

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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March 16, 2016

Start: 10:21 a.m.

Recess: 05:54 p.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E:

DANIEL DROMM
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Vincent J. Gentile
Daniel R. Garodnick
Margaret S. Chin
Stephen T. Levin
Deborah L. Rose
Ben Kallos
Andy L. King
Inez D. Barron
Chaim M. Deutsch
Mark Levine
Alan N. Maisel
Antonio Reynoso
Ydanis A. Rodriguez
Helen K. Rosenthal
Mark Treyger
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.
Vanessa L. Gibson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Brad S. Lander
Jumaane D. Williams
I. Daneek Miller

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

Carmen Farina
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education

Ursulina Ramirez
Chief Operating Officer & Chief of Staff
New York City Department of Education

Raymond Orlando
Chief Financial Officer
New York City Department of Education

Jessica Pavone
Deputy Chief of Operations
Division of Early Childhood
New York City Department of Education

Michael Mulgrew
President
United Federation of Teachers

Cassie Prugh
Assistant to the President
United Federation of Teachers

Randi Herman
First Vice President
Council of School Supervisors and
Administrators

Jackie Febrillet
Political Director
Local 372

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

Sara Mullery
Children's Defense Fund of New York

Randi Levine
Policy Coordinator
Advocates for Children of New York

Erin George
Community Organizer
New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Ariel Savransky
Policy Associate
Food and Economic Security
Citizens' Committee for Children of New
York

Lisa Levy
Director
Policy, Advocacy and Organizing
Hunger-Free New York City

Lily Woo
Director
Cahn Fellow Program for Distinguished
Public School Principals
Teachers College, Columbia University

Alicia Arrington
Communications Coordinator
Alliance for Quality Education in New
York City

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

Felicia Alexander
Parent Leader
The Coalition for Educational Justice

Liz Accles
Executive Director
Community Food Advocates

Rocio Espada
Member
Make the Road New York and
Coalition for Educational Justice

Amina Abdouramane
Academy of Urban Planning
Bushwick Campus

Barbara Harris
Granny Peace Brigade

Medina Taliaferro
School Liaison
Billion Oyster Project
New York Harbor Foundation

Jose Angeles
Youth Leader
Sistas and Brothas United

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

Brendan Parker

Member

Urban Youth Collaborative, Youth
Advocates, Youth Allies

Youth Leader

Sistas and Brothas United

Isaiah Paulino

Member

Urban Youth Coalition, Youth Advocates,
Youth Allies

Youth Leader

Sistas and Brothas United

Lisa Robb

Executive Director

Center for Arts Education

William Crow

Managing Museum Educator

Metropolitan Museum of Art

Sami Abu Shumays

Flushing Town Hall

Jennifer Becker

Wave Hill

Kristina Erskine

Representative

The Point

Janice Johnson

Student

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

Tianhao Zhang
Student, Francis Lewis High School
Co-Founder
Teenergetic

Latrell Stone
Member
Urban Justice Collaborative and
Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice

Zian Augustini
Youth Leader
Make the Road New York and
Urban Youth Collaborative

Iki Ron
Youth Leader
Make the Road New York and
Urban Youth Collaborative

Christina Rodriguez
Youth Leader
Make the Road New York and
Urban Youth Collaborative

Jordani Monegro
Youth Leader
Future of Tomorrow and
Urban Youth Collaborative

Karen Jimenez
Member
New Settlement Parent Action Committee

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

Terence Renton
Youth Organizer
Ugnayan Youth for Justice and Social
Change

Esperanza Vasquez
Member and Leader
New Settlement Parent Action Committee

Kate McDonough
Director of Organizing
Girls for Gender Equity

Anna Bean
Representative
E.M. Eisen-Markowitz
City-As-School High School

Shana Louallen
Social Worker

Mijo Wutavi [sp?]
Research Associate
Class Size Matters

Denaia Ileus [sp?]
Youth Member
DRUM

Naima Bartholomew
Youth Staff
Ya-Ya Network

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

Rashida Latef
Advocacy Coordinator
West Side Campaign Against Hunger

Rajul Patel
High School Science Teacher
Educators for Excellence

Cameron Maxwell
English Language Arts Teacher
Educators for Excellence

TRANSCRIPTION NOTE: Spanish testimony of

Karen Jimenez with a translator beginning at

[06:41:27] and again with at **[06:52:51]**. Chair Dromm

also speaks Spanish at **[06:41:33, 07:00:36]**

[background comments]

[gavel]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. 'Kay, good morning everyone. Apologize for being a little late; gotta love that BQE; was on it for an hour-and-a-half, so got to know it very well.

Good morning; I'm Council Member Danny Dromm and the Chair of the Education Committee. Welcome to the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget Hearing on the Department of Education. Today we will be hearing from the DOE's Chancellor, Carmen Farina, followed by testimony from unions, parents, advocates, students, and others who wish to testify in front of the Council.

The Department of Education's Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Budget totals \$22.9 billion, excluding pension and debt service, which represents 28 percent of the city's \$82.1 billion budget. This year's budget is \$971 million more than the Fiscal 2016 Adopted Budget. This increase, in large part, funds

priorities of the administration. Additionally, school budgets will grow with an increase in state funding for Fair Student Funding.

In September 2015, the Mayor announced new initiatives aimed at raising achievement across all public schools as part of an Equity and Excellence campaign. These programs total \$76.8 million in the Fiscal 2017 Preliminary Plan and will help ensure students master critical skills on time and prepare them for future success. The administration has also provided \$70 million for new mental health services as part of ThriveNYC, the administration's mental health plan.

Additionally, building up on the Council's Restorative Justice Initiative, the administration has allocated \$7 million to restorative justice programs which aim to change school culture by changing the approach to student discipline.

Lastly, there is a \$158.7 million increase in Fair Student Funding (FSF) which will increase the budgets of some schools; those with FSF below 87 percent of their enrollment will see a boost. The funding will be given directly to schools

to raise their operating budgets so that all schools will have at least 87 percent of funding. Renewal Schools' budgets will increase so that they all have 100 percent of their Fair Student Funding budget.

Though I am very happy to see any increase that directly affects school budgets, until we have all schools receiving 100 percent of their FSF budget, our work is not done. While the overall budget of the DOE continues to grow, I am always concerned that not enough of this funding is trickling down to the classrooms. How are students gaining from these large increases in the DOE's budget? Do we ensure we are providing adequate special education programs to all students who need them? Is there additional funding for supplies and new technological advances in the classroom? Do students have the fields and gyms they are entitled to so that they can become high achievers? How do we make classes smaller? As a former educator, I know the value of class size and what it can mean for a child's education attainment.

The Council has stood firm with the Mayor in our demand for funding from the state, as it is legally obligated to provide increased funding to New

1
2 York City schools, based on the Campaign for Fiscal
3 Equity. We will continue to relentlessly fight for
4 our funding because I, like other educators, know our
5 students deserve it. We hope the DOE will continue
6 to fight to gain equity in our schools as well.

7 This leads me to my next hope for today;
8 that we can have an honest conversation about equity
9 for our students. The Mayor is investing a lot of
10 money to improve equity in this budget and I know we
11 can do more to directly affect students. Every
12 student, regardless of neighborhood, family income,
13 race, sexual orientation, gender identity, and
14 learning abilities should have access to a sound
15 education. The disparities in grade advancement,
16 reading and math proficiencies and graduation rates
17 must end. We need to make sure that as a city we are
18 preparing our students and giving them the
19 opportunity to become successful adults, we cannot
20 wait on the state to get us there; we have to find
21 creative ways to generate more revenue and be as
22 efficient as possible.

23 Today we want to examine the DOE's budget
24 in areas like the Fair Student Funding formula and
25 many of the needs added to the preliminary plan to

further clarify our areas of concern. However, we do know that the DOE is making great strides to improve. A recent IBO report from February 2016 highlighted the advances New York City schools are making in student achievement. According to the report, the 2015 English Language Arts (ELA) and math tests administered in grades 3-8 show continued improvement in student proficiency rates in city schools and a shift in the performance of city schools compared to the rest of the state. For example, in 2006 New York City students' test scores were 11 points lower in ELA and 9 points lower in math when compared with students across the state; however, last year those statistics changed, when it was reported that city students performed essentially the same as those in the rest of the state in ELA and were less than 3 percentage points behind the average in math; that shows tremendous improvement that our teachers, administrators, parents and schools have been able to make.

While we applaud the Chancellor on all the efforts toward creating more equitable schools, the Council wants to make sure the community and the Council are involved in every step of the way. We

wanna see real and tangible parent engagement for all communities, dedicated staff to support our LGBT student population and a true investment in language access services so that all New Yorkers can be engaged in their children's education.

Before I conclude, I would like thank my staff of my committee -- Elizabeth Hoffman, Ken Grace, our Finance Analyst, Aysha Schomburg, our Counsel, and Jan Atwell and Joan Povolny, our Policy Analysts for the Committee.

I'd also like to introduce my colleagues who have joined us this morning; I see Vinnie Gentile from Brooklyn, Andy King from the Bronx, Council Member Alan Maisel from Brooklyn, Helen Rosenthal from Manhattan, Mark Treyger from Brooklyn, and Antonio Reynoso from Brooklyn and Queens, and we will be joined by a number of other council members, as this committee has grown somewhat because we welcome Council Member Helen Rosenthal as a member of this committee -- thank you, Helen, for joining the committee -- and also our newly elected Council Member Rafael Salamanca, who will be joining us shortly.

And I think with that we thank you and we welcome the Chancellor's testimony. So I'm gonna swear you in; if you would raise your right hand, please. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council members' questions honestly? Thank you. And would you please begin, Madame Chancellor; thank you for joining us.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Good morning Chairperson Dromm and members of the City Council Education Committee here today. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss Mayor de Blasio's proposed Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary Budget as it relates to the Department of Education.

Seated with me are Ursulina Ramirez, DOE's Chief Operating Officer and my Chief of Staff and Ray Orlando, the DOE's Chief Financial Officer and a member of my Senior Leadership Team.

On the outset I would like to thank Speaker Mark-Viverito, Chairperson Dromm and all the members of the City Council for your strong partnership and support on behalf of the city's 1.1 million students and all that you do every day for our school communities. With your support this year

we enrolled a record 68,500 children in free full-day, high-quality Pre-K, nearly 50,000 more students that were enrolled before Mayor de Blasio took office. These students are receiving a crucial year of problem-solving and vocabulary-building that will put them on the path to long-term success. With these Pre-K children come their parents, and our engagement of parents at this level is at an unprecedented high.

Over the past two years we have worked to transform the school system; we have implemented a number of reforms to achieve equity and excellence and ensure our students have access to high-quality education. Before I discuss next year's budget for our schools, I would like to highlight some of our accomplishments.

To create a clear line of authority in our school system, we aligned responsibilities of supervising supporting [sic] schools under superintendents and these are also aligned with geographical areas, as many of you are aware of because of your political involvement. We created new geographically-based borough field support centers that provide integrated supports to schools

1 in the areas of instruction, operations, student
2 services, including health resources and counseling,
3 support to students with disabilities, and support to
4 English language learners. To share strong practices
5 we created two important programs -- Learning
6 Partners and Showcase Schools; together, these
7 initiatives demonstrate a commitment to professional
8 development and collaboration among educators and
9 schools that foster student learning and school
10 improvement. This Monday alone we hosted 170
11 superintendents from across the country to come see
12 some of the programs that we are doing here in New
13 York City.

14
15 We created a model dual language program
16 to foster collaborative practices among dual language
17 educators, elevate the quality of programs across the
18 city and provide support and guidance to schools'
19 staffs interested in opening programs.

20 We invested \$23 million annually in arts
21 education funding, allowing for the hiring of 300 new
22 arts teachers and resulting in 22,000 more students
23 receiving arts education. This Saturday I attended
24 the SING! of Murrow, Midwood and Madison, where the
25 three schools performed together and they invited the

10 new schools that will be getting SING! money to be the judges so that we will start spreading that particular program across the city, particularly to our large high schools, in addition to which 20,000 of our 11th graders will be attending *Hamilton* for \$10.00, which I think is phenomenal.

We launched a multi-year physical education initiative to work intensely with all our schools in eight priority districts to identify barriers to PE, develop solutions and recommendations for citywide strategies to ensure that all students receive PE that meet state requirements. Our 80 minutes in the contract PE ensures that all our PE teachers actually go out for PE at the borough offices so that we have a consistency of approach in curriculum for our physical education teachers.

To continue to engage students in the learning process over the summer, this year's "Summer in the City" will include a new curriculum, college-level and STEM-oriented enrichment program, and visits to some of the most important cultural institutions in New York City. Both mandated and non-mandated students will participate in this

program; there will be no stigma attached to going to "Summer in the City."

And finally, in collaboration with the City Council, we created approximately 220 new athletic teams, the majority of which are for small schools and for girls' teams; as a result, an additional 3,000 students have access to interscholastic athletics.

Additionally, with general funding from City Council, this year we have been able to provide intensive restorative justice programming in 15 schools and with City Council funding, for the first time our school communities will benefit from the programming and support of an LGBTQ Community Liaison; we've also worked together to provide all students and their families with free Microsoft software to use at home and increase civic engagement and vote or participation among high school students.

It was my privilege yesterday to be part the press conference encouraging high school students to vote and I would like to see a major campaign to see how we can increase voting across all our high school students in this year's November election;

civic engagement is a much-needed practice in our schools.

As part of our work to meet the needs of every student, we've created 130 new community schools; these schools are customized to a community's unique needs and create opportunities for students, families and communities, including expanded learning time, school-based health centers, mental health programs, dropout prevention, parent workshop, and adult education opportunities. These resources are imbedded into and outside the school day.

We know that student achievement improves when parents are involved in their student's education; we have taken strides to improve engagement and communication with all parents, including those parents who are limited English proficient. I appointed Executive Superintendent Yolanda Torres to redesign our Division of Family and Community Engagement to strengthen relationships between communities and their schools. We are providing increased professional development training for parent coordinators, parent leaders, family support coordinators, and family leadership

coordinators. We are pleased that data from the Fiscal 2016 Preliminary Mayor's Management Report, looking at the first month of the school year, show that the number of school-based parent workshops and workshop participation rates increased by 60 and 59 percent respectfully and parent/teacher conference attendance increased by 38 percent compared to the same time last year. Much of this has to do with our emphasis on student-led conferences, particularly in the middle school grades, but also that we now have an additional 40 minutes a week that is committed to parent involvement and parent engagement.

I wanna say also that one of the things that Ms. Torres has done, which I think is phenomenal, in my presentations around the city; more and more grandparents are raising their grandchildren, so we now have a Grandparent Advisory Counsel that works with Yolanda to see how we might reach more grandparents and particularly in the Asian community this has been extremely well-received and we have a whole list of requests that we have around the city to hear more about how we can help them.

LEP parents make up approximately 43 percent of our families; to better communicate with

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We know we are making progress; data released earlier this year showed a strong increase in our city's graduation rates and college-readiness indicators, as well as a decrease in the dropout rate. Graduation rate was over 70 percent for the first time in the city's history; I was particularly pleased to see a decrease in the dropout rates all across ethnicities. While we have made critical progress, there is still much to do. We will continue to focus on strengthening instruction, expanding opportunities for all students and engaging

families to ensure there's a clear path for college and meaningful [sic] career for all our students.

The Mayor and I have pledged to meet rigorous benchmarks -- 80 percent of our students will graduate from high school on time and two-thirds will be ready for college by the year 2026.

To achieve the administration's goal of equity and excellence throughout the system, we are implementing eight new initiatives; these initiatives will provide students with a firm foundation in the early elementary school grades, support teachers in providing a rigorous curriculum by building their capacity, increase student access to the courses they require to be successful later in life, and engage students in the communities where they live the following -- to boost literacy, the universal 2nd-grade literacy program places reading coaches, teachers with demonstrated experience in literacy instruction in every elementary school. These coaches will provide kindergarten through 2nd teachers with additional training in early literacy acquisition and in strategies to strengthen literacy instruction for English-language learners and students with disabilities. We will be starting with

two districts that are in high need and ensure that the pilot then moves on to other districts as we see success.

Algebra for All, AP for All, Computer Science for All seek to provide students with the skills and courses that they need to be successful in college and in today's market. Thanks to an unprecedented public/private partnership, the Computer Science for All initiative will ensure that by 2025 all students will receive meaningful, high-quality computer science education at each school level, from elementary to high school. A few weeks ago we had an open workshop for teachers who are going to be teaching algebra in 5th grade and we had close to a 100 teachers who came and the commitment is that those teachers and those schools will have a departmentalized approach to mathematics so all the students in those schools in 5th grade will actually have a very extensive pre-algebra course and I think for this summer and even during the vacation time we have more of those courses coming up for teachers to sign up for.

Middle School Access for All will provide students early exposure to college, while High School

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2 Access for All will also ensure our students have
3 resources and sports they need to pursue a path to
4 college. Recently we had a College Awareness Day
5 where we asked people throughout the city to wear the
6 shirts of the colleges that they went to and spent 15
7 minutes during the school day talking about why
8 college -- this goes even down to kindergarten -- why
9 college is important; what their experience was like
10 -- I caught some members of my staff kind of fudging
11 a little bit, what college they went to, 'cause if
12 they took a two-week institute in a prestigious
13 college, they were wearing those shirts, but the idea
14 is to make sure that kids understand the word
15 "college" and that aspirations are for all kids in
16 all neighborhoods to have that aspiration.

17 The "Single Shepherd" pilot in Community
18 Districts 7 and 23 will pair students with dedicated
19 counselors who will support them through high school
20 and see them into college. It's crucial that kids
21 who may not have -- they may be the first going to
22 college or don't have support at home, have an adult
23 who's totally committed to them and totally committed
24 to ensuring that they know all the ramifications of
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how to fill out applications or how to know the process of doing it.

All students, regardless of what type of public school they attend, deserve to benefit from the combined knowledge of our supremely talented and gifted teachers and administrators; the District Charter Partnership Program will pair district and charter schools together to foster stronger relationships and the sharing of best practices.

Now I will discuss next year's budget for our schools.

In the 2017 Preliminary Budget includes an allocation of approximately \$22.9 billion in operating funds and another \$6.3 billion of education-related pension and debt service funds. Our funding is a combination of city, state and federal dollars, with city tax levy dollars making up the biggest share, at 56 percent, state dollars at 37 percent and federal and other dollars at 7 percent.

The Mayor's 2017 Preliminary Budget reflects this administration's ongoing commitment to provide every student in every school with critical tools to prepare students for success in college and the workforce and to make New York City the best

urban school district in the nation. The Preliminary Budget builds on this administration's progress and makes targeted investments to ensure students have access to rigorous instruction and instructional and non-academic support to boost student achievement.

The 2017 budget directs \$76.7 million to support the Equity and Excellence Initiatives. With an investment of \$187 million in 2017, the City will continue to provide targeted, tailored supports to 94 schools in the Renewal School Program.

The preliminary plan also reflects an unprecedented commitment to enhance social and emotional learning in our schools through significant funding for restorative justice programs, climate [sic] supports for educators in high-need schools and mental health programs. For all our schools we are offering new programs to enhance school climate and reduce punitive disciplinary measures, including restorative justice, a form of discipline aimed at reducing future incidents through dialogue and self-reflection.

As part of ThriveNYC, the administration's Action Plan to support the mental well-being of New Yorkers, all Pre-K students will

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2 learn social emotional skills and the hundred schools
3 with the highest number of suspensions will receive
4 mental health supports, and we are offering three new
5 mental health trainings -- Youth Mental Health First
6 Aid at-risk training and Making Education Partners in
7 Youth Suicide Prevention. There is no worse e-mail
8 for a superintendent or a chancellor to get that
9 we've lost a child at their own hands; we need to be
10 able to say this is not acceptable.

11 Since 2009, the state has not met its
12 court-ordered obligations under the Campaign for
13 Fiscal Equity lawsuit. In this school year alone,
14 New York City public school students have been short-
15 changed \$2 billion in state education funds; we are
16 hopeful that the state will provide us with
17 additional school aid for the next school year. With
18 adequate funding from the state, would be able to
19 reduce class sizes, as well as hire more arts
20 teachers and guidance counselors in schools through
21 the city.

22 While we are confident that we are headed
23 in the right direction, we know we have a lot of hard
24 work ahead. I look forward to my continued work with
25 the City Council on behalf of our 1.1 million

students and their families. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you; we are happy to answer any questions you may have.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much, Madame Chancellor. Just wanna start by saying we've been joined by Council Member Vanessa Gibson from the Bronx and Council Member Brad Lander from Brooklyn; Council Member Ben Kallos from Manhattan has also joined us.

So let me just go directly to questions regarding the school budgets. We understand that the waits for the English language learners (ELLs) and students with interrupted formal education are increasing, due to an increase in Fair Student Funding; what will the Fair Student Funding increase look like to school budgets and how many schools will receive additional funding to get to the 87 percent of their budget?

RAY ORLANDO: Hi, good morning. So what we are doing in the Fair Student Funding formula, we're taking two steps, as you mentioned; we have created new waits for English language learners and for students with interrupted formal education; those waits are going to be imbedded in the formula so that

1 schools that serve these populations are better able
2 to -- are better funded and better able to provide
3 services to these populations. The students with
4 interrupted formal -- the waits themselves are posted
5 online and I can read them to you; I'm not sure how
6 helpful that would be, but the CR 154 requires us to
7 continue to provide services to English language
8 learners after they've been deemed proficient for a
9 period of two years, so we've created a new wait for
10 those students in K-5 and then a new wait for 6-12.
11 In addition, we've created a new wait for bilingual
12 students, both K-5 and 6-12, so there's five new
13 waits. The other waits all remain the same; we've
14 just made new waits for those purposes.

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16 The second thing we've done is; the
17 Mayor's Preliminary Budget includes over \$150 million
18 to raise the floor of the Fair Student Funding
19 formula, which the Mayor raised last year from 81
20 percent to 82 percent for schools at the bottom, as
21 well as raised all Renewal schools to 92 percent. In
22 the upcoming school year we're proposing to raise the
23 floor from 82 percent to 87 percent, which would be
24 the highest floor we've seen since the formula was
25 created over a decade ago. And over 650 schools

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And I wanna be clear that one of the things, it's not just about money, but it's about professional development, so in every borough office there is a team that is working specifically with English language learners and we have increased our professional development, because they're not all the same, so you have bilingual students who have been here a few years, you have bilingual students who just arrived into this country, you have dual language programs and we're trying to make sure that we have very discreet professional development for each of these categories, and that has been very helpful in terms of meeting the needs of different parts of the city and we wanna ensure that we've also done a lot of the training in conjunction with the UFT and as many resources as possible, 'cause this is a high-need area of teachers, so even our recruitment, the teachers in this category, is going to be much more extensive this year than it has been in the past.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And so what will happen to the schools that are already at 87 percent; will they see an increase?

RAY ORLANDO: The will continue to -- sorry -- They'll continue to receive what they received this year, so if you're at 87; you'll remain at 87.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So they'll be basically at the same amount?

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, essentially the same, yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what... [crosstalk]

RAY ORLANDO: Oh, I should mention that all Renewal schools this year are being brought from 92 percent to 100 percent, sorry.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So with the Renewal schools at 100 percent, how did you decide and why did you decide to go to 100 percent in those schools?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I mean obviously they're our most struggling schools and one of the things that we are putting in those schools is extra support for students; those are the schools that wherever possible have smaller class sizes; they also have lead coaches for principals; they also have

1 special reading program we've put in, "Reading
2 Rescue," which is showing really good success; we
3 have -- in our middle schools we are using the MSQI
4 approach. So these are schools that we looked very
5 carefully at their data and looked to see what it was
6 that each school needed, so in some schools they
7 wanted more guidance counselors, but we wanted to
8 make sure that no student fell through the cracks and
9 these schools in particular without that extra
10 support, and we're already seeing schools; I mean I
11 was just talking to Council Member Reynoso, like a
12 school like MS 50 in Williamsburg that was already
13 going to have an extra class coming in next year;
14 MS 80 in the Bronx, 80 kids applying for that school
15 that did not apply before. So it's very crucial that
16 we not only help our Renewal schools, but we build
17 them up, so as they get much better, that parents see
18 them as attractive choices.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How much more money
21 would be needed to bring every school up to 100
22 percent?

23 RAY ORLANDO: This year that would've
24 cost \$700 million.

25 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: \$700 million?

RAY ORLANDO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Now with the money that we're owed from CFE, estimated at \$2 billion; that would bring additional services to the system; that would cover the \$700 million?

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, that \$2 billion could be used to cover the \$700, yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Uhm-hm. Okay. So just to shift gears here a little bit; in your testimony I know that you mentioned the LGBT liaison, something that's very personally important to me; how is the LGBT liaison doing; can you give us a little bit of a description? I know he only started about six weeks ago, but I do also know that he has been swamped with phone calls and goodwill and good wishes, etc., so forth and so on?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I think that the most important sign of success is that he can keep up with the people who are calling for his services, so that's number one. I think also that he's being shared by several departments and I think the department that for us has brought us the most satisfaction is the fact that he's engaging so much with parents, because where we found a real need is

1
2 to explain to parents how to relate to their students
3 who have come out and where we thought we would have
4 more requests from certain parts of the city, this
5 has been universal, I mean he is set up to work in
6 every single borough at some point.

7 The other thing we wanna make sure is
8 that principals who need extra support; we've asked
9 superintendents who may have more a need to ask him
10 to speak at principals' meetings in their districts
11 so that principals can understand how to have
12 conversations around these topics. One of the things
13 we will be doing for next year is we will be creating
14 one or two showcase schools where this is an issue
15 and the principal has dealt with it well so that
16 other principals who want to go and see how to do
17 workshops around transgender youth, for example, how
18 to talk to parents; not just the parents whose kids
19 are doing this, but the other parents who then are
20 gonna have their children asking questions.

21 So I think he's been a wonderful addition
22 and I think also, every time he goes somewhere he
23 figures out one more handout that he has to develop
24 so that he can do it more across the city. So I'm
25 really very excited about this particular person.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I recently visited Newtown High School, both to see the GSA, Gay Straight Alliance that they have there, but also on Monday, regarding the provision of feminine hygiene products in that school as well. But I was so pleased when I walked into the building to see posters all over the school announcing the GSA and the meetings that they were gonna have; it was really very, very nice to walk in and see that.

In addition, another success story, maybe perhaps in areas that people might not think about, because they consider Queens to be a little bit more conservative than some of the other areas, is Rocky Sanabria, who testified here about two years ago, has now been elected the president, you know a transgender student has now been elected president of the Maspeth High School Student Council. So I think little by little we are making progress and I wanna see that continue.

I know that in the funding that we did give you last year as well, some of it's to be used for implementation of a Balanced Literary program through Lambda Literary; can you give me a description about how that's going, and the other

1
2 piece of it was for Peace for Professional
3 Development in June, I think, on the Professional
4 Development Day, what we used to call "The Brooklyn
5 Queens Day?"

6 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well professional
7 development has been one of our major goals; when
8 you're talking about the money that affects the
9 classrooms, I believe that's the money that affects
10 the classrooms. So we have definitely started using
11 our 80 minutes on Mondays to be doing more of a cycle
12 kind of approach, so six weeks of teaching literacy
13 approaches to teachers across all grades; we put out
14 this year a Reading and Writing Scope and Sequence
15 for high schools; we will be coming out at the end of
16 this month with curriculum units in social studies;
17 we've already done it in science.

18 So one of the approaches that we've taken
19 over the last two years is to come up with more
20 curriculum guides that teachers can use universally
21 across the city; this not about teachers in their own
22 schools having to sit down and write guides just for
23 themselves, 'cause first of all, it's not the best
24 use of their time and also, we need more consistency;
25 one of the things that's very clear to me. So I

1 think the Balanced Literacy, in terms of making sure
2 that the NYC Reads 365 has also said, these are the
3 new books that are out there; we put these books in
4 every school; we have posters everywhere you go,
5 including high schools; you'll see these are the
6 books that the kids are reading, based on our
7 citywide initiative; also, a lot of parent workshops
8 on how to encourage literacy at home. So I think we
9 have done a pretty good job in terms of the literacy
10 component; I think now one of the things we really
11 wanna start focusing a little bit more on is the
12 math, you know, how do we look at what's working;
13 what's not working -- I was in District 21 yesterday
14 and it was one of the issues -- that a lot of parents
15 haven't learned this way, so they have some questions
16 about how they can more get involved. But I think in
17 this particular area we've done a very, very good job
18 and the satisfaction rate among teachers for our
19 Monday PD is at 95 percent in one of the surveys we
20 did and that's something, as you know, Danny, is
21 almost impossible, 92 percent of happy people on
22 anything is almost impossible, so on PD, that's
23 really good.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So specifically with the Lambda Literary, that's gonna move forward; am I right; that's gonna go into about 20 schools, I think...? [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And then the Professional Development Day for the LGBT stuff; that's moving forward, I understand as well... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yes it is.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And are we still on schedule to have a Pride celebration at Tweed?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We are?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I have to ask -- [background comments] so many things are happening, I have to figure out. Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I love celebrations, so I'm... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I go... I believe in celebrations; I am the queen of celebrations, so to me, one... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I remember.

1
2 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Now the one thing we
3 haven't done enough in education, and I always feel
4 this; we always point fingers on what's not working
5 and we have to spend more time and energy on what is
6 working, because people do not rise to the occasion
7 if they don't have high morale and I think one of the
8 things I'm proudest of is as I go out throughout the
9 city, where teachers will say, you know I feel good
10 about being a teacher or I wanna stay in this
11 profession and I think that's something we have to
12 focus on, so a celebration for me on every single
13 level possible is all good.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I think another
15 area of major importance for us, and a credit to your
16 commitment to changing discipline policies in our
17 schools, has been the emphasis on restorative justice
18 practices. So what is your long-term goal for
19 expanding restorative justice and other alternatives
20 to suspension in the schools? And I believe the
21 suspension rate was down, if I'm not mistaken; can
22 you talk a little bit about that as well?

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I think one of
24 the most important things we've done is that we are
25 working with NYPD in terms of the... you know,

1 retraining our School Safety officers to take a more
2 de-escalation to approach talking to kids. I don't
3 think there's enough conversations prior to, you
4 know, having a negative approach to a student, so I
5 believe that we have to train all teachers about how
6 do we use mindfulness, you know, wellness training.
7 I went to a school recently in Queens where all
8 students are taught how to take a moment out when
9 they think they're about to do something wrong and
10 just relax and really think through what they're
11 gonna do. So I think a lot of training of teachers
12 and students on how to do more de-stressing
13 exercises.

14
15 But I think a prime example of where
16 we're going is that some or... There are a few things
17 that set me back in this job; I'm having a great time
18 and I try to do as much as I can in a positive way,
19 but my first visit to Rikers was a really eye-opening
20 experience, so my end goal is to have less of that or
21 the students... we have reshifted, thanks to Mark
22 Rampersant and Tim Lisante and a few other people; we
23 have put in books, in the classrooms; all the books
24 have themes of social justice, which I actually got
25 from the reading list of Satellite Transfer High

1 School Academy, we have put a lot more volunteers
2 there; we're looking at five hours of school versus -
3 - so our goal for restorative justice is also giving
4 the kids more opportunities to do things that are
5 meaningful for them; that's where after-school
6 programs in middle schools matter; that's where I
7 think also having community organizations that work
8 in the after-school programs, so we have to take a
9 long-range approach; we should not be looking at a
10 pipeline to prison; we should be looking at a
11 pipeline to college and that's really what the goal
12 should be in terms of how we look at our restorative
13 justice.
14

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's interesting that
16 you mentioned Rikers as well, because I've been there
17 twice to see the school and the different between the
18 first time I was there and the second time was great.
19 I saw a lesson being taught by the teacher on
20 persuasive speaking and he had a very innovative way
21 of introducing that to the students; he... or she, I
22 should say, actually, used a SMART Board to pull up a
23 speech that was being given by a Miss America
24 candidate and everybody sat up and took notice of
25

1
2 that woman giving that speech; I'll tell you that was
3 very true, so... [interpose]

4 CHANCELLOR FARINA: We have a master
5 principal there now and ambassador teachers; we
6 really are trying very hard to change the whole
7 culture there.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: One of the things
9 that does concern me, and we're gonna talk about this
10 later on in a corrections hearing, but is how many
11 students are actually getting to those classes.
12 Would you know off hand how many are getting to the
13 classes or have there been refusals to show up to
14 class or problems with transporting students to
15 class?

16 CHANCELLOR FARINA: No. We have had
17 tremendous cooperation from Commissioner Ponte; he
18 has sat in on a lot of our discussion; he has made
19 things possible for us that we thought were just part
20 of the rules, so we have not had that as a
21 resistance; we now have students... actually, I got a
22 bunch of letters from them in terms of how much they
23 loved the books that they were getting to read, so
24 we're just gonna be expanding our work there to make
25 it... you know again, many of those students are there

1
2 for a certified part of time, so our next step is to
3 ensure that students who have been incarcerated are
4 given support when they move back to their regular
5 school, so we have two or three plans on what we're
6 gonna be doing, and I'm happy to share it next time,
7 'cause that's still a work in progress. But this is
8 really exciting and Tim Lisante is working on it with
9 Ana Bermudez and her department.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I met with some
11 advocates yesterday, actually, about Rikers
12 specifically and about the school on Rikers and while
13 I think there's been some really good things going on
14 with the 16- to 18-year-olds, there continue to be
15 some issues regarding 18- to 21-year-olds and their
16 access to education programs. Has anybody talked
17 with you about that and what is the rule on that?

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think we're trying
19 to get this done right and then we're going back to
20 the conversation. It has been brought up, but it
21 hasn't been followed through on yet.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Yeah, it was
23 just recently brought to my attention as well. And
24 in terms of access to the internet and computers,
25 which for prisons is an issue...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: but most of these youth who are on Rikers have not been sentenced...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Right.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and so restrictions around internet is a problem as well and actually it's a main way to motivate students to do learning, as I saw in the lesson that I observed while I was there; are discussions going to be held around that issue with the Department of Corrections...?

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We're hold... Yes, the issue there is like many of our schools, we have that issue even in our regular schools, is the wiring capacity and the old structures that don't allow to wire easily, so it is under discussion and we're looking to see how we are able to succeed with that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So for capital projects on Rikers, it falls I think into, if I'm not mistaken, Council Member -- maybe The Speaker's district or it's in Council Member Constantinides' I believe district, but if other people were interested in providing capital dollars or Reso A money, is that

1
2 a possibility; is that something that they need
3 there?

4 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay, it would have
5 to go to a different department, but I mean I would
6 never turn anything away that has money that helps
7 our kids, so -- and one of the things we've gotten
8 very good at, and I think this is also complements to
9 the Council; we've done a lot more work with
10 interagency supports, I mean we meet with just about
11 every commissioner, 'cause it's not -- you know, "it
12 takes a village" is not just a cliché, it's a
13 reality, so just to work on Rikers, we met with at
14 least four different departments and probably more,
15 going forward, and I think that's really important,
16 so I would say if there's money forthcoming, it's
17 where does it go, but how does it get spent?

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So just to go back to
19 restorative practices and then I'm gonna turn it over
20 to the other council members.

21 How much in total is the DOE investing in
22 the Fiscal 2017 budget toward restorative practices
23 and how much of that is for internal staffing; how
24 much is being sent directly to schools, etc.?
25

URSULINA RAMIREZ: So I wanna say thank you too to the Council, who gave us funding last year to initiate some of our restorative justice... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: \$2.4 million.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Yeah and it was fantastic and what we're doing is learning from that and try to expand upon it. This upcoming fiscal year we have approximately \$7 million in restorative practices in school climate work. I don't know the breakdown in terms of how much is being spent centrally and how much is being spent on schools, but a big portion of it is gonna be dedicated to our 20 most highest-offending schools and we're really trying to provide comprehensive supports to those principals, whether through social workers and guidance counselors. [background comments] \$5.4 million goes to the schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 5.4?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. And are Renewal schools being included... is every Renewal school being included in using restorative practices?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: We're taking a hard look at what supports are given to Renewal schools, either through community schools and also through restorative justice programs; we are being delicate of how much supports we're giving to our Renewal school programs, 'cause we don't want to overwhelm the principals, so depending on what their suspension rates look like we will assess, but as you may know, we've seen a drop in our suspensions in some of our Renewal school programs, which has been really on the effort of the principals and the superintendents.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And in terms of the model that's being used in the schools, I think, from the information I've received so far, is that the model is that you are putting a full-time staff person into the schools to conduct or to lead in the area of restorative practices; am I correct on that?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: What we're trying to do is our capacity-building framework, which is to train five individuals within a school on restorative practices to be experts and come back to the school and train all of the staff on restorative practices, 'cause we know that it does take a village even within a school to understand what restorative

1 practices look like, and so we're gonna have five
2 experts in the building and we're really looking for
3 schools who really wanna do this and have an openness
4 to it and we have some superintendents who are
5 interested in trying to figure out now to do it in
6 their entire district.
7

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: You should also know
9 that we received a grant this of over a million
10 dollars to work on social/emotional issues with
11 adults and we put this money for training our
12 superintendents, emotional well-being for adults, and
13 all our superintendents have spent a year working on
14 what we call a LCI model, but want them then to
15 turnkey to the principals. So we're looking at
16 social/emotional restorative justice for everyone in
17 the system, not just for the students, but how does a
18 teacher de-escalate; how does a principal learn how
19 to talk to a group of angry parents? So this is a
20 consistent all the way down approach and I think the
21 superintendents who have chosen to do this deeper,
22 'cause they've actually been studying this together
23 and they have put in proposals to how they can expand
24 it, is much better than my putting out a mandate
25 across the city -- all of you must do this. We want

1
2 people to come to the table on many issues and say, I
3 really wanna get better at this, I'm willing to own
4 this and I'm willing to make sure that if I get
5 better at it; other people will get better at it as
6 well. So that's part of the process and how we've
7 done this.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I agree and I
9 think even involving kitchen staff, custodial staff;
10 School Safety agents is really important in terms of
11 turning the culture around in schools where we have
12 issues, because if a student is acting up during
13 lunchtime, you know and an aide is with that child
14 and then all of a sudden it gets thrown back to the
15 teacher when the teacher comes to pick them up, you
16 know it's not being helpful, even though the teacher
17 has been trained in these sorts of practices, so how
18 will those five people ensure that the professional
19 development and the change in the culture of the
20 school is actually going to occur?

21 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well one of the
22 things that we said to superintendents who then in
23 turn say it to principals; we wanna see the 80
24 minutes on Mondays not just to be bad academics; we
25 wanna see five- to six-week cycles -- one of the

1 things I've just told principals in elementary
2 school; I wanna see speech teachers doing PD, 'cause
3 we know that if you have speech teachers teaching
4 early childhood teachers things like phonics,
5 **[inaudible]** awareness who are much more likely to get
6 them to read earlier. So the restorative justice
7 team is also supposed to be working in those 80
8 minutes to train other teachers. The other thing is
9 also -- and I totally agree with you -- we know which
10 points of the day are the most problematic -- early
11 morning arrival, if they have nothing to do;
12 lunchtime, without a doubt -- so we've been trying to
13 train principals on how they do -- all kinds of
14 things; we look for models -- flip flops, you know
15 more physical activity; we've said you can hire your
16 phys. ed. teachers to do lunchtime as long as it's
17 part of their program, and also, dismissal time at
18 3:00; what you do in the school yard as a leader says
19 a lot about your school and also restorative
20 justices, and again, this is a little bit more
21 fragile; when parents are not in agreement, 'cause if
22 you have two or three factions in a school, how do
23 you resolve issues? So it's a multifaceted and also
24 we've asked Yolanda Torres, through the parent
25

engagement, to do restorative justice to the parents.

So we've been trying to do this multiple ways;

there's no one way, it has to be everybody onboard.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And the issues of racism; homophobia that enter into why many students may be acting out; is that something that these restorative programs are addressing directly?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Yes. And I would say that within the 20 -- you know and further, one of our programs that we got funding for, which is our SSOPE program, we would have a full-time MSW or LMSW on staff who would -- I am an MSW, so I know that there is training around how to talk to students who identify as LGBT and how to really deal with children with different issues.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Also, we have been training people under Lois Herrera to have these conversations at the school level, the same... I think you were there when I went to the Manhattan Borough's planning for the LGBT event that the Borough Office held; we asked other boroughs to start having the same thing in their offices, so that we start doing these things much more universally. And also, even with parents; how do you talk to your child and how

1 do you get your child to tell you that they're being
2 bullied? I mean everything I'm learning about
3 bullying -- I should say everything, but a lot -- I'm
4 learning from my grandchildren and what they tell me
5 and **[inaudible]**, don't tell anybody, you know and
6 this is -- So I think we have to also even us
7 literature to get kids to talk about certain things
8 and our guidance training this year has been ramped
9 up quite a bit and on this particular issue there
10 have been extensive workshops for guidance counselors
11 not to wait until it comes to you, but how do you
12 start having discussions to a school as a whole so
13 that you'll figure it out in open conversations.
14

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And with the
16 restorative justice programs; are we also working
17 with teachers on implicit bias their own issues as
18 they come to the disciplinary process? I think
19 that's a very, very important part of really changing
20 the culture of the schools; if... [crosstalk]

21 URSULINA RAMIREZ: I...

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: if they're not
23 addressing their own issues, then it's hard to get
24 them to buy into the overall restorative program.
25

1
2 URSULINA RAMIREZ: I think this is
3 something that the Chancellor and I are working
4 closely with our partners in labor on in terms of
5 conversations about, you know prejudice and bias
6 within our staffing and also looking at some of the
7 disproportionality and some of our numbers, and
8 everybody's open to having these conversations and
9 it's something that we want to address.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So is there any money
11 being put aside for that?

