been
17 fighting to ensure the state meets its
18 constitutional obligation to provide every child
19 with a sound basic education including the
20 commitment to fully funding the Campaign for Fiscal
21 Equity. But I'm also a mother of eight and a
22 grandmother of three. And I want to begin by saying
23 that Governor's Cuomo, Governor Cuomo's budget has
24 nothing to do with what will improve educational
25 outcomes for children and the everything to do with

1 what will please his hedge fund campaign donors.
2 Donors who wheel their wealth as a hammer on our
3 democracy, who push more privately run charters,
4 more testing, who fund... majority that doesn't
5 support a living wage or a... without strings
6 attached and who only believes money doesn't matter
7 when it comes to equitably funding our public
8 schools. Let's be clear receivership is just a cold
9 for privatization, privatization and shuttering the
10 voices of parents, educators, and students.
11 Governor Cuomo clearly wants... control of New York
12 City public schools period. The governor lay silent
13 as many I've heard today right as Bloomberg close
14 over 150 schools, pushed high stakes testing,
15 disrespected the voices of parents and educators
16 while showing favoritism for privately run charters
17 which turned out to be a failure. As a matter of
18 fact now because we have elected a mayor and Mayor
19 de Blasio that supports research based strategies,
20 collaboration, and prioritizes our public schools.
21 All of a sudden he feels the need to take over our
22 schools. But where was the governor when CEJ and
23 AQE and other advocacy groups around this city as
24 well as state were pushing for things that work for
25

1
2 the last 12 years. Most recently the governor had
3 the audacity, I'm sure many of you have seen the
4 report he released where he claims that some of New
5 York City public schools have been failing for 10
6 years. And I wonder perhaps the governor doesn't
7 realize or he's forgetting that Bloomberg had
8 control over those schools for 12 and was using the
9 same failed policies that he is trying to push in
10 his missed opportunity agenda this year. Well I
11 haven't forgotten. As the parents and students in
12 both Newark and Detroit who have, who have been
13 under state control for decades. What has, has it
14 done for the academic success of their schools?
15 Detroit public schools are looking at a billion
16 dollar deficit instead of a surplus. And Newark
17 students are being shipped all over New Jersey all
18 in the name of choice. State takeover is not what
19 our schools need especially since we have yet to
20 try equity, not only in the city, not only in this
21 state, but in this country. We need to end
22 educational inequalities and support the strategies
23 that were... New York City public schools, students,
24 over 2,000 dollars per student. What kind of
25 programs and resources I think we heard a little

1 bit from the Principal Wilshire could the children
2 in Brooklyn use with the 720 million dollars in CFE
3 funding that they're owed, 720 million dollars. How
4 could Queens reduce the overcrowding with the 700
5 million dollars owed to them? We know what works.
6 Every four year old needs Pre-K. We have a mayor
7 that's already on the ball with that. Every student
8 in high needs communities should be a community
9 school. Every student, not just in wealthy schools
10 need a high quality culturally relevant curriculum
11 to prepare them for college careers and life. Focus
12 on teaching and learning not testing and punishing.
13 Programs for English language learners including
14 immigrant, unaccompanied minors, supporting school
15 climate that keeps students in school and doesn't
16 push them out through harsh and punitive discipline
17 and meaningful engagement and respects for
18 students, parents, teachers, administrators, and
19 community members. That's what our schools need.
20 But that's not the agenda the governor is pushing.
21 Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Farina is already
22 working on a real plan to support our schools. And
23 they should be given the opportunity to, to see it
24 through. Rather it's the investment in pre-k that
25

1 will ensure that our four-year olds our most
2 vulnerable have access to a better start. To their
3 plan for community schools and renewal school
4 initiative that will provide resources and
5 collaboration, that will provide opportunities.. I'm
6 probably stealing Natasha, because she's the one
7 who always talks about this, the opportunity for
8 parents and community members to be part of the
9 solution right that they're at the table when
10 things are happening, not after they're happening
11 and that they are engaged throughout the whole
12 process of whatever is happening at schools and are
13 looked at and viewed upon as the experts they are
14 no matter if they have an eighth grade education or
15 PHD. AQE is clearly in support of the resolution
16 coined upon New York state legislature to reject
17 the governor executive budget proposal on school
18 receivership. And I'll close by saying this. I've
19 been at this table for many years over the years
20 and many time, very early on obviously just
21 everybody else very nervous about speaking but 14
22 years of educational advocacy when my children were
23 all in school and now I have grandchildren and we
24 still have yet to fully fund CFE? And then we have
25