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think it's part of
13 our overall PD, 'cause it's easy to change laws; not
14 easy to change hearts and this is one of the things
15 that really involves a lot more principal training on
16 how to have these serious conversations at a
17 teachers' meeting and I do think this is moving in
18 the right direction; I certainly discussed it with,
19 you know, Michael Mulgrew of the UFT, you know, what
20 are the kinds of workshops that we can do; I know
21 we're having one I think in two weeks with guidance
22 counselors around different issues. But this is
23 something that has to be very local and very careful,
24 'cause we want people to do this because it's the
25

right thing to do; not just because we are mandating it.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And I know I said I was gonna make that my last, but I just have one more issue that I wanna bring up before I turn it over to my colleagues.

Community learning schools, both the UFT and the DOE-initiated ones; the Governor is talking about putting I think \$100 million into the budget; hopefully we can raise that -- I think the advocates were asking for closer to \$500 million. Can you give us a breakdown how Community Learning Schools are going and what you see in the future moving forward for Community Learning Schools.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I think it's a work in progress; we started them -- some of them were already in place, but I think it's the matter of, first, finding the right partners for the schools; not all partners are good for the schools that they might have been assigned to, so I think that's number one; we're in the business of looking at that right now; asking for principal and teacher feedback -- is this the right partner for you; what is it that you wanted to accomplish; are they letting

you do this and so forth. I've been visiting a lot of these myself to get a sense of also, are they imbedded during the school day or are they just being seen as an after-school program? Our model is imbedded during the school day. They should be in classrooms supporting -- You know, I went to a school where I've been communicating with this teacher since September -- first-year teacher, very idealistic, wants everything to happen and so every two weeks we talk to each other, how are things going. And I went to visit her classroom, and she has all ELLs students, struggling students, and her energy is contagious and she had two of the community-based partners sitting in the back of the room working with two kids individually, each of them, to make sure that they were following the lesson that she was doing with the rest of the class; that to me is a model. Also with community-based organizations I wanna see more emphasis on working with the whole family; where they have been particularly successful is in raising attendance in a lot of our Renewal schools; we've been looking at attendance as one of our benchmarks and they went out and knocked on doors, rang doorbells, call parents or kids if they

1 don't show up. So I think that's been wonderful; I
2 think we still have work to do in terms of how we
3 coordinate better; what they're doing in the school.
4 Went to see another school recently where they're
5 doing a lot of the preparation for high school exams;
6 this particular organization, so under Chris Caruso
7 we've been doing a lot what works; what doesn't work
8 and we're gonna be having a big meeting now towards
9 the end of the year to look at what are the best
10 practices that each of them do so that others can
11 learn from that.
12

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I visited PS 001
14 on Friday and I was very, very impressed by what I
15 saw; that's a UFT collaborative learning school, and
16 I think the key there was, in essence, the principal
17 selection of the CBOs that she wanted to have work in
18 the building and she had picked -- two of the groups
19 that I saw that were actually working in the
20 classroom was the American Ballet Theatre, which was
21 great, and they were doing some dance and movement
22 with kids and then the other one was -- I think it
23 was the New York Architectural Society...

24 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Oh.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and they were doing bridge-building with the kids and so that was really interesting as well. But just to, you know, promote that, because I really do believe that when we deal with children holistically it's the best approach to addressing all of the needs of those children and so wanna continue to move down that lane as well. Thank you.

Alright, now we're gonna go to questions from council members -- [background comments] yeah, we're gonna go to Council Member Mark Treyger, followed by Council Member Rosenthal, King and Reynoso.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, thank you, Chair Dromm for your leadership and welcome, Chancellor; it's nice to see you again; the Chancellor spent some time in my district last night at a CEC town hall. Welcome.

And Chancellor, just to continue on some of the conversations from last night, I... in a different capacity I chair the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency and we've talked about this where the Mayor has a very ambitious plan called OneNYC; how to make the city more resilient and more sustainable and

1 to me, I've been very vocal on not just building
2 physical resiliency, but human resiliency and
3 building up human capacity that, you know, if the
4 goal is to place solar panels and you know, other
5 sustainable measures across the city, that that
6 should not equal to a jobs plan for Germany or China,
7 but a jobs plan for New York City and to start
8 retrofitting our public schools that are geared
9 toward these CTE areas to train them with the skills
10 to build these types of technologies, to build them
11 here and to install them for the future. Some of our
12 CTE programs are great, but some of them are working
13 on things that will probably be obsolete in 20-30
14 years from now and so you and I have had great
15 discussions about this; you pointed out some schools
16 in Staten Island and others, but I would love for us
17 to send a message to work with school districts in
18 the Hurricane Sandy impacted communities that
19 witnessed the flooding in their communities, for
20 those kids to be a part of the answer to minimize the
21 risk of a next Sandy; it will be something if they
22 grow up to have the jobs and the skills to make their
23 neighborhoods and make their city more resilient. So
24 this is something that I would really appreciate to
25

1 work with you on to figure out -- PS 97, an
2 elementary school in my district, that has TCUs that
3 need to be removed; if we can build an extension that
4 is in the resiliency sustainability frame, that will
5 be a fantastic opportunity to create a pipeline from
6 elementary, middle school to high school.
7

8 And lastly, just to reinforce the point
9 -- oh, I don't know if we're on the... yeah, I am on
10 the clock -- just to -- I'd love to work with your
11 office and SCA as well on making sure that the wiring
12 in our schools is sufficient. I know that,
13 Chancellor, you hear us on this; we agree, but the
14 number one request that my office gets for Reso A
15 funding is constantly wiring bathrooms and if we're
16 setting a goal of computer literacy, computer science
17 by 2020, sometime there, our schools are still wired
18 to the early 20th century and... [interpose]

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: so what is the
21 plan to make sure that all of our schools have
22 adequate wiring so our Reso A money can be used for
23 computer labs and science labs, so I'd like to hear
24 your feedback and I do wanna again -- Chancellor,
25 just yesterday, listening to you answer questions

1 about homework, answer questions about such
2 technical, grandeur [sic] things in schools; it's
3 great to have a chancellor who gets it, who
4 understands this language, who understands what
5 parents, children and educators go through, so I
6 commend you for really getting it and I'd love for us
7 to work together to really advance this school system
8 to make sure that our kids are learning 21st century
9 things and giving them 21st century opportunities.
10 Thank you and I await your response.

11
12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Let me take two
13 different things that you just said... [crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Sure.

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: We have made a major
16 investment in CTE; since last time I was here we have
17 a new head of CTE, John Widlund, who used to be head
18 of Co-op Tech, but also George Washington High School
19 and as a result, as you know, we have been
20 highlighting what are the CTE programs that, as you
21 say, we need for tomorrow and the year later, because
22 a lot of the programs are no longer needed. So he's
23 been doing an assessment of all our CTE programs and
24 also seeing what are CTE programs that we could use
25 that we haven't really started expanding. To me,

1 computer science, robotics; I went to the robotics
2 fair this Saturday and I was very impressed by the
3 things that kids could do, but not enough kids are
4 doing it, including at Grady, and how do we make sure
5 that we have centers; we don't have these centers in
6 every single school, but how do we have at least one
7 in every borough, and we have plans for some of that,
8 so that all kids will be exposed to the work of
9 technology. But also, our best CTE programs are
10 culinary arts -- I just got an e-mail yesterday; one
11 of our CTE graduates is getting a full year
12 internship in Paris studying under a three-star
13 Michelin chef. I mean those are the kinds of things
14 that we should be doing, because it's career-ready;
15 college-ready, it can be both or it can be one or the
16 other. So I think CTE is really in good hands and we
17 need to make sure that when we look at them in the
18 high schools that they are following in the right
19 direction. They also need to be... the CTE, as I feel;
20 they need to be more engaged in what's happening in
21 their community, so one of the CTE programs, [bell]
22 particularly in Staten Island that has an advertising
23 component, the teacher formerly worked in one their
24 -- I just connected to Helen Rosenthal -- I want them

1
2 to do the campaign for voters, for high school; let
3 the high school kids develop a program; give them a
4 little extra money for their program; then they can
5 do that.

6 I think the wiring issue is much more
7 complicated, not because we don't wanna solve it;
8 because it's extremely expensive and until we get the
9 fair share of funding and everything else and also,
10 figure out how to override buildings that are over
11 100 years old, that no matter what you do may not
12 have the right wiring; my feeling is a lot of the
13 wiring that we can -- you know, like even using cell
14 phones in our schools, I've been to schools where
15 they're developing apps, the Y Plan program in New
16 York City is moving to almost all our high schools,
17 where they use apps as part of their learning. So I
18 don't wanna say to you this is gonna happen tomorrow,
19 because I don't know financially -- you wanna add
20 something?

21 RAY ORLANDO: Very expensive. You know,
22 we're looking at a cost that would be, you know
23 measured in billions of dollars to bring all of the
24 buildings up and... so ultimately we have plans to wire
25 buildings for infrastructure for just the hardware

1
2 necessary, do the voice and data systems, all of
3 that; there's baseline technology in the capital
4 plan; most of this work is capitally eligible, but
5 it's a lot of work, it's very expensive and as the
6 Chancellor points out, the buildings themselves are
7 quite old.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: So Mr. Chair,
9 when we go to Albany for lobby day, we have an
10 agenda, to fight for money for our schools. Thank
11 you.

12 [background comment]

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
14 We're going to go to Council Member King, followed by
15 Reynoso and then Council Member Gibson. By the way,
16 everybody's on a clock for five minutes and we ask
17 that you stick to the issue of expense budget items.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: You mean we can't
19 talk about the cookout?

20 [background comments]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Well good morning,
22 Chancellor, it's always the delight... [crosstalk]

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Good morning.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: to have a welcoming
25 conversation with you; I will say, hearing you speak

lets us know that there is a dedicated educator at the helm here and not just a figurehead coming to talk with us, so thank you for your expertise. I have about four questions for you; I'll jump right in.

I do have a statement though regards to charter schools; neither for it or against it, but just like to see a school system that's merged into one that can help all our children learn to be productive people when they grow up, graduate out of high school, and I find it a little odd that due to the fact that all the money that's being spent on charter schools and the space that they use in public schools that we haven't figured out a way that you oversee and have really control over how charter schools are operating, since a lot of them are in our school buildings; that's something that we need to figure out how to change to help you move that conversation, 'cause at the end of the day, my first question goes into kinda of how do we -- or what is the plan for all these buildings that have different schools in them; how do we make them work together, because of limited space, limited resources, where you once had one building... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: where you had a set of 6th grade classes; now you have four schools that have sets of 6th grade classes; how do you... is there a plan to consolidate; how do you manage all that financially being responsible, because these buildings now are administratively top heavy with all the money that's being spent for administration in these buildings, so that's one of my first questions; what's the plan for that... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Can I answer that one before you go to the next one?

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Sure.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay. As you know, you and I visited a school together where there was a charter and a public school in the same building. To me, the most important thing is to figure out what each of them has that the other one wants or can use, so that it has to be a mutual benefit for both schools to share and we saw very clearly that the charter school in that building had done some really interesting work in terms of individualizing student needs; the other school was doing some interesting work in some other area. So put out a grant this

1 year, actually this last month, for charter schools
2 and district schools in the same building to write a
3 grant on what they would like to do together; most of
4 the schools are requesting to share after-school
5 programs, which I think makes a lot of sense, 'cause
6 neither one has enough money on their own, but also,
7 it's not just about sharing practices; we need to
8 break down the barriers that kids think that they are
9 better because they're in this school versus this
10 school. So if they are doing things together they're
11 more likely to work well, and we have a school in the
12 Bronx right now, three middle schools, one elementary
13 school -- elementary school is the charter school in
14 that building -- where all the principals meet once a
15 week and decide what are the things that they are
16 going to do together and what are the things they're
17 going to send kids from one school to the other
18 school to learn more of, and three of the schools are
19 Renewal schools. So I think there's a lot more work
20 can be done in this; again, this is not an area of
21 mandate; this is an area where people with goodwill
22 wanna say I have this; we've already designated
23 several charter schools that I think are doing some
24 innovative work to work with some of our public... and
25

1 vice versa. We have a lot to learn from each other,
2 but we need to do it openly and also, no one has all
3 the answers, you know 1.1 million kids; we need all
4 the help we can get.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay, thank you,
7 thank you for that answer.

8 My next question goes into diversity and
9 leaderships in the schools; how is your budget going
10 to, I guess say develop leadership in buildings that
11 reflect the students in the building so there is -- I
12 heard you talk about de-stressing out at times in the
13 school; sometimes when there is that bond just
14 because we come from the same cloth and the same
15 history; some of those stresses can go away, so how
16 do we -- that's a question of how do you plan to make
17 sure that the schools reflect the principals and
18 faculties reflect the neighborhood, just... that's the
19 question for you.

20 You also mentioned in your testimony
21 about 3,000 more students have access to sports; I
22 know over the last couple of years I've been an
23 advocate for SSAL, just like to know if there's a
24 plan to grow that number as well.
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I think your question about Renewal schools -- I forgot what this other one was --

[background comments] oh, PSA... okay, sure. I wanna be clear that there is always going to be, in any system, a bottom 10 or 20 percent of schools, always forever, as long as I've been around, and whether we call them Renewal schools or something else, they're always gonna need extra support; we are looking at our Renewal schools a little differently, we're looking at them as we're gonna give every child a change, but we are also going to, and we've already done so, close some of them; we are going to merge and consolidate others. If you have two schools, both of which have like 110 kids, together they'll be able to provide more services for their kids without an administrative overhead. So we're looking at that

as one of the other things in how we look not just at our Renewal schools, but schools in general; we had schools literally with 67 children, with a principal, and assistant principal and so to the degree that we are gonna constantly need building leaders, might these leaders be better -- and we've been working with the unions on this; this is not something we do unilaterally -- but I do think that the merging, consolidation, closing and supporting of Renewal schools is an investment in our kids; no child should be in a school where they won't be successful.

The other thing we have made very conscious; there are several schools based on state criteria of the 94 schools that already sort of came off the list; we're keeping them there 'cause they need a whole harmless year, they need a year where you're not pulling out the rug from under them. I remember years ago when you have a CERS [sic] school -- I mean I forgot all the acronyms that we had -- and then all of a sudden this was happening, they had after-school programs and then all of a sudden it disappeared; we need to support... and in particular, certain parts of the city where there's a lot more trauma, where we see what a wraparound service is all

about and how that helps. So I do think this is all part and parcel of our plans. In terms of the PSAL...

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Yes, just specifically, we're gonna add approximately 500 new teams over the course of the next four years and we're focusing on both the small schools and also developing girls' teams.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Any of you who might've want... I don't know if any of you went to the PSAL on... [background comments] Saturday -- very exciting and the Jefferson Campus won; Lincoln High School unfortunately lost, but I did get a tee shirt from the Lincoln High School principal today to remind me that he's not just about sports; he's about academics too, so... right?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: And for the girls, South Shore won and... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Okay.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Francis Lewis lost, just in case people were wondering... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And the other thing we're trying to do; you didn't ask this, but I think it relates to what you're saying; we're looking on

how do we work differently; we've co-located high school campuses, because if you have -- and I'll use an example of a school I'm particularly proud of and I have to say thank you out loud to Mark Rampersant, who's been unbelievable with all these -- you have six schools in a building, six principals who don't talk to each other; not by -- you know, just because they don't, and we are now trying to do something a little different; we're trying to develop building managers, so one person -- and this was at a request of two of your City Council, actually; I had Councilman Kline [sic] and Councilman Vacca meet me at the school and we put certain parameters in place that we wanna do at more of our campus high schools. For example, a building manager who makes all the day to day decisions around safety and dismissals and all the things that -- six people to agree on this might be too many. We also created a building council of students, two from each school; we're now gonna be creating a parent council of two parents from each school, so they will start having opportunities to talk to each other. We are also developing AP courses that each school will take on one area of expertise but that students from other schools will

1 be able to partake of, which requires, one of the
2 most difficult things; a common bell system. Now if
3 you think it's difficult to break the code, try to
4 have a common bell system in the school. But it's
5 something we're doing and we're gonna be using that
6 school as an example, and I have five more high
7 schools on my agenda to go meet with; I sit, we talk,
8 all the principals and we develop a plan that's going
9 to meet the needs of that school, but how they can
10 work, 'cause that's how we utilize better resources
11 and also, one sports team for the campus...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Yes.

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: one after-school pro...
14 one debate team for the campus; we've been rewarding
15 schools with tickets to *Hamilton*. It works to see
16 that when schools put their minds to work together,
17 we're doubling our money and also, kids have a whole
18 different attitude when they know that they're
19 working cooperatively, so that's something
20 [background comment].

21 COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Well I wanna thank
22 you for answering my question; I did have one more,
23 but my time is out, on libraries, but when we have a
24 hearing about libraries, I will ask my question then.
25

CHANCELLOR FARINA: 'Kay.

COUNCIL MEMBER KING: Thank you,
Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Council
Member King. Council Member Reynoso, followed by
Council Member Gibson and then Lander.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you, Chair
and welcome, Chancellor. I wanted to ask a question
regarding English language learners, IEPs and special
education children. I asked this question a while
back and never really got an answer that I thought
was sufficient; I know we got more per pupil funding
for students with special needs, but at a certain
point a school has so many special needs students
that it starts becoming a systematic -- a need for a
systematic change within the building to accommodate
the needs of many of these students; I have one
school where over 50 percent of their students are
either IEP or ELL and some of them mixed in that and
the per pupil funding is not enough -- well I don't
think it's sufficient to deal with the needs for the
school. Is there ever a point where we can have a
conversation about additional funding to schools that

1
2 have a percent of the students that are special needs
3 outside of per pupil funding, additional resources?

4 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Anything is possible
5 to talk about, but you know, it's really the amount
6 of money and where you prioritize. But I wanna
7 answer specifically the overlap, the Venn diagram...
8 [crosstalk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Right.

10 CHANCELLOR FARINA: between ELLs and
11 special ed., because... [crosstalk]

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Yeah.

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: we really have to --
14 and this has an agenda that we've been talking about
15 -- we have to really dig deeper and make sure that
16 kids who are labeled both deserve both labels,
17 because there has still been a lot of labeling of
18 students and we haven't really done a good enough
19 job; is it really special ed. or is it, you know,
20 that they have some language issues that we need to
21 deal with first... [crosstalk]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Right. Right.

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: So that's something
24 we've been talking about; I've certainly been talking
25 with Deputy Chancellor Baez in to how we start

1 looking at this in a school by school decision. The
2 other thing is, with special education, we need to
3 really be clearer in terms of how do we -- I'm hoping
4 that Pre-K is going to make a big difference in that
5 we're trying to identify earlier the kids who have
6 certain particularly, you know, speech, language-
7 delayed issues, and not all special ed. kids are in
8 the same category, there is a difference between a
9 child who should be in ICT class versus a child who
10 should be in a class, a Nest Program, which is kids
11 with Autism; we are now looking at definitions of
12 12:1:1 with kids with dyslexia; there's a lot more
13 layers on special ed. that even there are ELL, so I
14 think it's really doing a deep dive [sic]. But in
15 terms of specific schools, we're also looking --
16 particularly in the high schools -- of making sure
17 that no school has a percentage like you're talking
18 about, unless it's a zoned school and that's who
19 comes in. So this year we actually had principals in
20 the high schools come in one on one to say to them,
21 we're looking at your numbers and you have less than
22 10 percent special needs kids or ELLs; how do you get
23 your number to a fairer [sic], so we have quadrupled
24 the number of special needs children particularly in
25

1 many of our high schools and we had to do it one on
2 one and that's what we're going to continue to do.
3 But I think it's also using the right programs for
4 these students and we're looking for -- here again,
5 we're looking for technology, assistive technology
6 that makes sense. One of the reasons I went to
7 Chicago; I went to attend the NABE Conference and
8 look for materials that might be more appropriate to
9 use in New York City and interestingly enough, one of
10 the things that all the leaders that I met with told
11 me not enough materials are being written for this
12 particular population.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: But at what
15 time, Chancellor, does it become a problem that needs
16 more than just actual programming or more per pupil
17 funding and it's like a systematic assistant to the
18 school that is providing a... [crosstalk]

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think it...

20 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: over 50 percent
21 and this is a zoned school; I just wanna make sure
22 you know.

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah, just give me
24 the number later [sic] and a lot of this has to do
25 with how the superintendents also identify certain

schools who have more needs and that's a conversation I have with superintendents all the time... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: So I would love to talk to the superintendent... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: and just the burden of having to educate these children coming to a school; the per pupil funding is just not enough; his whole school is geared around teaching...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I'll tell you what the problem is, even more than the money, although I shouldn't say I don't want any money; we need our schools of education to graduate teachers who are trained to work with these students and we find that the biggest lack of teachers, going forward, are teachers who are trained to work with special ed. kids, of whole gamut and teachers who are ready to work with English language learners. I'm meeting today with the deans of education of all the community colleges and this is one of the things I'm gonna be asking them to do, to work with us more intensely on this. So a lot of it is, where are the teachers coming from and are they well-trained or do

we have to retrain them once we get them. So this is part of our conversation.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Great, we'd love to sit down and talk about that; I think that'll be great; I just wanna bring support to this school that I think is unfortunately being unfairly, I guess targeted because of the high needs it has and its low performance.

I also wanna talk about the MSQI; thank you so much for coming to one of the debates at Brooklyn [bell] Tech; I don't know if you stayed to see any of the debates, but those kids are pretty impressive; I can't imagine doing anything like they were doing at those debates, it was -- they intimidated me; I could only imagine how they feel competing against each other, but it's an extraordinary program that is really using debate to assist children in more comprehensively understanding what they're reading, which is I think part of what the common core wants to do and this is actually getting that done. And the students are articulating it and being able to break that down while they're debating, on the spot, which is remarkable; they're not taking days or weeks to comprehend what they're

1 listening or reading, they're kind of doing it on the
2 spot. So I just wanna -- we were able to fund the
3 MSQI program through the City Council and was
4 wondering if that type of programming or MSQI could
5 ever be something that the Department of Education
6 really looks to either match our funding or do
7 something more -- you know of course, citywide, I
8 just think it's so valuable and we talk... you
9 mentioned... [crosstalk]

11 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I have to tell you
12 that...

13 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: MS 50 and I just
14 wanna say, MS 50 is like my... [crosstalk]

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I know.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I love the
17 school and it has a lot to do with the MSQI
18 programming in there.

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: But MSQI has really
20 -- and again, I've been visiting schools just to see
21 them practice, but I think it has another value; I am
22 so totally committed to students talking in class and
23 being interactive learners and that does -- you must
24 do it; I mean it's not an option. The other thing
25 is, I heard the keynote speaker, who happened to be a

former MSQI student, someone who came to this country I think as a teenager, learned everything she did in her school and now I think she had a full scholarship to Dartmouth or one of the Ivy League schools. This is the kind of message we want all of our kids to have, but the other thing is; when I was there, all the teams were -- this was a Saturday morning; many of them had been there the day before practicing, and they were all engaged in learning. What I would love to see and I feel the same way about the robotics thing that I went to Saturday; I would love to see a varsity lettered tee shirt; the same way that our athletes get varsity letters, I'd like to see a varsity letter for our debate team, because there are what, 300 students there at Brooklyn Tech and they need to get the credit for academic competitions. I'm a big believer that, you know, we need to do a lot of things even playing field, but there is a place for competition and this is one of the places. So you don't have to sell me on MSQI, I'm thrilled with it, I appreciate the initiative that the Council has taken on this; we'll take anymore money for this particular cause, but it has to be used with fidelity. Here again, in some cases principals were

1 given this as a gift; I am not a big believer in
2 gifts; I believe you have to work for something
3 you're going to get, so in order for MSQI to work,
4 principal has to designate some teachers are gonna
5 take it on, go for the training and then implement it
6 with fidelity. One of the schools that is doing it
7 beautifully also is MS 110; it's a campus and all the
8 campus schools are doing it in District 11. So
9 there's a lot of examples of where this is done
10 right, but it's where the principals have embraced
11 it, the teachers have gone for training and the
12 vocabulary development is part of what they do.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Right. And
15 Chair, I just wanna say to the Council Members that
16 are sitting here on the dais and are just listening,
17 MSQI, an amazing program; if you sit on B and T
18 [sic], you'll be hearing me advocate for that as
19 well, alongside restorative justice, so just wanted
20 to make my pitch and thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's a great pitch
22 and support it. And I was also at Brooklyn Tech and
23 saw the debate league, which was fascinating.

24 Just to follow up a little bit on
25 something Council Member Reynoso brought up. Special

1
2 ed. Training and ELL training, when I was teaching I
3 think we had six special ed. credits we had to get
4 before we were licensed, only six, which is really
5 two courses and I don't think we had any requirements
6 for ELL training; is that still the case with the
7 state?

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Pretty much. We're
9 changing that because the other thing here; special
10 ed training, and this is something Deputy Chancellor
11 Linello [sp?] and Selmi [sp?] is doing really well,
12 is different, because we now have many more
13 categories; if you're teaching in an ICT class, it's
14 not the same as teaching in a 12:1:1 or the same as
15 teaching in an S [sic] program. All of these require
16 different skill sets and what we are asking our
17 universities to do; if you're going to be doing
18 special ed programs, distinguish between the three,
19 because these teachers need to come to the table
20 already ready, I mean obviously nobody really learns
21 how to teach until you're in a classroom, but we find
22 that we're actually retraining -- one of the things
23 we did the beginning of this year, we went around the
24 city to every first-year teacher; we had borough
25 conferences; Michael and I went to all the boroughs,

1 and one of the biggest issues that came up, which is
2 why we're doing so much intensive training on it now,
3 that we might not have been explicit enough in ICT
4 classrooms -- what do two teachers do if they're in
5 the same room together; who does what; how do you
6 evaluate two different teachers -- so a lot of the
7 training is now going to retrain the people we
8 already have. If you're working with kids with
9 Asperger's and dyslexia, you need a different set of
10 skills than kids, for example, that have behavior
11 issues, so we're looking at the whole map of learning
12 disabilities and then how do we specify the kind of
13 training. This is gonna be training that's gonna
14 take place all the time; we're doing some training
15 during the next week we have off and during the
16 summer, so this is an ongoing process; there's no one
17 answer to this.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, and now we
20 have Council Member Gibson, followed by Council
21 Member Lander and then Kallos.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Thank you very
23 much, Chair Dromm. Good morning Chancellor to you
24 and your team, thank you so much for being here; for
25 all of your work, just incredible, there is so much

information to continuously talk about, but I appreciate your commitment and the numerous visits you make to the Bronx, to District 9... [interpose]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I might as well live there.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: yes, and that's okay, that's fine, we want that in our chancellor. I chair Public Safety and DOE has had a major partnership with the NYPD School Safety around school crossing guards, so I certainly thank you for your work; last year's budget we allowed funding to hire 80 new school crossing guards; we wanna make sure every elementary; middle school has a school crossing guard, as well as new schools coming down the pipeline, so your partnership with School Safety, with SCA; DOT is going to be extremely critical, so I thank you for that.

I wanted to quickly talk about a little bit further on restorative justice; the School Leadership Climate Team of which DOE is a major part of, there are recommendations that will be coming down; I wanted to know if you can give us an update that's coming from the working group; are there any instances you could provide us on metal detectors and

the rotating metal detectors that we're looking at,
and certainly beyond the initial stage of this
working group; is this a group that's going to
continue further on in the long-term?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Thank you
Councilwoman. So I am a co-chair of the Leadership
Team and our last meeting was on Monday, or I
wouldn't say our last meeting; [background comment]
for the last year we've been working very, very hard
on our recommendations. A quick update on metal
detectors and scanning in schools; right now we're in
the process of developing a policy and protocol with
the NYPD and School Safety around the data that we're
gonna look at; the community involvement that's gonna
be involved, but we're still working on it and it's...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: an analysis both at a
database, but also, you know, principal and
community-based to assess whether principals want to
keep their scanners; remove their scanners...
[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: or even some principals who have requested scanners. So we are taking a look at all of those three things and we should be coming out shortly with our protocols.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay, great; I appreciate that, a lot of work has been put into that, so I really thank you for that.

The restorative justice and the \$2.4 million that we have currently 15 schools, what has been your feedback on that; have you seen already any reduction in the number of students that are arrested, suspended, given summons; I know District 9 has had over a 50 percent reduction, which I'm extremely proud of, and I also wanna make sure that's coupled with graduation rates; test scores, so have you seen any correlation between the restorative justice work and how that relates to many of our students in terms of academics?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: I think I'd have to come back to you on the correlation piece, only because I haven't looked at the 15 schools in particular and how that has impacted both suspensions, arrests and summonses, but we'll come back to you on that one... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: But I should say that with the 15 schools we are learning a lot and we're taking what we've learned to expand for this upcoming fiscal year, which we received additional money from... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: in our preliminary budget, to really expand more restorative practices, and also have more restorative practices in specific districts... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Okay.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: and District 9 is really leading the way on a lot of this work.

COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Absolutely; I thank you for that... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And I also wanna say that, you know, one of the things I'm proudest of, bar none, is our superintendents, but there are some superintendents who took on yeoman jobs and District 9 I think in particular stands out, she's got the most Renewal schools; she is one of the hardest to staff districts and yet she comes with full energy, has proven to be a leader for other

1
2 superintendents in the Bronx and I think one of the
3 most amazing things that I've seen there is how they
4 have monthly meetings among themselves to talk about
5 how they could share resources across, you know, the
6 district lines and it's been amazing and Leticia in
7 particular has gotten China, literally China, from
8 flea markets so she can serve people...

9 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right.

10 CHANCELLOR FARINA: as they discuss their
11 way forward and I think that's one of the things that
12 we really need, again, besides celebrations;
13 collaborations. If we have an answer to a problem,
14 it cannot stay within our own districts and I think
15 that's one of the reasons that a lot of things are
16 working there.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: Right. Thank
18 you; I was also going to give her a shout-out...
19 [crosstalk]

20 CHANCELLOR FARINA: **[inaudible]**

21 COUNCIL MEMBER GIBSON: District 9
22 Superintendent Leticia Rosario, amazing, I appreciate
23 her leadership. The one challenge we face in
24 District 9, along with District 23 in Brooklyn, is
25 that we unfortunately have the highest distinction of

1 students living in homeless shelters and transitional
2 housing, so your partnership with DHS is critical and
3 what I'd like to know is within this fiscal year are
4 there targeted programs that we're investing in that
5 focuses not only on these families getting into
6 permanent housing, right, which is DHS'
7 responsibility, but from DOE's perspective, what are
8 we doing to drive those numbers down? In my area, I
9 have schools that are at 30 percent, as high as that,
10 so it's very alarming to me and I wanna make sure
11 that District 9 is given attention that it needs.
12 [bell]
13

14 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah, I would say
15 that that's one of the numbers we're looking at all
16 the time and we also looked at what is the number
17 that would generate extra funding to deal with that,
18 but it's also been a matter of training and one of
19 the things that I've been working with the
20 superintendent; how do they support principals who
21 are constantly having a transient population, so
22 we're making more of an effort to allow students to
23 stay in the schools they feel comfortable with, even
24 if their shelters change, but this is definitely a
25 very big problem because of the numbers, but I think

Next we have Council Member Lander,
followed by Kallos and Levine.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you
Mr. Chair, thank you Chancellor. Mr. Chair, I'll
just echo that; it happened that my son's intramural
championship basketball game this Sunday was at the
building that houses Cobble Hill Success Academy and
like thinking about what that video is and you know,
that made me deeply unhappy, but I think the point
that we're making progress in our schools is really
quite significant. And I was also encouraged to hear
your response to Council Member Gibson on the metal
detectors and that's a little more clarity than we've
gotten from NYPD that what we're gonna get is some
clarity on how you seek to have them removed; how, if
anyone wants to seek to have them added, they could
do that, and some real clarity on what the data says
as well; I mean I think you know that that process
for too long has been shrouded in secrecy and in
addition, if you were able to get the school
demographics, it would be shrouded in secrecy with
deeply a discomfoting racial overlay, so getting
that policy on the table so schools can know what
they need to do and move forward is really

significant and we look forward to that coming [sic]...
[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And our goal is to be transparent in as many ways as possible and also making sure that we don't do something that then will backlash on us, so it has to be based on data, which is why we wanna be very careful and not on just data, but what are the types of incidences that are happening in certain schools versus others and then making sure that everyone in the building is comfortable going forward with whatever decision we make so that you don't have one principal talking against another.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's right. A couple just quick thank yous; I was just out at the new building that houses the Upper School of PS 130 and MS 839 and at D 75 school and anyone that needs to see a campus that's working together, go see that place, it is really just inspiring, there's a UPK center there; they're really working together in wonderful and creative ways. And I also want to appreciate the flexibility that you all showed in allowing MS 442 to have some more time before its

relocation; we need those new seats in the annex...

[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: where PS 32 is, but of course we want to help make sure both of those schools can succeed and grow, so thank you for doing that.

And I was very encouraged by the early data on the diversity admissions pilot to see that the schools were able to hit their targets; I don't wanna use the budget hearing to talk more about it; there's a lot more conversation to have about those issues of diversity, but maybe we'll find another time to do that.

But one of those schools, the Brooklyn Children's School, PS 372, I just wanna inject into the special ed discussion, because to my knowledge, they're still the only school that has the model of collaborative team teaching inclusion [sic] across a district school, D 15, and where the special ed -- yeah, the students with IEPs are from D 75 -- and I have found that a very encouraging model that is really working and I just wonder, as we're working with universities and building that program, is that

1
2 a model that we're looking at growing; it seems to me
3 to be a very effective one; it may be expensive, but
4 it sure seems to be succeeding.

5 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I think we're looking
6 at several different models, there are certain things
7 that **[inaudible]** and I have been talking about; that
8 certainly will always be a model, but I think also,
9 what are the categories on IEPs that will make this
10 more balanced, 'cause not all IEPs, when you're
11 blending schools, should be speech-delay issues, they
12 should be a combination. So but we look at
13 everything that's working and just so that -- I know
14 you wanna talk about it later -- but you should know
15 that one of the ways that we anticipate growing our
16 diversity is we will be putting out shortly our Pros
17 applications and we are encouraging principals who
18 have unique ideas on how to do diversity to become a
19 Pro school; Pro school is a school that doesn't have
20 to follow certain rules; the only rule they cannot
21 break is, if they have zoned students, they must
22 accept their zoned students first, but if they have
23 space they can put forth; ways of how to use that
24 space.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great and we're hearing from the schools that are doing this work about a desire to have professional development, talk to each other, being able to grow and strengthen that practice and there's also a growing network of high school students interested in this topic, the Integrate NYC for Me is bringing together some, but I'd love to introduce you to them, they're very dynamic [sic] young people.. [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I know and honestly, the other thing is, we will be making one of these schools a showcase school so that other schools who want to do this can go visit that school and see how it's done; certainly, Julie Zuckerman has done some of this work and Anna Allanbrook is doing some of the work, so highlighting the schools that have done it so other principals who may be thinking about it can go visit, because it's better to see something and see how it's working rather than try to imagine it all on your own.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's great. I had two topics, but I'm not gonna get them both in, so I'll leave school food -- breakfast and lunches -- to someone -- let's see, Council Member Levin's here,

1 maybe he'll pick that one up, but I just wanna ask
2 about college guidance and we're gonna here today,
3 later, from some of the people from the Student
4 Success Centers, the College Access Research and
5 Advocacy Program, that I think we're hoping maybe we
6 can put more money into and grow those centers and I
7 just wanna know how you see those fitting in with the
8 existing network of college guidance and support and
9 what we can do together to make sure every kid, and
10 especially **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah. I think
13 working on this together would be great. One of the
14 things that, again, when I'm talking about campus
15 models, if you have six high schools [bell] in a
16 campus, you should have one college office where all
17 of them are working together, because if you're
18 looking at a trip let's say to a school, you know,
19 you wanna go see SUNY; well if there are three kids
20 in each school who wanna go see SUNY, we should be
21 doing that altogether, so we're talking, how do you
22 maximize your resources in a building where you could
23 have several guidance counselors actually talking to
24 each other and saying maybe I'll work with the kids
25 who wanna go to CUNY schools or SUNY schools or

1 private schools; we need to have a better approach,
2 but I'm certainly interested in expanding them; I
3 just -- I think next week we're gonna be visiting one
4 of the Success Centers that I understand is doing
5 some wonderful work, so I'm curious to do more of
6 that, but I do think having shared space in a high
7 school building is another way to go.

8
9 URSULINA RAMIREZ: And... [crosstalk]

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I'll...

11 URSULINA RAMIREZ: And if I can just make
12 an addition to that. In our college Access for All
13 programs within middle school and high school and our
14 Single Shepherd program, we are looking at Success
15 Centers as an element to that.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I would just
17 encourage members -- it's an amazing sort of peer
18 education model and they'll be here later today; they
19 have a little video, so I hope people can stick
20 around and see that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And we've been
22 working with them very closely too. Thank you.
23 Council Member Kallos, followed by Levine, Williams
24 and Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Good morning
Chancellor; how are you doing today...? [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Good morning.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Wanted to just
touch base on four different areas; one being UPK,
civic, food, as Council Member Lander already knew,
and thank you for giving me the chance to ask the
question, though you were ahead of me in line, and
just investing in our staff.

With regard to UPK, as of 2014 WNYC
reported 2,118 4-year-olds in my district and in 2014
we got 123 UPK seats; it's now 2016; we are up to 425
seats, we've quadrupled those numbers and I believe
we have 72 more seats in procurement, but that still
only gets us to just shy of 500, which is one-quarter
of the way towards making sure we have Universal
Pre-K for every single child who is 4 years old...
[crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We're working on it.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: in the district,
and this is not just my district, there are districts
all over the city; there is only about one or two or
three I think districts that actually have more seats
or as many seats as are necessary for children,

1
2 according to WNYC. So what we can do to make sure
3 that we actually get the seats so children aren't
4 traveling for more than an hour from Roosevelt Island
5 to Chinatown and back and have longer commutes than
6 most adults to.

7 With regard to civics, it's an election
8 year, it's a presidential election year; would you be
9 willing to work with us to do a pilot with the kids
10 to have them do a mock election in April for
11 president and then interestingly enough, it turns out
12 that voting is a hereditary trait and social science
13 has shown that if parents take their kids to vote
14 they are more likely to vote themselves, so rolling
15 out "Vote with Kids" in November, when we will be
16 doing the presidential general election the kids
17 aren't in school; we could work with the kids and the
18 parents to make sure that the kids get a chance to
19 stop by or even fill out an absentee ballot with
20 their parents, but those two pieces together,
21 combined with the Student Voter Registration Day and
22 the Young Adult Voter Registration Act, which would
23 change it from handing it out with diplomas to in
24 class I think might help us ensure that the 1.1
25

million kids in our schools right now are in a habit to continue voting when they graduate.

On the topic of school food, we have an opportunity to make sure that 1.1 million children don't have to worry about hunger, which would be huge and with that cost savings that would be generated to the families, those families might have additional income so that they could worry about the rest of the family's hunger. Last year we gave \$6.25 million from the Council, but it only ended up costing \$3.6 million; it wasn't rolled out as a full rollout to all middle schools, only standalone middle schools, and so one key piece is; can we please have free universal lunch; I believe advocates are saying that while we would have significant... it might have costs; that we would be seeing a \$20 million reimbursement from the federal government, so it only costs \$3.6 million; along the same lines, making sure we actually get breakfast for every single one of our kids.

And then last but not least, as we're doing the community schools we can actually qualify for free federal supper, which means we could actually get three square meals a day and the federal

government will pay for it and that will bring more money into our local economy.

And then just on investing in our schools, last year the Council provided half-a-million dollars for the Executive Leadership Institute; I'm curious if you've had a chance to attend Elias [sic] principal and whether or not it is something that we can continue to invest on.

Similarly, I put member item funding and the Council provided \$9.6 million to Teacher's Choice so that teachers aren't spending everything out of their pocket, and whether or not we can see a baseline or a match from the administration, and then just last but not least, an expansion of Positive Learning Collaborative.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I see what he did, you see this is something to learn; he asks all his questions at one time so I have to use his time now to answer them all. Clever. Clever. I have to remember that as a strategy.