1
2 folks out there including the governor who claims
3 to be a democrat and support schools but is pushing
4 policies that we know have been tried tested and
5 failed. And we are fighting every day day in and
6 day out to ensure that every child not only in New
7 York City, AQE is New York state has access to a
8 high quality well-funded guess what public school
9 education. And I am very clear. I think Council
10 Member Dromm said this. Language is extremely
11 important. The words we use make a difference. We
12 cannot adopt a failing school conversation in
13 language. Because I remember years ago and many of
14 you do as well at the panel for educational policy
15 meeting when the, around school closures when our
16 young people were getting up and crying and saying
17 I am not a failure. Our young people internalize
18 that. And we can no longer, and I, there's no doubt
19 in my mind that the governor and others use that
20 language just for that to incite that right? So
21 until we are really ready to address equity that
22 means equity right? That doesn't necessarily mean
23 equality. That means giving those who need the most
24 more. And the governor claims to say that he's
25 giving kids three times as much or whatever their

1
2 number is. But equity means that maybe you need to
3 give them five times as much. That's what equity
4 is. And so thank you to the council for having
5 this, the struggle continues and I just want to say
6 to everybody else that no matter what happens in
7 this budget, no matter what the struggle to fight
8 the conversations around this must continue.
9 Because this is just the beginning of it right? And
10 while I can't guarantee we will get everything that
11 we need if we don't fight 'till the end we will
12 definitely get nothing. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just before Ms.
14 Caper starts as well. You're absolutely right. The
15 struggle is only beginning. And you are being very
16 successful. You look at that poll yesterday that
17 came out, the Quinnipiac poll, the message has
18 gotten out to people that these policies that the
19 governor is trying to impose upon us and throughout
20 the state are failed policies that are rejected.
21 They can't pull the wool over the eyes of parents
22 and people who care the most for their children.
23 And so don't be discouraged because you're
24 beginning to win the battle. Thank you.

25

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2 ZAKIAYAH ANSARI: I just want to say I
3 can never be discouraged. We have too many children
4 out there but you know it's just others do get
5 discouraged... Thank you Council Member.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely. Ms.
7 Capers.

8 NATASHA CAPERS: Good afternoon. I'm
9 Natasha Capers, the Coordinator for the coalition
10 for educational justice, a citywide coalition that
11 works in low income communities of color around
12 educational equity and ensuring that we're
13 providing high quality education to every student
14 in the city. But I'm also a mother of two, one of
15 which... here today, my oldest Brandon who is 10,
16 almost 11. And I think back to three years ago when
17 I was a parent in PS298 where my children attended
18 in District 23. And I think of the heart break when
19 the news came down that we were a quote unquote
20 failing school and that we were up for closure. And
21 I think of the devastation that took upon the
22 teachers, the staff, myself, the parents, and most
23 importantly my children. Because what people have
24 failed to realize is that when we message failure
25 then you mark us failures and we fail. And we do

1 not try to get back up because you've already
2 beaten us down. And I will contend that none of
3 these schools are failing schools. They are failed
4 schools because they were failed by their
5 government, they were failed by the officials that
6 we elected to uphold what we knew what was
7 valuable. They were failed by a system that didn't
8 care. They were failed by a system that didn't
9 value their color or their creeds or their sex.
10 They were failed by a system that invalue their
11 parents, their language, or their communities. They
12 were failed, they are not failures nor are they
13 failing. They were put into a system that was
14 designed to fail them. And it is our contention
15 that there is a way in which to change that system.
16 We know the way to change that system, we heard it
17 today. We know that community schools is a model in
18 which communities are at the table that they're not
19 just identifying their problems but they're the
20 root solution to them. That no longer do we view
21 people as failing and as deficits but as assets to
22 help solve their own issues within their schools,
23 within their lives and within their communities.
24 And we know that that is done through having high
25

1 standards through teaching and learning not just
2 through testing, test prepping, bubbling day after
3 day after day in which we already know does not do
4 anything to increase cognitive ability. It is done
5 through supporting teachers, through supporting
6 administrators, through helping them learn through
7 their craft so that they're giving the absolute
8 best to the best that parents have given them.
9 Their children... Parents send their jewels of their
10 lives to schools every day. And they're told that
11 they failed, that they did it, the system failed
12 them. We also know that by having an ongoing
13 college culture that supports parents through
14 college going experiences that supports them
15 through understanding how do I get my child to and
16 through higher education. We know that that works.
17 We know that having systems that support students
18 through all aspects of their lives social an
19 emotionally works. We know what works, but will we
20 fund what works? Or will we continue to fund a
21 school to prison pipeline that feeds on children
22 that look like my son. The question lies within
23 those who we elected to do our will, who are now
24 doing the will of hedge funders. And that we know
25

1
2 have no intention in making sure that little brown
3 boys like Brandon get what they need and what they
4 rightfully deserve. We know that false messaging
5 has eroded the systems of principals. We know that
6 it erodes the minds of our students and it's time
7 to change all of those things. It is time to stand
8 up to our governor who is pushing a system that we
9 already know doesn't work. We've seen over 150
10 school closures. And yet schools are not any more
11 successful. Yes they've raised the graduation rate
12 but to do what? When students still only have, only
13 graduate 13 percent, black and brown students 13
14 percent college and career ready meaning that they
15 would have to go through remediation, meaning that
16 they have to pay for a high school education. So
17 you've raise the graduation rate for what? For
18 students to go where? To do what? We know what
19 works. Community schools work. The Coalition for
20 Educational Justice has been working hand in hand
21 with the Department of Education and City Hall to
22 ensure that the model that initiative for renewal
23 schools works on every level, especially around
24 parents and community engagement. Because when
25 parents do not understand what is happening within

1
2 the confinements of the school walls they will not
3 be able to sit fully to participate at a table to
4 ensure that things are done properly. We are fully
5 committed and we know that when we say no to this
6 governor that it means something. The parents ad
7 citizens of the city said no to a failed policy of
8 Bloomberg. So we say no again to a fail policy from
9 the state. And we reject the, the notion of
10 receivership. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you so
12 much for your testimony, your emotional testimony.
13 And thank you for coming the other day to the press
14 conference on the same issue. I deeply appreciate
15 your support and your efforts on behalf of our
16 students and your struggles in this battle. And
17 what can I say you're 100 percent right. Thank you
18 very much. Okay. Alright our next panel is Kesy
19 [phonetic] Foster from Urban Youth Collaborative,
20 Kesi I'm sorry. Kama Lacarmen unofficially, oh okay
21 okay. And Leonie Haimson from Class Size Matters.
22 Okay I'll have to swear you in. So if you'd just
23 raise your right hands please, do you solemnly
24 swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth,
25

1
2 and nothing but the truth and to answer council
3 member questions honestly. Great.

4 KESI FOSTER: So I want to thank you
5 Council Member Dromm, Education Committee for
6 having us here today on this very important
7 proposal. Hello my name is Kesi Foster. I'm the
8 coordinator for the Urban Youth Collaborative. We
9 are a coalition of organizations led by youth that
10 come together to fight for racial justice in our
11 public school system. We believe that if New York
12 City is going to close the opportunity gap and
13 provide all young people with high quality
14 educational opportunities we must invest in
15 solutions developed with the community and based in
16 equity. For the last 12 years education reform has
17 been imposed on our communities with no input or
18 engagement with the young people attending our
19 schools or the communities. Schools were closed
20 down with no regard for the impact that it was
21 going to have on the students that remained. We
22 know young people that have had to attend classes
23 in former janitor closets, young people that have
24 to take gym and music classes online because their
25 schools had to let go teachers as they were going