Let me take one at a time. I am totally engaged in civic engagement; I am a total believer that we need to do more because we are not going to flourish as a democracy if kids don't understand how

1 we got here and what we need to do to preserve this
2 democracy. We have a civics curriculum, we have it
3 starting in kindergarten; it is totally laid out
4 right through 12th grade; maybe not being taught the
5 way it should be taught, but we have the curriculum,
6 it's certainly one of the things that we'll be
7 highlight more as I talk to superintendents. I think
8 also that one of the things I would encourage more
9 City Council people to do is to engage their
10 communities in participatory budgeting. I would love
11 to see civic engagement being done by getting our
12 high school kids to participate in participatory
13 budgeting really... we now... [interpose]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Eleanor Roosevelt
15 High School in my district, which is one of the only
16 high schools in my district that serves local
17 constituents, will be having a PB vote site; we have
18 changed the age to 14 just so that they can vote.

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay. But we also
20 have something now called "Y Plan" which is an app,
21 it's a total training process and I actually have
22 sitting in my office proposals from high school
23 students based on participatory budgeting and
24 different things about civic engagement. In terms of
25

how do we get kids to vote, we are gonna do a campaign for high schools; my concern about mock elections [bell] this year goes back to bullying a little bit, because what I am hearing from elementary school kids that it's already become a source [sic] in some schools -- who's your parent gonna vote for -- and unless this is done right, this could be something else that's going to create more contention. But one of the things I had read years ago; I believe it's Minnesota, one of our top five states with good election results, that they have many election boards right outside of the voting booths for kids to go with their parents and parents are encouraged to take their children with them to vote so they understand, like you said, that this is a family job and that kids get to do that. So I'm all for whatever's gonna get us to vote; I think the percentage is embarrassing and as I said yesterday at the press conference, there are countries that dock people a day's pay if you don't vote; there are other countries that you vote on Sunday so there's no excuse and we need to make voting a part of our everyday life.

As far as food in middle school, with all of the money we spent, we have seen a percentage of about 6 percent in terms of students eating more than they might've, so this is still something we're looking at closely before we expand it in any way, 'cause our numbers are not reflecting that this has made a major difference; that's not to say for the kids that it does make a difference, but I think we need further study. And for the UPK... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: For the middle school, that's not the age where the bullying for being financial destitute -- for me, in high school the issue was that it's high school and that's where the kids are starting to bully each other over who eats what and whether or not you even have enough money for lunch that day, so...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: I think if we rolled out in high school you would probably see different numbers and 6 percent is a big number.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: We'll continue to evaluate and evaluate high schools as well.

On UPK, and I know you speak to Deputy Chancellor Wallack fairly regularly around some of

our Roosevelt Island seats; we do have an RFP; we are looking at space there, evaluating space, so we'll keep you abreast of anything that we find and through the RFP process.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Breakfast.

Sorry.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Breakfast, Councilman, has had a little bit of a rocky start; we're trying to really listen very carefully to individual schools and one of the things we have been doing is asking schools what some of their issues are and the issues have been that in some schools parents really do not want the breakfast in the classroom, they feel that the students should have breakfast before they leave the home; it varies from school to school, it's been a very interesting phenomena in that there are schools that have all kinds of reasons for this. The other thing that we have to make sure -- we eliminate the issue of it's interrupting teaching time; it shouldn't. If you use breakfast in the classroom as a time to teach socialization skills -- you know eating, breaking bread is a social skill, so how do you get that to look like that. In schools

1 that we have received some complaints, we've asked
2 principals to take it back to their SLTs to have
3 discussions with SLTs how this could be done more
4 smoothly. So this is one that we are rolling out,
5 we're rolling it out slowly, we wanna make sure that
6 we answer all the concerns from the field so that we
7 can actually do it across the city, but in ways that
8 make sense.
9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: ELI PLC.

11 CHANCELLOR FARINA: What?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Executive
13 Leadership and **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

14 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Oh. Well actually,
15 we're working very closely with them now on our
16 Renewal schools; they are supplying for us and doing
17 the training for the coaches that are working with
18 our Renewal schools, so we have very good
19 relationship, although I've never been part of it,
20 I've always been a guest speaker, even during my
21 years of retirement, and it's certainly an
22 organization that I think adds value to the system.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KALLOS: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
25 Member Levine, followed by Williams, Chin and Barron.

1 I'm sorry, I have Levine. Okay, Levin. [background
2 comments] No? Okay. Alright, so we'll go to
3 Williams, I'm sorry. Williams, Chin and Barron.
4 Williams is not here.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well I guess it's
7 my turn.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, we'll take it.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Good morning
10 Chancellor... [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Chin, Barron,
12 Deutsch... [crosstalk]

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Good morning.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: And thank you for
15 coming to visit my district, with EC 1, I think there
16 was a very fruitful town hall with lots of questions
17 for you and hopefully we're working together to get
18 parents more engaged and also help them to make sure
19 that the dual language program that's working in that
20 school will continue to be really a great program.

21 I'm gonna ask you a couple of questions
22 in terms of the language access. In terms of this
23 year's budget, how much funding is available to hire
24 and train multi-lingual staff, to have material,
25 translators at the home, interpretation and

translation service for parents? The other question is that we were very pleased that when DOE announced expansion of the phone interpretation program for our school and we were wondering why that was not also implemented for Pre-K students who are attending schools that -- the Pre-K program run by the CBO and can we make sure that we extend that service to be available to parents of Pre-Ks in the CBO program? The other question that I have is focus on the dual language program; wanna know how many ELL students are enrolled in these dual language programs and also, what kind of support that DOE is providing to do teacher recruitment, support for teachers, teacher training, and also really to have a pipeline that could be the future dual language teacher. I know that we don't have that many high school programs right now, but we do have a few and I'm looking at these students who are in our dual language program in the middle school and high school; they could be our future dual language teachers; we've gotta make sure that they're interested in doing that, and also supporting schools that are starting dual language programs in the elementary school level. I visited one of the kindergarten programs; it's amazing how

1 the kids can switch from one to the other, even on
2 basic, you know, number counting or basic terminology
3 on learning the culture, so I think this is something
4 that I know that you're very supportive of and we
5 just wanna make sure that we have the support there
6 to keep it going.

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I think there
9 are several things; in any dual language program 50
10 percent of the students are native speakers, so
11 that's already an ELL student whose parent is willing
12 to put him in that program and the other 50 percent,
13 which is one of our challenges, have to be
14 monolingual English only students; that's the only
15 way these programs work. So we now have parents
16 coming to us in groups who want us to start dual
17 language and the first thing is; do you have enough
18 children who fit both of those categories. You're
19 absolutely right about our challenges finding
20 teachers and actually, you and I were in an event I
21 believe with the China Institute and I would love to
22 see things like the China Institute; the Asia Society
23 even look to see if they could start working with the
24 university to certify teachers, because that to me is
25 where we're gonna be getting the teachers of the

1 future. I think also, and I think you and I
2 discussed this, getting parents who may have -- and
3 actually did the ethnic media -- who may have been
4 teachers in their country to get the certification
5 here to become teachers, but also moving more
6 aggressively to find paraprofessionals who speak two
7 languages to be able to become some form of assistant
8 teachers who are working with the UFT on a special
9 category of this so that they can become the next
10 level of dual language teachers. But this continues
11 to be a big challenge. When I went to Chicago, one
12 of the things I was told that there are certain parts
13 of the country that actually have a surplus because a
14 lot of cities are doing away with dual language, so
15 we encourage people -- we're gonna be doing a
16 national recruiting, actually in two weeks we're
17 gonna start to get more dual language teachers from
18 other parts of the country to apply to work in New
19 York City, because that is definitely one of our
20 challenges. The future teachers is something I
21 really wanna start in our schools; if we have really
22 good dual language high school students, we want to
23 encourage them, and that's one of the meetings I'm
24 having later today, to take the course work necessary
25

1 to become the teachers -- and it's also pay forward;
2 if you have been a first generation American and you
3 come into a school, wouldn't you want to give back to
4 your community? So I think there's a lot of ways we
5 can do this, but it's definitely one of our bigger
6 challenges.

7
8 URSULINA RAMIREZ: Just to comment on
9 your language access; one of the things we announced
10 fairly recently was nine new language access
11 coordinators within our borough field support
12 centers, which equates to approximately \$675,000 and
13 these folks are gonna be incredibly helpful for our
14 borough field support centers, but also for our
15 principals and superintendents [bell] in accessing
16 language access document interpretation.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: But... [background
18 comments] so that program, is that... I mean that
19 service, is that available to Pre-K parents whose kid
20 is attending the program in the CBOs?

21 URSULINA RAMIREZ: And we are assessing...
22 so we've done a lot of work in increasing
23 interpretation at the BFSCs and in some of our
24 district schools; we are now looking at some of the
25 CBO partners and we'll continue to have conversations

with you how we improve our interpretation services for our CBO partners.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Well we definitely need to expand that service and make sure that every kid, every parent has that access to the interpretation or the translation, because they're just starting out, so we wanna make sure that they're on the right track, so hopefully, in terms of the budget, make sure that all the kids, whether they attend Pre-K in the public schools or CBO get the service for their parents. Thank you.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: I hear you and we will evaluate.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, Council Member Barron, followed by Council Member Deutsch and Levin.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you Mr. Chair and thank you to the panel for coming. Chancellor, I'm glad we have a chance to talk again and thank you for the follow-up that I received in regards to a question that I had asked at the PEP regarding lunch in middle schools, because there's going to be a co-location and my question was; now that this would no longer be a standalone middle school, what would be the impact of the students who

1 had in fact been receiving or had been eligible for
2 free lunch but now perhaps were no longer in a
3 standalone school because there is an attempt to
4 bring in a high school? And it leads me to the
5 question of how many students in middle school grades
6 are in co-located buildings that are not eligible for
7 the free lunch because in fact there are other grades
8 in their building?

9 [background comments]

10 CHANCELLOR FARINA: No, I don't have that
11 exact informa... I'll find out, but most middle school...
12 standalone middle schools, even if they're in
13 buildings with other schools, get the free lunch, but
14 let me get you exact numbers...

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

16 CHANCELLOR FARINA: and I'll get back to
17 you on that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. And
19 regarding the CTE program, in my district there is
20 the FDNY High School, which is on a campus with
21 Thomas Jefferson, which as we have heard, won the
22 City Championship this past weekend, but the FDNY is
23 not able to have firefighters who are perhaps retired
24 and are interested to come to teach in the school,
25

1
2 they're not able to employ them because of the state
3 regulation. What are we doing so that those experts
4 in the field, in a profession, in a career who want
5 to come and work in our high schools, in these CTE
6 schools, can in fact bring their services there; what
7 are we doing in that regard...? [crosstalk]

8 CHANCELLOR FARINA: What I'm going to do
9 after this meeting is over, I'm gonna come over and
10 give you a hug, because what you're asking is what
11 I'm asking and this is something I need your help in
12 terms of talking to the state... [crosstalk]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Okay.

14 CHANCELLOR FARINA: we have this problem
15 in many of our CTE schools; we have it in our nursing
16 programs, we have it in our pharmacy programs, we
17 have it in our automotive programs; this requires a
18 special licensing that only the state can do. I have
19 gone to Albany at least three times in the last two
20 months and this is my major issue, it's my number one
21 issue other than money, and this means that we need
22 -- and the new commissioner is very supportive of us
23 getting something done, but if you as a City Council
24 were to work with someone on my team to ask for this
25 to be one of the priorities; if we're gonna do more

1 work with CTEs, we need to recruit the retired
2 everybodies [sic] and what happens is, they need a
3 supplementary license, an ancillary license; I
4 believe it has a special name, and it can only be
5 approved at the state level. So I absolutely agree
6 with you, I wanna see this; I wanna see iron welders
7 come in and volunteer...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes.

9 CHANCELLOR FARINA: we need this in all
10 our CTE programs -- and also, they have access to
11 something that we've been trying to kind of get in;
12 it's like, you have a lot of people who have union
13 cards, so if you have some union people working in a
14 school like Queens Vocational with plumbers and
15 electricians, which they have great programs, they're
16 much more likely to mentor them and then support them
17 when they apply **[inaudible]**, so yes, we need this,
18 but this is, unfortunately, out of my hands, but I
19 would love support from the Council in moving this
20 forward.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you and I'm
22 sure that the Chair would be able to have us lend our
23 support in that regard. I have a lot of other
24 questions, so I'm gonna use a strategy that some of
25

1 my other colleagues have used. I like to pose a
2 question and get an answer so we can have more of an
3 exchange ongoing, but here are my other three
4 questions. In regards to co-locations, my feeling is
5 that as charter schools have been co-located they've
6 been the proverbial camel's nose getting in the tent
7 and eventually what happens is that there is a
8 takeover. In terms of buildings that have more than
9 one school in them and have three, four, five; six
10 principals getting principals' salaries, regardless
11 of what the number of students are in their school,
12 some perhaps larger than others; what is the impact
13 that we can see in regard to that and can we continue
14 to justify paying four, five, six principals in a
15 building that was designed for one administration,
16 that's the first question; secondly, in terms of
17 charter schools over which we as a city with you
18 being the chancellor have no jurisdiction, no ability
19 to respond to parents' complaints of things that are
20 happening that they feel are unjust in that school;
21 what is your plan to address that? Thirdly, in terms
22 of the homeless students, I've been told that each
23 school should have a poster visible someplace that
24 brings the parent information about the McKinney-

1 Vento Act; in all of the schools that I've been in,
2 [bell] I haven't seen that poster visible so that
3 parents would know that that exists. And finally, in
4 terms of teacher training, I did have a hearing
5 regarding teacher training to look at how effective
6 are the training programs that teachers are going
7 through who eventually wind up in the New York City
8 schools, and there was a lot of information given, a
9 certain set of metrics, which I don't know are a good
10 measure for how effective teachers are that was
11 presented, but what can we do to make sure that
12 schools of teacher preparation in fact go beyond just
13 understanding that it's a curriculum of information
14 that teachers are to bring but certainly another
15 understanding of the sensitivity of a culture, the
16 economic conditions and the language which was
17 referred to earlier, that is important for teachers
18 to address and embrace as they teach students,
19 especially in the New York City school system?

20
21 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay, I will do my
22 doctoral dissertation, starting right now.

23 Well let me be clear, one of the things
24 in co-locations, there are all kinds of co-locations
25 and one of the things we're looking... we already

1 started doing this, is merging and consolidating
2 schools within the same location, if we have seen
3 that there are two schools in a building that don't
4 have a certain number of students or that might work
5 more efficiently if they were one school with one
6 administrator; we started doing that, we did about,
7 what, 10 already, we're doing -- by the end of this
8 year we probably would have done about 25, and that's
9 being done exactly for what you said; we don't need
10 two administrative overheads, but more importantly,
11 we need the students to have more resources and if
12 you're spending your percentage -- 'cause you're
13 getting money, as you know, based per student, so
14 instead of having 120 kids you have 325; you're gonna
15 get more services for the kids, so we've already
16 started to do that.

17
18 The other thing is also, in schools where
19 there are too many co-locations, and it depends
20 really mostly in high schools; the idea of putting in
21 a building manager that handles the safety issues,
22 the programming issues, any issues that having six
23 different people's opinion on something is gonna keep
24 us from getting something done is the way to go. I
25 said that one of the examples is the work we've done

1
2 in Lehman High School over the last two months and we
3 have been doing a lot of this building manager idea
4 to make sure that kids get better services and that
5 it's more coordinated.

6 The other thing that we're doing,
7 particularly when there's a charter school in the
8 building, adding them to the mix of the discussion;
9 what do you wanna do differently, what do you bring
10 to the table; how do we unify our resources? I will
11 tell you right now that one of the charter schools
12 and one of our public schools are actually sharing an
13 assistant principal; they decided neither one of them
14 had the money or the resources, they wanted to spend
15 their money on other things, so they decided -- took
16 us a little bit of time to figure out how do we do
17 that in our budget, but I think it makes sense to
18 kind of come together and work together. I think as
19 far as teacher professional development -- I said it
20 before; I will continue to say it -- the best
21 professional development is actually working in a
22 school and we need to figure out more ways, and we
23 have a few; we're looking to expand, internship
24 apprenticeship programs for teachers, which is
25 different than student teachers; we need to put

1 teachers in the schools where they're more likely to
2 work; we have several pilots this year where we
3 specifically are looking to put them in high-needs
4 schools so they'll know what it's like to work in
5 those schools and definitely a discussion with
6 universities in terms of what should their programs
7 look like to fit the needs of today. Having some of
8 those conversations over the next two weeks; I will
9 let you know how it goes.
10

11 And as far as cultural diversity, this is
12 something that we've been talking to teachers about,
13 it goes back to the bullying, it goes back to
14 everything we are as a city and I do think there's a
15 lot more discussions on this and it has to be school-
16 specific.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. And
18 just one last point; if we could get the most recent
19 report on spending of charter schools that are
20 co-located so that we can verify that those amounts
21 that are \$5,000 or over have been recorded, reported
22 and that the host school is getting that same amount
23 of money. I don't think we've gotten that report
24 lately, so I would appreciate getting that.

25 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Okay.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And Council Member Barron, I had the fortune of visiting the vocational high school out in Queens with the Chancellor a few months ago and this issue of credentialing people who are experts in the field coming into CTE schools has been an issue that we've been looking to move forward, so we will join in on that with the DOE as we move forward. So now we have Council Members Deutsch, Levin and then Rosenthal.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you, Chair and I wanna thank you, Chancellor; I know you were in my district Saturday night; you went to Madison, the SING! performance; I think I just missed you; I missed your dance performance or I missed your dance moves...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: [laugh] That's an exaggeration; go ahead.

COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: I want to bring up a few issues; number one, I went to visit one of the schools in Council Member Reynoso's district where the children had debates on certain issues, so one of the things I brought up is to maybe have like certain debates -- we talk about bullying -- to have

1 debates about the issue of bullying, to listen to
2 what the children, what the ideas are and what they
3 think and what's on their mind when it comes to
4 bullying. And number two is also depression, to talk
5 about depression, to have a debate about depression,
6 'cause many children come from different households
7 and different areas and from single parents and
8 sometimes they have issues in different households,
9 so the kids come to school, they come to school very
10 depressed at times, so just to get what's on their
11 mind to see what they have to say and when you have
12 debates on certain issues like this, you could
13 actually have the children bring out what's on their
14 minds and we're able to work with them and better
15 understand what our children are thinking. So that's
16 one thing I wanted to mention.

18 And the second thing is, is that when an
19 educator, when a faculty member of the school goes to
20 school and they have to drive around looking for
21 parking and sitting in traffic; I have five children,
22 I know what it is when you leave home and dealing
23 with kids and then you have to go and deal with
24 school children in the class; the hassle, the
25 aggravation of looking for parking, that alone could

1 affect how a teacher goes into the school and how her
2 or his day may start. So I wanted to bring up if
3 there's any type of feasibility through capital money
4 or through an elected official, through my office;
5 through my district to do some type of faculty
6 parking by doing underground parking at the school,
7 at the playground area, 'cause a lot of schools have
8 the playground nearby and it could be done underneath
9 there by excavation underneath and to put some type
10 of parking for faculty members; this way teachers
11 could come in; they don't have to look for parking
12 and they don't have to be late; there's no excuse for
13 being late just because you're looking for parking,
14 but just the hassle, the aggravation will make their
15 day start off on a better foot.

17 So that was number two and number three
18 is, the Mayor has the MIH plan and I would like to
19 see if we have MIS, mandatory inclusionary schooling
20 and if we could look at some of our schools and maybe
21 increase the heights in areas where there is no
22 residential nearby, where there's a school yard, like
23 in my district, like with Lincoln High School,
24 there's really no residential around; we could
25 increase it by let's say one or two floors, 'cause

1 sometimes I see that children are going into other
2 areas, other schools that are not too close to home,
3 so if we could keep them within their neighborhoods
4 and increase the heights, because I have seen through
5 the Department of Education that when they have the
6 real estate department looking for schools, they just
7 grab sometimes anything they can find without outdoor
8 recreational space, like I had in my district several
9 years ago; when I was working for my predecessor
10 there was an Ocean Avenue, Avenue L where they wanted
11 to build school, but there was no... it was basically
12 like a box with no outdoor recreational area for the
13 kids to go out and play. So when you have existing
14 buildings that have already the outdoor space, we
15 could just increase it by slightly, just to have
16 children in the areas in the neighborhoods able to
17 attend the local schools.

19 And one other thing regarding school
20 safety; we have metal detectors, we also have School
21 Safety Officers, but I haven't heard anything
22 mentioned about the argus [sp?] cameras, which I
23 think the DOE is mandated to have, but it's not done
24 and as well as having security cameras throughout the
25 schools. Unfortunately, we had an incident right

1 across from my district; I was at a meeting with
2 Council Member Jumaane Williams where there was a
3 dispute outside of a school, which is continuing to
4 cause tension over there, so having cameras indoors
5 and outdoors to monitor; not to rely on someone's
6 phone camera to take videos, but by having security
7 cameras; there are federal and state funding that
8 encourage institutions to have cameras, so there's no
9 reason for a public school not to have cameras and if
10 we need a waiver from parents because it's a public
11 area; [bell] then we should have the parents sign
12 them **[inaudible]**.

14 CHANCELLOR FARINA: 'Kay, let me take one
15 at a time. Parking has been an issue as long as I've
16 been in education and that was even when not
17 everybody drove to school and I remember as a
18 teacher, people getting there at 6:00 in the morning,
19 'cause first come first served and you got the first
20 spots if you got there and people literally staying
21 in their cars for an hour until they left their car.
22 So this is not a problem that's easily solved; it is
23 something that we are prioritizing, for example, in
24 high need areas so that, you know, certainly a
25 preference to teachers who may be working in Renewal

1 schools was one of the things, 'cause we need perks
2 to get teachers to go to some of these schools, so
3 that's one thing. I hear what you're saying in terms
4 of using available space nearby; we've already
5 started working, Elizabeth Rose started working with
6 Parks and Recreation to talk about how we might use
7 parks, not only for our gym times; for other
8 purposes; we started looking also at big fields, I
9 believe it's the Thomas Jefferson Field that was only
10 being used exclusively by Thomas Jefferson that now,
11 when they're not using it, is also being allowed to
12 be used by Spring Creek; it's a school that's right
13 across but was not allowed to use the field. So
14 we're looking at all the resources we have and how we
15 can maximize those resources.

17 I think in terms of depression, this is
18 something actually that I am concerned about, because
19 I'm hearing about it younger and younger and we're
20 also hearing about it as one of the reasons why
21 attendance is low in some places; the kids don't have
22 the wherewithal to wanna get up in the morning; that
23 adds to a lot of other issues. I had the First Lady
24 come speak to us this week; I do something once a
25 month called "Carmen's Classroom," I ask visitors to

2 come and talk about things relevant to them so my
3 team kind of hears why we're going in certain
4 directions, and she talked about the programs around
5 mental health that we're gonna bring to our schools,
6 but particularly with depression, because also for
7 too long in this country -- and probably everywhere,
8 but I would say in this country -- this has been
9 something people don't talk about, it's embarrassing;
10 in certain cultures -- I mean I have talked to
11 parents in my life as a principal who said don't
12 ever... I'll talk with you about this -- I remember
13 having a conversation with -- but when my husband
14 comes, don't tell him we discussed this and I think
15 we need to and I think her initiative on making this
16 discussion more public, more open and more honest I
17 think is very, very important, so we have to start
18 with putting it out there. I would not be a
19 proponent of making this a debate issue because
20 debates have very clear techniques they have to
21 follow, they have to be evidence-based, they have to
22 have certain... they get certain points for certain
23 things, but I think how we train guidance counselors
24 to have these conversations in our schools, starting
25 in elementary school, you know, even when I just took

on this job, I thought this was something that we'd be doing in high schools. I have a 4-year-old grandson, a 9-year-old and 11-year-old; I am learning more about what's relevant today than I ever imagined, 'cause they talk to me more than my daughters ever did, and I hear from them what's going on among their peers. So I do think the whole issue of mental health and depression and bullying have to be almost like a strategy that we use in our classrooms where kids feel that it's okay to talk about it, and then having conversations with parents.

In terms of developers, I think one of the things we need to do is make developers more community-minded and what could they put in their buildings that would help us; we're looking certainly for some of them to do Pre-K centers for us, because those are not zoned and several of them are doing it already, but how do we make this more of a citywide effort so that we can alleviate space in our schools? I think that... do you wanna talk about the cameras?

URSULINA RAMIREZ: In terms of cameras, I would say it's a cap... uh apologize... it's a capital budget allocation; we don't have outdoor cameras in some of our schools; we have indoors, and as you

might know, some of them need to be upgraded, 'cause not all of them are functional. So we are working -- and that's in our capital budget.

[background comments]

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Indoor.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, thank you very much. Council Member Levin, followed by Rosenthal and then Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman; thank you, Chancellor.

First I want to start off by thanking you and the administration on supporting breakfast in the classroom and that rollout; I know that there have been some hiccups, that's not unusual in terms of what has happened in other big cities; Los Angeles, Chicago in the last five years they've both had large-scale rollouts and have had hiccups in the first several months, so I'm not necessarily surprised. I went to one of my CECs; that's one of the more vocal CECs around this issue, and one thing that I think is important note is, in one of the schools that expressed concerns about it, according to school food staff, the number of children eating breakfast in the school has doubled and that's a

1 success and so just wanna thank you for that and any
2 resource that we could bring to the table, we're
3 happy to work with you guys on and I'm just thrilled
4 that you guys are doing that.

5
6 CHANCELLOR FARINA: And I think Steve,
7 one of the things that's important, 'cause I know
8 what district you're talking about, is getting the
9 parents from that school to go talk to parents in
10 other schools, because I do think it's the parent to
11 parent communication; the principal to principal...

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yeah.

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: communication that
14 will make other people think twice about saying no.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And also, I
16 talked to a superintendent from another district in
17 my council district and they said they haven't any
18 problems.

19 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yeah.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: One issue I wanted
21 to bring up; it's a totally different issue, and it's
22 actually not even really a DOE budget issue, but I
23 chair the General Welfare Committee; we had our
24 hearing yesterday; this issue around pay parity for
25 the Early Learn teachers in our CBOs, it's not really

1 something that is relevant to you guys except that
2 they are paid on average \$10,000 less than UPK
3 teachers in the DOE setting, so they're paid less
4 than UPK teachers in the CBO setting and less than
5 the UPK teachers in the DOE setting and what's
6 happening is, we're losing 0 to 3-year-old teachers
7 to the Pre-K system and it's having a very
8 destabilizing impact on that system and so I know
9 it's not your agency, but it's certainly something to
10 look out for, 'cause it's actually at this point, a
11 pretty significant problem that needs to be addressed
12 and it needs to be addressed with funds that only OMB
13 can really decide to do, so would love to just have
14 your support on that.

16 One thing that is actually an ancillary
17 issue to that is, when students are moving from a CBO
18 setting for Pre-K into a DOE setting, the CBOs,
19 they're open till 6:00 at night, so when the kids are
20 moving over to elementary schools, one thing it's
21 raised an issue about is, after-school for elementary
22 school and actually, I went out and visited a couple
23 of high-needs schools, Title I schools in my
24 district, and I asked the principals, hey, you know,
25 what do you guys need and they said after-school

1 programming; it's so important, especially in Title I
2 schools where parents are working late, so I know
3 that's also actually not your agency's budget, but
4 certainly something that I would love for you to look
5 at.
6

7 And then lastly, and I know this is not
8 necessarily driven by this administration, but in
9 looking at our budget this year and the increases in
10 certain budget lines, what jumps out at me is that
11 the second greatest increase, after general
12 instruction, is charter schools. The chart school
13 increase this year, just for folks to understand
14 this, is \$200 million increased this year to a total
15 of -- that's \$1.67 billion and that's gonna have to
16 go up in the Executive Budget because that doesn't
17 include newly-cited charter schools, and I know
18 that's not this administration; that's due to state
19 law and the state charter cap and the state granting
20 of charters, but this has a significant impact on our
21 budget; if we're looking at, just in comparison,
22 general instruction, that increase is going up is
23 \$369 million, charter school increase, so that's for
24 all of the rest of the school system, charter school
25 increase, \$200 million increase; that's a greater

1
2 increase than we're seeing in fringe benefits, it's a
3 greater increase than we're seeing in special
4 education; in fact, this year -- last year was the
5 first year; this year as well, the charter budget is
6 higher than the special ed budget for the rest of the
7 entire city [bell] and I think that we need to kind
8 of have this conversation; it's not so much about how
9 you feel about charters versus... well you know,
10 whether you're pro-charter, anti-charter; the rate of
11 increase is such that it's going to take on a greater
12 and greater percentage of our education budget and so
13 that's just something that I -- it's not a policy
14 driven by this administration necessarily, but it's
15 something to really point out; there's a budgetary
16 **[inaudible]**. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much
18 and very good points that you brought up there, thank
19 you. Council Member Rosenthal, followed by Miller.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you so
21 much, Chair. And Chancellor, I just wanna give you a
22 special shout-out; thank you so much for joining us
23 yesterday at the kickoff for Student Voter
24 Registration Day; I know how passionate you are about
25

getting people to vote and it's wonderful partnering with you, so thank you for that.

I'm gonna ask two questions having to do with the DOE's contracts budget, with my Contracts chair hat on. First, last year the DOE pulled what was proposed to be a \$1.1 billion contract with Custom Computer Specialists and reissued the RFP for far less, \$472 million; that's a \$627 million value less than the original contract; please explain what happened to the money from the contract savings, in other words, when you published the adopted budget in FY15, was the contract in there; was it updated in the November modification; was it in the preliminary budget, and what was in the Executive Budget? And then separate for expense and capital.

RAY ORLANDO: Sure. So at the time that the \$1.2 billion contract estimate was published, those funds were not in the capital plan at that level... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: What were they in for?

RAY ORLANDO: They were in for less; I can get you the details.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: You don't know the number?

RAY ORLANDO: I... I don't have the number at this time, no... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay.

RAY ORLANDO: So at that time, subsequent to the posting of the \$1.2 billion figure, the department negotiated with the proposed vendor to reduce the amount to the lower 600 odd million dollar number that the panel subsequently voted on.

Following that, the department decided not to go forward with that contract and did a new RFP, which broke the work into smaller pieces and was more closely defined and also used department staff... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Mr. Orlando, I'm really familiar with what the new contract was and unfortunately, I'm on a clock.

RAY ORLANDO: I'm sorry.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So what is the... I guess what I'm surprised about is then that you don't know what the original number was, because it was either... is it in the ballpark of a billion dollars; is it in the ballpark of \$800 million, \$600

1 million; \$200 million? Can you give me a ballpark
2 number? I won't hold you to it; I'm on record, it's
3 a draft.
4

5 RAY ORLANDO: Sure, I believe that the
6 baseline capital funding for technology projects like
7 this at that time was in the neighborhood of \$4-500
8 million, but as I said, I can get you the detail.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So it was in
10 the neighborhood of \$4-500 million, and I just wanna
11 really be clear I understand the facts, and then... I
12 forgot the date, February 12th, which is probably
13 right after... right before the preliminary budget was
14 sent over to the Council, you proposed to the PEP, at
15 that time, 600 and whatever the number was...

16 [crosstalk]

17 RAY ORLANDO: Approximately 600.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: \$75 million,
19 so when you proposed that, did you accommodate that
20 \$200 million increase in the preliminary budget that
21 you sent over to the Council or no?

22 RAY ORLANDO: So that funding at that
23 time, we were between the preliminary budget and the
24 Mayor's Executive Budget, so the expectation... the
25 expectation... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: But you had to have known on February 12th, when you knew it was \$675 million that Chancellor Farina and the PEP signed off on, you didn't put those numbers into your projections to OMB for the preliminary budget, which was published a week prior, if that; I don't remember; I mean it could've been a week after; it's published in February? You can just say no; I mean if that's the answer, that's the answer, but...

RAY ORLANDO: At the time the expectation was that the City's capital plan subsequently published in Executive Budget subsequent to the vote would be increased to accommodate the work that was being contemplated over that period of time.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And on the expense side?

RAY ORLANDO: Similarly, but as I said, I'd be happy to get you the detail... [interpose]

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I would like you to please send over to the Council the exact pages from the preliminary plan and the executive plan...

RAY ORLANDO: Sure.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: where the line
3 item... [crosstalk]

4 RAY ORLANDO: Absolutely.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: or technology
6 is in there...

7 RAY ORLANDO: Sure.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: for Fiscal
9 Year 15 and Fiscal Year 16...

10 RAY ORLANDO: Sure.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: and the year
12 end adopted budget I guess for Fiscal 15... [interpose]

13 RAY ORLANDO: Sure.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: that was
15 published in June 2014. I wanna track -- and I'll
16 explain my question so you don't think I'm just
17 asking for random information. I of course want to
18 track that line that I'm going to assume that there's
19 a line in the capital and in the expense budget that
20 say technology and I wanna see -- if there's no more
21 detail than that; if there's more detail; great, but
22 if there's not, just what the total is in the
23 snapshot in June, November, February, and June over a
24 two-year period, so eight numbers.

25 RAY ORLANDO: Sure; be happy to.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Okay, but
3 actually it will be... [crosstalk]

4 RAY ORLANDO: No problem.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: 16 numbers,
6 because one for expense and one for capital. I just
7 wanna be very specific.

8 RAY ORLANDO: I understand completely and
9 we'd be delighted to get that.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: And how long
11 do you think it'll take to get this information?

12 RAY ORLANDO: I don't think it will take
13 long at all.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: So do you
15 think I can have it tomorrow?

16 RAY ORLANDO: I will... [background
17 comments]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: That was a
19 short turnaround.

20 RAY ORLANDO: I will try to get it to you
21 as soon as possible; it may not be tomorrow.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Today is
23 Thursday... [background comments] Student Voter
24 Registration Day is tomorrow, so I'll give you... next
25 Wednesday; that sounds good.

Second question... [crosstalk]

RAY ORLANDO: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: in December 2015, the DOE and the FCC settled on the E-rate investigation; this investigation was looking into whether the NYC DOE violated -- and of course, this was all under the previous administration and had nothing to do with you and I fully respect that -- before I even ask the question, respect how you have turned around this picture, Chancellor; anywho [sic]...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Training...

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: yes, yes, thank you... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: many hours of training.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: thank you -- whether or not the prior DOE violated the competitive bidding rules of the E-rate program; as a result of the settlement, the DOE will pay a \$3 million fine and withdraw E-rate funding requests from 2003 to 2013; again, obviously, before this administration. The DOE must also submit a detailed compliance plan with a quarterly reporting, appoint an independent compliance monitor, commission independent annual

audits, review policies and procedures to ensure compliance with fair and open competitive bidding processes, and undertake E-rate compliance training, as you mentioned, for DOE employees. My two questions are: what are the budget implications for the fine for complying with the settlement and for not being able to collect the E-rate funding? [bell] Press reports put the total cost to the city at \$123 million; do you agree with this figure? And second; how would this affect the schools; are the schools not able currently to get the technology upgrades they need due to the lack of the E-rate reimbursement funds? Thank you.

[background comments]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Before I have Ray answer this, I just wanna say that we took this very seriously and honestly, it took hours and hours and weeks and weeks of work, to the point that we had a specific team that did nothing but this and came in on weekends to work on it and that we also now have designated people who watch this almost on a daily basis. But in terms of the other specifics, I'll let...

RAY ORLANDO: Thanks, Carmen. Yes, the way... so the way the program works is, we pay the vendors and the vendors receive direct reimbursement from the federal government. So we paid... we paid the... Yes, so in this case, we paid the vendors in full for that period of time, so the work was done and the vendors were paid and so reimbursement that would've gone to them would have come to us, but it didn't for those years under the agreement that we agreed not to pursue is how it worked.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I'm sorry, and the dollar amount? In the press it's reported \$123 million.

[background comments]

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, the schools.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And the schools continue to get the services; I just wanna make that very clear.

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, Helen. Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Council Member Miller.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for you and your team being here, Ms. Farina, this afternoon. I wanna ask about the DOE's contracts, outside contracts and the percentage of your budget that it makes up and talk about some of those individual contracts and how -- is \$13 billion an accurate number? What is the actual number?

RAY ORLANDO: One moment. Daniel; you wanna help me out here? [background comments] Okay, sorry 'bout that; apologize for the delay. So the FY17 contract budget is \$5.6 billion, [interpose, background comment] which is \$200 million more than in FY16; about half of that is for payments... about \$3.1 billion of that is for payments that we make to non-public schools and to charter schools.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So my next question was; was that an increase from the previous fiscal year... [interpose]

RAY ORLANDO: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: obviously the answer is yes...

RAY ORLANDO: Yes, a \$200 million increase.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: and...

RAY ORLANDO: In addition, another billion dollars of those contracts are for pupil transportation and busing.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay. So it would not necessarily be specific to the increase in charters, but more the pupil transportation?

RAY ORLANDO: The contract budget -- a bunch of things go up in the contract budget, including charter... [crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And [background comments] has the DOE done anything or is preparing to address that issue to kinda wrap its hands around the cost of transportation? I know there was some talk last year about doing so, maybe bringing it in to the city and kinda averting those outside contracts.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: I mean on busing specifically, obviously we're always looking for ways to find cost-effective services, but I think one of the things -- we have increased our bus services, one, for students in temporary housing and so we have seen some increased cost there, but I think it's to the benefit of students.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yeah, but not so
3 significant; I think it is something that we
4 **[inaudible]**. So... and I wanna be kinda brief and
5 quick with this; DOE is not subject to Local Law 63
6 in terms of doing internal cost analysis to see
7 whether or not it could be done in-house. Of these
8 \$6 billion in contracts, how much of this work did..
9 have we looked to see if any of this work could be
10 done internally or is it cost-effective to have the
11 work done... outsourced?

12 [background comments]

13 URSULINA RAMIREZ: And I would say, we
14 are actually looking at insourcing in a host of
15 areas, including in our Division of Information and
16 Technology we're looking at insourcing. To the best
17 of our ability we obviously wanna build internal
18 capacity where we can do work; sometimes we have to
19 contract out because we have to be honest with
20 ourselves, that some folks are doing better work than
21 we are, especially with some of our community-based
22 organizations and some of our professional
23 development.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So is there
25 actual document on this analysis as to whether or not

1
2 it was cost-effective and the best thing to do in the
3 interest of the City of New York to contract the work
4 out or is just, we've gotta take the work [sic]...
5 [crosstalk]

6 URSULINA RAMIREZ: Are you looking at
7 something specific? I just wanna make sure that I'm
8 **[inaudible]**... [crosstalk]

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: No, I'm just
10 saying that it has been the culture in the past that
11 jobs got contracted out, that some of these services
12 were contracted out and I think that what we strive
13 to do is be more efficient where possible that we can
14 do the work here; that we at least take a look at it
15 and ensure that as in Local Law 63, that we look and
16 make sure that it cannot be done more cost-
17 effectively in here before we outsource the work. Is
18 such a policy in place in the DOE?

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So Chancellor, let me
20 just also say; some of the contracting out is for
21 special ed services; am I right?

22 RAY ORLANDO: Yes... [interpose]

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How much are we
24 spending on that?
25

RAY ORLANDO: So I only have the number for the charters and the non-publics together, which is \$3.1, but it's about half and half for special ed services.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And those are special ed services that are not available... [crosstalk]

RAY ORLANDO: Those are... Those go directly to schools, yeah, the special... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: that are not available... that we can't provide on our own... [crosstalk]

RAY ORLANDO: We can't provide it, yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and we contract them out.

RAY ORLANDO: Yes. And I mean I guess what I'd say is, of the \$5.6 billion that our contract budget includes, really only \$1.2 billion is for stuff that we haven't talked about, which is non-public school charter, pupil transportation and UPK for NYSEEEKS [sic], so I know the number looks really big, 5.6 may look like a huge amount of the contract budget, but if you lay aside those four things, you're left with more like \$1.2 billion, and ultimately, as the Chief Operating Officer just

1 pointed out, we are looking to insource some IT
2 consultants into permanent employees. What we are... a
3 lot of the contracts that we have that are very small
4 are done by principals at schools and we need to be
5 careful as we think about contracting procurement and
6 reporting that we don't overly burden principals. So
7 we'd be [bell] happy to continue to have this
8 conversation with you, but we need to be careful...
9 we're a little protective on our end of our
10 principals.
11

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So of the 5,600
13 contracts, how many of the contracts were issued to
14 MWBE?

15 RAY ORLANDO: [background comments] Okay,
16 14.4 percent last year in aggregate value. So...

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: And who oversees
18 the MWBE program?

19 RAY ORLANDO: The Chief Operating Officer
20 and I do.

21 URSULINA RAMIREZ: I apologize, yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay.

23 URSULINA RAMIREZ: We are -- this is
24 actually a huge priority for us, in increasing the
25 number of MWBE contracts that we have and expanding

our outreach and also expanding -- well having communications across all divisions about the importance of MWBEs, especially ones seeking contracting. So this is a huge priority for our administration.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So we can look forward to correspondence about what you're doing and how we can collaborate and partner...? [crosstalk]

URSULINA RAMIREZ: One hundred per... Yes, we just actually had a meeting yesterday **[inaudible]** City Council to talk about our improvements of MWBEs, so happy to chat with you about that.

COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay, thank you. And Chancellor, I'd like to double back on some conversations about the community renewals and specifically, one in my district and how we could further partner, but we can... along the line. Thank you so much for coming.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So for Mr. Orlando, let me just follow up. The 14 percent that you're quoting for MWBE... [interpose]

RAY ORLANDO: In dollars; not in... [crosstalk]

1 COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION 153

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Right and that's an
3 expense or does that also include School Construction
4 Authority?

5 RAY ORLANDO: It does not include the...

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's separate.

7 RAY ORLANDO: Separate.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So there's a separate
9 number for School Construction Authority as well...
10 [crosstalk]

11 RAY ORLANDO: Yeah.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and we may have
13 gotten to that in the capital budget hearing, but
14 we'll follow up with you on that as well.

15 RAY ORLANDO: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Okay, I have a
17 couple of lightning round questions and hopefully we
18 could move one.

19 I bring up every year and but it's Junior
20 ROTC, so can you tell us how much you spend on Junior
21 ROTC?

22 [background comments]

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I have no idea.

24

25

1 URSULINA RAMIREZ: I actually... I'm not
2
3 sure if we have this right now and we can get back to
4 you as soon as this ends.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well I think it's
6 about \$1.5 million, somewhere in that area. But my
7 concern really -- my immediate concern is that the
8 DOE does have a policy against using facsimile guns
9 in the school system and they continue to carry those
10 guns; I am asking again, if there's anything we can
11 do to minimally get the guns out and we can have a
12 discussion about the other issues moving forward. It
13 just seems to violate that policy and sends a mixed
14 message, Chancellor.

15 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Happy to have that
16 discussion.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good; we will
18 have that discussion. Summer in the City; what is
19 the anticipated cost of Summer in the City programs
20 for Fiscal 2017 and actually, I haven't heard too
21 much about it; can you just give me a description
22 about what looks like?

23 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I think the
24 major difference for Summer in the City is that it
25 will be a combination of mandated and non-mandated

1 students; I mean I just got **[inaudible]** for parents
2 yesterday that it will not be a STEM stigma; it's
3 also going to be running four days longer than it's
4 run in the past; it's gonna have an additional three
5 days for teacher professional development; it's also
6 going to include 2nd graders in greater numbers than
7 we have in the past; if our goal is to have all 2nd
8 graders reading on grade level, it's important to
9 imbed them in our Summer in the City; the 2nd grade
10 is gonna be very heavily STEM focused so they won't
11 be doing the same things they do during the school
12 year, and also, there is going to be a planned units
13 of curriculum study, so it's not about ditto sheets
14 and workbooks and more of what they do during the
15 school year, but there's gonna be a curriculum tied
16 into social studies and science which will be much
17 more engaging and we're working with also cultural
18 institutions to provide some free services to
19 families to go together during the summer to the
20 institutions who are giving us free admission. So
21 there's a combination of many things that are
22 happening during Summer in the City; in the high
23 schools -- and this is a 2nd grade to 8th grade
24 initiative -- we're also in the high schools doing a
25

1 lot of very focused credit recovery that's done in a
2 very systemic way so that the rules apply to
3 everybody and also making sure that it helps move our
4 graduation rate in a way that also makes them
5 successful when they get to college. So it's
6 different in the sense of the curriculum, the
7 teachers who will be trained and the amount of hours
8 they will serve kids [sic].

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And how will those
11 schools be selected and how many schools do you
12 estimate it to be?

13 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well we're not
14 opening every school, obviously, because of cost
15 factors, so we anticipate that most sites, and the
16 schools already know they've been selected, will
17 house anywhere from two to three schools in a single
18 building; we're also encouraging elementary and
19 middle schools to share a building so we can do more
20 mentoring; between the middle school kids and the
21 elementary school kids, we feel if they work together
22 it'll make Summer in the City a lot more exciting.
23 We're also looking for our Renewal schools to
24 continue work to some degree with their CBO partners
25 over the summer. So there's a lot of professional

1
2 development taking place; like I said, the week that
3 we're off, a lot of teachers are coming to make sure
4 that they have the skills they need for this, so I'm
5 very excited, 'cause I do think having a set
6 curriculum that's different than what we've done in
7 the past will make this much more consistent
8 citywide.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And when will those
10 students be notified that they're eligible for the
11 program?

12 CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I would think to
13 a large degree most parents should know already,
14 'cause there's been ongoing conversation --
15 parent/teacher conferences are actually this week and
16 next week and this is a good time to bring that
17 information to the students so they have plenty of
18 time. We also want -- all principals already
19 received their Summer in the City Guidelines, they
20 know which schools are gonna be open, which schools
21 they're partnering with and our hope is to have given
22 everyone enough lead time so that parents whose
23 students are invited will accept the invitation and
24 not decide to go on vacation somewhere.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay. Parental engagement, can you explain to us a little bit further the DOE's vision for parental engagement and how parental engagement fits into the structure of superintendents?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well I have to say that superintendents working both independently and with us, there are two family or parent liaisons in every superintendency and their role is to work with PTAs; I meet with CPAC once a month; I do the CEC town hall meetings; all superintendents attend these meetings, the CEC; the superintendent always sits at the meeting, town hall. Last night, for example, I was in District 21 and the four major takeaways for me are follow-ups with the superintendent to have another meeting with the CECs; I'm doing a CEC on Monday, a town hall meeting on a specific issue where I'll meet with the parents one hour before the other meeting, but there's a lot of family engagement. Yolanda Torres has been going around the city and meeting with different parent groups to see what they want more of; it's been much more customized than in the past; like I said, she just started a Grandparents Advisory Group because we found that was

a need; we had our first meeting at Bank Street Bookstore several months ago. The increase in parent engagement the city has been documented by an outside agency and it's up I believe to 58 percent compared to 30-something in the past. We also are hearing from principals that parents coming to either PTA meetings or workshops have asked principals to document with their superintendents the amount of workshops they're doing per month on specific issues and certainly, you know, how to read your IEP, how to help you child learn English at home; whatever the school needs is really done much more specifically that way and through our community partners we're also asking them to provide workshops. I mean one of the things that parents, we've increased the number of parents' workshops; the largest single request from parents has been cooking classes and we've always done GED; I just had a request from a principal, she has 20 parents, and we do GED for Haitian-Creole parents. So it really comes as a request from the community and then we try to fill the request.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What funding, how much funding is being invested in parental engagement?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: I can get that information; I don't have... [crosstalk]

RAY ORLANDO: Sure. There's a significant amount of money that -- one percent of Title I funds need to be directed to parental engagement itself; that alone is about \$6 million; there's... almost all of... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How much?

RAY ORLANDO: \$6 million and that's in schools itself, independent of anything else that's going on as parental engagement activity. In addition, FACE's [sic] budget has over \$1.5 million in it for parental engagement activities which involve all kinds of central planning; there are the budgets for the CECs and the CPACs; it's probably tens of millions of dollars... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: And the other thing is, you know we are working with learning leaders, we are doing a lot of, like I said, specific workshops in different places. I meet with the CEC presidents; we changed the rules in the last year, I meet with

1
2 them on Saturdays so that they have more time and
3 also with the CEC presidents I've been bringing with
4 me the times that we meet, once a month on a
5 Saturday, different members of my staff, so they just
6 had Josh Wallack speak to them, they had, you know,
7 Corinne Anselmi-Rello speak to them. So we're trying
8 to be open, but to the degree that they want specific
9 topics, because not all parents are the same
10 citywide.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. In the Fiscal
12 Year 2016 Adopted Budget, 30 additional IEP screening
13 teams were included; we had thought we would be
14 hiring 50 with that money; was there a reason why we
15 only have 30 rather than 50 teams?

16 [background comments]
17

18 CHANCELLOR FARINA: I don't know; I'll
19 get back to you on that; I don't know the answer. I
20 know that we have been working to increase that
21 support, but...

22 URSULINA RAMIREZ: We'll get back to you
23 on the specifics as to... [interpose]

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm sorry?
25

URSULINA RAMIREZ: We'll get back to you on the specifics, what happened between 30 and to the 50, but we'll get back to you today.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay. And that was the \$12.5 million that was put into the budget; right, for that last year? Okay.

Universal Pre-K, can you provide us with a list of the number of students enrolled in UPK in DOE buildings, Early Childhood Centers, standalone UPK centers, [background comments] administered by the DOE and charter schools? Do you have rough numbers in terms of the number of... [crosstalk]

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: students enrolled? 'Cause one of the things in the reports that we've been getting, there was a little bit of a discrepancy; I think that in your report... in your testimony today you said 68,500?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Total.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But we have 71,300...

CHANCELLOR FARINA: That was last year; this is this year. These are the registered ones for September. Go ahead.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: I'm gonna actually ask my colleague, Jessica Pavone, who's on our Early Childhood team, to help us on these answers.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Cause that's a little bit of a decrease in the number of students.

CHANCELLOR FARINA: Well there are just so many 4-year-olds, every given year it changes.

JESSICA PAVONE: I think... Thank you, Chancellor. I think the number that the Council Member is referencing... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I'm sorry; can you just say who you are?

JESSICA PAVONE: I'm sorry. I'm Jessica Pavone; I'm the Deputy Chief of Operations for Early Childhood Division in DOE, and I think the number that you're referencing, Council Member, includes both half-day students as well as full-day students.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I see. Okay. Alright and I think we'll make this the last one. How many teachers need to be added in order to reduce class size levels to those specified in the City's state-approved Contracts for Excellence Class Size Reduction Plan, [background comments] which is 20 in

grades K-3, 23 in 4-8 and 25 in 9-12? And what would be the cost for adding those teachers?

CHANCELLOR FARINA: We can't calculate this right now, but if you wanna have a separate discussion on this, I'll be happy to discuss it with you. This is more complicated than just numbers; it has to do with space and any number of other things, so let's take this one and then we'll come back and share with everyone.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Alright, thank you very much, Madame Chancellor; we really appreciate you coming in and spending so much time with us; also to your assistants, Ursulina and Ray, thank you for much for being with us. Thank you.

URSULINA RAMIREZ: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, we're going to now move into the public... and our first witness will be Michael Mulgrew and Cassie Prugh from the United Federation of Teachers. [background comments]

[pause]

Thank you very much and as is the policy of this committee, I do swear everybody in, so I'm gonna ask if you'd raise your right hand and Cassie as well. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth,

the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly?

MICHAEL MULGREW: I do.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And would you identify yourselves for the record?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Michael Mulgrew, President of the United Federation of Teachers.

CASSIE PRUGH: Cassie Prugh... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Put the mic on, Cassie.

CASSIE PRUGH: Oh I'm sorry, thank you Councilman. Cassie Prugh, Assistant to the President, United Federation of Teachers.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And President Mulgrew.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you, Council Member Dromm. I have submitted my testimony and I will not read it; I will just testify as I always do.

First I wanna thank you as the Chair of the Education Council; I would also like to thank Chair of Finance, Council Member Ferreras, as well as Speaker Viverito for your partnership and your care at all times on behalf of the school children in the schools of New York City.

1
2 and drabs anymore; the intention of the money from
3 the beginning was so that we could have systematic
4 change inside of our school system by large amounts
5 of funding being brought to us in certain periods of
6 time and to cement that into place. I heard you
7 speak before about something that is continually very
8 troubling to us; the issue of class size. So we
9 would like to have your continued support and your
10 lobbying efforts also in Albany as we move forward
11 with this process.

12 In terms of class size itself, this is
13 something that we need to get done; we always hear
14 how it is a complicated process about the need for
15 space, but when you hear this for 15 years, you start
16 to say, well where is the plan; what is going on; why
17 do we continue to have a plan on space utilization
18 and the creation of school seats; we applaud this
19 administration's work this year in terms of a much
20 more rigorous plan, but I think it's time for us as a
21 city to come up with a whole new process of how we
22 forecast and make sure that we are giving each and
23 every community the ability to have the classes sizes
24 they deserve.

1
2 to find out exactly what the proper process, as well
3 as it can't just be about flying in with a bunch of
4 services, there has to be engagement of the parents
5 and the community to actually get the efficiencies
6 that we want if we're going to give these schools the
7 services they so badly need.

8 We are now up to 26 schools, we can
9 report that they are all doing very well, much better
10 than they have in the past, but we think it's
11 important for us to continue this program because we
12 use what we find to guide us in the work, in our
13 influence and advocacy in all levels of government as
14 we move this forward.

15 So we now hear a lot about student
16 discipline, it is a hot topic at this moment and I'm
17 very happy that it is. The zero tolerance program
18 that was adopted years ago is something we never
19 supported; it should not have been supported, anyone
20 who's in a classroom knows if you try to stop every
21 time a child is doing something they should be
22 corrected upon, you would never be able to teach and
23 it was gonna have disastrous results. But we also
24 know that there has to be a team approach in every
25 school level; our Positive Learning Collaborative,

1 which is another program which now we have started
2 two years ago, we are funding 15 schools, it is being
3 completely funded by the dues money of the United
4 Federation of Teachers; what we have found is, there
5 has to be a training on all the different approaches
6 and let a school decide what approach will work best
7 for it. We are very happy that we are training staff
8 in restorative justice, on positive behavior
9 intervention strategies; on crisis management of
10 students, but it is that team approach that we have
11 seen the great results come from.

13 When you go and visit these schools, and
14 I will put an offer before you to go and visit any of
15 these schools, what you will hear from them is, it
16 isn't any individual program that has helped us, it
17 is the fact that we now are in discussions and
18 working as a team, from the security guard at the
19 front door to people serving food inside of the
20 cafeteria to the administration, to every one in the
21 school who understands that this is a team approach
22 about forming a positive culture inside of a building
23 and a respectful culture inside of the building.

24 So now as we want to move this program
25 out, because we now have direct evidence, these

1 schools have dropped suspensions dramatically; in
2 independent surveys of both teachers, parents and
3 students, they have all said the schools are in a
4 much better place than they were before these
5 programs were brought forth. So we wanna move
6 forward with these programs; we are asking for a \$1.5
7 million allocation from City Council; this is hard
8 work, but it's the work that's gonna make a
9 difference, but we also know that we need to add an
10 additional piece; our program was designed around
11 trying to enhance the behavior of the largest number
12 of students in the building, but we knew there would
13 be problems in the end, which these schools have now
14 told us there are; there are students who need much
15 more of an in-depth clinical intervention and we need
16 to start supplying schools with the funding to do
17 that work, because as they have said, over 90 percent
18 of the student population is much better, but there
19 are certain students that this is more about a
20 clinical intervention; they don't wanna suspend that
21 child, but right now a teacher's hands are tied, a
22 school's hands are tied; the only way to get that
23 intervention is through a suspension process and
24 that's just wrong; it should not be happening. The
25

1 schools should have the ability to have that much
2 deeper clinical intervention, should be part of a
3 school if it is identified as a need and it shouldn't
4 be that a teacher and a family have to go through
5 this legal process in order to get that child the
6 support and the services that they need, and that's
7 why we're asking to expand the number of schools
8 doing this as well as add this new component into it.

10 We are also asking City Council to
11 partner with us in support of different initiatives
12 that we currently have in Albany and as well as
13 helping us expand them by doing their own research in
14 terms of the schools, which I know so many of you
15 have great relationships with. Teacher centers have
16 basically, through what I call the bad times or the
17 lack of no professional development or support were
18 the only things that were being done to help teachers
19 across this city, it is a statewide program, but the
20 problem and the issue that we're having is that the
21 statewide funding will only cover a certain portion
22 of the teacher center's work; we want to expand this
23 work in New York City; we would like you to partner,
24 if you wanna partner with individual schools so you
25 can help them with their funding so they can have a

1 teacher center; almost every school I visit that
2 doesn't have a teacher center, the principal always
3 asks me; can you help me get a teacher center and I
4 will direct them to City Council at this point. So
5 this is a wonderful piece.

6 We would also like you to survey your
7 schools in terms of needs for any, what we call
8 applied learning, career and technical education
9 settings; that goes from basic robotics to Lego [sic]
10 leagues, to career and tech ed at the high school
11 level; these programs are growing in New York City,
12 as they grow they're going to need more support and
13 we are hoping that the work we're doing in
14 Washington, D.C. right now; we are actually close to
15 trying to get, and we believe we can get, what is
16 called the Perkins Act, reauthorized in D.C.; it will
17 probably be the last act done before D.C. stops
18 functioning, if you can believe it's functioning.
19 And then at the state level, this is the first time
20 we have additional funding in the state budget for
21 career and technical education specifically, but as
22 we can get those things done, it really comes down to
23 an individual school, if it wants to move forward,
24 with help of their local council member.
25

1
2 And last but not least, we would like
3 your support in the enrollment gap legislation that
4 we have right now in Albany so that all schools, and
5 I'm specifically talking about charter schools, serve
6 all children in our school system, it is very clear
7 that we believe that every school in New York City
8 that receives public tax dollars should serve all of
9 the children in New York City. And that is the end
10 of my testimony.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much
12 and thank you for not reading it, but delivering it
13 yourself there. I wanna point out to you, in the
14 opening I also applauded the gains that the city
15 schools have made over the last few years and
16 actually saw it myself, even before the IBO report,
17 where our students are essentially doing just as good
18 as the students around the rest of the state and may
19 in fact be doing better when you add in the
20 considerations for poverty and discrimination. And
21 so I think that it's a point that we really need to
22 highlight in terms of our public schools and to
23 congratulate them and continue to build on them. And
24 I think too often that does not happen and people
25 look at our public school system with a negative eye

and so that's why I was really glad to see that IBO report come out... [interpose]

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: it really just highlighted to me, I think, the positive gains that our school system is making.

MICHAEL MULGREW: As well as so many of our schools -- a much larger percentage of our schools moved up in their categories in terms of state designations than anywhere else in the state. We have absolutely been doing fantastic work.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And I know how important that is also to teacher morale; to say to our teachers that they're doing a good job and that their work is appreciated, having been a teacher for 25 years. Much work remains to be done, however and I'm glad to hear your emphasis on CFE and the commitment to CFE. I believe that the Governor is talking in his budget about putting in \$1 billion, if I'm not mistaken, and I think the two houses came up with allocations of \$1.4...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and \$1.7, if I'm not mistaken; it still doesn't meet the need that the

Chancellor is talking about, which I think she said was \$2 billion for our city school system; how do you feel about that and where are we going with that?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Well when you hear numbers like that out of Albany, first you have to see what is in foundation aid, 'cause foundation aid is basically the money that we're talking about; when it's not in foundation aid, it actually disproportionately hurts New York City, so right now the fight is over the percentage of money that's going to be in foundation aid.

CFE specifically talked about things that the school system needed to do; if we are able to ascertain a large chunk of CFE, my question to the Department of Ed would be; what are you going to use it for? Because there is a plan that's supposed to be followed and that is the plan we want followed. The major portion of that plan is the reduction of class size, now we always hear, well that's much more complicated -- there are class sizes that could be reduced in New York City right now; we know we also need to hire -- we have a huge shortage in ESL teachers; we need to be able to hire them, recruit them and if we cannot do that, we have to train our

1
2 current teachers on how to do that; that is the work
3 that CFE was supposed to be funding, so when they say
4 they need more from Albany, even though we work very
5 well with this administration, the question to me
6 always is; what are you using it for? We don't need
7 anymore -- as far as I'm concerned, any dollar we
8 fight for in Albany is supposed to go to a school; we
9 want the money in the school, and that's always gonna
10 be a point of friction, because as far as I'm
11 concerned, we get the money for the children and the
12 teachers who work inside of the schools; we know we
13 need an administration of above to run the school
14 system, but I would like that -- it's never gonna be
15 lean enough for me, 'cause I always believe that in
16 the end, the best decision and the best use of
17 financing is at the school level.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So having been a
19 former teacher as well, I know that there were times
20 that you have keyed [sic] delegate assemblies, for
21 example, where teachers were willing to even
22 sometimes, although of course we weren't well-paid
23 teachers, but I would say that reduction in class
24 size was right up there...

25 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yep.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: with provision of good wages; that's how important it is to the educational process and I think that one of the last questions I did ask the Chancellor today was about the class sizes and how funding would impact that and you're right, they did say it's confusing and we don't know; how do we... [crosstalk]

MICHAEL MULGREW: That seems to go from every administration.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But how do we make sure that that money goes directly to reduction of class size?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Look, it has to be the priority and that would... I would look to City Council to help to make sure that money is actually going towards class size. Setting targets and hoping it happens is not the way this is going to happen. I applaud that they're creating more school seats that we need, but the whole process of where to allocate school seats and how we develop the funding for... the capital plan, as we know, needs to be revamped and this is not this administration or the previous administration; this has never worked in New York City. You know a lot of the times we can be, put it

1 on the table; why was a school built there? It was
2 political; it had nothing to do whether they needed
3 the seats half the time. So we need to come up with
4 a process that ensures every community that they're
5 getting their seats and population shifts inside of
6 our city all the time; there are certain areas where
7 we have school-aged children, the population is going
8 down; in other areas where it's going up dramatically
9 and where they're completely, woefully unprepared to
10 deal with that shift in the population. So the
11 answer can't always be it's complicated; we get that
12 already; what's the plan and I know that City
13 Council, us and a lot of other folks are willing to
14 roll up our sleeves and say this is the plan, okay,
15 instead of it's complicated.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So I think in the
18 last capital report; I know this is not a capital
19 hearing, but we had one last week, the DOE or the SCA
20 was reporting that they now -- which is, by the way,
21 an increase in the number of seats needed..

22 MICHAEL MULGREW: It's the first real
23 increase we've had in a very long time.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We're still gonna be
25 about 44,000 seats shorts and when I asked the SCA

1
2 how much that would cost, they said it would cost
3 about \$4 billion; now I wanna give the Mayor some
4 recognition that he did put an extra \$868 million in
5 for additional seats, but we still have a great need
6 ahead of us in order to really reduce that number...

7 [crosstalk]

8 MICHAEL MULGREW: And we have to catch up
9 because for years what we were doing, we were leasing
10 space and not actually creating permanent seats; that
11 was a decision by a previous administration that it
12 was much easier just to lease space instead of
13 actually creating seats that the community itself
14 would always have. So we're in a catch-up mode; what
15 they did this year is the first time since I've been
16 president where you see an actual real significant
17 increase, but we are way behind, but that does not
18 mean we should not be lowering class size; there are
19 places in this city where this is space to lower
20 class size; mandating the use of funds to
21 specifically mandate class size, it should not... you
22 know, the principal decides. We know there's a
23 difference between 20 and 25 children in a class; I
24 don't have to explain it to you. When I had 28 or 30
25 kids in my class versus I had 22, I was a better

teacher for the 22 than I was with the 28; it's just common sense.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Also, you can get more done. Just in terms of the question about Teacher's Choice; what do you estimate teachers spend per year out of their own pocket for supplies?

MICHAEL MULGREW: It's solid now that it's a minimum of five, but the average is somewhere between \$500 and \$1,000, but you know there's some that skew it way off, way above \$1,000. But it's a minimum of \$500 per teacher at this point, from all the surveys that we have done. It's always been a struggle, but the teachers versus -- I didn't get the supplies I need to teach the unit I'm starting on Monday; doesn't mean I'm not gonna start teaching the unit on Monday; it means I'm gonna go out this weekend and buy all the supplies to teach the unit, and that's literally the choice they're faced with and they go out and they do it and they've always done it and I just think it's a great partnership and recognition on behalf of the City Council that they recognize what the teachers do above and beyond; what we're asking for will never compensate them for

everything that they do, but it is a recognition that people understand that they do go above and beyond.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So the historic high in that was about \$20 million and you're requesting that again this year?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes. And that -- well last year we gave them about 10...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Nine point something.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and then we gave them \$125 each in their pocket, which really doesn't really put much of a dent... it's a little bit of a dent in terms of what their expenditures are.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So we need to work on that together.

Community Learning Schools, I believe the Governor put in \$100 million; advocates have spoken to me about needing \$500 million; are we going to see any other commitment from the state in terms of Community Learning Schools?

MICHAEL MULGREW: It would be my opinion at this point that you will see the state funding; what that final level will be I am not sure; it

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And... [crosstalk]

MICHAEL MULGREW: The last thing that we need, Council Member Dromm, is for someone to say, everybody like this Community Learning School concept and here's all the money; we need to make sure that there's a process that engages the community, it's not about here's a check, go get services; it's supposed to be about an engagement process with the teachers, with the administration and truly with not just the parents; with the community. We literally do a five-month process, starting with the teachers and the parents, working with administration; then going out and identifying all the stakeholders in the community, finding out what resources are currently existing that they've never connected together, do a needs analysis after that, and then start bringing services into the school building. That's a five-month process of a true engagement and needs assessment; not here we are with a check, go buy your service. It's not just medical and mental health; it goes much further than that. We have hundreds of

1 families now who are coming in for all sorts of
2 financial need services that has nothing to do with
3 the school, it's not about "education," but it's a
4 service to the community; we do believe that the more
5 you have the community inside of the school building
6 the stronger it is and the stronger their
7 relationship is with it. So at first it was about
8 making sure we had a health clinic; then it was
9 bringing in food services; then it became financial
10 services; then it became setting up a tutoring
11 program, using retired teachers to come in and set up
12 tutoring time, and the amount of services -- I was at
13 a school where the American Ballet Theatre is doing a
14 complete program; you would think that you would go
15 there and see them doing ballet; they're not, they do
16 ballet sometimes; half the time they're doing English
17 language arts through the ballet service; that is the
18 smart way to do it. So I am very optimistic about
19 everyone talking about it, but I want to ensure that
20 there will be a correct process and that a true
21 partnership of the community is involved at that
22 school.
23

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So in your model, I
25 believe one of the things that I saw at this visit

1
2 that I made to PS 1 last week is that a coordinator
3 is hired for the school to coordinate the services
4 and... [crosstalk]

5 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah, we...

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: then bring them in,
7 and that's part of that six-month process?

8 MICHAEL MULGREW: Well what we do it; we
9 have a team that goes in for the process and as we're
10 learning the school community, we start looking for a
11 resource coordinator who will be a good match with
12 that community; sometimes we find them in the
13 community; sometimes we bring them from outside, if
14 they have the right background in terms of what the
15 school needs; some schools need a lot of mental
16 health services, so that means we want a coordinator
17 who has a very deep knowledge of the mental health
18 service providers of New York City and how do you get
19 them into the building. That coordinator we think is
20 the key to the entire process; you can't leave it up
21 to the school and the principal or a teacher to deal
22 with coordinating all these services and finding
23 them; that coordinator conveys all information that
24 the school needs back to us at the UFT to our
25 Community Learning School program and then we go out

1 and find the services for them; if they don't have
2 them available, we literally go out, find the
3 services and bring them in; that's why so many
4 schools apply to us because we have a whole cadre of
5 service providers, you know, like Food Bank of New
6 York is, as far as I'm concerned, should be given
7 awards all the time because no matter how many
8 schools we ask them to serve, I always think they're
9 gonna run out of food; they keep finding it, you
10 know, besides running cook shop and when, just by
11 chance, they heard in a meeting we needed a program
12 because we had so many families in financial distress
13 and we didn't need -- you know, the standard before
14 was, oh we'll help parents with financial literacy;
15 we found that that wasn't helpful in a lot of
16 schools; they needed a program to get families in
17 financial distress to financial stability and they
18 actually went out, engaged in people who did this
19 work and Food Bank of New York City is running that
20 program for families. So we've been able to do so
21 much of that, but the resource coordinator is key.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: About a month ago we
24 did a hearing here on homelessness and your Vice
25 President Karen Alford came, gave testimony, along

1 with a principal from one of the schools that's
2 involved in the Community Learning project and they
3 talked about buying a washing machine and a dryer...

4 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: for the school; I
6 mean that to me was just incredible to hear that
7 that's the type of need some of these schools have,
8 because she had a very high population... [interpose]

9 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: of homeless students
11 that came to school who didn't have the ability to
12 wash their own clothing and that's what they would do
13 in that school.

14 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yep. And that's... you
15 can't get that by people parachuting in from above
16 saying we're here to help or we're here to save you;
17 there's people at the schools and in the communities
18 who can do this work, they've just never been given
19 the proper support or opportunity and they know
20 what's best. It's my believe and I've seen it over
21 and over again; if you give people the support and
22 opportunity, they will take care of the children of
23 their community.
24
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So last year we put \$475,000 into the UFT Community Learning Schools; this year you're asking for \$1.5 million?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What would that increase get us?

MICHAEL MULGREW: Well now what we're trying to do is, we need to ramp up the ability to get more resource coordinators, because what we're seeing is as Community Learning Schools, the Mayor, and we applaud him for saying he wants 200 Community Learning Schools, a lot of them are talking to us about the need for resource coordinator; we need to ramp up our ability to find and train resource coordinators, as well as continue now, as I said before, because Community Learning Schools and Positive Learning Collaborative are tied together in one thing; there is a need and there is a shortfall of mental health services on behalf of New York City schools and we need to be able to figure out how to help the people who are doing it now expand their capacity so that we can get them into the schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So in your request for funding also, you put down you wanted, what was

1
2 it, \$1.5 million for the Positive Learning
3 Collaborative; that is a restorative justice program?

4 MICHAEL MULGREW: One of the pieces of
5 that program is restorative justice; we started this,
6 as I said in my testimony, two years ago; the 15
7 schools we did this in all had high suspension rates;
8 their suspension rates... [crosstalk]

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And they're
10 elementary schools?

11 MICHAEL MULGREW: Well, some K-8s, so
12 it's not just specifically elementary. Their
13 suspension rates have dropped dramatically; the
14 parents say the buildings are much better places to
15 go to; the students like going to the schools much
16 more, and the teachers like working there. It's
17 heavy duty training, we train them in a bunch of --
18 we sent staff of the UFT and from schools to Cornell
19 for intensive training three years ago in the summer;
20 we brought them back, they're all certified; they now
21 go and if a school wants to do this, we bring a team
22 from the school, they get completely trained in all
23 sorts of practices -- restorative justice, Positive
24 Behavior Intervention strategies -- I'm trying not to
25

use the acronyms, but I'm talking to Danny, so it just comes out sometimes -- sorry...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Ed-speak.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah... crisis intervention strategies, we do all sorts of different things and then they bring it back and everybody at the school has to be trained; we then have coordinators who go to the schools and start working with them; the issue we're having now is; all the training we do, there is nothing that we can supply at this moment about a much-needed clinical intervention; there are students who have all sorts of different challenges and they need a clinical intervention and it is wrong for them to be continued to be suspended and we need to get the service that they need and we shouldn't have to suspend them and go through this legal process in order to get them the service; if everybody is agreeing there is a problem, why don't we just deal with it; why do we have to go through all these hoops? So we're looking now to expand that; we have a lot of schools who wanna do it and but once again, this is a program by and large has been paid for by the UFT members' dues money.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: See, one of the things I wanted to highlight here is that I think most of your programs are in elementary schools and I think most of the DOE are in the high schools; I think one of the advantages to doing it in the elementary schools is that if we can get the kids at a young age as well, it prevents future problems I think when they're older, so it's an initiative I'm very interested in.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Alright, we all know that the earlier we get the intervention the much more effective it is for the rest of the child's life, whether that's in academics or behavior or anything else; the earlier the intervention, the ability for real success for that child is much higher the earlier we get to them.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So let's go to the charter enrollment gap and I would ask that you could explain that a little bit further. Council Member Levin, in his questioning before, highlighted that the growth of money into the charter school system has been absolutely incredible and it may in fact take up almost -- how much did you say, a quarter of the... [background comments] please put your mic on.

Five to seven years, about a quarter of the budget...

[crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Currently, between 5 to 10 years, about a quarter of the DOE budget, potentially, on the current rate of growth.

MICHAEL MULGREW: In terms of how much funding they get and how it's used, that's a whole different other issue, but if you're gonna get funding, then you need to serve all the children; you have to serve the neediest children; you cannot say you're serving special ed children when they might be receiving one service per week versus a special ed child who is in a self-contained classroom all week; we all know there's a major difference and when a child has issues in terms of discipline and how they are acting in school, the school is supposed to help them through that; not send them to another school so they don't have to serve them. So all we're saying, very simply, and this is the first time it's been put in a one-house bill in Albany, is do that and we'll deal with how much you're getting per student in the end, especially here in New York City; as we know, in New York City, especially with the facilities funding that the state now requires us to do, a child in a

1 charter school is receiving more funding than a child
2 in a public school. So we'll deal with that issue at
3 a different time, but right now all we're asking for
4 is support from City Council just to say, take all
5 students, the same needy students that everyone else
6 needs to serve, and we do it and we're happy to do
7 it, we think it's part of education; they should be
8 doing the same thing.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So just one last
11 question before I turn it over to my colleagues;
12 Council Member Reynoso and then Treyger have a couple
13 of questions as well, and this was not in your
14 testimony, but it concerns me; that's the education
15 tax credit in Albany...

16 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yep.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What's going on with
18 that? For me, it seems like they are asking for \$150
19 million to be taken away from our public school
20 budget that we could desperately use here in the city
21 if we were to give this money for that education tax
22 credit purpose.

23 MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah, we are lobbying
24 strongly against this; as I met with some of these
25 people, they have told me, you know... oh look, we know

1 what the game is, it's a backdoor voucher bill; I've
2 been in this job too long, I don't mince words
3 anymore; it's a backdoor voucher bill; it's a piece
4 of legislation that was designed for a national group
5 that's main goal is to defund public education and
6 privatize public education and this is just the way
7 to do it, and that is what is going on and I've tried
8 to explain that to folks; that is, you know, some
9 folks that we work who are pushing this bill and I've
10 been very clear with them, you're not on the right
11 side on this one because the people who have given
12 you all this information and want you to push this
13 legislation, in the end they wanna do one thing,
14 which is to privatize public education, which we know
15 will be bad for the students of America.
16

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very, very concerning
18 to us here in the Council as well. Thank you...

19 [crosstalk]

20 MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and I'm gonna ask
22 Council Member Reynoso to ask his questions...

23 [crosstalk]

24

25

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you,
Chair; I have to... I was supposed to be heading out 15
minutes ago to a Sanitation Hearing across the hall...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Uh-oh.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: I have to chair
that, yeah, but I'll be fine. I just wanted to ask a
couple of questions; I'm gonna ask you all three so
that we just hopefully knock it out of the park.

Community Learning Schools, love the
model, works great in my district; I'm gonna be
asking every school in my district to get it
hopefully that doesn't have it yet; just know, it'll
come...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Well if you're gonna
ask you're gonna need some funding.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: There you go; I
know; the money's important, so we will do our part.
But I do wanna say -- you were talking about the
process regarding Community Learning Schools and how
important that is; I just feel that given that you're
at the leadership level of that process, what
concerns you really have there, because you're
driving that process and so long as that you stay in
place and you're the lead on the CLS model, I feel

comfortable that what you're doing now will continue to happen.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Well my fear is that if Albany -- you know, it's kind of a mixed bag here; my fear is Albany's really gonna fund this and everybody's gonna run with the money and not do the process the correct way; my conversations in Albany are more about, I'm glad you all understand the need for Community Learning Schools; we don't wanna waste this funding; you need to also put into place that a certain process has to be put in place at the same time they receive this money. Because when we first thought of this our first year, with you guys, we showed up at the school and they were like, where's our check? Because that's the way it always happened; where's the check; we're like, no, we wanna talk to you. So we talked to them for a while and these are good folks, we would interview and then after a month they were like, well where's the check? And we're like, we're still going with this process and then they understood it and it's funny, because that first cohort now talks to other schools about how important this process is and it does come out with a better result for the school. I am talking to

1 Albany about that; anyone here I know and I thank you
2 for your support of Community Learning Schools and I
3 know you have been there with us when we visited at
4 different times, that we have to make sure that every
5 school community understands they are better off
6 doing this the right way and do not do that knee
7 jerk, oh we know exactly what we need, 'cause every
8 school who has gone through this process has landed
9 up doing things they had never thought they were
10 gonna do at the beginning.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Well I'm very
13 supportive and I just wanna say that a group of us
14 young men of color within the City Council all are
15 extremely supportive of this program and wanna make
16 sure that this type of model continues to happen,
17 especially in the schools that are in our districts
18 -- I'm speaking selfishly there, Chairman.

19 Also wanna speak to professional
20 development, the new model of professional
21 development for teachers and what you think it's met
22 and has it been a model that you appreciate and
23 whether or not it's making progress in the teacher's
24 ability to keep expanding on their ability to learn I
25 guess.

1
2 MICHAEL MULGREW: It's really more about
3 the time; there's no one set model; we had no time,
4 so we know you're only gonna move education,
5 especially now as we move forward, in more of a
6 collaborative approach at the school level; we would
7 hope a school actually develops completely as a team.
8 I'm never gonna be satisfied that every school is
9 doing good solid PD every week and will always push
10 at that; we should never stop pushing at that. But I
11 do believe that the results we're seeing in New York
12 City schools is as a direct correlation to... for the
13 first time in a long time we have this ability to do
14 training on a weekly basis inside of our schools and
15 I don't think we would've been making this progress
16 without it.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Alright, well
18 I'm glad to hear that. And the last thing is ESL;
19 I'm a former ESL student; extremely important to me;
20 at this point a young child comes from a foreign
21 country mid-year or let's say in the 3rd or 4th
22 grade; within that year they have to take the
23 statewide exam, you know, especially the ELA one,
24 which I'm extremely concerned about is... I would
25 challenge anyone, including you, Mr. Mulgrew, to tell

me if you could learn a language proficiently in one year... [crosstalk]

MICHAEL MULGREW: Oh no, you don't have to challenge me; I can tell you, no.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Exactly, I would challenge anybody in the Department of Education, both in the federal, state and city governments. Right now I've pushed a resolution to the state and the state has pushed it to the federal government...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yep.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: asking that we get waivers to the federal government or ask the federal government to give us a waiver for those students that just can't be proficient and what we end up getting are teachers that are failures, students that are failures and schools that are failures for an unreasonable request of learning a language in one year, proficiently in one year.

MICHAEL MULGREW: And it goes a little bit deeper; I'm hoping that that waiver gets approved, especially when you consider that the person who signed the waiver on behalf of New York State is now the Secretary of Education. So if he doesn't approve his own waiver, that would be a

1 little weird, but I've seen crazier things in
2 government, but the piece [bell] that we're missing
3 here is, something's wrong when we're using that exam
4 as the criteria for proficiency when we have hundreds
5 of students who are passing Regents in English but
6 cannot pass their NISIS [sp?] LAT [sic]; something's
7 wrong and we need to... and that is a discussion we are
8 pushing at the state level, because how are students
9 passing the English Regents, you know, living
10 environment Regents in English yet your NISIS LAT --
11 what is wrong with your NISIS LAT. But the
12 Department of Ed, I applaud the dual language schools
13 are opening, Part 154 that was put down upon us,
14 another unfunded mandate from the state has not been
15 helpful; New York City, two big crises -- number of
16 school seats and the growing English language
17 population because we don't even have the basic
18 workforce to help. So I agree and I look forward to
19 partnering with you and supporting you as we move
20 forward on this.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you for
23 that; I appreciate your time, Chairman. And also,
24 make sure you find me for any advocacy that needs to
25

happen on any ELL students; I'm always gonna be there for you.

MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER REYNOSO: Thank you guys.
Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Council
Member Treyger.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, Chair
Dromm and welcome, President Mulgrew. I just wanna
give a personal plug; in your testimony there is
strong support for teacher center...

MICHAEL MULGREW: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: to me, I think
it's really a leaning center; as someone who, like
the Chair, taught in the public school system, what
the public really needs to understand is that we have
seen the mandates from Danielson framework, from
Common Core, to Mozal [sp?] to MOTEP [sp?], to a new
evaluation system that they've just mandated from
Albany yet again and educators are not robots, we're
humans, we need time to process information, we need
time to make sure that all these changes are not
going to negatively impact the students that we serve
and teach every day. And so I was a member of the

1 teacher center in the school where I taught at; we
2 developed a teacher-led professional development team
3 to process these changes to make sure it did not
4 negatively impact student outcomes for the most
5 vulnerable student populations. So in reality,
6 teacher center, which is really a learning center, is
7 a direct result of all of the mandated changes and
8 regulations that come from Washington, Albany and
9 beyond, for us to be able to incorporate what we know
10 worked best to meet the needs of all of our kids. So
11 Chair Dromm, and I thank you for your advocacy and
12 your support of this, but these are critical centers
13 in our schools that cannot be played with; we need
14 time to process things to make sure that outcomes
15 remain strong in our schools. So I just wanna begin
16 by saying that, thank you... [crosstalk]

18 MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you very much for
19 comments.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: a 100 percent.
21 Now President Mulgrew, when the Chancellor earlier
22 testified, I raised something with her that I know
23 that you've also been very supportive and strong on;
24 I chair a new committee called Recovery and
25 Resiliency that deals with the Mayor's resiliency

plans; how to make the city more resilient, he has a plan called OneNYC where there will be mandates by decades beyond us here that will have solar panels installed on public buildings and very nice things; that resiliency mandate and plan should not be a jobs plan for China or Germany; that should be a jobs plan for here in New York City, so what are we doing, I asked, to retrofit our public schools to invest in them and to invest in CTE capacity so our schools, like a grading, instead of working on car parts that might be obsolete 20 years from now, to teach them the skills to build solar panels and to build resiliency products and items that meet the needs of the 21st century. Students in my community who live in Coney Island who witnessed the worst natural disaster in their history should be taught the skills and given the training and the opportunities to be a part of the answer to the 21st century challenges. So what can we do to work with the UFT, work with teachers, work with stakeholders to really improve our CTE plan, that our schools are aligned to 21st century skill-building and what type of resources do we need from the city and state level to make this

1
2 happen? And I thank you for your advocacy and your
3 support, as always.