1 through the phasing out process. Students became
2 collateral damage. Still the narrative continues
3 today about how successful closing schools is, is
4 as, is as a turnaround strate3gy. Of course those
5 imposing policies on us never engage with the young
6 people that get the short end of the stick. Now we
7 are being told we have two choices. We can continue
8 to close schools or turn schools over to private
9 operators through the governor's receivership
10 proposal. We continue to invest in solutions that
11 shut the community out and young people as part of
12 the process and create a petition creating winners
13 and losers and making equity impossible to achieve.
14 The community's school model when done systemically
15 to include rigorous engaging and culturally
16 relevant curriculum transformative community and
17 parent engagement positive discipline practices and
18 strategies to improve teaching and learning has
19 shown to be successful in districts throughout the
20 country. Recently open unified school district move
21 to transform all their schools and the community
22 schools beginning with a yearlong process that
23 engaged community members and stakeholders in a
24 visioning process to move the city forward
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1 collectively. I just saw that as part of Governor
2 Cuomo's plans to receivership the receivers would
3 potentially be tasked with doing just that,
4 creating community schools through wraparound
5 models. Essentially what the governor is proposing
6 is the same idea as Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor
7 Farina have already put in place but his plan is to
8 give it over to private operators without giving
9 the city a chance to fully implement it. Handing
10 schools over to the state to give the private
11 operators or charter management companies that do
12 not have the answer to communities or have the
13 communities represented on boards or leaderships
14 will not address root issues that we have, that we
15 need to address to improve our school system. We
16 understand the urgency to improve our schools.
17 Where's the urgency to identify equitable solutions
18 that don't create a lottery for success. Where's
19 the urgency to address the 150 thousand students
20 that walk through metal detectors every day and
21 attend schools where we spend 2,000 dollars less on
22 their education than in schools where we don't have
23 metal detectors. Where is the urgency to address a
24 school system that employs over 5,000 school safety
25

1 agents and uniformed school safety officers and
2 less than 35 hundred guidance counsellors. Or
3 where's the urgency to address the needs in schools
4 where 20 percent of the young people who attend the
5 schools are homeless. We should look no further
6 than Newark where state controller schools has torn
7 apart the community where young people had to
8 occupy the state appointed superintendent's office
9 because their concerns were continued to be
10 ignored. If we want to look at how well
11 receivership has worked we can look to Detroit
12 where after years of failure, failure the Michigan
13 governor has just transferred the turnaround office
14 to the Department of Technology Management and
15 Budget because that's where education should lie.
16 Our educational system is currently not providing
17 all students with the same high quality educational
18 opportunities. We should acknowledge that it has
19 never provided all students with the same high
20 quality educational opportunities. The achievement
21 gap is an opportunity gap. If we are serious about
22 improving a system for all 1.1 million children
23 that attend our schools it is time for us to look
24 past solutions that create a pathway through, for
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1
2 some and collectively embrace and invest in
3 solutions that create a pathway for all students.
4 Community schools is a step in the right direction.
5 Receivership is a step in the same old direction.
6 Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you Kesi.

8 Leonie.

9 LEONIE HAIMSON: Yes I, thank you very
10 much for having me here. I'm here to speak in favor
11 of the resolution against the governor's proposal.
12 The state has no track record of improving schools
13 ad receivership. When the state education
14 department took control of the Roosevelt school
15 district in 2002 and ran it for over a decade there
16 was little or no improvement as reported in a news
17 day article in 2013 quote Albany's intervention
18 ends Monday after 11 years and more than 300
19 million dollars in extra state spending. The period
20 marked by limited scholastic progress and memorable
21 mistakes by state officials and their appointees
22 was the first and only time the state ever managed
23 a local school system. And then I quote Roger
24 Tilles who's the region from Long Island who said
25 that the State Education Department has no

1 capabilities to run a school district. We need
2 other alternatives. Moreover I'd like to focus on
3 the narrative of the crisis of failing schools that
4 has been used to justify the expansion of state
5 receivership which I think is manufactured to
6 encourage the hostile takeover of public schools.
7 As Michael Petrilli of the Thomas Fordham Institute
8 just wrote and he's a big supporter of the Common
9 Core standards and the new exams; some education
10 reformers in media outlets are already using the
11 results of the new tougher tests to brand schools
12 as failing as if most of their students don't make,
13 meet the higher standards. Note for instance the
14 daily news' special report that was just put in
15 this week fight for the future which leads with the
16 provocative headline New York City is rife with
17 underperforming schools including nearly two-thirds
18 of students missing state standards. This line of
19 attack closely resembles the talking points of Eva
20 Moskowitz and Jeremiah Kettredge of Families for
21 Excellent Schools who both promote the notion that
22 in New York City 80, 800 thousand kids can't read
23 or do math at grade level. And 143 thousand kids
24 are trapped in persistently failing schools.
25