4 MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you. In terms of
5 career and technical education, I am happy that we
6 have increased the enrollment in students inside of
7 career and technical education programs in New York
8 City, but every meeting I go to with parents, this is
9 a subject I hear all the time -- I want my child to
10 be trained -- and then when I tell them that when we
11 do career and technical education everyone thinks
12 it's the vocational, which it's a much different
13 program, it's more real world at this point, and then
14 the data has shown us over the last 10 years that
15 students who graduate from career and tech ed
16 programs -- 'cause we can't say schools anymore;
17 there's more students inside of programs in what's
18 called traditional schools than there are in CTE
19 schools; the students who graduate from those
20 programs graduate at a higher rate than the academic
21 students, go to college at a higher rate and finish
22 college in four years at a much higher rate than
23 students who are in what is considered "academic"
24 programs. So it's really not -- and because parents
25 are always telling me that the cost of college

tuition and all this; I want my son to get a vocational skill; I'm like, you need them in a career and tech ed program. So what can City Council do at this point is work with us to help schools understand, because what had happened is, while we were trying to grow them, schools were given no credit for it, [bell] remember school report cards; it was all based on academic subjects, so why would a school go out of its way to then start a whole CTE program if they were gonna be given no credit for it; if they would have wait to years to see the results in their graduation rates and they wouldn't do that. So luckily we were able to convince enough people to do it, but now it's time to grow them; if you see a partner, you all work with different businesses; I agree with you, we have one solar school in New York City, okay, one; the need of that industry is off the chart. We have the largest harbor in terms of utilization rate, a small utilization rate; our harbor needs a lot more work inside of it, they literally are recruiting thousands of people a year to come work inside of our harbor system; we have one school that deals with that, the Harbor School. So there are so many opportunities that should be given

1 to the children of New York City; it's not just about
2 transportation technology in terms of automobiles and
3 airplanes, we do that, but we still -- actually, I
4 could tell you, the Greater New York Automobile
5 Dealers Association would like us to start more
6 programs because they need the technicians and a lot
7 of those dealerships would actually pay the child's
8 college tuition if they will guarantee that they will
9 come work for them. So the opportunities are there;
10 as we move forward with a plan for Albany, which we
11 are doing this year, we would welcome your support,
12 and I would like to maybe perhaps say we should have
13 a hearing on career and tech ed...

14 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Yes.

15 MICHAEL MULGREW: and really show what's
16 going on and what needs to be done.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you.

18 Thank you, Chair.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you very
20 much; you know, as I said earlier, how grateful
21 Council Members were to have a chancellor who is a
22 former educator and I wanna say how lucky we are to
23 have a union leader who spent so many years in the
24 classroom, but what an extra special privilege it is
25

1
2 to have so many educators on this committee, we have
3 six former educators on this committee and we can
4 really get to the heart of education questions and..
5 [crosstalk]

6 MICHAEL MULGREW: I...

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: it's been a
8 privilege.

9 MICHAEL MULGREW: I'm assuming a lot of
10 people here are like, what are they talking about,
11 because we almost dropped right into teacher-speak,
12 but it is -- and I can't thank the support and it
13 does make a difference, teaching's a really hard job.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: We can't let it
15 go without letting it be said how good it is to have
16 a chair who... [interpose]

17 MICHAEL MULGREW: Chair.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: spent so many
19 years in the classroom as well... [crosstalk]

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Don't get
21 me started because it's a very... it's the reason I ran
22 for office, but thank you, President Mulgrew. Thank
23 you very much... [crosstalk]

24

25

MICHAEL MULGREW: Thank you all very,
very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Our next
panel -- [background comments] and by the way, I have
a lot of people, so I'm gonna have to limit... Oh yes,
I'm gonna do a shout-out, but let me call the
students -- Randi Herman, the Vice President of the
Council of School Supervisors and Administrators and
Jackie Febrillet from Local 372.

And let me give a shout-out to the class
of seniors from the High School for Fashion
Industries is here, a class on economics and
government. Where are you? Let's see, stand, if you
don't mind, everybody. Thank you very, very much for
coming and for listening to this testimony today. I
know we have other students here as well, so we're
gonna get around -- I think some of them are gonna be
giving testimony.

Okay, I have to ask if you'll raise your
right hand, please so I can swear you in; we do that
with everybody that comes before us. Do you solemnly
swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
but the truth and to answer council member questions

1
2 honestly? Thank you very much and Randi; would you
3 like to start?

4 RANDI HERMAN: Good afternoon; it's a
5 pleasure to be back. Today I'm up here testifying;
6 yesterday I was in the audience listening to
7 testimony that focused on the homeless, which was
8 very disturbing; what's even more disturbing is that
9 many of those homeless are our children, but I
10 digress.

11 I'm Randi Herman, the First Vice
12 President of the Council of School Supervisors and
13 Administrators; we represent the principals,
14 assistant principals, supervisors of education
15 administrators, and the directors of Early Childhood
16 Education that work for the Department of Education,
17 as well as those working in City-funded Early
18 Childhood programs.

19 You've heard all about the challenges
20 that the Department of Education faces as a very
21 large system that comes with the territory. Our
22 members, particularly the CSA members, the school
23 leaders, really have their work cut out for them and
24 they have to really think outside the box. You heard
25 Michael talk about children with special needs,

English language learners; the differentiation is endless. As any educator knows, trying to design instruction that meets the needs of all children is a challenge.

One of the things that can help level the playing field is technology; this we know, this has been documented, we've tried it; we know it works; it works with Autistic children in giving them the ability to communicate, it works with English language learners and helps them develop and become proficient in English; what they need is the hardware and up to now Reso A money has not been able to purchase tablets because the basic rule of eligibility was that it had to have a five-year lifespan and until now, tablets did not have that. So what we'd like to ask is that the Council work with the Department of Education to try and get tablets approved for Reso A; that would enable many of our schools to purchase older models that aren't so expensive but are perfectly suited to the apps that the children need to learn English, to practice problem-solving skills and even to become proficient in skills that they're lacking. So we'd really welcome your help with that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So Vice President

Herman, that has been a priority for this committee and we're working with the Comptroller to see how we can make that happen, because we recognize also that tablets, iPads, etc. are assistive learning devices, especially for many of our special ed students and we also recognize, and I believe this is true, that when the Smart Schools Bond Act was passed, you could use part of the money for technology and it's my belief that districts in the surrounding area are using some of that money to purchase tablets and iPads and I believe that students in New York City should also be able to do that. So we wanna move forward on that and we will work together with you on that.

RANDI HERMAN: Any help we can give, you just ask.

Another wonderful thing that we've been doing, you've heard a little bit about Universal Pre-K from the Chancellor; we know that the earlier students get to an educational environment the better prepared they are, the more progress they make and also, development delays are able to be remediated when they're very young and it does save on the budget; in the long run it saves the child

1 frustration; it saves the family a lot of
2 frustration. We're doing Universal Pre-K, finally
3 we've recognized it and we're willing to invest and
4 there's living proof; this Council doesn't intimidate
5 her; she'll take us all on. What we'd like to see is
6 a thoughtful expansion of Early Childhood Education,
7 one that makes sure that the Universal Pre-K
8 classrooms have -- oh, already she's got her next job
9 -- have the equipment, supplies and supervision that
10 they need. You heard a little bit about the teacher
11 shortage on one side of the table; we have to do
12 something to make sure there's not shortage anywhere.
13 So it's a much larger problem than for this time and
14 place; it's a bigger conversation, but it's one that
15 we've had with you for quite a while and I think the
16 discussions are productive and will continue.

18 We have faith in the research the early
19 childhood education is going to make a considerable
20 difference; the ripple effect will be felt for years
21 to come, but again, just not to grow too fast, too
22 quickly and it's a temptation, I know, because once
23 you see something is having a positive impact, you
24 want it to continue and you want it to grow.

Now we recognize, as do you, that our members, the school leaders of the City have to continue to be on the top of their game and we also know that even though, as my great grandma used to say, I have 10 children and 10 fingers; no two fingers are alike. So we have to really make sure that our members get the cutting edge of professional development; we have a vehicle that we use to do that; that's the Executive Leadership Institute, which in years past has been funded generously through the City Council and we ask that you continue your support of the Executive Leadership Institute and its programs that include the Advance Leadership Program for assistance principals -- just to point a fact, since its inception, the APs who have gone through that program, 155 have become principals. Just this year alone 275 assistant principals participated in the school-based Intermediate Supervisors Program and the year isn't over yet.

So again, we're doing good things; you've heard a lot about the initiatives that the Department of Education would like to put in place; our members are gonna need cutting edge professional development to make sure that we roll it out just as the

Department of Education has envisioned. So any support you could give for that this year, we'd welcome that.

Now I mentioned earlier the students who are in temporary housing or homeless; in the last six years, since 2010, there's been a 25 percent increase in the numbers of homeless students. Every day our school leaders address the extraordinary social, emotional and instructional needs of more than 83,000 students who live in the city's homeless shelters; they need more than just meals, they need more than just mental health and they need more than just having their physical needs seen to; that's one of the reasons we continue to advocate for more assistant principals, social workers, guidance counselors, and other education professionals.

Now I mentioned earlier that many students are hungry when they come to school, well the Department of Education, along with the City Council's support, has organized Breakfast in the Classroom and what that has done is enabled students who come late to school to just grab breakfast and go to class; they won't miss any instruction, but the department has been wonderfully responsive to the

diverse needs of our school communities and has begun to develop flexible breakfast in the classroom so that students will also be able to eat in the cafeteria when they arrive at school. So we thank the Council for their support with that and the partnership with the Department of Education has been nothing short of wonderful.

And finally, the Community Schools model; you heard Michael talk about it; I was with you on Friday when we went to PS 1; there's nothing you can say about this model that does it justice. The key piece, as Michael also explained, is the resource coordinator; we've talked about this at length, Karen Alford and I; that is the linchpin; that makes or breaks the success of this program. So as it move forward, the funding that the model gets needs to continue to support that resource coordinator. It's an expensive model; nobody's denying that, but the cost of not investing in a Community Schools model is much greater down the line.

So as always, there's a lot more to talk about and I look forward to continuing our conversations and I thank you again for the opportunity to come here today.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So before we go to our next speaker, your request for ELI is \$770,000?

RANDI HERMAN: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That's what we gave last year, so it's the same amount?

RANDI HERMAN: Yeah, the same amount...

[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You want a renewal of that?

RANDI HERMAN: if the Department of Education would like to partner with us in the other initiatives that we were talking about earlier, that of course would come at an additional cost, but you know, that depends what we're asked to do. But the \$770,000 will fund exactly what we had.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So just to -- I've been at your rallies, obviously, and I kind of know the answer to this, but for the record, just maybe a little bit more in depth, can you explain what's happening with the 3-year-old classroom teachers vs. the UPK teachers and its relationship to the DOE?

RANDI HERMAN: Loaded question. Okay. If Jackie and I were both working in an Early Childhood Center, City-funded Early Learn Center, we

both have the same credentials, same licenses, same certification from New York State, but I got to teach the Universal Pre-K program this year; City Hall said I was getting \$50,000, a 2.5 COLA, a signing bonus, and a retention bonus, but my colleague who's teaching next door, well she's out of luck...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: In the 3-year-old room.

RANDI HERMAN: in the 3-year-old classroom. So what does she do; she says well, I can't afford to stay here; I think I will go to the Department of Education and teach Universal Pre-K over there and then I'll get that pay... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: At another site perhaps?

RANDI HERMAN: At a U Pre-K site run by the Department of Education. So what that does is; creates a teacher shortage for the CBOs that are working with the City to expand Universal Pre-K, so there's a disconnect there; we can't keep stealing from the other side. Plus, Universal Pre-K teachers might also decide well, if I went to work at a Department of Education Universal Pre-K, my salary would be even higher and you know what, my benefits

would be better too. It's just an imbalance that we need to correct.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So it's about pay equity.

RANDI HERMAN: It's about pay parity, it's about equity in benefits, wages, working conditions; I mean, they work till 6:00; if you work in the Universal Pre-K at the DOE, you work till 3:00; you work 181-183 days a year; Early Childhood Centers are open a lot more than that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay Jackie, why don't you proceed and then I know Council Member Treyger has some questions.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Good afternoon, Chairman Dromm; Councilman Treyger. My name is Jackie Febrillet; I'm the Political Director...
[interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is that mic on, the red light?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: It's on.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Good afternoon, my name is Jackie Febrillet; I'm the Political Director

for Local 372; thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify.

Local 372 represents over 23,000 DOE employees; we represent school aids, paraprofessionals, school crossing guards, parent coordinators, substance abuse specialists, and lunchroom workers; essentially represent the backbone of the DOE; we are those workers that allow teachers to teach and administrators to do their jobs, oh let's not forget also the school crossing guards.

Before I start I wanna give thanks to the administration for not reducing the education budget; that really is essential in preventing services from being cut, because when cuts need to be made, usually administrators have to make the tough decision of keeping a program or cutting staff and usually support staff is the first people that have to go and that means Local 372 members.

Local 372 members are struggling, on a very meager salary they are scrambling to pay basic necessities, such as housing, food and transportation to get to work; if this isn't bad enough, we have Local 372 members who are also homeless or living in shelters, without a place to call their own, yet

1
2 everyday these same members go to work every day to
3 perform their duties that they're tasked to do, which
4 is take care of 1.1 million school children and they
5 love every single minute of the work they do.

6 I also want to thank the administration
7 and the Mayor for his vision with the \$15.00 an hour
8 initiative; Local 372 members will have a better
9 chance now to pay for their homes and put food on
10 their table.

11 One issue I'm gonna discuss is the SAPIS
12 or Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention
13 Specialists. SAPIS provide anti-bullying, provide
14 substance abuse prevention and intervention for the
15 students and for the families. The administration
16 was gracious enough to provide us with \$2 million
17 last year for the SAPIS; however, let's be clear,
18 this was a one-time funding; we're asking the
19 administration to please once again fund the SAPIS
20 for -- we're asking for \$3 million, \$2 million to
21 maintain the current number of SAPIS, plus an
22 additional million for additional positions. The
23 jobs that SAPIS do are very important, they just
24 don't do substance abuse prevention and intervention;
25 they provide anti-bullying and even during a

1 situation that there is violence in the schools and
2 kids need counseling, it's the SAPIS that get called
3 to provide that kind of intermediate counseling when
4 there's a tragedy at the schools. We've asked the
5 state for funding and we're hoping that the State
6 Assembly and the State Senate do provide additional
7 funding for the SAPIS, but we're also asking for the
8 City Council to provide funding for the SAPIS.
9 Without this \$2 million injection into the SAPIS
10 program, we will be losing 25 positions and those 25
11 staffers were placed throughout the district; most of
12 them were placed in Staten Island, which has a really
13 high incidence of substance abuse and alcohol abuse
14 in middle schools and high schools, because that's
15 where it begins; it begins in middle school. The
16 rest of the staffers were distributed along the other
17 four boroughs. Again, we're asking you for \$3
18 million to continue the 25 positions that were funded
19 through the money the City gave last year for the
20 SAPIS, plus an additional million for additional
21 positions.
22

23 We're also asking for \$3 million for the
24 severance-related fund; now this is kind of like a
25 strange situation, Local 372 is the only union that

1 provides full-time benefits for part-time workers,
2 even when they retire; now because of many things,
3 such as increase in prescription drug costs and
4 layoffs many years ago, the fund is being depleted.
5 Currently we've had to make the difficult decision of
6 not covering a lot of the retirees and their spouses
7 for supplemental services, such as paying for their
8 drugs and for the dental because the fund is
9 depleted. We've asked the Legislature and we're
10 asking you for assistance; we're also asking the
11 Mayor's Office for assistance in funding this fund;
12 we're asking for \$3 million. The problem is that as
13 of July 2016, those that are in COBRA that are within
14 the fund will have to go from paying \$55 a month in
15 COBRA to close to \$200 a month. Now what really
16 hurts is the fact that these are people that cross
17 our children in the street, they feed our kids in the
18 cafeterias; they keep our kids safe in the hallways,
19 in the playgrounds and the least we can do is make
20 sure that when they retire they don't have to worry
21 about whether they're gonna put food on the table or
22 pay the rent or pay for their medication that's
23 trying to save their lives; that is why we're asking
24
25

the City Council to please assist us in giving us \$3 million to put a gap in this fund.

And I wanna piggyback on something that Randi said... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jackie, just also on the... [crosstalk]

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Sure. Sure.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: that was the school crossing guards; right?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: No, for the school crossing guards, we're testifying on Monday for the school crossing guards; we're... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do they face a similar issue with the severance...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: The severance is the part-time workers, which is the school aides and the school crossing guards and the cafeteria workers, which are all part-time positions. So over 9,000 retirees and future retirees are gonna be affected by this issue.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So on the school crossing guard issue...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I had a friend
actually whose husband -- she's retiring..

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So her husband lost
the benefits; right?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Absolutely. Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And this money, this
\$3 million would enable...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Would allow us to
bring everyone back.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Right. And from what
I understand, part of the issue was because of the
decrease in the number of people who pay into the
fund?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Absolutely and also..
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And because the City
has decreased the number of school crossing guards..
[crosstalk]

JACKIE FEBRILLET: And because...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: we're not able to
meet that number anymore?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: And the City has also
not increased the contributions since 1987...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: they're basically contributing the same amount regardless of how many -- cost of inflation with... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So it's a combination of those two issues?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Those two issues. So we also have a plan in place that our members are willing to contribute additional funding into the fund to keep it solvent; also, we are working with the City for them to raise the contribution, so it's kinda like a three-pronged approach, but in order to resolve this issue before July, when the COBRA is gonna go up to \$200, we're asking for assistance, just to give us... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what's COBRA now?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: COBRA, they're paying \$55 a month... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: and the difference between \$55 and \$200 is a big difference for someone who's on a fixed income.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And then the school crossing guards got an increase, thanks to the

efforts to your union, to \$11.50, but I don't know if they're even up to \$15.00 an hour yet.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Not yet; not till 2018.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you're talking \$200 out of people who had made in their career less than \$15.00; you're talking a large sum of money.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Large, large sum of money; it's an unusual... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: circumstance, so we're asking for your assistance in that.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Now the final thing I wanna discuss is what Randi was discussing, Breakfast in the Classroom. Local 372 members, the cafeteria workers, prepare the meals and they serve the meals in the cafeteria, they deliver the meals to the classroom; they are more than willing to do this job, because you know what, it is their grandkids that are in those schools benefiting from the breakfast in the classroom and breakfast in the cafeteria; they provide lunch; they do all this work with minimal staff and when we took into consideration expanding

the program, we also have to take into consideration expanding the staff. Our members are tired; they come in early in the morning before they can clock in so that they can have the breakfast ready for the cafeteria and for bag lunches or bag breakfast or whatever has to go to the classroom; they have to bring it back down and still prepare lunch and the schools are so overcrowded that lunch can start at 10:00 in the morning. We're asking for additional staffing in order to make sure that our kids are fed and they're fed properly and appropriately. That was a big thing; we're asking for an additional 500 school lunch employees, because currently, the only thing the DOE and the Office of School Food wants to do is give you extra hours. If you've been there since seven in the morning, six in the morning preparing meals and they wanna give you an extra hour, you're already beat, you're burnt out; it does nothing for you to have an extra hour when actually what you need is an extra body. So we're basically asking, we're hoping that the City Council can assist us with \$3 million for SAPIS, \$3 million for the severance-related fund and money for additional school lunch employees. And with that I would like

to thank you and I'm available to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Just one more question... [crosstalk]

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and then I'm gonna actually turn it over to Council Member Treyger...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: while I eat a sandwich over here, but I will be listening. With regard to the lunchroom workers, are they currently bringing the food to the classroom for the breakfast program...? [crosstalk]

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Oh absolutely, and taking it away.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: and they have to do this all within an hour, because then they have to go get ready for lunch. And there's not a heavy duty person in the school, meaning that they're allowed to lift and take these things to the cafeteria; you have an elderly person having to do this...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So who's preparing... [crosstalk]

JACKIE FEBRILLET: with no elevator.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Who's preparing the breakfast? In other words, going... in my school we had warmers and the food would come in I think, you know, in a package and you'd put it in the warmer and they'd warm it, so it was just a matter of putting it in and pulling it out; whenever we ordered like a school lunch for a trip or something, the staff had to make the sandwiches, etc.; that takes an awful lot of time; is that similar to now what's happening with the breakfast program?

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yes, that's similar -- that's what going on, they have to prepare the meals, they have to prepare that, whether it's bag lunches or bag breakfasts; if they have to heat anything up -- some schools do cook, some cafeterias, some kitchens do cook... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: **[inaudible]**

JACKIE FEBRILLET: so they have to do all this while at the same time making sure that they get the food to the students... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: And Randi; you wanna talk maybe about the issue with warm food [inaudible]?

RANDI HERMAN: There was a major discussion, shall we say, about the temperature that the food was served at, because Department of Health regulations are very, very specific. So these folks have to work very quickly. Yes, they could do it if there are enough of them, but keeping the cafeteria open, serving breakfast to the kids who come in, getting all these bagged breakfasts up; the trash back into the bags, getting those bags cleared out of the hallways within an hour, back downstairs, then sorting through the organic versus the non-organic, because don't forget, we recycle, Zero Waste initiative; that's a major undertaking and my members expect lunches ready when lunch is ready and it better be at the right temperature and it better be ready for children when the children come down. It's an impossible task without the right resources. Do we want children fed? You bet. Should they have a hot breakfast a couple of times a week? You bet. Should lunch be ready and served in a wonderful

environment in the cafeteria? Yes. And all of that takes resources.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How do they deal with liquids in the classroom? Because, like in the cafeteria in the morning, I'd walk in and I'd see kids pouring, you know the leftover milk into big buckets, [background comments] so how are they doing that in the classrooms?

RANDI HERMAN: Well not well. Remember there's liquid, there's yogurt, there's a lot of spillage and accidents do happen and a custodian, of course, is as far away as the phone, but remember, a building generally has one custodian and if 10 classrooms are calling that they have spillage to clean up; oh well, where does he go first; somebody could slip, and have I heard about that? Yes. More often than not, it's a staff member who isn't paying attention to the yogurt on the floor, but that's problematic too.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. I wanna turn it over to Council Member Treyger, who's gonna take over chairing for a little bit. Thanks.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you, Chair Dromm. Listen, he works very hard; he's entitled to have his lunch too, you know it's a part of the teacher contract and it's a part of here as well. But I... [background comments, laughter] I... I wanna say -- I have a question for -- welcome, Vice President Herman, by the way; welcome to... thank you so much...

RANDI HERMAN: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Just a quick question about something that used to irk me as a teacher and I still hear that it still occurs, but I'm not sure at the scale that it occurs; the October register, and I would really like to get clarity on this, because I remember when I was a teacher in a high school, October was a big important month, attendance, attendance, attendance, because that is the month that the DOE would use to determine the number of kids actually showing up at the building, but I taught in a school that was in a community that welcomes and has a lot of immigrants that move in from other countries and we welcome them around the world, but if you show up to the school after October in November, December, January, does the school get funded for these kids and that is something that has

1
2 to end and so I'm just... as far as giving... they need
3 to give us support to meet the need... [crosstalk]

4 RANDI HERMAN: You're absolutely right.
5 You're absolutely right, plus add to that if a child
6 comes to you after October 31st from a charter
7 school, do you think that money follows the child
8 anytime soon? Budgets for schools are funded at
9 approximately 80 percent of where they should be
10 right now. Fair student funding is anything but fair
11 and we all see it; we know how much money we're
12 short; we know how much money we need to get the job
13 done the right way. When I go to a school and I see
14 a wonderful, wonderful program, I sometimes will ask
15 the principal, what did you have to give up to get
16 that; that's a question I should never have to ask,
17 nor should a principal have to make that decision.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: And I appreciate
19 that type of candidness, because we hear mixed
20 answers, but I believe you are correct; I don't
21 believe that schools are being funded after October
22 and mind you, some of the children that come into the
23 school -- and again, we... the public school system
24 welcomes all children, period, but some of the
25 children that walk in might have needs beyond, you

1 know, an ordinary child, where they might need help
2 with reading, that might need an IEP, they might be
3 an English language learner that might need
4 additional resources of a paraprofessional, for
5 example, that has to be assigned based on the
6 language, and the schools are not being funded for
7 it. And there was a report recently where the DOE is
8 not meeting all of the mandates governed by IEPs, and
9 IEPs, just so we're clear, as I'm sure are, these are
10 not suggestions, these are not recommendations, these
11 are not just, oh, by the way, you should do this;
12 this is law, federal; state law that we're not
13 complying with and the consequence of this is the
14 learning outcomes of the most vulnerable student
15 populations. So and that is an issue that still
16 bothers me to this day, that we need to be much more
17 flexible with these register months and if children...
18 DOE and the Mayor, everyone says we welcome all
19 children, which is great, but they need to -- Albany
20 and everyone, Washington needs to fund our schools
21 better to meet the needs of all these kids.

23 RANDI HERMAN: And the Department of
24 Education will tell you that it has a core document
25 for every school to fill out when a special needs

1
2 youngster is identified that documents the
3 coordination of resources that were available at the
4 school and how they could possibly be cobbled
5 together to meet the child's needs. It's a process
6 that although it's not supposed to take a very long
7 time; it takes way too long, the turnaround time is
8 not 48 hours, it's 72 hours, so if a child has an
9 identified need, the principal is told, look within
10 your budget and your resources to see how you can
11 best meet that, and if you can document for us on
12 this report that you have used every possible
13 permutation of resources at your disposal, we'll take
14 a look at how we can help you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: And I believe
16 that that is -- I'll be very blunt -- that's
17 disrespectful to principals, because principals and
18 assistant principals, they don't just plan a day
19 before school starts about the school year ahead;
20 administrators plan months and months and months
21 ahead to make sure they have educators placed in the
22 right classroom size, making sure paraprofessionals
23 are hired, making sure that the school is functioning
24 and working, meeting the needs of all kids and then
25 for them to come last second and the school

1
2 population is growing and they say well just find it
3 in your budget, that is disrespectful to the
4 supervisors who spend months responsibly planning out
5 their budgets and so we need -- you know, I hear you
6 and this is something that I continuously hear at the
7 ground level, but we need to make sure that the DOE,
8 and of course, even Albany, because of course this
9 becomes a situation where the City will say, well
10 Albany needs... yes, and that's true, Albany still owes
11 us quite a bit of... a lot of money, but we need to be
12 working with our school administrators, working with
13 our school communities on being as flexible as
14 possible and providing additional resources to meet
15 the needs of these kids.

16 RANDI HERMAN: Well it's also the
17 viewpoint that -- they look at a child from a
18 budgetary standpoint... [crosstalk]

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Correct.

20 RANDI HERMAN: that it's fair student
21 funding and every child gets the same amount of money
22 for support to begin and every service is worth X
23 number of dollars. I've always looked at it in
24 exactly the reverse; here's the child, the child is a
25

1 zero-based budget; what is it going to take to
2 educate this child?

3
4 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: That's correct
5 and so I appreciate that. And just quick question
6 with regards to the outreach of hiring school
7 crossing guards and what are still some of the
8 challenges we face in retainment and hiring? Because
9 you know we've seen an expansion of UPK; there's more
10 sites where children will be crossing with their
11 parents to get to school... [crosstalk]

12 JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yes.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: we're hearing,
14 you know, conversations about additional hiring, but
15 what I'm hearing on the ground is that number one,
16 there are challenges in outreach, there are still
17 barriers of communication, and the other thing is; is
18 the job attractive enough to... [crosstalk]

19 JACKIE FEBRILLET: That is... yeah.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: keep and retain
21 people who quite frankly keep our kids and families
22 safe. I'd just like to hear your thoughts on that.

23 JACKIE FEBRILLET: Well the biggest issue
24 is... we are trying to make the job more attractive,
25 we've been working with the City; the biggest issue

right now is, that school crossing guards are only allowed to work a maximum of five hours a day and also the schedules are staggered, so you're talking about a school crossing guard working two-and-a-half hours in the morning and then two-and-a-half hours in the afternoon, so they have this huge gap in-between where they're doing absolutely nothing, yet they have to stay close to their posts. If you need a full-time position, it makes no sense for you... you can go work at McDonald's, you can go work somewhere else, when they will be paying you the same amount of money, basically, but you get more hours of work. What we've been asking the City, we've been asking the City Council to assist us in, and what we'll be testifying on next week is annualization; basically is increasing the hours for school crossing guards. The needs of the school crossing guards have changed; the NYPD is the one that has put a cap on the hours for the school crossing guard. Back in the 70s and the 80s, the needs were different, but now the needs have completely... are really different; we have after-school programs, we have evening programs, we have middle schoolers going out for lunch; there needs to be a school crossing guard there all day every day;

1 this needs to happen, because it's not just kids that
2 they're crossing, they're crossing the parents,
3 they're crossing the grandparents, our school
4 crossing guards get spat at, cursed at just because
5 they have to protect the kids from traffic; traffic
6 death... people getting hurt outside of schools. The
7 schools are overcrowded; the lunches are staggered,
8 so a high school could be having lunch at 10:00;
9 another one at 2:30; they can go outside for lunch;
10 traffic is bad, boom, you get hit. There needs to be
11 a school crossing guard regardless whether it's a
12 public school, a charter school or a private school,
13 there needs to be a school crossing guard in every
14 corner for every school; all our kids deserve to be
15 safe; that is the biggest problem, the cap and the
16 hours and it's the NYPD that needs to lift the cap.

18 Second, the pay recently increased for
19 the school crossing guards, they're making close to
20 \$12.00 an hour; we're working on increasing that.
21 With the \$15.00 an hour, that's not gonna kick till
22 2018, so we're still fighting for that. So there's a
23 couple of things that make it hard for the position
24 to be filled. Also, according to the NYPD, which I
25 don't believe, they're saying that people don't want

1 the positions, because they'd rather be working close
2 to where they are. A school crossing guard has to be
3 on their spot by no later than 8:00 in the morning
4 and it's more convenient if you live in the
5 neighborhood, but if you need to work, you need to
6 work. We have people saying they will go anywhere as
7 long as they're working, because even though the
8 position is part-time, you're getting full-time
9 benefits. The only problem with a school crossing
10 guard position is that during the summer, if you
11 don't have a site for the summer work, then you're
12 basically going on unemployment; however, at this
13 point in time, because there's so many schools open
14 during the summer, almost every single school
15 crossing guard has a position during the summer. So
16 if you guys were to assist us in just lifting the
17 cap, talking to the NYPD, we've been fighting with
18 them for years, take the cap off. The school
19 crossing guards are needed in those schools for more
20 than just the four-five hours, they're needed every
21 day.
22

23 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: You know I find
24 it interesting you say this, because we hear a lot
25 about this term "Vision Zero"...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: and you would imagine that the administration would wrap this into Vision Zero...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: because if we're on a mission to make pedestrian traffic fatalities reach zero, you would think that we... let's start getting very serious about our children and our parents crossing the streets. I would also argue that in addition to the crossings where the schools directly are, and as someone who used to teach, I know this because, Chair Dromm as well, that the access points where kids come from are also important; if they're getting off the train, if they're getting off that stop, that first crossing is also a critical access point where I think we definitely could use some crossing guards; during dismissal, during... when kids also come in the morning, there's a lot of issues and challenges we face where the NYPD themselves will say they need help...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: getting kids dismissed from the... I used to come from a school where the principal would say, and I appreciated this; those kids are our responsibility from the school until they get home...

JACKIE FEBRILLET: So true.

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: and the staff would be dispersed to make sure that we get kids out, dismissed in a responsible way, but that's where crossing guards can help as well, not just directly by the school, but even to the access points of how they get home and how they arrive to school in the morning.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: 'Cause oftentimes those access points are more dangerous than the block by the school, because the one at the schools might be monitored by a school aide or the principal might be outside, like in the case of my kid's school, 'cause it's not just that the union member -- I'm talking also as the perspective of a parent...

COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Right.

JACKIE FEBRILLET: whose 6-year-old is now walking to school because he thinks he's a man now, so... he's walking to school... so there's this fear

1 myself and the Chair that we would like to work with
2 you as much as we can on advancing and supporting
3 these very, very critical needs, both to retain
4 quality workers, and you're absolutely correct about
5 the role of your membership; that is what makes the
6 building run and it takes a family and the school to
7 make a building run and so we appreciate you,
8 appreciate your membership and we thank you, Vice
9 President Herman as well, because it really begins
10 with leadership as well and we thank you and your
11 membership for all your support and help. Thank you.
12

13 RANDI HERMAN: Thank you.

14 JACKIE FEBRILLET: Thank you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Oh and with that
16 I return it to our Mr. Chairman.

17 [pause]

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, our next panel
19 -- Erin George from the New York Lawyers for the
20 Public Interest; Randi Levine from Advocates for
21 Children, Ariel Savransky, Citizens Committee for
22 Children, and Sara Mullery from Children's Defense
23 Fund. [background comments]

24 [pause]

Okay, so I have to swear you all in, so would you raise your right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly? 'Kay. Would you like to start? Yeah. Alright.

SARA MULLERY: Okay. Good afternoon, thank you so much for having me; my name is Sara Mullery and I work on health and education issues with the Children's Defense Fund of New York.

The Children's Defense Fund is a national nonprofit child advocacy organization that champions policies and programs that lift children out of poverty, protects them from abuse and neglect and ensure their access to healthcare, quality education and a moral and spiritual foundation.

Our testimony discusses three areas relating to the Department of Education budget that greatly impact a child's well-being; first, school health, students experiencing homelessness and school climate. CDF of New York is committed to using school-based healthcare services to maximize a child's future health and opportunity for learning. We believe that schools should play a fundamental

role in the fostering of healthy children and promote the expanded use of school-based healthcare services.

We thank the Mayor for including investments in the Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary Budget, focused on mental health services, staff training and additional healthcare staff. We call on the Council and the executives to work together to further expand access to school-based health services by first, further investing in school health. CDF of New York believes that the City should work to develop a citywide school health roadmap that would be outcome driven and would seek to assess which school-based healthcare delivery models best resolve health disparities; this would ensure that students have access to universal baseline of healthcare services.

The City should also consider exploring increased reimbursement under the Free Care policy. To enable an increased investment in school health services, the City would likely need to draw upon more federal and state dollars. The Free Care policy opens up the potential for schools to receive reimbursements for screenings and assessments. The influx of state and federal Medicaid dollars would

then better enable Office of School Health to invest more in school-based health services.

Students experiencing homelessness is a second area for investment. Housing instability negatively impacts a child's opportunity for learning and with nearly 84,000 New York City students defined as homeless, [bell] it is critically important for New York City to ensure that these children have access to support services.

We thank the Mayor for including funding for a transportation coordinator for students in temporary housing. [bell] Additionally, CDF of New York calls on the City to further support these students by first preserving and expanding the Safe in My Brother's Arms program (SIMBA). The SIMBA program has been a critical lifeline for New York students experiencing homelessness and New York City should preserve and expand support for the program. The City can also support these students by expanding access to fee waivers for City University of New York applications. CDF suggests that the application fee be waived for any student applying to CUNY who has experienced homelessness; by doing so, the City, with a small investment, can significant improve the

educational and employment opportunities for some of our most vulnerable youth.

School safety and climate supports is the third area for investment. CDF of New York works to replace punitive school discipline and safety policies in New York City schools with social and emotion supports that encourage a positive school climate and improve educational and social outcomes for youth. We urge the City to increase its investment in Whole School Restorative Justice models by expanding investments in school-based Restorative Justice. Today, each school participating in the City Council Restorative Justice Initiative has a full-time school-based Restorative Justice coordinator; CDF of New York, as members of the Dignity in School Campaign of New York, respectfully ask that the Council allocate \$2.4 million to ensure that the sustainability of schools already involved and an additional \$2.6 million to expand the program to additional schools.

It is our hope that the Council will continue dialogue with the Department of Education on the value of sustainable investments in school-based healthcare delivery, supports for students

1
2 experiencing homelessness and Restorative Justice in
3 schools. I would like to thank Chair Dromm and all
4 of the members of the Education Committee for the
5 opportunity to testify today.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
7 Randi.

8 RANDI LEVINE: Good afternoon. Thank you
9 for the opportunity to speak with you about the
10 Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary Budget. My name is
11 Randi Levine and I'm Policy Coordinator at Advocates
12 for Children of New York. Advocates for Children's
13 mission is to promote access to the best education
14 New York can provide for all students, especially for
15 students from low-income backgrounds and students of
16 color.

17 We're pleased that the Preliminary Budget
18 has a number of initiatives that would support
19 students with disabilities, students who are
20 homeless; immigrant students. We're also pleased
21 that the Preliminary Budget includes an investment of
22 \$16.4 million for literacy coaches for students in
23 kindergarten through 2nd grade. Last week we
24 released a report documenting the need for urgent and
25 sustained action to address the particularly low

1 literacy levels for low-income students with
2 disabilities and prepare schools to teach reading
3 effectively for all students, and we know that Chair
4 Dromm, you had an op-ed today about the need to
5 provide specialized reading instruction for students
6 with dyslexia in particular. Providing literacy
7 coaches to students in their early elementary grades
8 is an important step toward moving schools closer to
9 achieving their fundamental responsibility of
10 teaching all students, including students with
11 disabilities to read. While the Preliminary Budget
12 includes a number of other encouraging initiatives,
13 we want to use our limited time to highlight a few
14 areas in which more funding is needed.

16 First, the budget should include
17 increased resources to address school climate. We
18 have some statistics here about school discipline in
19 New York City; we are pleased that there are several
20 initiatives in the Preliminary Budget to address
21 school climate and have listed them here.

22 We're grateful to the City Council for
23 funding the Restorative Justice pilot program in the
24 FY 2016 budget. For 2017 we're requesting \$5 million
25 for this initiative, \$2.4 million would support the

continuation of the pilot program for the schools selected to participate this year to sustain these efforts [bell] for a second year and an additional \$2.6 million would allow for additional schools to receive funding to participate in school-based Restorative Justice.

Second, increased resources are needed for students in temporary housing. You held a hearing recently on students in temporary housing and we have a lot of statistics here about the dismal outcomes that students living in shelter that we're producing for these students.

We're recommending that the budget include funding to hire at least 100 social workers dedicated to meeting the educational needs of students living in shelter. We've outlined here the inadequacies in the current staffing for students in temporary housing and the various ways in which social workers can use the clinical training and strength-based approaches to really help students who are living in shelters.

Third, the budget should include funding for a reliable data system to track information regarding students with disabilities; we're grateful

1 to you and the City Council for enacting Local Law 27
2 and recently received the first set of data around
3 special education; the data showed that 40 percent of
4 students with disabilities are not receiving their
5 full services and also showed that we don't have any
6 reliable data about which students and whether or not
7 students or when students are receiving their
8 services and we think that a reliable and accurate
9 data system is the first step so that the City can
10 identify where it's falling short and make sure that
11 all students with disabilities are receiving the
12 services to which they're entitled.
13

14 And finally, the last area I'll highlight
15 is the need for more funding for translation and
16 interpretation. We were glad that the City took
17 several positive steps this year, including expanding
18 direct phone interpretation to schools; however,
19 Pre-K programs at community-based organizations, New
20 York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs) do not
21 have access to interpretation by phone right now and
22 we know that the City is working on this issue and
23 encourage the City to include increased resources so
24 that Pre-K for all programs can really communicate
25 with all families.

Thank you and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next please.

ERIN GEORGE: Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name's Erin George; I'm a Community Organizer at New York Lawyers for the Public Interest; we're a nonprofit advocacy organization working to advance equality and civil rights.

Over the past several years NYLPI has become increasingly involved in education advocacy through our membership in the Phys Ed for All Coalition and the Sexuality Education Alliance of New York City. As the Council considers the City's education budget, we hope you will push to ensure that the DOE does more to help schools meet physical education and sexuality education standards.

Research shows that quality physical -- [clears throat] pardon me -- quality physical education enhances students' academic achievements, improves concentration and instills good habits for healthy living. PE is particularly critical for students with obesity and related health problems.

Approximately 1 in 5 New York City public school students in grades K-8 are obese and obesity rates are higher in low-income and communities of color.

Last year the Council made the important decision to prioritize PE through the passage of Local Law 102 and through a \$6.6 million allocation to the DOE and we thank you for doing so. This allocation allowed for the development of the PE Works Initiative, which bolstered PE programs in eight school districts through the hiring of license PE teachers, as well as physical education managers. Preliminary feedback about this program has been positive; as such, we're requesting that the Council dedicate an additional \$18 million to expand the PE Works Initiative to all 32 school districts. Furthermore, given that the 2016 budget funded a systemwide analysis of PE barriers and needs, we urge the administration to include capital funding in the 2017 budget to begin addressing the capital needs identified in the analysis.

In terms of sexuality education, this is an integral piece of students' overall health, well-being, decision-making, and academic achievement; according to a recent New York City Youth Risk

Behavior survey, about half of public high school students are having sex; every year in the US nearly one million teenage [bell] girls face an unintended pregnancy, a quarter of new STIs occurs in adolescents and every hour two teens contract HIV. Despite these realities, we don't yet have comprehensive sexuality education in grades K-12 here in New York City, as is nationally recommended. Furthermore, a third of high school students either have never received sex ed or they don't know if they have or not. The Council displayed recognition on the importance of this issue with the recent passage of the group of bills focused on tracking and reporting of data related to health education and we thank the Council for this critical step.

We request in further support of sex ed that the Council provide funding to expand the provision of health education and to ensure that adequate sexuality education training is completed by all educators who are providing health education instruction. Thank you for the time and we look forward to working with you further on these issues.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next please.

ARIEL SAVRANSKY: Good afternoon. My name is Ariel Savransky and I'm the Policy Associate for Food and Economic Security at the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York. I would like to thank Chair Dromm and the members of the Education Committee for holding today's hearing.

We are pleased to see that the Preliminary Budget proposed to begin funding the Mayor's equity and excellence agenda which aims to help children succeed in school through initiatives such as Literacy for All, Algebra for All and AC for All; unfortunately, the plan will not be fully implemented until 2026 and we continue to hope these initiatives can be expedited. In addition, there was no funding in the Preliminary Budget to begin funding the Computer Science for All, but we hope to see this in the Executive Budget.

There are also still critical issues that we hope to see funded by the administration in the Executive Budget; I'm just gonna go through a few of those.

We are strongly urging the administration to finally complete Mayor de Blasio's campaign promise to implement universal free lunch for all

public school students. This would help destigmatize school meals, resulting in more kids eating, cost savings for parents and increased federal and state reimbursements.

Next I'm gonna just highlight physical education and just echo what Erin said, instead of going into all the details; we agree with everything that she mentioned.

Summer programs. CCC is very disappointed that the Preliminary Budget failed to include funds to enable nearly 31,000 middle school students to attend summer programs this year. Our testimony includes a map by council district of these cuts. We urge the administration to restore these slots as soon as possible.

Next, given the changes in federal law that strengthen requirements for educational stability for foster children, we urge the administration to require DOE and ACS to make a joint plan, fund transportation costs and fund any additional administrative or social work costs to finally implementing educational stability requirements.

We also urge the restoration of \$2.4 million and add \$2.6 million for Restorative Justice [bell] programs. We echo what Randi said about MSWs to help homeless children. And then lastly, we urge the administration to restore and baseline the initiatives supported by the City Council in Fiscal Year 2016 and we hope the City Council will do so as well. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you very much; it's good to hear everybody's on target with the \$5 million for the Restorative Justice, so I assume you all got together and came up with a good number there; we are gonna fight for that moving forward and we'll see what we can come up; you know, I can't guarantee anything now of course; we're just entering into the beginning of the budget negotiations and many of the issues that are raised by every member of the panel here now are issues of concern to this committee.

So I do have one question though. One of the things I noticed in the Citizens' Committee for Children is the call for the baselining of some of the Council... all of those Council initiatives; I worry a little bit about that, because when we

1 baseline it we don't have as much control over it and
2 it becomes an administrative issue, particularly with
3 regard to the LGBT liaison, because it's so new and I
4 really want to continue to ensure that that is done
5 right and since it's Council money we can direct it
6 more forcefully than we can if it's in the baselined
7 budget. So pretty much we're on board with that;
8 some of that stuff I would like to see baselined; I'd
9 like to see the DOE contribute to the Teacher's
10 Choice money as well; I think that that would be very
11 helpful and I think they actually should be supplying
12 those teachers with a minimal number of you know,
13 pencils, markers, paper and stuff already, but some
14 of them I just have a little concern because I want
15 to ensure that the programs are done the way that we
16 would like them at the Council to be done.

18 ARIEL SAVRANSKY: And we would love to
19 discuss those more with you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Sure, absolutely. So
21 alright, I guess... thank you very much and we'll call
22 the next panel.

23 Okay, Diana Feldman from ENACT; is she
24 still here? I don't think so. [background comments]
25 Okay. Melissa Riser or Risser from Urban Justice...

ENACT? No. Okay. Lisa Levy from Hunger-Free New York City. She's here? Yeah. Alright. Lily Woo, Teachers College, Cahn Fellows Program. Is Lisa here? Okay. And Vilatina [sp?] Jones from the Lower East Side Power Partnership. [background comments] Okay, we've gotta call a couple more. Alicia Arrington, Alliance for Quality Education. Is Alicia here? Okay, good; we got you. Okay. [background comments] And Felicia Alexander from the Coalition of Educational Justice. [background comments] Okay. [background comments]

Okay, I'd just like to swear you all in, so if you'd raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly? Okay. Would you like to start? Yeah.

LISA LEVY: Hello; can you hear me? Is that... Is it close enough? Is that...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is the red light on?

LISA LEVY: It's on... the red light is on...

[interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

LISA LEVY: but I don't know... can you hear me?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's a little hard, but...

LISA LEVY: I don't know; this might be the bad one. [background comments] Hello?

MALE VOICE: Testing one, two. Yeah.

LISA LEVY: Let me switch; I think this is the bad one. Hello; can you me now? Better? Okay. Sorry; I... I didn't eat lunch, sorry. Yes, hunger is bad.

My name is Lisa Levy; I'm the Director of Policy, Advocacy and Organizing of Hunger-Free New York City. I wanna first thank Chair Dromm for his work on behalf of people in need, as well as to the committee for inviting me to testify.

As many of you already know, and as you can read in my submitted testimony, about 1:5 children in New York City struggles with hunger here, in one of the richest cities in the world. During 2014-2015 school year, out of 73 large school districts, New York City ranked last in effectiveness in reaching low-income students with breakfast; only 35.3 percent of students who received free or reduced

price lunch also participated in a school breakfast program. We know that serving breakfast as part of the school day is the most effective way to ensure that children do not struggle to learn on an empty stomach and thanks to the Council and Mayor de Blasio, last year New York City began serving breakfast in the classroom to students in standalone elementary schools. While change can be difficult, we know this is a path worth following, as parents, teachers and principals have attested to successes. With PS 18 in the South Bronx seeing increases of more than double, from 200 to 500 out of 600 kids total eating a healthy breakfast in the classroom, this school will assuredly see hunger decrease this year. Similar increases have been seen citywide in schools where breakfast in the classroom has been implemented, expansion to middle and high school for this effective program can only continue the momentum. Additionally, expanding the service of universal lunch, which was introduced by the City Council in 2014, to all standalone middle schools should be on the agenda. Last summer I distributed summer meals with the Council's own Vanessa Gibson at Crotona Pool in the Bronx, along with Council Members

1
2 Levine and Rosenthal in Manhattan and visited Sunset
3 Park Rec Center with Council Member Menchaca,
4 Assembly Member Ortiz and Senator Gillibrand, [bell]
5 where eager kids enjoy... [bell] I'm gonna just finish
6 up really quickly.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes, just...

8 LISA LEVY: Thank you. ...where eager kids
9 enjoyed healthy sandwiches and fruit. In 2015, this
10 valuable program served 8.1 million meals, virtually
11 the same number as it did in 2014, reaching only a
12 quarter of the kids who eat free and reduced price
13 lunch during the school year. Research shows that
14 half the families who don't participate don't know
15 where sites are located or that the program even
16 exists. We can improve this program and we
17 appreciate the efforts of those who helped last year.
18 Currently in our nation's capital the bill to pay for
19 these programs is being debated, the Child Nutrition
20 Reauthorization bill; I not only ask each of you to
21 support the programs locally to assist children in
22 New York City who struggle against hunger, but to let
23 your members of Congress know that these programs are
24 valuable to those in your districts; after all, it
25

should be a priority that in a nation as wealthy as ours no child should go hungry. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
Next please.

LILY WOO: Good afternoon Chair Dromm and honorable members of the committee. My name is Lily Woo and I'm the Director of the Cahn Fellows Program for Distinguished Public School Principals at Teachers College, Columbia University. I'd like to take a moment to thank Chairman Dromm for your previous support for Teachers College.

Thank you for allowing me to speak before you today about a very important and transformational program that promotes education excellence in our city schools. In listening to this morning's testimonies from Chancellor Farina and Michael Mulgrew, they express a very serious concern about not celebrating the good work of those in the schools, as well as trying to reduce the amount of attrition of people leaving the system. The Cahn Fellows Program for Distinguished Public School Principals founded in 2002 emerged from the vision and generosity of Charles and Jane Cahn. The Cahn Fellows Program is a 13-month program that

strengthens public schools by recognizing and celebrating its outstanding principals and aspiring principals and developing the capacities [inaudible].

The program engages participants in a collaborative network of peers and develops their ability to improve school climate and culture, teacher effectiveness and ultimately, student learning and achievement. The program is housed at Teachers College, the nation's first and largest school of education that is affiliated with but financially independent from Columbia University.

I can attest to the Cahn Fellows transformational power and believe that the program merits your support, because I am the former principal of PS 130, the Desoto School, a Title I school located in the Chinatown/Little Italy area, with approximately 1100 children when I served as principal, and I served there as principal for 25 years. So I know exactly what Chancellor Farina and Michael Mulgrew were talking about.

As the time I took over [bell] in 1990, the school was struggling, with only 38 percent of the school passing standardized exams; today it's become one of the highest performing schools in New

York City, ranking in the top 5 percent in New York City and 10 percent in New York State. The Cahn Fellow Program is modeled on an evidence-based practice of the importance of school leaders. Research has shown that the most significant resource that schools contribute to academic success. Principals have a decisive impact on school enrollment, achievement and graduation rates; however, far too often the opportunities for exceptional principals to receive support, recognition and the ability to network with other exceptional principals are very limited, and we try to address all of the issues in terms of reducing the number of people who are leaving the system by providing that support. Our city's educational system needs to provide critical support and leadership development to its most exceptional leaders; the Cahn Fellows Program does this in the following manner: Each year they solicit nominations from a committee of exemplary principals who have completed at least three years in their position and who have shown outstanding leadership in their school communities and districts. They go through a rigorous vetting process and 20-25 candidates are

selected each year; once selected, the fellows are asked to select a mentee from their school building to work alongside them on an inquiry project that will benefit the school and maybe benefit other schools as well. The program's focus is to increase leadership capacity in the school system, identify and cultivate new leaders, improve school performance. Through the use of various pedagogical approaches designed to encourage critical reflection and perspective transformation, principals work to improve their schools and establish a pathway for leadership development of their mentees. Once principals have completed the rigorous program, they are awarded a Certificate of Completion. Since 2003 over 270 principals and 270 mentees have completed the program and research has shown that those who have gone through the program have achieved better reading scores and math scores as well as improved student attendance than similar schools led by non Cahn Fellow principals.

I first referred to my own experience as a principal; had it not been for the Cahn Fellows Program back in 2003, when I was in the first cohort, I might not have lasted the 25 years as principal,

1
2 for exactly the reasons that Chancellor Farina and
3 Michael Mulgrew had attested to. At a time when I
4 felt isolated and alone in my work, the program gave
5 me renewed energy, really smart colleagues to call up
6 on and new strategies on how to take my school to the
7 next level. I attribute much of my success as a
8 school leader to the valuable insights that I gained
9 through the program; after more than 40 years in
10 public education, I retired from the position and had
11 the privilege of taking on the leadership role of
12 this tremendously valuable organization.

13 The Cahn Fellows Program is currently
14 totally supported through corporate foundations and
15 individual donations that are increasingly difficult
16 to secure. The program strictly serves public
17 schools and in order to continue the program at no
18 cost to participants and schools, we are respectfully
19 asking for the Council's support so that these
20 leaders can continue to benefit the children and
21 community they serve.

22 The Cahn Fellow Program for Distinguished
23 Principals plays an important and unique role in the
24 landscape of professional development for outstanding
25 principals in New York City by supporting excellence

and ensuring mentorship for tomorrow leaders and is fostering a better environment for educators and the thousands of children that they service. Thank you for your support and consideration; I'm happy to answer any questions you have.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you very much and I think it's really important what you had to say, because after 12 years of being beaten down by previous administration and being blamed and teachers and administrators being blamed for everything that was wrong in the school system, it's really time that we turn that situation around and show our teachers and principals how much they're really appreciated for what they do and offer them support for the things that they need, you know. Thank you; appreciate it.

LILY WOO: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Next please.

ALICIA ARRINGTON: Good afternoon everyone. My name is Alicia Arrington; I'm the Communications Coordinator with the Alliance for Quality Education in New York City.

Last year the City Council decided to pass the controversial Int. 0065 amid pushback,

1 police testimony and others, giving nearly \$20
2 million to private institutions; when asked why, the
3 response constituents received was that New York City
4 was flushed with cash, making it no issue to hand out
5 millions of public dollars to private institutions.
6 So now, since New York City is so flush with cash, it
7 should be no issue to fund educational initiatives
8 that would benefit our youth, many from areas that
9 unfortunately cannot say that there is an
10 overwhelming influx of funds.
11

12 The Parent Innovation Fund calls for only
13 \$2.5 million; not nearly the \$20 million that the
14 City was able to give away last year, and the
15 Restorative Justice Initiative calls for only \$5
16 million, for a whopping total of \$7.5 million to go
17 towards positive initiative to benefit those that are
18 not flushed with cash.

19 The difference that parent/teacher
20 engagement makes and the impact that it has on a
21 child's education has been widely acknowledged for
22 quite some time now; however, though building school
23 communities and raising student achievement has been
24 at the forefront of many of the city's educational
25 initiatives, the parent engagement piece that is so

1 integral to the success of these programs has not.
2 The Parent Engagement Innovation Fund calls for
3 transformative parent engagement that will
4 acknowledge and support the child holistically by not
5 only considering, but also engaging their family;
6 this step to more effectively strengthen the ties
7 between families and school staff, as well as
8 including parents as partners in their child's
9 education has the power to boost student achievement
10 and parent power. It has been proven through
11 research and example that an actively engaged parent
12 can make all the difference in the world and that the
13 programs that the Parent Engagement Innovation Fund
14 calls for, like parent/teacher home visits, academic
15 parent/teacher teams, parent education and
16 empowerment partners, and parent university [bell]
17 will only set the standard for what it means to have
18 transformative parent engagement.
19

20 New York City should take the opportunity
21 to become a model for this movement; as city so
22 flushed with cash should have no issue spending the
23 measly \$2.5 million to fund this initiative that
24 could implement innovative programs for the
25 betterment of our students.

Another initiative that would no doubt go towards the betterment and uplifting of our students is an investment in Restorative Justice practices. As many learned minds, including President Barrack Obama have recognized, the school to prison pipeline is very much real and an endangerment to our black and Latino youth; it would be a travesty for New York City, which prides itself on being a forward-thinking city, to undermine these claims.

Last year there were over 44,000 suspensions and nearly 800 arrests and summonses issued to students whom were disproportionately black, Latino, LGBTQ or students with disabilities. Again, while educating, it would be a travesty to disregard the student holistically as a person with outside experiences and emotions impacting their being and more specifically, their behavior. What Restorative Justice aims to do is retain the dignity of our students while providing a safe and respectful learning environment for all students. It is important to consider that a large portion of punitive measures taken in New York City are for small or arbitrary violations, like insubordination or disruptions, both of which have been proven to be

1 normal adolescent behavior. We have to work to take
2 a step back and really examine our practices and
3 whether or not they are supporting our youth,
4 especially our black and Latino youth, whom face
5 institutionalize racism outside of the classroom, to
6 ensure that this does not continue inside our
7 schools. Restorative Justice calls for the training
8 of our teachers, as well as full-time school-based
9 coordinators in order to combat these issues.

11 Again, as a city that should be forward-
12 thinking and especially the city that is flushed with
13 cash, it should not take a second thought to support
14 these initiatives that would drive us forward and
15 create better learning environments for all of our
16 public schools. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Again, thank you for
18 reminding me so much of what one of my colleagues in
19 the City Council said about being flushed with cash,
20 so if we had that \$20 million that we gave away to
21 the private schools, we wouldn't have to be begging
22 for an extra \$2.6 million for Restorative Justice; we
23 probably wouldn't have to be begging for money for
24 additional food programs; I mean just think of all
25 the things that we could have done with that \$20

1 million instead of giving it away to private schools
2 and I have to tell you, it infuriated me that that
3 was done and probably nothing more has happened in
4 the Council [clapping] -- thank you, thank you --
5 we're not supposed to clap, but thank you for that,
6 because there's nothing that upset me more as chair
7 of this committee than to see that \$20 million be
8 given away to private schools when we have so many
9 needs here; it made me wonder how many people, how
10 many of my colleagues have been into a public school
11 to see what's really going on. But thank you for
12 reminding us of that; don't even get me started,
13 because I'll go crazy with that.

14 ALICIA ARRINGTON: Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Next please.

16 FELICIA ALEXANDER: Good afternoon.

17 Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak
18 before you. My name is Felicia Alexander and I am a
19 mother of four beautiful and smart young children
20 that attend public school in Bedford-Stuyvesant,
21 Brooklyn. I am a Parent Leader at CEJ, The Coalition
22 for Educational Justice and I'm here requesting that
23 the Parent Engagement Innovation Fund be supported by
24 the Council in conjunction with DOE.
25

The fund would support parent/teacher home visits where two teachers will make 30-minute visits to families at their homes to build relationships, which will allow for mutual trust and respect to be established. Academic parent/teacher teams are an innovative approach to parent/teacher conferences where there will be three 75-minute classroom meetings a year where parents will learn about what their children need to accomplish to be promoted and are trained in how to help their children reach these goals at home. This links home and school learning and makes the most of parent/teacher conferences. PEEPS, the Parent Education and Empowerment Partners, develops parent skills from trainings on full curriculum and strategies for aiding struggling students and then placing them in the overcrowded classrooms. Parents would then, after completing 100 hours, have the opportunity to become certified and gain from college credit. Finally, Parent University would be a series of workshops and trainings that would train parents, school staff and teachers together and would funnel parents into a pipeline of different leadership roles.

I personally have witnessed the positive experiences from parents and students regarding these educational initiatives that are currently being jointly funded by the DOE and the City Council; one of them, the Middle School Quality Initiative, has benefited and flourished from the City Council's involvement and support over the last 10 years [bell] and we want the Parent Engagement Innovation Fund to follow this model.

The Mayor and the Chancellor have both repeatedly addressed and acknowledged that parent engagement is a crucial component for a school and for its students to succeed. CEJ recognizes and appreciates the shift of this administration from the previous one and the efforts being done to restructure faith. CEJ is now requesting that the DOE and the City reinforce these sentiments by funding these four proven research-based models. These models would have an impact on the 95 percent of parents that are otherwise no engaged or involved with any school governance structure, such as the SLT or CEC. Every-day parents would be able to be active participants in their children's education; when parents are engaged it has positive effects in that

grades improve, standardized test scores are raised, attendance is increased, and behavior is improved.

There has been no administration in New York City that has ever really invested in research-proven models of parent engagement; this current administration has the opportunity to set a precedent for future administrations by not only recognizing the relevance of parents being meaningfully engaged, but by stepping up and establishing funding for these models to expand them and sustain them. New York City can be at the forefront of innovative educational programming and be a model for the country to follow.

As I said at the beginning, I have four young children, one who is Autistic; I have served on the PTA and I have been a CEC president; I sit on Community Board 3 and co-chair the Board's Youth and Education Committee. I am an involved and active parent; my school district is District 16, which is struggling and looking at a lot of consolidations and school closings. The children in my district deserve a chance to reach their full potential; there are many brilliant, intelligent children who are not being given the chance; the parents are

1 disenfranchised and apathetic because of being shut
2 out repeatedly from their schools; they have been
3 viewed as problems and liabilities instead of as
4 assets; these programs could help turn my district
5 around. Please provide the supports needed for our
6 children to get what they deserve, which is a quality
7 education and a supportive environment that nurtures
8 not only the child, but their families and
9 communities as well. I thank you for allowing me to
10 speak today.

12 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much
13 and the one thing I learned as a New York City public
14 school teacher for 25 years is that any time a parent
15 got involved in their child's education, in way shape
16 or form, that child always improved, so it's really,
17 really crucial to seeing that student improvement
18 occur. So thank you; we're gonna really look at this
19 more closely and hopefully during the budget back and
20 forth we can do something for our parents. Thank
21 you. Thank you to this panel, thank you very much
22 for coming in; appreciate it.

23 I'm gonna call our next panel -- Barbara
24 Harris from the Granny Peace Brigade; Aminata
25 Abdouramane, Bushwick Campus Youth Food Policy

Council; Tianhao Zhang, Teenergetic, Francis Lewis High School -- is she here or he here -- [background comments]

[pause]

Okay, so when he comes in, we'll do it, okay. Liz Accles from the Community Food Advocates. Liz is not here yet? [background comments] Okay, we'll do that in a minute. [background comments] Oh. Rocio Espada from the Coalition for Education Justice. Rocio here? There she is. Okay. Yeah. Here's Liz.

[pause]

Okay, if you'd all raise your right hand, I'll swear you in. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly? 'Kay. Liz; do you wanna start?

LIZ ACCLES: Good afternoon; I'm Liz Accles, the Executive Director of Community Food Advocates. Thank you, Councilman Dromm, for giving me an opportunity to testify today.

As usual, I'm here to talk about universal free school lunch and wanna make a few points of particular importance, both in our work and

1
2 in response to the Chancellor's testimony. I wanna
3 bring to your attention -- I wanna first thank you
4 and the City Council for being the champions, along
5 with the Public Advocate, on the issue of universal
6 free school lunch and we are really counting on you
7 all this year to make sure that this happens,
8 expansion to all students in the budget process.

9 I wanna bring to your attention the
10 parent caucus letter that was sent by New York City
11 public school parent leaders to Mayor de Blasio on
12 February 18th; as you will see, it is signed by a
13 huge representation of the parent leadership body
14 within the New York City Department of Education
15 system. There is incredible interest and momentum on
16 this issue; some of my colleagues are here in the
17 audience, and there's additional testimony attached.

18 I wanna just make a few points. The
19 letter asked for the Mayor to keep his campaign
20 promise and to fulfill that promise in the Executive
21 Budget; parent leaders know firsthand in every
22 neighborhood throughout the city, even those
23 neighborhoods that people don't expect, that there
24 are families and children who are struggling to make
25 ends meet and children who go without food or limited

1 if they aren't able to eat adequately in school.

2 This is a big issue and we don't think that the
3 administration is registering the level of parent
4 interest and support on this and given the big focus
5 of the administration and the Department of Education
6 on parent engagement, not paying [bell] attention to
7 this letter we think is very significant.
8

9 I wanna just say three very quick points;
10 one is, we don't think there's anything left standing
11 in the way of expansion to all students; there's a
12 7 percent increase in participation in middle
13 schools, there has been no negative impact on Title I
14 allocations and the City estimated a cost of \$6
15 million in middle schools and that the cost last year
16 was below \$1 million. We also think that the
17 response of the Mayor and the Chancellor on the
18 numbers not being enough is disingenuous; this is a
19 Department of Education program; it's in their hands
20 to help maximize the impact and participation and so
21 it's not in the Council's, it's not in the advocates'
22 hands; it's in the hands of the agency running the
23 program.

24 I have more to say, but my time has run
25 out...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You know I just wanna ask you though; the Chancellor said that it's up 6 percent; right?

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is that... you heard that, right; were you here?

LIZ ACCLES: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So she seemed to think that was not significant of a number, but to me, if you can get it up 6 percent last year, it's only gonna go up further as years go along.

LIZ ACCLES: And that's what's proven true in schools with universal across the city and across the country and that's why I use the word -- and I don't say it lightly -- disingenuous, because we think that's kind of a throwaway, discard line and that for any other program in the first year, if it went up 6 percent, that would be seen as successful and I'm sure you could go through any transcripts of the Mayor's speeches to find that and so we don't buy it, parents don't buy it; our coalition of over 200 organizations don't buy that that's the reason and we really think, given the other pieces of information, a small amount of additional city money could reach

every student in every neighborhood throughout the city.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you don't buy it and I don't understand it, but we'll work together on trying to figure it out.

LIZ ACCLES: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Liz. Next please.

ROCIO ESPADA: Hello. Thank you for allowing me today to testify. My name is Rocio Espada; I am a parent of two children at PS 123 in Bushwick, Brooklyn; I am also a member of Make the Road New York and the Coalition for Educational Justice. I am testifying to ask the City Council and Department of Education to support the Parent Engagement Innovation Fund this year of the City budget.

Everyone says they want more parent engagement in schools, but then they don't provide support that the schools need to do that. This year the principal at my children's school is very open and welcoming to parents; any time that you want to come and talk to her about anything, she will invite to come sit down and talk. She is always there

The principal we had last year was very different; parents couldn't talk to her directly; she would give you attitude; I wasn't really happy about that, so I didn't get involved, to be honest, and I know that that's the case in many schools; parents get attitude when they call or go in, there aren't translators to help them or school staff; they take forever to call them back.

My experience has shown me that schools need more enthusiastic and positive staff so parents will feel welcome to come and many school staff do not know how to interact with parents; that's why CEJ is asking the Council and the DOE to create a parent university to provide leadership development to parents, but also, to principals and school staff on how to interact with parents if they don't have the knowledge. Many parents have passion and interest in getting involved with their children [bell] in school, but the school is very limited in being able to help to do that and some principals and school

1
2 staff want more parent involvement in their schools,
3 but they do not know how to make that happen; parent
4 university can help train both of them to work
5 together.

6 One of the other models that CEJ is
7 advocating for is called Academic Parent-Teacher
8 Teams (APTT) and it's a type of parent/teacher
9 conferences where parents meet as a group and learn
10 how to teach their kids at home. There are a lot of
11 parents who don't know math, for example; they don't
12 know how to help their kids. With APTT they go in
13 the classrooms and learn what the teachers do with
14 their kids and take home the games so they can do it
15 at home to help support that learning. This model
16 benefits the parents and kids because they are both
17 learning together. If you believe that parent
18 engagement is important, then please back that up
19 with funds for programs like this that have shown to
20 really increase parent engagement. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
22 Next please.

23 AMINA ABDOURAMANE: Hello, good
24 afternoon. My name is Amina Abdouramane and I am
25 currently a 12th grader in the Academy of Urban

1
2 Planning at Bushwick Campus in Brooklyn. Thank you,
3 Council Member Dromm and the Education Committee for
4 your continued support on universal free school
5 lunch.

6 And as a student who has been fighting
7 for this issue for three years now, I am also here to
8 urge the Mayor to expand this program. Imagine
9 someone who has been trying to stay unseen for the
10 longest time in a hide and seek game; you may be
11 asking, who is this person and why exactly are they
12 hiding. This scenario I am talking about is not just
13 a hypothetical one; it is a reality that plays out in
14 school cafeterias throughout New York City. This
15 person in this scenario tries their best to not show
16 any evidence at all of their hiding area, and why
17 exactly are they hiding? Because they don't wanna be
18 seen by any other members of the game. Why not?
19 Because if that does happen, they lose.

20 In the case of school lunch, many
21 students play this exact game, hiding and not wanting
22 to be seen; the only difference is that a hide and
23 seek is fun, but applying this game to school lunch
24 is really not.

Why do students not want to be seen on a lunch line? Because of the fear of getting caught. And why? Because there are many reasons so answer that; let's go through some of the main points.

1. It is a social class system which is reinforced by the school lunch process.

2. This is where stigma and bullying occur.

All over the world the motto is treat people the way you wanna be treated; however, this motto does not at all exist in our school cafeterias; instead, name-calling, put-downs, bullying, label of students, and etc. exists. Can you believe that this actually happens in schools? People, students are ashamed to get up and get lunch; what if they're hungry; what if that lunch is the only [bell] one they'll have for the entire day; what if their parents don't have to give them money to buy lunch; then what? The answer is obvious; they stay hungry for the whole day until hopefully they go home and eat something. The actual reason why students don't get in line for lunch in school is because they are afraid to get caught eating what our world knows now as "free-free." Getting labeled or being bullied for

1
2 being a free-free eater is like getting labeled as an
3 outcast and being an outcast in school without
4 universal free school lunch means that everybody
5 knows who you are in a very negative way; it has the
6 same stigma as a person who is homeless and is also
7 on public assistance.

8 You can believe what I'm saying to be
9 credible because I was a victim and I still am a
10 witness of this. I know that this is not what the
11 Department of Education was aiming for, but this what
12 actually happens in school cafeterias. Students
13 should have all the resources and nourishment they
14 need in order to reach their potential and as a
15 graduating senior of 2016, I want to make sure that
16 my years of fighting for universal free school lunch
17 will banish the free-free stigma once and for all.

18 As our city's leader, Mayor de Blasio has
19 the power to do this and I urge him to take a stand
20 for all New York City public school students. Thank
21 you very much.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you also and
23 thank you for coming in and sharing your viewpoint as
24 a 12th grader, it's pretty amazing. But isn't it
25 unbelievable that we have -- this country, it's so

rich and so much food in this country that we have to fight for free lunches; it just doesn't make sense to me. Thank you. Barbara.

BARBARA : Hi. Thank you for having me testify; I am humbled by all I... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Barbara, just pull that mic a little closer so we can get you... [crosstalk]

BARBARA : okay... and have the opportunity to address the funding allocation for the Mayor's Expense Budget 2016 for Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps and urge the council members to vote to reallocate the approximately \$1.4 million tax levy allocated for the program in 18 public high schools. And sitting here today I heard of so many important projects and programs that need \$1.5 million to continue and excel and here we are supporting a military program in our school and for many reasons we should not be, as taxpayers, supporting it. The cost of the program is \$1.5 million to the City and to us as taxpayers. Instructors are not employees of the New York City Department of Education, but rather employees of the federal government and this sets a troubling precedent of having individuals who do not

1 possess the requisite qualifications to be a teacher
2 in the New York City system, yet are engaged in
3 teacher high school students, and each school with a
4 JROTC programs hires at least two military
5 instructors for their unit, which mean that unlike
6 any other subjects in the class, two are teaching the
7 program. These instructors are not required to have
8 the same training or credentials as mandated for most
9 New York City teachers, but paid the same salaries
10 and benefits.

12 The question on instructors has not been
13 answered by Chancellor Farina yet -- is there a
14 teacher examination for the test or is it bypassed;
15 are JROTC instructors observed during class hours;
16 are they supervised, and do they receive a review
17 from the high school administration, and we know the
18 answer is no. The program contradicts educational
19 theory, 'cause it's described as developing
20 leadership, but the curriculum has no data that it is
21 a [bell] discipline program; it focuses on military
22 values and hierarchy, the idea of soldiering,
23 following commands, fitness and drills and curriculum
24 is developed by the military. The Department of
25 Education does not control or oversee what is taught

and appears to be out of the loop. The teaching process is contradictory to educational theory, as it promulgates a highly authoritarian approach to information that discourages criticism and glorifies the unbroken chain of command; the program's heavy emphasis on drills signifies this approach. The curriculum is not consistent with teachings of democratic values, conflict resolution and collaboration and conflicts with the educational goal of encouraging students to learn through developmental thinking, examining and questioning historical and current events. Do you as members of the Education Committee prefer students responding to lessons with yes, sir; no, sir or do you prefer students to ask why; should students be encouraged to find their individual voices, not group-think through regimentation, and Chancellor Farina this morning referred to debate teams and speaking in class and wanting our children to have this kind of experience to speak out with their own thoughts. But the most troubling for me is that weapons are used in the program, contradicting educational directives. The JROTC students are given uniforms and facsimile rifles, which are used for drills, parades and

1 assembly programs. Each member of JROTC marches into
2 assemblies in uniform carrying rifles; is this not
3 hypocritical of the current school regulation of zero
4 tolerance for guns or weapons of any sort in the
5 school? JROTC sends the wrong message about weapons;
6 students cannot bring weapons into school, but they
7 can read and learn about and handle them in JROTC
8 programs.

10 Currently there's an anti-gun violence
11 campaign and project and Mayor de Blasio and the City
12 Council have invested \$19.9 million in comprehensive
13 strategies to reduce gun violence and collaborated in
14 a citywide anti-gun violence initiative throughout
15 the five boroughs. In the 2016 City Council
16 allocation funding documents, more than \$550,000 has
17 been allocated to school-based conflict mediation and
18 anti-violence programs, including the NASAGA [sp?]
19 project to teach anti-gun violence and conflict
20 resolution strategies in classrooms. How confused
21 can a student be -- JROTC students carry and display
22 rifles, guns are for drills and competitions; war
23 becomes a game; what's going on in the public school
24 high schools; how do you balance these two models?

Chancellor Farina has not answered this question also about the permission to use JROTC rifles in schools and we know that teamwork, comradery and new challenges are a strong part of alternative programs to add to students' learning, both education and social. Do we want this? And I know this is small, but this is JROTC at a Veterans Day parade carrying their rifles in the streets. This is a group of students that are in a robotics project; some are from Mott [sic] High School and other high schools, they're from the Bronx, where I come from, and they learn technology, they learn teamwork, they learn comradery and they have gone to Javits Center to be part of the final challenge. And very exciting program; we should have one of these in every school or at least in every borough for \$1.5 million.

Here's the girls' basketball team from South Sound High School in Brooklyn, who won -- this is from 1950, a picture of them; they won the championship; they were give an award right here in this room and each one stood up and named the college she was going to; they had learned teamwork, they had gotten self-esteem, they were energized and their

1 studies in academics were raised. And here's from
2 the anti-gun violence program, which is in each
3 community; a coach, an advocate working with students
4 in the community, in the five boroughs to end gun
5 violence, to stop what's going on and they're being
6 successful; the program in the schools as well is
7 very successful.

8
9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Barbara, I'm gonna
10 have to cut you off right here... [crosstalk]

11 BARBARA HARRIS: I know, so you can cut
12 me off, but...

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. I wanna say,
14 you know I do support your efforts... [crosstalk]

15 BARBARA HARRIS: I know.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I appreciate you
17 coming out every year that I've been here to continue
18 the struggle; I believe in your struggle...

19 BARBARA HARRIS: Right.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I have serious
21 questions about students carrying facsimile guns in
22 the schools when it violates the zero tolerance
23 policy... [crosstalk]

24 BARBARA HARRIS: Right.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: for guns; I did ask the Chancellor that question as well; the Chancellor said she would be willing to discuss it; I'm gonna take her up on that...

BARBARA HARRIS: Right.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and talk with her and maybe start from that angle as well. But...

[crosstalk]

BARBARA HARRIS: And what is the curriculum as well?

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: But we really do love the Granny Peace Brigade... [crosstalk]

BARBARA HARRIS: Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and we appreciate the fact that you've come out again and stuck with this and continue to fight for this. Thank you.

BARBARA HARRIS: I also represent the 22 organizations who have signed on... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you've been doing wonderful work and you ask very valid and true questions that really need to be answered and if we believe in restorative practices, if we believe in peace and justice, if we believe in the things that

we say we're teaching our students; why do we continue to allow this situation to go on in certain high schools?

BARBARA HARRIS: I deeply appreciate your concern... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And the other question is this, Barbara...

BARBARA HARRIS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: is if they were adults, over the age of 18...

BARBARA HARRIS: Yes, right.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: it might even be a different story, but many of these people are younger than that... [crosstalk]

BARBARA HARRIS: Absolutely.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and I think that's a question to be asked as well.

BARBARA HARRIS: Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Alright, our next panel -- okay... Isaiah Paulino, Sistas and Brothas United; Brendon Potter, Sistas and Brothas United, I'm sorry; [background comments] Parker, I'm sorry; Jose Angeles, Sistas and Brothas United, and Medina [sp?] Taliaferaco, [background comments]

ferro; sorry about that, Taliaferro, Billion Oyster Project. [background comments]

[pause]

'Kay, I'm wanna ask you to raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly? Okay, very good. Would you like to start? Yes.

MEDINA TALIAFERRO: Good afternoon. My name's Medina Taliaferro [sp?]; I'm the Billion Oyster Project, School Liaison for the New York Harbor Foundation, a marine restoration education organization that supports the New York Harbor School on Governor's Island and runs the Billion Oyster Project.

I would like thank the Chair of the Education Committee, Council Member Danny Dromm and the entire committee for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to thank the Department of Education for their continued partnership and support and would like to express my support for the Council's efforts to further collaborate with the DOE to bring more STEM programs like the Billion Oyster Project to public schools citywide.

The Harbor Foundation has requested \$100,000 from The Speaker for Fiscal 17 and would like the support of the Education Committee to help bring the Billion Oyster Project to 40 more middle schools citywide. We live and work in a city of islands that surround the third most active port in the country, yet many New Yorkers do not identify as living on the water. The Port of New York employs 300,000 people, yet fewer than 12 percent of them went to public schools in New York City. SUNY Maritime in the Bronx has a near 100 percent job placement for graduates who earn an average starting salary of almost \$70,000. Eighty-five percent of SUNY Maritime students are white and 85 percent come from outside of the five boroughs. Meanwhile, our natural ecosystem is massively degraded. New York Harbor was once one of the most biologically productive places on earth; the engines of that productivity were the oyster reefs, now gone as a result of overharvesting and pollution. Oysters filter the water; they provide food and habitat for thousands of species; they stabilize the harbor floor and protect our shoreline during extreme weather. We have a generation of young people who have been

denied knowledge about and access to real well-paying careers in the marine industry. Our school system is on the hunt for exciting, inquiry-led STEM learning opportunities and our massively deteriorated natural ecosystem is in need of their help.

In the Billion Oyster Project, the New York Harbor Foundation has developed a system for addressing these needs by engaging students directly in the challenging work of restoring New York Harbor. Our primary educational partner is the New York Harbor School on Governor's Island, [bell] where students are integral to the work of oyster restoration through their career and technical education program and are engaged with city and state agencies, dozens of nonprofit and commercial firms on a number of large-scale restoration and research projects; they are also joined by over 50 other schools, 30 of which are public schools, throughout the five boroughs that represent 25 City Council Districts. Each year over 6,000 new middle school and high school students are engaged through a robust educational program that is scalable and inexpensive; funded in large part by the National Science Foundation.

At each school students participate in hands-on, inquiry-led science and math lessons through a curriculum that aligns with the New York City scope and sequence and leverages the performance expectations of the next generation science standards. In addition, students and teachers work with live oysters at restoration stations near waterfront sites where they collect research data that is shared through a cloud-based digital platform that connects all 50 schools. This committee's support in prioritizing \$100,000 from The Speaker for the citywide expansion of the Billion Oyster Project during the year's budget will help make harbor literacy a reality for thousands of middle school students. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. Next please.

JOSE ANGELES: Hello, good afternoon. My name is Jose Angeles; I am a senior at [inaudible]... [crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jose, could you pull that a little closer?

JOSE ANGELES: Yeah, of course. Alright. Hello, good afternoon. My name is Jose Angeles, at

ELLIS Preparatory Academy; I am a Young Leader at Sistas and Brothas United from the Bronx. In 2015, only 36 [sic] percent of students entering my college were college-ready. I came to this country three years ago because I wanted to get a college education; my bigger obstacle has been learning English, why the English, I don't have [inaudible] of English from my country that tell me how [sic] here to defend myself and to be able to go to college.

My first years at [inaudible] I met [inaudible] who was a college student; he motivated me to [inaudible]; I started to learn English that I could enter to college like him. I learned a lot because he was a Dominican guy like myself; he went through similar [inaudible] as me. I [inaudible] my honor to attend to a school that has met some of my similar [inaudible] needs; however, like any school, we want the Department of Education to invest more in more schools. We need more support learning English to be able to attend a four-year college; we want to be able to take classes [sic] levels before we graduate high school; we need more support in passing the state exam of SAT; we want people to stop dropping out of school because they are discouraged

1 that they can learn the language. We are asking that
2 the DOE invest in the summer bridge programs that
3 will train college students to return to their high
4 school. To support we need graduates complete [sic]
5 financial aid documents, for scheduling [sic] for
6 classes, filling out paperwork; I'm staying on track
7 to start college in the fall. The DOE should provide
8 funding and support high school to implement summer
9 bridge to college programs at the all NYC high
10 school. As students who want to get ready for
11 college, we just need your support to get ready.
12 Thank you so much.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jose, did you provide
15 any copies of your written testimony?

16 JOSE ANGELES: If I provide many copy?

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Any copies to...

18 JOSE ANGELES: No. No, I didn't provide.

19 [background comments]

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah, okay; I would
21 really appreciate that, so we can... [crosstalk]

22 JOSE ANGELES: Alright.

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: hold onto it and look
24 at it a little bit later.

25 JOSE ANGELES: Alright, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much
[bell] and for sticking around.

JOSE ANGELES: Alright.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

BRENDAN PARKER: Good afternoon. My name
is Brendan Parker; I attend **[inaudible]** Preparatory
Academy; I am a member of the Urban Youth
Collaborative, Youth Advocates, Youth Allies and
Youth Leader at Sistas and Brothas United.