1
2 Petrilli goes on to say these statements are all
3 out of bounds and reformers should say so. They
4 validate the concerns some educators voiced all
5 along that we would use the results of the tougher
6 test to unfairly label more schools as failures.
7 The results of the new common core exams are
8 essentially unreliable. They were designed to find
9 two-thirds of the students failing and did so, not
10 just in New York City but across the entire state.
11 These reports by families for excellent schools
12 claiming a crisis were put out by an organization
13 that has received considerable funding from hedge
14 funders and wall street financiers as well as more
15 than 700 thousand over the past two years from the
16 Walton Foundation, an organization with an
17 aggressive privatization agenda. These same
18 unreliable figures cited by this organization were
19 echoed in a report from the Governor's Office that
20 has been described as quote sometimes
21 indistinguishable from the eight reports on
22 struggling schools at the FES has sent reporters
23 since the summer. Not surprisingly the governor has
24 received huge... from some of the same hedge funders
25 and financiers. Yet Carol Burris award winning

1 principal in the Rockville Center School District
2 in Long Island has shown how unreliable these
3 figures are based on cut scores imposed by the
4 state that purport to show which students will be
5 college ad career ready. For example only half of
6 her students in the district were said to be
7 proficient or standards at ELA and math based upon
8 their state test scores. 100 percent of them
9 graduate with a regions diploma and 85 percent with
10 an advanced designation. Over 92 percent of them go
11 to college and persist and are there, still there
12 two years later. Another such district is Oceanside
13 Long Island where 96 percent of students graduate
14 with a regions diploma of 58 percent with advanced
15 and 92 percent go on to college including 70
16 percent of four year colleges yet more than two-
17 thirds of their eighth graders were found to be
18 failing and below grade standards as well. When
19 Michael Bloomberg was running for reelection in
20 2009 the state test scores purported to show that
21 two thirds of the city students had achieved great
22 standards in English and 82 percent in math. Now
23 the state says only about one-third of them do.
24 Clearly the cut scores were set for political
25

1 reasons then and are now just as politically
2 motivated. They were preordained to fit the
3 ideological goals of those who were intent on
4 dismantling and privatizing our schools. A few
5 years ago another conservative Riques [phonetic]
6 commentator at the American Enterprise Institute
7 revealed the motives behind these exams in an
8 eerily pertinent column called the common core
9 Kool-Aid quote. First politicians will actually
10 embrace the common core assessments and then we'll
11 use them to set cut scores that suggest huge
12 numbers of suburban schools are failing as well as
13 city schools of course. Then parents and community
14 members who previously liked their schools are
15 going to believe the assessment results rather than
16 their own lying eyes. Finally newly convinced that
17 their schools stink parents and voters will embrace
18 quote unquote reform. However most of today's
19 proffered remedies including test based teacher
20 evaluation, efforts to move effective teachers to
21 low income schools, charter schools, and school
22 turnarounds don't have a lot of fans in the suburbs
23 who speak to the things that parents are most
24 concerned about. Common core advocates now incense
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1
2 an eerie confidence that they can scare these
3 voters into embracing the reform agenda. And this
4 was written two years ago. When Governor Cuomo was
5 running for reelection he acknowledged that the
6 state test scores that children received were not
7 fair and thus he promised that they should not be
8 put on their transcripts he ran a campaign ad in
9 which he promised quote not to use common core
10 scores for at least five years and then only if our
11 children are ready. If these scores aren't ready to
12 be used to judge students they aren't adequate to
13 judge our schools or deem them failing either They
14 are certainly not reliable enough to ask the state
15 education department to take them over which has no
16 record of success in doing so. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you both very
18 much for coming in and for presenting that
19 testimony, for giving testimony. I was very glad to
20 hear Leonie your comments as always. I am, I agree
21 with you on the use of test scores. We're going to
22 have a hearing on that on March 30th to inform
23 parents of their right to opt out of the test
24 because I do believe as well as an educator that
25 part of the underlying cause for all this hysteria

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2 round the crisis quote unquote is based on the
3 misuse of standardized tests to judge everything
4 from principals raises and bonuses to how well
5 students are doing in the classroom to raiding
6 schools themselves which we saw 12 years of failed
7 policies, we saw manipulation of test scores during
8 certain mayoral elections when all of a sudden
9 scores in 2009 and maybe previous to that went up.
10 And it looked like everybody was doing wonderful
11 and then two or three years later they fell and now
12 nobody's doing good and you know it reminds me of
13 when I first became a teacher. The principal would
14 bring us down and in those days they would score
15 the test by 2.1 second grade first month, 2.5 and
16 4.5 or whatever it was. And you know it asked me
17 some questions about what I would do to help get
18 the scores up and you know you'd be held
19 accountable for that and you'd come up with a
20 little bit of a plan. But it wasn't everything
21 about the child. It wasn't everything about the
22 schools. And we have fallen into this trap that we
23 have allowed elected officials politicians to use
24 these test scores to determine everything about the
25 success quote unquote of schools success or failure