I want City Council and the DOE to
increase support for Student Success Centers and
college bridge programs because student-based
programs or initiatives have been proven to increase
the college-going rates for blacks, Latinos and
students on track of becoming first-generation
college students in their family.

Student Success Centers and college
bridge programs help train high school students to
act as college advisors while providing them with a
stipend. Student Success Centers also help our high
school students lacking the resources, the knowledge
and the support they need to apply to college and
make informed decisions. Even with graduation rates
going up in the city, too many black and Latino

1 students are being left behind. We are asking that
2 additional funding is allocated towards creating four
3 new Student Success Centers while keeping the current
4 eight success centers serving 18 high schools and two
5 middle schools. We need to expand the college bridge
6 program to include 20 more high schools. Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, thank you very
9 much and same thing, if we can get some written
10 testimony, that would be great. Next please.

11 ISAIAH PAULINO: Alright. Good
12 afternoon. Hello. My name is Isaiah Paulino; I
13 attend Validus Preparatory Academy, located on the
14 Bathgate Campus in the Bronx. I am member of the
15 Urban Youth Collaborative, Youth Advocates, Youth
16 Allies, a Youth Leader at Sisters and Brothers
17 United.

18 Sisters and Brothers United is a youth-
19 led social justice organization consisting of middle
20 school and high school students in the Northwest
21 Bronx. I am here today to speak up because the
22 Department of Education has been unfairly suspending
23 and pushing kids head-first into the school to prison
24 pipeline. The Department of Education is partaking
25 in racial unjust practices that push youth into the

1 criminal justice system instead of higher education.
2 Why is it that black and Hispanic students make up 89
3 percent of all students that are suspended but only
4 67 percent of all students and almost 100 percent of
5 all students that are arrested? I know the answer;
6 institutional and structural racism. I'm lucky that
7 in my school we have a wellness success center where
8 students have a place to seek guidance from adults
9 regarding school and personal problems. City Council
10 needs to also allocate funding toward providing
11 students with a service and resources that we
12 deserve. We need solutions that address
13 institutional and structural racism and investment in
14 Restorative Justice and investment for teachers and
15 anti-racism, gender, LGBTQ training is one of the
16 solutions.
17

18 Currently, New York City employs 5,400
19 school safety agents and only employs 3,800 social
20 workers and guidance counselors combined; we have
21 1,600 more school safety agents than social workers
22 and guidance counselors combined. The DOE spends \$4
23 million; it's not about having the money, it's about
24 what we spend the money on. [bell]
25

The Department of Education's new investment in Restorative Justice is a good start, but the DOE is still not taking on racism and bias. With help from the City Council to expand last year's Restorative Justice investment, we can finally begin to address racism and bias. Investing in policing instead of Restorative Justice is an investment towards criminalizing of black and brown youth. Research has shown that police in schools do not create a safe environment, but leads to a higher number of students being arrested and receiving criminal summonses. We are asking that support for Restorative Justice practices in our schools is expanded with an investment of \$5 million in the next faculty year, including funding to hire Restorative Justice coordinators, with additional funding towards trainings for teachers in Restorative Justice practices. The training should also be expanded to include racism justice, gender justice and cultural awareness trainings. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Do any of the students here, the schools that you go to; do you have any Restorative Justice programs in your school?

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And that continues in
3 your school?

4 ISAIAH PAULINO: Yes it does.

5 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And what about
6 the other guys; do you know...? [crosstalk]

7 BRENDAN PARKER: I happen to be an active
8 member of the student government body which works
9 with GSA.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Oh great. And your
11 school?

12 JOSE ANGELES: No, we don't have any
13 programs.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And what school are
15 you?

16 JOSE ANGELES: ELLIS Preparatory Academy.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What?

18 JOSE ANGELES: ELLIS Preparatory Academy.
19 That's the Kennedy campus.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, good.

21 JOSE ANGELES: I just know... [crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright. I mean I
23 just think those are important components to have in
24 schools, so that's why I'm asking that question, but
25 I really thank you for your testimony and if you guys

could provide me with some written testimony, I would really appreciate it.

JOSE ANGELES: Alright.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you for coming in.

JOSE ANGELES: Thank you so much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, I'm gonna have to ask... move people along more quickly; I'm sorry folks, because we're gonna get booted here at about 5 p.m., so I need to move this along.

Lisa Robb from the Center for Arts Education; William Crow from the Metropolitan Museum of Art; Jennifer Becker from Wave Hill and Sami Shumays from Flushing Town Hall.

I have a feeling that these arts organizations may have a better way to spend \$20 million than on some private schools, but I won't get you involved in that argument.

Alright, I have to swear you in, so can you raise your right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly?

[collective affirmations]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, very good.
Would you like to start over here?

LISA ROBB: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yes.

LISA ROBB: Thank you so much; it is so great to be here today. Thank you, Chair Dromm -- I see there aren't other members of the Council; I thank the staff that are here; it's nice to visit with you today. I'm Lisa Robb; I'm the Executive Director at the Center for Arts Education; I'm new at my job; I'm so excited this my first hearing. I'm just leaving four years of state service at the Council on the Arts for New York State and in that job, along with all the other work in arts culture heritage I've done, I see that arts ed in Pre-K classrooms are a powerful curriculum area; they deliver results, they deliver the promises they should to students, teachers and school leaders. I'm so glad to hear already today ballet has been mentioned, architecture, music, and dance and it's so great to be in a room like this to talk about the value of artistic training for citizens in New York City, 'cause we're just surrounded by it in this

room; it so beautiful to look up and see that painting.

I wanna talk about good news; the investment in 2014 and a variety of measures around arts learning and arts education and professional training and sort of a comprehensive approach to how to think about arts learning is bearing a great result; we're very pleased about that and we're so pleased it was baselined, although it was real interesting to hear your comments about the danger in baselining, but nonetheless, it's wonderful; get it out early, \$5 million is a great number today; we hope that that funding can be increased by \$5 million. Why? We got good news in December of 2015; Department of Education released the annual Arts in the Schools Report for 1450 [sic] and the most important thing to mention is significant progress to addressing inequity in the delivery of arts learning participation opportunity in schools; hundreds of schools are benefiting, tens of thousands of students. Why? 175 new arts teachers; also speaking to one of your earlier points, these teachers are working in buildings that may have multiple schools and they may be working with multiple schools; they

1
2 may be working in multiple locations; it's a really
3 shrewd way to make that investment; [bell] that's a
4 7 percent increase, which is significant and
5 demonstrable in terms of how important that funding
6 was. We already hear this year from Paul King, who
7 is the great manager of that arts ed unit at DOE; we
8 have 125 new teachers, so that's 300 new art
9 specialists, and that's helping to deal with some of
10 these historic inequities.

11 Another important finding in that study
12 was principals and school leaders allocated \$9
13 million more precious dollars to arts learning; this
14 shows that the investment in professional learning
15 for school leaders is also paying off for the 1.1
16 million children.

17 Cultural partnerships I know can be
18 talked about by my colleagues that are up here, 87
19 percent of the schools have some kind of a cultural
20 partnership; that is wonderful news; we want that to
21 be 100 percent; that's an easy 100 percent; some of
22 the others are more difficult.

23 I wanna echo your comments, Chair Dromm,
24 on increasing participation, not just access. I
25 wanna echo the comments of the Chancellor about

1 supporting what works and what delivers results that
2 we can measure and see are bearing down to payback on
3 the investments that we're making with these public
4 dollars. And I wanna echo Mr. Mulgrew's comments to
5 say, this kind of funding strengthens communities and
6 we wanna make sure that our communities are strong
7 along with our schools. I'm also pleased today to be
8 here with our colleagues because we know that
9 interagency work is important for every agency and
10 every City Council committee and we hope that funding
11 increases to DLCA because of all the work that they
12 do in classrooms serving families and children.

13
14 In closing I wanna again talk about our
15 mission, which is serving 1.1 million students;
16 advocating for that, we want them all to be
17 participating several times every week in arts
18 learning, integrated arts learning, chorus programs,
19 instrumental music, dance, theatre, visual arts, all
20 of those things deserve our support and those
21 resources will help us achieve better results.

22 We'll continue to do our work advocating
23 and to collect data, to educate, to collect stories,
24 and to support this goal. Thank you for having -- oh
25 wait, one thing; there was one aspect of the report

1 that came out in June of 2015 which is of concern and
2 we're trying to figure out where the data collection
3 might be part of this confusing information. The
4 information in December did show a drop from 55
5 percent to 38 percent for percentage of schools
6 requiring elementary level arts education, which we
7 know early access can bear fruit over a longer period
8 of time. We hope that that's part of the new
9 reporting system and we're gonna look at that and
10 we'll make sure that if it really is a decline that
11 we advocate to make sure we move that needle, and
12 again, in closing, we do hope that \$5 million more
13 can be allocated to this broad comprehensive approach
14 to arts ed because it will deliver results for you,
15 results that will make us all proud of the
16 achievements that these kids are having every day in
17 the school and the classrooms... [crosstalk]

18
19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

20 LISA ROBB: Yep.

21 WILLIAM CROW: Good afternoon, Chairman
22 Dromm and members of the Committee on Education. My
23 name's William Crow; I'm the Managing Museum Educator
24 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where I oversee
25 our work with pre-K through 12 students and educators

and I'm really honored to present testimony today,
really on behalf of all New York City school children
and communities.

As you may know, the Metropolitan Museum
receives over 6 million visitors every year and of
those, we offer about 28,000 programs to an audience
of about 700,000 people; in fact, last year we
welcomed over 136,000 students from New York City
through our programs, including professional learning
programs for thousands of educators.

Even though these are large numbers, of
course, impressive numbers, I really am here today to
speak about the impact that we see among educators,
among students and school communities when they're
working partnership with cultural institutions and
with the Department of Education. I'm sure, as many
people know, in the past, schools may have thought of
cultural institutions and museums as really being a
type of field trip, you know especially as we're now
in the spring, schools thought of that as a reward for
students or a way of just getting out of the
classroom and of course now we know that museums and
cultural institutions are not just sites for field
trips, but really are essential partners in

supporting the work that we all have, our shared goal of student achievement and our shared goal of having these young people grow into engaged critical participatory citizens in New York City.

I would also cite that recent empirical studies really support that even a single visit to a museum or cultural institution can support students' confidence and taking advantage of those institutions, their critical thinking skills; of course their content [bell] knowledge, but even their perspective-taking or tolerance of others, and so I also would make sure that the Council is aware of those other benefits that museums offer in terms of seeing young people's well-rounded experiences and having museums as part of that.

I know that I also speak for many other museums and cultural institutions in the city when I say that we really celebrate and support the vision of schools' Chancellor Carmen Fariña to tap cultural institutions. As a museum educator, I know I speak for many of my colleagues by saying we are here to support the work of the City and the youth of the city, whether that is through visits to schools or to our museums or family and community engagement

activities, teen drop-in programs, or professional learning, and was delighted to hear about professional learning still being at the center of the city's administration. We see that when we have opportunities to have in-depth experiences with educators, such as guided practice or modeling or working with educators over an extended period of time, aligned with the goals of the City, we see progress in our work and the impact that we have. We're really fortunate at the Met to work very closely with the Chancellor, but also the Office of the Arts and Special Projects, of course, social studies, District 75, family and community engagement, and others.

So just in closing, I would say that as you consider the financial resources that are available to museums; cultural institutions, but the Department of Education, in the case of this budget, to really keep all of us front of mind as essential partners in this work and we greatly value your support in this endeavor. Thanks for your time.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Sami.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: Sure. Thank you, Council Member Dromm. And I have to say it's great

1
2 to be up here with a couple of our partners; we've
3 long been a partner with the Center for Arts Ed in
4 advocacy and we've participated in Teens Take the Met
5 since its beginning. So I'm gonna skip around a
6 little bit with my testimony.

7 Flushing Town Hall is a member of New
8 York's CIG, one of many cultural institutions that
9 have stepped in to fill the gap created by the
10 significant losses of arts education programs in New
11 York City schools over recent decades. So we applaud
12 the recent increases to DOE's budget specific to arts
13 ed and we hope both the Council and the
14 administration will go farther.

15 For more than 20 years, Flushing Town
16 Hall has captivated imaginations and broadened
17 students' arts education experience, providing
18 meaningful connections between classroom subject
19 areas and the arts. Over the past year we offered 58
20 educational programs and events to over 8700 students
21 -- remember, we're a small institution with a \$1.6
22 million budget -- these programs include matinees for
23 school students, in-school residencies, CASAs,
24 workshops, professional development for teachers, and
25 workshops for seniors. And we support our school

partners with a number of resources, including online listings of workshops and residency descriptions, study guides and e-news letters that inform our schools about it.

I have a quote here and I put it in your packet; we recently had a retired teacher from the UFT, came to our program who said, "During the many years I was a teacher, I took my classes to some great school performances for school groups, but never did any come close to the scope and genius of the one I saw yesterday morning at Flushing Town Hall." And she was talking about a program called "The Cultural Crossroads of Ireland and Africa." And I wanna use that to depart from my testimony for a bit, just to say that [bell] one of the things that cultural partners can do that schools themselves cannot do is offer a wide range of diversity in terms of both cultural representation as well as discipline. The degree to which that could be offered even if we were to see very strong arts ed dollars put directly into the schools, it would be difficult to match what cultural institutions can bring to schools, because the cultural institutions in New York City represent an incredible diversity

collectively of disciplines, cultures, traditions, etc. and it would be impossible to put all of those teachers into one school. So while in general I think having things in the schools is great; the cultural partnerships offer something special that you can't get through the schools directly. So I think that that's an important reason why CIG and the other cultural institutions in the city are really important in partnership with the DOE.

So with that, you know, you see our statistics on what we've done. I'll just conclude by saying that you know we applaud any increase to the DOE's budget specific to arts ed and we also very strongly advocate for the needs of the Department of Cultural Affairs and we're asking for \$40 million to be added to the cultural affairs budget, so we hope you'll support that. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

JENNIFER BECKER: Hi, good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Wave Hill is a public garden and cultural center located in the northwest section of the Bronx; we offer programs in horticulture, the arts and of course, education. Currently we serve 155,000 annual

visitors and I'd also like to point out that we've extended IDNYC free memberships to 5,000 individuals from all five boroughs; this now represents over 60 percent of our membership base.

Our education programs are committed to providing engaging, hands-on educational experiences that connect students with a natural environment; currently our department serves 25,000 individuals every year through family programs, teen empowerment internship programs and school programs. Today I'm here to talk to you about Wave Hill's school programs specifically.

Our cross-curricular academic year programs, summer programs and professional development opportunities serve 10,000 New York City school children and teachers every year. Our school programs are unique; they provide a safe, clean, picturesque environment that's a nice break from the classroom for NYC students; they support the common core learning standards, the next generation science standards, and are modeled around critical thinking, thoughtful observation and inquiry-based exploration.

Our academic year school programs are offered in nature studies, creative arts and

historical studies and in the most recently completed fiscal year we served 8500 students and teachers, that's almost 400 classes through those programs.

Our summer programs are offered in July and August and help offset the summer slide and again, in the most recently completed fiscal year served nearly 1700 New York City school children and teachers.

And our professional development opportunities for Pre-K through middle school educators include full-day sessions hosted at Wave Hill, offsite conference presentations and in-school workshops. We serve approximately 400 educators from New York City [bell] -- oh, sorry -- every year.

So in the most recently completed fiscal year, the school groups served by our education department were from all five boroughs, with the highest representation from the Bronx and Upper Manhattan. Of the Bronx-based school group, 89 percent represented some of the most underserved communities, including Mott Haven, Tremont, Belmont, and Fordham Manor.

So on behalf of Wave Hill, the CIGs and the program groups, we appreciate your support in this budget cycle and thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. And when I was a teacher, I had the opportunity to take my students to three of the institutions here as well, so I can fully appreciate what you do; I've seen it first-hand.

Just one thing I have a question about. So the \$23 million that the Mayor put into the budget, how much of that exactly went to arts organizations versus to arts teachers? You know you... Do you get money directly from the DOE on that?

LISA ROBB: I believe that the money...
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you just put your mic on?

LISA ROBB: Oh yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And by the way, I do need Sami and Wave Hill to...

JENNIFER BECKER: Wave Hill, Jen,
Jennifer Becker.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: yeah, to identify yourselves in the mic. So Sami; why don't you say that first?

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: Sure. Sami Abu Shumays, Flushing Town Hall.

JENNIFER BECKER: And Jennifer Becker from Wave Hill.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Wave Hill. Okay.

LISA ROBB: My understanding, and Doug is here to correct me if I'm wrong, is the funding actually did not drive back to the cultural partners; it was professional... \$5.2 million for teachers, \$2.8 for partnerships -- I was wrong -- so \$5.2 million for teachers, art specialist teachers; \$2.5 to increase available funding for partnerships. What about professional learning? [background comments]

DOUG ISRAEL: \$2 million for professional development, like \$6 million for facilities and then another \$2 or so for art supplies and instruments and materials.

LISA ROBB: Thank you very much, Doug Israel, Center for Arts Education. This is the problem of six weeks on the job, so I really do appreciate Doug.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's great to have those facts and figures at your fingertips; it's great.

So I was in these community schools; you might've heard me talk about it before, and I was very impressed by the partnerships that they have with a number of the arts organizations; are any of you involved with the community schools?

LISA ROBB: I don't think we're at a community school. I do not believe we are running a residency at a community school.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: I'll ask our education department and get back to you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah. I mean I just was wondering how these community schools hooked up with the arts organizations and who pays for them, and out of whose budget is it coming?

LISA ROBB: We will make sure that you receive that information. Thank you; it's a very good question.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: What I'll say about in general our partnerships with schools, is that the funding comes from a variety of sources, so some of it is DOE funds; some of is schools pay themselves;

some of it; we've had a few council members support us giving free tickets to students...

LISA ROBB: Private philanthropy.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: private philanthropy; one of our board members have done that. So it's really coming from a variety of sources, but if the DOE's budget were significantly increased specifically for school partnerships, it would definitely have an impact.

LISA ROBB: And what was so unique about that funding was; it was a comprehensive approach, dealt with facility, dealt with professional learning, dealt with the partnerships, dealt with arts teacher specialists in the buildings. It is that comprehensive... you know, inch by inch, it's a cinch, so when you just take that bit by bit and build, it's only gonna deliver good results.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And the programs that you're involved with in schools; that's during school time and do you also... [crosstalk]

LISA ROBB: In our case...

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: get CASA grants?

LISA ROBB: Yes, we have CASA grants; we're in about 140 schools, serving maybe 10,000 kids and 600 educators.

WILLIAM CROW: At the Metropolitan, we also have a CASA grant at PSIS 78 in Queens; we have a number of school partnerships across the city and then of course school visits and professional learning at the museum.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: I would say for us, and I'll be quick, all of the above. So we have CASAs for after school, we have residencies that we put teaching artists in schools and we have field trip programs during the school day where groups come to our programs.

LISA ROBB: And we have ELLA grant... we have DOE ELLA grants also. We are scrappy; we charities and find... sniffing out that funding to deliver the services.

JENNIFER BECKER: And our academic year programming is during the school day; our summer programming is obviously over the summer. Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much to all of you. Thank you.

LISA ROBB: Thank you.

SAMI ABU SHUMAYS: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Tianhao Zhang from Teenergetic; Solomon Aniemeka from East Farms New York; Janice Thomas from East Farms New York, and Kristina Erskine from Community Food Advocates and The Point.

[background comments]

Alright. So can you raise your right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly?

[collective affirmations]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay; let's start over here. Just make sure that little red light is on.

KRISTINA ERSKINE: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good.

KRISTINA ERSKINE: Okay. Hello. I'm Kristina Erskine; I'm a youth organizer for Community Food Advocates and I'm also the Co-Founder of the Bushwick Campus Youth Food Policy Council, which is a youth group that was formed in order to start working on universal preschool lunch; I've been working on

1
2 this issue since I was a senior in high school and
3 I'm currently a sophomore in college. I'm here today
4 to testify on behalf of youth from The Point CDC, so
5 I'm going to read their testimony.

6 "Hello, our names are Stephanie
7 Almodovar, Chanley Carrasco [sp?], Kimberly Fuentes,
8 and Brandon Valdivieso [sp?]; we are high school
9 students in the Hunts Point area who form a part of a
10 teen activist group called ACTION in a local
11 community organization known as The Point CDC.

12 We would like to first thank the City
13 Council Education Committee for their continuous
14 support through the Lunch for Learning campaign.
15 Through this testimony we would like to express why
16 we need universal free school lunch to be implemented
17 in all New York City public schools.

18 As youth who work for and advocate for
19 positive change in our community, it is important to
20 us that we share with you the importance of creating
21 a universal free school lunch system throughout all
22 New York City public schools. Most school-age youth
23 in this community depend on the nutrition we receive
24 from our schools; students in school need breakfast
25 and lunch to help them operate their day; most

students eat lunch in school because we all know how important it is for our health and education.

As you may be well aware of, Hunts Point is home to the largest food distribution center in the United States; however, we are also a food desert with few healthy food options available in our community. Once you've transitioned out of middle school into high school, the security of a school-wide free school lunch is gone; that is why supporting the creation of universal free school lunch from pre-K through high school is important.

Implementing universal free school lunch, along with improving the quality of school food, will help ensure better school environments for youth people in our public school system. School lunches are unappetizing; [bell] access to more varied foods, along with better refrigerated dairy products served in schools will benefit us in the classroom. We are asking you, Mr. Mayor and City Council members to institute universal free school lunch. We need better food options in all our schools. Thank you again for your support and thank you for your time."

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next please.

JANICE JOHNSON: Hello. My name is Janice Johnson [sp?] and I am a student at George [inaudible] High School. I'd like to take offered [sic] today to deliver my support for the Lunch for Learning campaign for universal free school lunch for all NYC public school students.

Cyber bullying, embarrassment, pressure and fear are all factors under the school lunch system and the ones who have opportunity to obtain it. A while back, I was [inaudible] of the term called for school lunch to be renamed free. The word has more meaning than it seems; better yet, more impact. Last year when we were all allowed to have our phones in school, students would go out of their way just to take pictures of people eating school lunch; I happened to be a victim of a situation and I must admit, it got me highly upset to know later on [inaudible] I would be [inaudible] on social media. This caused mental frustration to my well-being; it made me not want to show my face in school; I was [inaudible] with a high popularity level, as well as one who was more fortunate and this was happening to almost to everyone, so I can only imagine what it did to those who knew free lunch would be their only

meal. Did they make the pain unbearable and overwhelming enough to sacrifice health and cause starvation? Excuse me [clears throat].

Bullying isn't the only issue with school lunch; there were times when there wasn't enough food, it was undercooked or just a bad taste; nevertheless, I think the first approach would be to make all school lunches universally free and soon enough, the factors behind students not eating school lunch will become obsolete.

I am asking you, Mr. Mayor and Council Members to make universal free lunch a priority; we need to stop the stigma and get better access to food in our schools. Thank you for your time and support for this meaningful, **[inaudible]**, necessary issue.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
Next please.

SOLOMON ANIEMEKA: Hello. My name is Solomon Aniemeka. I stand in front of you today to discuss a troubling issue currently existing with our schools; in order for me to receive lunch as a student, I'm required to pay \$1.75 every day, due to my father's income. To you, \$1.75 may be a small amount, but what I request is for you all is to

1
2 consider the fact many parents today, like my father,
3 are being suffocated by responsibilities. My
4 father's income makes me ineligible for free school
5 lunch, but his responsibilities, such as taxes,
6 educational expenses, rent, as well as putting food
7 on the table at home, tend to reduce his yearly
8 income, leaving him with insufficient funds, doubts;
9 limiting payment distribution for lunch.

10 For many students, the situation is
11 similar to mine; this can lead to health issues, lack
12 of focus in class, and as well as low grades and much
13 more. In my school the appeal of school lunch is an
14 issue, but how can we improve lunch in a public
15 school if not everyone can eat it? In addition, I
16 had to apply for a youth program known as East New
17 York Farms to obtain money in order to limit the
18 issues my father was facing on a daily basis.
19 Moreover, on weekdays I have to work until 6:30 p.m.
20 after my school hours, so when I arrive home, I have
21 to begin my homework, which will last up till late in
22 the evening, giving me less time to sleep.

23 Furthermore, when I have to prepare to
24 school I'm exhausted, which decreases my ability to
25

focus in class and further, having a negative impact on me academically.

What I ask of you, Council Members and Mayor is to establish free school lunch for all New York public schools; you have the power to make sure that the youth of our current generation can obtain a proper diet [bell] to help strengthen our ability to focus in class. It is your choice to proceed towards the right path in supporting today's youth. Thank you to the City Council for your support this year and as well as your full attention and have a good day.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much. Next please.

TIANHAO ZHANG: Good afternoon Council Member Dromm and the fellow members of New York City Council Education Committee. My name is Tianhao Zhang and I'm a senior at Francis Lewis High School in Fresh Meadow, Queens. I am here today to represent a student advocacy group, Teenergetic, inspired by a student protest in my school about lunch quality; I founded Teenergetic with my classmates and set as our mission to launch universal free lunch, improve the appeal of school food and

enhance the overall learning experience in New York City schools.

With your support, Teenergetic and other community-based organizations aim to make more progress this year towards universal free school lunch. At Francis Lewis High School, we have a significant population of immigrant students; having immigrated to this country with my family four years ago, I witnessed first-hand some of my friends who are hesitant about filling out school lunch forms; they will say it's because their parents are unwilling to review certain information, out of concern of their immigration status. Additionally in my school, many students' families barely miss the eligibility threshold to qualify for free or a reduced price lunch and therefore struggle to pay for their children's meal; what this means for many students is choosing between food or a review book; unfortunately, most students will choose to pay for the latter, a decision that affects their health and academic progress in the long run.

This situation is not limited to my school; in fact, the lack of universal free school lunch leads to problems throughout New York City in

1 different forms, depending on the school. By
2 implementing universal free school lunch, the two
3 aforementioned problems can be immediately and
4 effectively addressed. While the City tries to
5 remedy the crisis in our school system with the
6 initiatives in elementary and middle schools, high
7 school students continue to be left out of this
8 critical conversation; that's why I am here today;
9 I'm here to ask the Mayor to make universal free
10 lunch [bell] a top priority. To Council Member Dromm
11 and the fellow members of the Education Committee, I
12 thank you for your support and hope you'll continue
13 to be the strong champion on the issue. All students
14 should be guaranteed full access to school lunch,
15 regardless of their individual family situations, so
16 that every student can become more productive in
17 their educational endeavors. Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much
20 and first of all, let me tell you, each of you get a
21 four for timeliness and for fitting your message into
22 the timeframe allotted; I congratulate you on that,
23 number one, because actually, it makes us listen even
24 more to hear what it is that you're saying, and we
25 always like to hear the voices of students here at

1
2 this hearing and that's why we're really glad that
3 you were able to come down, and we hear your call for
4 universal free lunch and we understand the reasons
5 why and we're gonna fight with you to see if we can
6 make that happen moving forward. So thank you again
7 for coming down; we really definitely appreciate it.
8 Thank you.

9 [collective thank you]

10 [background comments]

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, Council
12 Member Lander wanted to ask a question.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I just wanted to
14 let you all know what an effective group of advocates
15 the students fighting for Lunch for Learning has been
16 and the Council is onboard; I know there's not a lot
17 of other members here right now, but council members
18 have been persuaded by young people testifying, there
19 was a rally a couple of days ago and it -- partly
20 it's 'cause it's a good idea and partly it's because
21 young people have been very effective advocates, so
22 we're with you and thank you for coming out.

23 [collective thank you]

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Our next
25 panel -- Zian Augustini [sp?] from Urban Youth

2 Collaborative; Casey [sp?] Foster, Urban Youth
3 Collaborative; Ziar [sp?] Augustini, Urban Youth
4 Collaborative; Latrell Stone, Urban Youth
5 Collaborative, and Christine Rodriguez, Urban Youth
6 Collaborative. [background comments]

7 [pause]

8 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright, so let me
9 just swear you in. Would you raise your right hand
10 everybody? Do you solemnly swear or affirm to tell
11 the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth
12 and to answer council member questions honestly?

13 [collective affirmations]

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, thank you.
15 Kessey; do you want... or Casey, who... where should we
16 start?

17 CASEY: Yeah, so we're trying to get the
18 video... [crosstalk]

19 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: You wanna start down
20 here?

21 CASEY: ready; we can start down here...
22 [crosstalk]

23 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

24 CASEY: with Latrell, yeah.

25 [background comments]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah, just push that button; make sure that little red light is on and then speak right into the mic.

LATRELL STONE: Good afternoon everybody. I'm Latrell; I am with the Urban Youth Collaborative and Youth Ministries for Peace and Justice. Alright.

So a week before Regents week at my high school in the Bronx, my AP English teacher decided to give us an option mock AP exam to take as an extra credit; since most of us were already passing the class, we didn't show up for the exam because it wasn't mandatory. That Monday after Regents week we came back to the class and were informed that most of us were now in danger of failing. Our class vocally expressed how upset we were that she decided to make this exam mandatory without prior notice and was probably surprised, because she thought more people would show up to the exam.

After class I went up to my teacher and apologized for jumping out of character like I did and tried to explain why I felt what she did was wrong; she said okay and I thought the situation had ended there. The next day when I tried to attend that class, I found out that I was removed from that

1
2 class for two days; in other words, I got suspended
3 from my AP class for two days.

4 Black students are four times more likely
5 to be suspended **[inaudible]** discipline and push us
6 out in ways that aren't always backed by data.
7 Suspensions are going down, but the racial
8 disparities for black students are still high, higher
9 than the national average.

10 Investment in Restorative Justice is not
11 just an investment in a program; it's an investment
12 in a change of school culture, school culture that
13 still unfairly pushes out black students, Latino
14 students, LGBTQ students, and students with
15 disabilities. How many hours of instruction; how
16 many classes; how many school days are missed by
17 students every year? We have to continue to work
18 together in order to dismantle the school to prison
19 pipeline.

20 What if my school had a Restorative
21 Justice coordinator or the teacher in our class could
22 have been able to have peer mediation or a group
23 **[inaudible]** to talk out the misunderstanding? Would
24 could have got into [bell] a more positive solution
25 than me and other students being suspended from our

1
2 AP class for two days. This was my first time being
3 suspended in my life and it's sad that it had to
4 happen in my senior year of high school. I'm worried
5 about my little sister and other students that will
6 be here after I graduate.

7 We are thankful for the \$2.4 million that
8 we received for Restorative Justice so far and are
9 hoping to see that funding double to \$5 million. If
10 there was \$20 million for private security guards in
11 schools and for other programs, we can definitely
12 work together to find more money to fully fund
13 Restorative Justice. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, thank you. So
15 just tell me; why did you get suspended?

16 LATRELL STONE: Because when she told us
17 that we were in danger of failing the class because
18 she all of a sudden made the test mandatory without
19 telling us, we sort of pretty much got very upset and
20 got very vocal about it, sorry, I'm not gonna lie; I
21 was screaming a little bit 'cause I was really upset
22 because she really did just went behind our backs and
23 decided to make this whole thing mandatory, when she
24 did say it was optional and that we didn't have to
25 take it, and I guess that she must have felt upset by

that or something and felt the need to remove me from that class, even though after the incident I went up to her and I apologized for acting out the way I did.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Alright, thank you. Next please.

ZIAN AUGUSTINI: Peace. My name is Zian; I'm a youth leader with Make the Road New York and the Urban Youth Collaborative. Last month I joined the parents of Ramarley Graham, my friends, my brother and sister, other City Council; community groups at the vigil calling for an investigation into his death. My friends and I chanted our hearts out, shouting our truth and then left to go back to our Brooklyn neighborhood. We got off the train and started walking home; we were stopped by [inaudible] officers. My friend was half-a-block in front of us and a plain clothes officer came up and stopped him; we watched the officer detain and start to pat him down; two officers approached us and asked us, what do you have in your pockets. Only two of us from... only two blocks away from home; after calling for justice for Ramarley Graham, we had to deal this injustice. For too long my neighborhood had high suspension rates and high stop-and-frisk. As a young

1
2 black man, I am faced with racial discrimination and
3 yes, harassment, but this isn't just about me and
4 that night; it is about all the people and all the
5 young people in New York City that look just like me,
6 my friend and my sister and need to invest in our
7 future.

8 After dealing with the harassment that
9 night, my sister and I woke up and went to school;
10 the first thing we see in school every day is school
11 police officers and metal detectors and that's what
12 many black and brown students see every day, for more
13 than 9,000 of us, that is the first thing we see
14 every morning; it can be triggering, traumatizing;
15 our schools have 5,400 school police officer and only
16 3,800 guidance counselors and social workers. It
17 should not be a surprise that 94 percent of students
18 arrested are black and brown. Research shows that
19 the presence of police leads to only an increase in
20 students being arrested for minor incidents. We are
21 investing in the school-to-prison problem. I don't
22 know how our school system ended up employing more
23 police officers than guidance counselors or social
24 workers, [bell] but I only know it wouldn't be like
25 that if we weren't black. I know the City Council is

1 committed to supporting young people and that is why
2 we need the City Council to lead the push for
3 Restorative Justice; it would help the schools move
4 away from criminal responses and push-outs and it
5 would provide resources for schools to hire
6 Restorative Justice coordinators for a prioritized,
7 learning environment that keeps us in school and out
8 of criminal courts. We're spending close to \$400
9 million on school police and security and \$7 million
10 on Restorative Justice practices. In four years,
11 when I graduate, the City will have spent a billion
12 dollars on school police, \$28 million on Restorative
13 Justice and if the city keeps doing that, what are
14 you telling me, my friends and my sister, what's the
15 message for us? Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
18 Next please.

19 IKI RON: Peace. My name is Iki Ron
20 [sp?]; I'm a youth leader with Make the Road New York
21 and Urban Youth Collaborative.

22 Being a black girl in school is hard and
23 the stereotypes and bias we face is often overlooked.
24 Black girls are treated differently than white girls;
25 black girls are 10 times more likely to face harsh

1 discipline. Being black is the biggest indicator
2 that you will be suspended or arrested. The majority
3 of suspensions and criminal summons are not provided
4 for dangerous reasons; they're for minor infractions
5 like defying authority and disorderly conduct. The
6 Secretary of Education and Attorney General said
7 these infractions are biased and unfairly impact
8 black students.
9

10 In my experience, I feel that we are
11 looked at like we are about to cause trouble. If we
12 speak up for ourselves or even while we're having fun
13 and like joking around and dancing, our behavior is
14 called inappropriate and defiant and I think it's
15 because as black girls don't fit people's expectation
16 of what a girl is supposed to act like.

17 An administrator at my old school once
18 called us crazy because of the way we danced. Old
19 stereotypes like we will never graduate and we will
20 drop out and have a child; that we are trouble
21 waiting to happen, still exist; it feels like the
22 system isn't built to build us up and support us, but
23 break us down mentally and emotionally. We are even
24 treated differently just not by race, but because of
25 appearance; I've seen... I am treated differently than

other black girls because people don't look at me and always think I'm black, because my hair is naturally long and curly and adults and other students in my school treat me differently from my friends that have short curly hair and more so-called "normal" black features.

In 2014, the Federal Department of Education called for **[inaudible]** bias training; 70 percent of our students are black and Latino, but 60 percent of our teachers are white. We have to address the bias stereotypes that still make school life so hard for many black girls. As **[inaudible]** funding for Restorative Justice, we hope we can make sure schools get anti-racism and gender bias trainings for staff. We need to honest that racial bias is a reality students face and we need a plan to address it; funding to expand Restorative Justice [bell] and to make sure that training includes anti-racism training is a start. The DOE is spending \$7 million for Restorative Justice and we are happy that we're starting to get to invest in Restorative Justice, but that's one dollar per student. If every school is going to be impacted, it has to be a much bigger investment. The Council has been the leader

on this, expanding further investment to \$5 million would be a push for the city even farther. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next please.

CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Good afternoon. Good afternoon. My name is Christine Rodriguez; I am a Youth Leader at Make the Road New York, as well as the Urban Youth Collaborative.

I currently attend a new school, but for the last two years of my high school I had the opportunity to be a youth leader at the Student Success Center (SSC) on Bushwick Campus. My stipend position as a youth leader allowed me to work closely with my peers to help them through the college application process.

College is more important than ever, but unfortunately, many black and Latino students in New York City are not moving on to college. Only 26 percent of incoming freshmen at CUNY's stop senior colleges are black and Latino; 95 percent of all high school students have college aspirations and we have become a society where it is almost impossible to

earn a livable wage, but students often don't receive the support they need.

As a youth leader, I had a role with a lot of responsibility; with the training we received during the summer and throughout the school year, from college access research and action, youth leaders are able to have one-on-ones with students and facilitate workshops around college awareness. We help students with their financial aid applications, help students find colleges, write their personal statements, and finish and complete all paperwork. Having a SSC definitely has a great impact in schools and on the lives of the students. Schools with SSCs see an increase in the number of students applying to college, the number of colleges students apply to and an increase in financial aid. Due to lack of resources and time, most students are unable to meet their guidance counselor and having a SSC opens up access for those who have little to none. Fifty-five percent of high school graduates from low-income families enroll in college in comparison to 84 percent of high-income families.

I have encountered many instances where students [bell] saw college as something accessible

1
2 and in their future. The Urban Youth Collaborative
3 has been fighting for New York City to lead the way
4 in increasing access and equity to school counselors,
5 college counselors and college preparation programs,
6 such as the Students Success Centers for black,
7 Latino and first-generation college goers.

8 Currently, I am a college bridge coach at
9 the SSC; the college bridge program provides jobs to
10 college students to work with seniors at their old
11 high school. I support seniors during the year and
12 in the summer, between high school graduation and
13 college matriculation, by working alongside
14 counselors and conducting workshops, providing advice
15 on completing financial aid forms, how to pay for
16 textbooks, arranging transportation to college, and
17 registering for class. One-third of graduating
18 seniors who are accepted to college and plan to
19 enroll fail to do so due to lack of support.

20 An important population of students that
21 are underrepresented is undocumented students and for
22 many undocumented students, this is the first time
23 their citizenship status becomes vulnerable and I
24 found it interesting how comfortable students are
25 when speaking to peers.

The college process is very complicated, especially for first-generation students; it can even be harder when it comes to parent involvement and as a youth leader and a college bridge coach, I experience many clarifying moments with parents. This work is very important to me and important to my community; many students visit the SSCs every day and it is realistic to say that many students would not be in college if the SSC was not present. This position creates leadership for both youth leaders and students and relationships with parents and staff members. I hope to see more Student Success Centers in New York City; many students miss many opportunities because of the lack of support they have access to.

It is important to invest in youth design solutions, such as Student Success Centers, because we play a big role in helping students realize their dream. It is also important to invest in summer college bridge programs for students matriculating to college; we ask the DOE and the City of New York to financially commit to these programs. We are asking for a \$4 million commitment this year. You will see that young people have solutions to the issues we

face; we are hoping to see the resources we need because it is important to invest in all students. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

MALE VOICE: And I am foregoing testifying; we're gonna show a short clip from the documentary that's being shot right now, featuring Christine Rodriguez and also, **[inaudible]** in here somewhere too.

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Did this young lady get a chance to give testimony? [background comments] That's okay. And what's your name?

JORDANI MONEGRO: Jordani [sp?].

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Jordani; do we have a slip for you; did you fill out one of these slips?

JORDANI MONEGRO: No.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: No, okay. So when you finish, will you fill one out for me and then bring it... [crosstalk]

JORDANI MONEGRO: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: and give it to one of the sergeants; okay?

JORDANI MONEGRO: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Alright; why don't you start?

JORDANI MONEGRO: Good afternoon. My name is Jordani Monegro [sp?] and I am a youth leader with Future of Tomorrow and the Urban Youth Collaborative.

This fall I will be attending college and I will be a first-generation college student. My school was fortunate to have a Student Success Center; I received support with college applications, registering for SATs, public financial aid, and more. My dream is to study fashion and journalism and now I will have the opportunity to fulfill my dream. Unfortunately, other schools in my neighborhood and in New York City lack the resources needed to help students get into the best college for them. My high school's campus is the only high school campus in my neighborhood with a college student... college success center. I cannot imagine how stressful it can be for other students and first-generation college students to successfully get into college when they don't have that extra support system.

There is currently not enough money and resources being invested to get these students into

college and we must change this now. If we do not want our children to suffer educationally, we need to invest in their futures; that means college. We need college counselors, we need more Student Success Centers; we need every school to have a plan and the resources to put in place.

I think about my younger sisters back home in my country when they arrive here; will they get the support needed to get to college; will there still be funding for the current Student Success Center on my campus; will they be able to live their dreams?

If my school did not have the Student Success Center I would possibly not be attending college in the fall or any time soon. The Department of Education's new College for All plan is going to provide some students with extra guidance counselors, but a plan for all has to reach everyone. Investing \$4 million in Student Success Centers will provide on-campus work for students and support thousands [bell] of more students to get into college. I am asking you to support us in getting us to college today. Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 'Kay, thank you.
3 Casey.

4 [video viewing]

5 MALE VOICE: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very, very good. Do
7 you guys know how many college credits you need to
8 graduate? About?

9 LATRELL STONE: 44.

10 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: For a junior college
11 probably, right? So it's about 120 college credits
12 that you'd need to get a bachelor's degree. Yeah,
13 about that. And do you know how many credits each
14 course is approximately? How many credits you get
15 for each course?

16 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Like it varies,
17 three, four.

18 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That's right, so you
19 have a lot of coursework to do, so sometimes you have
20 to carry 12 credits or 15 credits; sometimes you have
21 to carry a minimum of 12 credits in order to be able
22 to get financial aid too, so there are all types of
23 things are hooked into the number of credits that
24 you're taking in order to advance and stuff like
25 that. So that's why I think a program like this is

1
2 so really important because it will really begin to
3 expose you to all those little details of how you
4 move forward. Does anybody know the difference,
5 'cause it was asked in the video, the difference
6 between a community college and a senior college?
7 Christina; do you know...? [crosstalk]

8 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Yeah. She said,
9 what is... if you know the difference between a two-
10 year... [crosstalk]

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I can't hear you.

12 [background comments]

13 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Oh well a community
14 college, you basically receive an associate's degree
15 and then with a senior college you can receive a
16 bachelor's... [crosstalk]

17 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Absolutely.

18 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: and move forward to
19 a master's degree.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you know how to
21 get a master's degree?

22 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Uhm-hm, after... you
23 apply.

24 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: After that, good, so
25 you should be aiming for that too. Okay. That's a

great program. Thank you. Council Member Lander; do you have questions?

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair and thanks to all of you for coming out and testifying; I think your youth collaborative is doing a great job and the Restorative Justice work is tremendously important. I've had a chance to get to look at the Student Success Centers and I'm really so impressed; I just wanna make sure I understand a few things right. First, essentially, all of the work is done by peer counseling, by other high school students; yes?

CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Well the ones that are trained, yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And it's mostly people who themselves are first-generation, whose parents haven't gone to college?

CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, I'm a first-generation student.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So you are and it seems like, you know, a lot of the counselors are as well?

MALE VOICE: Yeah, most of the students that are actually helping students through the

1
2 application process themselves are first-generation
3 college students. Many students also, there are
4 campuses where there are undocumented students that
5 are also acting as Student Success Center student
6 leaders as well.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And so how do
8 you... I mean, how do you learn what you need to know
9 to be peer counselors if you haven't done it before
10 and almost no one in your family has done it before?

11 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Well we receive a
12 lot of support in the Student Success Centers from
13 peers and our supervisors and also the training that
14 we receive in CARA really helps.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And that's what
16 the money you're asking from the City and the City
17 Council is to help set the centers up and provide
18 that support and training so you can help other
19 people... [crosstalk]

20 MALE VOICE: We are... sorry... so CARA,
21 College Access and Research and Action at CUNY is our
22 technical assistance provider. Also, full-service
23 Student Success Centers have community partnerships
24 and so the one on the Bushwick Campus is run by Make
25 the Road; the most recent one that just opened on

1 DeWitt Clinton in the Bronx, Good Shepherd, as a
2 community partnership. So each Student Success
3 Center has a strong community partnership and then
4 CARA acts as the trainer and technical assistance
5 provider to train the young people on how to be the
6 college advisors.
7

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And my last
9 question is just -- it's almost my understanding that
10 a lot of these are in campus schools where there's
11 three, four, five high schools in one building and
12 they function as a way of bringing people together
13 across the campus, which is not always that easy to
14 do, especially if the schools don't have themselves
15 enough college support and access. Have you found
16 that to be effective in your school?

17 CHRISTINE RODRIGUEZ: Yeah, Bushwick
18 Campus has four schools and most of the students,
19 they don't have the opportunity to meet their
20 guidance counselors because of time and so they come
21 the SSC during their lunchtime or after school or we
22 reach out to them. So yeah, it is very effective.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: That's good.
24 Well thank you very much for your work; I really want
25 one of these at John Jay Educational Campus for the

high school students there; a lot of them don't have access to enough college counseling, but thanks all of you guys.

MALE VOICE: Thanks. And I would just say briefly; there are also two middle school success centers that are part of our proposal and that has middle school students playing the same role as the high school students, helping families through the high school application process.

COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: It's only in New York City that middle school students would need the level of support to apply to high school that most Americans need to apply to college. But you're right, we do, so thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: We may soon need that for kindergarten, believe me.

MALE VOICE: Thank you, Chairman.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much to this panel; thank you for your testimony.

Alright, our next panel -- Katie McDonough, Girls for Gender Equity; Robin Vitale, American Heart Association; Karen Jimenez, Dignity in School and Parent Action Committee; Terence Renton [sp?], and Esperanza Vasquez. [background comments]

Okay. Excuse me; do you wanna raise your right hand please so I can swear you in? Okay. Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth and to answer council member questions honestly? Okay; would you like to start?

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Good after...
[interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: **[Spanish]**... Could you move the microphone? Yeah.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Good afternoon. My name is Karen Jimenez; I am a member of the Parent Committee in Action of New Settlement.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: I am very thankful to be here; thank you for having us.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: I am here to request the municipal Council to give us their support with our fight for Restorative Justice within our schools in the Bronx.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Just in the year between 2014 and 2015 in the Bronx, we've seen 30.7 percent of arrests and 60.4 percent of suspensions in public schools, more than any other county.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: We made an investigation about a year ago in relation to the school environment and the impact that young people have who are vulnerable and are pushed out of school. Based on our findings, we noticed that 21 percent of students did not enjoy their experience to be in school academically and 57 percent would not go to a counselor or to a social worker even if [bell] they were passing through a tough time in school.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Only 11 percent said that a social worker or school counselor would approach them and we think that [sic] 56 percent reported that they would never approach them, and in reality, a lot of our students have said that they prefer to seek help from their friends or family members instead of going to social workers or school counselors.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: That's why we would like change within our schools that they will be able to focus on the emotional development of our young students in a positive manner. We want parents to be leaders who will work together with schools and to be able to build a chain of trust to be able to transform our school culture.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: There is a program called Center of Peace, which is modeled in Chicago that we would like to implement in the Bronx where a member of our community who is able and is proficient to help our young students will be able to help them resolve their conflicts without the necessity of violence and only with the use of words so that our young people will be able to reflect and will be able to be construed in a matter where they find themselves; that they are themselves capable to be able to reach that goal.

KAREN JIMENEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: And that's why we are advocating a Restorative Justice; we're asking the City Council to support us with \$2.4 million so that we will be able to **[inaudible]** justice

restorative and into the next year and that we need this \$2.6 million to be able to expand this program so that especially more schools in the Bronx will be able to decrease this violence that exists in schools. Thank you very much for your attention.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. **[Spanish]**

[background comments]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Next please.

TERENCE RENTON: My name is Terence Renton and I am a youth organizer for Ugnayan Youth for Justice and Social Change... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Can you just speak more into that mic and state your name again...? [crosstalk]

TERENCE RENTON: Okay. So my name is Terence Renton and I am a youth organizer for Ugnayan Youth for Justice and Social Change, a member organization for Dignity in Schools Campaign New York. This is my first testimony to the city and definitely not my last. First I would like to thank all of you for coming out here to share my story and the stories of young people in the Filipino community.

I am here to remind the City Council of the importance of restorative practices in our schools and how the current punitive system in place needs your compassion to allocate sufficient resources for it to be drastically reformed. Young people of color are the crossfires of the school-to-prison pipeline and your leadership and urgent action can make a difference in our lives.

As a young adult that has gone through the public school system, I witnessed firsthand the need for a reform in our school policies. As new immigrant to the United States and living in a working-class neighborhood, I struggled in school. I have been suspended and I felt like the school environment was set up like a prison, with guards, metal detectors, limited resources, and adults treating us so relentlessly. I had many friends who were intelligent and capable, but when they made a mistake, many of which were minor, they were given unfair punishment, whether it's suspension, expulsion or even arrest. Our black and brown sisters and brothers are disproportionately targeted by this broken education system. Is it fair that black students make up about 26 percent of the student

1
2 population in New York City but were 53 [sic] percent
3 of those suspensions? The Filipino community is not
4 immune from this broken education system; one of our
5 undocumented members had a traumatic experience in
6 high school; he was falsely accused and implicated by
7 the dean of the school in video, where he was
8 allegedly selling drugs; when he requested to see the
9 video footage, he was bullied and threatened; the
10 ultimatum was to get arrested by the police or be
11 suspended. With life and the safety of his family on
12 the line, he was forced to lie and admit to the false
13 accusation. He was suspended for several days and
14 that had a huge impact on his academic record.

15 What kind of a message are young people
16 receiving in the current school-to-prison climate
17 that treats us as guilty offenders [bell] without any
18 due process; we are judged and criminalized by the
19 color of our skin and the years of our experience
20 this is not right, we are not disposable people, we
21 deserve the same basic human rights and dignity as
22 any other person. What is your responsibility as
23 city officials in changing this; what can you do to
24 right the wrongs that are happening to tens of
25 thousands of young people in New York City?

We urge the Council to push the administration to increase its investment in Whole School Restorative Justice models in schools, including sustainable, full-time school-based staff, youth and parent leadership, professional development, and district-wide coordination. Concretely, this means that you must allocated \$5 million to restorative initiatives in the 2016 Fiscal Year. Our schools and our young people are desperate to have the resources to create an alternative to the school-to-prison pipeline; already there have been over 50 schools that have submitted their application to incorporate Restorative Justice within a week of sending out 115 applications. It is clear to the schools of what needs to be done; we need to change old beliefs and find ways for the most effective way to teach and sustain a school community. Mayor de Blasio is also clear about the leadership it takes to reform our public schools. As the Mayor who has backed Restorative Justice and has said change takes time in processing, the Council Members can do your part in this long-term Restorative Justice Initiative. We implore you to allocate the resources towards the future of young people, public schools

and our communities. We also need your leadership and action to continue to transform, invest and change our school system into a safe and nurturing one that all young people deserve. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you, Terence and your organization -- I'm gonna say it wrong?

TERENCE RENTON: Ugnayan.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Ugnayan.

TERENCE RENTON: It means linking.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So you're in my district...

TERENCE RENTON: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: but I have not met that organization yet.

TERENCE RENTON: We are actually sharing the office with DRUM..

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

TERENCE RENTON: Desis Rising Up and Moving.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Very good.

TERENCE RENTON: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Why don't you come in and see me too?

TERENCE RENTON: Of course.

2 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay, bring your
3 group in; I'd like to meet with you.

4 TERENCE RENTON: Of course; I will.
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next
7 please.

8 ESPERANZA VASQUEZ: **[Spanish]**

9 SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Good afternoon. My
10 name is Esperanza Vazquez; I am a member and leader
11 of the Parent Committee on Action of New Settlement.
12 I'm a mother of two children; I am here to request
13 funds for the Restorative Justice Initiative for next
14 year for our schools that are participating in the
15 program and to be able to increase 25 more schools.

16 ESPERANZA VASQUEZ: **[Spanish]**

17 SPANISH TRANSLATOR: And with this
18 program we will find benefits that are helping for
19 our community and that would attract restorative
20 practices to not punish our children and to be able
21 to support them so that they will continue their
22 education and they will be able to go to college.

23 ESPERANZA VASQUEZ: **[Spanish]**

24 SPANISH TRANSLATOR: The reason why this
25 is necessary is because in the Bronx we still have

high rates of arrests and suspensions and there's a high risk that our students who are needing to [bell] go to school instead of prison; that they will be able to get these programs of justice which help to be able to break this barrier so that our young people will be able to go into this path of university schooling and not to jails.

ESPERANZA VASQUEZ: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: The benefit of these restorative practices for schools, in our public schools in the City of New York, are geared towards the necessities of our community schools, which will reduce the inequalities and disciplinarian actions that create healthy relationships between educators and students and will involve students and families, which will reduce and prevent damages, which will restore positive relationships, which will resolve conflicts and maintain school leaders in our community responsible. Thank you.

TERENCE RENTON: **[Spanish]**

SPANISH TRANSLATOR: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

Next please.

KATE MCDONOUGH: Good afternoon. My name is Kate McDonough and I'm the Director of Organizing at Girls for Gender Equity. Girls for Gender... [bell]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: That's not for you.

KATE MCDONOUGH: Okay. Girls for Gender Equity is an intergenerational organization committed to the physical, psychological, social, and economic development of girls and women. Through education organizing, GGE encourages communities to remove barriers and create opportunities for girls and women to live self-determined lives. We're also active members of the Dignity in Schools campaign.

For the past two years our Sisters in Strength **[inaudible]** organizers who are all high school-aged young women of color have been conducting their own research on discipline practices in school and calling attention to how racial and gender stereotypes about young women of color, particularly black girls, cause them to be uniquely and unfairly disciplined. One of our Sisters in Strength can't express her own opinion without being told that she needs to stop being loud and angry. This same young woman can't come to school with her hair up without it being assumed that she will get into a fight.

Another Sister in Strength was suspended for a week for accidentally breaking her teacher's pencil sharpener; the teacher's reasoning for the suspension was that she broke it on purpose because she wanted attention.

These are not isolated incidents, systematic racism and sexism; studies have found that black girls are more likely to be disciplined for talking back and receive informal forms of discipline, such as being asked to leave the classroom for chewing gum, getting up to throw away trash or speaking too loudly.

One study entitled "Ladies" or "Loudies"?, by E.W. Morris, found that much of the discipline that black girls face stems from a perception that their femininity is somehow flawed and the discipline administered is used as a means to have black girls conform to stereotypical forms of femininity, such as being quieter and more passive; in other words, white upper-class femininity.

A major shift needs to happen and I encourage city government [bell] to help foster this change by investing \$5 million in Restorative Justice to our schools. I support this work 'cause I've seen

1
2 it happen and I've seen it work. Girls for Gender
3 Equity is currently working with Roy H. Mann, a
4 middle school in the Mill Basin section of Brooklyn
5 to incorporate restorative practices into the fabric
6 of their school community. The school has decided to
7 go in this direction to uphold their core value that
8 everyone matters and to work from a preventative
9 approach as opposed to a reactive one. So things
10 like asking a young person how they're doing when
11 they seem upset as opposed to letting that fester and
12 come out later in the school day. Since this
13 approach they've seen a 90 percent decrease in
14 suspensions, they have yet to open their safe room at
15 all this year and are now moving in the next step to
16 start community-building circles during class time so
17 that they can have a school environment that is worth
18 restoring.

19 So schools need resources to implement
20 restorative practice as well, for it is not simply a
21 program to help reduce suspensions, but a value
22 system that yields a more humane approach to working
23 with young people, an approach that systematic racism
24 and sexism that has kept from them for far too long.
25 There are great schools that are tackling this issue

head-on and many more that want to go in this direction, so let's make sure that they have the resources they need to be successful. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Well thank you very much and thank you to everybody that came in from the panel. You know these are issues that we're fighting for in the Council; we hope to be able to increase the budget for our Restorative Justice projects and programs in the schools and it's a priority for this committee, so really appreciate having your testimony. **[Spanish]**

Okay, our next group -- E.M. Eisen-Markowitz from Teachers Unite; Shana Louallen from Teachers Unite; Mijo Bontonavi from Class Size Matters, and Denaia Ileus from DRUM. [background comments] Just wanna check before we begin. Is Rashida Latef here? [background comments] Okay, you'll be next. Naima from Ya-Ya Network [background comments] you here? Okay. Rajul Patel from Educators for Excellence. Okay. And Cameron Maxwell, Educators for Excellence... [background comment] okay, so you'll be on the next panel. Thank you. Thank you for sticking with us too; appreciate it.

1
2 Alright, can I ask you to raise your
3 right hand, please? Do you solemnly swear or affirm
4 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
5 the truth and to answer council member questions
6 honestly?

7 [collective affirmations]

8 Alright, let's start over here.

9 ANNA BEAN: Hi, I am not E.M. Eisen-
10 Markowitz; she's a teacher at City-As-School High
11 School and so I'm speaking on her behalf; she had to
12 go back to school for the end of the day, but I'm
13 gonna read her statement.

14 "Hello, I am E.M. Eisen-Markowitz..."

15 [interpose]

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Did you state your
17 name?

18 ANNA BEAN: Anna Dean, with Teachers
19 Unite.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

21 ANNA BEAN: "Hello, I am E.M. Eisen-
22 Markowitz and I am in my 10th year as a teacher in
23 New York City and I am here, even during the middle
24 of the school day, because making the City Council
25 investment go in the right direction is urgent in the

lives of the young people I work with. In 10 years I've seen hundreds of small human conflicts lead unnecessarily to the suspension, arrest and/or push-out of black and Latino high school students, but the decades-long movement against zero tolerance, metal detectors and policing in schools in New York City is building momentum and the political tide is turning, thanks to committed grassroots organizing by educators, parents and young people. Mayor de Blasio's Preliminary Budget released in January proposed new funding for positive school safety resources and the City Council itself, thank you, has invested \$2.4 million in their Restorative Justice Initiative from Fiscal Year 2016, but this money needs to go directly to schools; we need real sustainable investment in full-time school-based staff; not just contracts for professional development with outside vendors.

In my school we used DOE funding for restorative practices training for 10 staff members every summer for three years and by the following school year, only 4 or 6 of those teachers returned and we'd be back at the beginning. Meaningful change only started to happen in our school when our UFT

chapter voted to develop two relief-time positions for classroom teachers to work as part-time restorative co-coordinators. The two of us didn't do all of the restorative interventions, conferences, group assists; mediations because we had other teachers and parents and students who could, but we coordinated when, where and how they'd happen and we connected people to ongoing training and professional development. We also connected people at times and places that made sense for our school day and we followed up. Had I been a classroom teacher with a full teaching load, I would not have had the time, energy or resources for this kind of coordination connection; this kind of position is vital in sustaining restorative justice work in schools and it can only function meaningfully as a school-based role fully integrated into the school community over several school years.

Lots of people already in schools every day want to build restorative school climates and lots of people in schools every day have the skills we need to do this; what we don't have is money, time and dedicated staff. As a public school educator and a member of Teachers Unite and the Dignity in Schools

1 Campaign New York, I'm here today to ask the City
2 Council allocate \$5 million for the Restorative
3 Justice Initiative to fund the second year of the
4 initiative to ensure sustainability and to expand the
5 number of participating schools, to direct funds to
6 schools in order to include funding for full-time DOE
7 staff as our day coordinators and encourage the Mayor
8 to invest in youth and parent leadership and
9 district-wide coordination. With a school safety
10 budget nearing half-a-billion dollars, the
11 administration must divest from police in schools and
12 invest in what really makes schools safer for
13 students and families. Thank you."

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. You know
15 I can't help but to remark on your comment about the
16 political tide turning and I think you're right in
17 our district public schools, but if you look at
18 charter schools, it's still a huge problem and
19 there's two standards there, and I brought this up at
20 other hearings as well, that if charter schools are
21 gonna consider themselves to be public schools, then
22 they need to also get in line with restorative
23 practices, because when I read about and hear about
24 schools, like Coney Island Prep, where they make kids
25

1 wear an orange shirt if they have run out of pride
2 [sic] dollars so that everybody else in the class
3 knows who has run out of pride dollars, and all of
4 the other kids in their class are forbidden from
5 talking to the child with the orange shirt and if you
6 talk to the kid in the orange shirt, then you have to
7 wear an orange shirt as well, and when I hear about
8 those types of policies in our charter schools, I
9 freak out. So thank you for saying the tide is
10 turning and I agree with you on that, and I think we
11 should continue to move in that direction for all
12 public schools.
13

14 ANNA BEAN: I agree.

15 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you.

16 SHANA LOUALLEN: Thank you. So thank you
17 to the City Council for your leadership in addressing
18 how we dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline; this
19 has been showcased by your \$2.4 million investment in
20 the Restorative Justice Initiative for the Fiscal
21 Year 2016.

22 So my name is Shana Louallen and I am
23 school social worker; I have been for quite some
24 time, for the last few years, and like many of my
25 colleagues, I too have had to serve as the sole

1 social work for a school, counseling upwards of 375
2 students while engaging in restorative practices for
3 conflict resolution between students and staff. So
4 doing mandated counseling, treatment plans,
5 mediation, breaking up fights, running social-
6 emotional PDs for staff, guiding social-emotional
7 content for advisories, making parent calls, leading
8 family conferences; creating safety and harm-
9 reduction plans makes social work in schools a really
10 hard job and it also makes the task of shifting a
11 counterintuitive, punitive school culture to a
12 restorative a lonely one.
13

14 When however I worked at a school where
15 their school culture embraced restorative practices,
16 I saw a shift in students of color inclusive of
17 improved engagement and support. The shift allowed
18 social workers to engage in more deeply clinical and
19 family work, in addition to collaborative
20 participation in restorative planning -- the key word
21 is collaborative. With the help of restorative
22 coordinators, this took years to happen and I must be
23 clear in stating that this work cannot happen solely
24 on the backs of social workers, teachers and schools,
25 nor on the backs of staff of color; it is a community

1 effort; it requires priority treatment by school
2 administrators, frank conversations about race,
3 class, power, and privilege and strategic actions
4 that follow, as well as buy-in from staff, student
5 and families. If we're saying that student voice
6 matters, that students of color matter and that
7 specifically black lives matter; then we as frontline
8 workers need more support on the second round of the
9 initiative.
10

11 As a member of Teachers Unite and Dignity
12 in Schools Campaign New York, I am requesting the
13 following -- allocating for \$5 million for the
14 Restorative Justice Initiative for the next year to
15 ensure sustainability and expand the number of
16 schools able to participate, to allow for the
17 initiative to fund full-time-based school staff and
18 professional development around school climate as
19 well as race, class, power, and privilege with
20 respect to restorative practices, to push Mayor
21 de Blasio's administration to increase the investment
22 in Whole School Restorative Justice models that also
23 include youth and parent leadership, but most
24 importantly, community involvement, as well as
25 district-wide coordination, and to push for the

administration to divest from policing in schools via school safety and invest in successful processes, as well as people who really make schools safe for students and families. Thank you so much for your time.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much and thank you to your dedication to our students, 375 cases is an awful lot to carry, believe me. Thank you.

SHANA LOUALLEN: No problem.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Next please.

MIJO WUTAVI: Good evening Chair Dromm and members of the Education Committee, thank you for holding this important hearing today. My name is Mijo Wutavi [sp?] and I am the Research Associate for Class Size Matters, a citywide parent and public interest group that advocates for better schools and smaller classes in New York City. My written testimony has a lot more information, but I'm gonna try to breeze through it right now.

Unfortunately school budgets have not recovered since the recession as well as the cuts both to city and the state started to impose in 2007. In 2008, schools got 100 percent on average Fair

1 Student Funding; if the Mayor's proposed budget is
2 adopted, it will mean a 9 percent cut to our schools'
3 funding since 2007. The result of these cuts to
4 schools has been a loss of more than 4,000 teachers
5 between 2007 and 2014 and an increase of class size
6 since 2008. Now there are over 350,000 students
7 crammed into classes of 30 or more this year; in
8 light of this reality, there are many aspects of the
9 administration spending which appears unwise. One
10 example, since October, the DOE has spent almost \$70
11 million on **[inaudible]** for professional development
12 related to the Common Core, even though the State
13 Education Commissioner has said that Common Core is
14 likely to be significantly changed. There are a few
15 other examples in my written testimony, but I should
16 also quickly mention the \$1.1 billion internet
17 contract that was to be awarded to Custom Computer
18 Specialists, a company that had been implicated in
19 the Ross Lanham kick-back scheme just a few years
20 before. Along with Patrick Sullivan, former
21 Manhattan member of the PEP, we have formed a
22 Citizens Contract Oversight Committee to provide more
23 transparency for the DOE's contracting and
24 procurement process. I believe there needs to be
25

more public officials, including the City Council, involved in the oversight process to ensure against waste and fraud. For example, on the proposed contacts to be voted at the PEP this month, about half of them are retroactive, which prompts the question; what is the point of a vote that is held months after the money has been paid?

On the Fair Student Funding, the DOE weights [sic] per student do not make sense to us, given the research on what is most effective to help students learn. One example is the smallest amount of funding is allocated to students in grades K-5 where the investment in small classes have huge payoffs. As many cities indicate, [bell] remediation is far less effective than prevention. And one last thing.

Finally, we are concerned about the rapid growth of funding for charter schools. In the Mayor's Executive Budget for next year, charter school funding will cost the DOE a projected \$1.5 billion, a rising to \$2 billion by Fiscal Year 2020. The DOE is now also funding in a program called District Charter Collaboration, which is projected to sharply increase to \$2 million next year. What is

1 this program paying for and how is this collaboration
2 going to benefit our public school students; is the
3 private sector providing matching funds for this
4 program or is the DOE burdened with all the expense?
5 These are the questions that must be asked,
6 especially as we feel the state has not enforced the
7 2010 Charter Law that requires that charter schools
8 enroll and retain their fair share of high-needs
9 students, including English language learners and
10 students with disabilities. Thank you for the
11 opportunity to speak.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you and I've
14 worked closely with the organization and I remember
15 these issues, obviously and I am a little bit happy
16 though to see that this district school initiative
17 has happened; I just hope that the results are as
18 good as what they're expecting them to happen to be,
19 so we'll see what happens in the future moving down
20 the road. Thank you.

21 MIJO WUTAVI: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Next please.

23 DENAIA ILEUS: Hi, my name is Denaia
24 Ileus and I'm a Youth Member at DRUM, Desis Rising Up
25 and Moving. DRUM organizes low-income South Asian

immigrant youth, adults and workers for immigrant rights, economic justice and educational justice, we are also a part of the Dignity in Schools Campaign. I am currently 17 years old and an 11th grade student at Urban Academy High School.

Students deserve to have a quality education and environment that is safe, supportive and respects the rights and dignity of all young people; however, a few months ago I had to make the decision to transfer out of my previous school, William Cullen Bryant High School, because I did not feel safe or supported. I had gotten into multiple arguments with my teachers because what they taught during the class was different from what was being tested on our class exams; they would always place the blame on me instead of trying to help me succeed in the class; this caused me not to care about the classes and I ended up not doing well. I was not the only one who had a problem with the school administration and at times it resulted in students being suspended. There were many instances where school security agents or teachers would bully students by saying things that made them feel stupid or hurt them emotionally. For example, I used to

1 wear a hijab and when I decided not to wear it
2 anymore, the school security agent compared me to my
3 old school ID and said it was a great idea because I
4 looked prettier without it anyway. Although it might
5 have seemed like a harmless compliment, I found it
6 offensive because I have friends and family members
7 who still wear the hijab. Racial biases and
8 institutionalized racism and bullying, whether
9 through actions, inaction or words and especially
10 when it comes from those in positions of power make
11 our schools into places where we do not feel safe or
12 supported; that's what happened to me and I ended of
13 being pushed out of my high school. I didn't know
14 what I could do because there was no way to address
15 the problems because it was always their word against
16 mine; I felt like leaving was my best option.
17 However, if my school had restorative justice
18 programs, I know things would have worked out a lot
19 differently. Having access to these programs in a
20 school environment will allow students, teachers and
21 other school staff to work out their problems in a
22 positive way that will benefit [bell] all sides; that
23 is why I am here today to urge the City Council to
24 expand funding for Restorative Justice in New York
25

1
2 City public schools to \$5 million in the upcoming
3 year, together we can transform our schools into
4 places that value its young people and our right to a
5 quality education. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you and I'm
7 really sorry that incident happened to you and every
8 time I hear about these ridiculous things that some
9 of the school safety agents do, it's infuriating, you
10 know and I just had another incident with a young man
11 who knew me, transgender man, actually who knew me
12 and reached out to me because he was standing in
13 front of his school waiting for his mother to pick
14 him up and school safety agents and a police officer
15 came out and told him to move and he said well no,
16 this is where my mother always picks me up. First of
17 all, I don't even know what right they have to move
18 people on a public street, to be honest with you;
19 that's my first question, but then he pointed to his
20 belt and on his belt, you know he had his holster and
21 his gun and his handcuffs and he says look, if you
22 don't move, choose which one you want, the silver or
23 the black, meaning do you want the handcuffs or do
24 you want the gun. So you know, we keep hearing this
25 and you'd think the message would get through, like

FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

NAIMA BARTHOLOMEW: Uhm Bartholomew.

[collective affirmations]

Okay. Thank you very much. And let's start over here.

NAIMA BARTHOLOMEW: Hello and good afternoon everyone. My name is Naima Bartholomew and I am youth staff at the Ya-Ya Network, Youth Activists-Youth Allies, and I am a current high school student at the New Design High School which is located in the Lower East Side on the Seward Park Campus.

While attending my current high school, I lacked connection with those in higher positions. I've watched friends close to me have up to three weeks of suspension for defying authority. What was outrageous was the crime administrators said that students committed was wearing a hat in class or even having their phone out in class. There are alternatives to handling situations in school where students and teachers have a lack of communication; this alternative is Restorative Justice.

Restorative Justice is a process in repairing or restoring a relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. Restorative justice brings participants closer, encourages accountability and puts an end to harmful stereotypes. This process also eliminates the school-to-prison pipeline. The school-to-prison pipeline are policies that push

students out of school and into the criminal justice system; this system disproportionately targets youth of color and youth with disabilities. We need to reverse the school-to-prison pipeline by investing in restorative justice programs.

As a high school student, restorative justice practices are not just an alternative to suspension; they're way to build communities between teachers and students. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.
Next please.

RASHIDA LATEF: Good evening.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Good evening.
Thought we started it was morning.

RASHIDA LATEF: I know; I was hoping that would make you laugh, actually.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What time did you get here?

RASHIDA LATEF: I'd say maybe 1:45 or so.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: What time?

RASHIDA LATEF: 1:45 or so.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Wow. Well thank you for staying.

RASHIDA LATEF: Thank you for having me.

So my name is Rashida Latef; I am the Advocacy Coordinator at the West Side Campaign Against Hunger and I'd like to thank Council Member Danny Dromm, Chair of the Education Committee, for the opportunity to submit testimony on the Fiscal Year 2017 Preliminary New York City Budget, and specifically, the need to expand universal free school lunch to all public school students.

Founded in 1979, WSCAH is an innovative customer-choice food pantry that combines access to healthy food with support services, job training and policy advocacy to help stabilize clients and put them on a path to self-sufficiency. In the last year we have provided food for more than 1.1 million meals for over 43,000 families.

At WSCAH we know first-hand that the impact of universal free school lunch is extremely important to our clients; many of our clients are parents who in addition to SNAP and emergency food programs rely on school meals to fight hunger; without free school meals, clients like Fatima, a mother of three school-age children attending New York City public schools, would have fewer resources

1
2 to ensure her children are not hungry and struggling
3 academically or being bullied because of the stigma
4 of poverty among students. This program would serve
5 students and families across New York City, but
6 especially our clients who we witness struggling
7 financially on a daily basis.

8 Recently with Good Joy and parent
9 leaders, other advocates and several of your
10 colleagues, in calling for expansion of universal
11 free school lunch during a Lunch for Learning press
12 conference in front of City Hall on March 10th,
13 Council Member Ben Kallos highlighted the very real
14 impacts of stigma in the cafeteria as he described
15 his own experience with being hungry and bullied as a
16 student who qualified for free lunch. Manhattan
17 Borough President Gale Brewer detailed the
18 administrative and technical benefits that universal
19 free school lunch would yield in removing the need
20 for school administrators to act as bill collectors
21 and Council Margaret Chin reiterated the cost-effect
22 of implementation of universal free school lunch by
23 emphasizing the state and federal reimbursements that
24 City would received, thereby costing only \$3.6

million to expand universal free school lunch to elementary and high school students.

Once again, [bell] WSCAH would like to thank the City Council's Education Committee for its continued support for this issue and the opportunity to testify about the need to expand this program to all 1.1 million New York City public school students. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you very much.

RAJUL PATEL: Hi. Thank you for letting me give my testimony today. My name is Rajul Patel; I am currently a high school science teacher in the poorest urban school district in America; I'm testifying on my own behalf and not on the behalf of the Department of Education.

The students that walk into our school building every day are carrying with them a multitude of burdens; the odds are stacked against them and they know; school should be a place to ease burdens and a place to feel safe and respected by peers and adults alike. If education is the ticket out from poverty, then we should be doing everything we can to create an environment where students wanna be in

1 school and that needs to include expanding
2 restorative justice programs in all of our schools.

3
4 My introduction to punitive forms of
5 discipline was when I started teaching New York City
6 schools; I witnessed middle school-aged kids who had
7 never been convicted of a crime or been caught with a
8 weapon start their day by walking through a metal
9 detector; the message is clear, we already think
10 you're a criminal. One of my students was suspended
11 for losing his temper and directing some choice words
12 towards his teacher; rather than engaging him in a
13 conversation about his actions, he was kicked out.
14 This is where restorative justice and the ideologies
15 behind restorative justice practices come into play.
16 Students should be given a chance to analyze what
17 they did wrong and to come up with plans to prevent
18 it from happening again; this teaches them how to
19 deal with difficult situations when they become an
20 adult, how to control their temper, how to handle
21 making mistakes, how to take ownership of mistakes
22 and how to face the damages that they've created.
23 Punitive discipline does one thing; removes them from
24 their mistake. When you know the person next to you
25 and you know the struggle they've been through, then

you are less likely to harm them; this statement has helped suspension rates drop 60 percent at our school by incorporating restorative justice practices into our every day. Recently I was able to incorporate restorative justice circles into my health class and it was transformative. The students who participated absolutely loved it; they loved how it brought everyone together. Bringing people together exemplifies why restorative justice is the better method of behavior management rather than a punitive consequence; we should be bringing people together, bringing students in and keeping them in the classroom; not pushing them out. I've been fortunate to experience restorative justice and practice at my school and schools like mine that are piloting these approaches to non-punitive discipline. I have also been fortunate enough to study and analyze restorative justice in other school districts as an author of [bell] Educators for Excellence's policy paper on school climate and discipline. From my experiences, I firmly believe that restorative approaches can be transformative for a student's relationship with his or her school community and for the culture within the school. Positive forms of

discipline practices are more inclusive and fair for the diverse population of students I serve; it is time to move past the current consequence system the New York City Department of Education employs; I ask this committee to provide the support and funding to its teaches and schools to promote creating connections with students rather than a focus on corrections; in order to do so it is necessary to greatly expand the funding currently allocated for restorative justice training for all personnel in schools and to provide funding for restorative justice coordinators at all schools.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. Next please.

CAMERON MAXWELL: Hi. My name is Cameron Maxwell and I'm a 7th grade English Language Arts teacher at Isaac Newton Middle School in East Harlem and I'm speaking here today on behalf of myself and not on behalf of the Department of Education. I'm speaking in support of a vision articulated by an Educators for Excellence policy team I was part of last year and to speak on behalf of a recommendation I know is critical for our New York City students and teachers.

To use the language of our policy paper we must, "prioritize additional training for evaluators and mentors on giving specific feedback on positive classroom culture-building."

Creating meaningful systems for improving school culture is a daunting task, it requires not only buy-in from staff and administration; it requires money and energy and consistency and focus and trust; it requires teachers sitting in a room for extended periods of time, having difficult conversations about what their school should look like; crucially, it demands the hard-won [sic] insights of well-trained and experienced teachers, deans and counselors.

Without the knowledge of these mentors and teacher leaders, school culture goals are hashed out on an ad hoc basis; there may be a common desire to change a school's culture and its student/adults interactions for the better, but there is no vision, no set of practices to follow or concrete achievable goals to aspire to; little gets done to anyone's satisfaction.

Anyone who's had the experience of solving a difficult problem or completing a complex

1 task through a series of e-mail chains knows this
2 frustration exactly. New logistics and problem-
3 solving happen individually to the point where
4 everyone's either working at cross-purposes or
5 miscommunications are fraying people's **[inaudible]** to
6 their breaking point.
7

8 Now our school has recently adopted a
9 positive culture-building system using principles
10 from the Positive Behavioral Interventions and
11 Supports (PBIS) method and it's supported by a great
12 teaching app called ClassDoJo and we use this to
13 track and validate our students' various successes
14 and the point system allows kids to work towards
15 awards of various sizes and I've seen it motivate
16 great successes occasionally in my own classes and
17 I've also seen it ignored or disparaged by teachers
18 who haven't known or cared to learn how it can best
19 be used. [bell] Now if these teachers could be
20 observed and mentored and coached by experienced
21 culture-builders and shown the craft of relationship-
22 building first-hand through observations and video
23 recordings; we'd have a well-guided, confident staff
24 ready to realize holistic change in their difficult
25 classrooms. We all know how powerful one-to-one

learning opportunities can be and let's create more of them and above all, let's bring a full package of resources and incentives to bear in creating a new core of veteran evaluators and mentors. Seventy-five percent of teachers surveyed by E for E have known a fellow teacher who left over student discipline issues; there needs to be a sense of urgency. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Thank you. So Rajul, in your school you have a coordinator and restorative practices have -- no...

RAJUL PATEL: There's no coordinator, it's been just me and the dean who've been putting in extra hours after school and before school to plan all of this.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you're working to train the whole staff?

RAJUL PATEL: Yeah, this is our first year piloting it, so so far we've had about...

[interpose] CHAIRPERSON DROMM: It's you and who else?

RAJUL PATEL: Me and the dean...
[crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And the dean?

2 RAJUL PATEL: Yeah.

3 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: How many kids in your
4 school?

5 RAJUL PATEL: We're a middle and a high
6 school, so I couldn't tell you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Is it 1,000?

8 RAJUL PATEL: No, it's less than that.

9 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: 500 maybe?

10 RAJUL PATEL: Yeah, like 500..

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay.

12 RAJUL PATEL: 5-600.

13 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So it's a little bit
14 smaller.

15 RAJUL PATEL: Yeah.

16 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Your principal
17 supporting you on this?

18 RAJUL PATEL: In words, but not with
19 anything else.

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So it concerns me
21 'cause I think that you're probably doing a good job;
22 one of the objectives of this hearing today is to
23 make sure that we begin to get buy-in from everybody
24 who's involved in the whole school and it's one of
25 the questions I had asked the Chancellor when they do

18 And Mr... is it Mr. Maxwell?

20 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: So is that the same
21 thing for you?

25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And both of you are with Educators for Excellence?

CAMERON MAXWELL: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And when you had the idea of doing restorative practices, did that come about because of the report that you did, that Educators for Excellence did or did you contribute to the report or how did you come to... [crosstalk]

CAMERON MAXWELL: Well I had heard of restorative practices prior to joining with Educators for Excellence, but in working with the policy team that I was part of last year, I really became convinced of their value.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And so one of the issues that we do see is when we try to implement restorative practices there is some pushback from teachers who may not be familiar with it or who don't buy into it right away because they think it takes too much time away from teaching, etc.; that's been your experience?

CAMERON MAXWELL: Yes, yes it has.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. And how do you go about or what do you anticipate doing to try to get some more teacher input or buy into this?

1
2 CAMERON MAXWELL: Well I think having
3 experienced leaders who can speak to its efficacy in
4 other places and actually demonstrate it through the
5 evidence such as video recordings or through sort of
6 a one-to-one mentorship with some sort of culture
7 leader could maybe start to create some of that
8 shift, to where they're actually being confronted
9 with, okay, this is how it works, this is why it
10 works and this is how I can prove that it works.

11 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And you're 7th grade,
12 middle school?

13 CAMERON MAXWELL: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: And is your principal
15 supportive?

16 CAMERON MAXWELL: Yeah, very much so.
17 But we are over-matched oftentimes by the challenges
18 of our neighborhood, but she is behind restorative
19 practices, so just finding new ways to do it and more
20 effective ways to do it I think would be goal both
21 for her and for myself.

22 CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Do you have a
23 coordinator?

24 CAMERON MAXWELL: We do not, no.
25

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. So the responsibility for the implementation is falling on the two of your shoulders?

CAMERON MAXWELL: The grade level teams are typically where that... [interpose]

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: The grade level teams.

CAMERON MAXWELL: right, where those decisions are worked out.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Okay. Did you wanna say something?

RAJUL PATEL: Yeah. So I think that a lot of teachers are sort of misinformed with the fact that restorative justice wastes time. Like I said, 60 percent suspension rates dropping that much, kids are staying in the classroom longer, since they aren't at home doing absolutely nothing and so I think really, by incorporating restorative justice you could be increasing class time; not decreasing it.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: I agree wholeheartedly and I think once you implement it and if done school-wide, I think that ultimately you find

that you're able to do better teaching and you're better able to even control your class.

CAMERON MAXWELL: Right, yeah; just creates a different tone within the room when you can effect these practices and it really creates a situation where kids feel more positively about their education and their school.

CHAIRPERSON DROMM: Yeah and I mean, initially I think some -- you may have to spend some extra time on finding out what the issue that is making the kid act that way, you know maybe he didn't have food at home; maybe he had a fight with mom or dad or something like that or mom and dad's doing something, but I think ultimately when you can form those circles -- I particularly believe in circles actually; I think that it makes for a much better and easier teaching day. So but thank you everybody, to the whole panel for coming in; this has been a great expense budget hearing and I think we are about to close this and adjourn; it is now 5:55 p.m. This meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

[background comments]

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 April 20, 2016