1
2 of these schools. And underlying all of these
3 battles is the way in which these test scores have
4 been used. It's wrong. It was never meant to be
5 used that way and we need to move away from it as
6 quickly as humanely possible. So that's my comment
7 for the day. Thank you. Council Member Treyger.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Very briefly
9 the chair thank you very much for really
10 crystalizing exactly the point here. And I thank
11 you for your powerful testimony for both of you.
12 And I just want to just shed light because I, I was
13 a teacher during the, the Bloomberg years and, and
14 so as we were trying to implement the Danielson
15 evaluations and we were, we were being told that we
16 must align our lessons to common core I taught
17 history, I made, I pointed out that the exams have
18 not been aligned to common core so we're aligning,
19 we're shifting instruction, preparing our kids for
20 an exam that is not aligned to our instruction.
21 That just goes to show you the disconnect and the
22 self-fulfilling prophesy. And for, and for those
23 people who you know I hear some, some of the people
24 yelling that this is the civil rights issue of our
25 day. Well I'll tell you we just observed the 50th

1 anniversary of Selma and when I taught history I
2 don't, I didn't see these testing companies include
3 Selma bloody Sunday on our US history regions. So
4 here's some news for, for our testing companies out
5 there in park. Thank you.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And while we're on
8 it. You know the use of these test scores for
9 teacher evaluations is also totally absurd. You
10 know some teachers, gym teachers for example don't
11 have anything to do really with the reading score.
12 People will prefer to possibly become gym teachers.
13 They don't test kids below second grade right. So
14 who wouldn't want to teach the grades lower than
15 second grade. In schools they have to share test
16 scores right? They come up with some type of a
17 system where the gym teacher shares the test score
18 with the overall school or on the grade or... I don't
19 think the public fully understands this piece of
20 the misuse of tests to determine teachers
21 evaluations and determine scores for schools. It's
22 bizarre that anything like this could have ever
23 have happened. And the reason that it did happen is
24 because we did not have education experts from the
25 regions and the chancellor all the way down to the

1
2 former administration... [cross-talk] understand
3 what's going on.

4 LEONIE HAIMSON: Actually, actually yeah
5 it's came down from the federal government with a
6 race to the top. And they, they..

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely.

8 LEONIE HAIMSON: ...the, the experts at
9 that point were not considered either. The national
10 academy of sciences came out saying this is a bad
11 idea, this race to the top. You cannot evaluate
12 teachers this way. All the experts said so and they
13 did it anyway. And that's when the system was
14 imposed not just in New York City but across the
15 country. And it's been very very damaging.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely. Thank
17 you. Thank you both for coming. Kesi thank you as
18 well. So we do have a quorum so we can vote on the
19 resolution that is before us. And with that I'm
20 going to ask the clerk to all the vote.

21 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: William Martin,
22 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote Committee on
23 Education. Chair Dromm.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely 100
25 percent yes.

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COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Garodnick.

COUNCIL MEMBER GARODNICK: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Weprin.

COUNCIL MEMBER WEPRIN: I vote 85

percent yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Deutsch.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Maisel.

COUNCIL MEMBER MAISEL: Yes.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: New York City

schools are not for sale. I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: By a vote of eight in the affirmative, zero in the negative, and no abstention item has been adopted.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much Mr. Clerk. This is a clear message to the governor that we reject his plan and that they need to scrap it and come up with something else. I'm also asking the clerk to keep the vote open for another 15

1
2 minutes or so. Let's say 20 minutes. And with that
3 I thank all the members for coming.

4 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member
5 Williams.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER WILLIAMS: I vote aye.

7 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member
8 Barron.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I vote aye.

10 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member
11 Rose.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Aye, yes, and
13 we're going to get this money... son of a gun. You
14 know I'm sick and tired of...

15 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Council Member
16 Levine.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: I vote aye.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Yes I'd just
19 like to say that it is now 3:13 and the meeting of
20 the... Oh okay yes, okay. Clark would you call the
21 final call, the final vote?

22 COMMITTEE CLERK MARTIN: Final vote in
23 the Committee on Education is now 12 in the
24 affirmative, zero in the negative, and no
25 abstentions.

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CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very good and with
that I will adjourn this meeting at 3:13.

[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 March 31, 2015